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Faculty for Social Wellbeing

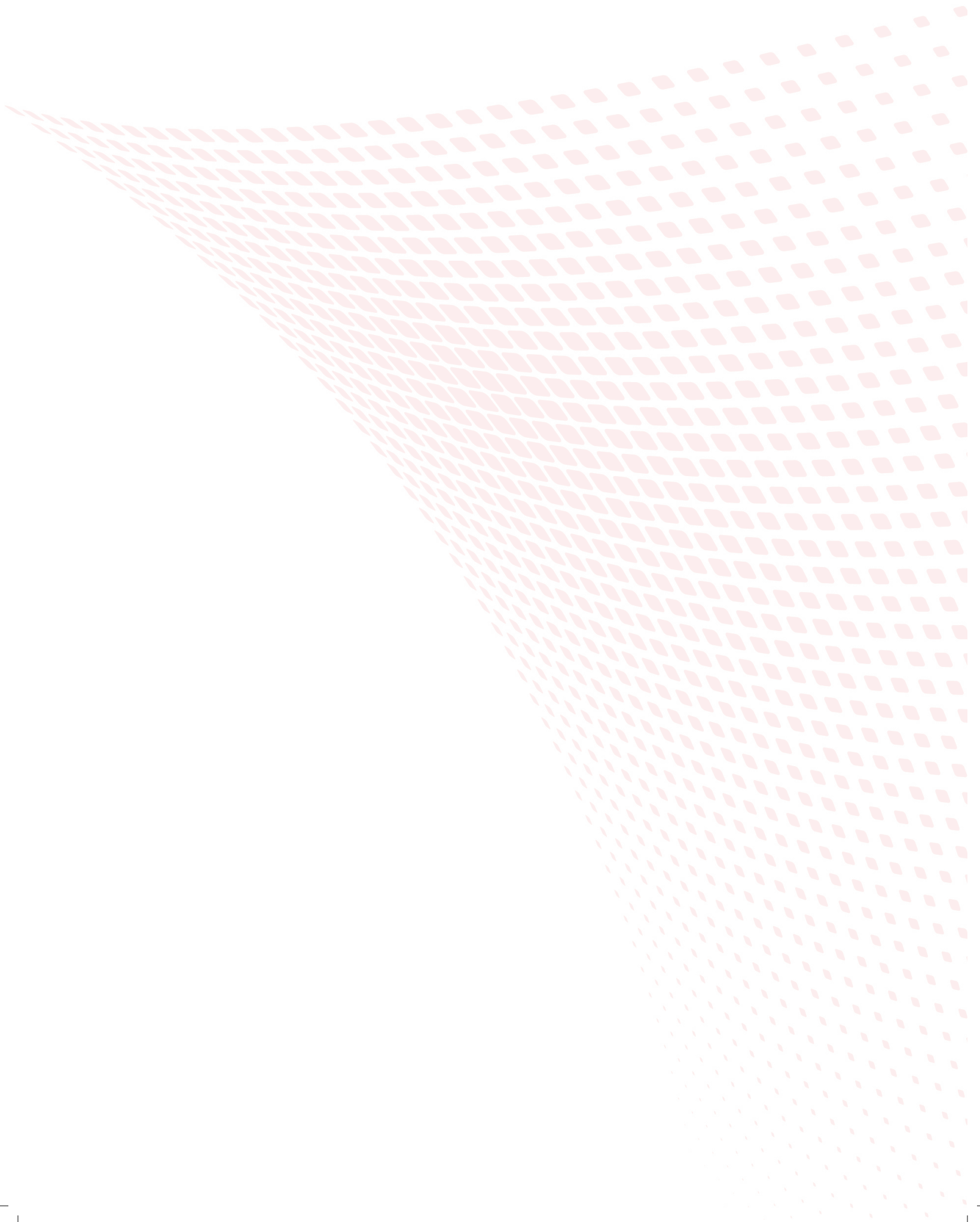
Understanding the Valletta Community

NOVEMBER 2019

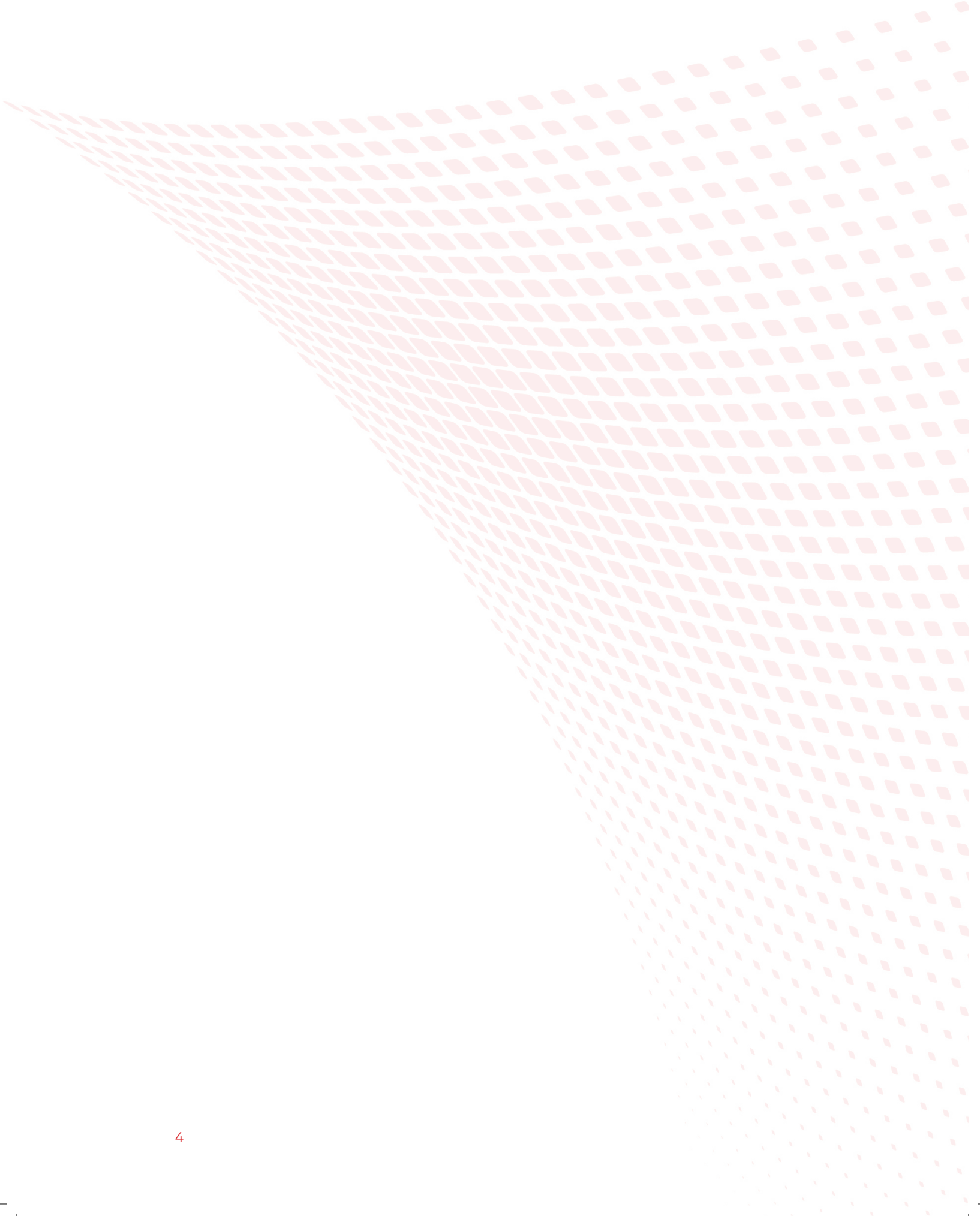
Prof. Andrew Azzopardi, Project Manager
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Dr Andrew Camilleri, Research Support Officer



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Understanding the Valletta Community



Understanding the Valletta Community

Valletta is the Capital City of Malta. All citizens of this Country are affianced with Valletta. The beauty of this city is second to none. As a Faculty, in collaboration with a number of stakeholders, we attempted to locate some important issues that have potentially impacted the liveability of this community. As per introduction of the report; *'This paper discusses findings of a mixed-methods case study on community development with special attention to liveability issues of island state communities that would have held the European Capital of Culture (ECoC) title. The case study context is Valletta – capital city of former colony and EU island state Malta. Valletta held the ECoC title during 2018 (European Commission (EC), n.d.). The empirical study was informed by data contributions from Valletta residents; as well as by government and cultural elites who influenced, to varying degrees, how regeneration and development occurred in Valletta between 2014 and 2019. This timeframe covers the period before, during and exactly after 2018 - when Valletta held the ECoC title (V18).'* Notwithstanding we are such a small Island the complexities that one finds from one town or village to another and even within the same locality is incredible and makes it exciting to research. This study we hope has managed to localise a number of issues that if one reads well into the empirical data can inform our decision makers to take the much-needed actions. Kudos to all the team that was involved in this project.

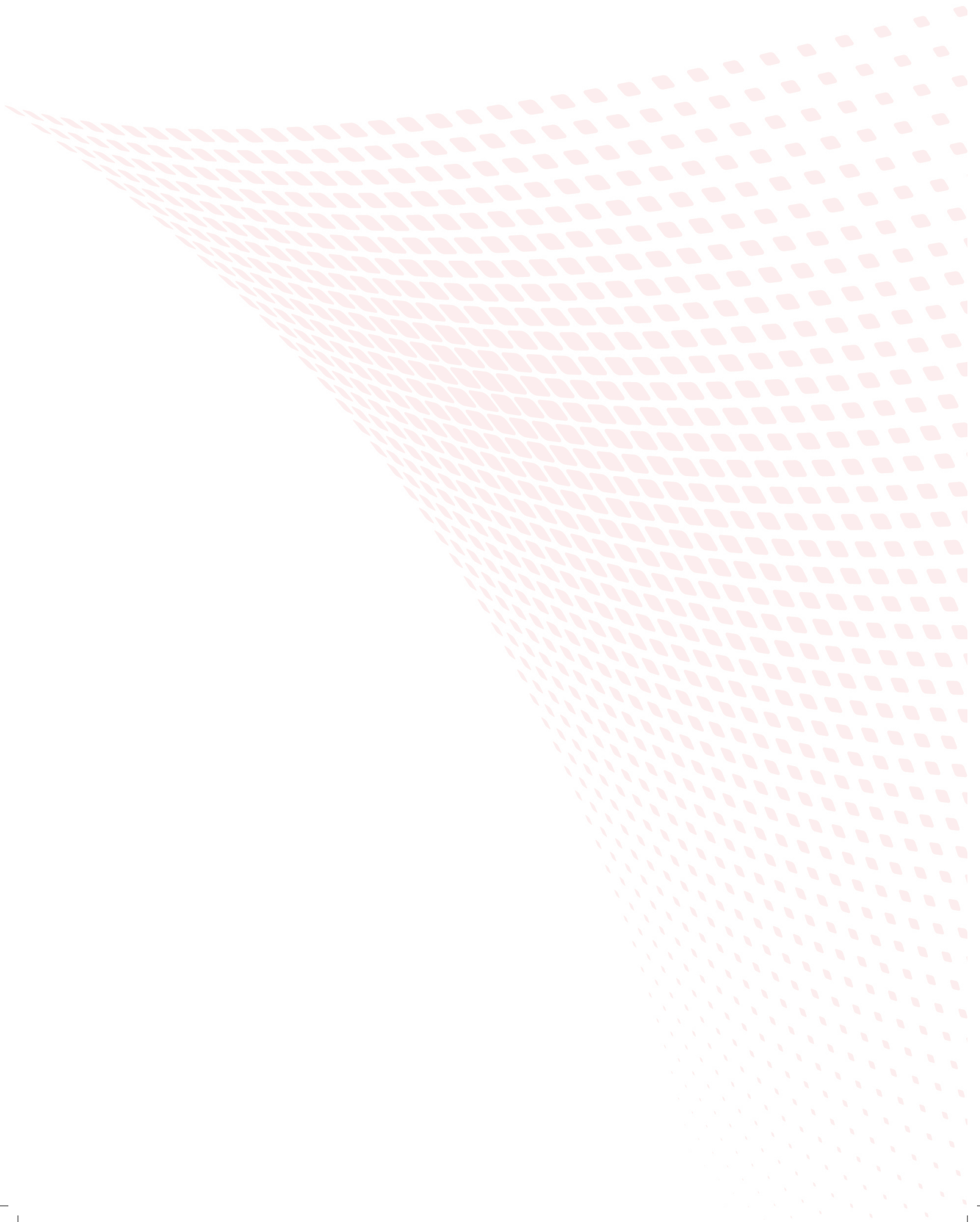
Prof. Andrew Azzopardi

Dean

Faculty for Social Wellbeing



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WORK PROGRAMME

1. Organization/s Sponsoring Research:
Inspirasia Foundation Malta
2. Research Support Officer III
Dr Maria Brown – Faculty for Social Wellbeing
3. Community-based research support officer
Mr Andrew Camilleri
4. Technical Advisory Committee:
Prof. Andrew Azzopardi, Dean, Faculty for Social Wellbeing;

A representative of the Valletta Local Council;
Stakeholders; and NGOs.
5. Problem Statement

Locating the debates around community is no easy task. The discourses around community are countless. Naturally, having 'community' does not entail erasing the diverse communities of practice that Valletta is endowed with. It implies that all groups within that community and all individuals should gather around inclusiveness to ensure that all citizens find comfort in the town they live in. People in a community need to feel they belong, they need to feel that their neighbourhood is safe and they are comforted in moments of distress. Instead of relying solely on outside, detached and impersonal services this community should attempt to maximise the use of community resources and through community development actions, apps and innovative services to bring people together. Community naturally, depends on this comforting and sense of security.

Whereas there are a number of compound discourses that are associated with the idea of community, a particularly important premise is that communities are interconnected. Others claim that community in its own right is a value. The qualities we think construct communities are brought together by treatises ranging from membership to proprietorship, from reliability to citizen's interaction in multiple and mutually reinforcing contexts. Much has been written and done but maybe the two major notions that bequeath our thinking on the understanding of community are; *gesellschaft* (whereby the citizen is largely cut off) thus representing co-location but minimal attachment and *gemeinschaft* (whereby the citizen is weaved into a network of relationships and family support) which tends to represent tighter and more assimilated social grouping.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This Project will attempt to:

- (1) problematize the discourses around what values and characteristics constitute Valletta;
- (2) map the complex and particular challenges that some neighbourhoods face;
- (3) identify the liveability challenges of the community;

- (4) attempt to propose ways how to resolve the issues through smart actions;
- (5) propose solutions towards better communities by utilizing community resources;
- (6) identify how we can get people less dependent on benefits.

6. Milestones and Deliverables

STAGE 1 – LITERATURE REVIEW

This will delve into concepts, theories, policies and practices that are relevant to the area and population under study.

Deliverable: A Literature Review

STAGE 2 – RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS AND METHODOLOGY

This stage will comprise the development of research instruments (questionnaire, focus group schedule and related recruitment, consent and assent forms) that will be submitted to the Faculty Research Ethics Committee (FREC) to obtain ethical clearance.

Deliverable: A progress report that will include the research instruments and documentation related to FREC procedure and clearance.

STAGE 3 – DATA GATHERING AND ANALYSIS

Stage 3 shall be dedicated to the execution of the actual fieldwork of the research study.

The questionnaire will be administered to a representative sample of Valletta residents.

The focus group will be carried out with stakeholders of the Valletta community that will include government entities, NGOs, entities with artistic and commercial interests, people in the social professions whose work is related to the area and so on.

Quantitative data (collected through the questionnaire) shall then be inputted, cleaned and coded while qualitative data (collected through the focus groups) shall go through a process of transcription. Next, all data gathered shall be analysed using SPSS and NVivo, respectively.

Deliverable: A Methodology Report stating research questions, details on data-gathering instruments and data analysis methods, gaining access to the field of research and the strategies adopted to sample and recruit participants in due diligence of ethical considerations.

STAGE 4 – INTERPRETATION, REPORTING OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Finally, in the fourth and last stage of the study, the data analysed in the previous stage shall be interpreted and reported to present the results and a set of recommendations and proposed measures that will form part of the community development programme.

Deliverable: A Final Report that will account for the findings and outcomes of the dissemination component.

