



STATE OF THE HERITAGE REPORT

THE SUPERINTENDENCE OF CULTURAL HERITAGE

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STATE OF THE HERITAGE REPORT 2007

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1.0

INTRODUCTION

The State of the Heritage Report is a requirement of the Cultural Heritage Act 2002. It is intended to provide a regular mechanism for monitoring the implementation of the law and the general state of matters in Cultural Heritage.

In the 2006 National Forum for Cultural Heritage, the Superintendence announced a policy decision to link up the State of the Heritage Report with another important document, namely the National Strategy for Cultural Heritage.

The National Strategy is a public document which binds and guides all interested parties with respect to the strategic needs of cultural heritage in Malta. As required by the Cultural Heritage Act, the Strategy document was prepared by the Ministry for Tourism and Culture and published in 2006. The text of the Strategy may be downloaded from the website of the Ministry for Tourism and Culture.

The Strategy has become a keystone in Government policy in the field of cultural heritage.

In view of the importance of this document, the Superintendence believes that it is necessary to align the State of the Heritage Report to the Strategy Document. This measure should be adopted by all those entities that operate within Malta's heritage sector. In this regard, chapter 2 of the current Report includes a series of measurable observations which inform us about achievements of the National Strategy, and which will in the coming months inform us of the type of heritage indicators that we are to adopt.

The supporting data of these measurable observations were collected from a number of public entities which are directly or indirectly linked to Cultural Heritage. These are the same public entities which are entrusted with the implementation of the National Cultural Heritage Strategy. Chapter 2 also serves as an assessment of the progress achieved by the various entities in implementing the tasks identified within the National Strategy.

Without doubt the consultation process is the key element in drawing up the State of the Heritage Report. This process is purposefully kept to a minimum to avoid placing another burden on heritage partners and stakeholders. Nevertheless, that various consulted entities had problems providing the measurable data sets necessary to adequately monitor the state of affairs in Malta's cultural heritage. This has been the case ever since the State of the Heritage Report was first published five years ago. In a number of instances during data collection exercises, it was apparent that awareness of the Strategy Document was low or inexistent. This

situation has hampered the drafting process of this document and has to be addressed as a matter of priority. The success and relevance of the State of the Heritage Report is a measure of the commitment given by every entity to its compilation.

Chapter 3 of this Report provides a review on the information presented earlier. It also places these observations within the perspective of the last five years since the enactment of the Cultural Heritage Act. This is therefore an opportunity to consider the progress achieved on the road of reform in the cultural heritage sector of Malta.

The guiding principles of this Report remain those of the preamble of the Cultural Heritage Act. The new format of the State of the Heritage Report therefore follows issues of Public Participation, Improved Governance, the Care and Sustainable Use of the Cultural Resource.

2.0

The Measures

2.1

Broadening Citizen Participation



Article 4 (2) of the Cultural Act, 2002:

'every citizen of Malta as well as every person present in Malta shall have the duty of protecting the cultural heritage as well as the right to benefit from this cultural heritage through learning and enjoyment. The cultural heritage is an asset of irreplaceable spiritual, cultural, social and economic value, and its protection and promotion are indispensable for a balanced and complete life.'

National Cultural Heritage Strategy: Tasks 1.01, 1.02, 1.03, 1.04, 1.06, 1.07, 1.08, 1.09, 1.10.

The National Cultural Heritage Strategy covers the principle of Citizen Participation, through the following areas of activities: increasing public awareness, cultural heritage as a medium for education, linking cultural heritage and the arts, increasing access to cultural heritage for all social categories and to social inclusion, linking heritage to the arts and media documentaries and programmes.

As Malta's main public cultural heritage operator, Heritage Malta bears the biggest responsibility to broaden the public's interest in and participation in cultural heritage matters. With its wide and varied selection of high quality sites and collections, Heritage Malta is well placed to carry out such a task.

On the other hand, the role of other cultural operators, such as Local Councils and Non-Governmental Organisations is equally important, but more difficult to quantify. It is critical that information on these activities is collected over the coming years in order to get a fuller understanding of activity in this area.

2.1.1 Public Awareness on the Importance of Cultural Heritage and the Role it Plays for the Development of Maltese Identity

In 2007 Heritage Malta was directly or indirectly involved in the following events to promote the importance of cultural heritage to the public. These events are mainly aimed at a generic public and generally do not target specific social or age groups.

January to November 2007	Number of events
Exhibitions	70
Heritage trails	10
Lectures	39
Other events	31
Total	150

2.1.2 To Promote the Use of Sites and Museums for Educational Purposes

Heritage Malta organised special educational projects for the scholastic year 2007-2008 which included the use of specific sites and museums, namely the Inquisitor's Palace, Tarxien Temples, Ghar Dalam and the Palace Armoury. Ghar Dalam and the Palace Armoury provided workbooks for both primary and secondary school children. During 2007 there were also the temporary educational programmes in conjunction with other temporary events, including *The Chinese Terracotta Soldiers* and the *Caravaggio L'Immagine Del Divino* exhibitions.

