Annual Report
2015
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The voluntary sector plays an important role in providing services in the community. In a welfare society, voluntary organisations (henceforth VOs) are indispensable and they perform a number of functions for the welfare of its members, the development of the country and integration and solidarity of the society and nation. The generosity of the Maltese is well renowned and substantial amounts of money are collected by VOs every year.

The mission of the Office of the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations (henceforth CVO Office) is to regulate the voluntary sector by giving it more visibility and guarantee transparency and accountability of the organisations that compose it, in the carrying out of their important work, whilst monitoring and supervising the activities of these organisations as well as supporting them. The role of the regulator of the sector is of utmost importance in order to increase public trust, confidence, accountability and transparency in the sector, so that VOs can continue to play a central role in society to meet uncovered needs.

To strengthen the mission of the CVO Office a lot of work was carried out to finalise the amendments to the Voluntary Organisations Act (Cap 492 of the Laws of Malta), (henceforth VOA). Some of these amendments will address weaknesses in the legal and enforcement powers of the Commissioner, including those on fraud, money laundering and terrorism. In this way it will strengthen the regulatory framework of the voluntary sector in order to sustain high levels of public confidence in VOs to encourage a vibrant and diverse sector, independent of the Government. As the Commissioner highlights in his overview, this needs financial backing, which is currently lacking, in order to implement all the provisions of the law effectively and efficiently and become a more proactive and robust regulator.

This report highlights the work carried out during 2015 with regards to compliance to Subsidiary Legislation 492.01, Voluntary Organisations (Annual Returns and Annual Accounts) Regulations 2012 (henceforth Subsidiary Legislation 492.01) by enrolled voluntary organisations. The CVO Office gives high importance to the promotion of compliance for the benefit of the individual VOs and the wider voluntary sector. Where risks and non-compliance to law are identified, regulatory advice is given to VOs. Where necessary the Commissioner uses its legal powers to open an inquiry or an investigation.

Despite all the reminders sent to VOs to submit their annual returns and accounts on time, a significant number of VOs, in all categories, fall behind in abiding by the law to send their submissions on time. Efforts were made during 2015 to collect also late annual returns of previous years. The proposed amendments to the VOA will give more powers to the Commissioner in this regard to take timely action, particularly in cases where there has been negligent or deliberate abuse on the part of administrators.

The CVO Office is aware that accountability is amongst the most important drivers of public trust in the voluntary sector. Therefore it is crucial that administrators file their accounts and annual returns on time. With the collaboration of the Malta Council of the Voluntary Sector (henceforth, the Council), training courses were organised to administrators of VOs on the compiling of annual accounts and returns, where emphasis was made to take reporting requirements seriously, since good reporting demonstrates the good standing of a VO for the benefit of its supporters and beneficiaries.

The CVO Office was kept very busy with the increase in applications for enrolment during the year. In fact a total of 161 applications were submitted compared to the 154 applications filed in 2014. This brings the total of VOs that have applied with the CVO Office since its inception in 2008, to 1228. These VOs are very diverse in mission, social purpose, activity, size and complexity. They range from very small organisations with a committee of 3 administrators to bigger and international VOs employing people.
The number of Certificates of Enrolment issued amounted to 120. VOs obtaining the Certificate of Enrolment can enjoy several advantages and benefits, amongst of which is that they can benefit from government grants in accordance to the VOA.

The VO’s status depends on a statutory test in accordance with the VOA, carried out by the CVO Office to establish its legal form and its eligibility to enrol. The different legal forms and their statutes are well explained in this report. This chapter includes a brief description on what is a Foundation, a Trust and an Association. Throughout the year, this Office received and replied to a good number of enquiries in this regard, like what is the composition of a statute, rights of administrator and members, rules on conducting an annual general meeting etc. It is not always possible to guide organisations in their enquiries since the Commissioner’s office is not a legal firm and has no authority to give legal advice. On the other hand, the Commissioner is legally bound to provide information and guidelines to persons performing voluntary work and to members of voluntary organisations, for the better performance of their role and for the better achievement of the objectives of the VOs in which they serve.

During 2015, a lot of effort and work was put into the design of this Office’s new website, which is the project for the Simplification of Bureaucracy of this Office for 2016, in line with government policies. This will eventually satisfy legal obligations of the VOA and obligations implied by the European Union (henceforth EU) for more transparency within the sector. This website will include comprehensive information on the various services offered by this Office, on all VOs enrolled with the CVO and online applications forms. This website will offer the functionality of applying online for enrolment, online submission of annual returns and accounts, online application for the services offered by the CVO Office, public search facility as well as document management system with back office management of approvals. The website will also include, guidelines, a feedback system, a secure members’ area which will allow for online VO management and several different types of media (eg. podcasts, links). A Project Description Agreement on the website project was signed in 2015, between the Information Management Unit of the Ministry for Social Dialogue, Consumer Affairs and Civil Liberties, MITA and the CVO Office. The Situation Business Analysis Report, mapping all the processes as they currently are and how they will be transformed online, has been drafted. This report gives a brief on the guidelines that will be available on the website to assist VOs in their work. Some are also intended to increase the level of good governance in these organisations.

The vision, strategy and accomplishments of the CVO Office are outlined in this report. Working on a vision and strategies are very important to accomplish the objectives of the CVO Office. They deliver many benefits and define the values of this Office and its employees which will lead to more efficiency and effectiveness. This Office will continue working to reach its objectives, with its limited resources for the benefit of the voluntary sector.

The CVO Office works in close collaboration with the Council which is doing a very good job to support the voluntary sector in its needs. It is offering various beneficial services to VOs and is playing a crucial role to support them in their requirements. During 2015, the Council consolidated the initiated projects and initiatives such as the Training and Capacity Building Program for Voluntary Organisations Administrators, the Small Initiatives Supports Scheme, the Mentoring Scheme for VOs and the National Volunteer Award, whilst entering also in new initiatives for the benefit of the third sector. The Council organised various activities throughout the year and offered funding schemes to financially support VOs in their various projects.

In sum, this annual report gives an overview of the hefty work carried out during 2015 to regulate the voluntary sector by its small staff. Regulation is important for the sector since it can act as a badge of quality for enrolled VOs and engender public confidence. The CVO Office aims at supporting and nurturing the sector and at understanding the sector’s diversity whilst educating it to improve good governance amongst VOs.
2015 was a year where a lot of work was dedicated to two major projects engaging the Commissioner’s office; one the formulation of the amendments to the Voluntary Organisations Act (2007) which has been ongoing since 2012, the other the setting up of the Commissioner’s website intended to accommodate all the information about enrolled VOs that the office is legally required to make publicly available in the better interest of accountability. With regards to the first, the amendments have received the Government’s formal approval and a white paper should be forthcoming early in the New Year to be followed by a period of consultation before they are sent to parliament for their promulgation. With regards the second, the technical work completed on the part of this office with the cooperation of the Ministry and MITA, the funding of the project was approved by the Finance Ministry this year to the tune of €41,000. The construction of the website will enable applicants to enrol on the VO’s register and the submission of annual returns and accounts to be made online and will hopefully come into operation in the first half of 2016. Once it is in place, it will make the work of the office more efficient and will economise on bureaucracy and staff time.

Owing to the growing amount of legal work, and in anticipation of the approval by parliament of the amendments referred to in the previous paragraph, the office was assigned a full time senior legal officer at the end of this year. This new recruitment has boosted the office staff and will enable it to improve its all-round efficiency. Meanwhile heartfelt thanks are due for the sterling support and advice it has received from the office’s consultants Ganado Advocates’ Lawyers over the years from the beginning when it was being set up. The office still, however, requires the recruitment of an office management assistant to support its administrative work which has grown increasingly urgent and which will include updating of the website. It also requires drastic revision of the allotted budget for 2016 which, at 60,000 Euros falls well short of the office’s basic requirements, which includes the Commissioner’s honorarium. The Office’s basic requirements were estimated and justified in the Commissioner’s budget estimates for the year which were made in anticipation of the two projects mentioned in the previous paragraph.

What is for sure is that the amendments to the law will require a professional campaign of public information and education which will need to be outsourced. Moreover, the transfer of the hard data in the files on the present voluntary organisations’ register will need to be transferred to the website. Both these projects will need their own funding.

Because of the delay in concluding the work on the amendments leading up to the white paper, the two other projects referred to in my report for 2014 have fallen behind; these are the publication of regulations regarding the charity shops and of public collections respectively. Both are urgently required. Charity shops that are mushrooming everywhere are thus far unrecognised in the law and therefore unregulated. The problems with public collections are well known and, again the problem is one of regulation.

Under the VOA organisation enrolled with the Commissioner are exempt from applying for a police licence in accordance with the Public Collections Act but there are still no regulations in place to regulate them. The reason is that the promulgation of such regulations could, in a situation where enrolment is optional, deter organisations from enrolling with the Commissioner in order to profit from the laxity of the Public Collections Act. Both sets of regulations are scheduled to follow the passage of the amendments through parliament. This will also require a revision of Subsidiary Legislation 492.01, which requires improvement and adaptation to the amendments.