7. Time Frames

Stage 1:	Projected completion: Months 0 -1
Stage 2:	Projected completion: Months 2 - 3
Stage 3:	Projected completion: Months 4 - 5
Stage 4:	Projected completion: Months 6 - 7

1. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. INTRODUCTION

This deliverable reviews the knowledge base informing the Understanding the Valletta Community project. It starts with an overview of salient geographic, socio-economic and cultural aspects of the Valletta context. This is followed by a discussion of literature that illuminates what a community is and who can be considered as forming part of the Valletta community. Liveability of a given space will be discussed by considering the various debates and stakeholder perspectives. Attention to vulnerability and resilience within resident populations. The theoretical discussion will tantamount with a review of literature on the end goal of this research project, which is community development.

The review will then proceed to considerations for policy with an in-depth look at the issues of inclusiveness and sustainable development. Reference will be made to literature on practices that have characterized recent developments in Valletta - including branding, gentrification, networked community resources and urban regeneration, with a view to inform the resulting community development programme being targeted by this same project.

2. CONTEXT

Valletta is the capital city of Malta, the smallest member-state in the European Union (EU) situated in the centre of the Mediterranean with a geographical proximity to Italy and other Southern European countries, as well as North Africa. Malta's smallness and 'islandness' impinge on its public sphere (Vassallo, 2012) particularly in terms of contradictions between seclusion and exposure; conservative and reformative or radical social movements; the value placed on both stability and change; the preservation of tradition and the thirst for innovation.

Following accession as a European Union member-state in 2004, the country has witnessed intense and fast-paced growth in its economy and the population has grown exponentially, reaching 475,701 at the end of 2017 (National Statistics Office (NSO), 2019a). In 2018, population growth in Malta was more than 15 times that of the EU average (Eurostat, 2018).

The Knights of St John started works to build Valletta in 1566 on Mount Sceberras, mainly for strategic reasons after winning the 1565 Great Siege. Valletta has uninterruptedly been Malta's capital city since 1571 (Valletta Local Council, 2007). During the period of the Knights, Valletta became the undisputed commercial and social centre of the Island (Mitchell, 2002, pp. 58-59; Mula, 2000). Further to a brief period of colonization by France, under British rule and at a time when British imperial financial interests were rapidly expanding, Valletta's harbour was described as "one of the most capacious and finest in the universe" (C.S. Sonnini cited in Muscat, 2002, p. 1). Trade and commerce thrived particularly when Britain was at war, with the exclusion of the Second World War (Borg, 2014).

Following the Second World War Malta steadily lost its strategic significance with the advent of nuclear weapons and the post-World War II logic of the balance of nuclear power contributed to a slow decline of Malta's strategic importance, matched by the rapid shrinking of the British Empire (Elliot, 1994). By the time when the last British troops left Malta in 1979, "Valletta was dealt a heavy blow from which it is still recovering" (Borg, 2014, p. 23) that included construction of the new Freeport, in the south of the island, which made Valletta redundant to import-export trade.

From once Malta's largest city with a population of 22,768 in 1901, Valletta's population declined after the end of World War II (Borg, 2014). Recent statistics show that Valletta's population

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stood at 2,269 males (1.2%) and 2,383 females (1.3%), totalling 4,653 persons, making up 1.3% of the country's population (National Statistics Office - Valletta 2018 Research Team & Valletta 2018 Foundation Evaluation & Monitoring Steering Committee, 2018, p. 8). Notwithstanding strong touristic yield since the 1960s, residents still left since the building booms of the 1950s-1970s provided better accommodation outside of Valletta for a great number of people and before the housing market inflated. This was compounded with the affordability of cars and other vehicles that freed the commuter from being bound to the capital city for transport despite its long-standing status as hub of the public transport system in Malta; as well as with increase of supermarkets in other towns and the widespread availability of consumer goods in shopping centres like Sliema and Hamrun (Borg, 2014). This led to the emptying of the city, leaving only a small number of residents, whose socio-economic strength is weak, below the national average, not representative of general Maltese society (Torpiano, 2016). It was only very recently, basically at the time of writing, that Valletta shifted from being the third locality in Malta with the highest expenditure per capita on select social protection benefits, when this exceeded €2,000 per capita (NSO, 2017, p. 35), to a slight decline in such expenditure that classified it among localities in the country with an average expenditure of €1,630 – €1,999 per capita (NSO, 2019a, p. 37).

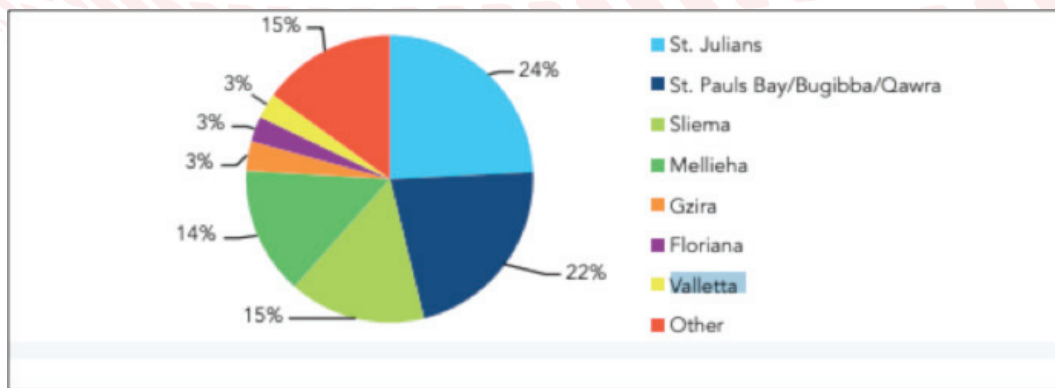
Throughout and notwithstanding, Valletta remained the administrative and political capital of the island. In post-Independence and post-Republic Malta, Valletta remained at the centre of political life. Valletta's contemporary physical fabric is one of deep contrasts with resplendent palaces standing besides dilapidated and even abandoned buildings (Borg, 2014). Generally speaking Valletta can be divided into the major areas illustrated in Figure 1:

Figure 1: Map of the Main Valletta Zones



Republic Street, running as it does through the heart of Valletta, seems to divide the city between right and left halves (facing in from city entrance). The right side is generally considered the more affluent with most of the palaces and places of note being situated on this side of the city. The former Parliament building is another landmark, which seems to divide Valletta into the upper and the lower part. These are, of course, generalizations and, indeed, one of the features of Valletta is that there are demographically distinct pockets or enclaves all over the city (Borg, 2014).

Figure 2: Inbound tourist accommodation, 2016



(NSO, 2016, p. 87)

Valletta is one of the top places of work for both self-employed persons and employees (NSO, 2019b). Despite being a touristic mecca, until 2016 it only secured 3% of inbound tourist accommodation (NSO, 2016, p. 87). In fact, until recently, the number of hotel beds was insufficient to meet demand for tourism accommodation in or near Valletta. The situation is currently undergoing change with boutique hotels and short rentals becoming more available (Ebejer, 2016).

Valletta was the European Capital of Culture (ECOC) in 2018. The European City/Capital of Culture Programme was launched in 1985 and the ECOC title has been awarded to nearly 60 cities in 30 countries. The Programme has been a key platform for city positioning and a catalyst for economic and cultural regeneration (Garcia & Cox 2013). Cities compete fiercely for the honourous title (Hall 1992) that is associated with a 'showcase effect' (Fredline and Faulkner, 1998) a 'feel good effect' (Allen et al. 2002) and enhanced community pride (Borg, 2017). In 2012 the Valletta 2018 Foundation which was established to bid for and organize the ECOC event with the objectives of influencing the behaviour of different stakeholders by putting Valletta on their mental maps and cultivating a positive perception targeting sustainable development (Borg, 2017; Valletta 2018, n.d.).

3. DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

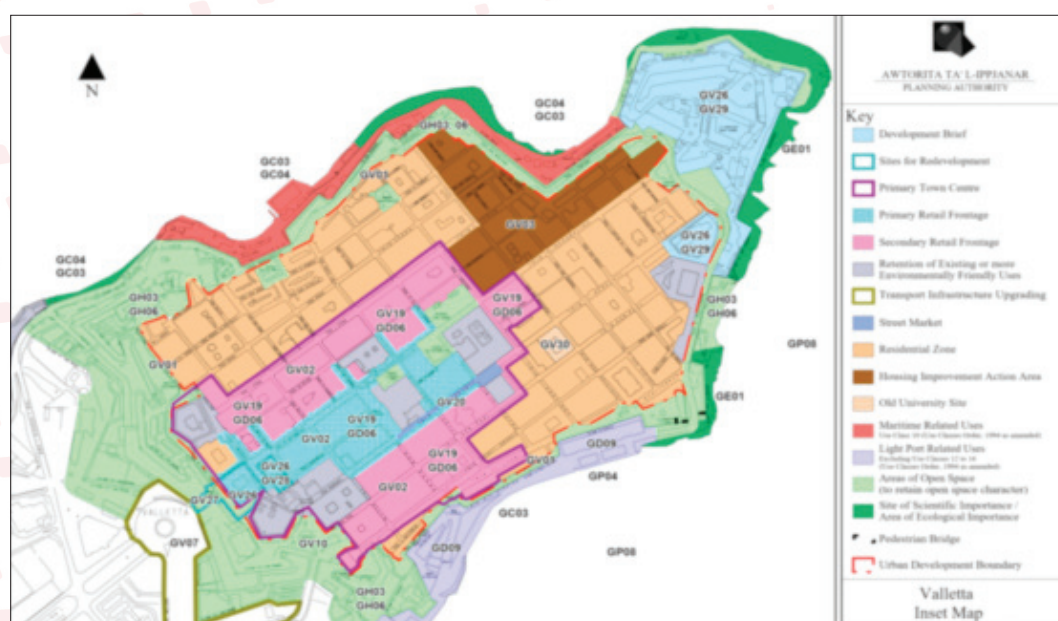
Two government policies have been developed with specific address to Valletta. The first, written in 2002, set a number priorities including the enlivening Valletta in the evenings through a mix of visitor and leisure loci and the encouragement of residential use of Valletta through a series of steps taken to rehabilitate older houses, the use of vacant floors above business premises, residents' parking schemes, better children's play provision, and the

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limitation of office expansion into residential blocks. The document also highlighted the need for greater and more efficient use of community spaces despite the declining population such as the using of vacated government buildings for social and educational purposes (Malta Environmental and Planning Authority (MEPA), 2002). The document also provided a series of measures that would be looked upon favourably by the Planning Authority when related to measure to expand housing provision.

The 2002 plan also envisaged sectors within which commerce, historical and residential areas were given priority. This would direct overall development and ensure that loss of open space and thus loss of identity are avoided, and more efficient use and recycling of existing land for development are promoted (MEPA, 2002).

Figure 3: Valletta Map – 2002 Proposal



(MEPA, 2002)

The second government development policy was entitled A Strategy for Valletta (MEPA, 2016a). In this document one can note a shift in the priorities of the policy maker wherein despite still promoting the quality of urban living but makes no mention of promoting more residential spaces. Additionally whereas in the 2002 document offices were deemed as requiring limitation, the attraction of high-end retail outlets the facilitation of the setting up of more offices coupled by auxiliary services such as food and drinks for employees, users, visitors and tourists were deemed on par with promoting the quality of urban living (MEPA, 2016). This shift in policy can in fact be captured by the following statement:

The revitalisation of cities and the regeneration of communities are not limited solely to upgrade the urban environment but need to be complemented with interventions aimed at boosting economic activity (p. 41).

Economic activity therefore seems to have become the benchmark of qualitative urban living.

Figure 4: Valletta Map – 2016 Proposal



(MEPA, 2016b)

An additional difference between the two documents is that the previous discourse on sectors is not repeated within the newer document and one can instead find nodes. The 2016 document defines nodes as,

A number of key locations have strategic significance due to their geographical position in the City. These have the potential to attract people from the city centre to its periphery and vice versa. This can be mainly achieved through the improvement of peripheral land and sea transport. A significant part of local identity is the existence of built heritage features. These features, both large and small, can be used as focal points to incrementally build an identity within the changed setting of recent development. In addition, a strong sense of local identity and a manifest sense of place are likely to give rise to the ambience that users, residents, workers and visitors would find attractive (p. 25).

The shift in the discourse represents an idea that an area can be at the same time residential, touristic and a place for workers. This goes contrary to the idea in the 2002 document which sought to section off different sectors according to use.

Further to this contextual overview, the next sections delve into main concepts, theories, policies and practices that inform the research and community development programme being targeted by this project for and with the Valletta community.

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4. THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This section reviews select literature that analysed concepts and social issues and processes deemed informative to the design, development and implementation of the Understanding the Valletta Community project.

4.1 COMMUNITY

A community involves people who, in spite of individuality, uniqueness and diversity, share ties, perspectives, practices or actions in specific geographical locations or settings (MacQueen et al., 2001). Fundamentally, the community is a political concept (Hoggett, 1997), ubiquitous in political and policy discourses (Ledwith, 2011) resulting from an emotional appeal to an “imagined past” and to “an idyllic future” (Hughes & Mooney, 1998, p. 58).

Recent research identified the following among main community groups as associated with Valletta:

- Persons who identify as being from Valletta ('Beltin'), and who reside in Valletta;
- Persons who identify as being from Valletta ('Beltin'), but do not reside in Valletta; Persons who do not identify as being from Valletta (non-'Beltin;), but who reside in Valletta (including expatriates);
- Persons who are residents of the Inner Harbour / “Greater Valletta” area;
- Maltese people in general, who commute to Valletta with different levels of regularity (Deguara, Pace Bonello & Magri, 2017, p. 7)

In the same research, such community groups were found to perceive Valletta in a range of ways. They lived, experienced and highlighted important distinctions that run along the lines of “residence, symbolic belonging and accessibility of Valletta as both a geographical space and a social place” (p. 7).

Another recent study with Valletta residence recognized Valletta as a source of pride for participants, stemming from the Valletta's status of capital city, where the 'Beltin' consider themselves the main 'owners'. Through this collective ownership a sense of pride and care is developed. Secondly, through this 'ownership' 'Beltin' encourage active participation by other stakeholders in their residential area, thus keeping the city 'alive' for themselves and other stakeholders. The study showed that non-Valletta-residents also shared this sense of pride (Borg, 2017).

4.2 LIVEABILITY

Liveability has a plethora of different definitions (Thompson, 2008) and there is no generally accepted concept of liveable city; yet it has several qualitative and quantitative facets. This concept depends on two other concepts, which render its definition possible: quality of life and wellbeing (Antonescu, 2017). Indeed, Veenhoven (1996) argues that liveability is quality of life and the degree to which provisions and requirements fit with the needs and capacities of citizens. Notably, treatment of the concept is inherently anthropocentric because it is bound to people's quality of life, wellbeing and needs' satisfaction (De Haan et al., 2014); or their perceptions of such. That said, generally speaking, for a city to be liveable, it needs to fulfil several conditions, including economic, environmental, infrastructural (healthcare, transport, education and related), aesthetic, cultural, recreational, as well as those related to home,

ambient, neighbourhood, leisure, safety, convenience and vicinity (Antonescu, 2017; Vuchic, 1999). Arguably, community liveability and ways of relating to one another are increasingly overriding economic growth as indicators of quality of life (Wilkinson & Pickett, 2009).

A series of methodologies recognised globally assess liveability; many of these share the same elements. Such liveability indices are used to classify cities into several categories. Research has illuminated the perceived importance of liveability to both sustainability and viability but very little research has been proactively undertaken to qualify, measure it and model its development (Thompson, 2008). One such rarely developed model is based upon the economic, social and cultural needs of stakeholders, residents in particular. This model was informed by case studies about the whole spectrum of liveable space, both commercial and residential (Thompson, 2008).

Compared to United States (US) 1980s and 1990s trends when measurement of liveability prioritized extent of city extension and growing dependency on vehicles whilst targeting human and financial entrepreneurial investment; more recent conceptual, research and policy approaches to liveability dwell on social concerns forerunning equity and the advancement of the underprivileged. Moreover, use of the concept of liveability summoned recognition of other concepts, such as sustainable-city, smart-city, global-city, perfectcity, fastest-city. These are interdependent yet not entirely overlapping (Antonescu, 2017).

Research in Valletta on the impact of holding the ECoC title and yearly events such as 'Notte Bianca' illuminated the overall positive perceptions of the residents' experience, particularly of Valletta's older residents (65-80 years). Whilst acknowledging challenges such as noise and parking they strongly expressed such occasions and cultural offerings brought life back into Valletta and affirmed this as a source of pride for them (Borg, 2017).

However, the literature also documents that most Valletta residents face difficulties related to the cost of building maintenance and parking (Ebejer, 2016). More recently, late night disturbances from the catering establishments negatively impacted liveability in Valletta:

Not enough attention is being given to the impact of the increased evening activity on residents. Noise in the evenings is becoming more of a nuisance to residents, to the extent that night time sleep is being disrupted. Unless the problem of night time disturbance is addressed, Valletta risks losing more residents and this would undermine regeneration objectives (p. 6).

