



“COVID-19 has hampered some of the SDGs’ progress, and meaningful progress in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals should be considered more urgent than ever before.”

– *Evarist Bartolo, Minister for Foreign and European Affairs, speech at the UN High-level Political Forum, July 2020*

MAIN CHANGES IN 2020

Malta is reporting 0.44% of ODA/GNI for 2022, an increase from the 0.30% reported in 2019. In real terms, this is a year-on-year increase of €14.48 million (€51 million for 2020). While this is the fourth consecutive year with a notable increase on the previous year, AidWatch Malta is concerned about the fact that reporting standards have fallen. The ODA report for 2019 published by the ministry includes less detail than the previous ones, which hampers attempts to analyse the Government’s performance.

The annual call for CSO projects was not issued for 2020, following a failed attempt in late 2019 to link CSO projects to trade promotion in Ghana and Ethiopia. The cabinet change in January 2020 brought in a new minister for foreign affairs, while the trade promotion portfolio was reallocated to the economy ministry. The global pandemic absorbed much of the ministry’s attention, but it is unfortunate that CSO proposals to support long-standing partner beneficiaries in facing the challenge of COVID-19 were totally disregarded.

In late 2020 the ministry issued a call for three ‘pre-defined projects’ in Ethiopia and Ghana, for which beneficiaries and activities had been identified and defined beforehand by the ministry itself. This meant that Maltese CSOs were effectively restricted to a service provision role, and were deprived of both ownership and the right of initiative.

Regrettably, none of the recommendations from last year’s report were taken into consideration.

TRENDS AND PROJECTIONS FOR 2021 AND BEYOND

On its website the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs published a revised ‘Implementation Plan’ in the first half of 2021, setting out the priorities and aims of Malta’s ODA, in generic terms. No detail is given, however, on how the government intends to deliver its ODA.

Government dialogue with civil society has deteriorated. Not only did the Maltese government refrain from collaborating with civil society in supporting community organisations in partner countries, to alleviate the impact of the pandemic on the most at-risk people: it has also retreated completely from consultation and communication with the development cooperation community.

CASE STUDY BOX:



The signing of a memorandum of understanding in September 2020 between the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs and the Islands and Small States Institute of the University of Malta is a best-practice example of collaboration between government and academia that can bring about a more focused ODA programme, drawing on the breadth of expertise in Malta. Under the agreement, the ministry will fund scholarships for students from Small Island Developing States (SIDS) eligible for ODA. The ministry also appointed a thematic Ambassador for Islands and Small States, who will lead efforts to promote the interests of small states (mainly islands) in the international arena.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE MALTESE GOVERNMENT

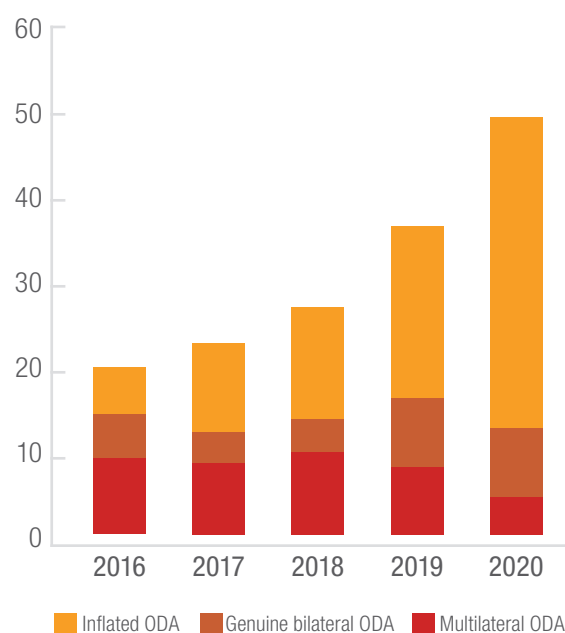
- Increase the amount of genuine aid to meet the objectives set at EU level, and make refugee costs additional to the ODA spending targets.
- Increase the transparency of ODA reporting through an in-depth, comprehensive report on Malta’s overall ODA spending.
- Improve aid effectiveness by ensuring predictability and multi-annual programming for the funds allocated to high-quality poverty eradication projects

proposed by Maltese CSOs, by raising awareness of the development impact of Maltese CSOs, and by introducing a co-financing mechanism for larger grants (EC-funded development education and awareness-raising projects).

- Support civil society organisations in increasing their capacity to implement and monitor projects that are fully focused on the LNOB principles.
- Engage with Maltese civil society and development experts in an assessment of the Maltese ODA programme and policy, evaluating, inter alia, their geographical and thematic focus as well as their effectiveness.

MALTA – GENUINE AND INFLATED ODA

(€ million, constant 2019)



ODA TO LDCS (€ million, constant 2019)

LDC	ODA to LDCs	ODA to LDCS (% GNI)	ODA to LDCS (% total ODA)
2016	1.01	0.01	5.02
2017	3.26	0.03	14.15
2018	2.19	0.02	8.08
2019	1.21	0.01	3.29

ODA TO DRM (€ million, constant 2019)

DRM	ODA for DRM	DRM (% bilateral)	DRM (% total ODA)
2016	0.00	0.00	0.00
2017	0.00	0.00	0.00
2018	0.00	0.00	0.00
2019	0.00	0.00	0.00

AID MODALITY (€ million, constant 2019)

Year	Bilateral gross	Grants	Loans	Loans (% of gross bilateral)
2016	10.37	10.37	0.00	0.00
2017	13.91	13.91	0.00	0.00
2018	16.87	16.87	0.00	0.00
2019	28.76	28.76	0.00	0.00

ODA TO SUPPORT GENDER EQUALITY (€ million, constant 2019)

Gender focus	Bi allocable	Total Screened	Not Screened	None	Significant	Principal	Significant (% of screened)	Principal (% of screened)
2016	4.24	0.00	4.24	0.00	0.00	0.00		
2017	2.68	0.00	2.68	0.00	0.00	0.00		
2018	3.55	0.00	3.55	0.00	0.00	0.00		
2019	8.24	0.00	8.24	0.00	0.00	0.00		

ODA TO SUPPORT CSOs (€ million, constant 2019)

CSO support	Non-CSO	Donor-CSO-Earmarked	International-CSO-Earmarked	Recipient-CSO-Earmarked	Donor-CSO-Core	International-CSO-Core	Recipient-CSO-Core	Total bilateral CSO support, % bilateral	Total bilateral CSO support, % total ODA	Core bilateral CSO support, % bilateral	Core bilateral CSO support, % total ODA
2016	10.37	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
2017	13.91	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
2018	16.82	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.05	0.00	0.29	0.18	0.29	0.18
2019	28.76	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00