One positive and important step forward in 2015 has been in the area of creating more collaboration and trust between this Office and the different Government Ministries and entities.
It has always been the Commissioner’s contention that in order to enjoy any kind of benefits from Ministries or government agencies, VOs must, in the first place be enrolled on the Commissioner’s register in compliance with the VOA. In the second, that it must be compliant with Subsidiary Legislation 492.01 which further requires all enrolled organisations to be up-to-date in the submission of their annual returns and annual accounts. This contention has, this year, achieved significant support from most Ministries and agencies, and the practice has grown whereby they routinely enquire at this office about the state of compliance of VOs before issuing them with funds, and refusing funding to VOs that are not fully compliant.

This is an encouraging collaboration which needs to be strengthened in the future and which also exists with the Council with which the Commissioner works closely.

On another positive note, it was encouraging to note increasing Government spending on the voluntary sector and the growing collaboration with the Council which moved to new premises in December 2014. It was encouraging also to see the centre becoming increasing popular with VOs for meetings, seminars, and so on, and to see the Council’s services to the sector grow and improve. The Council has now clearly taken a life of its own and its future growth will be ensured by the amendments to the law that concern it.

This year the Commissioner decided to look more closely at the situation of the voluntary sector in Gozo. In November 2014 the Commissioner arranged two meetings in Gozo, one with the Minister for Gozo and with senior officers of his Ministry, the other following, with the Gozo NGO Association. The purpose of the meeting at the Ministry was two-fold: (1) to brief the Ministry on the requirement of the law (especially Article 4) with reference to any Ministerial funding or other benefits it may allocate to Gozo voluntary organisations; (2) to assess the Gozo NGO Association’s claim to represent the Gozo voluntary sector, and the level of its recognition and collaboration with the Ministry. The meeting with the Association, however, failed to materialise despite the long advance notice and the availability of the Commissioner for any time. The Commissioner followed the initiative with a memorandum which was sent to the Ministry on the 16th April 2015, proposing steps towards its recognition of the NGO’s Association as representing the interests of the Gozo voluntary sector, and offering his assistance to this end. The memorandum was copied to the Association with the Ministry’s approval and the reactions to its contents by both sides. The Ministry replied that it was taking my proposals up with its lawyer but nothing further was heard from it by the year’s end. The Gozo NGO Association made no reply.

Following his briefing of the Gozo Ministry in November 2014, in 2015 the Commissioner’s attention was drawn to a complaint reported in the media over the administration of the Voluntary Organisations Fund for Gozo for the year amounting to 50,000 Euros managed by the Ministry for Gozo.

On investigating the matter with the Ministry for Gozo the Commissioner found several irregularities in the process followed beginning with the call for applications and continuing with the actual distribution of the Funds which was far from transparent and compliant with the law (Voluntary Organisations Act (Cap 492 of the Laws of Malta). The distribution of the funds having unfortunately already been made so that they could not realistically be reversed or remedied, the Commissioner insisted with the Ministry on its assurance that strict compliance with the law be ensured not only in the future administration of the Fund which has been increased to 90,000 euros for 2016, but with any benefits made available to VOs in Gozo through any scheme administered by the Ministry.

The Ministry for Gozo was also reminded that any recipients of funding or other benefits administered by this Ministry must not only be enrolled with the Commissioner but must also be compliant with Subsidiary Legislation 492.01. This means that the recipient organisation must be in possession of an enrolment certificate and a declaration from the Commissioner’s office declaring it up-to-date with its annual returns and annual accounts, in conformity with the general practice followed by other Government Ministries and agencies.

Prof. Kenneth Wain
Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations

3.1 VISION

The CVO Office was legally set up to strengthen the voluntary sector through various initiatives with the specific aim of promoting the work of VOs as well as encouraging their role as partners with the government in various initiatives.

The ultimate vision of the Commissioner’s office is to give more visibility to the voluntary sector as well as to guarantee transparency and accountability of the organisations that compose it in the carrying out of their important work. Transparency and accountability of VOs to donors, beneficiaries and the public are crucial in instilling public trust in the voluntary sector.

As the regulator of the voluntary sector this Office seeks to deliver a well governed voluntary sector which instils confidence in all stakeholders, underpinned by this Office’s effective regulatory and advisory role. This aims to increase public trust and confidence in voluntary organisations.

This Office will continue promoting compliance by VOs and their legal obligations in exercising control and management of the administration of their organisation.

3.2 OBJECTIVES

A strong voluntary sector is a vital part of civil society. The role of the CVO Office is crucial in regulating the voluntary sector.

This Office considers that it can best fulfil its objectives given the necessary financial and human resources by:

- Concentrating on promoting compliance by VOs
- Creating more awareness and educating VOs on their legal obligations
- Promoting accountability and transparency in the voluntary sector
- Issuing guidelines on the various services offered by the CVO Office
- Providing clear, accessible guidance to VOs to comply with legal and regulatory norms

- Encouraging greater transparency and accountability by VOs, which is vital to create public trust and confidence
- Making it easier and more efficient for VOs to work with the CVO Office using more user friendly digital services through the new website which is currently being developed. The new website, through which all the services offered by this Office will be online, include the register of VOs, accounts of VOs and the list of administrators
- Enforcement of the amendments of the VOA, which gives more powers to the Commissioner. One of the main amendments being compulsory enrolment of VOs
- Recruiting and training new staff to ensure that this Office can deliver its legislative role
- Taking action against defaulting VOs
- Commencing a programme of work with various stakeholders, including the Malta Institute of Accountants on VOs’ accounting and annual reporting.
- Researching the voluntary sector

Given the limited resources of this Office, most of resources will concentrate on the objectives relating to accountability, transparency, compliance and education.

3.3 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The following are the main strategic priorities of this Office:

Increase Public Trust and Confidence: Overall trust in VOs is on the high side, but mismanagement in some organisations can damage the reputation of the whole sector. As a regulator of this sector, the main priority of this Office will be to direct its resources to regulating the voluntary sector, to increase public trust and confidence.

Compliance: This Office will continue to promote the need for VOs to file their annual returns and annual accounts on time, and with the development of the new website, this will be facilitated through online submission as well. These will assist the CVO Office to promote public trust and confidence in VOs and thereby encourage charitable giving. Given the necessary
resources, this Office will be more proactive and less reactive to ensure that VOs comply with their legal obligations.

**Accountability:** to enhance the accountability of VOs to donors, beneficiaries and the public, by educating the sector and taking the necessary actions where necessary.

**Investigations:** With the recruitment of a Senior Legal Officer, this Office aims at taking timely action in conducting investigations, which are mostly on malpractice and misconduct in VOs, to protect the organisations themselves, their cause and their beneficiaries.

**Guiding the Sector:** The new website will highly improve the accessibility of guidelines, clearly indicating what VOs must do to be compliant. This Office will promote the online application for various services and transactions through the website.

**Support to the Sector:** This Office will work in collaboration with various stakeholders to support the sector.

**Education:** Given the necessary resources, this Office will promote the early identification and management of sector risk, through a variety of means including, guidelines, codes, regulations and awareness campaigns using online and printed media, to promote prevention rather than cure.

**Website:** The new website will be used to set out responsibilities and requirements for VOs. Online information will also be used to promote the accountability of VOs to the public. VOs and the general public will be encouraged to make use of the facilities offered in the website, which will be the quickest and easiest way of communicating with this Office.

The website will enable users to access all information on enrolled VOs which is public in accordance with the law and thus sharing of information is made more easily worldwide.

**Research:** Researching the sector is a very important tool on which to base the strategies of this Office. It will give a clearer picture of the sector that will assist the Commissioner to regulate the sector more effectively.

### 3.4 WORK PLANS

The CVO Office worked hard since its inception and with its very limited financial and human resources to endeavour in delivering its objectives as a regulator of the voluntary sector through its core regulatory activities, mainly by enrolling VOs, providing guidance to administrators to enable them to manage their organisation effectively, ensuring VOs are accountable and transparent by requiring and publishing information in accordance with the law and taking action to deal with serious mismanagement or abuse in VOs. Work Plans have been set on various projects the CVO Office is or will be working on. The main ones are the following:

**The Voluntary Organisations Act**

The Voluntary Organisations Act which was introduced in 2007 mainly addresses the legal form of organisations (foundations and associations) used in the sector, as these had till that date not been addressed in Maltese law.

The VOA has since been implemented by the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations. Practice has shown the need for correction, clarification and revision. The proposed amendments mainly address the difficulties which have arisen in the interpretation and application of issues related to the voluntary and non-profit sector. Amendments also include some other amendments to the Second Schedule of the Civil Code. The amendments to the VOA, which has been in the making for the last 5 years, reflects developments in laws and judgements of the Courts, the stages of negotiations between the various interests and political directions received from time to time in the light of developments. It is being proposed that these amendments be issued for public consultation for a period of two months prior to proceeding with the moving of a Bill before the House of Representatives.

**Annual Returns and Annual Accounts Regulations**

With the introduction of Subsidiary Legislation 492.01, VOs enrolled with the CVO Office, are legally bound to submit annual returns including annual financial accounts in a timely and accurate manner on a yearly basis. The introduction of this Subsidiary Legislation represented a new challenge for enrolled VOs and more responsibility for the CVO Office both as a sector regulator and even more as a leader for enrolled VOs.
From the feedback obtained through various discussions and meetings with administrators, it transpired that many organisations are encountering difficulties in compiling and submitting documents in line with this Subsidiary Legislation. Taking into consideration this important factor, the CVO office granted extensions for submission of proper annual returns and annual accounts to those organisations which asked for reasonable extension periods supported by valid reasons including the adoption of proper internal policies and practices.