4.3 POWER, STAKEHOLDERSHIP AND INEQUALITY

Power is indispensable for humans to engage in practices that qualify them as social and political beings. Power may be used to assist or obstruct; to assign responsibility to a human agent or agency; and to shape and control one's life and realize one's objectives (Lukes, 2002). All three practices are relevant to this research and community development project.

The distinction between visible and invisible power (Lukes, 1974) is also relevant to this research and community development project. Power may involve the ability of an individual or a group - such as individual members or cohorts of the Valletta community or this community as an entity - to make decisions that are favourable to respective self-interest. In this case, power's visibility lies in the outcomes. Theoretically, this is known as the pluralist one-dimensional perspective of power (Lukes, 1974). Its shortcomings include that it limits the manifestation

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of power to the expression of “policy preferences, revealed by political participation” (p. 15) and that it limits (or ignores) the process (possibly featuring visible or unarticulated or unobservable conflict) of making such decisions (p. 13). The pluralist analysis also fails to factor in that “people might actually be mistaken about, or unaware of, their own interests” (pp. 13 - 14). Hence, it “is blind to the ways in which the political agenda is controlled” (p. 57).

Less evident, is the visibility of the second type of power, termed by Lukes (1974) as two-dimensional since this involves “the ability of powerful groups to limit what are deemed to be legitimate grievances which need to be acted on” (Crowther, 2013, p. 3), for instance when it one group successfully limits rights of vulnerable groups and/or minorities. In this case, awareness and knowledge of such rights would be fact but marginalized in the decision-making agenda. Power becomes visible in the expression of conflict and/or resistance from the marginalized and their allies.

Nevertheless, two-dimensional power is only a “qualified” (Lukes, 1974, p. 21) version of the pluralists’ analysis, and similarly and contradictorily flawed by putting too much emphasis on observable conflict. The status quo may be secured and pervasive to the point of unawareness of alternatives to the existing political processes (Bachrach and Baratz, 1970 cited in Lukes, 1974, p. 21). Not only the two-dimensional view posits that there is consensus if no grievance is uncovered; it also fails to adequately explain what a grievance is – “an articulated demand...an undirected complaint...a vague feeling of unease or sense of deprivation?” (Lukes, 1974, p. 24).

The three-dimensional view of power emphasizes power that is exercised invisibly, thus conflict may well remain limited to “potential conflict” (Lukes, 1974, p. 24). Indeed this potential “may never in fact be actualised” (p. 24) since this involves

...the broader social and cultural exercise of power that shapes attitudes and expectations so that people accept systemic inequalities as natural or inevitable. Wrongs that need righting are not articulated... This dimension of power is very economical in the sense that it does not require the mobilisation of resources to enforce it as it relies on self-limitation or self-censorship (Crowther, 2013, p. 3).

In the third scenario, it is harder to measure power outcomes, partly because the intervention might have long-term effects, partly because the nature of outcomes is also heterogeneous - in other words, empowering when at interpersonal level; and emancipatory when involving wider systemic change (Crowther, 2013).

Considerations explained in this review of power sensitize and deepen the project's engagement with power's visible and invisible manifestations in the context of the Valletta community at the time of the study.

4.4 VULNERABILITY AND RESILIENCE

Communities are “susceptible to the damaging effects of a hazard” (United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR), 2009, p. 30). Whether a specific area is vulnerable (or not) depends on existing conditions, characteristics and circumstances such as: the built environment; the adequacy of construction materials and the orientation of structures in space; population densities; people's livelihoods, savings and physical capital; natural resources; resource degradation; levels of health and well-being; and conditions of equality, peace and security (Wamsler & Brink, 2016).

However, much depends also on the population's and institutions' reactions and attitudes. Risk related to the susceptibility of the location and risk related to the capacity of people to react are to distinguished, also for operational reasons (Wamsler & Brink, 2016).

On the other hand, resilience refers to “the ability of a system, community or society exposed to hazards to resist, absorb, accommodate to and recover from the effects of a hazard in a timely and efficient manner, including through the preservation and restoration of its essential basic structures and functions” (UNISDR, 2009, p. 24). A resilient city is therefore one that withstands or overcomes climate- and non-climate-related, small and large-scale disasters (Wamsler & Brink, 2016).

In a small state like Malta, vulnerability is seen as both inherent and contingent. Prudent domestic policies and strategic positioning in the regional and global system, strengthen resilience to both inherent and contingent vulnerability. The EU offers increased opportunities for dealing with the social, economic, environmental and security challenges that support reduction of vulnerabilities while increasing resilience to exogenous and endogenous shocks (Pace, 2006).

In Valletta the rapid changes to Valletta's geospatial and social fabric reviewed in this document are countered by research evidence illuminating that the concept of Valletta as “home” has proven to be resilient to these processes of commercialisation and displacement. Difficulties are offset to some extent at least by the sense of resilience and adaptability that Valletta residents themselves often display (Deguara, Pace Bonello & Magri, 2018).

4.5 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Globally, in the 1950s community development was legitimately recognized as promoting better living with active community participation, if possible, on the initiative of the same community (United Nations (UN), 1953, p. 33) and it also became a recognisable paid activity in the United Kingdom (UK) (Craig, Mayo, Popple, Shaw & Taylor, 2011, p. 3). Arguably, during these times and particularly when combined with adult education, community development was abused as a smokescreen to control local populations (UN, 1953). Controversy persisted in the late 1980s and 1990s, the term was borrowed by fiscal conservatism to brand projects that undermined social and economic structures of local communities (UN, 1953).

Today, community development is more sensitized to such critiques but still features competing rationalities, ideas, traditions, visions and interests claimed by Right, Left and Centre (Shaw, 2011). Community development has potential for providing a public space to express position and collective identity or, indeed dissents; albeit this is no guarantee safeguarding from privilege preservation (Shaw, 2011). In many countries, communities are facing increasing pressures due to a variety of constantly evolving shifts that come about as a result of economic and social developments as an outcome of geopolitics, technological progress, globalization, migration, climate change.

These pressures to evolve with changing times are not inherently negative, yet they threaten the status quo, prompting communities to respond to novelty: possibly by adapting, possibly by resisting. Both possibilities may take place simultaneously, along a very broad spectrum, over diverse ranges of times and with the involvement of various stakeholders. Material and non-material outcomes would range, possibly with ambivalence between communities

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becoming generally more cohesive than before - or where things can go awry (Azzopardi et al., 2019).

Valletta is no exception.

Valletta's community shifted from inhabiting a night-time 'ghost city' where, once shops close, there is no activity to engage people; to a 'museum city', spurred by the Valletta 2018 events (Borg, 2017). A shift described as "not an option, as participation by audiences is the element that contributes to the city becoming more 'alive'" (p. 61). Research showed that Valletta 2018 was perceived as catalyst for urban regeneration and restoration, albeit residents made negative evaluations of short and long-term outcomes of these, based on concerned that the ultimate beneficiaries of such regeneration of buildings would not be the residents (Borg, 2017).

Notwithstanding, the literature also documents that a thriving Valletta resident community is also relevant to tourist attractiveness of the City because the social and cultural life of residents add vitality (Ebejer, 2016). "When visitors see and share in life of residents, there is a sense of connectedness that enhances the visitor experience" (p. 8).

5. POLICY PRINCIPLES

This section reviews a limited number of principles deemed essential to policy implementation (recent past, current or prospective) in the Valletta community at the time of the study, i.e. in the wake of Valletta's ECoC 2018 title, as well in the city's broader Maltese and EU context.

5.1 INCLUSIVENESS

An inclusive policy is specifically geared towards eliminating discrimination or facilitating diversity. Consequently, social policy areas where inclusiveness is highly relevant include mobility, housing, education, digital citizenship, leisure / recreation and political participation. The latter is particularly emphasised by EU service standards and principles, whereby inclusiveness is described as "how citizens and groups can interact and participate in open policy and decision making" (European Commission, 1995-2019).

Whilst IT and communications, art and heritage, public services and transport (Figure 3) are among the top industries that benefitted from the increased economic activity associated investment associated with Valletta 2018 (Bugeja & Vella, 2019, p. 10) the social inclusiveness impact of such investment is less tangibly calculated, particularly on such a short-term basis; thus makes case for the Understanding the Valletta Community project.

Figure 4: Industries that mostly benefitted from increased economic activity

Major Impact on Industry Gross Value Added (€ million)	
IT and Communications	21.0
Construction	15.0
Wholesale and Retail	8.9
Art and Heritage	8.6
Machinery and Equipment	7.1
Architecture and Engineering	5.8
Public Services	3.2
Transport and Warehousing	1.9
Financial Services	1.4
Other Non-Metallic Minerals	1.0
Water, Energy and Gas	0.7
Administrative and Other Personal Services	0.6
Other	17.2
TOTAL	71.5

(Bugeja & Vella, 2019, p. 10).

The commercial activity catalysed, at least in part, by Valletta 2018 was largely welcomed, especially by small businesses in Valletta. However, research flagged that efforts to reduce disturbance to Valletta residents are sorely needed. Combined to rising property prices, this may force our residents out of the Valletta community. In turn, this would negatively impact personal lives and the vibrancy and the social fabric of the city. Research evidence shed light on residents' desire for more community-based events (Deguara, Magri & Pace Bonello, 2018).

From the known research evidence it transpires that Valletta remains largely inaccessible to people with a disability, impairments, and mobility issues. MUŻA was identified as an example of good practice for structure and cultural offering that are inclusive and accessible (Deguara, Magri & Pace Bonello, 2018). Notwithstanding, equality and equity of representation of artists, particularly in terms of gender balance, are debatable.

In the run up to 2018 ECoC on-going construction related to several public and private projects heavily impacted accessibility. The Valletta Design Cluster aims at providing access to new facilities and public spaces in previously dilapidated neighbourhoods, such as the Biċċerija area. Spatial assessments of the city indicate a general improvement from 2016 (Zammit & Aldeiri, 2018).

Understanding the Valletta Community

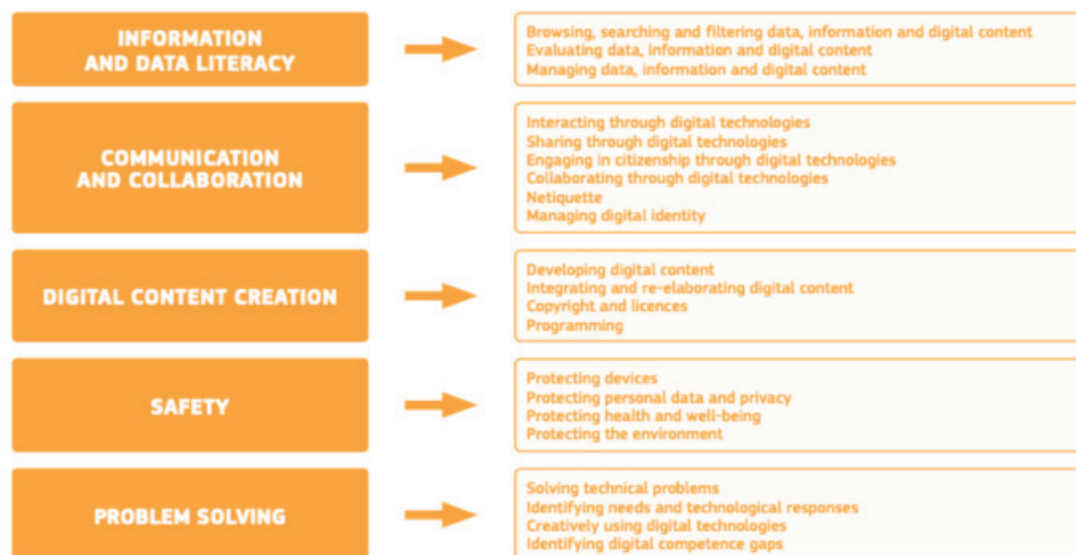
The literature also documents that vulnerable groups were one of the target groups identified by Valletta 2018 programmers. Examples included young people with different abilities and their carers who worked on the Sounds Out Loud project; whilst visual arts exhibition Tactile targeted the visually impaired community (Blagojevic Vella & Godhwani, 2018).

On a national level, the literature documents how the Valletta 2018 Foundation also facilitated participation of vulnerable or hard to reach groups by working with active ageing centres, schools and hospitals, for instance by providing specialised transport to mental health patients at Mount Carmel Hospital who visited the Orfeo Majnun Parade and the Toi Toi performance Down Memory Lane (Blagojevic Vella & Godhwani, 2018).

At the digital level, the EU is severely aware that many of its member-states' citizens lack abilities to exploit the full potential of digital technologies in their everyday lives. The European Commission developed the European Digital Competence Framework for Citizens (DigComp) and a related self-assessment tool (Figure 4) inform a common understanding of what digital skills are and how to assess them (European Commission, 2016).

In relation to this and in a community context, whilst planning of public spaces is usually considered to be an administrative duty, with digital tools it becomes more and more possible that citizens can play an active part of that development process, not only because they gain the knowledge in doing so by the tools, but can directly communicate and discuss phases with stakeholders. But IT can even rapidly produce spatial prototypes in order to test functionality, adaptability, usability, durability etc. (Dolata, 2017). There is no evidence that the Valletta community was ever involved in planning, design and testing ICT in public spaces (e.g. iBins).

Figure 5: DigComp 5 key areas and 21 competences



(European Commission, 2016, p. 21)

In sum, as regards inclusiveness, the literature identified local social exclusion as one potential opportunity cost of ECoC, depending on the precise strategies applied and given the geographical and historical specificities involved (Markwick, 2018). Indeed, one implication yielded from this review is that research should verify nature, incidence and extent of local social exclusion and of which cohorts.

5.2 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The World Commission on Environment and Development defines sustainable development as development that meets present needs, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (Brundtland, 1987). Sustainability has been applied across a range of public policy arenas and its operationalization has required a focus on tangible subject matters. It is apparent that the different sectors or disciplines of governments have, arguably selectively adopted and adapted the concept to make case for particular policies and programmes. By way of example, treasury and budgetary portfolios adopted 'economic sustainability', whilst environment portfolios focused on 'environmental/ecological sustainability' (De Haan et al., 2004).

Changes within a community need to be sustainable, which is why community development should begin with the day-to-day lives of its members (Ledwith, 2011). Through participation that focuses on empowering local members of the community, individuals are encouraged to critically reflect upon their realities. This reflection allows for a democratic, participatory approach that leads to collective action that can address the issues faced by community members.

When people join together to enact positive change within their communities, this prompts a growth in their confidence, thereby leading to a greater sense of control and empowerment in their capabilities as a community. Moreover, when members of a community join forces to meet their needs, this has a knock-on effect that results in the feeling that they are part of something greater than themselves, which in turn increases their sense of interconnectedness (Ledwith, 2011).

Communities' capacity can be enhanced through building upon the social fabric that ties communities together (Elliott, Mulroney & O'Neil, 2001). Multiple strategies for accomplishing this include, but are not limited to: developing human capital, promoting family-friendly practices where people are encouraged to participate in activities, creating opportunities for connection between community members, encouraging a sense of diversity and appreciation for the inherent strengths that result therein, making use of community members who are natural networkers, and building upon existing relationships with decision-makers (p.106).

In the wake of Valletta ECoC 2018, the literature recommends further research and cultural activity that will continue to build a sustainable legacy (Valletta 2018 Research Team & Valletta 2018 Foundation Evaluation & Monitoring Steering Committee, 2018). In the context of Valletta, sustainability is understood beyond environmental and geospatial issues. Issues related to governance and the economic impacts of culture were identified as a central consideration in the development of the cultural sector, shaping policy decisions and ensuring sustainable cultural growth (Valletta 2018 Research Team & Valletta 2018 Foundation Evaluation & Monitoring Steering Committee, 2018).

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ECoC Valletta 2018's various perceived impacts were condensed into five themes, namely:

1. Cultural and territorial vibrancy;
2. Governance and finance;
3. Community Inclusion and Space;
4. The Tourist Experience; and
5. The Valletta Brand.

A longitudinal research plan was created around these themes, with a plan to conduct relevant studies within each theme in collaboration with research partners, thereby setting out the process for the subsequent years (Valletta 2018 Research Team & Valletta 2018 Foundation Evaluation & Monitoring Steering Committee, 2018).

Particular strategies designed to promote development, particularly in the tourist sector, may conflict with wider cultural and socio-economic objectives of the ECoC event and also the longer-term goal of sustainable development. Opportunity costs may arise, such as conflicts of economic and cultural interests, local social exclusion and unsustainable outcomes, depending on the precise strategies applied and given the geographical and historical specificities involved (Markwick, 2018).

