



MED Programme

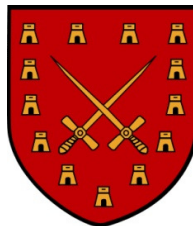


Project : Integrated Strategy for Sustainable Development of Mediterranean Rural Areas - MedStrategy

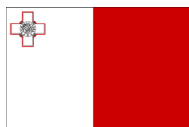
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Component 3 Phase 3: Territorial and Institutional SWOT Analysis

Pilot area: *Pembroke, San Giljan, San Gwann, Swieqi (Northern Harbour District) and Naxxar and Gharghur (Northern District)*



**Pembroke Local Council
Malta**



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Introduction

Phase 3 of Component 3 of the Medstrategy project is based on the preceding Territorial and Institutional Analyses, and it purports to present a SWOT matrix using established methodology in order to present in a succinct manner the factors that are affecting the formulation, adoption and implementation of integrated sustainable development strategies. By adopting a similar methodology to those of the other partners, Pembroke Local Council will provide comparable data regarding the area studied in Malta in common with the other 3 areas, these being located in Italy, Spain and Greece. The final Diagnostic Report will compare the 4 territories' characteristics as well as their different governance systems.

The SWOT will feature 6 broad Thematic Areas and a number of specific indicators. The thematic areas follow closely the ones adopted in the integrated territorial analysis undertaken under Phase 1 of Component 3. The SWOT will be carried out for each indicator, thereby providing a clear, comprehensive and accurate situational snapshot. The thematic areas are the following:

1. Socio-demographic factors
2. Settlement system
3. Environmental and historical/cultural resources
4. Economy and production
5. Territorial services
6. Environmental services

The Institutional SWOT is intended to analyse the capacities of local authorities to foster a sustainable development culture and strategies by demonstrating a number of characteristics, namely:

- a. The capacity to cooperate with the different levels of government for the territorial management
- b. The ability of the Local Authorities in fostering growth and innovation in a competent, efficient and effective manner
- c. The capacity of the Local Authorities to develop policies, programs and government actions oriented at the sustainable development
- d. The capacity of the Local Authorities to promote a shared (common) ""Vision"" of the sustainable development through the activation of participative processes

1 Territorial SWOT

1.1 Territory, Population and Employment

	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
Population structure and dynamics	<p>Pembroke itself has a healthily growing population, with a predominantly young population.</p> <p>The surrounding communities tend to have a higher average age, as is the current trend for the whole population on a national level. The experience afforded by an experienced population base should not be underestimated.</p> <p>Influx of new blood and ideas particularly from Eastern Europe enhance the population and bring in new skills.</p> <p>On a socio-political level, Malta offers some very important advantages. A long-established bipartisan democracy means political stability.</p> <p>Social fabric is very strong, good civil society framework Social stability, rule of law, making Malta a very safe country</p>	<p>The ageing population is also a weakness as this puts a burden on the social security system among other negatives.</p> <p>The process of immigration is not completely studied and understood, and there may be some negatives in the long run.</p>	<p>The study area has nevertheless a relatively low population density when compared to the national average. The beautiful rural landscape and quiet life in the study area is attracting young and old alike, who are taking up residence in the area. Further opportunities for expansion of the phenomenon still exist.</p>	<p>Ageing of the population is a threat in the older villages, with an expected dramatic increase in dependency Ratio even in the short term.</p>

	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
Education and life style	<p>The study area has a relatively high achieving rate when compared to the national average.</p> <p>School attendance to university level is also relatively high.</p> <p>Pembroke is famous for having a disproportionately large number of schools and training centres, including professional and vocational as well as lifelong learning for adults.</p>	<p>Consumerism, as with the rest of the population of Malta, is rife. High rate of dependency on private cars, high motorisation rate. The average car age is in excess of 12 years, about 4 years higher than the European average.</p> <p>Awareness towards sustainability is low in Pembroke and the urban localities, while the rural ones attract new residents coming from a typically middle-class background. These tend to bring in more sensitivity and awareness.</p>	<p>The schools and training centres in Pembroke are also an opportunity for social and economic sustainability.</p>	<p>Increased affluence is changing consumption patterns, with the throwaway culture and the rocketing demand for such luxuries as private cars are a serious threat.</p>
Employment & GDP	<p>GDP per head is higher in the study area than is the national average.</p> <p>Malta has a well established governance system with excellent international credit rating, well established services oriented economic structure</p> <p>There is an ongoing shift to high-value-added industrial sectors, and in San Gwann a Life Sciences Centre is being built as a cluster incorporating start-up support and business incubator.</p> <p>There is a good social welfare system, widespread use of ICT, Iti-lingual population Well established university.</p>	<p>Malta's insularity and marginal EU location is a weakness. It is a small island state.</p> <p>There is a very small internal market, with infrastructure conditions being relatively poor.</p> <p>Skill shortages in certain economic sectors.</p>	<p>Increased trade integration within EU is benefitting the economy.</p> <p>Current diversification towards high value added economic activity</p> <p>Expansion of growth sectors, Globalization. E-marketing and e-business all represent significant opportunities for employment and wealth.</p>	<p>Precarious over-use of finite resources is putting pressure on the system.</p> <p>Globalisation is also a threat as it reduces the possibility of differentiation and premium pricing.</p> <p>Uncertainties in economic climate and rapid development of emerging economies seems like a huge potential threat.</p> <p>Slump in demand due to financial crisis bring on uncertainties in credit management and finance, and even unpredictable labour marker shifts.</p>