Heritage Malta is committed to introducing educational programmes in all its museums and sites. In fact in the coming months work in this field will be focused on the National Museum of Natural History.

2.1.3 To Promote a Link between Cultural Heritage and the Arts

Linking cultural heritage and the arts is treated both by the Cultural Heritage Strategy Document and by the National Tourism Plan. These documents indicate that such a linkage can be obtained through the promotion of events and/or alternative use of sites and museums both for international events and for local community activities. However no measurable data exists as yet regarding the level of implementation on this specific area of activity. Stakeholders should strive in the coming years to report on this area of intervention in a measurable manner.

2.1.4 Social Inclusion & Accessibility for Persons with Different Needs and Physical & Intellectual Backgrounds

Data on social inclusion (or exclusion) does not appear to be collected by any of the interviewed entities. This lacuna makes positive action in this area virtually impossible, at least for the cultural heritage sector.

More information is available with respect to the issue of physical accessibility. Going just by Heritage Malta, it is possible to see that infrastructural works for adapting sites and museums to persons with different physical needs are underway. At two sites these works have been carried out, namely at the National Museum of Archaeology and at the Roman Domus. Works have also started at the Maritime Museum.

As from 2008, the Strategy Document requires a number of Social Inclusion programmes to be underway, utilising cultural heritage sites, museums and the arts. These programmes should include key stakeholders such as The Ministry for Tourism and Culture, the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage, Heritage Malta, the Ministry for the Family and Social Solidarity, and Saint James Cavalier Centre for Creativity.

2.1.5 Documentaries and Programmes on Cultural Heritage

Public Broadcasting Services estimated that the average percentage for fully dedicated arts and culture programmes in 2007 was around 8%. Besides these fully dedicated programmes, the theme of art and culture is also tackled on lifestyle,

current affairs and educational programmes. Needless to say it is very difficult to quantify the time dedicated to art and culture. Data was not available to compare the figures of culture and arts programmes aired over previous years.

Cultural content in the media is therefore already quite high. Given these figures, it appears to be wisest at this stage to concentrate on content in programmes, in terms of quality control and information range. PBS has stated it believes that a feasible strategy for this aim should be based on increasing cultural content in its programmes, but not at the detriment of other genres of programmes.

2.2

Improving Governance in the Cultural Heritage Sector



Article 4 (3) of the Cultural Heritage Act, 2002:
'the State in Malta shall have the duty of establishing and maintaining the administrative and regulatory structures of superintendence so as to ensure that this heritage is protected and conserved, as well as such other structures as are required for the management of the care, exposition and appreciation of this heritage.'

National Cultural Heritage Strategy: Tasks 2.01, 2.05, 3.01, 3.02, 3.06, 3.08.

The National Cultural Heritage Strategy covers the area of Governance in Cultural Heritage, through the following measures: introduction of state indemnity for travelling exhibitions, provision of adequate human resources and training to the cultural heritage sector, developing the Cultural Heritage Inventory, Standards and Guidelines for sites and monuments, encouraging Public-Private Partnerships.

2.2.1 International Conventions

Over and above the specific measures contained in the Strategy, one should first consider the extent to which Malta has adopted international conventions on cultural heritage. At present the situation stands as follows:

CONVENTIONS – Council of Europe	SIGNED	RATIFIED
European Cultural Convention, 1954	✓	✓
European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage, London 1969 (London Convention 1969)	✓	✓
European Convention on Offences relating to Cultural Property, Delphi 1985 (Delphi Convention 1985)		

Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe, Granada 1985 (Granada Convention 1985)	✓	✓
European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (Revised), Valletta 1992 (Valletta Convention 1992)	✓	✓
European Landscape Convention, Florence 2000 (Florence Convention 2000)	✓	
Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society, Faro 2005 (Faro Convention 2005)		

CONVENTIONS – United Nations	SIGNED	RATIFIED
Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, The Hague 1954 (Hague Convention 1954)		
Protocol to the Hague Convention of 1954 for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, The Hague 1954 (Hague Protocol 1954)		
Customs Convention concerning facilities for the importation of goods for display or use at exhibitions, fairs, meetings or similar events, Brussels 1962	✓	
Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, Paris 1970		
Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, Paris 1972	✓	✓

UNIDROIT Convention on Stolen or Illegally Exported Cultural Objects, Rome 1995		
Second Protocol to the Hague Convention of 1954 for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, The Hague 1999 (Hague 2nd Protocol 1999)		
Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage, Paris 2001		
Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, Paris 2003		
Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expression, Paris 2005	✓	✓

It should be noted that while Malta has signed 5 out of 7 Council of Europe conventions, it has only signed 3 out of 10 United Nations conventions.

