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2019/20

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# A Report on Minority Relations in Malta



L-Università  
ta' Malta

This report is part of a project conducted by the University of Malta and funded by the Ministry for Home Affairs and National Security.

The views expressed in this report are the sole responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Ministry for Home Affairs and National Security.

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## **0.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This report contains the findings of two studies that investigated majority-minority relations in Malta, mainly by looking at the views of the Maltese majority and the Arab minority on migrant integration. This executive summary details the key findings of the studies and highlights recommendations for improving intergroup relations.

### **0.1 STUDY 1: ARABS' VIEWS CONCERNING ARAB INTEGRATION IN MALTA**

1. This study, conducted in the first half of 2019, adopted a qualitative approach. 15 Arab participants were engaged in in-depth semi-structured interviews concerning their views on the integration of Arabs in Malta.
2. Participants generally argued in favour of some form of integration or mutual engagement.
3. Experiences of discrimination and media bias against Arabs were perceived as hindering migrant integration in Malta.
4. Some form of integration was perceived as being necessary, and the active pursuit of this was viewed favourably. Some participants also noted improving Maltese-Arab relations over generations.
5. Problems with institutionalised discrimination, self-critical aspects and the slow pace at which integration is taking place were also highlighted.
6. Mixed/ambivalent arguments emphasised individual differences (e.g., the view that both Maltese and Arabs can be open or cautious toward each other) and the possibility of improvement if issues are dealt with.
7. A previous similar qualitative inquiry with Maltese participants was carried out, ending in 2016 (Sammut et al., 2018). The resulting views of both Arabs and the Maltese were used to compose an integration scale.

### **0.2 STUDY 2: MALTESE & ARAB VIEWS ON MIGRANT INTEGRATION**

1. An online survey was carried out amongst Maltese (non-Arab) and Arab (with or without Maltese nationality) respondents. 340 participants were recruited using snowball sampling.
2. Respondents in this study were asked to indicate (i) the extent to which they agreed, and (ii) the extent to which they think that Arabs (for Maltese participants) and the Maltese (for Arab participants) agreed with 12 statements that expressed either pro-integrationist or

anti-integrationist sentiments. These statements were based on the findings from Study 1 and a previous similar qualitative inquiry with Maltese participants (Sammut et al., 2018). Statements were ranked for their pro- or anti-integrationist sentiment by 15 independent experts in fields related to intercultural relations, prior to being used in this study.

3. Arab participants were more pro-integrationist than Maltese participants on all 12 statements, except for one.
4. Arab and Maltese participants agreed to the same extent with the view that “*Migrants would do well to keep certain cultural practices private in order to get along with the locals*”.
5. Both Maltese and Arab participants resulted as being pro-integrationist overall, with Arab participants being more pro-integrationist.
6. Maltese participants hold slightly pro-integrationist views.
7. Maltese participants perceive Arabs to be less pro-integrationist than Arab participants were in this study, suggesting that Maltese participants do not have an accurate perception of Arab views on integration.
8. Arab participants perceive the Maltese to be slightly pro-integrationist, implying that Arab participants have an accurate perception of Maltese views on integration.

### 0.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The findings in this study suggest that any communication strategies or similar efforts aimed at improving majority-minority relations are more likely to be effective if they move from relatively common grounds, on which both groups show similar levels of agreement (e.g., “*Migrants would do well to keep certain cultural practices private in order to get along with the locals*”), toward reasonably obtainable goals (e.g., “*As a minimum, there should be no discrimination between the Maltese and Arabs*”).
2. We recommend staircasing public opinion among the Maltese, by presenting arguments sequentially, incrementally arguing in favour of views that are more pro-integrationist. We recommend doing so until public opinion is consolidated vis-à-vis the view that “*As a minimum, there should be no discrimination between the Maltese and Arabs*”.
3. The integration scale can be used to keep track of public opinion and assess whether desired goals are being successfully implemented, and whether groups are converging in their views of integration as well as their views about each other.

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

This report presents the key findings on majority-minority relations in Malta that emerged from two studies: a qualitative study amongst Arabs living in Malta in the first half of 2019; and an online survey carried out with 340 respondents in Malta between November 2019 and January 2020. Recent decades have seen intergroup relations become more salient, particularly following Malta's accession to the European Union in 2004. Recent Eurobarometer studies have found that Malta consistently ranks among the top three EU states when it comes to viewing immigration as the most important concern facing the EU (European Commission, 2018, 2019a, b). Various issues contribute to this heightened focus on migration and intergroup relations, ranging from local concerns regarding ways of life and cultural identity, to broader concerns surrounding future uncertainties. Minorities in Malta face similar issues as they seek to adapt to the cultural environment of the host country (i.e., acculturate) and secure a decent life in Malta for themselves and future generations.

This report conceptualizes intergroup relations in a broad manner, highlighting both the perceptions of the majority (that is, Maltese natives) and minorities (in this case, Arabs in Malta), giving equal consideration to the perceptions of both groups. Moreover, the report focuses on the perceptions of the majority and the minority concerning each other's views. This allows us to make recommendations that accord with local cultural conditions.

The report starts by presenting background qualitative research with Arab participants, conducted to complement previous research with Maltese participants (see Appendix A for a more detailed overview). The key findings of the survey are then presented: namely, the views of the Maltese concerning integration; the views of Arabs concerning integration; what the Maltese think that Arabs think of integration; and what Arabs think that the Maltese think of integration. This is followed by a discussion concerning the findings and how they can be employed in the service of improved intergroup relations in Malta.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The research described in this report forms part of ongoing doctoral work by Luke J. Buhagiar (see also Buhagiar & Sammut; manuscript in preparation).



## **2.0 BACKGROUND RESEARCH: STUDY 1**

The aim of this study was to investigate the views of Arabs in Malta concerning the integration of Arabs, and to build a scale that can be used in survey research. The study with Arab participants adopted a qualitative approach involving the use of in-depth semi-structured interviews. This section details the procedure involved in carrying out the interviews with participants and analysing the data, together with the results obtained. It concludes by presenting the scale to be used in further research, and the summarised findings from Arab participants in this study compared to those of Maltese participants from a previous similar study carried out in 2016 and reported in *Arabs in Europe: Arguments for and against integration* (Sammut et al., 2018).

### **2.1 PARTICIPANTS AND PROCEDURE**

Fifteen participants were recruited by means of snowball sampling, whereby participants were asked to participate, and to refer the researcher to other potential participants who may be willing to participate. The interviews were carried out between February 2019 and May 2019. Eleven participants were male, and four participants were female. The youngest participant was 21 years old, and the oldest participant was 68. All participants were of Arab origin, out of which two were of Arab-Maltese origin. The respondents held various nationalities, ranging from various Arab League states to Maltese. Participants had varying levels of education, and all participants identified as Muslim except one. The in-depth interviews took place at locations chosen by the interviewees themselves. All interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed and translated into English prior to data analysis. Participants were informed about their rights and informed consent was obtained prior to each interview.

During the interviews, participants were asked to provide their viewpoints concerning the integration of Arabs in Malta. Participants were engaged in discussion and asked to provide justifications for their views, and to supplement their arguments with examples and any qualifying statements that might contextualize their views. The interview thus started with a direct question asking participants for their opinions concerning the integration of Arabs in Malta. This question was aimed at eliciting participants' central claims. This was followed by a question asking

participants to provide reasons for their claims and any examples they can use to substantiate their claims. Finally, participants were asked whether there were any exceptions to their main claims. The interviewer then proceeded to make a summary of the arguments made by the respondent, and asked the respondent to correct any mistakes in the summary (see Appendix A for more background details).

## 2.2 DATA ANALYSIS

The first step in the data analysis involved coding the various *claims* posited by the respondents. The similar claims made across participants were then grouped together with the purpose of eventually identifying the different arguments that respondents used to substantiate similar claims. This initial step resulted in 35 claims. The second stage involved a thematic categorization of the claims, meant at grouping those that made similar arguments concerning integration. The identified themes were *cultural*, *religious (religio-cultural)*, *socio-political*, *psychological*, *stigma-related* and *economic*. In turn, arguments within such themes were given a valence (positive, negative or mixed) vis-à-vis integration. It is worth noting that (a) a positive valence usually signified arguments stating that integration is happening, or else positive aspects of Arab-Maltese relations; (b) a negative valence usually signified arguments stating that integration is not happening, or else difficulties hindering integration; and (c) a mixed valence usually signified arguments pushing ambivalent claims. The final step involved analysing the data to code for the *justifications* (i.e., *warrants* or reasons), *evidence* (i.e., specific examples that participants used to substantiate their claims) and *qualifiers* (i.e., statements used to calibrate the argument), which supported the arguments made (see Appendix A for more details).

## 2.3 FINDINGS

On the whole, the majority of participants favoured some form of integration. No participant argued actively and categorically against integration; participants either highlighted the fact that integration is difficult to achieve, or else gave a different label to what they perceive as the best outcome, for fear that the term ‘integration’ can be co-opted in order to preclude Arabs from practising their cultures. Some participants saw integration as happening, and as improving over

time and generations; others argued that integration is happening slowly if at all; and yet others highlighted the fact that integration is a personal matter, and as such, whilst some individuals manage to integrate, others have a harder time. Arguments made by participants either highlighted good relations with the Maltese, or else pinpointed difficulties – both institutional and on a personal level – that hinder the integration of Arabs in Malta. This section presents some of the various issues raised concerning integration in more detail. We do this by presenting selected claims by theme, together with illustrative excerpts from the interviews.

### 2.3.1 Cultural

This theme concerned cultural elements where religion did not necessarily play a major part. Participants either argued that similarities can help the Maltese and Arabs get along, or else that there are differences between the Maltese and Arabs. The main claims can be summarised as follows: ‘Shared cultural elements help integration’; ‘We have different views on gender’; and ‘Maltese and Arab cultures are contrasting’.

Participants were of the opinion that the fact that the language is similar helps Arab integration to a great degree, as Arabs tend to pick up Maltese very easily. Moreover, a shared sense of hospitality and Mediterranean characteristics meant that Arabs find it easier to integrate in Malta than in other European countries, which were perceived as being less friendly and more rigid when it comes to integration. Participants also view Arabs and the Maltese as sharing the same attitude toward life, whereby both are relatively easy-going and know how to have a good time:

*“[Regarding the Maltese:] If you’re a friend, they’re generous, you go out with them and you enjoy yourself with them, right? And Arabs are the same eh, you make friends with them, you enjoy yourself with them, and they respect you.”*

Other points raised focused on the differences between Arabs and the Maltese, which sometimes come as a shock to the Arab seeking to integrate. Participants argued that whilst Arabs tend to be

more tight-knit and value reciprocity highly, the Maltese have a different set of expectations when it comes to day-to-day human dealings, which are not always easy for outsiders to pick. Moreover, cultural restrictions among Arab Muslims on issues such as alcohol, and different views on gender and gender relations, were cited as examples of other differences.

### **2.3.2 Religious (religio-cultural)**

This theme concerned religious elements, both in isolation and with reference to culture. Such arguments mostly made reference to relations between Muslims and Christians. Summarised claims that are typical of this theme include the following: ‘There are good relations between Christians and Muslims’; ‘Arabs have to be diplomatic to integrate’; ‘Religion makes Arabs stick out’; ‘Islamic Arabic culture hinders integration’; and ‘Both Maltese and Arabs fear imposition by the other group’.

This theme involved highly varied points of view. Some participants highlighted the fact that there are good relations between Christians and Muslims in Malta, and that in all the years they have spent in Malta, they never experienced discrimination because of their religious affiliation. Moreover, the importance of mutual respect between Christians and Muslims was emphasised. Other participants highlighted the fact that religion makes Arabs stick out among other foreigners in Malta, for better or for worse, because Islam is very dear to many Arabs. Another opinion was cognizant and understanding of the fact that both the Maltese majority and the Arab minority fear a loss of cultural and religious identity. Other participants highlighted the perceived exclusivist attitude of the Maltese, whereby if one is not Maltese and Christian, then they are excluded from social circles; or else, the perceived conservative elements that some Arabs hold onto, causing them to disengage from society at large.

A dichotomy emerged whereby some participants favoured education as a way of improving people’s knowledge on religio-cultural differences, whereas others argued that it is better to be diplomatic and avoid speaking about religion, in order to maintain good relations with the locals.