In view of such difficulties and the revision of accounting standards within the EU, this Office started discussions with the Malta Institute of Accountants to revise this Subsidiary Legislation, to make it more reflect the accounting needs of the voluntary sector.

**Website**

The current website of this Office is in dire need of an overhaul to increase this Office’s online presence. It needs to be updated, modernised and made accessible to reduce bureaucracy, increase transparency and efficiency. This past year a blueprint for a new website has been designed and will be implemented once the necessary procedures are in place. The CVO office together with the Information Management Unit of the Ministry for Social Dialogue, Consumer Affairs and Civil Liberties and MITA has been working on compiling a business plan for this project and the contents of the website. The CVO’s new website will give a background to the workings and procedures of the CVO’s office, information on the Commissioner’s work, and shed light on the Office’s ongoing research.

Perhaps more importantly however, the new website will provide an easy and accessible way to view all enrolled organisations, both compliant and defaulting organisations in an online register that is easily searchable. Moreover, it will include guidelines on the services offered.

Other planned updates include an online services section which will allow voluntary organisations to apply, submit and pay their registration fee online. Organisations can also submit their annual returns and annual accounts online. This section will take the shape of a secure online profile or an Organisational Portal that each individual VOs can register for. This will allow the organisations to manage their virtual profile, data and benefit from the new online services anywhere and at anytime. The website will include the status of whether organisations are compliant to the law or otherwise.

**Collaboration with National Statistics Office**

In 2015 the Commissioner reopened discussions with the National Statistics Office (NSO) to pick up once again the collaboration between the two. The focus was on carrying out a nationwide research project on volunteering that would cover all aspects of this sector in the Maltese Islands. The scope behind the research project was to glean an updated cross sectional view of the sector, its beneficiaries and its workers both in terms of voluntary and paid staff. This information is a necessary aide to the Commissioner, policy makers and other stakeholders to reach a better understanding of the sector, identify trends and highlight the necessary measures to draw out the best outcomes for the voluntary sector as a whole.

Despite the highly important nature of the research and the completion of all foundation work, this research has been postponed once again due to the difficulties met by the NSO, including staff shortage and other pressing EU deadlines. After a meeting held with high officials in this Office, it was agreed that discussions will again open late during 2016, after the amendments of the VOA will come into force, to capture more VOs, since enrolment will be compulsory.

**Legislation on Tax Exemption**

During the Budget Speech of 2013, Hon. Minister Edward Scicluna, Minister for Finance, announced that VOs enrolled with the Commissioner, will be exempt from tax on the income generated. Meetings were held between this Office and Officials from the Ministry for Finance, Inland Revenue and this Office’s legal advisers to draft a legal notice on tax exemption to enrolled VOs. The first draft was discussed with Inland Revenue Officials.

Since our legal advisers were concentrated on the drafting of the hefty amendments of the VOA, this legal notice was shelved for some time. Once the amendments to the VOA are finalised, the CVO’s legal advisers will continue working on the drafting of this legislation.

**Legislation on Public Collections and Charity Shops**

The CVO Office will be working on legislation to regulate Public Collections by VOs and Charity Shops which are not up to now regulated.
4. Enrolment of Voluntary Organisations

VoOs are becoming more conscious on the advantages of enrolling their organisation with the CVO Office, and of the need to be certified by the regulator of the voluntary sector. Enrolment will lead such organisations to more transparency and accountability.

Figures for year 2015 show that applications for enrolment with the Commissioner have kept a steady pace. In fact this year a total of 161 applications were submitted compared to the 154 applications that were submitted in the year 2014.

This brings the total of VoOs that have applied with the Commissioner since this Office started operating in 2008, to 1228.

A total of 174 applications were submitted for processing during 2015 as listed hereunder:

i. 13 applications carried forward from year 2014

ii. 161 applications received during year 2015

A breakdown of these applications is as follows:

i. 132 were fully enrolled (this includes the 17 organisations that were requested to submit further documents in 2014)

ii. 53 organisations were requested to present further documentations (out of which 27 organisations submitted all the required documentations and were fully enrolled)

iii. 35 applications being processed (transferred to 2016)

This again shows that the CVO Office had another busy year during 2015, during which 158 applications, that is 90.8% of the total applications, were processed.

- It is to be noted that 3 organisations closed down during year 2015.

4.1 CERTIFICATES OF ENROLMENT

Hereunder is the breakdown of Certificates of Enrolment issued by the Office of the Commissioner on a monthly basis during the year under review:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Certificates</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>11</td>
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<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>14</td>
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<td>May</td>
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<td>June</td>
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<td>July</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>13</td>
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<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 4.2 CATEGORIES OF ENROLLED VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS

All VOs are classified on registration according to their social purpose with some falling under more than one classification.

A breakdown of enrolled VOs by classifications as required by the VOA is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>No. of VOs</th>
<th>Percentage of the total VOs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Philanthropy</td>
<td>219</td>
<td>17.83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education and Sport</td>
<td>506 (Sports 104)</td>
<td>41.20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>5.04%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>14.08%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social and Community</td>
<td>561</td>
<td>45.68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture, Arts and National Heritage</td>
<td>475 (Band Clubs 82)</td>
<td>38.68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment and Animal Welfare</td>
<td>131 (Animal Welfare 32)</td>
<td>10.66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotion of Human Rights</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>9.93%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other Classification</th>
<th>No. of VOs</th>
<th>Percentage of the total VOs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Voluntary organisations from Gozo</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>7.41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youths</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>5.04%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>5.70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Malta</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1.14%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One is to note that the percentage of the total VOs has been calculated on the 100% of all applications that have applied with the Commissioner since this Office started its operations, namely 1228 organisations.

### 4.3 CANCELLATION OF APPLICATIONS

The Commissioner has cancelled 14 enrolment applications after these organisations failed to submit further documents as required by law.

Two organisations have since then re-applied for enrolment with this Office and submitted the correct and required documentations.
5. Leading and Monitoring
Enrolled Voluntary Organisations

As expressed in previous reports, the introduction of Subsidiary Legislation 492.01, VOs enrolled with the Commissioner for VOs are now legally bound to submit annual returns including annual financial accounts in a timely and accurate manner on a yearly basis. The introduction of this Subsidiary Legislation represented a new challenge for enrolled VOs and more responsibility for the CVO Office both as a sector regulator and even more as a leader for enrolled VOs.

Like in previous years, this Office continued supporting and providing guidance to enrolled organisations while carrying out monitoring and control measures which must be carried out in its function of promoting transparency and accountability in the voluntary sector. The main tasks forming part of this process include:

- Notifying enrolled VOs with continuous reminders by email with informative material and related templates for completion of annual returns
- Meetings with various organisations and their representatives
- Advising VOs on compiling and submitting annual returns in line with legislation.
- Investigating various issues arising from analyses of annual returns and annual accounts
- Obtaining further clarifications on issues for getting a better understanding of VOs’ work, financial situation and eventually leading them for being more transparent and accountable
- Involved in development of new legislation
- Attended to courses related to new financial and accounting standards
- Providing assistance and information to third parties involved in managing or having other related work with VOs
- Provided feedback to funding entities on proper compliance of enrolled VOs

5.1 PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED

As mentioned in previous reports issued by the Office of the Commissioner it is a known fact that the majority of VOs enrolled with this Office apply for enrolment exclusively for being licensed and authorised to collect funds from the public and from other entities including the central Government and European Union. A considerable amount of enrolled organisations have submitted their annual returns for more than three years at times even on the last day of the application date of a particular funding scheme.

However, during 2015 one could note that despite of this, there is still a significant lack in the submission of annual returns in all categories of enrolled voluntary organisations. Organisations especially those in category 2 provided positive feedback. Organisations in the mentioned category have strived to submit their returns especially financial accounts as requested by Law and after having met these standards they have now understood the benefits of such efforts. They have also shown commitment to continue providing annual returns and financial accounts punctually in future. This can be considered as an achievement both for our Office and the mentioned organisations.

Like in previous years, this Office encountered problems and at times opposition from administrators in exercising its right to obtain further information when and where necessary as per Article 34 (1) of the VOA as stated hereunder:

“The Commissioner may investigate the affairs of any voluntary organisation at any time and may demand, in writing, any relevant information relating to the operation of a voluntary organisation or any person involved in the activities of a voluntary organisation, if he has cause to believe that such information is necessary in order to establish whether an organisation is acting in compliance with the provisions of this Act or any regulations made there under.”

VOs need more to understand the importance of being transparent and accountable by submitting detailed financial and activity reports in which clarity of activity carried out can be proven and evidenced, as this will lead to reduce the demand for further information by this Office.
This issue is of extreme importance when taking into consideration the fact that this Office is being asked to provide feedback on proper compliance of enrolled organisations all year round. Feedback to entities was provided in regards to LEAP Scheme, Aġenzija Żagħżagħ for Band Clubs, SIS scheme issued by the Council, Animal Welfare and also to Ministry for Finance regarding tax benefits.