2.2.2 State Indemnity for Travelling Exhibitions and Loans

At present, Heritage Malta is already using the State Indemnity scheme, on an ad hoc basis for organising foreign exhibitions in coordination with the Ministry for Tourism and Culture. Recent examples of the adoption of this system include the Chinese Warriors and the Caravaggio exhibitions, both held at the National Museum of Archaeology in 2007.

At this stage, what is most urgently required is the development of an official policy framework and structure for the provision of State Indemnity. Without the continued assistance of State Indemnity schemes, high level international exhibitions in Malta would become too costly to stage and could therefore be denied to the Maltese public.

2.2.3 Staffing and Training in the Cultural Heritage Sector

In 2003 the first staffing exercise within Heritage Malta and the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage was carried out with the detailing of former Museums Department staff to serve in the new entities. In 2005 the process was further consolidated with the transfer of all former members of staff from the Malta Centre of Restoration to start serving within Heritage Malta.

The process of building up the State's cultural heritage entities is however far from complete, as certain sectors are still heavily under-staffed. Such under-resourcing is particularly felt in those areas where specialised cultural heritage experience or know-how is most acutely required. Typical of this situation is the Superintendence

itself which currently only has a staff complement of 7, compared to the estimated required staff of 30.

In addition to the engagement of new human resources, training is another key element in the updating of the national cultural heritage sector. In-house training tends to be quite high within the public service. For example about 135 Heritage Malta employees benefited from the training programmes organized by the Agency during 2007.

For the conservation and restoration sector data is available for the number of students following the local ICMCH courses. For the academic year 2006-2007 ICMCH courses, attendance figures stood as follows:

Conservation Degrees	Entries at September 2006	Entries at September 2007
Masonry Heritage Skills Certificate Course	12 new admissions	12 new admissions
	10 moved up to level 2	13 moved up to level 2 (including late applicants)
	10 moved up to level 3 year 1	15 moved up to level 3 year 1 (including late applicants)
	9 moved up to level 3 year 2	9 moved up to level 3 year 2
B.Cons. (Hons) Programme	1 new admission	4 new admissions
	13 graduates (Nov 05)	Nil
	11 graduates (July 06)	1 graduate
M. Cons		2 graduates (Dec 06) 4 new admissions
M.A. in Cultural Heritage Management	13 new admissions	11 progressed (2 withdrew in early days of course)

2.2.4 National Cultural Heritage Inventory

The existence of a National Cultural Heritage Inventory is of fundamental importance to the proper management and governance of the country's cultural assets. Inventory data must furthermore be accurate, updated and accessible in real time.

In 2007 the Superintendence launched CHIMS, the Cultural Heritage Inventory Management System. This system is GIS based and is accessible on the internet at www.chims.gov.mt. At present data sets are being developed for populating CHIMS with the necessary information levels. This is not a process restricted to the operations of the Superintendence, but involves various stakeholders in the cultural heritage sector, including both data producers and data consumers.

In this process of data population within CHIMS, priority will be given to those areas posing most urgent management needs.

2.2.5 Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation & Preservation of Sites, Monuments & Collections

At present curatorial and conservation practices in museums and sites are adopted on an ad hoc basis at each institution. In some cases international bodies of guidelines, such as those prepared by ICOM and ICOMOS, are employed as an important point of reference. However, practices vary greatly from museum to museum, even within the same organisation. The variation increases if one takes into account the museums run by NGOs, Local Councils or by ecclesiastical bodies.

The need for national standard setting and guidelines in the area of museum and site curation and conservation is an urgent priority. However such guidelines must enjoy full public and institutional support and must be based on prior wide consultation. The Committee of Guarantee should play an important role in the development of this consultation process.

2.2.6 Public-Private Partnerships and the Management of Heritage Assets

The Strategy document identifies the creation of PPPs with a cultural heritage objective as a means of bringing in private investment into this under funded sector. The Strategy identifies such PPPs as being especially necessary with respect to 'secondary' sites and monuments which will probably not be in a position to attract other forms of adequate public funding.