In the context of Valletta, research recommendations for sustainable community development include improved consultation with local communities regarding any policies affecting Valletta and its liveability; addressing local concerns; encouraging affordability in housing especially amongst the existing resident population; encouraging people-based policies in urban planning, including fostering walking routes around Valletta, as has been done in MUŻA; encouraging the use of public spaces in the city and safeguarding these against occupation by private enterprise, especially when this creates an obstacle to accessibility. Research also flagged the need to monitor the demand for tourist accommodation in Valletta to ensure that this is sustainable and ensuring there are contingency plans in case there is a significant drop in demand (Deguara, Pace Bonello & Magri, 2017, p. 45).

6. PRACTICES

This final section of this report is dedicated to a review of practices deemed relevant to understand the Valletta community at the time of the study, i.e. in the wake of Valletta's ECoC 2018 title, as well in the city's broader Maltese and EU context.

6.1 BRANDING

City branding has an increasingly significant role in government agendas as countries employ culture as a tool to attract tourism and investment. Branding implies handling relations among multiple stakeholders with different objectives (Knox, & Bickerton, 2003; Trueman et. al., 2004); whilst audiences engage with city brands as destinations for culture and investment (Borg, 2017). City brands are fuelled by processes where diverse stakeholders that include cultural performers, event producers, retailers and consumers, co-create brand value (Vargo & Lusch 2016, 2008).

A recent study that scrutinized perceptions on the branding of Valletta as ECoC 2018 concluded that the Valletta 2018 brand was perceived as a catalyst for positive change and as elevating the city's profile. The ECoC title presents an opportunity to sell a city's brand via cultural offerings.

The ECoC title potentially provides cities to benefit from urban and cultural regeneration and community development that can improve their image (Borg, 2017). Audiences engaged with the Valletta 2018 brand through a multitude of encounters that ranged from direct instances (such as advertising or actual participation in an event) to other indirect experiences (like word of mouth or third party contributions on social media). These encounters impacted on individuals attitudes towards the Valletta 2018 Brand.

The same study concluded that Valletta residents from the older cohort considered the Valletta 2018 brand as positive because it was bringing Valletta 'back to life' and elevating the city's profile. Yet they were also concerned with gentrification driving 'Beltein' out of the city. The younger former Valletta residents who, whilst still calling Valletta their home city, no longer lived there due to increased housing prices confirmed this to some degree. Notwithstanding, this cohort expressed that regeneration of the city catalyzed by the Valletta 2018 brand was not only necessary but vital in order to ensure Valletta's economic and social importance. Moreover, the Valletta 2018 brand was fund as having an impact on Malta, and Gozo, not just Valletta (Borg, 2017).

6.2 GENTRIFICATION

Valletta features demographically distinct pockets all over the city. One can be in the most affluent part of the city and turn round a corner to find a street whose houses are in ill repair, or turn from such street and unexpectedly end up in a plaza of beautiful facades. This makes it difficult to map out where gentrification is happening and that is why it has been argued that it would be best to consider the gentrification of Valletta as a whole. However, this makes the gentrification impact difficult to assess (Borg, 2014).

The wealthy and upper class are not new to Valletta; although throughout its history there has always been a cohort of the population composed of servants, labourers, craftsmen and artists (Borg, 2014). Straight Street had "an unenviable reputation as a prostitution centre which, frequented by the world's fleets, was the scene of fights and brawls" (p. 26).

Retaining existing residents whilst attracting new ones is challenging. New residents bring much needed investment into the capital by restoring properties that would otherwise decay (Ebejer, 2016). In this context, to discuss gentrification as if it were a loss for the city is to deny that the problem of the city results from "de-gentrification". Being nostalgic for an "old charm Valetta" is not enough to guarantee a future for the capital city, not unless we are happy with the city remaining a "museum" with lots of things to show the tourists, or a Saturday night place, with a number of cultural activities (some high culture, and others much lower!) and restaurants attracting custom from outside the city, but whose resident community otherwise slowly disappears. Is that the future of our capital?...one must ask who the "locals" are...the risk that the latter will not be able to afford the price of property in the city, if such property becomes sought after by more prosperous, prospective residents (Torpiano, 2016, p. 5).

The literature documents increased demand for residential properties in Valletta from two groups of people namely young persons (singles or couples), who seek properties at the lower end of the market, normally a small apartment which they refurbish; and wealthy foreign elderly persons, who seek larger prestigious houses which they refurbish. More than just a property, these are attracted by a lifestyle of living in a historic context with enjoyable pedestrian spaces and gardens and close to most social and cultural facilities – attractions that are hard to find in combination elsewhere in the Maltese Islands (Ebejer, 2016).

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However, research flagged uprooting possibility, particularly of residents in private rental accommodation. It is hoped that new legislation regulating the Rental Market brings light to this situation (Deguara, Magri & Pace Bonello, 2018).

In sum, class and broader diversities manifested today in the Valletta community have historical roots that add value questions of to what extent and in what ways is Valletta experiencing gentrification in contemporary times.

6.3 NETWORKED COMMUNITY RESOURCING

Successful community organizations require adequate resources to sustain and expand their work. Material and non-material resources are required to source, manage and run infrastructure and other resources. Since the political-economic context contributed to shaping all aspects of organizing, context is critical to the question of resourcing.

Consequently, one cannot discount the current neoliberal context and how it is heavily driven by demands for the commercialization, monetization, privatization, and commodification of everything possible. The neoliberal context has skewed not only views of the state, but also of civil society, by largely excluding community action organizations from it (Fisher & Shragge, 2017).

In this light, it is remarkable that in the Maltese Islands, community networked resourcing has been piloted as a community development strategy. Such research flagged identification, establishment, and building upon existing networks as assets to greater success of community initiatives and activities.

Opportunities to reflect and engage in dialogue in community spaces led to several proposals for how any issues or needs of the community could be better addressed or overcome. Such proposals included the importance of increased collaboration between different entities, the relevance of devising training programmes and activities that are based upon the specific needs of community members, and also the need for celebrating diversity within the community.

Recommendations included the establishment of further collaboration between different entities - both within the community and together with national agencies and provision of easily accessible and up-to-date information of the local services that exist in the community, to encourage locals to build their network and be more active in community life (Azzopardi et al., 2019).

6.4 URBAN REGENERATION

Urban regeneration is a process spanning years and even decades. Valletta's regeneration featured implementation of many important projects, including the Centre for Creativity, the pedestrianisation of Merchants Street, Pjazza San Ġorġ and Pjazza Kastilja; restoration and reuse of Fort St. Elmo; restoration of many Valletta buildings; the City gate project and the CVA/park and ride. Each was recognised as essential for the continued process of Valletta's urban regeneration (Ebejer, 2016).

For many years, anachronistic rent laws acted disincentivised property owners to rent property and landlords to invest in their Valletta properties (Smith, 2010, p. 79 as cited in

Ebejer, 2016). In the mid-nineties legislation changed to facilitate the renting out of properties but reluctance to rent properties to Maltese persisted (Ebejer, 2016). Degraded dwellings and streetscapes and many vacant properties resulted. Several government projects were started and completed between 2005 and 2014 and some historic buildings were restored and put to good use. This was one of several factors that fuelled confidence to invest in Valletta properties, for residential or commercial use; more investment in Valletta properties is expected in the coming years (Ebejer, 2016). Notwithstanding, planning constraints create additional costs and there difficulties to restore Valletta properties, making it more difficult for people to invest in Valletta's historic properties (Ebejer, 2016) - save for the wealthy with consequent effects on gentrification.

Arguably, privatisation increases lack of responsibility of planning services due to the limited economic resources along with a critical view of bottom-up policy making that yield to urban policy making primarily left in the hands of corporate-supported organisations (McCann, 2001).

Regeneration experiences of other countries and cities can resource best practices but approaches to regeneration cannot simply be copied from one place to another. Solutions for Valletta should be derived based on a proper understand of the issues and of the cultural and legal context because Valletta is unique in terms of urban heritage, its role as a capital city, its many diverse functions as a living city and also as a commercial and administrative centre (Ebejer, 2016).

Literature evaluating the impact of Valletta 2018 dwells on how in urban regeneration projects the involvement of the community is crucial in:

- Supporting community leaders to work together for common goals, with the challenge of creating new opportunities and functions; and
- Bringing new economic opportunities that improve quality of lifestyle by creating liveable neighbourhoods with improved healthy and safe community environments (Zammit & Aldeiri, 2018, p. 70).

It is argued that for an urban regeneration strategy to be derived, there needs to be a good understanding of what the objectives are. What are the objectives that ought to be set for Valletta's future? How would we like Valletta to be in 2020 and beyond? (Ebejer, 2016).

And, ultimately, who are the parties that make up the relevant "we"?

What are their visions?

Can the baggage and interests of such parties be reconciled and synergised within a framework of sustainable development? In what ways?

7. CONCLUSION

This report delivered the literature review planned for the Understanding the Valletta Community project by giving an overview of the geospatial and socio-economic context of Valletta and by reviewing literature sources that inform on main concepts, theories, polices and practices relevant to the research and community development programme being targeted by this project.

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The main points that emerged from the literature review exercise are that visible and invisible power dynamics are crucial to understand extent and ways of which the community and its stakeholders grapple with decision-making, conflict and related inequalities. In the wake of Valletta ECoC 2018, community development calls for attention to issues of liveability, vulnerability and resilience.

The discussion also identified inclusiveness and sustainable development as the two overarching policy principles informing the project. Literature on branding, gentrification, networked community resourcing and urban regeneration emerged as highly informative in setting the scene for the project at the practical level.

To sum up, Valletta is home to a resident community with a strong social and cultural life. Living in Valletta has always been subject to challenges and inconveniences; over the years the nature of these has changed and, arguably, increased. Evidence-based community action and development are key to effectively enhance Valletta's liveability in a framework of sustainable development.

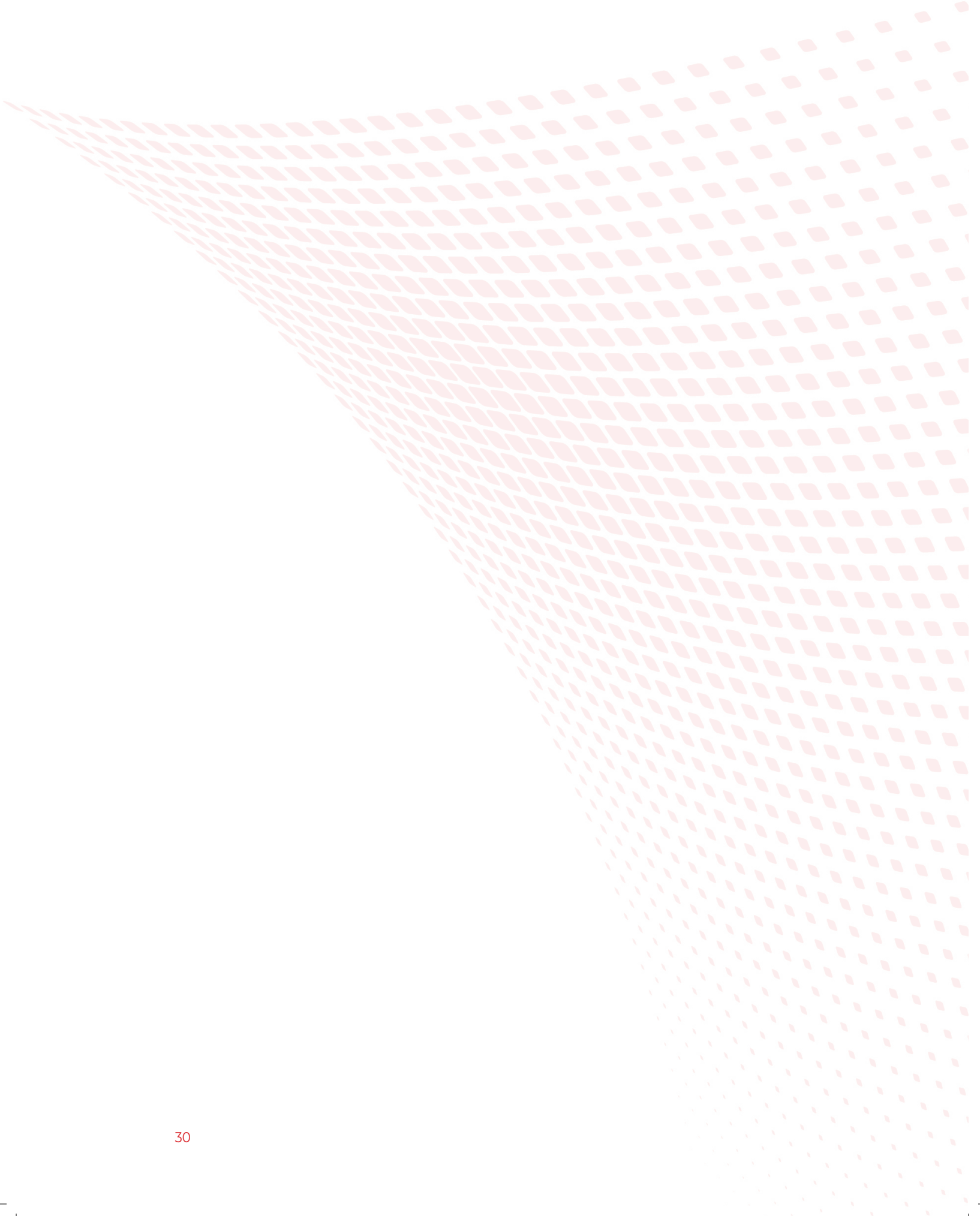
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2. RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS & METHODOLOGY (Progress Report)



1. INTRODUCTION

This report presents the research instruments deployed in the Understanding the Valletta Community Project and documentation related to obtaining clearance to carry out research by the Faculty Research Ethics Committee of the Faculty for Social Wellbeing of the University of Malta.

2. THE RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design factored in the collection of qualitative data using a face-to-face focus group carried out with stakeholders of the Valletta community recruited through elite sampling in view of roles they filled within state and civil society entities, or as private residents; and collection of quantitative data using a postal questionnaire administered to all 923 residents of Valletta at the time of the study.

3. RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

The following documents are appended in the pages that follow:

- 3.1 Covering letter of the questionnaire for postal administration to Valletta residents (English & Maltese versions)
- 3.2 The questionnaire for postal administration to Valletta residents (English & Maltese versions)
- 3.3 Focus Group Recruitment and Information Sheet (English & Maltese versions)
- 3.4 Focus Group Consent Form (English & Maltese versions)
- 3.5 Focus Group Schedule (English & Maltese versions)

Understanding the Valletta Community



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5th August 2019

Dear Sir / Madam,

You are being invited to fill-in the enclosed one-time questionnaire that will inform the study ***Understanding the Valletta Community***.

The Faculty for Social Wellbeing is carrying out this study in collaboration with the Valletta Local Council and the study is funded by the Alf Mizzi Foundation.

The aim of this study is to understand experiences of and relations between those holding a stake in Valletta, including residents, entrepreneurs, and representatives of governmental and non-governmental entities – with special attention to the experiences and effects of Valletta European Capital of Culture 2018.

The information you will provide will only be used for research purposes and only the research team will have access to it. The information you provide will be stored securely and separately from other personal information. Participation in the study is totally voluntary. Failure to participate carries no consequence. Your rights as a participant under the General Data Protection Act (GDPR) include the right to information, access, correction, complaint, deletion and not sharing information (data portability).

The questionnaire is anonymous. It is being provided in Maltese and English versions (back-to-back prints) for you to fill-in the version you prefer. It is very brief and will only require around 5-10 minutes of your time.

Once you fill it in kindly use the enclosed self-addressed and postage paid envelope (i.e. no stamp is required) to post it in return by not later than 30th August 2019.

Should you require further information please contact the research team on maria.brown@um.edu.mt / andrew.camilleri@um.edu.mt or +356 9940 4820 / +356 7921 5933. In the unlikely event that any of the questions cause stress or discomfort you can seek free and professional advice from www.kellimni.com

Your contribution is of great value to this research. We look forward to hear from your end.

Thank you.

Best Regards,

Dr Maria Brown
Research Support Officer III
Faculty for Social Wellbeing
University of Malta



VALLETTA
Città Umilissima

5 ta' Awissu 2019

Għażiż/a Sinjur/a

Ġentilment nistiednuk timla' l-kwestjonarju inkluż ma' din l-ittra.

Il-kwestjonarju huwa parti mill-istudju '*Understanding the Valletta Community*' mmexxi mill-Fakultà għat-Tiŝiħ tas-Socjetà tal-Università ta' Malta, b'kollaborazzjoni mal-Kunsill Lokali tal-Belt Valletta. L-istudju huwa ffinanzjat mill-Alf Mizzi Foundation.