One should note that due to work related with feedback to funding entities and due to lack of resources, this Office was not in a position to acknowledge and/or provide feedback to all organisations submitting annual returns during 2015. It has been decided to focus attention primarily on those organisations applying for funds since this was considered as a more important issue even for national interest.

5.2 ANNUAL RETURNS IN FIGURES

It is important to highlight that due to lack of resources especially time and human resources, it was not possible to record and take into consideration the amount of extensions provided for those organisations who have reached an agreement for sending further information and/or documentation as requested for this Office and neither for other pending issues regarding submissions of annual returns. Moreover, it is good to draw the attention on the increase in number of annual returns which need to be submitted on an annual basis from year to year, which is increasingly significantly. This will eventually increase with the introduction of the amendments of the VOA, unless adequate resources are made available to this Office. Lack of resources may adversely affect the assistance to all enrolled organisations in an efficient and effective manner.

![Annual Returns in Figures](image)

**Figure 1:** Number of Annual Returns (AR) to be submitted on a yearly basis

This Office has strived in reminding, encouraging and assisting VOs to submit annual returns punctually and correctly. During 2015, this Office has once again concentrated its efforts not just to collect annual returns for 2015 but also for those pertaining to previous years. This was brought to the attention of administrators and organisations in the reminders which had been generated. During 2015 a total number of 645 annual returns were received of which 404 were accepted and acknowledged since they were in line with the Law. The majority of the remaining 241 were vetted and emails were sent to the respective administrators who were being advised about missing/wrong information submitted.

It is good to note that feedback has been provided in various means including written and verbal. In many instances this took a considerable amount of time especially when a series of exchanges by email were necessary. The amount of time spent on customer service is increasing significantly with the consequence of leaving less time to process work submitted by enrolled organisations.
Figure 2: Annual returns received and acknowledged during 2015 as per Category

Figure 2 indicates the number of returns received by this Office in the three categories of enrolled voluntary organisations. It is important to highlight the fact that even though there was a slight decrease in the number of acknowledgements issued during 2015, more time was dedicated for proper compliance of those organisations intended to apply for funds. One should also consider that most of these organisations fall in Category 2 or Category 3. Assisting and guiding these organisations entails more time than those in Category 1.

5.3 CONCLUSION

As one may note especially from Figure 1 in the previous section, this Office is facing a tougher job each year for the collection of annual returns. With the introduction of Subsidiary Legislation 492.01, organisations are now legally bound to submit these documents. Compliance to this legislation has not yet been accepted by all organisations as part of their ethical duties and organisational culture. Like in previous years, it seems that enrolment means funds for the majority of the organisations and this practice needs to be changed as soon as possible.

Hopefully, the proposed amendments to the VOA will be a useful tool in meeting this important goal. Even the eventual revision of Subsidiary Legislation 492.01 for submission of annual returns and annual accounts shall focus to meet this goal.

Meanwhile it is important to note that 2016 will be a much tougher year for this Office since the proposed amendments will oblige this Office to control and report suspicious transactions related to money laundering and funding of terrorism. Legislation and an increase in manpower are surely required for this Office to cope with the increase in work load both as regards figures but also as regards new monitoring and control obligations.

A main goal during 2016 will be the enforcement of compliance and providing more support to VOs. In this regard, during 2015, specialised training in the field of auditing was provided to staff at this Office. Later on, discussions with other entities including Malta Institute of Accountants will be held in order to set specific accounting and reporting standards for VOs.

Further education and training aimed to regularise the sector, changing the behaviour and culture of those VOs not yet abiding to legislation must be an ongoing process. Only the efforts from all stakeholders involved can lead to the final desired results of a win win situation.
The Voluntary Sector is a vast growing sector. The Labour Force Survey issued by the National Statistics Office in December 2015, shows that the number of volunteers in Malta in 2015 increased by 1.05% over 2014, by 5.26% over 2013 and by 44.06% over 2009. This means that in 2015 the number of volunteers amounted to 31,578. This shows an increase of 328 over 2014 and an increase of 1578 over 2013.

Research in the sector is quite scarce and one can enhance the research by focusing on research on subjects of interests to VOs such as: Money laundering, management, fundraising and much more. In addition, we have a shortage of statistics about the exact picture of the voluntary sector in Malta and Gozo.

To overcome this issue, one of the proposed amendments to the current VOA is the mandatory enrolment of VOs. This will give a better picture of the voluntary sector in Malta.

6.1 PUBLIC MEDIA SCRUTINY

To keep itself up-to-date with what is going on in the voluntary sector in Malta on a daily basis, the CVO Office uses public media scrutiny. During 2015, information about VOs obtained from the public decreased by 53.9% over 2014 and by 55.6% over 2013. This strike-off occurred since the Office decided that when the same articles appear on different newspapers, only one of them is kept for future reference.

6.2 THE WEBSITE

2015 was the year in which the website project was given a very important step forward. The CVO Office, the Information Management Unit of the Ministry for Social Dialogue, Consumer Affairs and Civil Liberties and MITA drafted the Project Brief and business plan of the whole project. The plan is that the new website will be launched towards the third quarter of 2016.

The CVO Office together with MITA drafted the Situation Business Analysis Report which gives an in-depth analysis of the whole project. This report documents the current system and gives a formal description of the requirements.

The current system is composed of the register of VOs, the enrolment application, de-registration and winding up of a VOs, the change of status of a VO from active to dormant, cancellation of enrolment, the yearly submissions and request for certificate of good standing.

The requirements to the new system includes a set of online forms including: Enrolment and Enquiry forms, Request for Investigations, View Register of enrolled VOs, Maintain Profile / Yearly Submissions / Change of Administrators Form / Change of Local Contact Persons, Winding up / De-Registration of Enrolment, Dormant Organisations, Request Certificate of Good Standing, Request Copy of Certificate of Enrolment and Cancellation of Enrolment Form.

The new website will incorporate:

- A set of guidelines and their respective online forms. These include:
  i. Guidelines to enrol a VO together with the online enrolment form
  ii. Guidelines to terminate / de-register a VO
  iii. Changing the status from active to dormant and cancellation of enrolment
  iv. Guidelines on the Certificate of Enrolment
  v. Guidelines on how to submit an enquiry
  vi. Guidelines of annual returns and annual accounts

- VOs’ online profile which enables VOs to submit their annual accounts and annual returns online, VOs’ message board (which enables such organisations to keep their members informed with what is going on in their organisation by publishing notifications in this message board

- Database of all organisations, publications, statutes, list of administrators annual returns and annual accounts

- Search facility to find a particular VO or publication
Guidelines to enrol a VO

The guidelines on what is required to enrol a VO are intended to help the administrators of VOs to make it easier for them to apply for enrolment with the CVO Office. They are intended for national and international temporary and non-temporary VOs to inform them on the procedure and documents required to enrol.

These guidelines include information such as: Who can enrol, general legal requirements, benefits of enrolling, duties once enrolled, various details required by an organisation, type of organisation, registering as a legal person, writing the statute, roles of administrators, explanation on the social purpose of an organisation and its public benefit, documents needed by international temporary and non-temporary VOs and documents needed by non-enrolled VO to enrol with this Office, what happens after the submission of the enrolment application form and what happens once enrolled.

Guidelines for termination of Enrolment

These are a set of guidelines for those VOs who are enrolled with this Office and wish to terminate their VO. The guidelines include all legal requirements and a step by step procedure to terminate the VO as follows: holding an annual general meeting or extra-ordinary general meeting during which an administrator is appointed to make sure that termination is successful, documents needed to terminate the VO and what happens after termination is submitted to the CVO Office.

Guidelines for Changing the Status from active to dormant

These are a set of guidelines for those enrolled VOs who wish to change their status from active to dormant for a definite period of time and not exceeding two years as from the date of the approval of changing the status from active to dormant. These guidelines include all legal requirements and a step by step procedure to change the status of a VO from active to dormant. The guidelines will be beneficial to committee members who need to convene a meeting during which the administrators decide to go dormant and consequently inform the Commissioner by means of a resolution letter. This letter includes the reasons of going dormant, together with a list of possible solutions and a business plan to implement such solutions with specific deadlines.

Should the recovery period be successful, the administrators will then have to write to the Commissioner informing him that they are re-activating the organisation. During the dormant period, the administrators are still accountable to the Commissioner and have to submit all the annual returns and accounts at the end of each financial year. The dormant status can be held up to 2 years, otherwise the Commissioner will write a warning to the administrators informing them that the dormant period is over and that the Commissioner will be taking legal actions to terminate the organisation.

Guidelines for de-registration of a Voluntary Organisation

These are a set of guidelines for enrolled VOs who wish to de-register from the CVO Office but wish to continue operating as a VO. These include all legal requirements as stipulated by the VOA, whereby the administrators of a VO are required to send a resolution letter stating that the VO wishes to de-register from the CVO Office and the reason for de-registration. The letter should be signed by all committee members. The administrators should also send the annual returns and annual accounts up to the date of de-registration to the CVO Office.

Guidelines of the Certificate of Enrolment

The certificate of enrolment is an official document stating that the particular VO is enrolled with the CVO Office. Thus it is eligible for all privileges guaranteed by the VOA. The certificate of enrolment shall be deemed to be a public document and shall be surrendered to the Commissioner on his demand in writing. The certificate of enrolment is not to be used to determine the fiscal status of a VO or the taxability or otherwise of its income and transactions.