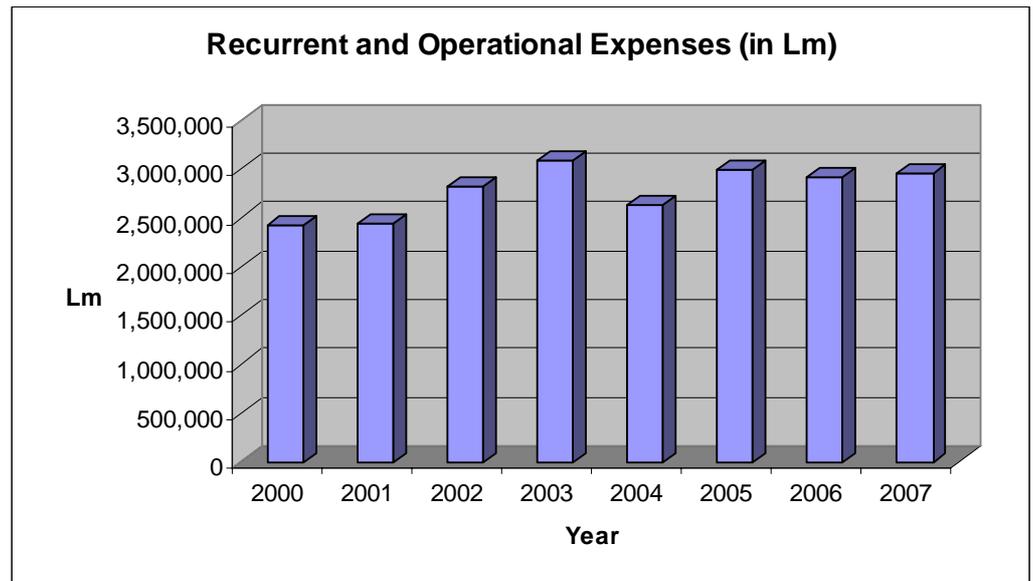
Decentralised models of cultural heritage management and funding such as PPP, present great opportunities but also hazards of their own. Free economic initiative and the open market have to be counter-balance with a strong presence of the state to ensure the Public's rights over the cultural heritage are not endangered.

Essential ground rules, and a system of checks and balances, must be in place in order to permit PPP style systems of management to flourish without damaging the cultural heritage measure. Ensuring that such ground rules exist and will be enforced may also require enshrining by means of new legislation.

2.2.7 Investment and Costs

The expenditure figures reported in the Financial Estimates are identified under two principal headings: Recurrent and Operational Expenditure (salaries, rent, services, and maintenance) and Capital Expenditure (expenditure on construction and major infrastructural changes).

The figures below indicate the minimum amount voted by the government on the cultural heritage sector. Despite these figures being estimates, they are strongly indicative of the significance of public expenditure in maintaining the cultural heritage sector in Malta.



Recurrent and Operational Expenditure (in Lm)

Entity	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Office of the President - Improvements to Presidential Palaces	3,000	3,000	15,000	20,000	7,000	25,000	25,329	25,329
Museums Department	1,118,000	1,170,000	1,320,000	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Superintendence of Cultural Heritage	NA	NA	NA	NA	145,000	130,000	130,000	130,000
Heritage Malta	NA	NA	NA	1,342,000	850,000	1,150,000	1,646,000	1,646,000
Committee of Guarantee	NA	NA	NA	NA	14,501	15,000	15,000	15,000
Malta Centre for Restoration	50,000	150,000	340,000	500,000	470,000	500,000	NA	NA
Department for Culture & the Arts	842,000	723,000	662,400	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Malta Council for Culture & Arts	NA	NA	NA	649,000	570,000	570,000	500,000	500,000
Fondazzjoni Patrimonju Malti	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000
Manoel Theatre Management Committee	130,000	130,000	97,500	130,000	100,000	110,000	110,000	110,000
National Orchestra	200,000	200,000	230,000	250,000	270,000	290,000	290,000	290,000

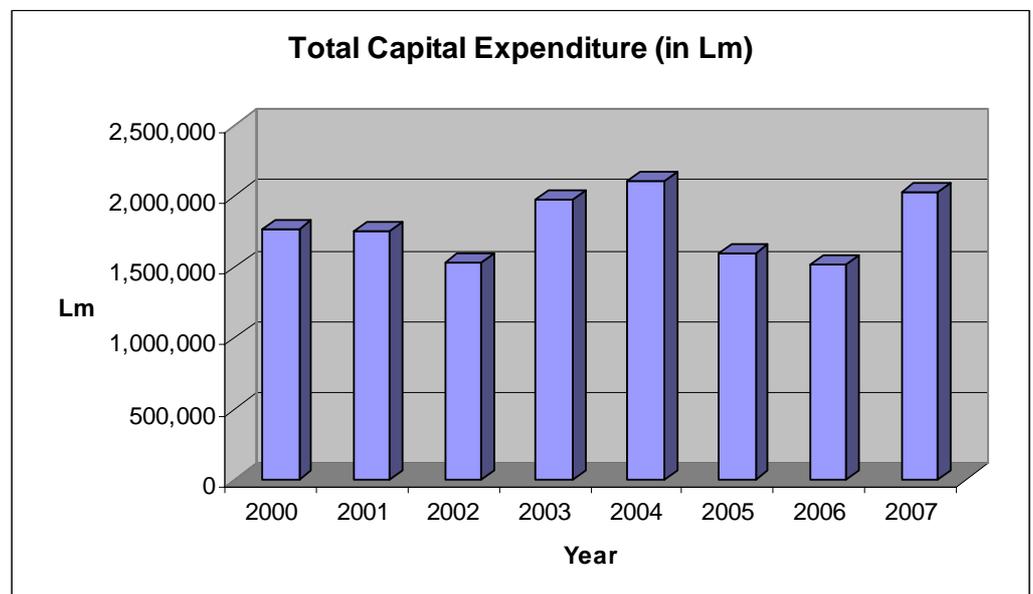
St. James Cavalier Centre for Creativity	30,000	30,000	112,500	150,000	145,000	135,000	140,000	170,000
Ministry for Gozo - Subsidies to Cultural Organisations & Cultural Council	13,000	13,000	9,012	14,000	13,992	14,000	14,000	14,000
Total	2,416,000	2,449,000	2,816,412	3,085,000	2,635,493	2,989,000	2,920,329	2,950,329