One notable qualifier made by participants to such arguments concerned the view that religious differences do not necessarily hinder integration to a large extent, since people divide themselves on a myriad of issues with associated labels (e.g., Nationalists vs Labourites; Catholics vs Jehova's Witnesses, etc.), so Christianity and Islam are no different matter.

### **2.3.3 Socio-political**

This theme concerned issues that are central to integration. Such views generally made reference to integration directly, and specified whether integration is taking place or not, and what possible solutions there are to improve relations between Maltese and Arabs. Summarised claims of this type include the following: 'By granting their rights, Arabs feel respected and tensions decrease'; 'Integration depends mostly on migrants'; 'Institutionalised discrimination hinders integration'; 'Many Arabs stick to their own'; 'Racism and the far-right are problematic'; 'There are good relations between Maltese and Arabs in Malta (Arabs integrate)'; 'Integration is the only option'; 'The integration of foreigners, including Arabs, is improving over time'; 'Integration is happening slowly if at all'; and 'There are many good examples of integration, even though they're not mentioned very often'.

In this theme, some participants expressed points of view that highlighted the possibility of other solutions apart from integration (such as assimilation into a broader category; or a melting pot of cultures), whilst still arguing that integration, if implemented properly, is a good option. Contrastingly, some participants argued that integration depends more on migrants, be they Arab or not, because they are the guest who is seeking to be included in society. This was countered by arguments stating that Arabs should not be forced to integrate against their will, for example, by being pushed to participate in activities that are not in line with their beliefs. Whilst some participants saw integration as happening very slowly if at all, others argued that integration is improving over time and generations, and mentioned younger migrants and locals as examples of improved relations. More importantly, the central arguments in this theme concerned (a) institutional hurdles such as very slow bureaucratic procedures that leave many migrants without

appropriate documentation, (b) cases of outright institutionalised discrimination against migrants, and (c) the indispensability of some form of integration or mutual belonging:

*“No, the only alternative is that we have to live together. We have to live together, cooperate with each other, we don’t have any other choice. Except that we discuss and we see what, what we agree on and we cultivate that which we agree upon, and where we don’t agree we avoid, or at least we don’t provoke each other.”*

### **2.3.4 Psychological**

This theme concerned issues of individual differences. These generally arose with reference to relations between individual Maltese and Arab people. The main claims can be summarised as follows: ‘Some Arabs integrate more than others’; ‘The Maltese are friendly with Arabs they know personally even though they say bad things about us’; ‘There are different Arabs and Maltese – both can be open or cautious toward each other’; ‘The Maltese are greedy’; ‘The Maltese are kind-hearted and welcoming.’

This theme was particular in that it delved into individual-level and detailed differences within both migrants and local communities. Besides a mix of both positive and negative views of the Maltese, this theme is most notable for the frequently made claim: ‘Some Arabs integrate more than others’. This belief was based on different reasons and examples of Arabs who have a harder or easier time integrating. Participants generally argued that Arabs who are less conservative, who marry a local, who are not traumatised by war, who are younger, who work with the Maltese, who were born in Malta, and who are lucky enough to find themselves in welcoming situations in Malta, generally have an easier time. Moreover, participants generally expressed awareness of the fact that whilst many locals say bad things about Arabs, once people get to know each other, they tend to have good relations with each other. Some participants took this as an indication of underlying tensions, whilst others argued that making such exceptions for people we know is a normal aspect of being human.

### **2.3.5 Stigma-related**

This theme highlighted different sources of stigma. Summarised claims include the following: ‘The Maltese have a very negative image of Arabs (due to history / education system)’; and ‘The media puts us in a very bad light’. Such arguments generally made reference to the media and its negative influence and heavily biased reporting vis-à-vis Arabs. Participants argued that this is only to be expected, since the media is profit-driven and needs to create stories in order to sell. Moreover, participants gave numerous examples of media bias, such as exaggerations and sensationalizing vis-à-vis Muslims, where numbers were conflated to advance a negative view of Muslims (e.g., during times of prayer). Moreover, participants argued that the collective memory of the Maltese and the education system conflate Arabs with Turks, and depict Arabs as the principal enemy, despite Malta having been under the control of other powers (such as the French and the British) that are not represented in adversarial terms.

### **2.3.6 Economic**

This theme highlighted economic relations. The main claims can be summarised as follows: ‘Foreigners contribute greatly to the country’ and ‘The Maltese want immigrants here for work but don’t want them to be themselves’. Whilst emphasising the role that immigrants have played in sustaining the country’s economic growth, arguments within this theme also highlighted mistreatment by employers who ask employees to remove the hijab despite company regulations, and examples of people who have a hard time finding a job because of their religious affiliation. This theme thus highlighted the double standards associated with wanting immigrants to sustain the country’s economy, whilst giving them a hard time and telling them to do as requested or else face the consequences:

*“So, the Maltese want foreigners in Malta and they don’t want them to be themselves”*

#### **2.4 SCALE COMPOSITION: MALTESE AND ARAB ARGUMENTS SUPPORTING THE STATEMENTS**

The findings from the study with Arab participants, and those from the previous study with Maltese participants (Sammut et al., 2018) were used to develop an integration scale consisting of 12 statements relating to the integration of Arabs in Malta (see Appendix **B** for a more detailed explanation on how this measure was developed). The 12 statements that make up the integration scale, informed by arguments made by both Maltese and Arab participants, were ranked by independent experts according to how pro- or anti-integrationist they are<sup>2</sup>:

1. The Maltese and Arabs can definitely get along whilst fully keeping their cultural and religious differences – living together is highly beneficial. **[Most pro-integration item] [Weight: 6]**
2. It would be better for society if the Maltese and Arabs engage with each other (e.g., at work, at school, etc.) instead of isolating themselves. **[Weight: 5]**
3. Having Christian and Muslim places of worship side by side makes for a strong and diverse society, both here in Malta and elsewhere. **[Weight: 4]**
4. The similarities between Arab and Maltese culture, heritage, language and mentality can help us get along. **[Weight: 3]**
5. As a minimum, there should be no discrimination between the Maltese and Arabs. **[Weight: 2]**
6. As with other cultures, cultural contact between Arabs and the Maltese can be good in some specific respects (e.g., new food, music, etc.). **[Weight: 1]**
7. The religious and cultural differences between Arabs and the Maltese can be problematic when it comes to living together. **[Weight: -1]**

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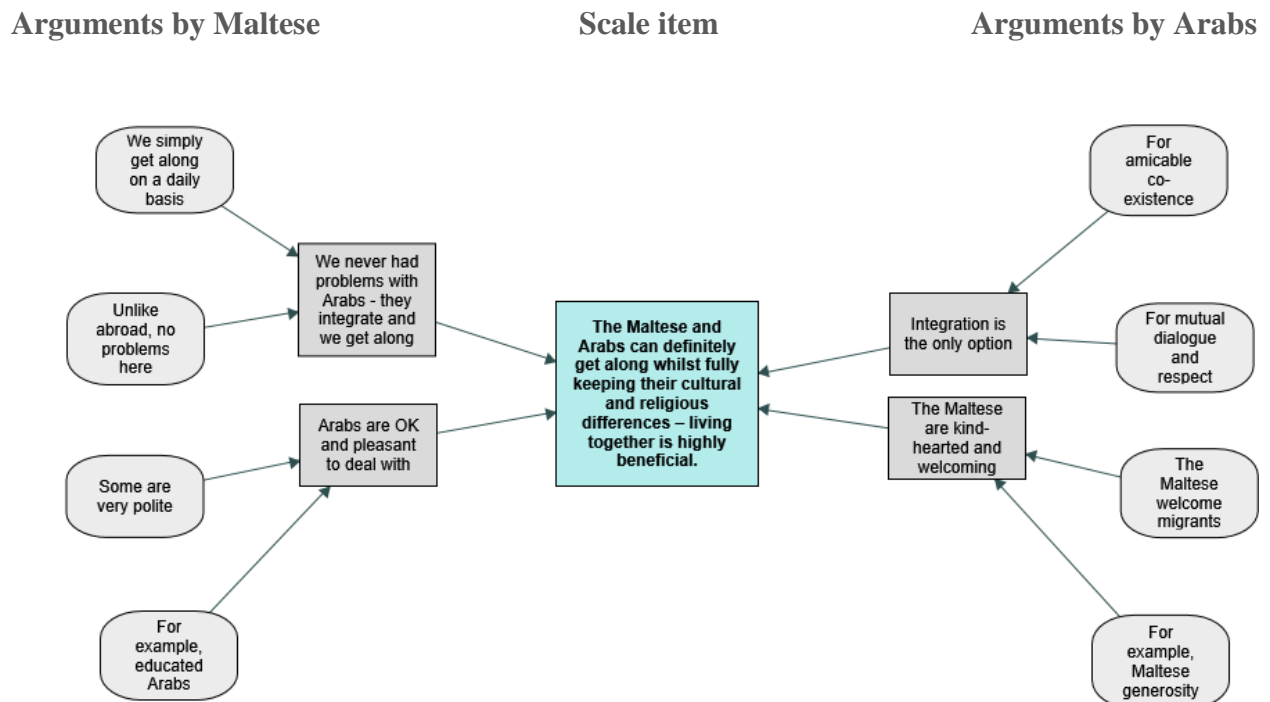
<sup>2</sup> When used in the national survey (Study 2), the statements were scored according to the weighted value in brackets multiplied by the rating on the scale (e.g., if a participant rated agreement with Statement 1 as being 4 on a 7-point scale, this score was 24 [4x6], etc.). These scores for the 12 statements were added to calculate the overall views on integration.

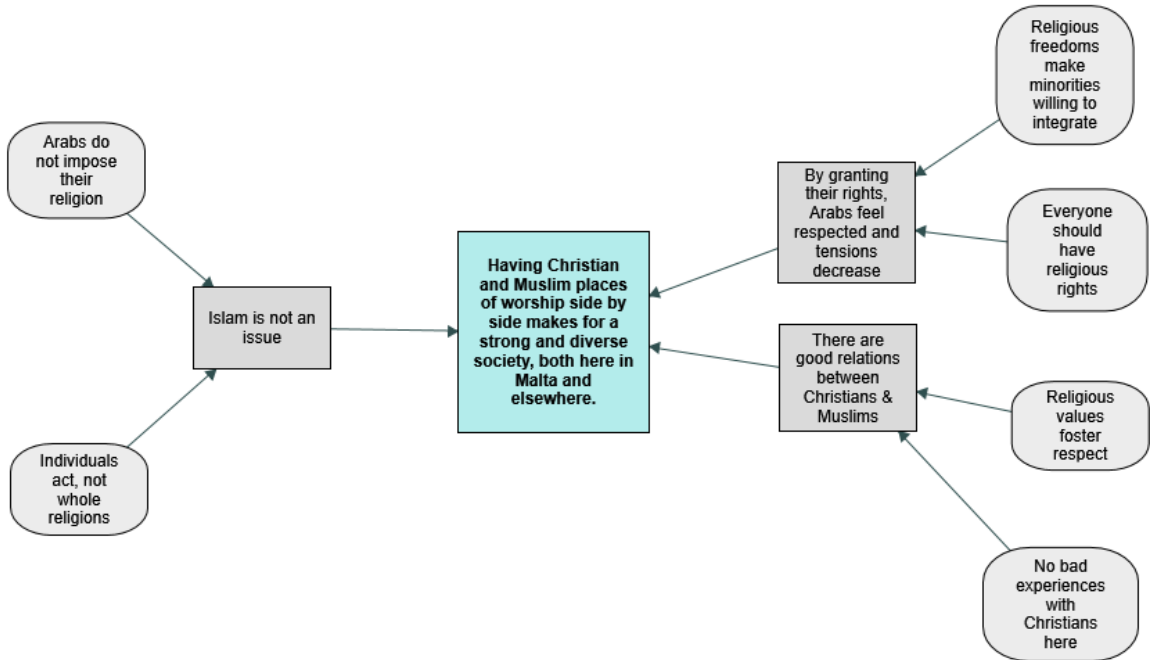
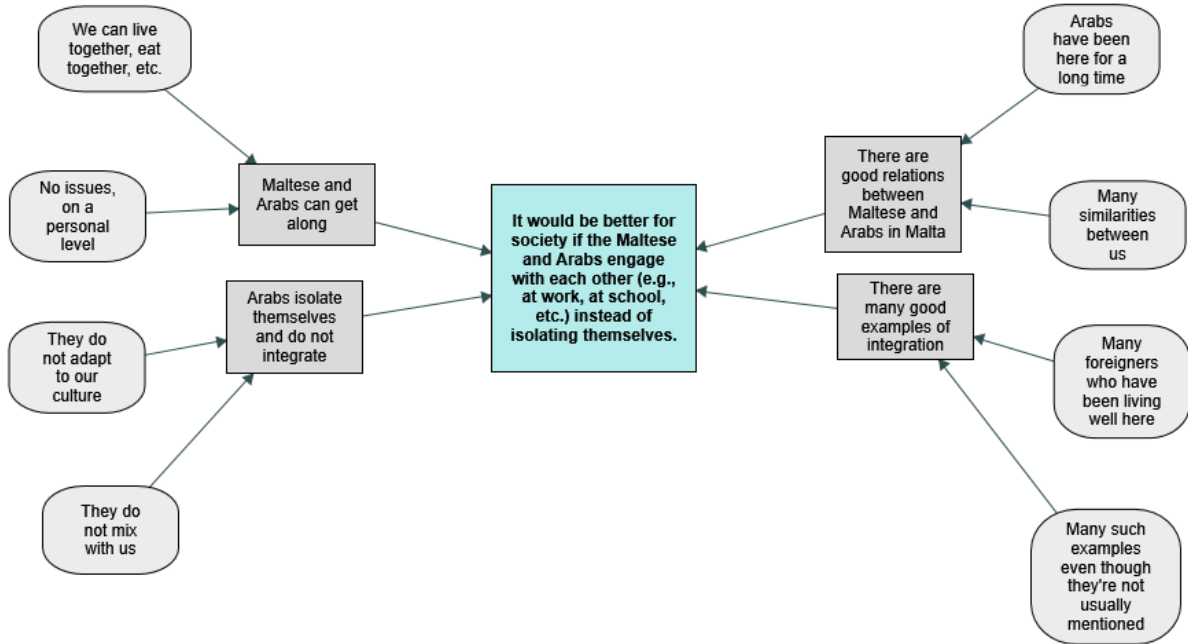