The guidelines of the certificate of enrolment is composed of a set of general legal requirements, the benefits of having the certificate, what happens to the certificate once the VO is terminated, suspended or de-registered. It also gives a description of the certificate, a list of all legal actions against abusive use of the certificate and a step-by-step procedure on how to replace a misplaced or damaged certificate.

During 2016, this Office will be working on the following guidelines:

Guidelines for voluntary organisations’ administrators

These guidelines are intended to help all administrators of VOs to govern their organisation.
Guidelines on how to write a Statute

These are a set of guidelines intended for all VOs who are setting up their organisation. It will help them to write their statute.

Guidelines on how to apply good governance

Good governance is the result of well-established standards, principles and rules. These guidelines are intended to help VOs and their administrators to improve their standards of good governance, practice and accountability. This yields more efficiency, credibility and advancement of their organisation.

Guidelines on good financial management of a voluntary organisation.

These guidelines are intended for VOs and their administrators to help them manage their finances in the best way to avoid risks.

Guidelines on how to avoid risks

These are a set of guidelines to help all VOs and their trustees to avoid any financial risks.

Guidelines on how to take on employees

These guidelines will assist all enrolled VOs who are considering recruiting employees. In this realm, one should also refer to the Employment and Industrial Relations Act.

Guidelines on how to solve conflict of interest and conflict resolution within your organisation

These guidelines are intended for all those VOs who have conflicts in the committee or whose committee members have a conflict of interest. These will guide them on how to deal with such situations.

Guidelines on how to plan ahead

Planning is very important. It will help you to reach your target deadlines and to give priorities to things which are mostly important. These guidelines are intended to help VOs in this manner.

Guidelines on how and when to comment or submit a complaint about the services / decisions of the Office of the Commissioner

Feedback is very important for this Office to ensure that it is giving the best service possible to the public. These guidelines are intended to help all the public in general on how to submit a complaint.

Guidelines on good governance in fundraising

One of the main requisites which make an organisation qualify for an enrolled VO is that it is non-profitable and autonomous. Thus one of its sources of income can be through fundraising. To assist VOs on good governance in fundraising, this Office will be developing guidelines for administrators. Poor governance is the greatest risk. With good governance, success right across the organisation, comes easier.

Guidelines on how to avoid fraud and money laundering risks

VOs are at risk of being misused by individuals or other organisations to finance or support terrorist activity or assist money laundering. It is wise to be aware of the risks, and to take appropriate precautions. In this regard, this Office is planning to develop a set of guidelines to help VOs be more aware on issues related to such cases.

Guidelines on how and when to report suspicious voluntary organisations, activities and persons

The CVO Office receives various complaints and requests for investigations on VOs, their activities and other persons. In order to help the public on how to file a report on such cases, this Office is developing guidelines in this regard.

Guidelines on the legal procedures on complaints and investigations

The CVO Office receives various complaints and requests for investigations on VOs. To help VOs and the public have a better understanding of the legal procedures which are being used by the Commissioner, guidelines will be developed to explain the way in which the Commissioner conducts investigations into law infringements.

Guide to the law

In order for the VO and the public in general to have a better understanding of the main provisions of the VOA, its Subsidiary Legislation 492.01 and the Second Schedule of the Civil Code Act 1870, (Cap. 16 of the Laws of Malta), this office will be working to compile a guide to assist VOs and the general public to understand the law regulating the voluntary sector to meet its obligations.

Conclusion

“Once everyone begins to code to the guidelines, you’ll find it easier to manage the project and you’ll get more work done in the same time” – Ryan Parman

The Office of the Commissioner wants to elevate the voluntary sector a step further by developing such guidelines as explained above. These guidelines aim to assist VOs, increase their awareness on their obligations, educating them and instilling good governance. Moreover, through continuous research, this Office is keeping itself updated with how civil society is developing in other countries to keep abreast of local and international developments in this sector.
Society is mainly based on rules and laws. It could not function if individuals were free to do whatever they wanted. Laws set out standards, procedures and principles that must be followed. These rules and laws are established to ensure that everyone is treated the same and that nobody is above the law.

VOs whatever their purposes may be the same in principle; in the majority of cases they formulate their own rules by agreement with the members. These rules, known as Statutes or Bylaws, relate solely to that particular organisation. Therefore if one breaches these rules one might be suspended or might end up losing membership within that particular organisation.

Throughout the year, the CVO Office receives a number of enquiries from VOs, most of them related to the statute of the organisation. E.g:

• What should be written in the statute?
• What happens if an issue arises and the statute is silent?
• Who should take decision in such cases?
• Do founders/administrators/members have rights?

It is not easy to guide organisations in their enquiries since the Commissioner’s office is not a legal firm and has no authority to give legal advice. On the other hand, the Commissioner is legally bound to provide information and guidelines to persons performing voluntary work and to members of VOs, for the better performance of their role and for the better achievement of the objectives of the VOs in which they serve.

To answer these questions and similar others, one must look at them from different points of view. When a new organisation is established it must have a legal form which may be either a Foundation or a Trust or an Association. All of which shall be regulated by their own legal statute. The three legal forms namely Foundations, Trusts and Associations require different procedures to be established. Therefore, the statute for each organisation must be compliant to the laws of Malta.

7.1 FOUNDATION

The definition of a foundation can be found in Article 26(1) of the Second Schedule to the Civil Code (Chapter 16 of the Laws of Malta). This article defines the nature of a foundation:

“A foundation is an organisation consisting of a universality of things constituted in writing, including by means of a will, by a founder or founders whereby assets are destined either-

a) For the fulfilment of specified purpose; or

b) For the benefit of a named person or a class of persons and are entrusted to the administration of a designated person or persons. The patrimony, namely assets and liabilities, of the foundation is kept distinct from that of its founder, administrator or any beneficiaries”.

Foundations described in (a) are known as purpose foundations, and foundations described in (b) are known as private foundations. A private writing or oral stipulation does not suffice to bring the foundation into existence.

A foundation is therefore an organisation: The Second Schedule to the Civil Code defines the term ‘organisation’ as universality of persons who associate or universality of things which are appropriated to achieve a lawful purpose having a form recognised by law and which is capable of being a legal person in terms of the law.

A foundation can only be constituted by virtue of a public deed inter vivos or by means of a will. The deed of the foundation shall contain, on pain of nullity, an endowment of money or property worth at least 1,164.69 Euro. A foundation established for a social purpose or as a non-profit making requires a minimum endowment of 232.94 Euro.

For the deed of the foundation to be valid, it is necessary that it contains certain clauses, in the absence of which the deed is declared to be null. The deed of foundation must, on pain of nullity, state the following:
a) The name of the foundation: This name must conform to the law and must include the word 'foundation'.

b) The registered address in Malta: P.O Boxes are not considered as addresses:

c) The Purpose or objectives:

d) The constitutive assets with which it is formed;

e) The Composition of the Board of Administrators and the names of the first administrators:

f) The Legal representation:

g) The term for which it is established if any:
    i. A purpose foundation may be established for an unlimited term.

h) The financial year of the foundation as required in terms of Subsidiary Legislation 492.01.

i) Dissolution Clause – What happens to the assets of the organisation if it is winded up?
    i. It is true that purpose foundations are constituted in an irrevocable manner. Any clause in the statute of the purpose foundation which reserves the right to revoke the foundation shall be disregarded. A purpose foundation however terminates if it achieves its purposes or if this becomes impossible.
    ii. However, a purpose foundation can be given a new purpose by its administrators or the Court.

j) Additional clauses
    i. The statute may contain other provisions including dispositions on the Duties of the Board of Administrators, Removal of Administrators from the Board of Administrators and on the Powers of the Founders.

It is important to note that a foundation may not be established to trade or carry on any commercial activities, even if the proceeds of such trade or commercial activities are destined for social purposes. A foundation may therefore never engage in active trading.

The law does however contemplate exceptions; therefore a foundation which is enrolled as a voluntary organisation in terms of the VOA may carry out activities as permitted by Article 38 of the said Act.

7.2 TRUST

The definition of a trust under the Trust and Trustees Act (Chapter 331 of the laws of Malta) emphasises the relationship between the different parties:

A trust exists where a person (called a trustee) holds, as owner or has vested in him property under an obligation to deal with that property for the benefit of persons (called the beneficiaries), whether or not yet ascertained or in existence, which is not for the benefit only of the trustee, or for a charitable purpose, or for both such benefit and purpose aforesaid.

The relationship that establishes a Trust is the relationship between those persons, being the person (the settlor) who gives (settles) an asset (The Trust Assets) to another person or persons (the trustees) to hold for the benefit of another person or persons (the beneficiary or beneficiaries).

Trusts established or recognised in terms of the Trusts and Trustees Act shall qualify as VOs only when they are established as charitable trust. “Charitable purpose” means any charitable, social or philanthropic purpose, and without prejudice to the generality of the aforesaid, includes in particular all the requirements as laid down in the VOA.