The following table sums up the total allocation of Capital expenditure including government funds, EU-funded projects and Structural Funds. The totals of these three groups (per year) are displayed in the chart below.

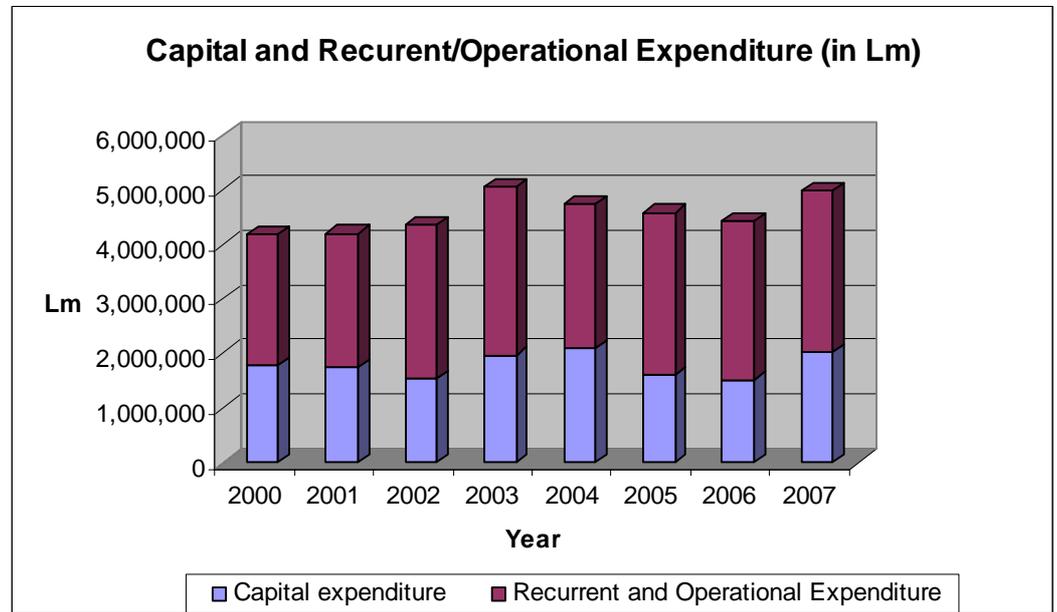
Capital Expenditure (in Lm)

Details of expenditure	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
<i>Government Funds:</i>								
Improvements at Museums & historical sites, and restoration works	250,000	400,000	300,000	550,000	330,000	300,000	300,000	200,000
Surveillance, Security & Automated Ticketing System	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	30,000	5,000
Ggantija Heritage Site	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	100,000	700,000	NA
Restoration of Forts, Fortifications & historical places	630,000	530,000	500,000	500,000	650,000	450,000	291,948	100,000
Restoration of the Auberge d'Italie	150,000	75,000	50,000	50,000	10,000	NA	NA	NA
Restoration and improvements to historical sites - Gozo	20,000	25,000	30,000	20,000	30,000	NA	20,000	30,000

Superintendence of Cultural Heritage - CHIMS	NA	NA	NA	NA	70,000	25,000	15,000	NA
Restoration Works V Italian Protocol	NA	NA	NA	NA	140,000	112,000	81,279	7,000
Rehabilitation of St. James Cavalier	NA	NA	NA	NA	10,000	10,000	8,608	NA
Upgrading of Manoel Theatre	20,000	25,000	NA	150,000	150,000	250,000	215,000	5,000
Rehabilitation Projects	600,000	600,000	550,000	600,000	613,000	250,000	145,279	50,000
Superintendence Relocation of premises	NA	80,000						
Sub-total	1,770,000	1,755,000	1,530,000	1,970,000	2,103,000	1,597,000	1,515,166	477,000
<i>Structural Funds:</i>								
Hagar Qim / Mnajdra Shelters	NA	1,504,194						
Museum of Archaeology Gozo	NA	47,964						
Sub-total								1,552,158
Total	1,770,000	1,755,000	1,530,000	1,970,000	2,103,000	1,597,000	1,515,166	2,029,158



The following chart shows the sum total of Capital and Recurrent expenditure over an eight year period.