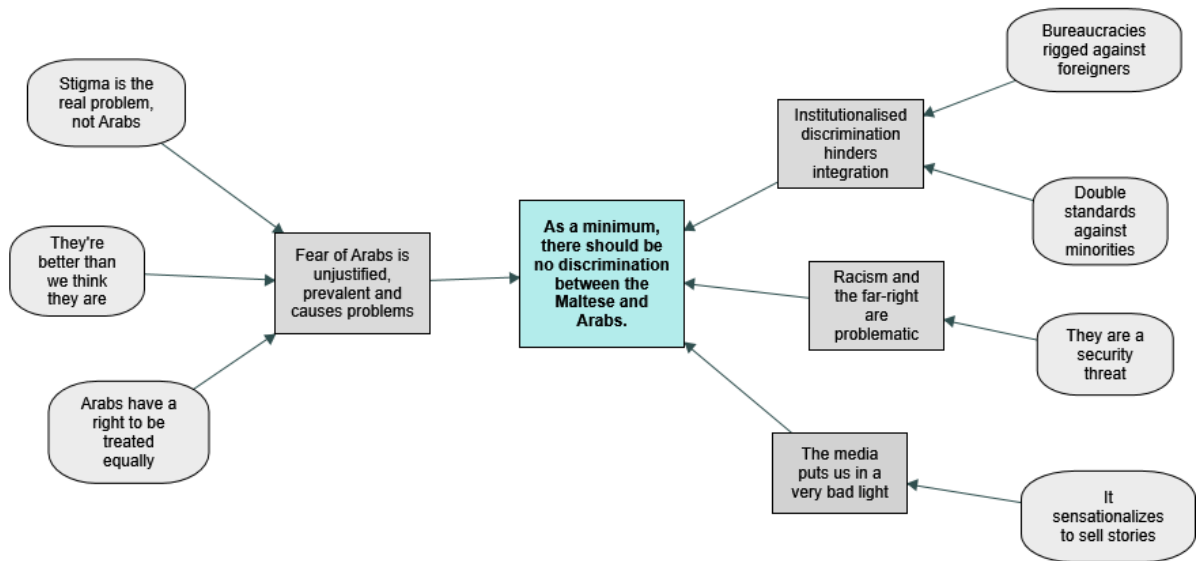
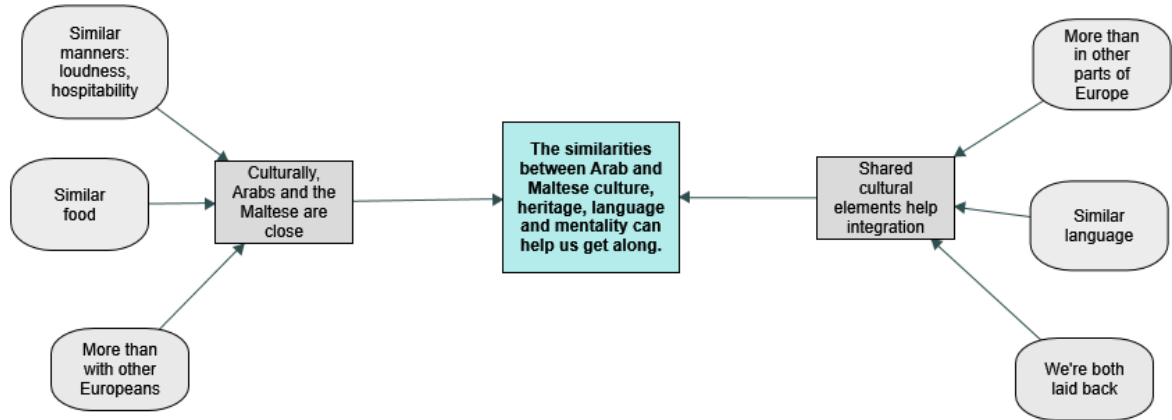
8. Migrants would do well to keep certain cultural practices private in order to get along with the locals. **[Weight: -2]**
9. Arabic Islamic culture and Maltese Christian culture are too contrasting for us to get along well. **[Weight: -3]**
10. At the end of the day, the Arabs or the Maltese will want to impose their way of life on the other. **[Weight: -4]**
11. It would definitely be better if the Maltese and Arabs avoid dealing with each other altogether. **[Weight: -5]**
12. Racism between the Maltese and Arabs makes sense - we simply should not mix. **[Most anti-integration item] [Weight: -6]**

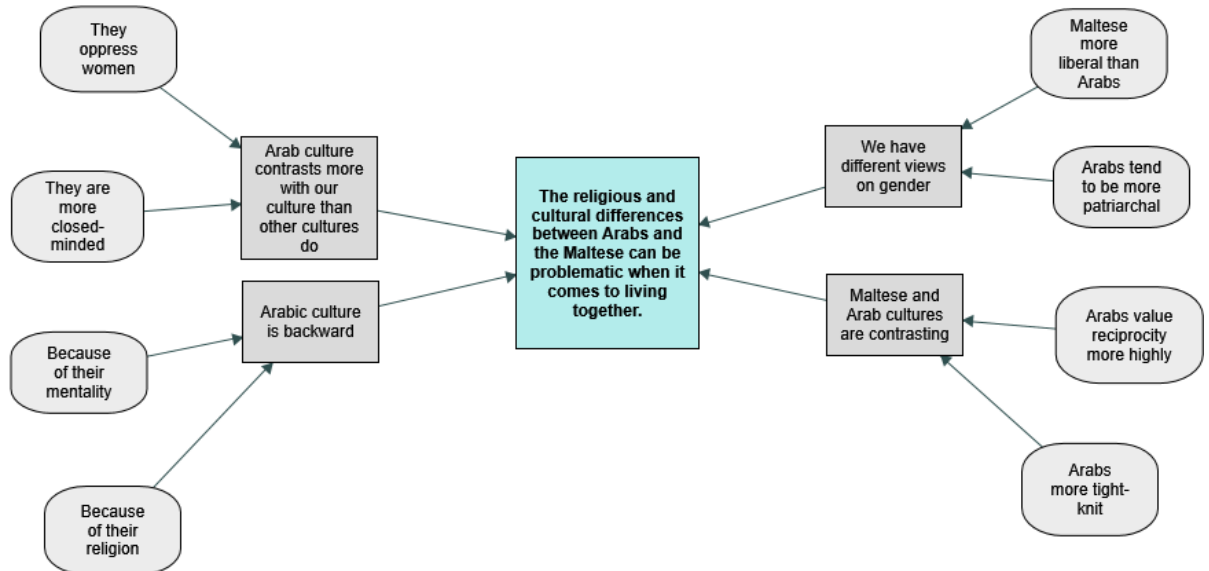
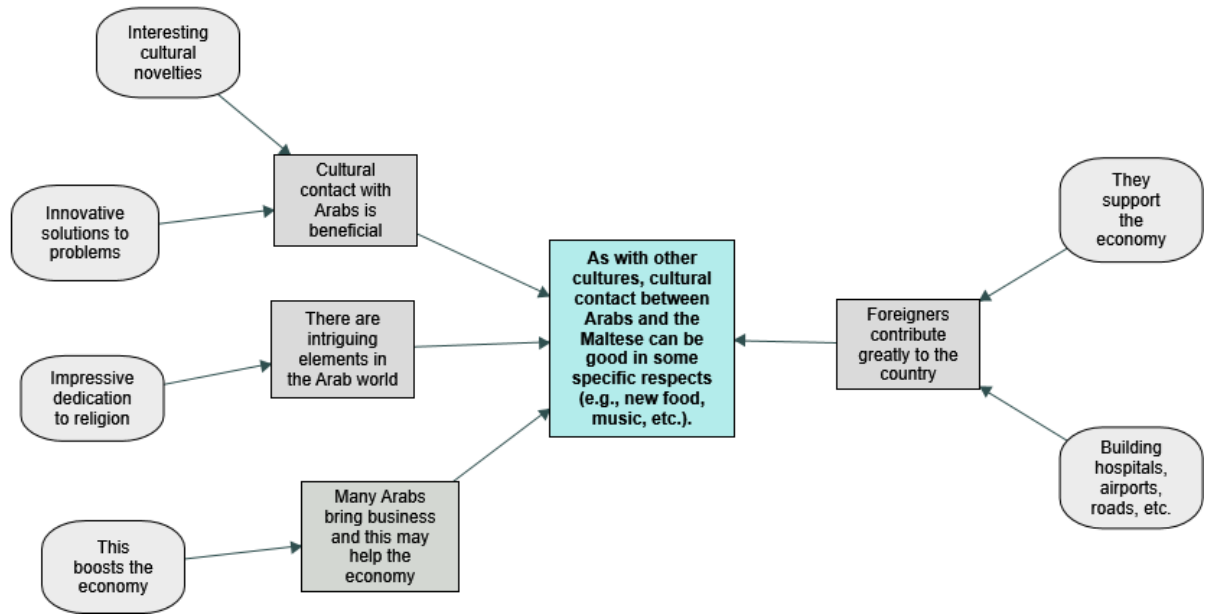
These items are presented below, together with a selected illustration of the arguments feeding into such items from both groups:

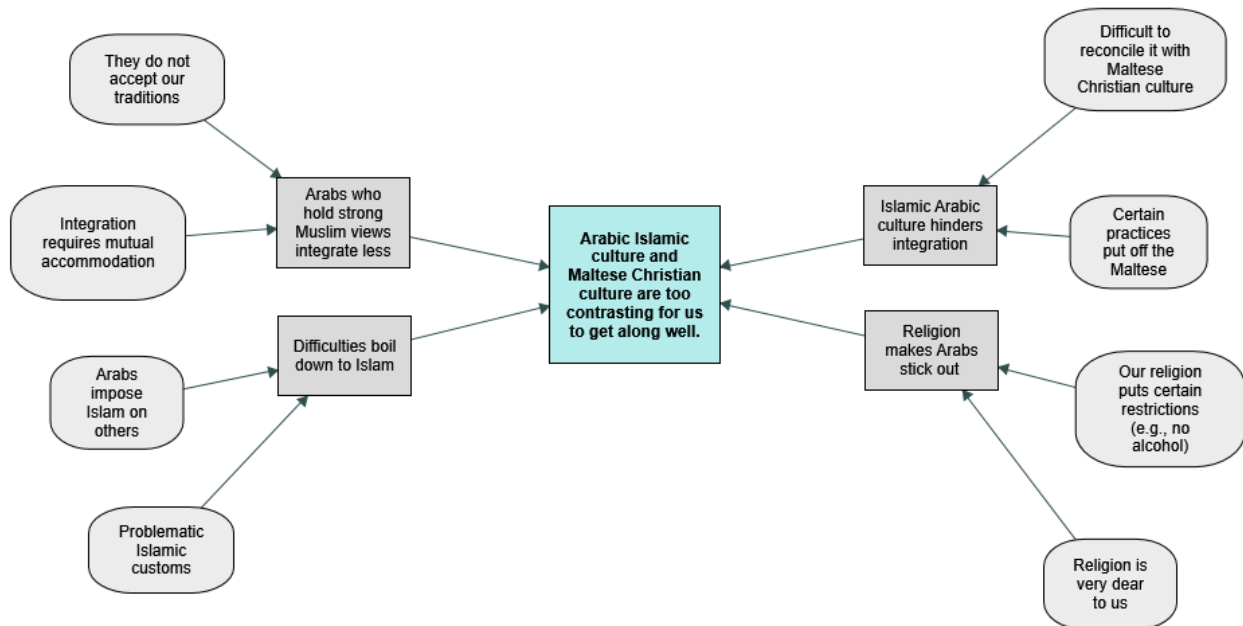
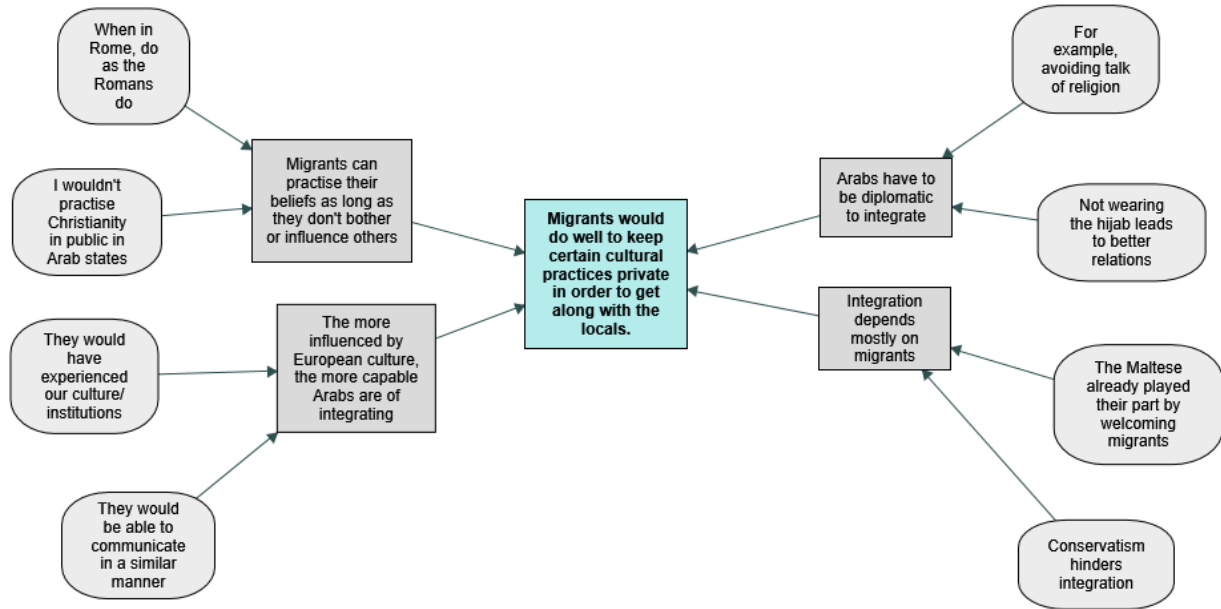
**Figure 1. Arguments supporting Scale Items**

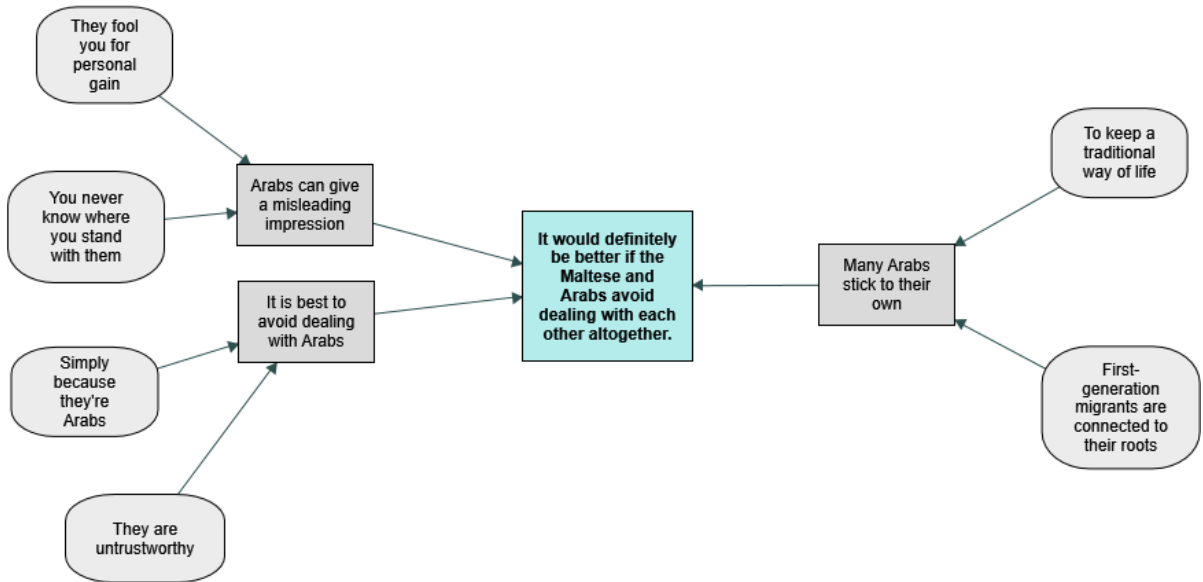
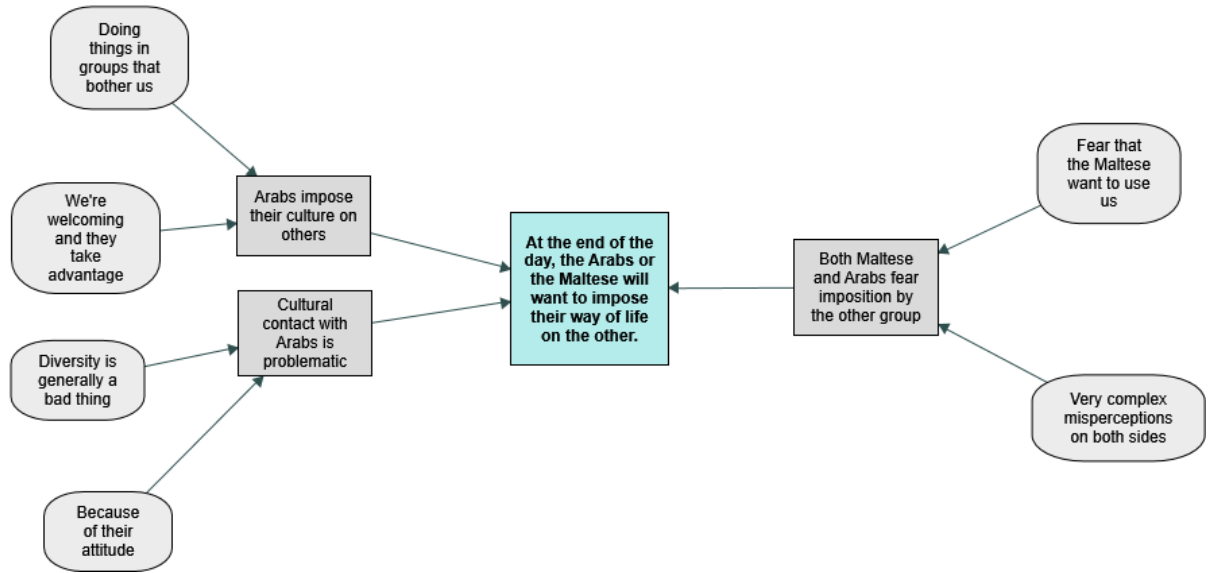


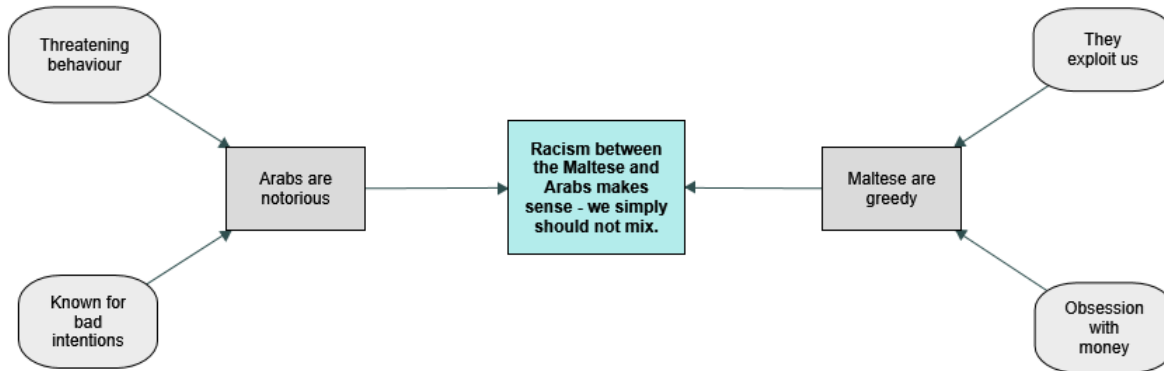












## 2.5 DISCUSSION

This section outlined a study conducted in order to understand the arguments of Arabs concerning the integration of Arabs in Malta. This study, and that by Sammut et al. (2018) with Maltese participants, had three strong key points. Firstly, the qualitative analysis used allowed for a level of detail that is not usually achievable using other forms of analysis, such as standard thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Secondly, the interview protocol and data analysis procedures were highly similar across studies, and thus the elicited arguments can be meaningfully compared, as illustrated in the above diagrams. Thirdly, the argumentative *themes* featuring in the arguments made by Maltese participants and those made by Arab participants were almost completely identical, even though both groups differed in their arguments. This presents a unique opportunity to try to understand the divergences and convergences in opinion, which are crucial for designing effective communication strategies in the service of improved intergroup relations.

In contrast with the arguments made by the Maltese (Sammut et al., 2018; see Appendix A), which were predominantly anti-integrationist, Arabs tended to highlight the necessity of improved intergroup relations. Various examples of discrimination were provided by the Arab participants, together with an acknowledgement of the sensitivity of the issues involved, self-critical arguments vis-à-vis cultural conservatism, and the importance of considering intergroup relations in detail by noting people's various backgrounds and current situations (e.g., as indicated in the psychological

theme). Examples of good relations with the Maltese were also substantial, and featured on various levels, both individual and societal. The term ‘integration’ was defined in many different ways. Yet, whereas both positive and negative features of Arab-Maltese relations were highlighted by Arab participants, the view held by most participants was that some form of integration or mutual belonging is both desirable and necessary, despite the difficulties involved. This warranted further investigation, especially in view of the extremely negative ratings given by Maltese to Arabs in previous research (Sammut & Lauri, 2017; see Appendix A).