1.2 Settlement system

	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
Urban growth	<p>There is a low degree of urbanisation and sprawl in most of the study area when compared with the nation as a whole.</p> <p>Urbanisation is kept in check mostly by the significant presence of natural beauty spots and areas of special scientific interest.</p>	<p>Increase in residential units in Pembroke is well regulated, but San Gwann is s problem.</p>	<p>Pembroke still represents an opportunity for conversion of existing ex-military buildings as private dwellings.</p>	<p>Lack of policies are an important threat, as is potential corrupt practices in the issue of building permits.</p>
Quality of urban area	<p>The little existing urban fabric is generally well planned and managed. An exception may be San Gwann, where a ribbon development gave way to a haphazard urban and suburban development bisected by a very busy main road.</p> <p>Air quality is generally good, except in San Gwann. Most of the areas are well served by urban community services.</p>	<p>Monitoring of air quality and other parameters is generally lacking.</p>	<p>Opportunities are represented by various Government schemes and European projects for amelioration in the area of the quality of life in general.</p>	<p>The major threat is lack of planning.</p>

	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
Transport Infrastructures	The road system between the local councils of the study area is quite extensive. Given the exceedingly short distances, communications do not represent a problem in any way.	The road system is generally in a very bad state of repair.	The new public transport system, which has been operating nationwide since July 2011 may represent the best opportunity for reduction in greenhouse gas and other emissions, although proper marketing will be needed to sell the idea in a country having a special relationship with the private car.	Increased affluence in future may continue to wreak havoc by encouraging bad transportation habits.

1.3 Environmental and historical/cultural resources

	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
Protected natural areas	<p>Like the rest of Malta, the study area has excellent climate conditions with no extreme weather events.</p> <p>There are a number of Natura 2000 spots within the study area, including in Pembroke itself. Gharghur boasts one of the most beautiful valleys in Malta, Wied L'Anglu.</p> <p>The countryside within the area is a haven for many town dwellers seeking some weekend respite from urban life often roam the area, mostly on Sundays.</p>	<p>The sites are not always very well managed, although there have been improvements in recent years.</p> <p>More innovative approaches are needed in order to get the best benefit in terms of their tourism potential.</p> <p>There is also lack of awareness of the sites and of their overriding importance.</p>	<p>The most important opportunity is tourism, particularly with the current trend to try to develop the shoulder months.</p> <p>Government and EU funding of heritage trails and other valorisation instruments also represent a huge opportunity.</p>	Tourism can also be a serious threat because of the potential for disturbance. Tourism must be regulated.

	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
Historical and cultural heritage	<p>Malta, including the study area, has an outstanding cultural heritage for the size of the country.</p> <p>It has a very diverse cultural product, spanning several centuries. This is supplemented with an excellent mix of historical attractions and events/festivals.</p> <p>In Pembroke, most of the buildings have historical value and are listed, having been built by the British mostly between the world wars, and they represent some of the best British military architecture of the period.</p>	<p>The sites are not always very well managed, although there have been improvements in recent years.</p> <p>More innovative approaches are needed in order to get the best benefit in terms of their tourism potential.</p> <p>There is also lack of awareness of the sites and of their overriding importance.</p>	<p>The most important opportunity is tourism, particularly with the current trend to try to develop the shoulder months.</p> <p>Government and EU funding of heritage trails and other valorisation instruments also represent an huge opportunity.</p>	<p>Tourism can also be a serious threat because of the potential for disturbance. Tourism must be regulated.</p>