Revenue in the Public Cultural Heritage Sector

Revenue	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Museums Department admission fees	886,144	849,061	NA	NA	NA	NA
Heritage Malta Admission Fees	NA	NA	850,000	923,866	1,273,528	1,452,879
Malta Centre for Restoration	12,335	16,238	102,117	164,105	NA	NA

2.3

The Care and Use of the Cultural Resource



The Cultural Heritage Act, 2002, in article 4 (4):
'the duty to protect includes the duty to documentate, conserve, maintain, restore and includes the duty to intervene whenever deemed fit, including in circumstanced of misuse, lack of conservation or application of wrong conservation methods. Such duty to protect also includes the duty to encourage the sustainable use and maintenance of the cultural heritage resource, in accordance with the principles of integrated conservation.'

National Cultural Heritage Strategy: Tasks 1.05, 1.11, 2.04, 3.04, 3.05, 3.09, 4.01, 4.02, 4.04, 4.05.

The National Cultural Heritage Strategy carries a broad range of tasks to cover the principle of appropriate use and core of Malta's cultural resources. These include: Fiscal Policy, Guardianship Deeds, Conservation and Enforcement, Heritage Risk Assessments, Intangible Culture and Landscapes, Scheduling, Management Plans, Military architecture, Underwater heritage.

2.3.1 Programme of Guardianship Deeds

Guardianship Deeds allow NGOs and Local Councils to become custodians of immovable cultural heritage property in public ownership. Properties selected for Guardianship Deeds are normally in a poor state of conservation, or are normally not accessible to the general public. By concluding a Guardianship Deed the cultural property can be returned to useful cultural activity and is maintained long-term at the Guardian's expense.

Since its introduction, the situation with respect to Guardianship Deeds stands as follows:

Guardianship Deeds as at end 2007		
	Completed	Under Discussion
NGOs	9	5
Local Councils	0	2

The Superintendence of Cultural Heritage will be preparing a policy document, in consultation with the Lands Division, on the Guardianship Deed process in order to provide guidance to prospective and existing guardians.

The need for such a policy document is felt to be especially necessary in view of the growing interest being shown in Guardianship Deeds, especially by the 68 Local Councils of Malta and Gozo. A good indicator of this growing interest were the numerous queries on this subject submitted to the Committee of Guarantee during a number of public meetings held in the course of 2007 between the Chairman of the Committee and Local Council representatives.

2.3.2 Fiscal Policy

The Budget 2007 stated that services and activities of a cultural nature and of a non-profit-making nature will be exempt without credit for value added tax purposes. This was formalised through the publication of Legal Notice 266 of 2006, Donations (National Heritage) Rules, 2006.

The Budget 2008 specifies that all training in the arts will be exempted from payment of VAT, 'as long as this will be provided by organisations which are accredited in the Register for Accreditation in the Training of the Arts'. This document also states that 'companies which provide financial assistance to recognised non-profit-making cultural organisations and/or to the Arts Fund will be able to deduct these grants from their taxable income'.

The introduction of Fiscal Policy measures to benefit the cultural heritage and arts sectors is innovative to Malta. Its impact on these sectors must be followed in the coming years. Extending and improving these measures will depend on this monitoring mechanism.

2.3.3 Cultural Heritage Management Plans

Currently Heritage Malta is preparing management plans for the sites it administers, such as Hal Saffieni Hypogeum, Ggantija Temple Complex, Tarxien Temple Complex, Skorba Temple Complex, Ta' Hagraat Temple Complex, Hagar Qim Temple Complex, and Mnajdra Temple Complex. There are preliminary works ongoing on the management plans of the rest of the sites and collections administered by Heritage Malta.

In the coming years it will be necessary to review possibility of extending the principle of Management Plans to a broader, national level. Management Plans in fact should not only be restricted to UNESCO recognised World Heritage Monuments. This review will have to be carried out in close consultation and involvement with the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage, Heritage Malta, NGOs, Local Councils, and other relevant government entities. This process should also be carried out under the aegis of the Committee of Guarantee.

2.3.4 Scheduling Program of Cultural & Natural Landscapes & Sites

Scheduling is the most powerful legal defence to land based cultural heritage assets that Maltese Legislation can provide to date. Scheduling is a protective measure introduced by the Structure Plan for the Maltese Islands, and is further reinforced by means of the Cultural Heritage Act.

