

THEME 1 CULTURAL & TERRITORIAL VIBRANCY



EVALUATION & MONITORING
Research Findings 2016

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE

The Valletta 2018 Evaluation & Monitoring process is a means through which the Valletta 2018 Foundation gains a deeper insight into the various impacts of the European Capital of Culture (ECoC) title on different spheres of cultural, social and economic life. The goal of this process is twofold (i) To understand the changes brought about by the ECoC title, and (ii) To address any shortcomings and challenges faced by the Valletta 2018 Cultural Programme throughout its implementation.

This process comprises a series of longitudinal studies commencing in January 2015, three full years before the European Capital of Culture year, and running through the ECoC, with results presented in 2019, thereby capturing data before, during, and in the immediate aftermath of Valletta holding the ECoC title.

This process is divided into five themes:

- 1. Cultural & Territorial Vibrancy**
- 2. Governance & Finance**
- 3. Community Inclusion & Space**
- 4. The Tourist Experience**
- 5. The Valletta Brand**

This research is a collaborative, mixed-methods process, involving a number of public entities, collecting and analysing data primarily of a quantitative nature, together with independent researchers working with data that is predominantly qualitative. These entities and researchers constitute the Valletta 2018 Evaluation & Monitoring Steering Committee, that was set up to manage and implement this research process.

The public entities forming part of the Steering Committee are:

- National Statistics Office
- Malta Tourism Authority
- Jobsplus
- Economic Policy Department within the Ministry of Finance

The independent researchers participating within this process were selected according to their area of expertise. The areas covered are:

- Cultural Programme
- Branding
- Sociology
- Built Environment
- European Identity

Although each of these researchers, and their respective teams, are carrying out data collection and analysis specifically within their respective fields, various points of intersection and collaboration across the various areas have been established so far. The data being collected throughout each study is being shared with the Steering Committee in order to create synergies between the different fields being analysed.

The research methods adopted throughout the various studies that comprise this process vary greatly, ranging from quantitative surveys to in-depth interviews, focus groups and real-time experience tracking.

CULTURAL & TERRITORIAL VIBRANCY

THEME 1

Cultural and Territorial Vibrancy investigates the impacts of the ECoC title on the various forms of cultural participation within Malta, and the extent to which the Valletta 2018 Cultural Programme is addressing issues related to cultural engagement, community involvement within cultural activities, and skills development.

This strand is formed of three major studies. These are the Valletta Participation Survey, being carried out by the National Statistics Office, which provides crucial information on the degree to which various groups and individuals participate in cultural activity taking place in Valletta, and identifying the push and pull factors which encourage or discourage further participation.

A second, related study, being carried out by Daniela Blagojevic Vella, analyses the Valletta 2018 Cultural Programme in detail, examining how this is devised and implemented, and reflecting upon its effectiveness in fostering international collaboration and community participation in cultural activity.

Finally, the study carried out by Dr Marcello Carammia examines individuals' sense of European identity throughout the Valletta 2018 process, looking into changes in the degree of trust and closeness to European and National institutions through a series of quantitative surveys and qualitative focus group sessions.

Together, these three studies present a comprehensive overview of the current cultural participation and the ways in which Valletta 2018 intends to influence and encourage further involvement within cultural activity and greater participation within artistic, social and civic processes. These studies will be further supplemented with other sources of data over the coming years, foremost amongst them being the upcoming Cultural Participation Survey which examines participation within culture on a national scale.



VALLETTA PARTICIPATION SURVEY

National Statistics Office



ABSTRACT

The Valletta Participation Survey (VPS) is a population survey with the goal of capturing data related to cultural activities related to the Valletta 2018 events. The VPS is one of the statistical tools utilised by the Valletta 2018 Foundation to monitor the impact of the European Capital of Culture in 2018, particularly in terms of the general public's participation in activities that are being organised under the umbrella of Valletta 2018, with specific reference to Valletta.

The survey was carried out for the first time in 2014, followed by two other waves in 2015 and 2016. One of the main scopes of these surveys, and the time series data that they are providing, is that of shedding light on the areas that were tackled by the Valletta 2018 Cultural Programme and to evaluate its impact across time.

The survey covers areas related to cultural activities mainly held in Valletta during different times of the year. Other questions are related to the perception that the general public has about the events organised by the Valletta 2018 Foundation and about the current situation in Valletta in general, particularly in relation to the European Capital of Culture.

INTRODUCTION

The VPS provides an overview of the main issues related to the demand for cultural activities, with a focus on those that are under the umbrella of Valletta 2018.

The third wave of the Valletta Participation Survey was carried out in 2016. With the results calculated by this wave, one can analyse data as a time series. The questionnaire was divided into four parts, as follows: (i) demographics; (ii) questions addressed to Valletta residents only; (iii) questions addressed to non-Valletta residents only; and (iv) questions directed to everyone. The questions directed to everyone are divided into two sections, one related to attendance to cultural events and the other specifically on the European Capital of Culture. The questionnaire has remained consistent throughout the three waves of the survey.

METHODOLOGY

Sampling and population coverage

The target population for this survey is persons aged 16 years and over living in households in the Maltese Islands. Each district in Malta is equally covered, however, there is an oversampling for Valletta.

The selection of the sample is done through a stratified random sampling based on three variables, sex, age group and district. For 2016, the targeted population was estimated to be 360,372, as can be seen in Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1: Population distribution by sex and age group

Age Group	Males		Females		Total	
	Number of persons	%	Number of persons	%	Number of persons	%
16-24	24,638	13.6	22,491	12.6	47,129	13.1
25-44	63,524	35.1	59,716	33.3	123,240	34.2
45-64	56,178	31.0	55,182	30.8	111,360	30.9
65+	36,866	20.3	41,776	23.3	78,642	21.8
Total	181,206	100	179,165	100	360,372	100

Table 2: Population distribution by district or locality

District or locality	Males		Females		Total	
	Number of persons	%	Number of persons	%	Number of persons	%
Southern Harbour (excluding Valletta)	30,794	17.0	30,379	17.0	61,173	17.0
Valletta	2,312	1.3	2,458	1.4	4,771	1.3
Northern Harbour	54,213	29.9	54,308	30.3	108,521	30.1
South Eastern	27,717	15.3	26,948	15.0	54,665	15.2
Western	24,244	13.4	24,616	13.7	48,860	13.6
Northern	28,411	15.7	27,060	15.1	55,471	15.4
Gozo	13,515	7.5	13,396	7.5	26,911	7.5
Total	181,206	100	179,165	100	360,372	100

As can be seen in the table 3 below, the net sample interviewed was of 1,020 for the September 2016 wave. Of these, 830 were selected randomly from all over Malta, with the exception of Valletta. The remaining 190 were selected from Valletta. As in previous waves, the oversampling of Valletta residents ensured the production of good quality statistics for this locality.

Table 3: Sample distribution by district or locality

District or locality	Males		Females		Total	
	Number of persons	%	Number of persons	%	Number of persons	%
Southern Harbour (excluding Valletta)	67	13.5	68	13.0	135	13.2
Valletta	92	18.6	98	18.7	190	18.6
Northern Harbour	64	12.9	73	13.9	137	13.4
South Eastern	72	14.5	72	13.7	144	14.1
Western	67	13.5	71	13.5	138	13.5
Northern	69	13.9	71	13.5	140	13.7
Gozo	64	12.9	72	13.7	136	13.3
Total	495	100	525	100	1,020	100

DATA COLLECTION AND RESPONSE RATES

The survey was launched on 19th September 2016. The data collection process was carried out over a period of two weeks and was concluded on 3rd October 2016. Data collection was carried out using a CATI (Computer-assisted telephone interviewing) method, using experienced interviewers who were trained specifically for this survey.

The response rate for the VPS has always been over 75% throughout the three waves of data collection. In 2014 the response rate was of 84%, whereas in 2015 the VPS had a response rate of 77% and in 2016 the same survey had a response rate of 81%.

FINDINGS

Valletta residents

As can be seen in Table 4, shopping for clothes ranks as the most popular activity amongst Valletta residents, with 93.3% engaging in this activity. The least popular activity is relaxing in public places, at 85.2% Males demonstrated a higher rate of participation in all activities compared to females, as did persons aged 16 to 44, compared to those over the age of 45.

Table 4: Activities carried out by Valletta residents with Valletta

	Males	Females	Total
	%	%	%
Shopping for groceries	67	68	135
Shopping for clothes	92	98	190
Relaxing in public places	64	73	137

	16 to 44 years old	45 years old and over	Total
	%		
Shopping for groceries	90.9	87.3	88.7
Shopping for clothes	93.7	93.1	93.3
Relaxing in public places	89.7	82.3	85.2

Valletta residents tend to leave Valletta mainly through private car followed by public transport. Results show a noticeable increase in the use of public transport, particularly from 2015, where 27.7% of respondents listed public transport as their preferred means of transport to leave Valletta, to 2016, where this figure rose to almost 40%.