The deed of a Trust must, on pain of nullity, state the following:

a) The name of the Trust:

b) The registered address in Malta: P.O Boxes are not considered as addresses:

c) The Purpose or objectives:

d) The constitutive assets with which it is formed:

e) The Composition of the Board of Trustees and the names of the first administrators:

f) The Legal representation:

g) The term for which it is established if any: A Charitable Trust may be established for an unlimited term.

h) The financial year of the Trust as required in terms of Subsidiary Legislation 492.01

i. Dissolution Clause – What happens to the assets of the organisation if it is winded up?
It is important to note that a trust may not be established to trade or carry on any commercial activities, even if the proceeds of such trade or commercial activities are destined for social purposes.

A trust may therefore never engage in active trading. The law does however contemplate exceptions; therefore a trust which is enrolled as a VO in terms of the VOA may carry out activities as permitted by Article 38 of the said Act.

### ASSOCIATION

An association is an agreement between three or more persons to establish an organisation with defined aims or purposes to be achieved through the dedication of efforts and resources by such persons and others who may join voluntary. The patrimony, namely assets and liabilities, if any, of the association are distinct from that of the members, its administrators or any beneficiaries.

An agreement establishing an association shall be in writing, on pain of nullity. The statute shall state the following for the association to be eligible for registration with the Commissioner:

- **a)** The name of the association;
- **b)** The registered address, in Malta - P.O Boxes are not considered as addresses:
- **c)** The purpose or objectives;
- **d)** The method or process by which membership of the association is granted to applicants;
- **e)** The mode of procedure during annual general meetings including extra-ordinary general meetings;
- **f)** The composition of the board of administrators and the details of the first administrators;
- **g)** The manner in which administrators are elected to and removed from office;
- **h)** The legal representation;
  - i. In case of an association, the administrators of which are non-residents of Malta, the name and address of a person resident in Malta who has been appointed to act as the local representative of the association in Malta;
- **j)** The term for which it is established, if any;
- **k)** Dissolution Clause – What happens to the assets of the organisation if it is winded up?

The statute shall be signed and dated by the associating persons and any person subscribing to the statute after an association is established shall be deemed to have consented to all the provisions of the statute and all rules which may have been validly promulgated by the association until such date. In the event that more than three persons wish to establish an association, a statement may be made of this fact in the statute and the signature of three persons on behalf of all associating members stated in a schedule to the statute shall be sufficient to indicate the consent of all stated persons.

A general meeting for all members shall be convened at least once every year. At this meeting the annual report and the accounts of the association as approved by the administrators, as well as the report of the auditors or reviewers, shall be presented and discussed. Other meetings may be convened by the administrators whenever they consider it necessary or when they have a request in writing signed by at least ten per cent of the members. If the administrators fail to convene a meeting when so requisitioned, the Court can order the meeting to be held and shall state the time and place of the meeting which shall be binding on the administrators.

In the absence of specific provisions in the statute, at meetings of the members, decisions shall be taken by the majority of those present at the meeting except that:

- **a)** when decisions are taken on the amendment of the statute such decisions must be supported by at least fifty-one per cent of all the registered members on the basis of one vote per member;
- **b)** when decisions are taken to terminate the association or to donate to another organisation all of its assets, such decision must be supported by at least seventy five per cent of all the members; and
- **c)** when decisions are taken on the approval of accounts or matters involving the role or responsibilities of the administrators, the administrators shall not be entitled to vote.

Administrators may be removed in cases of misconduct, failure to declare conflicts of interest, breach of duty or failure to comply with the statute or any provisions of this Title: Provided that, notwithstanding any provision of the statute of an organisation, any action intended to remove an administrator on such grounds shall be preceded by a notice in writing to such person stating the alleged reasons for
such removal and providing such person with a reasonable opportunity to defend him/herself and rebut the allegations.

Removal of an administrator shall take place in accordance with the statute of the organisation. After exhausting all applicable remedies within the organisation, any person who demonstrates an interest may apply to the Court with a request for removal of an administrator and the Court shall issue such orders as it deems necessary after hearing the applicant and the administrator and considering any other relevant evidence. Every participant in the organisation has the right to freely leave the organisation.

7.4 CAN FOUNDATIONS, TRUSTS AND ASSOCIATIONS HAVE MEMBERS?

Foundations and Trust cannot have members although they may still have volunteers or contributors but without voting rights. All decisions rest upon the Board of the Administrators and the administrators are appointed or removed by the founder or founders.

The founders and/or the administrators have the right to call annual general meetings or other meetings, but the volunteers or contributors have no right to vote unless the statute provides otherwise and are appointed as board members. On the other hand, an association may have members and the committee members are elected in office through their annual general meetings or extra-ordinary meetings.

7.5 CONCLUSION

It is fundamentally important that each organisation has a good statute irrelevant to what legal form such organisation is. Disputes between members of a VO or between members and one or more administrators relating the affairs of the VO, may be avoided if the organisation has a good statute.

VOs shall make the statute, annual reports and the financial accounts available for inspection, free of charge, by any founder, administrator or member of the VO as well as by any donor or beneficiary who satisfies the administrators of an interest in the information. Every administrator/member shall conform to the Organisation’s Code of Ethics. Any member or members alleged to have brought, or attempted to bring disrepute on the organisation, shall be asked to appear before the executive committee and if, in the opinion of the executive committee, the case be found proven, the member shall be deprived of his/her membership. If the said member fails to appear before the executive committee without justification he/she shall be deprived of membership.

The statute may be revoked, added to or altered by a vote of at least fifty one per cent of all the registered members of the organisation who are entitled to vote at a general meeting of the organisation of which notice has been duly given specifying the intention to propose the revocation, addition or alteration, together with full particulars thereof.
The Commissioner and CVO staff attended several meetings and participated in various seminars, training programmes and other activities. A selection of events is listed hereunder:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>3rd February 2015</td>
<td>The Commissioner had a meeting with members of Inspirasia Foundation where a discussion was held on how this foundation could assist VOs in their work.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4th February 2015</td>
<td>The Commissioner had a meeting with the Social Affairs Committee to discuss the Annual Report of 2013.</td>
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<tr>
<td>30th April 2015</td>
<td>CVO staff attended the Small Initiative Scheme grant award ceremony held at the Council’s Volunteer Centre in Valletta. Hon. Minister Helena Dalli, Minister for Social Dialogue, Consumer Affairs and Civil Liberties made an address and presented the awards to several successful winners. Mr. Nathan Farrugia, Chairperson of the Council, also made an address.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4th May 2015</td>
<td>The Commissioner made a key note address during the Malta Philanthropy Forum, organised by Inspirasia Foundation on social issues in Malta and the voluntary sector. Another issue discussed was on what philanthropists look for when giving grants. The Commissioner covered aspects of the main areas in Malta that need help and Malta’s situation when it comes to social issues, limitations of the voluntary sector and how can the private sector help. The idea of this subject was to inspire and encourage people to want to give more and better without asking them directly. By informing them on the situation in Malta and how more can be done, this workshop served as a forum for people and businesses to come up with their own ideas on how to give more with more impact. Other speakers were, Mr. Gamil de Chadarevian Founder of Method Impact Ltd. and co-founder of “Partnering for Global Impact” who spoke about High Impact Philanthropy, Ms. Aida der Hovanessian, Manager at International Finance Corporation (World Bank Group), who spoke about best practices in Philanthropy, Mr. Fabio Segura, Head of International Intervention at Jacobs Foundation and representing the European Venture Philanthropy Association, who spoke about Venture Philanthropy, and Nathan Farrugia, Chairperson of the Malta Council for the Voluntary Sector, who spoke about the real needs of voluntary organisations.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6th August 2015</td>
<td>The Commissioner was interviewed by One TV on the Annual Report 2014. The Commissioner emphasised the issue of accountability and transparency by VOs. He said that he is concerned that a good percentage of VOs are not submitting their annual returns and accounts on time. He mentioned that the legislation on Charity Shops is needed to regularise such shops.</td>
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<tr>
<td>18th August 2015</td>
<td>The Commissioner was interviewed by PBS on the Annual Report 2014.</td>
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<tr>
<td>22nd October 2015</td>
<td>The Commissioner had a meeting with officials from the Financial Mechanism Office on EEA (European Economic Area) grants, where SOS Malta is the local fund operator, to give them an overview of the role of the Commissioner and brief them on the situation of the voluntary sector in Malta. The objective of the fund programme is to strengthen civil society, development and enhance its contribution to social justice, democracy and sustainable development in Malta. The programme will contribute to achieving four concrete outcomes related to the EEA Programme, namely Democratic values, including human rights, developing networks and coalitions of NGOs working in partnership, increase contribution to sustainable development achieved, strengthening capacity of NGOs and an enabling environment for the sector promoted.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1st December 2015</td>
<td>PBS interviewed the Commissioner on the situation in the voluntary sector, submissions of annual accounts and the non-regularised charity shops.</td>
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The CVO Office is funded by the Government and this year’s budget was €60,000.