The arguments of both groups were thus brought together, in order to look at the convergences and divergences between views. The result of this procedure was an integration scale that is highly *ecologically valid*. That is, the notions, arguments and positions signified by the statements making up the scale are notions, arguments and positions that one expects to find in the Maltese public sphere specifically. This is notably important when researching intergroup relations. If one were to use a scale that is not based on arguments made by the communities being surveyed, then the risk of misattribution, misunderstanding, or else perceived bias in statements composing the scale is substantial. This is grounded in literature (e.g., Choi, Yang & Chang, 2009) showing that members of different groups construe neutral information as favouring ‘the other side’. The fact that the statements making up the scale all make sense for both the Maltese and Arabs means that the eventual survey participant perceives and understands the statements in line with the dominant arguments made by his/her group, and either positions himself/herself for such arguments or against them. For instance, if a Maltese respondent were to fill in the scale, and is asked to rate Statement 5 (“*As a minimum, there should be no discrimination between the Maltese and Arabs*”), the reasoning behind such a statement would not be alien to the respondent, regardless of his or her position on the matter. The respondent would then position himself/herself by giving a number, say, on a scale from 1 to 7, to indicate one’s level of agreement. Accordingly, the next section details a national survey that was conducted with this goal in mind.



### **3.0 NATIONAL SURVEY: STUDY 2**

The national survey was carried out between November 2019 and January 2020. 340 members of the Maltese public across the various Maltese regions completed an online questionnaire, which took around 10 minutes to complete. Eligible participants were (a) Maltese persons of non-Arab origin, (b) persons of Arab origin, and (c) persons of mixed Maltese-Arab origin. Participants were recruited by means of snowball sampling. This was done because it was not possible to base the sample on the distribution of national key demographic characteristics in the case of the Arab population. Given that the main objective was to compare the distributions of the Maltese and Arabs vis-à-vis their views on integration, obtaining a sample based on such characteristics did not constitute an indispensable criterion. No personal details were collected during the course of this research. The survey was available in English, Maltese, and Arabic. The University of Malta procedure for research ethics evaluation was followed and filed with the Faculty for Social Wellbeing Research Ethics Committee (FSW-FREC). All participant data remained anonymous and participants were made aware of the purpose of the study. This section details the sample characteristics, the research tool involved, and the results obtained.

#### **3.1 SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS**

A total of 340 participants completed the integration scale (i.e., they indicated their level of agreement with each of the statements, and what they think the levels of agreement of the other group are on the same statements). In total, 217 Maltese participants, 105 Arab participants, and 18 participants of mixed origin completed the integration scale. Out of these, 276 participants completed the full survey. Participants of mixed origin were excluded from the analysis due to the small number of participants in this category. Given that the proportions of Arabs in Malta in the various demographic categories are unknown, the sample was not weighted when carrying out the analysis. The sample (excluding participants of mixed origin) had the following key characteristics (see Appendix C for more details):

**Table 1**  
**Sample characteristics**

		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
<b>Gender</b>	Female	144	54.3
	Male	121	45.7
<b>Age</b>	18-30	134	41.6
	31-50	133	41.3
	51+	55	17.1
<b>Region</b>	Gozo and Comino	10	3.9
	Northern	54	20.9
	Northern Harbour	101	39.1
	South Eastern	19	7.4
	Southern Harbour	27	10.5
	Western	47	18.2
<b>Education</b>	Primary	1	0.4
	Secondary	44	17.1
	Post-Secondary	60	23.3
	Tertiary	153	59.3
<b>Occupation</b>	Worker	200	75.5
	Student	39	14.7
	Homemaker	12	4.5
	Pensioner/ Retired	10	3.8
	Unemployed	4	1.5

### **3.2 RESEARCH TOOLS AND PROCEDURES**

The measures used in the national survey included: (a) nationality, (b) the integration scale, (c) mentalities, and (d) demographic characteristics. These measures are explained in turn below (see Appendix F for the full survey).

### **3.2.1 Nationality**

Participants were initially asked to self-categorize themselves as either (I) of Maltese origin (without Arab origin); (II) of Arab origin (with or without Maltese nationality); or (III) of mixed Maltese-Arab origin (with or without Maltese nationality). Depending on their choice, participants were led to different versions of the same survey. One version was intended for group I, another was intended for group II, and finally another version was intended for group III.

### **3.2.2 Integration scale**

The 12 statements making up the integration scale were presented to participants, who were presented with each statement one at a time and asked to rate their agreement with the statement on a scale from 1 to 7. Participants were also asked to rate the extent to which they thought that the other group agreed with the presented statements. The ‘other group’ consisted of “Arabs” for participants in group I, and “Maltese” for participants in group II. The items were presented in random order, in order to counteract any patterned responses relating to the order of presentation of the statements.

### **3.2.3 Mentalities**

People’s general outlook on life is often measured using measures that tap into people’s fundamental views on society or their cultural contexts. A recent development in this area constitutes scholarly work on mentalities (Sammut, 2019), which are suitable for studying the Maltese context. Participants were asked to indicate their agreement, on a scale from 1 to 5, with items meant at tapping into (a) the Reward mentality, (b) the Civic mentality, (c) the Survivor mentality, (d) the Localised mentality, and (e) the Pragmatic mentality (see Appendix C). The Reward mentality is held by individuals striving to work hard and obtain a desired outcome; the Civic mentality represents the drive to fix problems or address social issues; the Survivor mentality involves fatalism, distrust in institutions and the need to overcome adversity; the Localised mentality seeks to preserve social bonds and is provincial in outlook; and the Pragmatic mentality is protective, involving the preservation of one’s interests in a dynamic world. Participants were also asked to indicate the mentality that comes closest to their views.

**Figure 2. Mentalities**

Mentality	Description	Aspects
<b>Reward</b> mentality	helps individuals strive to obtain a desired outcome	demands and expectations from institutions; success-driven; optimistic
<b>Civic</b> mentality	seeks to fix problems or issues in the social firmament	agency; positive outlook towards life and people; negative outlook towards the status quo
<b>Survivor</b> mentality	seeks to overcome adversity	distrust in institutions and society; fatalism; anomie
<b>Localised</b> mentality	seeks to preserve social bonds and social capital	sharing; following rules; settled; provincial
<b>Pragmatic</b> mentality	seeks to preserve one's status and interests in a changing world	fatalism; impotence; protectionist; destiny

**3.2.4 Demographic characteristics**

Participants were asked to indicate their (a) Gender; (b) Age; (c) Locality; (d) Level of education; and (e) Occupation (see Appendix C).

**3.3 FINDINGS**

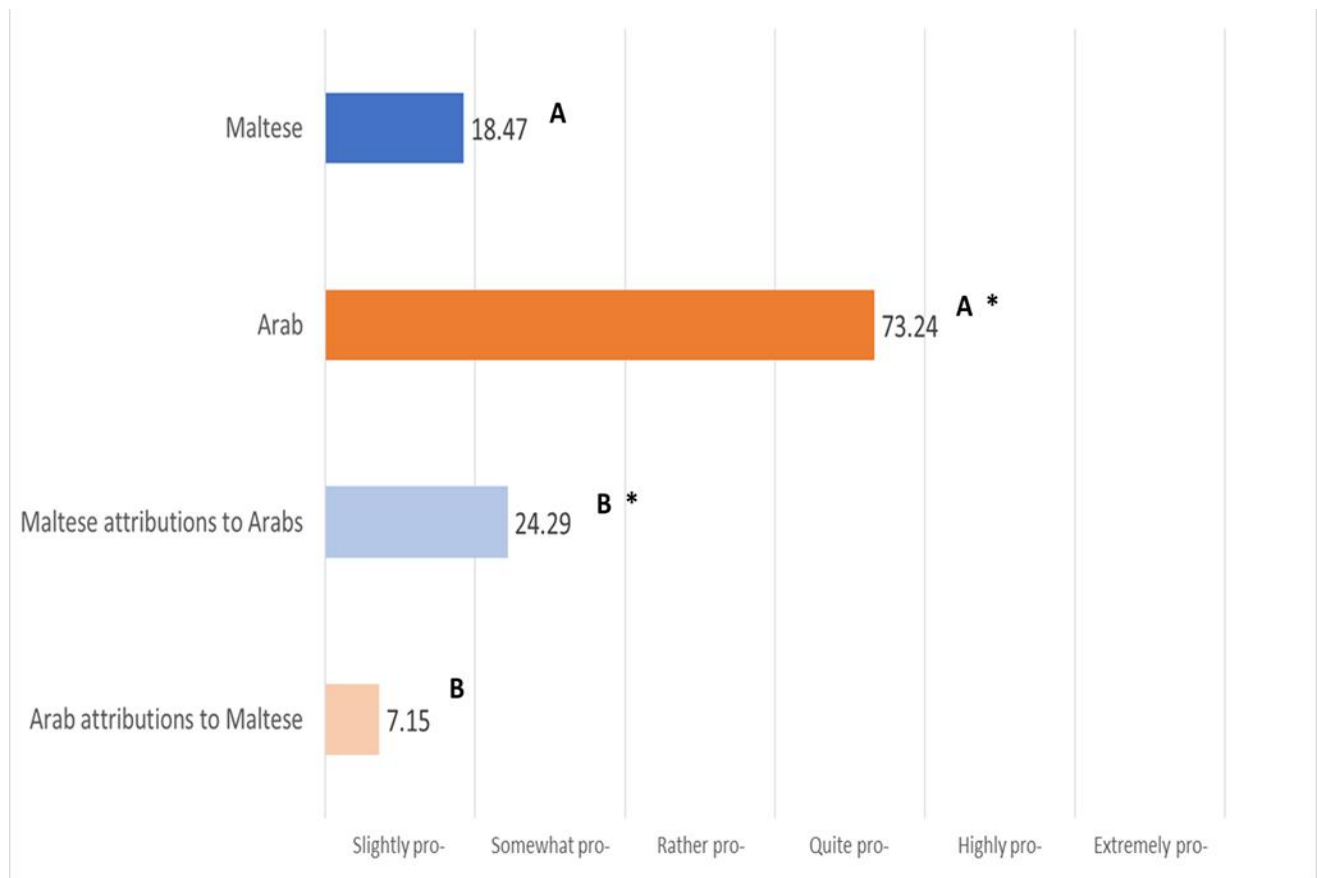
The survey data was analysed by means of statistical comparisons. This section details the findings of the national survey.

**3.3.1 Views on integration**

On the integration scale, the highest possible overall score is 126, and the lowest possible score is -126, as the twelve statements were weighted depending on how pro- or anti-integrationist they are (see Section 2.4 above). The Arab participants expressed significantly more favourable views toward integration than the Maltese (see Figure 3). Similarly, Maltese participants attributed a

significantly higher mean overall score to Arabs than Arabs attributed to the Maltese. That is, the Maltese attributed more pro-integrationist views to Arabs, than Arabs did to the Maltese. Whilst the Maltese attributed pro-integrationist views to Arabs, this was significantly less than the pro-integrationist views expressed by Arabs themselves. Thus, the Maltese appear to underestimate the level of pro-integrationist sentiment among Arabs. In contrast, there is no statistically significant difference between what the Maltese think about integration and what Arabs think that the Maltese think. This shows that Arabs are generally aware of what the Maltese think about integration overall. All groups expressed overall pro-integrationist views, and attributed overall pro-integrationist views to the other group, to different degrees. The following figure presents (a) the mean integration scores, and (b) the mean attributed integration scores, for Maltese and Arab participants:

**Figure 3. Overall views on integration**

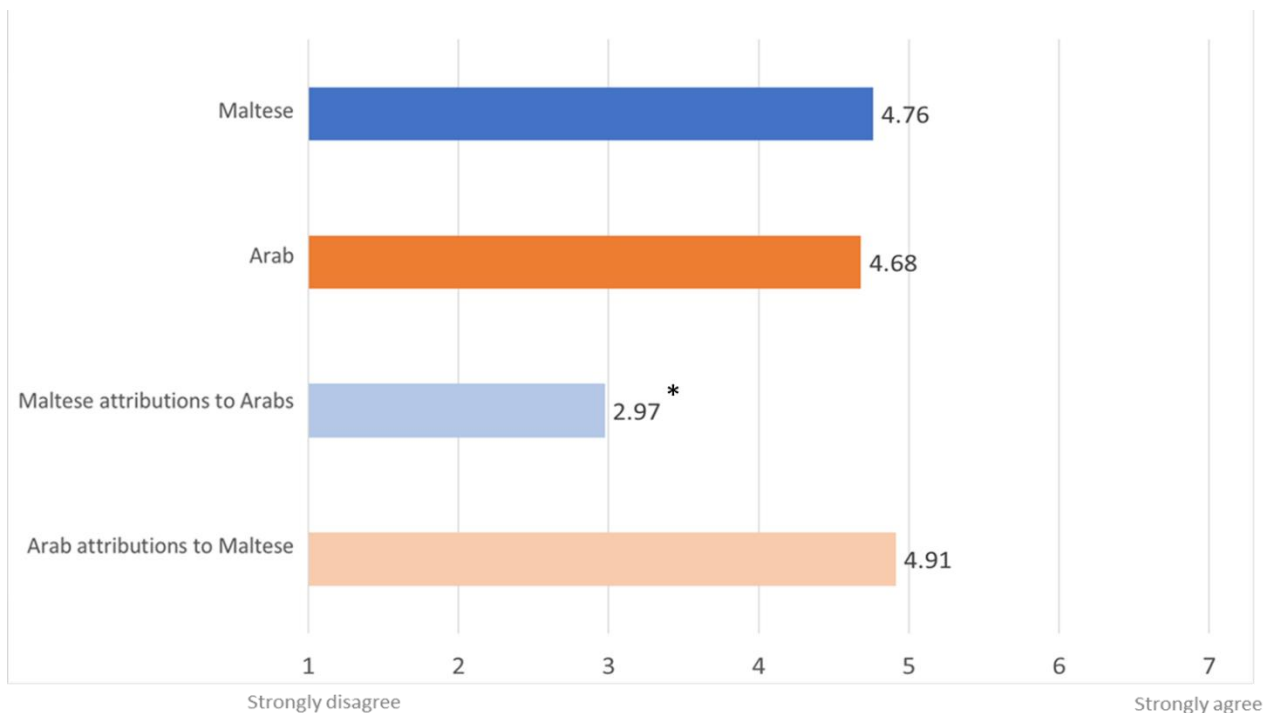


**Notes.** The lowest possible score on the Integration scale is -126 (anti-integration), and the highest possible score is +126 (pro-integration). Bars marked with the same symbol are significantly different from each other ( $p < 0.05$ ).

### 3.3.2 Detailed comparison of Maltese and Arab responses

Comparisons between the responses of Maltese and Arab groups on all the 12 statements of the integration scale yielded insightful results. Arabs indicated significantly higher agreement than the Maltese on all the 6 pro-integrationist statements. Similarly, the Maltese indicated significantly higher agreement than the Arabs on all the 6 anti-integrationist statements – except for Statement 8 (“*Migrants would do well to keep certain cultural practices private in order to get along with the locals*”), on which there were no differences between Arabs and the Maltese. There were also no significant differences between Maltese views and Arabs’ perception of Maltese views on this statement. On the other hand, the Maltese perceived Arabs as endorsing Statement 8 to a significantly lower degree than Arabs actually do and to a significantly lower degree than the Maltese do themselves. There were no significant differences between Arabs’ views on this statement, and Arabs’ perception of Maltese views.

**Figure 4. Views on Statement 8**  
 (“*Migrants would do well to keep certain cultural practices private in order to get along with the locals*”)



**Notes.** \*Maltese attributions to Arabs vis-à-vis Statement 8 were significantly lower than Maltese views, Arab views, and Arab attributions to Maltese ( $p < 0.05$ ).

Also noteworthy is the fact that Statement 5 (“*As a minimum, there should be no discrimination between the Maltese and Arabs*”) constituted the item with the highest agreement in the Maltese group, and that Statement 2 (“*It would be better for society if the Maltese and Arabs engage with each other (e.g., at work, at school, etc.) instead of isolating themselves.*”) was the item with the highest net agreement across groups, followed closely by Statement 5 (see Table 2). The tables and graphs below summarize the results of the comparisons of Maltese and Arab responses described above:

**Table 2****Mean Maltese and Arab responses to the statements in the Integration Scale**

<b>Scale items</b>	<b>Group</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
<b>1 – Extremely pro-integration</b> The Maltese and Arabs can definitely get along whilst fully keeping their cultural and religious differences – living together is highly beneficial.	Maltese	4.69*	1.816
	Arab	6.15*	1.343
<b>2 – Highly pro-integration</b> It would be better for society if the Maltese and Arabs engage with each other (e.g., at work, at school, etc.) instead of isolating themselves.	Maltese	5.23*	1.751
	Arab	6.30*	1.285
<b>3 – Quite pro-integration</b> Having Christian and Muslim places of worship side by side makes for a strong and diverse society, both here in Malta and elsewhere.	Maltese	4.35*	1.935
	Arab	5.70*	1.732
<b>4 – Rather pro-integration</b> The similarities between Arab and Maltese culture, heritage, language and mentality can help us get along.	Maltese	4.24*	1.845
	Arab	5.48*	1.468
<b>5 – Somewhat pro-integration</b> As a minimum, there should be no discrimination between the Maltese and Arabs.	Maltese	5.35*	1.755
	Arab	6.16*	1.374
<b>6 – Slightly pro-integration</b> As with other cultures, cultural contact between Arabs and the Maltese can be good in some specific respects (e.g., new food, music, etc.).	Maltese	4.94*	1.731
	Arab	5.76*	1.362



Scale items	Group	Mean	Standard Deviation
<b>7 – Slightly anti-integration</b> The religious and cultural differences between Arabs and the Maltese can be problematic when it comes to living together.	Maltese	5.15*	1.744
	Arab	3.09*	1.830
<b>8 – Somewhat anti-integration</b> Migrants would do well to keep certain cultural practices private in order to get along with the locals.	Maltese	4.76	1.938
	Arab	4.68	1.863
<b>9 – Rather anti-integration</b> Arabic Islamic culture and Maltese Christian culture are too contrasting for us to get along well.	Maltese	4.24*	2.018
	Arab	2.83*	1.795
<b>10 – Quite anti-integration</b> At the end of the day, the Arabs or the Maltese will want to impose their way of life on the other.	Maltese	4.74*	1.821
	Arab	3.21*	1.895
<b>11 – Highly anti-integration</b> It would definitely be better if the Maltese and Arabs avoid dealing with each other altogether.	Maltese	3.29*	2.038
	Arab	1.68*	1.451
<b>12 – Extremely anti-integration</b> Racism between the Maltese and Arabs makes sense – we simply should not mix.	Maltese	3.12*	2.024
	Arab	1.72*	1.244

**Notes:**

*Responses were given on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).*

*\* Differences between groups are statistically significant ( $p < 0.05$ ).*

**Table 3****Mean Maltese and Arab attributed responses to the statements in the Integration Scale**

<b>Scale items</b>	<b>Group</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
<b>1 – Extremely pro-integration</b> The Maltese and Arabs can definitely get along whilst fully keeping their cultural and religious differences – living together is highly beneficial.	Maltese attributions to Arabs	4.54	1.700
	Arab attributions to Maltese	4.40	1.752
<b>2 – Highly pro-integration</b> It would be better for society if the Maltese and Arabs engage with each other (e.g., at work, at school, etc.) instead of isolating themselves.	Maltese attributions to Arabs	4.82*	1.661
	Arab attributions to Maltese	4.01*	1.712
<b>3 – Quite pro-integration</b> Having Christian and Muslim places of worship side by side makes for a strong and diverse society, both here in Malta and elsewhere.	Maltese attributions to Arabs	4.27*	1.879
	Arab attributions to Maltese	3.62*	1.767
<b>4 – Rather pro-integration</b> The similarities between Arab and Maltese culture, heritage, language and mentality can help us get along.	Maltese attributions to Arabs	4.33	1.635
	Arab attributions to Maltese	4.20	1.643
<b>5 – Somewhat pro-integration</b> As a minimum, there should be no discrimination between the Maltese and Arabs.	Maltese attributions to Arabs	5.49*	1.722
	Arab attributions to Maltese	3.82*	1.833
<b>6 – Slightly pro-integration</b> As with other cultures, cultural contact between Arabs and the Maltese can be good in some specific respects (e.g., new food, music, etc.).	Maltese attributions to Arabs	4.93	1.509
	Arab attributions to Maltese	4.67	1.536

Scale items	Group	Mean	Standard Deviation
<b>7 – Slightly anti-integration</b> The religious and cultural differences between Arabs and the Maltese can be problematic when it comes to living together.	Maltese attributions to Arabs	4.40	1.777
	Arab attributions to Maltese	4.11	1.794
<b>8 – Somewhat anti-integration</b> Migrants would do well to keep certain cultural practices private in order to get along with the locals.	Maltese attributions to Arabs	2.97*	1.709
	Arab attributions to Maltese	4.91*	1.676
<b>9 – Rather anti-integration</b> Arabic Islamic culture and Maltese Christian culture are too contrasting for us to get along well.	Maltese attributions to Arabs	4.18	1.842
	Arab attributions to Maltese	3.99	1.800
<b>10 – Quite anti-integration</b> At the end of the day, the Arabs or the Maltese will want to impose their way of life on the other.	Maltese attributions to Arabs	4.49*	1.785
	Arab attributions to Maltese	3.85*	1.859
<b>11 – Highly anti-integration</b> It would definitely be better if the Maltese and Arabs avoid dealing with each other altogether.	Maltese attributions to Arabs	2.99	1.732
	Arab attributions to Maltese	3.14	1.706
<b>12 – Extremely anti-integration</b> Racism between the Maltese and Arabs makes sense – we simply should not mix.	Maltese attributions to Arabs	2.87*	1.667
	Arab attributions to Maltese	3.61*	1.811

