

Horizon 2020 Policy Support Facility



Peer Review of the Maltese Research & Innovation System

Malta

12 June 2019

Dieter Imboden, Chair

Mandate and Objectives

- ◆ **November 2017** Parliamentary Secretary for Financial Services, Digital Economy and Innovation of Malta asks the support of PSF for an independent Peer Review of Malta's R&I system
- ◆ **July 2018** Kick-off of Peer Review
- ◆ **Key Objectives:** To feed into the preparation of Malta's national strategy for R&D and innovation post 2020. Focus on the current National R&I Strategy 2020 and the policy mix, i.e. policies, measures and instruments supporting the public science base, public-private cooperation and business innovation dynamics.



Mandate and Objectives (Cont.)

◆ **Main goals of Maltese policy (as stated in the request from Malta)**

1. to continue R&I capacity building
2. to improve the dynamics of the R&I system
3. to improve the efficiency of current public investments in R&I.

◆ **Questions for the Peer Review: in order to achieve those goals, does Malta have adequate and appropriate**

- Policies
- Structures and resources
- Measures and instruments (incl. monitoring and evaluation)



PSF Panel

Independent Experts

- Dieter Imboden, Chair (Switzerland)
- Claire Nauwelaers, Rapporteur (Belgium)
- Maja Bučar (Slovenia)
- Ana Costa Freitas (Portugal)
- Jan van den Biesen (Netherlands)

National Peers

- Dermot Mulligan (Ireland)
- Tiago Santos Pereira (Portugal)



Methodology

- The PSF Panel carried out its work from July 2018 until May 2019.
- Two field visits in Malta from 16 to 19 October 2018 and from 17 to 18 January 2019.
- Exploitation of Background Report prepared specifically for this project (Restall 2019).
- Study of available documents from national or EU origin.
- Interviews of stakeholders, i.e., with 72 representatives of 25 organisations



Final Report

Abstract: Proposed Actions

1. **Key Policy Messages**
2. The PSF Peer Review: Aim and Methodology
3. Economic, Research and Innovation Context in Malta
4. Embedding R&I in Malta's **Development Strategies**
5. Improving Framework Conditions for **Public Research**
6. Incentivising R&I in the **Private Sector** and Stimulating **Public-Private Cooperation**
7. Fostering **Internationalisation** of the Maltese R&I System