Table 5: Type of transport mostly used to leave Valletta

Type of transport	Males	Females	Total
	%	%	%
Private car	58.6	66.1	56.2
Public transport	30.7	27.7	39.9
Other (including taxi or other paid services)	1.8	2.5	2.5
Do not leave Valletta	8.9	3.7	1.5

Non-Valletta residents

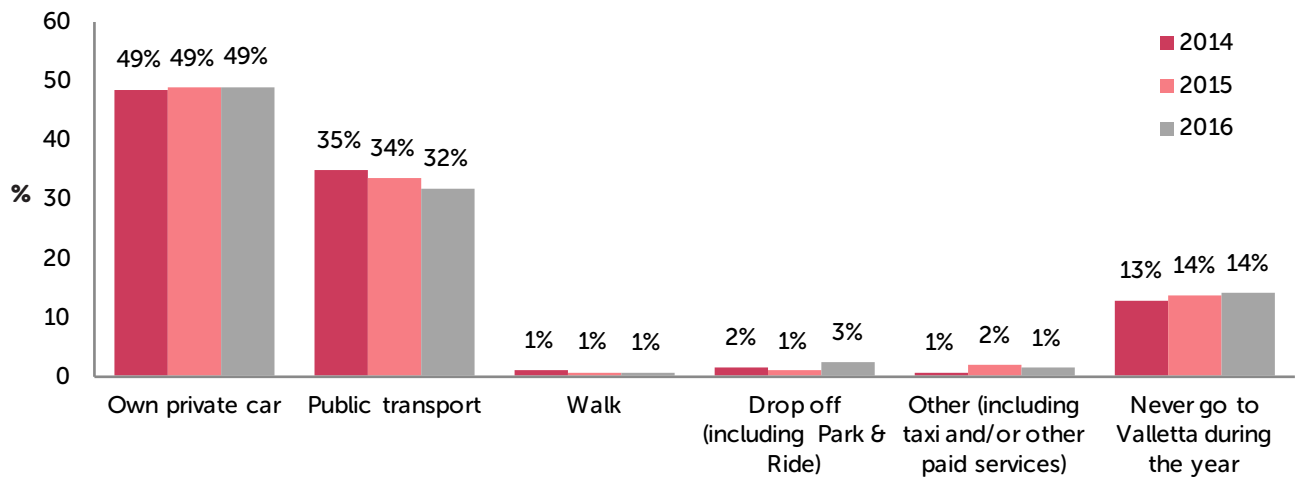
Shopping for clothes is the main motivation for non-Valletta residents to visit Valletta in winter, followed by work and administrative services and dining. There is a clear shift in the summer months, with the main motivation being shopping for clothes in 2014 and work and administrative services, and dining in 2015 and 2016 respectively (see Table 6).

Table 6: Reasons for non-Valletta residents who visited Valletta in a typical winter/summer month (Maximum 3 reasons)

Type of transport	2014	2015	2016	2014	2015	2016
	Winter (%)			Summer (%)		
Shopping of clothes	47.8	33.9	39.9	38.8	30.9	33.8
For Work, administrative services	28.6	32.0	33.4	29.7	36.2	31.4
Dining	19.7	22.9	28.3	23.1	24.8	35.6

The means of transport that is mainly used by the non-Valletta residents to visit Valletta is constant since 2014. The only noticeable trend is the drop in the use of public transport, which fell by 3% between 2014 and 2016.

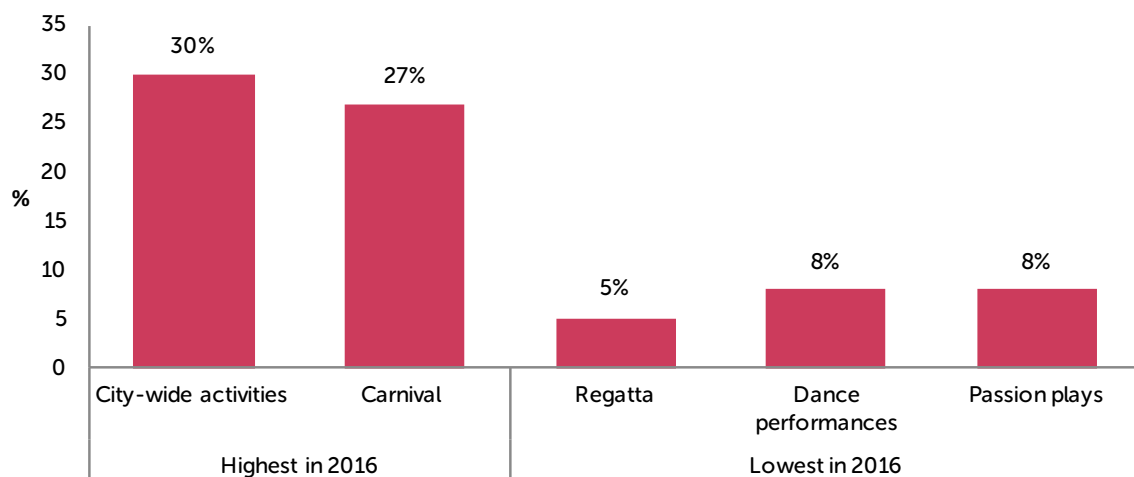
Chart 1: Non-Valletta residents – Type of transport mostly used to go to Valletta



Attendance to cultural events

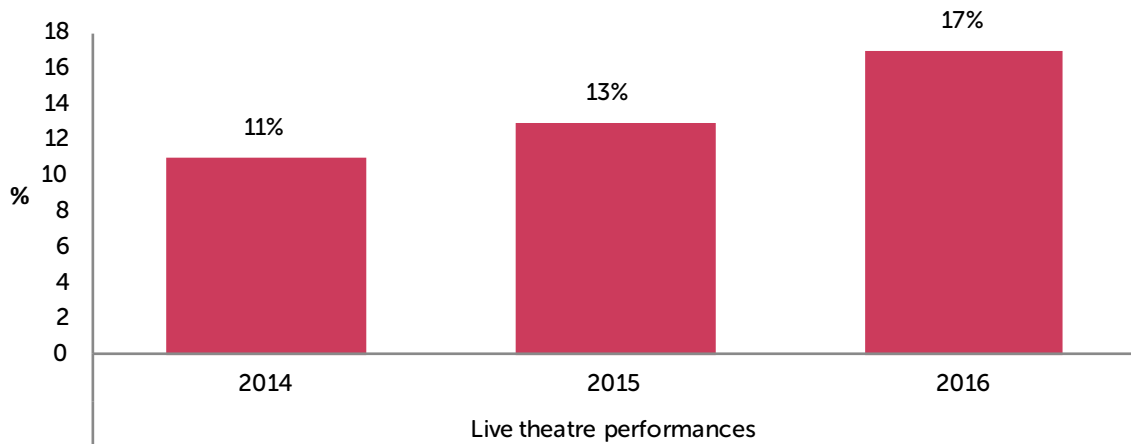
Chart 2 shows that, the most popular cultural events in 2016 were city-wide activities (such as Notte Bianca and Carnival), following a similar trend from 2014 and 2015. On the other hand, regatta was the least popular activity amongst respondents (5%), followed by dance performances and passion plays (both at 8%).

Chart 2: Attendance to cultural events attendance in 2016



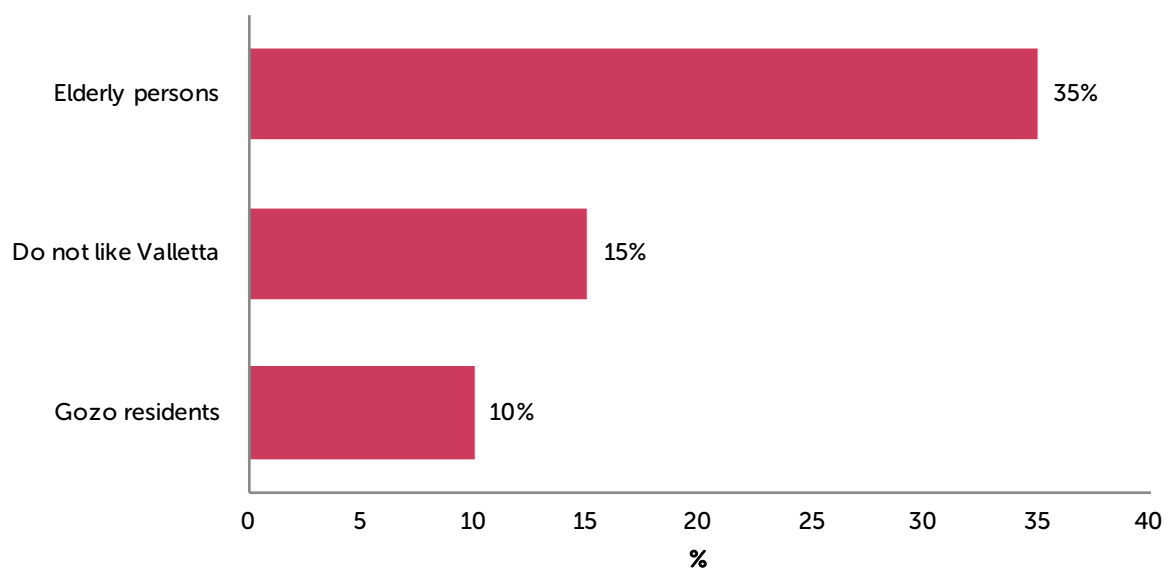
It is also worth noticing that the most significant upward shift in terms of attendance was related to live theatre performances, which recorded an increase of 6% between 2014 and 2016 (see Chart 3).