The situation with respect to Scheduling to date is as follows:

No. of Scheduled Sites by MEPA			
Sites having:	As per 2005	As per 2006	Increase
Architectural Value	1284	1309	+ 25
Archaeological Value	263	265	+ 2
Ecological Importance	173	203	+ 30

These figures indicate that numbers of scheduled properties tends to increase very slowly. The most pronounced increase is marked in sites of Ecological Importance, while sites of Archaeological Value are disproportionately low compared to those of Architectural Value.

The distribution of these figures can be explained in terms of the inner workings and priority areas of MEPA. For example, MEPA officers are more likely to have to deal with a built property within an Urban Development Zone than with a site of archaeological significance in an ODZ.

Still the identification of high cultural heritage risk should be defined independently of the inner workings of any particular administrative body. Independent identification should follow terms of the physical and geographical characteristics of the cultural resource itself. On the basis of thorough a risk assessment it will be possible to demonstrate which areas require most urgent protective action and therefore be the object of future Scheduling Programmes.

2.3.5 Cultural Landscapes

Landscape is defined as the joint work of Nature and Humanity. The protection and management of landscapes is as much a cultural heritage concern as it is an environmental one. Increasingly Cultural Landscape is becoming the subject of popular appreciation and social debate. This is witnessed by the extensive media coverage given over the last few years to land development issues impacting on the cultural and natural landscape.

Media attention is particularly high when dealing with proposed developments within ODZ/rural areas. However cultural landscape is also very much an issue in urban cores and in the fast changing coastal/harbour areas.

Landscape poses legal and methodological challenges, depending as much on the cultural heritage manager as it does on the environmental scientist, the planner and the geographer. New ways of interdisciplinary action are required at all stages, from policy to management. Above all social consensus must be built around the core values represented by cultural landscapes and by their protection and management. The role of NGOs and Local Councils is critically important in this respect.

2.4

Sustainable Use of Heritage Resources



The Cultural Heritage Act, 2002, in article 4 (5):

'The right to access to, and benefit from, the cultural heritage does not belong merely to the present generation. Every generation shall have the duty to protect this heritage and to make it accessible for future generations and for all mankind.'

National Cultural Heritage Strategy: Tasks 2.06, 3.07.

The National Cultural Heritage Strategy carries two key measures dealing with the principle of long-term, sustainable use of our heritage resources, namely: Cultural Heritage Statistics and the National Research Agenda.

2.4.1 Cultural Heritage Statistics

Statistical information collected by the NSO is used for national accounting purposes. Up to now such purposes have not covered cultural heritage purposes, if not on an episodic and ad hoc manner. The absence of a systematic pattern of data collection on the major cultural heritage issues renders the understanding of these processes over the medium and long term period.

Cultural heritage entities must work closely with the NSO to start reversing this situation. Without systematic cultural heritage statistical reporting, long-term forward planning and sustainable management of these resources will continue evading us.

2.4.2 National Research Agenda

Research in cultural heritage issues is carried out by a variety of bodies, involving mainly public resources or voluntary commitment. Unlike other sectors of cultural heritage, as in conservation for example, private sponsorship in pure research activities is almost entirely unknown. A system is required for the quantitative and qualitative accounting of research.

Without dependable and ongoing research, cultural resources cannot be securely understood, and less still adequately protected. Research is essential for long-term planning and sustainable management. It is therefore essential to acquire more understanding on how research is conducted in Malta, and what standards are being achieved.

Development of a National Research Agenda can assist in the process of making local research potential better structured and more aware of quality assurance issues.

3.0

The Review 2007



This is the fifth year since the enactment of the Cultural Heritage Act 2002. It is important at this point to review what the Cultural Heritage Act has meant to us all, both in terms of its successes and its limitations.

Over this five year period, the face of much of the public cultural heritage sector has changed radically. Gone is the old Museums Department with its 100-year-long tradition of cultural heritage practise left over by the British Colonial Administration. In the place of this centralised government department there have emerged specialised autonomous but inter-linked public bodies entrusted with the management of the nation's cultural heritage assets.

The main steps leading to this change were the following:

December 2002	Closing down of the Museums Department
January 2003	Start of the new public entities defined by law: Committee of Guarantee, Superintendence of Cultural Heritage and Heritage Malta
November 2004	First National Forum for Cultural Heritage
March 2005	Merge of Malta Centre for Restoration to Heritage Malta
December 2006	Launch of the National Strategy for Cultural Heritage

During these five years important measures have been introduced by the Superintendence in line with the powers and responsibilities outlined in the Cultural Heritage Act. Guardianship Deeds have been or are in the process of being set up with Non-Governmental Organisations and Local Councils. The IT infrastructure for the development of the National Cultural Heritage Inventory has been launched. Important enforcement action has been taken by the Superintendence in collaboration with the Police and with the Malta Environment and Planning Authority.