L-għan ta' dan l-istudju huwa li jżied l-għarfien dwar l-esperjenzi u r-relazzjonijiet ta' partiti ta' interess tal-Belt Valletta, li jinkludu residenti, negozjanti u rappreżentanti ta' entitajiet governattivi u mhux governattivi, b'mod speċjali wara li Valletta kienet Belt Kulturali Ewropeja (V18).

Il-twegibiet tiegħek ser jintużaw għar-riċerka biss. It-tim ta' riċerka biss ikollu aċċess għalihom b'mod sħiħ u jużahom b'mod kunfidenzjali. Il-partecipazzjoni tiegħek hija kompletament volontarja, skont ir-regolamenti tal-'General Data Protection Act (GDPR)'. Jekk tirrifjuta li tipparteċipa mhux ser ikun hemm ebda konsegwenza.

Il-kwestjonarju huwa anonimu. Bħal din l-ittra qed nipprovduh bl-Ingliż u bil-Malti, sabiex tagħzel il-verżjoni li tippreferi. Għandu jeħodlok madwar hames minuti.

Meta timlieh impustah lura billi tuża l-envelopp inkluż li għandu l-posta mħallsa, jiġifieri m'hemmx għalfejn bolla. Jekk jogħġbok ibgħatulna sat-30 ta' Awissu 2019.

Jekk tixtieq iktar informazzjoni iktbilna fuq maria.brown@um.edu.mt / andrew.camilleri@um.edu.mt jew ċemplilna fuq +356 9940 4820 / +356 7921 5933. Jekk f'xi punt il-partecipazzjoni tiegħek tinkwetak b'xi mod tista' wkoll titlob sapport professjonali bla ħlas fuq is-sit www.kellimni.com

Il-kontribut tiegħek huwa importanti ħafna. Għalhekk nistennew it-twegiba tiegħek bil-herqa.

Grazzi u sliem,

Dr Maria Brown
Research Support Officer III
Fakultà għat-Tiŝiħ tas-Socjetà
Università ta' Malta

Understanding the Valletta Community

Questionnaire

1. What is your gender? (Tick **ONLY ONE** box, the most applicable to your case)
 Male
 Female
 Other / Prefer not to say
2. How old are you? (Write down the number of years) _____
3. How many years have you been living in Valletta? (Write down the number of years) _____
4. What is the name of the street you live in? (Write down the name of the street)

5. What is the aspect of living in Valletta **that you mostly enjoy**? (Write down your answer)

6. What **service** or **improvement** do you as a Valletta resident require mostly / urgently? (Write down your answer)

7. Rate the following statements from 1 to 5 where **1** means **STRONGLY DISAGREE** and **5** means **STRONGLY AGREE**. (In each case, **tick ONLY ONE box**, the most applicable to your case)
I am proud of living in Valletta.
Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree
The parish feast celebrated in the area I live in is important to me.
Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree
The Valletta Football Club is important to me.
Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree
The Valletta Local Council is effective.
Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree
Overall, Valletta 2018 affected Valletta residents in positive ways.
Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree
8. **In general** do you spend your **free leisure** time in Valletta or elsewhere? (Tick **ONLY ONE box**, the most applicable to your case)
 In Valletta
 Elsewhere
9. How has living in Valletta changed in the past 5 years? Do you see such change/s as positive or negative? (Write down your answer in the space provided below)



Kwestjonarju

1. X'inhu s-sess tieghek? (Immarka kaxxa WAHDA BISS, l-aktar applikabbli għall-każ tieghek)
 Raġel
 Mara
 Ieħor / Nippreferi ma ngħidx
2. Kemm għandek snin? (Ikteb l-età tieghek b'numri) _____
3. Kemm –il sena ilek resident/a il-Belt Valletta? (Ikteb in-numru ta' snin) _____
4. X'jisimha t-triq li toqgħod fiha inti? (Ikteb l-isem tat-triq hawn taħt)

5. X'inhi l-aktar haġa li toqgħbok dwar li tkun residenti l-Belt Valletta? (Ikteb it-tweġiba tieghek hawn taħt)

6. X'inhu s-servizz jew it-titjib li għandek bżonn l-aktar jew b'mod urġenti bħala resident/a tal-Belt Valletta? (Ikteb it-tweġiba tieghek hawn taħt)

7. Evalwa dawn l-istqarrijiet minn 1 sa 5, fejn 1 ifisser MA TAQBILX B'SAĦĦA u 5 jfisser TAQBEL HAFNA. (Għal kull stqarrija immarka kaxxa WAHDA BISS, l-aktar applikabbli għall-każ tieghek)
Jien kburi / kburija li jien resident/a tal-Belt Valletta .

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Ma naqbilx b'saħħa	1	2	3	4	5 Naqbel hafna

Il-festa tal-parroċċa ċelebrata fiz-zona fejn ngħix jien hija mportanti għalija personali.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Ma naqbilx b'saħħa	1	2	3	4	5 Naqbel hafna

Il-Valletta Football Club huwa mportanti għalija personali.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Ma naqbilx b'saħħa	1	2	3	4	5 Naqbel hafna

Il-Kunsill Lokali tal-Belt Valletta huwa effettiv.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Ma naqbilx b'saħħa	1	2	3	4	5 Naqbel hafna

Meta tqis kollox, Valletta 2018 affettwat lir-residenti tal-Belt Valletta b'modi pożittivi.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Ma naqbilx b'saħħa	1	2	3	4	5 Naqbel hafna
8. **Ġeneralment, il-ħin liberu tieghek** tqattgħu fil-Belt Valletta jew barra l-Belt Valletta, f'lokalitajiet oħra? (Immarka kaxxa WAHDA BISS, l-aktar applikabbli għall-każ tieghek)
 Fil-Belt Valletta
 Lokalitajiet oħra
9. F'dawn l-aħħar ħames snin, kif inbidlet l-esperjenza tar-residenti tal-Belt Valletta? Dawn il-bidliet inti tarahom pożittivi jew negattivi? (Ikteb it-tweġiba tieghek hawn taħt)

Understanding the Valletta Community



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VALLETTA
Città Umilissima

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University of Malta
Msida MSD 2080, Malta

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socialwellbeing@um.edu.mt

www.um.edu.mt/socialwellbeing

5th August 2019

Dear prospective participant,

This is an invitation to participate in a focus group that will inform the research study ***Understanding the Valletta Community***.

The Faculty for Social Wellbeing is carrying out this study in collaboration with the Valletta Local Council and the study is funded by the Alf Mizzi Foundation.

The aim of this study is to understand experiences of and relations between those holding a stake in Valletta, including residents, entrepreneurs, and representatives of governmental and non-governmental entities – with special attention to the experiences and effects of Valletta European Capital of Culture 2018.

You are being invited to participate in a focus group (i.e. a group discussion) of around one (1) hour duration.

Date: _____

Time: _____

Venue address: _____

Audio recording will be used to make it easier to record and understand the information you will provide.

Pseudonyms will be used, meaning that your identity will be substituted with a fiction name in such a way that additional information would be required for your identity to be established.

The information you will provide will only be used for research purposes and only the research team will have access to it. The information you provide will be stored securely and separately from other personal information.

Your rights as a participant under the General Data Protection Act (GDPR) include the right to information, access, correction, complaint, deletion, not sharing information (data portability) and to withdraw consent.

Participation in the study is totally voluntary. You can refuse to participate or discontinue your participation at any time and without giving a reason, and this would carry no consequence.

Should any of the questions cause stress or discomfort you can seek free and professional advice from www.kellimni.com

To participate kindly fill-in the form below and deposit the form at the desk where this information sheet is being provided or email it / Whatsapp it to the contacts below. The research team will contact you in due course.

Should you require further information please contact the research team on maria.brown@um.edu.mt / andrew.camilleri@um.edu.mt or +356 9940 4820 / +356 7921 5933.

Your contribution is of great value to this research. We look forward to hear from your end.

Thank you and best regards,

Dr Maria Brown
Research Support Officer III
Faculty for Social Wellbeing
University of Malta



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5 ta' Awissu 2019

Għażiż Sinjur/a,

Inti mistieden / mistiedna tipparteċipa f'focus group' u b'hekk tagħti kontribut fl-istudju **'Understanding the Valletta Community'** mmexxi mill-Fakultà għat-Tiŝiħ tas-Socjetà tal-Università ta' Malta b'kollaborazzjoni mal-Kunsill Lokali tal-Belt Valletta. L-istudju huwa ffinanzjat minn Alf Mizzi Foundation.

L-għan ta' dan l-istudju huwa li jżied l-għarfien dwar l-esperjenzi u r-relazzjonijiet ta' partiti ta' interess tal-Belt Valletta, li jinkludu residenti, negozjanti u rappreżentanti ta' entitajiet governattivi u mhux governattivi, b'mod speċjali wara li Valletta kienet Belt Kulturali Ewropeja (V18).

Inti mistieden / mistiedna tipparteċipa f'din id-diskussjoni ta' madwar siegħa li ser issejtni:

Data: _____

Hin: _____

Post: _____

Id-diskussjoni tkun rekordjata sabiex tissemplifika l-analiżi.

L-identitajiet jibqgħu mistura b'użu ta' psewdonimi.

L-informazzjoni li tagħtina tintuża biss għall-istudju.

It-tim ta' riċerkaturi ser jirrispetta d-drittijiet tiegħek bħala parteċipant kif mitluba mill- 'General Data Protection Act (GDPR)'.

Il-parteeipazzjoni tiegħek tkun fuq bażi volontarja u int tista' twaqqafha meta mixtieq mingħajr ma tagħti raġuni u bla ebda konsegwenza.

Tista' wkoll titlob sapport bla ħlas fuq is-sit www.kellimni.com

Sabiex tipparteċipa jekk jogħġbok imla' l-formola t'hawn taht u halliha fejn indikat jew ibgħatha imejl jew whatsapp fuq il-kuntatti t'hawn taht.

Jekk tixtieq iktar informazzjoni għamel kuntatt ma' maria.brown@um.edu.mt / andrew.camilleri@um.edu.mt jew ċemplilhom fuq +356 9940 4820 / +356 7921 5933.

Il-kontribut tiegħek huwa importanti ħafna u għalhekk nistennew minn għandek bil-herqa.

Grazzi u sliem,

Dr Maria Brown
Research Support Officer III
Fakultà għat-Tiŝiħ tas-Socjetà
Università ta' Malta

Understanding the Valletta Community



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Title (circle one): Mr Mrs Ms Dr Other: _____

Name and surname: _____

Age: _____ (participation is only for adults, i.e. 18 years or more)

Role / Interest in the Valletta Community: _____

(Examples: resident, owning business in Valletta, working in Valletta, parish priest, NGO etc.)

Telephone / mobile number: _____

Titlu (immarka): Mr Mrs Ms Dr Oħrajn: _____

Isem u kunjom: _____

Età: _____ (sabiex tipparteċipa jrid ikollok 18 –il sena jew aktar)

Rwol / interess fil-Belt Valletta: _____

(Eżempji: resident, negozju fil-Belt Valletta, tmur għax-xogħol fil-Belt Valletta, NGO eċċ.)

Numru tal-mowbajl / telefon: _____

Formola ta' Kunsens

Grazzi talli aċċettajt li tipparteċipa fl-istudju *'Understanding the Valletta Community'*.

Jekk jogħġbok aqra l-istqarrija ta' parteċipazzjoni u qabel tiffirma li aċċettajt staqsi dak li tixtieq tiċċara lill-persuna li qed tassistik.

Bħala parteċipant/a f' din ir-riċerka jiena fhimt u naċċetta li:

1. Qed nipparteċipa f' 'focus group' (diskussjoni fi grupp) ta' madwar siegħa li qed iseħħ f' ħin u post konvenjenti għalija;
2. Id-diskussjoni qed tkun rekordjata sabiex dan jissemplifika l-analiżi tad-dejta;
3. Il-parteeipazzjoni tiegħi hija kompletament fuq bażi volontarja;
4. Nista' nirrifjuta li nkompli nipparteċipa x' ħin irid mingħajr ma nispejga għalfejn u bla ebda konsegwenza; u f' dak il-każ l-informazzjoni li nkun tajt sa dak il-ħin tinqered;
5. Qed ningħata kopja ta' din il-formola ta' kunsens li tinkludi d-dettalji tar-riċerkatur;
6. Nista' wkoll nsib sapport professjonali bla ħlas fuq is-sit www.kellimni.com

It-tim ta' riċerkaturi, rappreżentat mill-firmatarju ta' din il-formola, impenjat li:

1. Ma juża ebda qerq fil-proċess ta' riċerka;
2. Iżomm il-kunfidenzjalità billi juża d-dejta għal skopijiet ta' riċerka biss;
3. Isegwi r-regolamenti tal-'General Data Protection Act (GDPR)' f' dak li għandu x'jaqsam ma' d-dritt tal-parteeipanti għall-informazzjoni, tiswija, oġġezzjoni, aċċess, manigġjar ta' dejta eċċ.;
4. Juża psewdonimi u sistemi sabiex l-identità tal-parteeipanti tibqa' mistura;
5. Jagħti aċċess għar-riżultati tar-riċerka meta mitluba;
6. Iwieġeb il-mistoqsijiet kollha tal-parteeipanti.

F'każ ta' bżonn ikkomunika ma' andrew.camilleri@um.edu.mt jew billi ċċempillu fuq +356 7921 5933.

Il-kontribut tiegħek huwa importanti ħafna.

Grazzi.

Isem u kunjom tal-parteeipant/a

Firma tall-parteeipant/a

Numru tal-mowbajl / telefon tal-parteeipant/a (jekk tixtieq)

Data

Dr Andrew Camilleri

Isem u kunjom ir-riċerkatur

Firma tar-riċerkatur

Consent Form

Thank you for accepting to participate in the research study *Understanding the Valletta Community*.

Understanding the Valletta Community



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Kindly read the statement of participation below, clarify any concerns you may have with the person who is assisting you and once all is clarified kindly sign in acceptance.

Acceptance to participation in this study implies that, as a research participant:

1. I am participating in a focus group of approximately one (1) hour duration that is held at a time and place that are convenient to me;-
2. I accept that the focus group is being audio recorded in order to facilitate the data analysis;-
3. My participation is completely voluntary;
4. I understand that I can refuse to participate or to discontinue my participation at any time, without giving a reason and without being penalized. In the case that I withdraw, all the records and information collected will be destroyed;
5. I am being given a copy of this consent form, which includes all the contact details of the researcher;
6. I can access free professional support by accessing www.kellimni.com

The research team, represented by the undersigned, commits to:

1. Not using any form of deception in the data collection process;
2. Treating data with strict confidentiality by using it only for the purpose of the study;
3. Managing data by following the General Data Protection Act (GDPR) as regards participants' right to information, access, rectification, objection, erasure, data portability and consent withdrawal;
4. Ensuring that only the research team will have access to the raw data;
5. Using pseudonyms to the extent that reports cannot lead to the identity of the research participants;
6. Storing data securely and separately from personal information;
7. Giving access to the results of the research study if required and once the study is finalised;
8. Answering all questions and addressing participant's concerns about participation in this study at any point in time.

Should you require further information please contact the undersigned on andrew.camilleri@um.edu.mt or +356 7921 5933.

Your contribution is of great value to this research.

Thank you.