**Notes:**

*Responses were given on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).*

*\* Differences between groups are statistically significant ( $p < 0.05$ ).*

Figure 5. Maltese and Arab views on integration

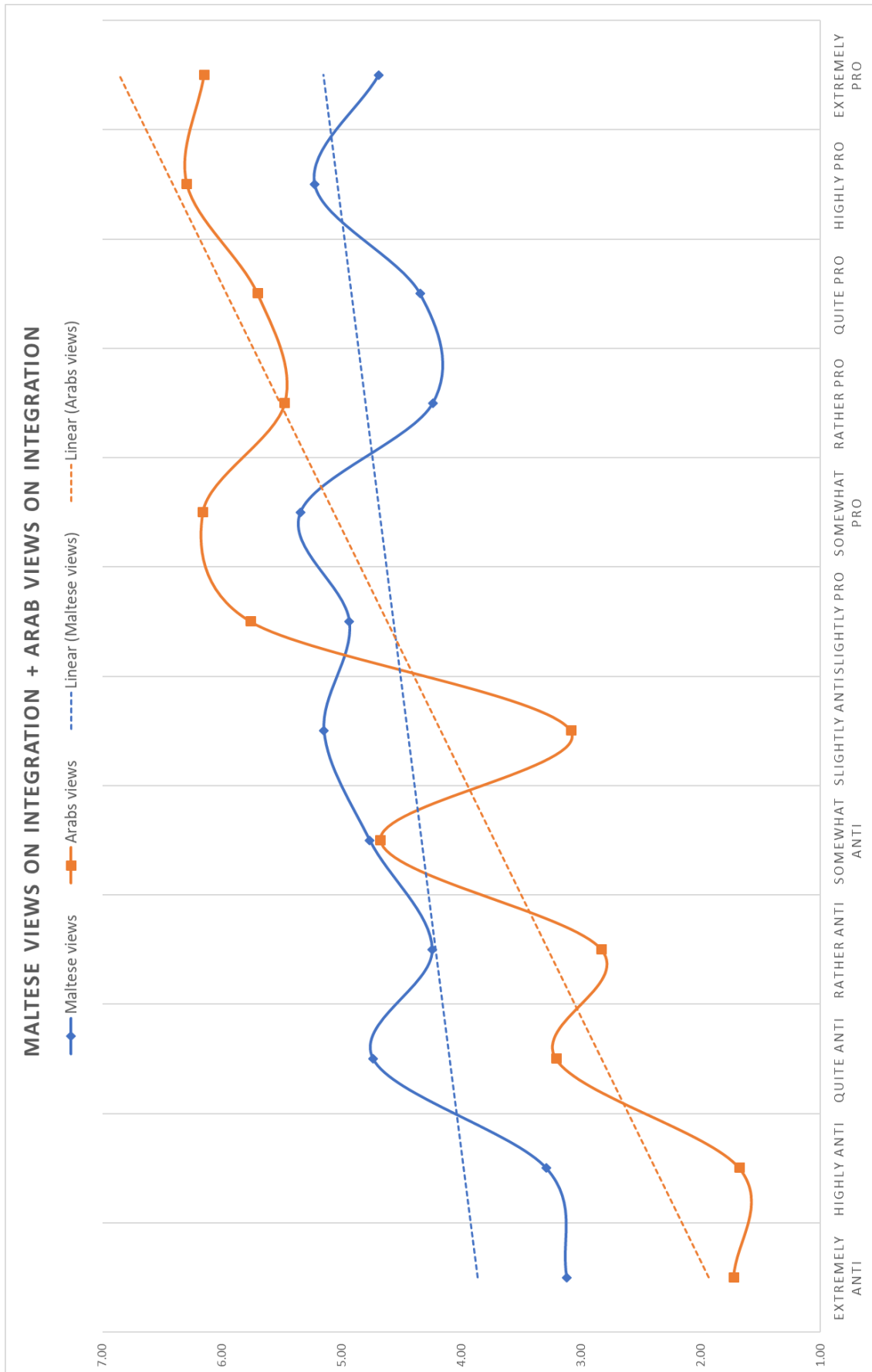


Figure 6. Maltese and Arab attributed views on integration

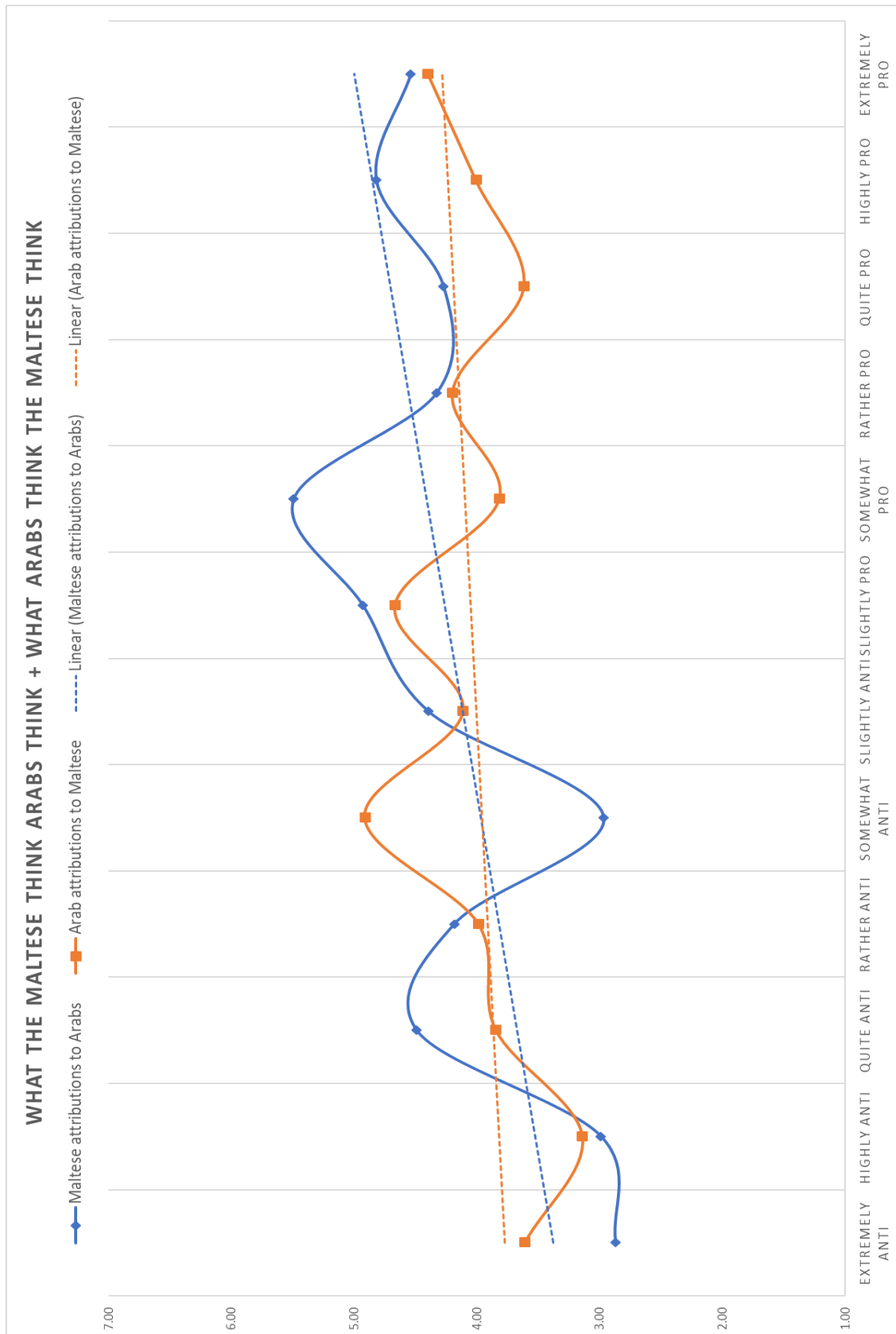
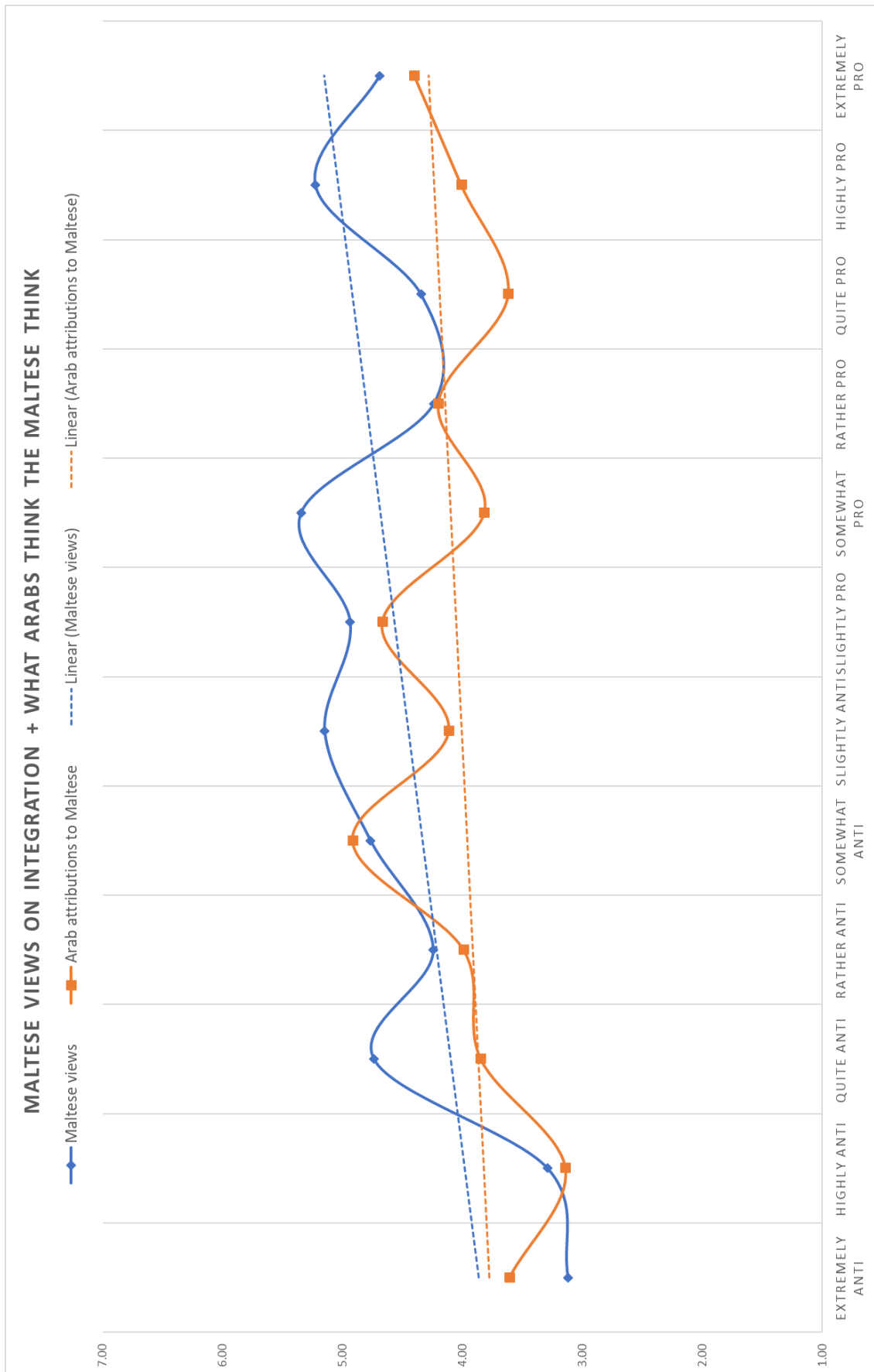
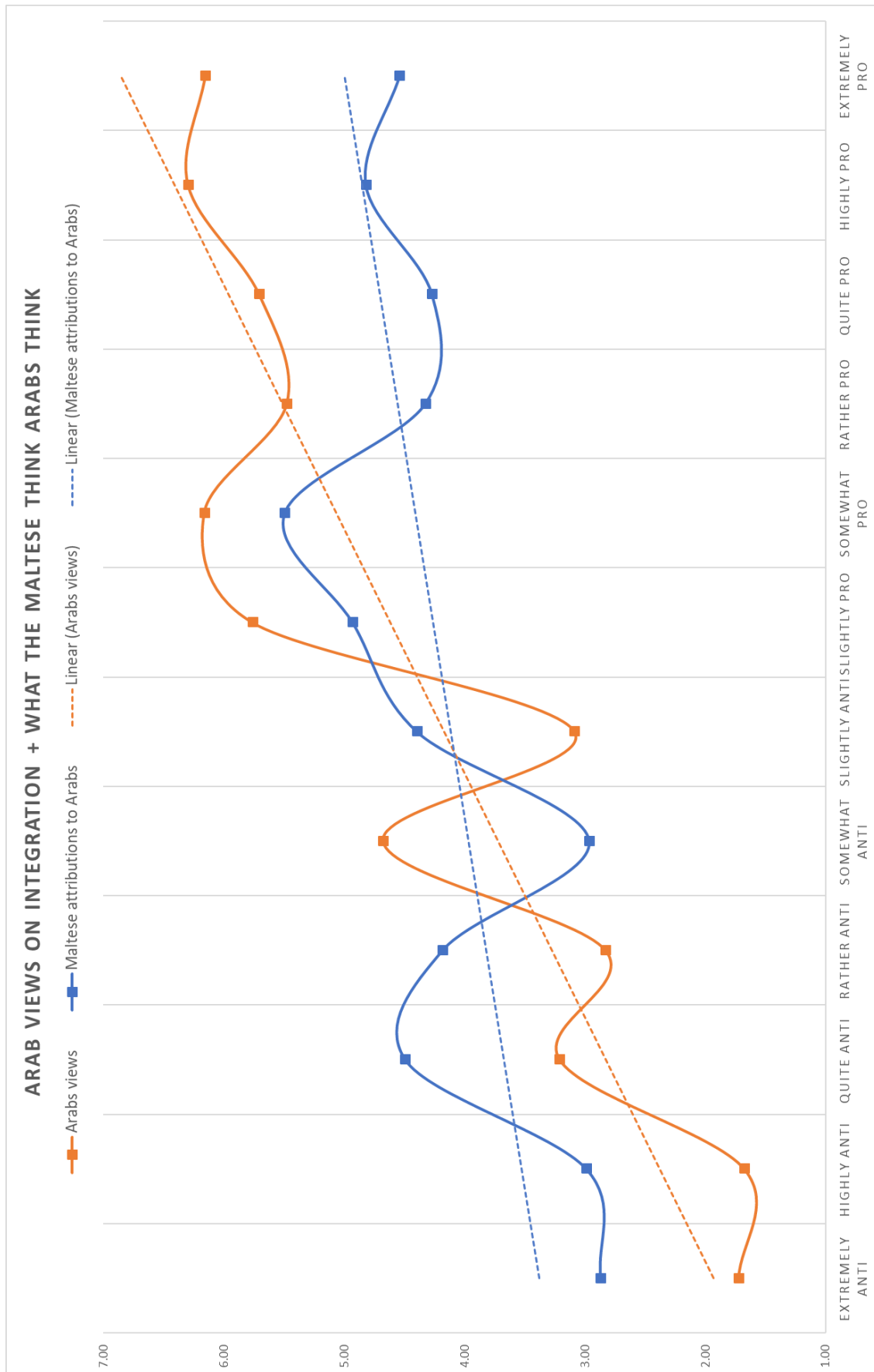


Figure 7. Maltese views and Arab perceptions of Maltese views on integration



**Figure 8. Arab views and Maltese perceptions of Arab views on integration**



### 3.3.3 Mentalities and views on integration

Participants in this study were asked to indicate the mentality that comes closest to their views. Within the Maltese group, those who identified with different mentalities were found to hold different views on integration. More specifically, those participants who identified mostly with a Civic mentality (i.e., those who have the drive to fix problems or address social issues) were significantly more likely to be pro-integration than those who identified mostly with a Reward mentality (i.e., those striving to work hard and obtain a desired outcome).