1.4 Economy and production

	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
Industrial and traditional crafts	<p>Long established democracy, political stability, strong social fabric, good civil society framework, social stability, rule of law, safe country. Strategic location in the central Mediterranean.</p> <p>Well established governance system with excellent international credit rating, well established market services economic structure. Ongoing shift to high-value-added industrial sectors.</p> <p>Malta has a firmly established industrial base with a good reputation. Although the study area is mainly rural, many of the residents commute to other areas for work, and therefore the economy has a national dimension.</p> <p>Malta has excellent air and sea port infrastructure.</p> <p>It has solid employment and training governance, an excellent education system with free education for all. There is widespread use of ICT by a population that is also multi-lingual.</p>	<p>Insularity and marginal EU location. Population density is high, with a very small internal market. Infrastructure tends to be in a bad state of repair.</p> <p>There is low spend in R&D and Innovation, and Low environmental sustainability. Skill shortages exist in certain economic sectors.</p> <p>There is also relatively low female employment rate, Limited child care services, while the public sector is relatively very large.</p> <p>Traditional crafts have practically died out completely.</p>	<p>Increased trade integration within EU and current diversification towards high value added economic activity represent important opportunities.</p> <p>E-marketing and e-business are opportunities to increased possibility of international networking</p>	<p>Precarious over-use of finite resources.</p> <p>Globalisation pressures and uncertainties in economic climate , particularly with a rapid development of emerging economies.</p> <p>Other threats are uncertainties in credit management and finance, environment fragility, unpredictable labour market shifts, and brain drain to EU member states.</p>

	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
Agriculture, animal husbandry, fishing	<p>There are three major types of agricultural activity: those which are associated with irrigated land and intensive cultivation of fruits and vegetables, dry land farming and livestock farming.</p> <p>The latter is based mainly on the intensive production of swine, rabbit, poultry and egg production.</p> <p>Agriculture has been particularly important in shaping the rural landscape and is thus a major contributor to the environmental character and quality of the rural landscape.</p> <p>It constitutes an essential element of relaxation and recreation other than a green lung.</p> <p>Its products provide a degree of self-sufficiency in the provision of fresh food, whilst it provides a full or part-time livelihood for a significant number of people, contributing to the rural economy, as well as, to the maintenance of rural communities.</p> <p>It is an integral component of the cultural heritage and a crucial backdrop for the tourism industry, which is a cornerstone of the economy.</p>	<p>The agro-food processing industry accounts for only 2.7 per cent of the total value added generated by the economy.</p> <p>It employs less than 2.6 per cent of the total full-time gainfully occupied workforce.</p> <p>Investment levels are very sporadic.</p> <p>Prior to EU accession, the agro-processing industry developed behind protective barriers and catered mainly for the domestic retail market.</p> <p>Innovation was very limited, as was the drive to diversify and to offer a better product in general.</p> <p>With EU accession, there was an influx of imported products at comparable prices, which were perceived by the consumers to be of higher quality, due to generally better presentation, complete labeling and exposure to advertising on foreign media channels.</p>	<p>Farmhouses, country houses, old agricultural structures and rubble walls form part of the rural heritage and are essential elements of the local rural character.</p> <p>The rural heritage and the surrounding rural landscape are social and economic assets, as they provide the setting that enhances the enjoyment of the countryside especially given the limited natural habitats in the Maltese islands.</p>	<p>Further neglect due to increasing competition from emerging economies.</p>

	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
Tourism / Tourist activities	<p>On a national level tourism contributes significantly to Malta's economic growth, employment creation and foreign exchange earnings.</p> <p>The study area is characterised by rural attractions and an important hospitality industry. High quality accommodation is on offer.</p> <p>A number of religious and profane festivals constitute important tourist attractions.</p>	<p>Main tourism source markets are the United Kingdom, Germany, France and Italy and hence it depends on a restricted market.</p>	<p>Malta is a mature destination which needs to deepen - through improved quality and presentation – rather than widen its tourism offer.</p> <p>Niche tourism markets, such as cultural heritage, rural tourism, health tourism and language tourism, whilst maintaining the holiday market.</p> <p>International developments point to the need to invest in newer forms of capturing business. In this context, information communication technology (ICT) applications provide Malta the opportunity to further its market penetration</p>	<p>Tourism industry significantly affected by the adverse geopolitical situation that characterised the international environment, as well as the economic situation in a number of major tourist markets.</p> <p>The Maltese tourism industry is also facing increased international competition, both from traditional as well as from new emerging tourist destinations.</p>