Name & surname of research participant

Signature of research participant

Telephone / mobile number of research participant (optional)

Date

Dr Andrew Camilleri

Name & surname of researcher

Signature of researcher



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Focus Group (Diskussjoni fi Grupp)

1. X'importanza għandhom il-festi tal-parroċċi tal-Belt Valletta llum il-ġurnata?
2. X'effetti pożittivi u negattivi jkollhom iċ-ċelebrazzjonijiet ta' dawn il-festi fuq il-ħajja ta' kuljum tagħkom?
(Eżempji: Jiżdienu / jonqsu għaqda, komunikazzjoni, pika, sbuħija, manutenzjoni, storbju, ħmieġ eċċ)
3. Valletta 2018:
 - i. X'inhi l-opinjoni tagħkom dwar dan l-avveniment? (in ġenerali)
 - ii. X'kontu qed tixtiequ li ser jiġri meta smajtu li Valletta kienet ser tiehu dan it-titlu? (aspettativi)
 - iii. Dak li mbagħad ġara, laħaq / qabeż / falla l-aspettativi tagħkom? Għaliex?
 - iv. X'effetti pożittivi u negattivi ħalliet Valletta 2018?
4. X'inhuma l-assi tal-Belt Valletta?
X'jista' jsir sabiex dawn jissahħu u jrendu aktar? Min għandu jkun involut f'din il-ħidma?
(Eżempji: gvern, kunsill lokali, soċjetà ċivili bħal każini tal-baned, parroċċi, NGOs eċċ).
5. X'inhuma l-problemi li hawn bħalissa fil-Belt Valletta? (Eżempji: piki, faqar, nuqqas ta' servizzi (mediċi, edukattivi), illitteriżmu, storbju, ħmieġ, kriminalità)
X'inhuma l-kawżi ta' dawn il-problemi? Jew x'jagħmilhom aġħar?
X'jista' jsir sabiex dawn jingħelbu / jitnaqqsu? Min għandu jkun involut f'din il-ħidma?
(Eżempji: gvern, kunsill lokali, soċjetà ċivili bħal każini tal-baned, parroċċi, NGOs eċċ).
6. X'tip ta' relazzjonijiet hemm bejn: (Eżempji: piki, kollaborazzjoni, tolleranza, rispett, mibgħeda eċċ).
 - i. residenti bejniethom, i.e. tal-istess zona u bejn zoni differenti; dawk imwiela l-Belt u dawk li ġew dawn l-aħħar 5-10 snin?
 - ii. residenti u negozjanti?
 - iii. residenti u min jaħdem il-Belt jew iżurha għall-qadi?
 - iii. residenti u turisti?
 - iv. residenti u kunsill lokali?
 - v. residenti u servizzi/uffiċini tal-Gvern?
7. Tagħmel kuntatt mal-Kunsill Lokali tal-Belt Valletta? Għal liema raġunijiet?
Kif tinqeda (tajjeb, ħażin eċċ..)?
X'ħidma tistenna li titwettaq mill-Kunsill Lokali tal-Belt Valletta?
8. X'inhi r-relazzjoni bejn ir-residenti u t-tim tal-futbol tal-Belt?
9. Politikament, kif inhi mqassma l-Belt Valletta?
10. Kif inbidlet l-Belt Valletta dawn l-aħħar ħames snin? Dawn il-bidliet huma pożittivi jew negattivi?
11. Hemm xi kwistjonijiet / mistoqsijiet oħra li thossu huma mportanti li niddiskutu?

Understanding the Valletta Community



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Focus Group (Diskussjoni fi Grupp)

1. X'importanza għandhom il-festi tal-parroċċi tal-Belt Valletta llum il-ġurnata?
2. X'effetti pożittivi u negattivi jkollhom iċ-ċelebrazzjonijiet ta' dawn il-festi fuq il-ħajja ta' kuljum tagħkom? (Eżempji: Jiżdiedu / jonqsu għaqda, komunikazzjoni, pika, sbuhija, manutenzjoni, storbju, ħmieġ eċċ)
3. Valletta 2018:
 - i. X'inhi l-opinjoni tagħkom dwar dan l-avveniment? (in generali)
 - ii. X'kontu qed tixtiequ li ser jiġri meta smajtu li Valletta kienet ser tieħu dan it-titlu? (aspettativi)
 - iii. Dak li mbagħad ġara, lahaq / qabeż / falla l-aspettativi tagħkom? Għaliex?
 - iv. X'effetti pożittivi u negattivi ħalliet Valletta 2018?
4. X'inhuma l-assi tal-Belt Valletta?

X'jista' jsir sabiex dawn jissaħħu u jrendu aktar? Min għandu jkun involut f'din il-ħidma? (Eżempji: gvern, kunsill lokali, soċjetà ċivili bħal każini tal-baned, parroċċi, NGOs eċċ).
5. X'inhuma l-problemi li hawn bħalissa fil-Belt Valletta? (Eżempji: piki, faqar, nuqqas ta' servizzi (mediċi, edukattivi), illitteriżmu, storbju, ħmieġ, kriminalità)

X'inhuma l-kawżi ta' dawn il-problemi? Jew x'jagħmilhom aġħar?
X'jista' jsir sabiex dawn jingħelbu / jitnaqqsu? Min għandu jkun involut f'din il-ħidma? (Eżempji: gvern, kunsill lokali, soċjetà ċivili bħal każini tal-baned, parroċċi, NGOs eċċ).
6. X'tip ta' relazzjonijiet hemm bejn: (Eżempji: piki, kollaborazzjoni, tolleranza, rispett, mibgħeda eċċ).
 - i. residenti bejniethom, i.e. tal-istess zona u bejn zoni differenti; dawk imwielta l-Belt u dawk li ġew dawn l-aħħar 5-10 snin?
 - ii. residenti u negozjanti?
 - iii. residenti u min jaħdem il-Belt jew iżurha għall-qadi?
 - iii. residenti u turisti?
 - iv. residenti u kunsill lokali?
 - v. residenti u servizzi/uffiċini tal-Gvern?
7. Tagħmel kuntatt mal-Kunsill Lokali tal-Belt Valletta? Għal liema raġunijiet?

Kif tinqeda (tajjeb, ħażin eċċ..)?
X'ħidma tistenna li titwettaq mill-Kunsill Lokali tal-Belt Valletta?
8. X'inhi r-relazzjoni bejn ir-residenti u t-tim tal-futbol tal-Belt?
9. Politikament, kif inhi mqassma l-Belt Valletta?
10. Kif inbidlet l-Belt Valletta dawn l-aħħar ħames snin? Dawn il-bidliet huma pożittivi jew negattivi?
11. Hemm xi kwistjonijiet / mistoqsijiet oħra li tħossu huma mportanti li niddiskutu?



4.2 UREC approval



Maria Brown <maria.brown@um.edu.mt>

FOR REVIEW: Form Publisher - UREC FORM V:5JULY2019 2479
6 messages

20 August 2019 at 07:38

Dr Maria Brown <maria.brown@um.edu.mt>
To: SWB FREC <research-ethics.fsw@um.edu.mt>
Cc: ANDREW AZZOPARDI <andrew.azzopardi@um.edu.mt>, andrew camilleri <andrew.camilleri@um.edu.mt>

Dear Sir / Madam

Kindly find enclosed zipped folder containing materials to be used for the *Understanding the Valletta Community Project* undertaken by the Faculty for Social Wellbeing

Further to self-assessment, materials are being sent for review and kindly requesting accelerated approval procedure due to project timeframes.

Let us know if you require further information.

Thank you.

Kind regards

Dr Maria Brown
Visiting Senior Lecturer
University of Malta

Research Support Officer III
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Academic profile: <https://www.um.edu.mt/profile/mariabrown>
Google Scholar: <https://scholar.google.com/citations?user=x18ZiAcAAAAJ&hl=en>

3. DATA GATHERING & ANALYSIS (Methodology Report)

INTRODUCTION

This report presents the research questions of the research study and details on data-gathering instruments and data analysis methods. It also gives an account of how access to field of research was gained and the strategies adopted to sample and recruit participants in due diligence of ethical considerations. It concludes with observations on limitations of the study and details of any mitigating measures undertaken.

2. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

By drawing on the research study objectives detailed in the work programme, the research study sought to answer the following general research questions:

What values and characteristics do residents and stakeholders attribute to Valletta?
How do residents and stakeholder discursively engage with these values and characteristics?

What are the challenges that some neighbourhoods face?
In particular, what are the liveability challenges?
How are challenges distributed in socio-geographical terms?

What SMART actions and initiatives can be developed with community stakeholders – particularly to decrease dependency on social benefits?
Which community resources may be deployed in the process?

3. DATA-GATHERING INSTRUMENTS

A questionnaire was developed with a total of nine questions that combined styles such as open-ended and close-ended questions. Close-ended questions included multiple choice questions and 5-point Likert scales ranging 1 to 5 to rate the intensity of agreement with literature-informed statements (see Deliverable 2). English and Maltese versions of the questionnaire were printed double-sided and accompanied by a cover letter that clearly stated objectives, timeframes and contact details of the research team (see Deliverable 2). These measures were undertaken to maximize response rates and user-friendliness; whilst ensuring standardized responses and maximizing external validity, as much as possible.

The focus group schedule was developed in a semi-structured manner to guide the discussion within the parameters of the general research questions, whilst maximizing internal validity by allowing the possibility of delving into unexpected but relevant aspects.

4. ACCESS, RECRUITMENT AND SAMPLING

The questionnaire was administered by post to all Valletta residential addresses according to the database available to the faculty for Social Wellbeing at the time of fieldwork. These amounted to 923 addresses, of which only 7 were returned to sender due to inability to deliver to the given address. The questionnaire was posted in Maltese and English languages (double-sided print) together with a cover letter containing details concerning procedure, ethical considerations and the research team's contact details, as well as a self-addressed and postage paid envelope to facilitate and maximize response. 175 responses were returned, thus producing a margin of error of $\pm 6.67\%$.

Understanding the Valletta Community

As regards the focus group, elite sampling was used to identify stakeholders of the Valletta community further to consultation with the Valletta Local Council and further to identifying stake-holding entities through the literature review exercise. The role of the community worker doubling up as researcher was instrumental to access the field and recruit participants. A total number of 8 participants attended the focus group representing the following – residents, the Valletta Local Council, the Malta Arts Council, a non-governmental organisation based in Valletta (YMCA), Heritage Malta, Spazju Kreattiv and the Valletta Cultural Agency. The focus group was of 60 minutes duration approximately and was held at the Valletta Local Council to maximize ecological validity. The discussion was audio-recorded to facilitate transcription at a later stage.

5. DATA ANALYSIS

Quantitative data retrieved using the questionnaire was inputted in Excel, sorted, coded and cleaned (e.g. street names were converted into zone numbers using a map formulated in consultation with focus group participants).

Quantitative data was then transferred to the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) whereby statistical tests were run. Examples include the Chi-Square test to test for associations between nominal variables, such as gender or zone of residence and overall impression of impact of V18. Likert scale ratings were tested using the One-way Anova test to verify any statistically significant differences between mean ratings for the different statements. A 0.05 level of statistical significance was used to validate significant differences and associations.

Qualitative data was transcribed ad verbatim, coded and analyzed using NVivo 12 software to identify themes and discourses relevant to shed light on the research questions.

6. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

A cover letter accompanied every questionnaire posted and a recruitment letter and consent form provided all the required information to focus group participants. Relevant information included information on required procedure, consideration of General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), confidentiality, access to findings etc. Whereas the questionnaire was printed double-sided to provide English and Maltese versions, it was clarified at recruitment stage that a focus group schedule in Maltese would put some focus group participants more at ease. Whereas the questionnaire was anonymous, the researchers explained to focus group participants that the information they provide would be associated with the stakes they hold in the Valletta community, e.g. resident, NGO, local council etc. Biased and leading questions were avoided and all verbal and written communication was politically correct. The research design and research tools were subjected to the scrutiny of the Faculty for Social Wellbeing's Research Ethics Committee, which also approved proceeding with the research (see Deliverable 2).

7. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY AND MITIGATING MEASURES

The research team considered the margin of error of margin of error of $\pm 6.67\%$ for the quantitative data as satisfactory when considering variables such as aging demographic, vacant property in Valletta, general survey fatigue and the summer period when fieldwork had to take place due to timeframes. Time and budgetary constraints did not allow piloting,



or sending reminders. Use of postage paid and self-addressed envelope and of a mixed-methods research design served as validation and mitigating measures.

Coding data always implies vulnerability to researchers' bias. For example, questionnaire questions that open-endedly queried respondents about enjoyable aspects about living in Valletta and urgent requirements had to be categorized by the research team to make quantitative analysis possible. The research team sought to maximize standardization levels and triangulated the analysis with the richer and ad verbatim qualitative data.

Furthermore, the remit of this research study is to inform community development and not to offer a blueprint. The role of the community worker in this regard bears potential of drawing on the evidence base to pursue community development projects with the identified stakeholders.



4. INTERPRETATION, REPORTING OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS (Final Report)

1. INTRODUCTION

This report presents findings of the analyses of qualitative and quantitative data gathered during Stage 3 of this project using the methodology explained in Deliverable 3. Research was carried out in the Valletta community between April and November 2019. The research design factored in the collection of qualitative data using a face-to-face focus group carried out with stakeholders of the Valletta Community recruited through elite sampling and collection of quantitative data using a postal questionnaire administered to all 923 residents of Valletta at the time of the study. 175 responses were received, and 7 envelopes were returned to sender (change of address). Thus quantitative findings bear a margin of error of $\pm 6.67\%$. A 0.05 level of significance was accepted to determine statistical significance when carrying out statistical tests.

The findings will be discussed in the light of the research project objectives, namely a problematization of the discourses around what values and characteristics constitute Valletta; and mapping of the complex and particular challenges that some neighbourhoods face, with special reference to the liveability challenges identified in the process of research.

The discussion of the research findings will be followed by research-informed recommendations and measures for the community development programme. In this manner, the report will also dwell on the research findings to address the remaining research project objectives, namely proposals for SMART actions to address the issues illuminated by the research; deployment of community resources in the proposed SMART actions; and proposals that target decreased dependency on social benefits.

The structure of this report is informed by this same outline.

2. DISCOURSES AROUND VALUES OF THE VALLETTA COMMUNITY: A PROBLEMATIZED ANALYSIS

2.1. SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS VERSUS INSTITUTIONALIZED SETTINGS

Analysis of quantitative findings about aspects of Valletta community life illuminated by the literature review carried out for this research study illuminated nuances and diversity characterizing the Valletta community in the post-V18 phase. Mean ratings for statements attributing value to being a resident of Valletta, the parish feast, the football club, the local council and the V18 title were all positively rated (Table 1). Mean ratings to statements concerning the value attributed to the football club and the parish feast were comparable. Mean ratings concerning effectiveness of local council and V18 effects on residents were also comparable.

To explain further, analysis revealed a similarity between values attributed to the parish feast celebrated in respondents' residential area (3.84) and to the Valletta Football Club (3.64), as well as a similarity between perceptions about the effectiveness of the Local Council and perceptions about the impact of Valletta 2018. Notably, mean rating scores for the two statements related to Local Council effectiveness (3.30) and impact of V18 (3.09) were the lowest, respectively (Table 1 and Figure 1).

Understanding the Valletta Community

2.2. 'US AND THEM'

However, analysis also illuminated that the mean rating of agreement with the statement "I am proud of living in Valletta" (4.70) was significantly higher than the mean ratings of the other four statements.

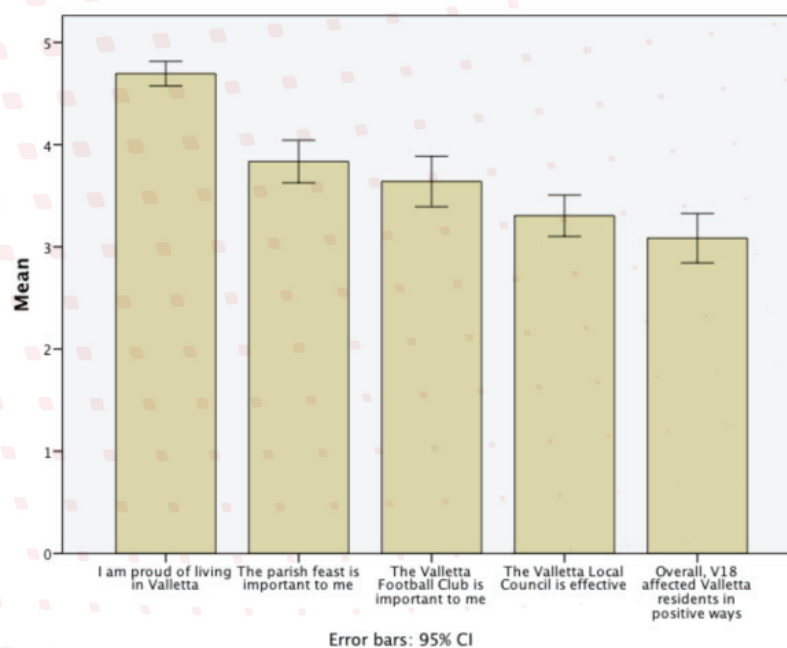
Table 1: Mean ratings scores

Statements	Mean	Std. Deviation
I am proud of living in Valletta	4.70	.778
The parish feast is important to me	3.84	1.353
The Valletta Football Club is important to me	3.64	1.601
The Valletta Local Council is effective	3.30	1.312
Overall, V18 affected Valletta residents in positive ways	3.09	1.568

(Chi-Square = 164.758, df = 4, p = 0.000²)

To further problematize this analysis it is worth noting that these results infer a more positive association with special interest groups – namely those implied in religious feasts and football clubs, rather than formal institutionalized settings – namely the Local Council and V18. Remarkably, pride of identity as a Valletta resident is overarching, secularized and enjoying a broad consensus. This finding was corroborated by analysis of further responses whereby 17.0% of respondents said Valletta was part and parcel of their identity, with special references to being born and bred there ('Beltin') (Figure 2).