Chart 3: Live theatre performance highest increase 2014-2016



Of particular interest was also the fact that almost 24% of respondents listed "other reason" as the main reason for not attending cultural events. This was the second highest category, preceded by the 34% that stated that they do not attend because they are not sufficiently interested in these events. A deeper analysis of respondents who listed "other reason" shows that 35% of them are elderly persons that do not attend due to health issues. The times of events and lack of accessibility and transport are amongst 'the other reasons mentioned by respondents when asked why they do not participate' why respondents advised that they do not participate in cultural events. Furthermore, 15% of this sub-group stated that they do not attend as they do not like Valletta, while 10% stated that since they do not attend as they reside in Gozo (see Chart 4).

Chart 4: Other reasons for not attending



European Capital of Culture

The last part of the survey focused on the European Capital of Culture and the Valletta 2018 Foundation.

The survey results show that respondents have a positive perception of Valletta, tending to agree more strongly with positive statements (Table 6). Statements related to cultural activities and the city's cultural heritage score particularly highly, with average responses very close to the highest possible rating of 5.

Table 6: Perception of Valletta

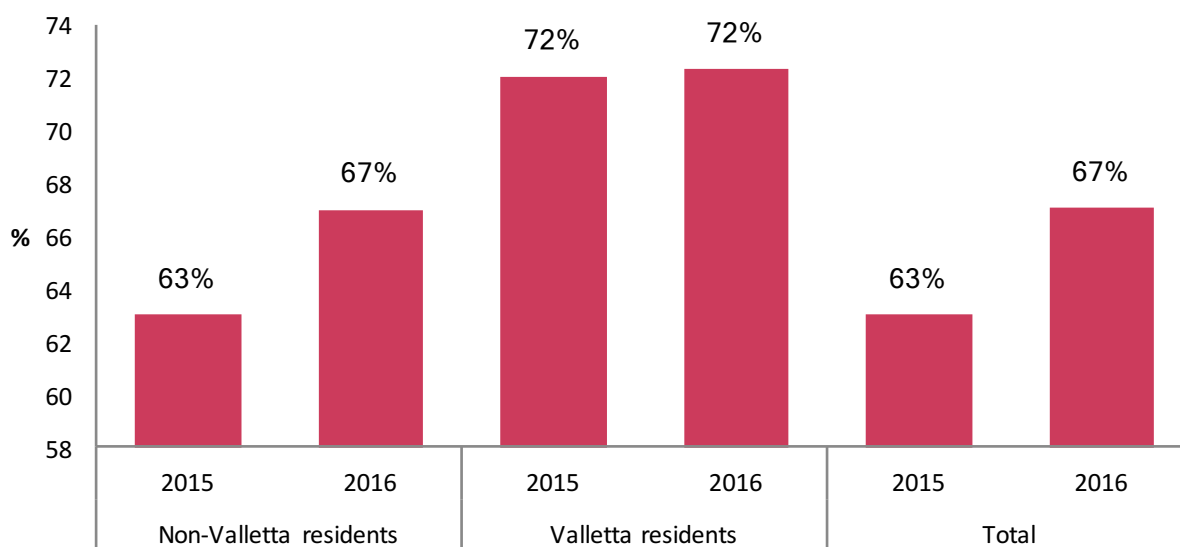
	Valletta as a city rich in culture	Valletta as a city which does not offer enough choice for entertainment	Valletta as a city which has too many vacant dwellings	Valletta as a city which is accessible to everyone	Valletta as a city which offers cultural diversity	Valletta as a city which needs restoration	Valletta as a city which is changing for the worse
2014	3.2	2.3	3.0	3.1	3.0	2.8	1.2
2015	4.4	2.7	3.9	4.3	4.3	3.7	1.4
2016	4.5	2.7	4.0	4.4	4.4	3.8	1.3

1 = Do Not Agree at all

5 = Strongly Agree

Knowledge of the European Capital of Culture (ECoC) increased over the past year, with 67% of respondents stating that they were familiar with it in 2016, compared to 63% the previous year. As was expected, Valletta residents' knowledge of the ECoC is higher than that of non-Valletta residents, with 72% of Valletta residents stating that they are aware of the ECoC title. This figure remains unchanged from the previous survey in 2015 (see Chart 5).

Chart 5: Knowledge of European Capital of Culture



Knowledge specific to Valletta’s designation as ECoC in 2018 is very similar to that about the ECoC title in general (Table 7). This has increased over the past years, rising to 67% in 2016 from 58% in 2014. As a general trend in all the three surveys, males are more informed than females about ECoC.

Table 7: Knowledge of Valletta’s designation as European Capital of Culture in 2018 by gender

	2014			2015			2016		
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Correct	62.3	53.4	57.9	64.1	59.3	61.7	70.5	63.3	66.9
Not correct	10.8	9.8	10.3	10.9	6.4	8.7	9.4	3.6	6.5
Did not answer or did not know	26.9	36.8	31.8	24.9	34.3	29.6	20.1	33.1	26.6

The respondents also identified the impact of the ECoC on a number of categories. The trends remain consistent throughout 2015 and 2016, with respondents demonstrating strong agreement with the positive impact on tourism, businesses and Valletta in general. There was a general improvement in the perception of all categories from 2014 to 2015. The lowest level of agreement was recorded when faced with the statement that the ECoC will have a positive impact on the people who live in Valletta, with an average score of 3.5 (Table 8).

Table 8: Perceptions of the impact of Valletta’s designation as European Capital of Culture on various sectors

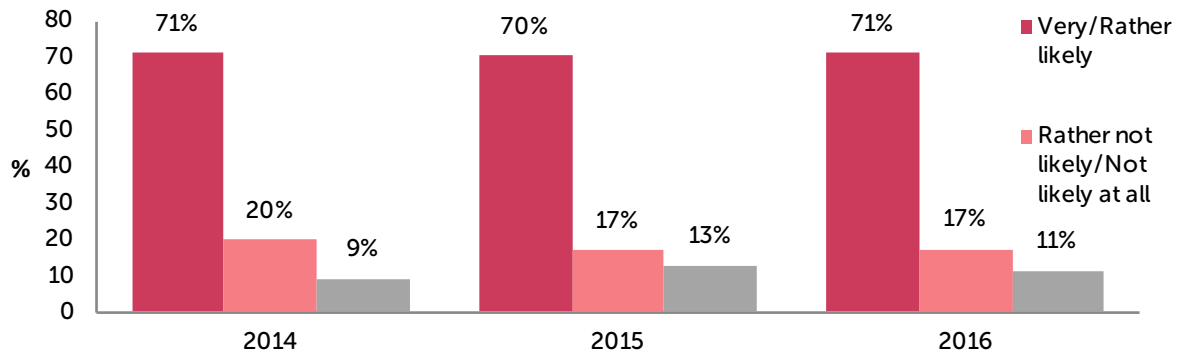
	Tourism	Cultural or artistic events	Businesses in Valletta	The visibility of Valletta on a global scale	The image of Valletta	People who live in Valletta
2014	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.3	2.6
2015	4.5	4.5	4.4	4.4	4.3	3.5
2016	4.6	4.5	4.6	4.6	4.5	3.5

1 = Do Not Agree at all

5 = Strongly Agree

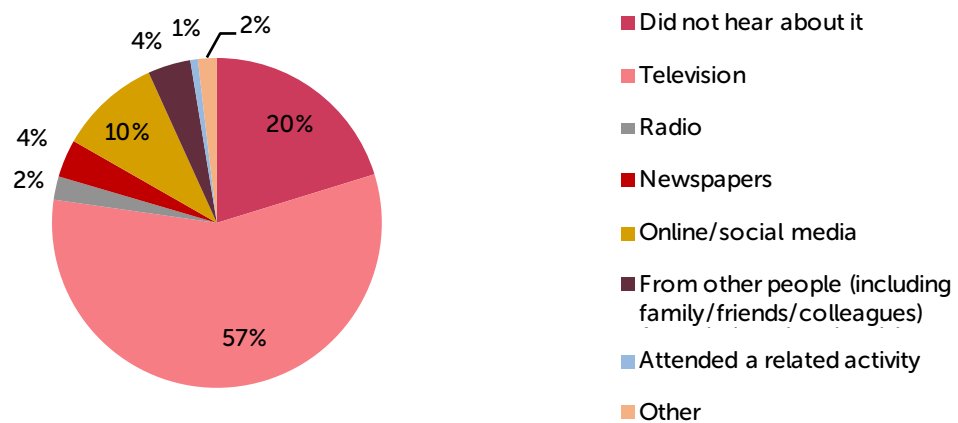
Chart 6, shows that on average, between the years of 2014 and 2016, 71% of the respondents stated that they are rather or very likely to attend an event organised by Valletta 2018.

Chart 6: Respondents' likeliness of attending events that take place in Valletta, as part of Valletta 2018



As shown in Chart 7, the main means of communication through which the public is keeping informed about Valletta 2018 is TV (57%), followed by online and social media (10%).

Chart 7: Main perceived means through which respondents are informed about Valletta 2018





CONCLUSIONS & WAY FORWARD

As the results of the surveys carried out so far demonstrate, general trends remained consistent between 2014 and 2016. However, one must note that there were some significant positive changes in the public's perception of Valletta.

The results presented also show a noticeable increase in awareness of Valletta as European Capital of Culture, which is now up to 67%. Furthermore, 86% of respondents described Valletta as a city which is changing for the better.

The next Valletta Participation Survey will be carried out in 2017. Two other editions of the survey will be taking place during 2018.