It covers all the CVO’s operating and administration expenses together with the Commissioner’s honoraria and Legal Consultancy fees.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Operational and Administrative Expenses</td>
<td>€22,238</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commissioner’s Honoraria</td>
<td>€25,183</td>
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<tr>
<td>Legal Advisers Fees</td>
<td>€8,826</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Income:**

| Enrolment Fees                      | €6,440 |


Malta Council for the
VOLUNTARY SECTOR

ANNUAL REPORT
2015
THE COMPOSITION OF THE COUNCIL

The 3rd Malta Council for the Voluntary Sector started its new term of office on the 1st July 2014. The Council for 2015 was composed of the following members:

Mr. Nathan Farrugia - Chairperson
Prof. Kenneth Wain - Vice Chairperson (ex-officio)
Mr. Ian Azzopardi - Member
Ms. Myrna Azzopardi - Member (Gov. rep. as from October 2015)
Ms. Romina Baldwin - Member (Gov. rep. up to September 2015)
Ms. Doris Bingley - Member
Ms. Gertrude Buttigieg - Member
Dr. Noel Camilleri - Member
Mr. Robert Farrugia - Member
Mr. Edward Gruppetta - Member
Ms. Gemma Sirol - Member
Ms. Claudia Taylor-East - Member
Mr. Mauro Pace Parascandalo - Executive Secretary and Secretary to the Council

THE COUNCIL, SUB-COMMITTEES AND BOARDS

During this calendar year, the Council had the following sub-committees and boards with the respective terms of reference:

VO Fund Board of Administrators

Members
Mr. Nathan Farrugia (Chair)
Mr. Ian Azzopardi
Dr. Noel Camilleri
Ms. Claudia Taylor-East

Terms of reference

The Purposes of the Foundation has been established by law to assist and support enrolled VOs through education, management support and financial grants in terms of Article 37(3) of the VOA. These purposes are laid down in the VO Fund Statute.

Training and Mentoring Sub-Committee

Members
Mr. Edward Gruppetta (Chair)
Ms. Gertrude Buttigieg
Mr. Robert Farrugia
Ms. Gemma Sirol
Terms of reference

As part of the Council’s objectives, the Training and Mentoring Sub-Committee shall support and help in the development of VOs in Malta and Gozo through the provision of training and mentoring programmes. These programmes shall address issues, but not only, related to capacity building and good governance.

Networking, PR and EU Relations

Members

Ms. Claudia Taylor-East (Chair)
Dr. Noel Camilleri
Mr. Robert Farrugia
Ms. Gertrude Buttigieg

Terms of reference

This sub-committee shall be responsible on behalf of the Council to stimulate co-operation and networking between VOs and to provide a platform from which to develop co-operation between VOs and the Government, work towards strengthening and, in some areas, establishing networking amongst VOs, supporting the setting up of platforms, and providing support and coordination in such cases.

The sub-committee shall also be responsible to promote and inform the public on issues related to the Council and the voluntary sector in general. It shall also facilitate the participation of the Council in European fora as well as in becoming a member of such European bodies working in the field of NGOs.

Consulting Sub-Committee to the Commissioner

Members

Dr. Noel Camilleri (Chair)
Ms. Doris Bingley
Mr. Ian Azzopardi

Terms of reference

According to Article 35(12) of the VOA, “the Council shall appoint a sub-committee composed of three members of the Council and which shall be consulted by the Commissioner in the cases referred to in Article 7(3). The sub-committee shall have a quorum of two members and the written response of the two members agreeing or disagreeing to a recommended course of action shall suffice as an expression of the views of the committee.

‘Ad Hoc’ Committee to plan and launch the National Volunteer Award

Members:

Ms. Doris Bingley (Chair)
Ms. Gertrude Buttigieg
Ms. Claudia Taylor East

Terms of Reference

Work towards the set up and preparation of the National Volunteer Award in conjunction with the Office of the President, preparing the general aims and procedures and setting the selection criteria. Once the procedures are in place, preparations are made for official launch.
THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL

The 3rd Council met eight times during 2015. During this year there was a continuation of the work carried out by the Council in 2014, consolidating the initiated projects and initiatives such as the Training and Capacity Building Programme for VOs’ Administrators, the Small Initiatives Supports Scheme, the Mentoring Scheme for VOs and the National Volunteer Award. During this year the Council launched a new initiative, the Youth Voluntary Work Scheme. The Council also opened the second Volunteer Centre in Qawra, complimenting the Valletta centre in support of VOs operating in the north.

There were regular meetings between representatives of the Council and the Minister for Social Dialogue, Consumer Affairs and Civil Liberties, the Hon. Helena Dalli, under whose remit the Council falls, where various items were discussed and where the Minister demonstrated her full commitment in support of the Council and the voluntary sector at large. The Council also had two meetings with Her Excellency the President of the Republic of Malta, Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca. These meetings were very productive and paved the way for mutual cooperation.

ADDITIONAL STAFF

During 2015 the Council continued to grow in its operation and for this reason its human capacity was incremented to support all the initiatives being undertaken. Apart from Ms. Christine Camilleri, who has been working as secretary with the Council since 2012, the Council has now been joined by three new officials. They are Mr. Kevin Cassar, Training Support Officer, responsible for training, mentoring and the Youth Voluntary Work Scheme; Mr. Jonathan Balzan is the Funding Support Officer, responsible for the Small Initiatives Support Scheme and Funding Guidance to VOs; and Ms. Maria Louisa Busuttil who is the Fund Manager for the Voluntary Organisations Projects Scheme (managed by the Council on behalf of the Ministry for Social Dialogue, Consumer Affairs and Civil Liberties) and also funding guidance to VOs.

SERVICES GIVEN BY THE COUNCIL

The Council continued to work on the services offered to the sector, building upon and consolidating those given in the previous two years. The Council kept updating the two websites which are the www.maltacvs.org and www.volontarjat.org. These two websites which have a complimentary function, keep VOs and the general public informed of what is happening in the VO sector. They are now being used also to provide applications online for the services provided. This tool also supports VOs in promoting their events, activities and training through the web page’s latest posts, web calendar and the advert banner. Information may also be circulated through a mass mailing system, which system was found to be extremely useful both in the dissemination of information by the Council to the VOs, as well as to circulate on a national level events and activities organised by VOs and which are of general interest. The second website, the www.volontarjat.org which supports the matching of volunteer organisations and volunteers or individuals or groups of friends looking to give a volunteer service, is still underutilized.

The online Volunteer Organisations Directory is another tool which is active and is used as a reference point for various entities and individuals, with more than 1,400 VOs listed.

TRAINING PROGRAM FOR VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS’ ADMINISTRATORS

For the fourth year running, the Council organised its training programme addressed to administrators working within VOs. For this year’s training, the Council decided to allocate the sessions to various entities instead of one training coordinator. The idea was to have a better spread of expertise depending on the specific area. The training was offered to administrators from both enrolled and non-enrolled VOs, targeting those involved in the running and management of a VO, committee members, team leaders etc. The program was initiated in September 2015 and intends to finish its cycle in June 2016. At that stage the Council will evaluate the program prior to initiating another cycle.
Below is the training programme indicating the sessions held as well as the extended programme for 2016:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Training</th>
<th>Trainer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>26/09/2015</td>
<td>Legal Obligations &amp; Implications of a VO</td>
<td>Equinox</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21/10/2015</td>
<td>Fundraising Practice, Fundraising Strategy &amp; Event Management</td>
<td>Kopin</td>
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<tr>
<td>31/10/2015</td>
<td>Accessing EU &amp; Local Funding</td>
<td>Funding Support</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/11/2015</td>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>Funding Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28/11/2015</td>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>Funding Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14/01/2016</td>
<td>Proposal Writing &amp; Budgeting: Developing Skills</td>
<td>Funding Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30/01/2016</td>
<td>Fundraising Practice, Fundraising Strategy &amp; Event Management</td>
<td>Funding Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/02/2016</td>
<td>Designing and Managing Fixed Term Projects in VO's</td>
<td>Funding Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17/02/2016</td>
<td>Strategic Volunteer Management</td>
<td>Funding Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27/02/2016</td>
<td>Strategic Volunteer Management</td>
<td>Funding Support</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/03/2016</td>
<td>Personal Power in Leadership: Creating the Climate for Success</td>
<td>Funding Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26/03/2016</td>
<td>Proposal Writing &amp; Budgeting: Developing Skills</td>
<td>Funding Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14/04/2016</td>
<td>Communication &amp; Campaigning</td>
<td>Misco</td>
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<tr>
<td>30/04/2016</td>
<td>Designing and Managing Fixed Term Projects in VO's</td>
<td>Funding Support</td>
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<tr>
<td>12/05/2016</td>
<td>Legal Obligations &amp; Implications of a VO</td>
<td>Equinox</td>
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<tr>
<td>28/05/2016</td>
<td>Personal Power in Leadership: Creating the Climate for Success</td>
<td>Funding Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09/06/2016</td>
<td>Accessing EU &amp; Local Funding</td>
<td>Funding Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25/06/2016</td>
<td>Communication &amp; Campaigning</td>
<td>Misco</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SMALL INITIATIVES SUPPORT SCHEME**

The Small Initiatives Support Scheme (SIS) for projects to be undertaken in 2016 was opened on the 16th October 2015 and closed on the 13th November 2015 at noon. An information meeting was held for VOs interested to submit applications was held on the 19th October 2015. By the closing deadline of the Scheme, 56 project applications by VOs enrolled with the CVO Office were submitted.
The 2015 National Volunteer Award was organised by the Council for the fifth consecutive year. This year the National Volunteer Award was again organised under the patronage of H.E. the President of the Republic of Malta Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca accompanied by the Hon. Minister Helena Dalli, Minister for Social Dialogue, Consumer Affairs and Civil Liberties. The National Volunteer Award was complimented by another three awards which were the Youth Volunteer Award, the Volunteer Organisation Award and the Corporate Volunteering Award.