As for the cultural operators one has to note a number of important projects completed or currently underway by Heritage Malta. These include the completion of the Roman Domus Museum project, originally started by the Museum's Department, and the initiation of the Temporary Shelter Project at Hagar Qim and Mnajdra. A number of important Management Plans have been initiated for the principle megalithic sites managed by Heritage Malta. These Plans, once completed, will constitute the backbone of our national conservation and appreciation programmes for these UNESCO recognised monuments. Similarly Heritage Malta has invested a lot of energy in the organisation of temporary events and exhibitions both locally and abroad.

From a financial point of view it can be immediately noted that Government's direct investment into the cultural heritage sector has remained very stable when compared to the last few years. This is a welcomed factor for the public cultural

heritage sector, especially at a time when concern on curtailing public expenditure has dominated national financial policy.

Furthermore it is noted that the income capacity of the cultural heritage sector remains very good, judging at least by the growing revenue figures of Heritage Malta for 2005/6. The introduction of new fiscal policies aimed at increasing private and corporate donations and investment in cultural heritage and the arts will surely assist in this process.

Nevertheless, an independent economic assessment of the sector is urgently required. In particular we need to learn more about cultural economics and the long-term objectives of investment. The allocation of scarce resources and their measured use must remain under constant review. Such an economic review will inform future policies and directions in Malta's Cultural Heritage.

The more important points that emerge from the review of the current figures and events of 2006-7 can be summarised under the following points:

- Institutional growth in the public sector and amongst NGOs is hampered by severely insufficient data and information about Maltese cultural heritage and about the organisations which manage it. Beyond the basic figures regarding financial expenses and investment and staffing levels, hardly any data is kept in a systematic, measurable and ongoing manner.

This situation renders comparative analysis over the medium and long-term impossible to make, both within a given organisation and between different organisations.

Medium to long-term forward planning is equally impossible to achieve, especially at a strategic nation-wide level.

Without forward planning, sustainability in the cultural heritage sector will not be achieved.

- While a lot of good work is being undertaken by public entities, services and NGOs, improved strategic interaction between all stakeholders will contribute to much needed common achievements. An important hallmark in the Cultural Heritage Act 2002 was the creation of space for participation. It is in the interest of Malta's heritage sector for this space to survive; it is only through a healthy diversity, built on well-resourced and focused agencies, and stakeholder participation, that institutional sustainability can be guaranteed in heritage.
- Some aspects of cultural heritage have still not shifted sufficiently from the situation as it existed prior to enactment of the 2002 Cultural Heritage Act. These areas of concern include a number of the 'soft' tasks identified in the National Cultural Heritage Strategy such as: Public Awareness and Involvement, Research Promotion, Inter-disciplinary action (Heritage and the Arts/Heritage and the Environment), Social Inclusion, Media and Communication.

Under staffing and insufficient resources at points that matter is an important part of the problem.

3.1 Final Considerations

Five years after the enactment of the Cultural Heritage Act, the entire public administration of the cultural heritage sector has been completely overhauled. The financial platform from which this sector operates has witnessed an increase in volume and shows signs of becoming increasingly diversified. The human resource basis of the sector is also increasing, with a gradual emergence of diversified training and professional pathways.

However, growth is a two-edged sword. Economic growth will certainly have benefits, as the past five years have shown. Concern should therefore be focused on whether the allocation of scarce resources is of benefit to heritage and its internal priorities, those that emerge from the materiality of heritage, rather than to the numerous externalities that thrive on our cultural patrimony. Economic and sectoral growth cannot be loosely equated with heritage growth.

In a sense, the window of opportunity presented by the enactment of the Cultural Heritage Act has shifted us into new territory: we are now in a post-EU accession situation where frontiers retreat into political backgrounds and the movement of peoples becomes a pan-European ideal. Malta is yet again at one of those historical turning points where cultural identity and heritage serve to define who we are.

As a non-renewable public good, heritage requires a thorough examination of its current state, its long-term preservation and transmission to future generations. Our Post-Modern condition pushes us to dissolve traditional barriers that once separated market from non-market values. That is to say, we need to shift our perception of heritage assets as consumables to one in which heritage values are more in keeping with socio-cultural values and the spirit of our ethnic identity. Consumption has become a social condition: in our small island, we relentlessly consume our heritage and cultural landscape on a scale that is vaster than that experienced in larger territories. We will have no future unless we build it now on caution and on measured steps that tread carefully on a past that is fragile and irreplaceable.

ACRONYMS & ABBREVIATIONS

ICMCH	Institute for Conservation and Management of Cultural Heritage
ICOMOS	International Council on Monuments and Sites
ICCROM	International Centre for Renovation and Maintenance
IT	Information Technology
MEPA	Malta Environment and Planning Authority
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NSO	National Statistics Office
ODZ	Outside Development Zone
PBS	Public Broadcasting Services
PPP	Public-Private Partnerships
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNIDROIT	United Nations International Institute for the Unification of Private Law

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