A COMPREHENSIVE ANALYSIS OF THE VALLETTA 2018 CULTURAL PROGRAMME

Daniela Blagojevic Vella

ABSTRACT

The research study sets out to investigate the strategies and practices currently in place to develop the Valletta 2018 Cultural Programme. The aim is to understand how the Valletta 2018 Foundation and various project leaders transfer their visions into objectives and how they work to create a balanced cultural offer, place the citizen at the centre and strive towards a European dimension.

The study observes a clear progress in the consolidation of the Cultural Programme with a range of projects across different disciplines included and confirmed for 2018. In particular, the information gathered shows an intensified drive towards contemporary projects, establishing international links and exploiting the Euro-Mediterranean dimension. The interviews and focus groups shed light on the different strategies in place and also the challenges encountered by the programme contributors. The interpretation of audience participation and engagement varies, ranging from grass-roots community projects to the large-scale events. However, the study also indicates that interviewees share a common vision of striving towards widening participation and with this a common concern that this requires ongoing efforts and the need to share best practices.

The implementation of projects at such a scale is largely unprecedented and capacity building, development, competences and skills are identified by respondents as necessary for the successful delivery of ECoC objectives. In particular, the study highlights the need for project leaders to understand the overarching objectives of the Valletta 2018 Cultural Programme beyond the aims of their individual project.

Keywords: Cultural Programme; audience participation; European dimension; cultural offer; audience engagement.

INTRODUCTION

Since 1985 the European Capital of Culture (ECoC) has become more than a high-profile cultural festival. Various ECoC studies and evaluations (Palmer/Rae (2004); García and Cox (2013); ECORYS) have shown how cities have increased their standards and ambitions beyond that of a year-long festival of activities.

The Valletta 2018 Foundation has also set an ambitious vision for its Cultural Programme that places cultural participation and citizens at the centre:

“The Cultural Programme that is being designed by the Valletta 2018 Foundation aims to reinforce citizen’s pride and self-esteem, allow for active participation, and develop initiatives that leave concrete and durable results leading to a citizenship that can affirm itself, generate international interest, and fully exploit the new or regenerated cultural infrastructure offered by the city” (Cremona, 2016, p. xii).

The ECoC Cultural Programme is a main element that needs to be assessed within a specific cultural context and in terms of the objectives set by the 2006 Decision No 1622/2006/EC¹. Article 4 stipulates that the ECoC should include two main criteria (i) European Dimension (ii) The City and Citizens.

The objective of this study is to analyse the creation of the Valletta 2018 Cultural Programme and the individual projects from development to implementation from 2015 to 2018. It sets out to identify the effectiveness of the Programme regarding the cultural offer, audience participation and European collaboration.

As shown in Figure 1, in 2015 the study started off by drawing upon previous evaluations of ECoC programmes and the Valletta 2018 Bid Book objectives to establish the elements and criteria against which to evaluate the Programme (see Annex I). The findings in the first year revealed the complexity of developing an ECoC programme and an ongoing refining of the vision and objectives by the Valletta 2018 Foundation. The first report showed how that the programming balance was in flux with a leaning towards a contemporary approach, a range of art forms and a focus on process-led projects rooted in Valletta and across Malta. The culture participation element was a priority in community projects led by the programming team while the development of the European dimension was still underdeveloped.

Building on these findings, in 2016 the research looked at how the programming and content were further consolidated and how the changes unfolded in the run-up towards ECoC. The 2015 study relied primarily on the institutional analysis while in 2016 the main focus was data gathering through in-depth interviews and focus groups. The study continued to investigate and fine-tune the following research questions:

1. How are the aims and objectives of the Valletta 2018 Cultural Programme being developed?
2. How is the Programme developed and devised?
3. What are the range and diversity of the cultural offer and programming balance?
4. How do the projects included in the Cultural Programme fulfil ECoC objectives on cultural participation? What strategies are being devised to engage audiences? What are the barriers to participation as perceived by the Cultural Programmers and creators?
5. How do the projects/events reflect the European Dimension?
6. What are the challenges encountered in the delivery of the Valletta 2018 Programme?

¹ Decision No 1622/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of the 24 October 2006 establishing a Community action for the European Capital of Culture event for the years 2017 to 2019.

It should be emphasised from the outset that the 2016 findings are based on a Programme which is in progress and the full range of projects and events programme will be further established in 2017. The focus is, therefore, the planning stage and the projects which have been announced, developed and/or produced by December 2016. The development of the study is shown in Figure 1.

Methodology	2015	2016	2017	2018
Institutional Analysis	X			X
Focus groups	X	X	X	X
In-depth interviews	X	X	X	X
Online questionnaire		X	X	X
Project visits		X	X	X

Cultural Programme development:

Figure 1: Development of study from 2015 to 2018



The research examines three aspects of the Cultural Programme in line with the Foundation's terms of reference. However, the effectiveness of the Cultural Programme is also dependent on various factors including governance and funding, infrastructure and communications².

² These aspects are being investigated through the Valletta 2018 Foundation Evaluation and Monitoring Research Plan.

METHODOLOGY

This qualitative study adopts a mixed method approach to reflect multi-dimensional aspects of the Cultural Programme and the developments unfolding over the years. Unlike studies that are post evaluation (ECORYS 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014), the ongoing evaluation implies that members of the research team can directly observe and survey the individual projects as they progress. Previous studies have noted the limitation of conducting interviews after the ECoC event because of the reliance on respondents' recollections and perceptions (ECORYS, 2014). This study has the advantage of analysing the Programme while it is still in progress.

In 2016, data was gathered primarily through in-depth interviews, focus groups as well as project visits. The interviews and focus group studies have been carried out with:

1. The Valletta 2018 Foundation team members and management including the Executive Director, Programme Coordinator and officers, Regional Coordinators, Strand Coordinators, Tal-Kultura Programme Manager;
2. Special events team including Production Coordinator, Line Producer and Executive Assistant.
3. Creators, Co-Creators and producers of projects included in the Cultural Programme;
4. Key persons from Public Cultural Organisations;
5. Independent artists and groups.

The interviews and focus groups were transcribed³ and coded according to themes and research questions namely (i) cultural offer and programming balance (ii) audience participation and engagement (iii) European collaboration.

In the first year of study, it was established that ongoing updates are necessary to ensure that the research findings are up-to-date and reflect the ongoing changes. Consultation meetings with the Programme Coordinator Margerita Pulè were organised regularly to ensure that the developments were tracked throughout the year.

The study attempts to achieve reliability by triangulating the data collected from the institutional analysis, interviews, focus groups and project visits. This methodology is adequate to gain detailed and in-depth perspectives on the ECoC Cultural Programme. However, in-depth interviews have their limitations particularly because of biases by both the interviewees and interviewers (Blagojevic, 2015). As identified in the first year of the study, caution is needed so as not to take personal interpretations for granted because of what Tinic refers to as the "situatedness" (Caldwell, 2008, p.8). In personal interviews, it may sometimes be difficult to filter through the self-promotion. Caldwell (2008) invites production studies researchers to sift through the personal branding and industry parlance (p. 318).

Moreover, studies on events commissioned by event organisers also tend to focus on positive aspects and neglect other critical aspects or do not focus sufficiently on social impact (Richards, 2013). To address this difficulty the research attempts to gather data from a variety of sources to widen its scope to include more critical perspectives.

³ Full recording and transcripts can be accessed on <https://transcribepro.wreally.com/docs>

As the Programme range continues to grow, particularly in 2018 once Valletta launches the full official Programme, it may difficult to conduct project visits and in-person project visits of all the projects. A number of project leaders and artists are not based in Malta and this also creates difficulties to conduct in-person interviews and to reach all those contributing to the Programme. Moreover, in some cases, respondents may be unwilling or hesitant to disclose all information and opinions.

To address these methodological difficulties, an online survey for project leaders will be conducted in 2017 as an additional methodological tool to ensure coverage of a wide-range of projects happening in 2018. Other studies (ECORYS 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014; Quinn & O'Halloran, 2006) have also used online surveys to ensure a wider response from ECoC contributors. The online questionnaire method will also be used in 2018 to reach the large number of contributors and artists and to investigate how audience participation strategies were implemented. The research can, therefore, evaluate the progress from the planning phase to the actual execution of the Programme.

FINDINGS

Research Question 1. How are aims and objectives of the Valletta 2018 Cultural Programme being developed?

ECoC evaluations of previous editions, particularly after 2005, indicate that hosts are setting wider ambitions with cultural, economic and social objectives included. Studies show that in most cases, core objectives remain the same at the application stage and the implementation phase. However, the reworking of goals for practical reasons was also observed (Garcia & Cox, 2013).

The interviews with different members of the Valletta 2018 Foundation throughout the year show that the intended objectives remain consistent with those proposed in the Bid Book. The objectives outlined by over 15 respondents include the following: (i) The focus on improving access to culture and the arts; (ii) Capacity building and opportunities for artists; (iii) Contributing to the development of quality projects; (iv) Legacy to ensure that outcomes continue beyond 2018.

The citizen element and cultural participation emerged as common priorities for the Programming team, as aptly summarised by one of the Valletta 2018 programme officers "there is a mission to make art and culture relevant to people and to their everyday lives and not just as a tourist attraction."