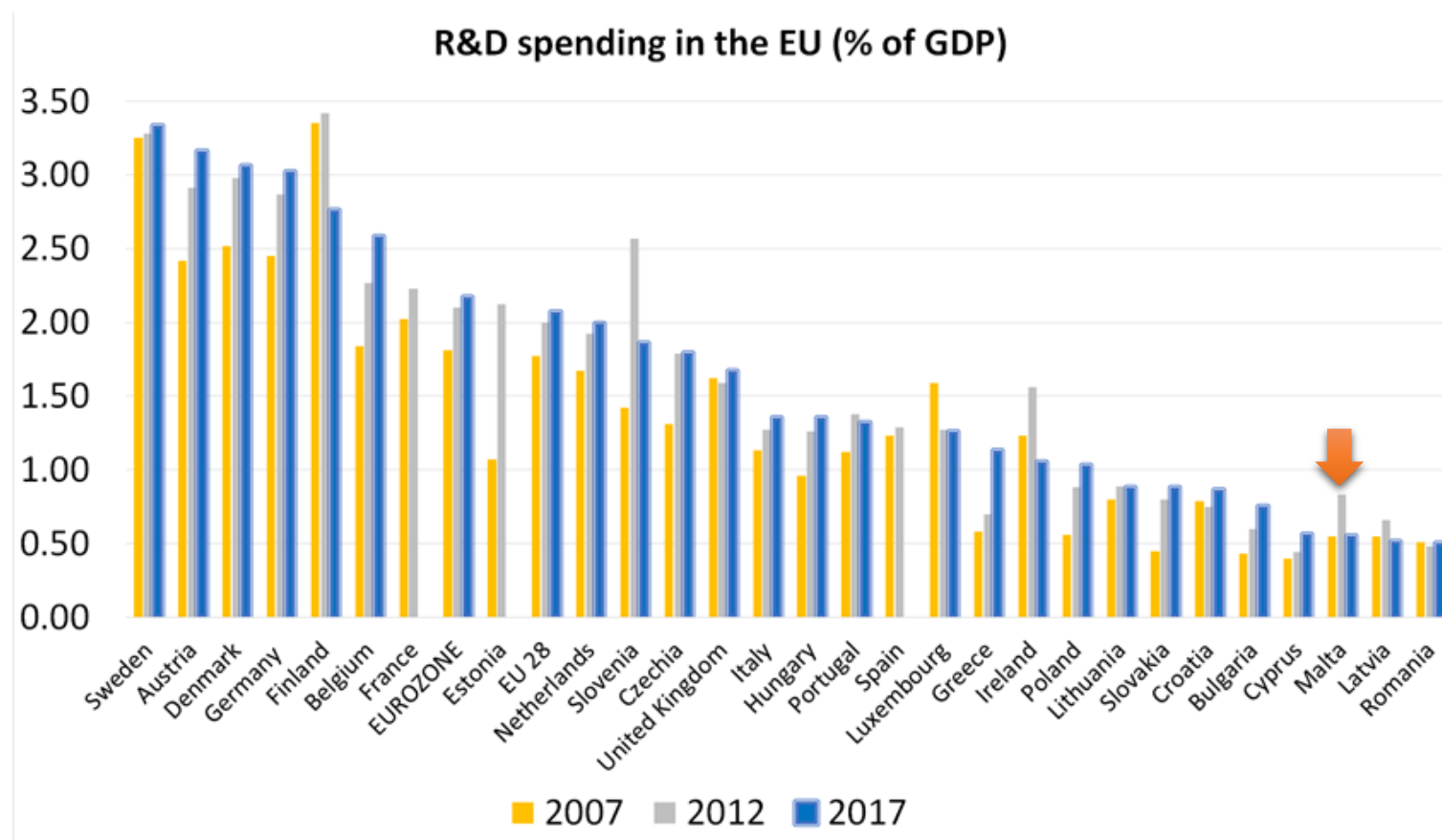


Proposed Actions

1. If Malta is to continue its current economic success into the future knowledge-based economy, then both the public and private sectors need to **invest significantly more in research, development and innovation.**