Figure 1: Mean ratings scores and comparability



Qualitative data analysis corroborates and suggests an explanation for the critical stance residents expressed towards the V18 rooted in an understanding that foreigners, not native residents featured on the V18 agenda. In turn, this substantiates evidence for an us and them dynamic and lack of integration between the different ethnicities holding a stake the community. Qualitative data also testify to an understanding that at the time of the study, 'Beltin' were being shortchanged of the value they should enjoy in the Valletta community:

"A lot of chatter about businesses and this and the other I'm sorry but do you know that people live in Valletta, most were foreigners. This was what V18 was" (Resident 1).

"A lot of the businesses do not employ 'Beltin' or Maltese people" (NGO).

"...there are six Maltese shops beneath my property and Maltese persons work in them but none of them are 'Beltin'" (Resident 2).

2.3 LEGACY

Data also testify to that value that residents place of having legacy in the Valletta community. They are critical that gentrification and rising property prices is pushing the younger generations out of Valletta:

If I had children, I would not afford to find a place for them in Valletta even if I would want to and this is leading to an exodus (Resident 1).

For me having a situation where people will still be living in Valletta in 20 years is that you have couples that have or will have kids today so that in 15 years you will have young people (Urban Regeneration).

Some focus group data justifies safeguarding a legacy of 'Beltin' as a government strategic policy and practice:

We're not talking about increasing the population but at least keep it at 5,000 people. The public funds need to go there. Government is investing in some (Urban Regeneration).

Other data illuminates how special interest group and religious rituals provide spaces for safeguarding legacy, notwithstanding gentrification:

The nice thing about feasts is that it brings people together even those who have left Valletta... (Resident 3).

3. DISCOURSES AROUND CHARACTERISTICS OF VALLETTA: A PROBLEMATIZED ANALYSIS

Data analysis sought to identify discourses about characteristics of Valletta. In other words, the research team sought to understand how different stakeholders approach the discussion of specific characteristics with Valletta or how they engage with such characteristics. The following subsections delve into identifying, discussing and problematizing the identified discourses.

Understanding the Valletta Community

3.1 VALLETTA RESIDENTS AS DISEMPOWERED

Time and again research data describe Valletta as a city whose residents (and native residents in particular, i.e. with roots in Valletta – ‘Beltin’) are victims or vulnerable to some type and extent of negative impact with little potential for effective response (i.e. disempowered). Native residents in particular are described as already scathed by the urban, economic and social changes taking place in the past years or as risking some type of damage, poverty or social exclusion. Uneven distribution of the yields of the developments experienced by the city in recent years and exclusionary gentrification featured among the negative impacts identified as already taking place at the time of the study. Special reference was made to issues related to public spaces, infrastructure, housing, welfare, employment and participatory citizenship:

...in the evening you have night life and in the morning you have construction and on Sunday I live next to a church and they start playing bells (Resident 2).

Whenever they win the league I always find vomit of the 14-year-old girl who had vodka for the first time and even people who abuse drugs. I do not expect the 14 year-old to clean up after her but the band club should clean my doorstep (Resident 2).

However because before there were three families occupying a building, the owner used the law to get the residents out even compensating, and as we know persons do not afford to live here, this is a minus (Resident 1).

Those who rented or who lived in social housing cannot be said to have benefitted from the boom (NGO representative 1).

...the residents are suffering (Resident 1).

...there is a bracket of people who live from hand to mouth (Resident 2).

There is also a big misconception that certain businesses are going to employ Valletta residents (Resident 1).

Going through Valletta one would be surprised to hear someone speak in Maltese (Resident 1).

A significant amount of data illuminated inequalities in the field of participatory citizenship where, as a stakeholder, native residents are described as being less articulate or with limited possibility of engaging in participatory citizenship due to bread-and-butter constraints. Residents are also described as more short-tempered, as played by the system, as receiving less consideration than stakeholders with business interests, as limited in advocacy and valid representation:

Valletta residents are not treated well when they complain... (Resident 3).

Residents are bit more hot under the collar and they are not taken seriously. This leads to the means of communication even in terms of bureaucracy, when someone complains often they say, ‘Look this guy is a trouble-maker’ (Resident 3).

... if a resident makes an objection with the Planning Authority they are successful but

how many residents have the time and knowledge to file an objection? If there is no one to do it, it won't get done and the Authority enacts delaying tactics to ensure that it is difficult (Resident 3).

If a person from a hotel complains because it might impact tourism it is given more importance. Same street, same meeting...but the hotel person was given more importance than the resident (Resident 3).

There is no one who is a resident who is in a position of power. We had a Mayor who I have a lot of respect for personally who was not even a resident of Valletta (Resident 2).

The idea of the committees had been held under a strong leash by the previous Mayor... (Resident 3).

The worse is like that restaurant that took two car spaces to put outdoor tables. Apparently the Local Council gave him permission. Two parkings, this is not on pavement or a pedestrian zone but in an area with a severe parking problem because right now the council or something has done a whole block the pavement is all closed (Resident 2).

From a problematizing angle, it can be said that the data made available by the research construct the native Valletta resident as having little or no agency, as limited because of stereotypically-informed traits and as yielding minimum (monetary and non-monetary) profit (if at all) from the city's recent developments.

Some data broadened the extent of negative impact and of negligible/ limited agency by projecting onto the project underpinning this research or the younger and future generations – thus implying an intergenerational dynamic, particularly as regards exclusionary gentrification:

How can we safeguard and include the Valletta resident in the study? (Resident 1)

If I had children, I would not afford to find a place for them in Valletta even if I would want to and this is leading to an exodus (Resident 1).

Furthermore, there is evidence of breadth of analysis in this discourse because stakeholders linked negative impacts of Valletta European Capital of Culture 2018 to global trends of city development spurred by major events, such as the Olympics:

...this happens on many levels even during the Olympics, such as Athens or London, the effect on the community has a negative impact (Heritage Malta 1).

3.2 PROBLEMS AS EXACERBATED

The data also illuminated a discourse on problems characterizing Valletta as exacerbated because (a) they are taking place in Valletta (as opposed to some other localities) and (b) sustainable development (that includes monitoring and evaluation) are lacking: Valletta has an infrastructure of 200 years (Heritage Malta representative 2).

Understanding the Valletta Community

Many of the people who come and participate in these feasts do not live in Valletta. This needs to be considered. When events are in my village it is easy, I know because I go (Heritage Malta representative 1).

Mediterranean nights, Maltese nights, feast of this or feast of that concert and all the activities, the military tattoo and the Carnival. Everything in Valletta! Even for business it is only up to a certain extent that they are happy but then there is a pandemonium. If there is a concert at the Royal Theatre what should be done is that wardens are at the entrance of Valletta and who isn't a resident I'm sorry there are car parks and park and rides and they do not enter in Valletta, not everyone who comes here wants to park their car on the pavement in front of a door.

These problems are felt in Malta but in Valletta and Sliema are felt even more (NGO representative 2).

The excesses are everywhere but in Valletta are felt more than other areas such as Sliema (Resident 2).

You cannot control construction because you have nightlife, you cannot control nightlife because you have boutique hotels (Resident 2)

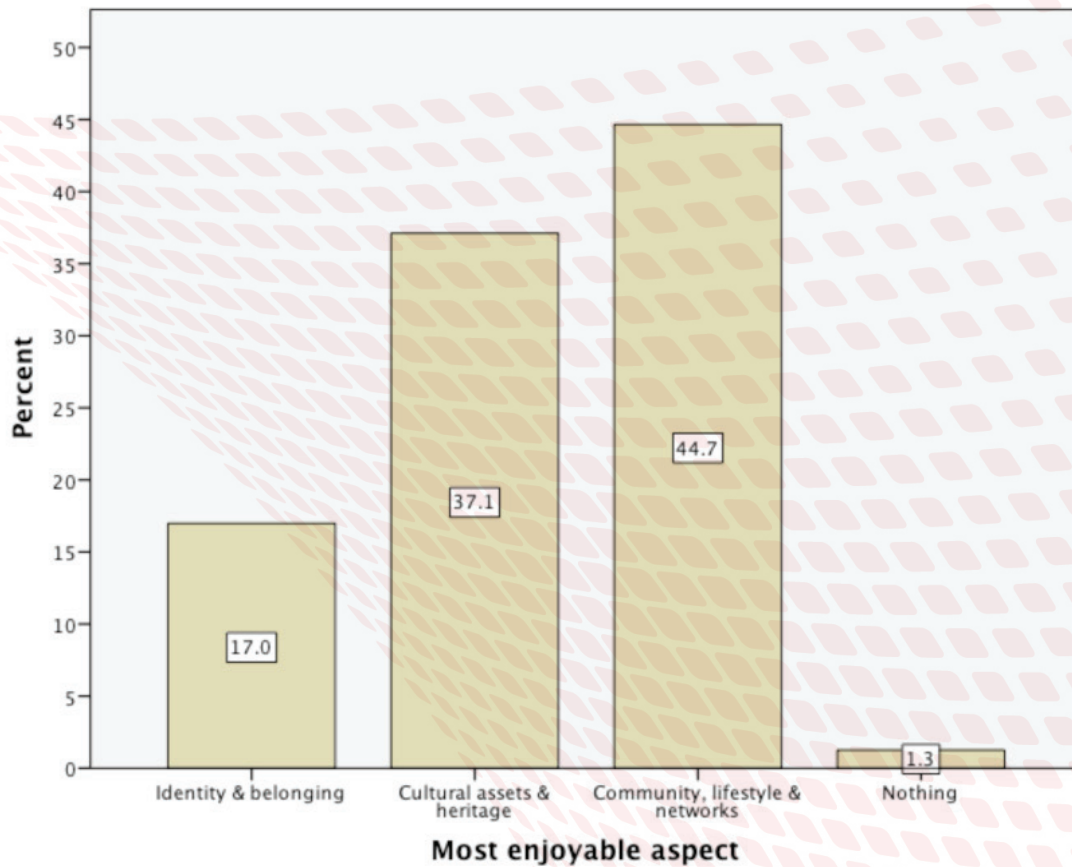
There is no thought (Resident 2).

...few of them (entities) are ready to take a step back and see what is not working (Heritage Malta 1).

Thus, this discourse emphasized that the architectural and spatial make-up of Valletta and the infusion of cultural and social vitality characterizing its very recent past have exacerbated the negative impacts of construction, commercialization and general urban development that severely limit liveability aspects such as pedestrian and residential accessibility, as well as parking issues.

Notwithstanding many of the mentioned characteristics are also linked to the aspects identified by questionnaire respondents as most enjoyable about living in Valletta (Figure 2). Among these, the city's community, lifestyle, vitality and networks were the most enjoyable aspect identified by respondents (44.7%). 37.1% mentioned cultural heritage and assets (either in general or by giving specific examples, such as the title as capital city, the bastions, the sea, the Cathedral etc.) .

Figure 2: Most enjoyable aspect of living in Valletta



3.3 POLITICS AS DIVISIVE?

Commercial interests or electoral defeat had the upper hand on servicing the Valletta community with spaces originally intended for political expression. The inferred discourse is how, at the time of research, party politics disserved the Valletta community:

The party clubs have all closed, one is a restaurant and the other I have not seen it open in a very long time (Resident 1).

A different discursive outlook illuminated other negative effects of partisan politics, more specifically dwelling on how electoral cycles affected liveability issues in Valletta. Change of partisan majority (reflecting government majority) in the Local Council taking place a few weeks before data collection was expected to have some kind of impact because – as the data explain – before this took place the Valletta 2018 Foundation could not be fully endorsed by a local council led by a majority representing the national Opposition:

Politics is the least thing that appears but it is there (Resident 1).

...the biggest relationship is that of the party in the Council with the party in Government. Having the V18 Foundation having no relationship with the Council is because there were different parties. It wasn't a surprise. Now there's a new dynamic (Urban regeneration representative).

Understanding the Valletta Community

The inference from this discourse is that, at the time of the research, party politics were perceived as divisive and consequently disserving holistic liveability in Valletta. Data below corroborate this analysis and illuminate political patronage dynamics:

...this one won't help me because they are not my colour. In the run up to the election it was clear how strong the perception and probably the reality that I will get helped according to my colour... (Resident 3).

The above data infer a yearning for authentic (small p)olitical engagement that outlives electoral cycle and is not enslaved by big party politics.

Notwithstanding, quantitative findings reveal a more ambivalent evaluation of local politics, with most respondents (51 out of a total of 168 respondents answering this question) stating they neither agree nor disagree with the statement 'The Valletta Local Council is effective'. Response analysis revealed no significant differences between the responses of males and females (p-value 0.874) (Table 2); nor between respondents residing in different zones of Valletta (p-value 0.321) (Table 3).

Table 2: Males' and females' rating of the statement

**Table 2: Males' and females' rating of the statement
'The Valletta Local Council is effective'**

	Gender		Total
	Male	Female	
Strongly disagree	6	8	14
Disagree	15	14	29
Neither agree nor disagree	22	29	51
Agree	13	17	30
Strongly agree	17	27	44
Total	73	95	168

($\chi^2(4) = 1.227, p = 0.874$)

**Table 3: Residents of different zones rating of the statement
'The Valletta Local Council is effective'**

Zone	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Total
Central	2	5	10	4	14	35
Marsamxett	3	6	5	7	8	29
Lower	3	10	20	7	5	45
Grand Harbour	3	4	5	8	4	24
Arċipiergu	0	1	2	0	1	4
Mandraġġ	0	1	2	2	5	10
Hastings	0	0	0	0	1	1
Due Balli	1	0	0	1	1	3
Tal-Habs	1	0	2	0	4	7
Forbici	1	0	2	0	0	3
Fuq il-Blata	0	1	1	0	1	3
Total	14	28	49	29	44	164

($\chi^2(40) = 43.594, p = 0.321$)

3.4 MERCURIAL DEVELOPMENT

The discourse concerning impacts of developments that took place in the five to ten years preceding the research illuminated that at the time of the research stakeholders perceived the nature and dynamics of such developments as mercurial:

Everything has pros and cons... (Resident 1).

The good and the bad are there... (Resident 1).

Although there is progress this is to the detriment of the way of life of the residents (Resident 1).

...before because Valletta was dead but now there is noise... (Resident 3).

The arts and business are nice but in the end we need to keep a balance in how one thing affects the other (Resident 1).

It is evident that, generally speaking focus group participants perceived progress and regress as two sides of the same coin. Qualitative data also illuminate how stakeholders had higher (and unmet) expectations.

On the other hand, quantitative data analysis revealed the majority of questionnaire respondents assessed the changes taking place in the Valletta community over the 5 years preceding the research study as overall negative (49.7%), compared to the cohort that perceived them as overall positive (33.5%) and the 16.8% of respondent that were ambivalent (Table 4).

Table 4: Residents' general assessment of recent ages by gender

Changes over the past 5 years		Overall positive	Overall negative	Overall ambivalent	Total
18-30	Count	1	3	4	8
	% within age cohort	12.5%	37.5%	50.0%	100.0%
31-50	Count	13	17	5	35
	% within age cohort	37.1%	48.6%	14.3%	100.0%
51-65	Count	21	26	6	53
	% within age cohort	39.6%	49.1%	11.3%	100.0%
66-80	Count	18	26	7	51
	% within age cohort	35.3%	51.0%	13.7%	100.0%
81+	Count	3	11	6	20
	% within age cohort	15.0%	55.0%	30.0%	100.0%
Total	Count	56	83	28	167
	% within age cohort	33.5%	49.7%	16.8%	100.0%

($\chi^2(12) = 12.962, p = 0.113$)

Understanding the Valletta Community

When these assessments were tested for significant difference, no such difference emerged when factoring in gender (p-value 0.073) (Table 4) or age cohort (p-value 0.113) (Table 5).