The independent artists interviewed, were also aware of the main ECoC objectives. Legacy and capacity building of artists emerged as priorities. However, most interviewees agreed that they were more concerned with the specific objectives of their own project and were less aware of the general themes and overarching objectives linking the different Cultural Programme projects and events. Moreover, some respondents said that they did not know which projects had been included in the Cultural Programme and suggested that there should be initiatives that bring contributors together to discuss their projects. They also recommended the use of communication and social media tools to remind them about ongoing ECoC initiatives and events. The Foundation acted upon this recommendation by organising a meet-up for all artists, artistic directors, programmers and project leaders in October 2016. During this activity, ECoC contributors introduced their projects and objectives to each other.

Research Question 2. How is the Programme developed and devised?

The Foundation's Programming team is responsible for the Cultural Programme, while the Artistic Director of Special Events Mario Philip Azzopardi and his team are responsible for the large flagship events including the opening ceremony, the Valletta Pageant of the Seas, the opera and the final event.

In January 2016, the EU Commission Monitoring and Advisory Panel report concluded that there was a clear progress concerning the Programme definition. The research confirms that in 2016 there was constant progress in establishing the projects to be included in the 2018 Programme and by the end of the year over 60 projects were included in the Programme.

Projects are being tested and developed so that more ambitious events can then feature in 2018 and over 25 projects were piloted or developed throughout 2016. These projects are process led in that they are being developed from now and will then be fully implemented in 2018. Even the flagship event the Valetta Pageant of the Seas was piloted in June 2016 and this was considered by the organisers as an opportunity to explore the effectiveness of the project in particular audience engagement strategies and logistics required as the

event features regatta boats, yachts, power boats and carnival floats. While most projects will be further developed and improved, other initiatives produced in 2015 and 2016 as Valletta 2018 projects will not be showcased further and other projects were specifically designed as short-term projects⁴.

In identifying projects that would form part of the 2018 Programme, the Foundation adopted a flexible approach - in some cases, the Foundation would be approached by artists who presented their projects while in other cases the Foundation would develop an idea or theme and then contact experts and artists working in that particular field. The management of the Programme also involves adapting to change as projects can develop differently to what was originally proposed.

Part of the process in 2016 was for the Programming team to identify gaps to ensure that the range and reach of the Programme are effective. ECoC presents an opportunity to implement cultural activities that have a wider reach and are more innovative, as will be discussed in the next section.

Research Question 3. What is the range and diversity of the cultural offer and programming balance?

Palmer/Rae (2004) identify various elements that influence the range and balance of the Cultural Programme including the size, scale and range of different genres. This study includes these elements as outlined in the question design (Annex 1) and the project visit form (Annex 2). The range of projects included in the Valletta 2018 Programme will continue to grow over the next year, with the full range of events launched in 2018.

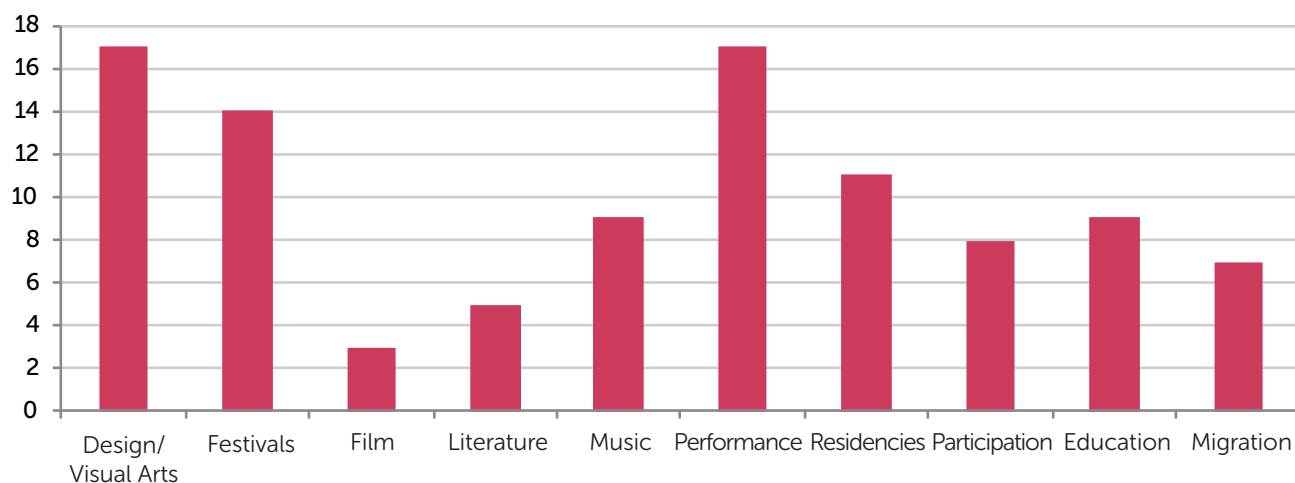
The Foundation manages its programme by loosely grouping the projects according to genre or type with a coordinator responsible for each strand. Figure 2 shows the distribution of projects according to strands as defined by the Foundation to date. The categorisation is made either by the type of artistic discipline or by the theme (e.g. exile/migration) or by the type of target group and interaction with the audience (e.g. education, participation). In interpreting this table, it is important to observe that there are clear overlaps, for example, a project may be categorised as 'participation' but at the same time it belongs to a particular art form like dance or theatre. Moreover, many projects are interdisciplinary and explore different themes and approaches. The strands are therefore useful to help in the internal management of the Programme and to ensure that there are various projects covering different elements.

Interviews conducted at the beginning of the year indicated that the theatre and dance disciplines were underrepresented at that point in time. This was due to the challenge of finding Maltese companies with the required experience to produce a large-scale project by 2018, given that a project of this scale is largely unprecedented in the local context. As can be seen in Figure 2 which shows the distribution of projects as at December 2016, the Programming team addressed this difficulty by establishing international links with performance and dance producers so that the Programme now includes more projects in this area. There is a clear focus on visual arts and design while theatre, film and literature are less represented. There is no strand dedicated to crafts and heritage suggesting that there will not be many projects from these sectors in 2018 or that these will be integrated as part of other projects in other categories.

Regarding Programming balance, the interviews and project visits also confirmed a drive towards contemporary and innovative projects. For the Executive Director Karsten Xuereb, Valletta 2018 cannot just be a reflection of the past but it is crucial to challenge ideas of what it means to be Maltese, Mediterranean and European in contemporary society.

⁴ Productions that will not be part of the 2018 programme include Bewildered Music Festival, Culture of Ageing, Haġa u Taħdita, Pjazza fi Pjazza and Storyworks.

Figure 2 Project range according to strand as categorised by the Foundation, December 2016



Research Question 4. How do the projects included in the Cultural Programme fulfil ECoC objectives on cultural participation?

The study looks at the Cultural Programme and how it is shaped with the needs of audiences and particular target groups in mind. As described in the previous section, one strand is identified as ‘participation’ in the programme categorization. In 2015 and early 2016, this strand was referred to as the community strand and this category deals mainly with grassroots projects targeting particular groups and adopting an active participation and co-creation approach.

In 2016, the Foundation estimates that over 150,000⁵ people took part in activities and projects related to Valletta 2018. These events include the Valletta Green Festival, the Valletta Pageant of the Seas and Notte Bianca⁶. All projects included in the Programme include a participatory element, either in terms of passive participation or active participation. Both approaches are important for the Foundation. The large-scale events focus on attracting large numbers while other projects particularly those in the participation and education strands are aimed at providing experiences and deepening relationships with audiences. Projects like Sounds Out Loud, Darba Wahda, Kanta Kantun, Ġewwa Barra and Naqsam il-Muza are examples of projects adopting this approach in 2016. Project leaders of such projects have emphasised the importance of focusing on the quality of relationships build with participants rather than the quantity of people attending a particular workshop or performance.

The large events are being developed to attract large audiences. Nonetheless, the Valletta Pageant of the Seas also involved the active participation of different communities and the organisers described the enthusiasm of various groups contributing to the event and the important role played by the Regional Coordinators.

Programmers, project leaders and artists interviewed shared a common concern that reaching out to audiences is not without difficulty and that increasing audience participation requires a significant cultural change. Culture Programme initiatives may not be relevant to all communities and artists have sometimes encountered a lack of enthusiasm. The lack of motivation by potential audiences was reiterated in interviews with various project leaders. Some target groups may be particularly difficult to

⁵ <http://valletta2018.org/news/valletta-2018-encourages-participation-in-its-2017-cultural-programme>

⁶ This does not include the New Year’s Eve event which was attended by approximately 75,000 people (Department of Information Press release, January 2017: <http://valletta2018.org/news/valletta-2018-encourages-participation-in-its-2017-cultural-programme>)

reach for practical reasons. For example, the participation of children in community projects outside school hours proved to be challenging as in the case of the Darba Wahda first workshop in Kirkop. In this project, various strategies and efforts were observed including the involvement of the Local Council, the use of posters and flyers, promotion on the project's social media page, presentations at Day Care centres and the provision of transport for participants. Nonetheless securing the participation of citizens needs ongoing efforts and collaboration with stakeholders.

The role of the Foundation, the Regional Coordinators and the volunteers is crucial in assisting small independent producers to engage with audiences and garner support from various stakeholders such as local councils and public institutions.