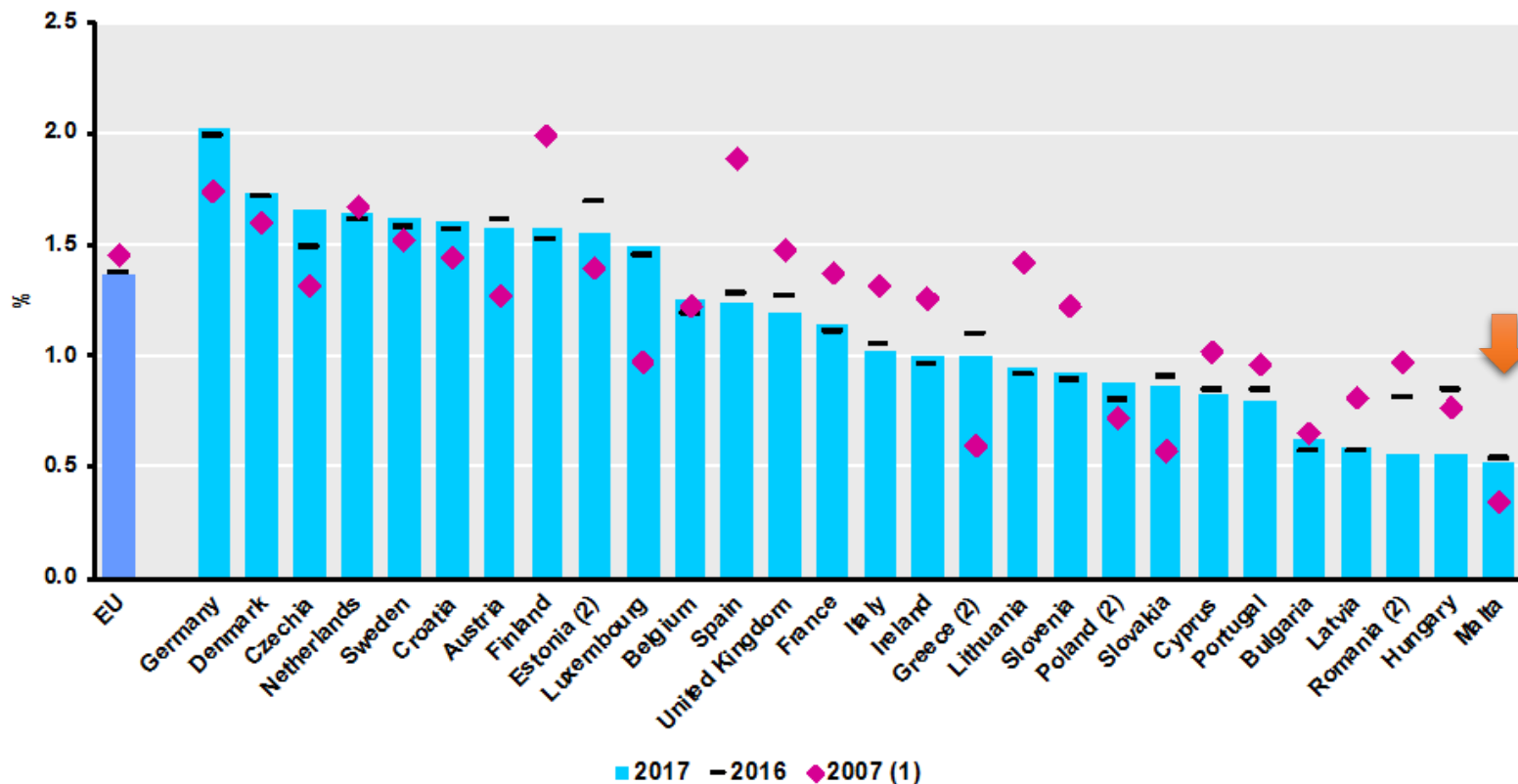


R&D Intensity



Source: Eurostat, published on 19 November 2018

Government allocations to R&D



Source: DG Research and Innovation - Unit for Reforms and Economic Impact - Country intelligence; Data: Eurostat, Notes: (1) HR: 2008. (2) EE, EL, PL, RO: Break in series 2007-2016

R&D in two micro-state islands: Malta and Iceland (2017)

	Population	GDP current prices mPPS	GERD	GERD/ GDP	GBAORD	GBAORD/ Total gov. exp.
Malta	475,701	13,729	€61m	0.55%	€21.5m	0.53%
Iceland	338,349	13,414	€462m	2.13%	€131m	1.42%

Source: Eurostat

Note: Expressing GDP in mPPS (million purchasing power standards) eliminates differences in price levels between countries.



Proposed Actions

1. If Malta is to continue its current economic success into the future knowledge-based economy, then both the public and private sectors need to invest significantly more in research, development and innovation.
2. Government needs to play a leadership in this by placing clearer priority on research and innovation: **one Minister should lead on these matters ('R&I Champion')**. The Minister should **chair the Core Group**, ensuring cross-governmental coordination. The Core Group should be reflected at Ministerial level by an existing or new Government sub-committee to address R&D&I issues.



Proposed Actions (Cont.)

3. To advise the 'R&I Champion' and the Government, an independent '**Consultative Forum**' should be created that represents **all relevant stakeholders of the research and innovation system**, including companies, Higher Education Institutions, Public Research Organisations and society.
4. **MCST should be upgraded** towards an 'MCST+' that expands its function of a research funding agency. It should be responsible for the **National R&I Strategy including the Smart Specialisation Strategy (RIS3)**.



Proposed Actions (Cont.)

5. Malta should establish a new 'Maltese Research Fund' for **competitive funding of basic and applied research**, to be managed by MCST.
6. Also managed by MCST, **FUSION** programme should be upgraded, with a **significantly increased budget** for the existing funding line **for cooperative projects**, as well as a **new funding line for research projects in Higher Education Institutions** and Public Research Organisations in selected fields corresponding to RIS3 priorities.



Proposed Actions (Cont.)

7. **More cooperation should be achieved between ME and MCST.** In the next funding period, instruments primarily delivering direct support to companies, funded by ESIF or not, should be concentrated with ME, while instruments mainly aiming at public research should be coordinated and funded through MCST, with cross-agency referral in case of public-private collaboration.
8. Malta should **significantly streamline, simplify and clarify its landscape of funding schemes available to innovative enterprises**, and deliver them in a more pro-active mode and with a clear account management. Support schemes for start-ups should be fully integrated into an 'easy-to-navigate' innovation support system.



Proposed Actions (Cont.)

9. **Applied research with mandatory university-enterprise collaboration** needs to be reinforced, notably through intersectoral mobility schemes, such as the Knowledge Transfer Partnership.
10. To facilitate more synergies in the policy mix, the **monitoring system is of central importance. It requires cooperation of all actors involved in funding R&I and should be led by MCST+**, expanding its role of a 'policy intelligence unit'. Policy evaluation should also become regular practice.



Proposed Actions (Cont.)

11. **UoM and MCAST** should develop a clear **concept of cooperation and division of work in teaching, research and third mission**. Together with the Government they should develop an efficient system **to support (and retain) scientifically talented individuals** from school up to the highest university level, while attracting scientific talents worldwide.
12. **International cooperation in R&D&I is vital for the Maltese research and innovation system**: there is room for further reinforcement of support to internationalisation of R&D&I activities, including in the field of digital innovation.



Thank you !