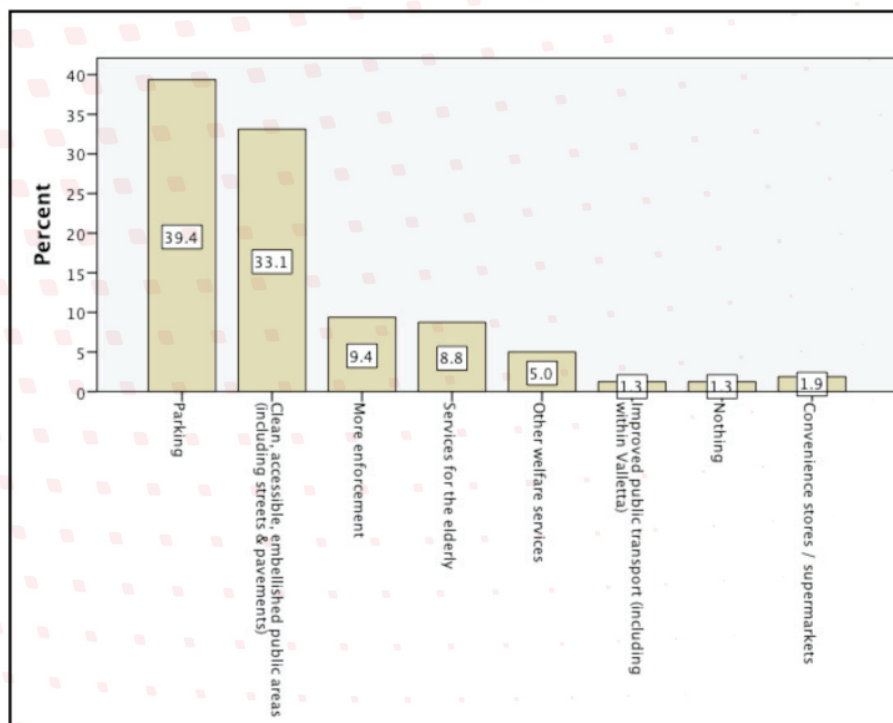
Table 5: Residents' general assessment of recent ages by age cohort

Changes over the past 5 years		Overall positive	Overall negative	Overall ambivalent	Total
18-30	Count	1	3	4	8
	% within age cohort	12.5%	37.5%	50.0%	100.0%
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51-65	Count	21	26	6	53
	% within age cohort	39.6%	49.1%	11.3%	100.0%
66-80	Count	18	26	7	51
	% within age cohort	35.3%	51.0%	13.7%	100.0%
81+	Count	3	11	6	20
	% within age cohort	15.0%	55.0%	30.0%	100.0%
Total	Count	56	83	28	167
	% within age cohort	33.5%	49.7%	16.8%	100.0%

($\chi^2(12) = 12.962, p = 0.113$)

4. MAPPING LIVEABILITY CHALLENGES

Figure 3: Service or improvement required mostly / urgently



Quantitative analysis illuminates the details of everyday struggles, with parking being identified as the most urgent / required service (39.4%, 63 respondents out of a total of 160 respondents who answered this question) followed by the need for clean and accessible pavements and streets (33.1%, 53 respondents), more enforcement (9.4%, 15 respondents), services for the elderly (8.8%, 14 respondents) and other welfare services (e.g. childcare, health centre) (5.0%, 8 respondents), improved public transport (including within Valletta) (1.3%, 2 respondents) and convenience stores / supermarket (1.9%, 3 respondents). Only 1.3% of respondents (2 respondents) said they felt nothing was required (Figure 3).

Qualitative analysis details some of the categories identified above. For example, the need for more enforcement synthesised numerous reports of noise pollution. Qualitative data corroborate and elaborate to illuminate daily experiences:

...in the evening you have night life and in the morning you have construction and on Sunday I live next to a church and they start playing bells (Resident 2).

For me the positive is evident but what I have observed is the increase in noise. I never manage to sleep more than 6.30pm, they either work next to me, they just finished next to me and opposite to me a boutique hotel is being built which will create noise at 4 am because of the tourists. Noise pollution is tremendous (Resident 2).

When you phone to complain about noise from establishments they answer that they have a permit till 1am or 4am. But what kind of noise? With the door closed? But in East Street and St Paul's Street there are people outside and if you complain he will say 'What am I going to do? Send people away?!' (Resident 2).

The problems aren't the boutique hotels, but that there aren't standard rules applicable to all. Why don't boutique hotels have rules that they can only stay open till 11 and then the doors need to be closed? (Heritage Malta 1).

On the other hand, various qualitative data describe problems or shortcomings as ubiquitously affecting the Valletta community and as experienced in a generalized manner by different stakeholders. Some examples are cited below:

On Facebook sites relating to Valletta you can start talking about how good bread is and it will always revolve to taking three quarters of hour parking (Resident 1).

People always have the same complaints and they say the same complaints (Resident 2).

In the 1990s I used to say look at boutique hotels but this was resisted. Once the doors where opened everything came in. We cannot find a balance. In the Local Plan of Valletta you had residential and commercial zones. When boutique hotels came in they did not limit them to certain areas so that they can protect the residents (Heritage Malta representative 2).

Consequently, analysis of quantitative data followed to triangulate the findings so as to map the identified challenges by gender, zone of residence and age. Respondents' sex made no statistically significant difference on the identification of the most urgent or most required service or improvement (p-value 0.621) (Table 6).

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Table 6: Service or improvement required mostly / urgently

Service / Requirement		Gender		Total
		Male	Female	
Parking	Count	28	35	63
	% within gender	38.9%	39.8%	39.4%
Clean, accessible, embellished public areas (including streets & pavements)	Count	20	33	53
	% within gender	27.8%	37.5%	33.1%
More enforcement	Count	8	7	15
	% within gender	11.1%	8.0%	9.4%
Services for the elderly	Count	7	7	14
	% within gender	9.7%	8.0%	8.8%
Other welfare services	Count	5	3	8
	% within gender	6.9%	3.4%	5.0%
Improved public transport (including within Valletta)	Count	2	0	2
	% within gender	2.8%	0.0%	1.2%
Nothing	Count	1	1	2
	% within gender	1.4%	1.1%	1.2%
Convenience stores / supermarkets	Count	1	2	3
	% within Gender	1.4%	2.3%	1.9%
Total	Count	72	88	160
	% within Gender	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

$(X^2(7) = 5.320, p = 0.621)$

However, the zone of residence of the respondent impacted on the identified service or improvement, as can be seen in Table 7 where the p-value stands at 0.000, i.e. lower than 0.05 level of significance. Thus, among residents of the Marsamxett (44.8%), central (42.9%) and lower areas (41.9%) the need to address parking problems faced by residents was flagged as most urgent / required. Among respondents from Arċipiergu (50%) and from Mandraġġ (50%) the need of clean, accessible and embellished public areas (including streets & pavements) was identified as most urgent / required among the range of services / improvements identified by all respondents.

Table 7: Residents of different zones identifying the most required / urgent service / improvement

		Parking	Clean, accessible, embellished public areas	More enforcement	Services for the elderly	Other welfare services	Improved public transport	Nothing	Convenience stores / supermarkets	Total
Central	Count	15	10	4	2	1	1	0	2	35
	% within zone	42.9%	28.6%	11.4%	5.7%	2.9%	2.9%	0.0%	5.7%	100.0%
Marsamxett	Count	13	8	1	4	2	0	1	0	29
	% within zone	44.8%	27.6%	3.4%	13.8%	6.9%	0.0%	3.4%	0.0%	100.0%
Lower	Count	18	15	3	3	4	0	0	0	43
	% within zone	41.9%	34.9%	7.0%	7.0%	9.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Grand Harbour	Count	7	7	7	0	1	1	0	0	23
	% within zone	30.4%	30.4%	30.4%	0.0%	4.3%	4.3%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Arcipiergu	Count	1	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	4
	% within zone	25.0%	50.0%	0.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Mandraġġ	Count	2	4	0	1	0	0	0	1	8
	% within zone	25.0%	50.0%	0.0%	12.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	12.5%	100.0%
Hastings	Count	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
	% within zone	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Due Balli	Count	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	% within zone	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Tal-Habs	Count	3	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	7
	% within zone	42.9%	28.6%	0.0%	28.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Forbici	Count	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
	% within zone	50.0%	50.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Fuq il-Blata	Count	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	3
	% within zone	33.3%	33.3%	0.0%	33.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Total	Count	61	51	15	14	8	2	2	3	156
	% within zone	39.1%	32.7%	9.6%	9.0%	5.1%	1.3%	1.3%	1.9%	100.0%

$(\chi^2(70) = 125.506, p = 0.000)$

Albeit represented only by 3 respondents, residents of Fuq il-Blata equally prioritized services for the elderly, parking problems faced by residents and the need of clean, accessible and embellished public areas. More enforcement was one of the priorities of respondents residing in the Grand Harbour area, but in equal measure to parking problems faced by residents and the need of clean, accessible and embellished public areas (30.4%).

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Table 8: Residents of different age cohorts identifying the most required / urgent service / improvement

		18-30	31-50	51-65	66-80	81+	Total
Parking	Count	6	19	24	12	2	63
	% within urgent requirement	9.5%	30.2%	38.1%	19.0%	3.2%	100.0%
Clean, accessible, embellished public areas	Count	0	10	14	20	9	53
	% within urgent requirement	0.0%	18.9%	26.4%	37.7%	17.0%	100.0%
More enforcement	Count	1	6	4	3	1	15
	% within urgent requirement	6.7%	40.0%	26.7%	20.0%	6.7%	100.0%
Services for the elderly	Count	0	0	3	6	5	14
	% within urgent requirement	0.0%	0.0%	21.4%	42.9%	35.7%	100.0%
Other welfare services	Count	0	2	2	4	0	8
	% within urgent requirement	0.0%	25.0%	25.0%	50.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Improved public transport	Count	0	0	1	0	1	2
	% within urgent requirement	0.0%	0.0%	50.0%	0.0%	50.0%	100.0%
Nothing	Count	0	0	0	1	1	2
	% within urgent requirement	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%
Convenience stores / supermarkets	Count	1	0	1	1	0	3
	% within urgent requirement	33.3%	0.0%	33.3%	33.3%	0.0%	100.0%
Total	Count	8	37	49	47	19	160
	% within urgent requirement	5.0%	23.1%	30.6%	29.4%	11.9%	100.0%

($\chi^2(28) = 48.113, p = 0.010$)

As regards, differences by age cohort, Table 8 shows that the majority of those identifying parking as the most urgent issue were 51-65 years old (38.5%) and 31-50 years old (30.2%). 37.7% of those identifying the need of clean, accessible and embellished public areas (including streets and pavements) as the most pressing requirement were aged 66-80 years (37.7%); whereas 40.0% of those advocating more enforcement were aged 31-50 years (Table X). Chi-Square testing proved that differences by age cohort were statistically significant (p-value 0.010).

5. SMART ACTIONS AND INITIATIVES

5.1. PROMOTION OF RESEARCH STUDY AND RELATED FINDINGS ON LOCAL MEDIA

Media promotion of the research study, of the planned community work and of the input of related stakeholders was a priority from Day 1. By drawing on the researchers' and the local council's networks, project outcomes have been and should be continuously disseminated on local traditional, online and social media so as to give visibility to the project and let prospective service users know of the possibilities for collaboration. Coverage by local newspaper Maltatoday and an intervention delivered by the key researchers on the local television programme Kalamita on ONE TV exemplify.

5.2 LAW CLINIC

The Law Clinic based at the Valletta Campus of the University of Malta has been offering free legal services by final year law students (supervised by warranted lawyers) to persons who cannot afford to pay for legal fees. It is envisaged that the team will now be providing its services within the Valletta Local Council premises to aid vulnerable Valletta residents.

This initiative may further thrive through a rigorous record keeping system that may require investment in ICT and recruitment and training of human resources. Nonetheless, rigorous record keeping may provide useful data on the community to inform further research policy and practice.

5.3 UNIQUE IDENTIFICATION NUMBER TO STREET LIGHTING

One of the frequent complaints of residents concerns faults with the functions of street lighting. However, at reporting stage, residents provide vague descriptions that hinder identification of the faulty equipment. Through a meeting with Valletta Management Unit within Heritage Malta a proposal was made to give a unique identification number to each streetlight, thereby reducing the guesswork necessary to find which streetlight does not work. This proposal was accepted and is currently underway to being implemented.

A further development may involve investment in intelligent systems that allow remote monitoring and data transfer concerning the operations of streetlights.

5.4 COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE VALLETTA LOCAL COUNCIL AND THE MALTA MEDICAL STUDENTS ASSOCIATION (MMSA)

At the time of writing the community officer (on behalf of the Valletta Local Council) is in liaison with the MMSA to provide Valletta residents with the possibility to have their blood tested for diabetes. Furthermore, an awareness campaign is currently being developed using World Diabetes Day as platform. An event is being planned to take place between the 14th and 16th November 2019.

Research findings suggest that public-private partnerships may be sought to (a) facilitate participation to this (and similar) event(s) by the elderly residents of Valletta (e.g. through transport and helper services); (b) to promote integration between foreigners and locals, integration between people with different backgrounds; and (c) to involve younger generations in the setting up and delivery of the event programme.

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5.5 COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE VALLETTA LOCAL COUNCIL AND THE MALTA-EU STEERING AND ACTION COMMITTEE (MEUSAC)

Collaboration between the Local Council and MEUSAC has been set up translating to monthly meetings. The objective is to facilitate access to EU funding by grassroots voluntary organizations within the community.

Research findings suggest that areas where voluntary organizations could positively impact the Valletta community's wellbeing include integration initiatives and initiatives that support active ageing

5.6 COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE VALLETTA LOCAL COUNCIL AND THE DEPARTMENT OF GEOSCIENCES OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MALTA

At the time of writing the community officer (on behalf of the Local Council) is in liaison with the Department of Geosciences to design and carry out a research study on indoor and outdoor air quality in several key locations within Valletta. One objective is to rigorously and scientifically gauge and evaluate the impact of traffic on the locality.

The research or recommendations resulting from it may be funded by corporate social responsibility funds.

5.7 COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE VALLETTA LOCAL COUNCIL AND VOLUNTARY ORGANISATION WIKIMEDIA MALTA

At the time of writing, the Valletta Local Council has just set up a partnership with Voluntary Organization Wikimedia Malta to formulate a joint grant proposal to access funds for a project that would give access to knowledge and learning on cultural heritage through the use of QR codes attached to key monuments and locations and the subsequent writing up of wikipages in several languages on the site in question.

Drawing on research findings, the informative content on heritage sites should seek to enhance cultural integration of contemporary society by drawing on any historical good practices, historical records or anecdotes that reinforce dialogue between cultures and nationalities.

5.8 ENHANCING IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

At the time of writing, the community officer is discussing the formulation of an impact assessment scheme with members of the Valletta Cultural Agency. The objective is to enhance the monitoring of development and its impacts on the Valletta community, particularly to monitor the impact of urban regeneration projects.

5.9 CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

At the time of writing, discussions are underway to develop a staff development plan for clerical staff employed at the Valletta Local Council that is uniquely tailored for the strengths and weaknesses of each of the clerical staff members.

5.10 THE ELDERLY AND PERSONS WITH LIMITED MOBILITY

A headline finding of the research study is that many elderly people are experiencing social exclusion to some extent or another. Significantly, Valletta (as for the rest of Malta) features an ageing society. The need for investment in infrastructure that facilitates active ageing, such as regeneration of streets and pavements and public transport, follows.

There is also research evidence to support investment in affordable and accessible residences for the elderly or day care centres that do not uproot the elderly from Valletta.

6. CONCLUSION

This report presented findings of mixed-methods research carried out in the Valletta community between April and November 2019.

The identity of being a Valletta resident and related pride featured among headline findings of the research study, particularly in the case of those born and bred in Valletta. These perceptions were significantly more powerful compared to other associations, including associations with state, religious or football entities. The strength of sense of belonging also fuelled lack of integration with new arrivals, including foreigners and (to a lesser degree) non-foreigners.

Whilst residents stated they enjoy lifestyle and networks that feature in the Valletta community, the liveability of many is hindered by lack of residents' parking, streets, and public spaces (including pavements and streets) that leave much to be desired. Residents also complained about lack of enforcements, particularly in the construction and recreational industries.

The overarching project supporting the execution of this research study is already piloting a number of SMART actions and initiatives that involve the input of the project-based community worker. In this regard, the research report concluded with an overview of these initiatives and included research-based recommendations that reflect the need for enhanced integration between Valletta stakeholders, the involvement of younger generations; as well as investment in research and infrastructure to support an ageing population that has experienced very rapid economic growth and social change over a short span.

ENDNOTES:

- 1 Each statement was measured on a 5-point Likert Scale ranging from 1 to 5 where 1 corresponded to strongly disagree and 5 corresponded to strongly agree. The 95% confidence interval provides a range of values for the actual mean rating score if the whole population of Valletta residents had been included in the study (with 7% margin of error). When confidence intervals (bars) overlap there's an indication that their mean rating scores are comparable, i.e. such mean ratings do not differ with statistical significance.
- 2 As mentioned earlier, a 0.05 level of significance was accepted to determine statistical significance when carrying out statistical tests.
- 3 As mentioned earlier, 17.0% of respondents said Valletta was part and parcel of their identity, with special references to being born and bred there ('Beltin').

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