In 2016, the launch of the Tal-Kultura volunteers programme and the work of the Regional Coordinators showed a strategic effort to reach out to different target groups and to involve civil society in February 2016. The Tal-Kultura programme (co-managed with SOS Malta) was formally launched to a positive response with around 385 volunteers signing up. The aim of the programme goes beyond the recruitment of volunteers as helpers. In the words of the Tal-Kultura Programme Manager JD Farrugia, the Tal-Kultura programme "is first of all giving people the opportunity to take ownership of the Cultural Programme and to take ownership of Valletta 2018...whether it's just as a citizen who has no direct involvement in the sector or whether it's people who are studying or incoming artists or performers, they can all use the volunteering programme to get involved and network". The volunteering programme also has the ambition of exploring how a network of volunteers can work efficiently.

Throughout the year the Regional Coordinators also stepped up their role and are now helping the Foundation to understand the needs of different locations and to address gaps in the Programme. Currently, the Programming team is carrying out an exercise to understand the gaps in reaching various localities across Malta to ensure a wider reach. The Regional Coordinators are also identifying the different target groups across the five regions.

Research Question 5. How do the project/events reflect the European Dimension?

A major shift was observed in 2016 preparations showing a more outward-looking approach and emphasis on the international dimension. The appointment of Airan Berg as International Artistic Advisor largely contributed to this development and increased the focus on establishing international links. An International Officer was also engaged early in 2016 as part of the Programming team in this area.

Throughout the year, the Programming team deliberately sought to explore European connections and the new Programme content attests to this. The Programming Coordinator and other members of the team travelled to various festivals and more links were created through these visits. The Cultural Programme now includes more European elements either through the participation of artists or through links made by Maltese artists with wider networks.

Another development in 2016 included the international call and the selection of the Austrian curator Maren Richter to lead The Sea Our Neighbour project. The Design Cluster was accepted as a new BEDA member (Bureau of European Design Associations) and was invited by the EU-Japan Fest Committee

for an exploratory visit to Tokyo. International professionals also participated in training projects such as Storyworks and the Curatorial School. There are also a number of Malta-based international artists who are already attached to projects or coordinating individual strands of the Programme. The projects under the migration strand also contribute significantly to the international dimension. Increasingly Valletta 2018 is driving its emphasis on the Euro-Mediterranean aspect and Malta's unique geographical position. Project leaders were asked by the Foundation to propose ways in which their individual projects can create international links and, as observed by interviewees, this needed to be followed up further so that more projects could create international links. Moreover interviewees urged the Foundation to create links and contacts that can be sustained beyond 2018.

For the Foundation's Executive Director, the European Dimension is also about making the Cultural Programme relevant to other Europeans by ensuring that the various themes resonate with and are relevant to international audiences.

Research Question 6. What are the challenges encountered in the delivery of the Valletta 2018 Programme?

The members of the Foundation highlighted challenges in finding the right professionals to work on projects and to ensure the successful delivery of the Programme. Finding professionals who are available for the next two years is proving to be difficult, however this is a challenge that is not exclusive to Valletta 2018 and has been faced by most other ECoCs. Respondents, both Foundation representatives and artists, highlighted the need for capacity building, development of knowledge, competences and skills. These challenges reflect changes in the Maltese arts sector but are particularly pronounced as the ECoC approaches and the need for greater professionalism in the culture industry becomes more apparent. As articulated in several interviews, many view the ECoC process as one that should lead to a change in mind-sets and improved quality standards in the arts.

Another challenge identified last year (Blagojevic, 2015) and voiced again this year by respondents, is the implementation of effective strategies to attract and engage audiences. In this area, there is a need firstly for all contributors to understand the overall objectives of the Cultural Programme and to share best practices on reaching and engaging audiences. Interviewees spoke of the need for a forum to debate and strategise around the issues faced by cultural players. There is a need for contributors to better understand the over-arching Valletta 2018 vision and how the work of individual artists or groups is contributing to these wider objectives. The need for more communication amongst Programme contributors throughout the implementation of the Programme was reiterated throughout.

Beyond the actual development of the Programme, the focus groups generated debates on the challenges faced by independent artists in Malta. The concerns included the lack of resources and accessibility to public institutions. The artists interviewed also saw the Foundation's role in facilitating relationships with both cultural stakeholders and audiences.



CONCLUSIONS & WAY FORWARD

The development of the Programme throughout 2016 shows a clear push towards international projects. The Foundation is now establishing new relationships with stakeholders from across Europe and the Mediterranean. The programme has been further consolidated so it is now more clear which projects will be produced in 2018 while others will not be developed further. The main challenge to be tackled over the next months is to ensure that the right professionals are brought in to support the Programming team's efforts. The understanding of a common vision and the sharing of information by all Programme contributors is also being highlighted as a priority for the coming year.

The study will continue to follow this progress and in February 2017, an online questionnaire will be sent to the producers of around 50 projects that are planned for this year. The project visits are expected to increase as the projects which were in planning or research phase will now be produced in 2017. The 3 focus groups will be organised in the second quarter of 2017 and the in-depth interviews and project visits will be organised throughout the whole year up until the end of November before the compilation of the final report.

The focus groups can also be used as opportunity to bring programmers and producers together to workshop ideas related to the Cultural Programme. Now that the Cultural Programme has been further consolidated, the study should also investigate the extent to which the contributors are extending their artistic ambitions and audience participation strategies as a result of ECoC.

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX 1

Success Criteria to Evaluate ECoC Cultural Programme

ECORYS (2014)	
Category	Criteria
Cultural and Artistic Offer	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Clear and coherent artistic vision for the Cultural Programme; 2. Involvement of local artists and cultural organisations in the conception and implementation of the Cultural Programme; 3. Range and diversity of activities and their overall artistic quality; 4. Combination of local cultural heritage and traditional art forms with new, innovative and experimental cultural expressions.
European Dimension	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Scope and quality of activities promoting the cultural diversity of Europe, intercultural dialogue and mutual understanding; 2. Scope and quality of activities highlighting the common aspects of European cultures, heritage and history and European integration; 3. Scope and quality of activities featuring European artists, co-operation with operators or cities in different countries, and transnational partnerships; 4. Strategy to attract the interest of a broad European and international public.
Outreach	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Involvement of the local population and civil society in the application and implementation of the ECoC; 2. New and sustainable opportunities for a wide range of citizens to attend or participate in cultural activities, in particular young people, marginalised and disadvantaged people, and minorities; 3. Accessibility of activities to persons with disabilities and to the elderly; 4. Overall strategy for audience development, in particular the link with education and the participation of schools.

Garcia and Cox (2013) (p.91)	
Category	Criteria
Public Engagement	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Evidence of activity targeted at specific groups; 2. Approaches to audience development and participatory activity; 3. Volunteering programmes.
Category	Guiding Questions
Background	<p>Ask about confidentiality and recording</p> <p>Interviewees official title, role and experience.</p> <p>Date of Engagement</p>
Objectives, vision and mission	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are the main aims and objectives of the Valletta 2018 Cultural Programme? 2. What is the main motivation of the Cultural Programme?
Development process, Adhering to bid-book application	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Please explain the planning in place from bid-book stage to date. 2. How have the objectives changed since 2012? 3. What is the planning work currently in progress?
Selection and consultation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How are projects selected/included? What are the selection criteria? 2. What is the involvement of local artists and cultural organisations in the conception and implementation of the Cultural Programme?
Themes, Orientation, Coherence	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are the main themes? how are they being used? How are projects categorised according to theme?
<p>Range and diversity of activities and their overall artistic quality;</p> <p>Programming balance</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How many projects will be included? 2. What is the length of the Cultural Programme? 3. How are the locations of projects selected (Valletta vs. regional)? 4. How has the Cultural Programme tried to balance between: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - local and international inputs in such a way as to maximise synergy? - independent groups and public cultural organisations? - tradition and innovation? - different arts forms & genres? - public and private space? - culture and art? - process led and event led? - professionals vs. Amateurs

B. Cultural Participation (RQ 4)	
Public engagement, outreach, audience development strategies, city and citizen;	How is the cultural sector engaging in the programme?
	What methods were used to encourage participation?
	How are young people and disadvantaged groups being encouraged to participate?
	What are the strategies being used for audience development? (volunteering programmes, calls, outreach, etc.)
	What kind of participation do you envisage/ are you planning?
	Who are your target groups?
C. European Dimension (RQ5)	
European perspective, European collaboration, mobility, networking, cultural diversity.	How do the project/events reflect the European Dimension?
	How do projects promote cultural diversity of Europe, intercultural dialogue and mutual understanding?
	How are projects engaging European artists/ collaborators/networks? what strategies are in place to encourage European collaboration?
	What strategies are being used to promote Europe and garner interest in European culture?
D. Challenges (RQ6)	
European perspective, European collaboration, mobility, networking, cultural diversity.	<p>What are the challenges encountered in the delivery of the Valletta 2018 Programme?</p> <p>What difficulties are/were encountered during the planning/development phase and how are/were these overcome?</p> <p>General feedback, comments</p>

APPENDIX 2
Project Visit Sheet

Date of Visit _____

Project Name _____

Project Contact Person _____

Contact Details: _____

A. General

1. Synopsis

2. Project included in bid-Book?

Yes No Partially

3. Project Themes/Objectives

4. Frequency of event/project

- a. Once yearly
- b. 2-3 events (performances, workshops, seminars etc.)
- c. More than 5 events
- d. More than 8 events
- e. More than 10 events