The National Volunteer Award was awarded to Mr. Alfred Debattista, Transplant Support Group Malta; the Volunteer Organisation Award which was awarded to the Malta Red Cross Society; and the Youth Volunteer Award was awarded to Mr. Roderick Theuma, who is a volunteer with the St John Rescue Corps. The Corporate Volunteering Award was not award. A commendation was also presented to Reaching Cambodia.

National Volunteers Award Ceremony

The National Volunteer Award was awarded to Mr. Alfred Debattista, Transplant Support Group Malta; the Volunteer Organisation Award which was awarded to the Malta Red Cross Society; and the Youth Volunteer Award was awarded to Mr. Roderick Theuma, who is a volunteer with the St John Rescue Corps. The Corporate Volunteering Award was not award. A commendation was also presented to Reaching Cambodia.
VOLUNTEER CENTRE

The second Volunteer Centre was opened in Qawra as part of the Qawra Leap Centre Complex on the 24th January 2015 by the Hon. Minister Helena Dalli, Minister for Social Dialogue, Consumer Affairs and Civil Liberties in the presence of the Hon. Minister Michael Farrugia, Minister for Social Solidarity and the Family. This Volunteer Centre will be providing facilities to VOs namely office space and common facilities, equipped with one meeting room and a training hall which will be used on a time sharing basis by those VOs needing a base for their operations.

Qawra NGO Centre

YOUTH VOLUNTARY WORK SCHEME

In May 2015 the Council launched the Youth Voluntary Work Scheme, a new opportunity for young people and VOs. The Youth Voluntary Work Scheme is intended to achieve two main goals.

The first goal is to help young people improve their skills and employment prospects by giving them an opportunity to take up volunteering as part of their non-formal and informal learning process. It will also enable them to discover the value of voluntary service and helps to foster a sense of community and active citizenship.

The second goal of the scheme is to support VOs in attracting young people to volunteering, enabling them to enhance their capacity with new volunteers and fresh ideas.
The annual National Training Conference was organised by the Council between the 3rd and the 5th December 2015 at the Marina Hotel Corinthia Beach Resort, St George's Bay. The theme of this year’s conference was “Leadership in the Voluntary Sector”.

The first day took off with a welcome address by Mr. Nathan Farrugia, Chairperson of the Council followed by a plenary session: “Professional Volunteering, How to find and keep volunteers” delivered by Ms Perdita Wingerter, CEO and founder of the NGO “Gemeinsam leben & lernen in Europa” (Living and learning together within Europe). This was followed by a panel discussion. On the second day there was another plenary session: “Challenges in Leading a Voluntary Organisation in today’s world” delivered by the other foreign guest, Mr. Mariano Votta, Director of Active Citizenship Network, Italy. This was followed by two sets of workshops.

The third and final day of the conference started off with a plenary session on Corporate Citizenship for Responsible Enterprises (CORE) delivered by Ms Maria Rauch (CEO, CORE). This was again followed by another two sets of workshops.

The conference was officially closed off by the address of the Hon. Minister Helena Dalli, Minister for Social Dialogue, Consumer Affairs and Civil Liberties.
During 2015, the Office of the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations received and replied to the following Parliamentary Questions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PQ Number</th>
<th>Question asked by:</th>
<th>Subject</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13438</td>
<td>Hon. Clyde Puli</td>
<td>List of persons serving on boards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13433/4/5</td>
<td>Hon. Clyde Puli</td>
<td>Number of persons working on definite and indefinite contracts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13436</td>
<td>Hon. Clyde Puli</td>
<td>Number of Consultants working in Ministry</td>
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<tr>
<td>13437</td>
<td>Hon. Clyde Puli</td>
<td>Number of promotions to employees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13656</td>
<td>Hon. Chris Said</td>
<td>Increase in Fees of Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14124</td>
<td>Hon. Mario De Marco</td>
<td>Persons in positions of trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14177</td>
<td>Hon. Jason Azzopardi</td>
<td>Persons in positions of trust</td>
</tr>
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<td>14261</td>
<td>Hon. Robert Arrigo</td>
<td>Persons in positions of trust</td>
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<td>14436</td>
<td>Hon. Jason Azzopardi</td>
<td>Work assigned to Tec Ltd</td>
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<td>14785</td>
<td>Hon. Anthony Agius Decelis</td>
<td>Persons in positions of trust</td>
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<td>14800</td>
<td>Hon. Anthony Agius Decelis</td>
<td>Positions of trust</td>
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<td>Hon. Anthony Agius Decelis</td>
<td>Works assigned to Vanilla Telecoms Ltd</td>
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<td>14830</td>
<td>Hon. Anthony Agius Decelis</td>
<td>Works assigned to MaltaShopper Ltd</td>
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<td>15858</td>
<td>Hon. Paula Mifsud Bonnici</td>
<td>Services of interpreters for the deaf by the Ministry</td>
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<td>17054</td>
<td>Hon. Charlo’ Bonnici</td>
<td>Persons with disability employed by the Ministry</td>
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<tr>
<td>17152</td>
<td>Hon. Carmel Mifsud Bonnici</td>
<td>Number of requests to the Ombudsman</td>
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<td>17155</td>
<td>Hon. Carmel Mifsud Bonnici</td>
<td>Authorisations issued to rent and buy vehicles</td>
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<tr>
<td>17331</td>
<td>Hon. Carmel Mifsud Bonnici</td>
<td>Employees with definite contracts</td>
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<tr>
<td>17333</td>
<td>Hon. Carmel Mifsud Bonnici</td>
<td>Number of cleaners and security guards</td>
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<tr>
<td>17510</td>
<td>Hon. Mario De Marco</td>
<td>Consultancy given to Dr. Aaron Mifsud Bonnici</td>
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<td>17664</td>
<td>Hon. Carmel Mifsud Bonnici</td>
<td>Number of self-employed during 2013, 2014 and 2015</td>
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<td>17724</td>
<td>Hon. Kristy Debono</td>
<td>Use of Credit Cards by public entities</td>
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<td>17746</td>
<td>Hon. Kristy Debono</td>
<td>Consultants engaged by the Ministry</td>
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<td>17830</td>
<td>Hon. Marthense Portelli</td>
<td>Fuel costs</td>
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<tr>
<td>PQ Number</td>
<td>Question asked by:</td>
<td>Subject</td>
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<tr>
<td>17768</td>
<td>Hon. Kristy Debono</td>
<td>Overseas travel by Ministry and its entities</td>
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<tr>
<td>17830</td>
<td>Hon. Marthsee Portelli</td>
<td>Fuel costs</td>
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<tr>
<td>17953</td>
<td>Hon. Charles Mangion</td>
<td>Number of employees engaged within the public sector</td>
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<td>18695</td>
<td>Hon. Anthony Agius Decelis</td>
<td>Members on boards</td>
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<td>19361</td>
<td>Hon. Paula Mifsud Bonnici</td>
<td>Use of services from X.Y.Z. Architecture and Design</td>
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<td>19703</td>
<td>Hon. Carmel Mifsud Bonnici</td>
<td>Number of persons employed in the Ministry in 2015</td>
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<td>19843</td>
<td>Hon. Marthsee Portelli</td>
<td>Number of persons employed between 2013 and 2015</td>
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<tr>
<td>19958</td>
<td>Hon. Ċensu Galea</td>
<td>No. of persons employed in the Ministry and in March 2013</td>
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<td>19898</td>
<td>Hon. Charlo’ Bonnici</td>
<td>Ex-labour party employees working in the Ministry</td>
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<tr>
<td>20072</td>
<td>Hon. Mario De Marco</td>
<td>Retired and recruited persons between 2011 and March 2013</td>
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<td>20086</td>
<td>Hon. Godfrey Farrugia</td>
<td>Number of members within four hunting associations</td>
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<td>20106</td>
<td>Hon. Silvio Schembri</td>
<td>Past &amp; present Members of Parliament working in the Ministry</td>
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<td>20326</td>
<td>Hon. Frederick Azzopardi</td>
<td>Board members and their remuneration</td>
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<td>20347</td>
<td>Hon. Luciano Busuttil</td>
<td>Advertising expenses by the Ministry on Nationalist Party media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20390</td>
<td>Hon. Luciano Busuttil</td>
<td>Teleworking offered by the Ministry and its entities</td>
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<tr>
<td>20738</td>
<td>Hon. Luciano Busuttil</td>
<td>MP’s working on a full time and part time within the Ministry</td>
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<tr>
<td>20757</td>
<td>Hon. Beppe Fenech Adami</td>
<td>Enquiry on whether Ms. R. Debattista works within the Ministry</td>
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<tr>
<td>20833</td>
<td>Hon. Luciano Busuttil</td>
<td>Expenses on consultancy services</td>
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<td>21088</td>
<td>Hon. Marthsee Portelli</td>
<td>General advertising expenses</td>
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<tr>
<td>21069</td>
<td>Hon. Marthsee Portelli</td>
<td>Advertising expenses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21342</td>
<td>Hon. Clyde Puli</td>
<td>Advertising expenses between 2013 and 2015</td>
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<tr>
<td>21779</td>
<td>Hon. David Agius</td>
<td>Contracts awarded to Dr. Aaron Mifsud Bonnici</td>
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