1.5 Territorial services

	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
Public transport	<p>The public transport service is brand new, having started operating on July 3 2012. The buses are brand new, modern and efficient, and climate controlled.</p> <p>Staff are well trained and very polite and helpful.</p> <p>There is a very wide network of routes</p>	<p>Timetables not adhered to, causing serious delays.</p>		<p>No attempt to explore other modes of inexpensive transport such as on demand schemes,</p>
Schooling, Social, Cultural, Sport	<p>School facilities are numerous and of a very high quality.</p> <p>Social and welfare services very highly developed.</p> <p>Cultural events are frequent and very accessible for residents and tourists alike.</p> <p>Sports facilities are very numerous and accessible.</p>	<p>.Quality of facilities tends to be rather low.</p>		

1.6 Environmental services

	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
Waste Management	<p>Separation of waste at source and a number of recycling plants seem to be working. Facilities exist also for bulky and/or hazardous waste.</p> <p>Wasteserv, the national waste management entity, seems to be working very well. Its integrated waste management system is efficient and effective.</p> <p>All waste is practically collected separately.</p> <p>New sewage treatment plants have been commissioned very recently and so utilise the latest technologies.</p>			
Water Management	<p>Municipal water of a very high quality.</p> <p>Bathing water is monitored regularly in summer and a high percentage of beaches are declared to be of a high quality.</p> <p>Supply meets demand even in summer.</p>	<p>Municipal water is blended from underground water and desalinated marine water. Desalination is by reverse osmosis (RO) and is very expensive in CO2 emissions.</p>		<p>Ground water drawn illegally by third parties is jeopardising the aquifer and forcing the use of a higher percentage of RO water.</p>

	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
Energy production and distribution	<p>Thermosolar and PVs in domestic and commercial use are on the increase.</p> <p>Government schemes are encouraging the public to take up green technologies.</p> <p>Citizens are well informed of alternative energy sources and energy efficiency.</p>	<p>Heavy reliance on fossil fuels means that 2020 targets are still very distant.</p> <p>While PVs are a viable option, the use of wind energy is precluded by the lack of availability of a land-based location. Offshore plants are also not feasible because of excessive depths.</p>	<p>Several incentive schemes and EU projects to help inform the public further and to incentivise the adoption of energy saving measures and RES.</p>	

2 Institutional SWOT

Thematic areas	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
The capacity to cooperate with the different levels of government for the territorial management	The two-tier system of government in Malta and the small size of the state means that it is possible to approach national, government with proposals for cooperation on territorial management.	The bureaucratic process tends to take over in matters of planning because local authorities are perceived by national agencies to lack the competences to engage in fruitful collaborations especially on matters of territorial management.	<p>Possibility for the local authorities to engage in projects that valorise the touristic assets of their locality, thereby gaining respect.</p> <p>Opportunities can include, for example, heritage trails, gastronomy, and festivals.</p> <p>Transnational networking for Mediterranean heritage trails.</p> <p>Involvement of citizens who constitute public opinion.</p>	Institutional upheavals and changes of command can ruin established collaborations.
The ability of the Local Authorities in fostering growth and innovation in a competent, efficient and effective manner	Local authorities are flexible enough to team up with local development agencies and others such as energy agencies in order to achieve a critical mass for the implementation of projects.	Lack of own competences can lead to distrust in some quarters.	Involvement of the local communities in small initiatives can help in capacity building.	
The capacity of the Local Authorities to develop policies, programs and government actions oriented at the sustainable development	Local authorities can be the originators and vectors for policies and actions such as awareness raising and actions within, and involving, the community; i.e. they can act locally while thinking globally.	Local authorities are perceived as lacking the skills and resources to embark on such projects.	EU programmes such as those under MED, ENPI and CIP.	

Thematic areas	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<p>The capacity of the Local Authorities to promote a shared (common) "Vision" of the sustainable development through the activation of participative processes</p>	<p>Local authorities can act as a participative network by virtue of their role in the community.</p> <p>Stakeholders may prefer to act within such a network rather than within a national agency, with its bureaucracy and complicated politics.</p>	<p>The local authorities are often too small to act as collaborative networks.</p>	<p>Consortia or associations of local authorities can provide the critical mass.</p> <p>EU programmes such as those under MED, ENPI and CIP.</p>	<p>The perception by national agencies that local authorities could be swimming 'outside their depth'.</p>