B. Culture Offer/Balance

1. Location

Valletta Other region _____ International

2. Tradition vs Contemporary

3. Genre

- a. Theatre
- b. Dance
- c. Music
- d. Film
- e. Visual Art
- f. Literature
- g. Interdisciplinary

Type

- a. Community
- b. Education
- c. Large Event
- d. Festival

4. Use of Space

- a. Public Space
- b. Private Space
- c. Both

Type

- a. Process led
- b. Event led
- c. Both

Artists

- a. Professionals
- b. Amateurs
- c. Both

PCOs

- a. Public Cultural Organisations
- b. Independent artists
- c. Both

C. Audience Participation

1. Were methods used to encourage participation?

Yes No

Describe

2. Specific Target Group

Yes No

- a. Children
- b. Youths
- c. Seniors
- d. Disabled
- e. Migrants
- f. Artists

Other _____

3. Strategies Used for audience engagement

- a. Volunteering
- b. Regional Coordinators
- c. Outreach
- d. Marketing and Communications
- e. Information sessions

Other _____

4. Type of participation

- a. Development/co-creation of content
- b. Training
- c. Workshop
- d. Attendance

Other _____

5. Media created for particular event

- Facebook page
- Twitter account
- Posters/flyers
- Newspaper adverts
- Online adverts
- Radio adverts
- TV adverts

Other _____

6. Number of people participation in single event

- a. 5 to 20
- b. 20-50
- c. 50-100
- d. 100-500
- e. 500-1000
- f. Over 1000
- g. Over 5000
- h. Over 10 000
- i. Over 20 000
- j. Over 50.000

Exact number (if available): _____

D. European Dimension

1. Participation of European Artists

- a. European
- b. International
- c. All of the Above

2. Euro-med dimension

- a. Yes
- b. No

3. Collaboration with Leeuwarden

- a. Yes
- b. No

4. Promotion of project in European/International Market

- a. Yes
- b. No

Description

5. Themes relevant to European/International Audiences

- a. Yes
- b. No

Description



THE IMPACT OF VALLETTA 2018 ON THE EUROPEAN IDENTITY OF THE MALTESE POPULATION

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with Gilmour Camilleri

ABSTRACT

This study examines whether the European sense of identity of people in Malta may be affected by the Valletta 2018, European Capital of Culture (ECoC) Programme, to what extent, and among what segments of the population. It employs a mixed-method and whole country approach spread over a five year period (2015-2019). During the first year of the study (2015), extensive desktop research was undertaken with a view to determining the baseline scenario on various definitions of European Identity, Cultural Participation and Valletta 2018 exposure, together with data on several socio-economic descriptor of people in Malta. During the second year of the study a large-scale cross-sectional survey was undertaken, employing computer assisted telephone interviews (CATI) on individuals aged over 18 years residing in private households. The survey returned around 850 responses which revealed interesting behavioural patterns in cultural attendance and participation that echo the findings of the 2011 Culture Participation Survey. In line with expectations, a positive correlation between respondents who are aware of the ECoC and who have actively participated in a Valletta European Capital of Culture event was found. In relation to the research question, ECoC exposure in 2016 was associated with a stronger sense of European Identity, and so too were other factors like education, interest in politics, age, and institutional trust. A second large-scale survey will be carried out in 2018 to yield a panel of observations. Given the complexity of the notion of European Identity, research in 2017 and 2019 will employ focus group methodology.

Keywords: European, Identity, Culture, Valletta



INTRODUCTION

In October 2012, Valletta was selected to be the 2018 European Capital of Culture (ECoC). Participation of Maltese and European citizens was considered to be an integral goal of the initiative and, to this end, the Cultural Programme that envisaged considerable community and outreach components all around the Maltese Islands. The European dimension is also a key aspect of the European Capital of Culture (ECoC) programme. ECoC programmes aim to foster cooperation between cultural operators, artists and cities from different Member States, to highlight the richness of cultural diversity in Europe and to bring the common aspects of European cultures to the fore (European Parliament, 2006). However, while the development of a European (cultural) identity is a goal of ECoC programmes, there are few studies which provide evidence of this. Consistent, accessible and comparable research and evaluation directly linked to culture is one of the requirements of hosting a ECoC (Garcia and Cox, 2013). In light of this, the present study examines the extent to which European identity in Malta may have been affected by the Valletta 2018 ECoC programme, to what extent, and among what segments of the population.

METHODOLOGY

Against the backdrop of the literature (provided in 2015 report), the study sets out to test three hypotheses:

- H1.** The impact of Valletta 2018 on the European-ness of Malta's society is conditional on the definition or dimensions of European-ness: affective dimensions of European-ness least likely to change;
- H2.** The impact of Valletta 2018 on the European-ness of Malta's society responds positively to participation and involvement in ECoC;
- H3.** The impact of Valletta 2018 on the European-ness of Malta's society is influenced by controls and demographics.

To do so, the study employs a mixed-method approach spread over a five year period (2015-2019), with people in the entire country of Malta as the focus. During the first year of the study (2015), extensive desktop research was undertaken with a view to determining the baseline scenario on various definitions of European Identity, Cultural Participation and Valletta 2018 exposure, together with data on several socio-economic descriptor of people in Malta. During the second year of the study a large-scale cross-sectional survey was undertaken, employing computer assisted telephone interviews (CATI) on individuals aged over 18 years residing in private households. The survey returned 850 responses which revealed interesting behavioural patterns in cultural attendance and participation that echo the findings of the Malta Cultural Participation Survey. A second large-scale survey will be carried out in 2018 to yield a panel of observations. Given the complexity of the notion of European Identity, research in 2017 and 2019 will employ focus group methodology. The present report details the findings of the year of study 2016.

A survey interview was designed specifically for this study to tap the relevant dimensions of both the dependent variable of interest (European-ness) as well as the possible explanatory variables, of which ECoC participation is the key variable of interest. In defining identity, reference was made to recent, authoritative, large-scale comparative research (Bellucci and Sanders, 2012), which envisage identity to be a complex construct composed of (i) Identity, or the feeling of belonging to the EU; (ii) Representation, or the extent to which actors perceive that the EU provides representation to their interests; and (iii) Scope, or the degree to which actors would like the EU to have jurisdiction on a wide range of policies. In designing constructs for cultural participation reference was made to similar work conducted in Malta (Briguglio and Sultana, 2015). Question constructs also referred to those included in standard Eurobarometer, European Social Survey, and the World Value Survey. The final survey (presented in 2015 report) included questions on degree of attachment to their town or village, region, country, Europe, nationality and what it means to be that nationality, being European and what it means to be European, feeling European and extent of voting in European elections, perceived consequences of Europe on people, knowledge of EU countries, perceived benefit to Malta and individual of being in the EU, views on unification and responsibility of EU in various domains, awareness of Valletta 2018, ability to name Valletta 2018 events, participation and attendance to any Valletta 2018 events.⁷

A sample of 800 individuals was generated from across the Maltese Islands and another of 200 targeted the population of Valletta. The April 2016 Electoral Register for the Maltese Islands was used to create

⁷ The final survey also included questions on cultural participation including internet use and participation as audience or producer of cultural activities. Further questions included those on age, gender, locality of residence, number of persons and children in the household, educational level, labour status, marital status and income. Other questions relate to self-assessed health, wellbeing, level of socialising and religious affiliation and frequency of religious service attendance. Respondents were also asked about institutional trust, political interest, whether they have ever resided abroad for a continuous period of at least 12 months or visited another EU country in the last 12 months.

a simple random sample of respondents aged over 18, with replacements. The respondents were then identified and telephone numbers acquired. The rate of call loss was very high in this survey, requiring more than 6 sample runs. This was partly because of the interview duration itself and partly because respondents (particularly those living in Valletta) complained of survey fatigue. In total, some 6000 phone calls were made to generate the sample at hand, namely that of 707 responses were obtained from across the Maltese Islands (which also include respondents from Valletta) and a further 153 from a dedicated Valletta survey. Early terminations were not included in the final dataset to ensure consistency and limit missing data. In line with requirements from the Data Protection Commission, the dataset was duly anonymised, and case was given a unique code. The data set was then checked for inputting errors.

FINDINGS

The analysis commenced with a test of representativeness of the final sample. The expected and observed population were statistically significant at the 95% confidence interval when tested against the population by town. Basing on the 707 completed surveys, the resultant margin of error was that of 3.68%, slightly more than the margin of error of the 800 target sample. The sample is representative of the Maltese population in terms of both spread (across the different localities as per sequential random sampling as sorted by locality and street name). Females are over-represented (mean of 0.6) and skewed towards older age groups (higher frequency in the 50+ age categories when compared to Census data with a mean age of 55.3) which is expected in CATI. Out of the surveyed respondents, 9.1% are from Gozo and Comino, 19.2% are from the Southern Harbour Area, 23.9% are from the Northern Harbour Area, 14.7% are from the South Eastern Area, 14.7% are from the Western Area and 18.4% are from the Northern Area.

The analysis below pertains to the sample consisting of 707 respondents in order to avoid over-representation of the Valletta cohort and thus remains comparable with population data. Following tests for representativeness, a first layer of analysis was undertaken to examine each of the variables, their means, distribution and the extent to which sample (2016) data corroborated findings from the desktop research collated in 2015 (in turn drawing from studies conducted in previous years).

Appendix 1 presents more detail on the dependent (identity) and explanatory (exposure to Valletta 2018) variables in the survey questionnaire. More details on each of the control variables collected are also available.

Identity variables

- i. Degree of Attachment: 79.8% of those surveyed responded that they are 'very attached' to their own country while 14.6% answered that they are 'somewhat attached'. 4.5% answered that they are 'not very attached' while 1.1% responded that they are 'not at all attached' to their own country. In contrast, 33.5% of those surveyed responded that they are 'very attached' to Europe while 32.5% answered that they are 'somewhat attached'. 20.2% answered that they are 'not very attached' while 10.9% responded that they are 'not at all attached' to Europe. 2.8% either did not know or were non-responsive.
- ii. The effect of Europe on how you feel about yourself in everyday life: 34.9% and 22.6% answered 'a lot' and 'somewhat', respectively on the effect Europe plays about how people feel in their everyday lives. 18.8% and 13.6% answered 'not very much' and 'not at all', respectively. The remaining 10% either did not know the answer or were non-responsive.
- iii. Did Malta benefit or not from being a member in the EU? – 78.4% gave a positive answer while 6.2% answered that it did not. The remaining 15.4% either did not provide an answer, or were unresponsive or did not find an answer in the suggested possible list of answers.
- iv. Have people benefited Malta's membership in the EU? – 54.5% gave a positive answer while 24.3% answered that it did not. The remaining 21.2% either did not provide an answer, or were unresponsive or did not find an answer in the suggested possible list of answers.
- v. Impact of event in Europe on people's lives: 50.5% and 32.7% answered that the events in Europe are 'very important' and 'somewhat important' in shaping people's lives. 7.9% and 3.4% answered that they are 'not very important' and 'not important', respectively. The remaining 5.5% either did not provide an answer, or were unresponsive or did not find an answer in the suggested possible list of answers.

- vi. Ranking of European Unification where 0 means unification has gone too far and 10 means unification should be strengthened: 18.7% think that European integration has already gone too far and gave a ranking between 0 and 3. 40.1% think that European unification should be strengthened and thus gave a ranking between 7 and 10. Nearly 23% gave an answer between 4 and 6. The mean for this answer was 6.0 with a relatively large standard deviation (3.2) highlighting the vast range of answers provided for this question. 18.3% either did not know or were non-responsive.
- vii. Does being a European affect your everyday life? – 22.6% and 34.9% answered that being European matters ‘a lot’ and ‘somewhat’ on how they affect their everyday life. 18.8% and 13.6% answered ‘not very much’ and ‘not at all’. 10.0% either did not know or were non-responsive.

Exposure variables⁸

- viii. Awareness of Valletta 2018: the majority of the respondents (40.7%) heard about Valletta 2018 through TV. More than 20% heard about Valletta 2018 from the radio. 5.4% of the respondents heard about Valletta 2018 through newspapers/magazines while another 4.1% of the respondents were made aware of Valletta 2018 online. 8.2% of the respondents were made aware of Valletta 2018 through other media sources. Valletta 2018 website: 93.8% of the respondents replied that they did not visit the Valletta 2018 website in the last year.
- ix. Three events of Valletta 2018: 68.1% of the respondents didn’t know to mention three events of Valletta 2018. 13.8% of the respondents were non-responsive. The remaining 18.1% of the respondents yielded various results – mainly Notte Bianca.
- x. Active participation in any Valletta European Capital of Culture event: 96.6% of the respondents did not actively participate in any Valletta 2018 cultural events. Which event: Of the 3.0% who had participated, 98.2% of the respondents were non-responsive. The remaining respondents mainly highlighted Notte Bianca as an event in which they participated.
- xi. Attended any Valletta European Capital of Culture event: A total of 14.0% replied that they attended and of these, 5.2% of the respondents highlighted Notte Bianca as an event that they attended.

Appendix 2 presents charts which compare some of the key findings from the survey with the desktop research conducted in 2015. Some of the key findings from this appendix are the following:

- We find very similar demographics, except for higher number of respondents aged 50 than the national population (typical of CATI).
- We find very similar patterns to cultural participation surveys including those by the National Statistics Office and the Eurobarometer.
- We find somewhat higher levels of attachment to the EU, but also to the country and to the town; a slightly higher frequency of respondents who in general think that Malta has benefitted from EU Membership (possibly explained by the fact that Maltese respondents benefit from projects that are either wholly or co-financed from EU funds) and lower uncertainty on the benefits of EU unification (possibly fuelled by Brexit information).

⁸ These questions were only asked to the sub-sample of respondents that had already acknowledged awareness of Valletta 2018. As a consequence, the resulting data differ significantly from the findings of the Valletta Participation Survey, in which the question was asked to the entire sample. Although different, however, the data are consistent with regards to the two key findings: a relatively low exposure, and the TV as main medium.

Appendix 3 presents key correlations between European Identity constructs and other variables (H1) and between ECoC exposure and the other control and demographics variables (H2). The study finds that:

- Identity (with Attachment to town/village, own Country and to Europe and Feeling of being European used as proxies) is positively correlated with education, social life, religious affiliation and age.
- Representation (Consequences of what happens in Europe used as a proxy) is positively correlated with the voting behaviour (0.29), frequency of social life (0.19) and negatively correlated with the place of residence (-0.19), although the latter does not have any plausible economic sense.
- Scope (Views on European Unification used as a proxy) is positively correlated with voting behaviour (0.22).

It is noteworthy that self-assessed health status, place of residence and whether the respondent has resided abroad for a period of one year or more are also important variables in explaining other key variables of identity.

In testing key correlations between the ECoC exposure variables and other variables, the study finds that:

- i. Valletta 2018 awareness is positively correlated with education (0.34) and frequency of social life (0.19). Furthermore, respondents who are aware of Valletta 2018 have on average visited the Valletta 2018 website (a positive correlation of 0.24).
- ii. There is a relatively strong positive correlation between active participation in any Valletta European Capital of Culture event with attendance in any Valletta European Capital of Culture event (0.26) and visiting the Valletta 2018 website in the last 12 months (0.23).

Testing the relationship between ECoC exposure and European Identity (defined in various ways) we test our hypotheses and find that:

- i. The relationship depends strongly on how identity is defined. Strong correlations exist for the identity and representation sub-components relative to the scope sub-component.
- ii. The correlation between European-ness and ECoC exposure is positive though not statistically significant. Initial causal analysis finds evidence that indeed European identity is affected by Valletta 2018 awareness once other effects are controlled for. However, this issue will be further explored in the years to come.
- iii. European-ness is influenced by a multitude of factors pertaining to control and demographic variables with education, voting behaviour and social life among the most important variables which exhibited strong positive correlations across the different dimensions of European Identity.

CONCLUSIONS & WAY FORWARD

This study examines whether the European sense of identity of people in Malta may be affected by the Valletta 2018 ECoC programme. In relation to this research question, ECoC exposure in 2016 was indeed associated with a stronger sense of European Identity (H2), and indeed this did depend on how Identity was defined (the identity and representation sub-components exhibited higher correlation with the other variables relative to the scope sub-component) (H1) and other factors were indeed correlated with European-ness (education, self-assessed health status, social life, religious affiliation, age, place of residence and whether the respondent has resided abroad for a period of one year or more). In line with expectations, a positive correlation between respondents who are exposed to the ECoC and who have actively participated in a Valletta European Capital of Culture event was found. ECoC exposure in 2016 was itself also associated with factors like education, interest in politics, age, and trust were among the correlates with a stronger sense of European Identity.

While cross-sectional analysis has revealed interesting phenomena, it is the changes which will occur among this population over time that will yield insights on causality. The survey will therefore be repeated in September 2018, when exposure to ECoC should be at its peak. This will provide insights as to how the European Identity of people in Malta changed after the exposure. Meanwhile, the immediate next step (in 2017) is to supplement these findings by Focus Group analysis intended to provide further insights, explanation, depth and texture.

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CONCLUDING REMARKS

The studies presented throughout the report allow us trace some of the cultural and social impacts of Valletta 2018 through an understanding of the development of the Valletta 2018 Cultural Programme itself, subsequently viewed through the lens of cultural participation and institutional trust.

Whereas the Cultural Programme itself is gaining an increasingly international dimension, establishing links with stakeholders from around Europe and the Mediterranean and adopting a thematic focus that transcends national boundaries, engagement with cultural activity at a local level also appears to be on the rise. Participation and engagement in cultural activity appears to be centred upon certain annual milestone events (such as Notte Bianca or Carnival) which remain extremely popular amongst the general population. Nonetheless, participation in various other forms of cultural activity is also on the rise, despite the fact that these remain largely niche activities.

Knowledge of the European Capital of Culture also appears to be on a steady increase, indicating that familiarity with Valletta 2018 and its Cultural Programme is growing as 2018 approaches. Nonetheless, reported measures of participation in Valletta 2018-related activities maintains scope for improvement, particularly as activities themselves will increase in the run up to and throughout 2018.

Aside from cultural participation, the impact of Valletta 2018 can also be viewed through the broader lens of identity and belonging. Attachment levels to Malta are very high, indicating that people feel particularly close to a concept of national identity. However this does not necessarily come at the expense of identification with a broader, European identity, which also remains high.

As these studies progress over the coming years, a more complete picture of the issues at hand will emerge, and with it a more comprehensive understanding of the Cultural Programme's strategic development and subsequent impact on European identity.

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