Within the Arab group, those participants who identified mostly with a Reward mentality were significantly more likely to be pro-integration than those who identified with a Survivor mentality (this involves fatalism, distrust in institutions and the need to overcome adversity).

## 3.4 DISCUSSION

This section presented the results of a national survey concerning the views of the Maltese and Arabs in Malta on migrant integration. The results indicated that Arabs hold more pro-integrationist views than the Maltese, and that Arabs generally tend to be aware of the views of the Maltese, as can be seen in the statistical analysis above, especially in the line graphs. In general, both groups ranked the pro-integrationist items in overall positive territory (above the midpoint of a 7-point scale), whereas there were more divergences between groups (in terms of overall positive or negative territory) in the anti-integrationist items. The focus on Arab migrants was warranted, given prior research indicating widespread negative attitudes toward this socio-ethnic group. Despite the negative attitudes levelled at Arabs by the Maltese (Sammut & Lauri, 2017, Sammut et al., 2018, Buhagiar et al., 2018), Arabs favoured integrationist views in this study. Another relevant finding concerned the fact that both groups agreed to a similar extent with assimilationist views (Statement 8 - “*Migrants would do well to keep certain cultural practices private in order to get along with the locals*”). Arabs held fairly accurate views concerning the extent to which the Maltese endorse assimilationist views; on the other hand, the Maltese underestimated the extent to which Arabs endorse assimilationist views.



Moreover, the relationship between mentalities and views on integration merits discussion. Among the Maltese, those identifying with a Reward mentality had significantly less pro-integrationist views than those identifying with a Civic mentality. However, among Arabs, those identifying with a Reward mentality were significantly more likely to be pro-integration than those identifying with a Survivor mentality. The Civic mentality is concerned with improving the social order. On the other hand, the Reward mentality emphasises the drive to achieve, by working hard and having a positive outlook; and the Survivor mentality holds a negative outlook on life and one's prospects, seeking to survive day by day. This finding shows that if one is Maltese and is doing well in life (e.g., financially), then one is less likely to be pro-integration. This finding is in line with a previous finding obtained by Sammut and Lauri (2017), which showed that feelings of security (personal, cultural, and economic) are negatively correlated with support for multicultural ideology. In contrast, among Arabs, the Reward mentality may be associated with building further links with locals (e.g., for achievement purposes), and hence tends to favour pro-integrationist views based on the benefits brought about by mutual contact. Yet, Arabs identifying with a Survivor mentality could be the ones being left behind by the system; given the lack of opportunities – perceived or actual – in their surroundings, such individuals find little meaning in mutual engagement. We now proceed to discuss these findings more systemically, and to make recommendations based on the findings from this study.

#### 4.0 GENERAL DISCUSSION

This report presented findings from qualitative research concerning Arabs' views on integration, and the composition and ranking of statements based on qualitative data from both Maltese and Arabs. The resulting integration scale was used in a national survey carried out amongst Maltese and Arabs, yielding the results detailed above.

The fact that Arabs expressed significantly more pro-integrationist attitudes than the Maltese merits consideration. Two reasons can explain this result. Firstly, minorities may perceive integration as serving their interests more than majorities do. This is a valid reason in its own right, because integration would mean that minorities safeguard, or in some cases actually create, spaces for practising their own cultural and religious beliefs, whereas the majority would already be comfortable in this regard. This finding also accords with Berry's (2006) research showing that integration results in the least distress for people seeking to adapt to new cultural contexts, and as such is perceived by minorities as beneficial. Moreover, Arabs were significantly more in favour of *all* the pro-integration items in the survey. Essentially, Arabs saw full integration, mutual engagement, the possibility of various places of worship, mutual similarities, the minimal condition of non-discrimination, and the benefits of cultural contact (i.e., Statements 1 – 6), as being more desirable than did the Maltese, who also generally saw such notions as being desirable. Therefore, apart from practical reasons for favouring integration, such levels of agreement may also indicate a willingness among the Arab minority for more active efforts toward integration or mutual engagement with the host majority, beyond practical reasons.

Secondly, the integrationist views of Arabs can be explained with reference to the positive ratings given to the Maltese by Arabs ten years ago (Sammut & Lauri, 2017; see Appendix A), indicating continuity in perceptions. Moreover, the fact that Arabs are generally aware of the views of the Maltese concerning integration, indicates that Arabs on the whole have maintained some form of regular contact with the Maltese, more so than the Maltese sought to have with Arabs. One reason for this is that, given that the Maltese are in the majority, it would be necessary for Arabs to have some form of interaction with them, thus gaining access into the views of the Maltese. On the other

hand, the Maltese need not seek contact with the Arab minority in order to navigate the social sphere and secure a decent living. This same awareness may also indicate that Arabs are generally aware of the negative attitudes held toward them by the Maltese (cf. Sammut et al., 2018), beyond their views on integration. This partly explains the fact that no difference was found between Arabs and the Maltese when it came to Statement 8 (“*Migrants would do well to keep certain cultural practices private in order to get along with the locals*”). This statement signified assimilationist views and was ranked by experts among the six anti-integrationist statements in the integration scale. This means that awareness of anti-integrationist views among the host majority may lead some minority members to adopt assimilationist views (as indicated by the slight overall endorsement of Statement 8 among Arabs), in an effort to get along with locals.

#### **4.1. IMPLICATIONS OF FINDINGS FOR COMMUNICATIONS**

The integration scale was based on prior interviews conducted with both Maltese and Arab communities, and mirrors everyday issues discussed among both groups. As described above, the twelve statements that form part of the scale were ranked by experts in fields related to intercultural relations, in order of pro- and anti-integrationist sentiment. As a result, these statements neatly capture the varied points of view on integration using language that is understood and similarly construed by both Maltese and Arab communities. This makes the integration scale an excellent tool to use in communication strategies that aim to change views on intergroup relations. The scale can be used as a tool for staircasing public opinion as follows.

##### **4.1.1 Staircasing public opinion**

Any communications strategy that aims to reduce the gap between the views of locals and migrants should take into consideration the consolidation of ideas relating to non-discrimination (Statement 5 - “*As a minimum, there should be no discrimination between Arabs and the Maltese*”) as a reasonably obtainable goal. The reason is that whilst Statement 5 was significantly more favoured by Arabs than the Maltese, this statement was also the one most favoured among the Maltese when compared to other statements. Given that the Maltese generally gave the lower ratings to pro-integrationist statements, this statement represents a goal that can be reasonably aspired to at

present, as it represents views that the Maltese may be more willing to concede. Moreover, it should be kept in mind that as long as there are significant differences between hosts and migrants when it comes to views on non-discrimination, it can be difficult to promote other goals, at least at present, due to issues with public rejection of views perceived as being too far removed from one's own. Once the objective of more wide-spread acceptance of non-discrimination is reached, different goals can be aspired to on the basis of this attainment. (For instance, if one's goal is to achieve higher levels of pro-integrationist sentiment, one could then proceed further by staircasing public opinion toward the endorsement of Statements 4, 3, 2 and 1; see Appendix E)

In consolidating agreement with non-discrimination (Statement 5), public messages are likely to be more effective if they start by acknowledging statements (and arguments backing such statements) in the integration scale that are adjacent to the one on which both majority and minority show similar levels of agreement. This means incrementally acknowledging the arguments behind statements 8, 7 and 6, respectively. All statements are backed by arguments made by both Maltese and Arabs and can thus be presented in ways that appeal to both groups, if presented with reference to the arguments made by them. Such arguments can be effective in influencing public opinion and nudging different communities to consider or acknowledge the ideas behind one statement, and then the next, and so on.

For instance, messages targeting the Maltese should take into consideration how the Maltese rated each of the twelve statements (see Table 2). However, they should also consider whether such statements were viewed by the Maltese as being more highly rated by Arabs (see Table 3), as statements seen as being more favoured by minorities can lead to reactance, despite slight average agreement among majority members (see Appendix A). A way to take both views and attributions on board involves acknowledging the ideas behind initial statements (e.g., Statement 8) in public messages before proceeding to the adjacent statements (Statements 7, 6, and 5). In case of communications with the Maltese majority, such messages should be based on the arguments sensible for the Maltese (see Figure 1). Similarly, if messages were to be addressed to the Arab minority, the rating of the statements by Arabs (see Table 2) and their attributions to the Maltese (see Table 3) should be considered, in like manner. Messages targeting both groups can involve a

mixture of such arguments. Importantly, these messages need to be presented in an *open-ended* manner (as opposed to being presented in a closed, conclusive manner), in a way that allows for further dialogue and engagement. Accordingly, if arguments with similar levels of agreement between groups are presented first (such that the majority, in this case, does not view the minority as favouring the arguments more highly), the audience is more likely to be receptive to further arguments later, thus moving toward the attainment of non-discriminatory views. This is especially the case with anti-integrationist statements (e.g., Statements 8 and 7, toward the mid-point) when the goal is to shift public opinion toward pro-integrationist views (e.g., Statements 6 and 5, toward the mid-point). The following section outlines an example of how to staircase public opinion specifically among the Maltese, using arguments based on the above reasoning.

**Step 1: “Migrants would do well to keep certain cultural practices private in order to get along with the locals.” (Statement 8)**

In the findings above, the item on which both groups do not differ significantly was identified. This item represents an issue on which both groups are willing to accommodate, and a point at which the distributions of both groups overlap. The statement supporting assimilation (Statement 8 – “*Migrants would do well to keep certain cultural practices private in order to get along with the locals*”) fitted this criterion, as both groups expressed slight agreement with the item, without there being significant differences between groups. Secondly, it was determined whether any of the groups in question perceive this same item as being favoured more *highly* by the other group (see Section 3.3.2). The fact that neither Arabs nor the Maltese perceived the other group as favouring Statement 8 more so than they themselves did, avoids issues with perceived bias. This is because perceiving a particular strategy as favouring the outgroup, increases the risk of perceiving the strategy as biased. Accordingly, the strategy should be implemented to incrementally shift public opinion from Statement 8 toward the acceptance of statements adjacent to it.

When initially presenting or acknowledging the ideas behind Statement 8 to the Maltese, it could be argued that knowledge of the local culture can help migrants integrate better in society, and that

migrants' ability to communicate in similar ways can help ease social relations between locals and migrants, as per the following adapted argument. The following adapted arguments are all based on the arguments of the Maltese concerning the integration of Arabs in Malta, which were the result of a previous qualitative inquiry (Sammut et al., 2018; see Figure 1 above):

*“Migrants would do well to keep certain cultural practices private in order to get along with the locals. This is because they can practise their own beliefs, as long as they do not influence or bother others. When you are in public, it’s best to do as the locals – this applies regardless of who you are or where you are from. And when you are in a private setting, for example at home, you can do whatever you like. The more exposed to European culture, the more capable migrants are of integrating. They would be able to communicate in a similar manner to us, and there would be less chance that they segregate themselves to live on their own. At the same time, there are certain differences between us that one would do well to acknowledge.”<sup>3</sup>*

Once this specific notion (based on Statement 8) has been addressed by acknowledging the ideas and arguments behind it, the next step can involve acknowledging the existence of some differences between groups (Statement 7 – “*The religious and cultural differences between Arabs and the Maltese can be problematic when it comes to living together*”).

**Step 2: “The religious and cultural differences between Arabs and the Maltese can be problematic when it comes to living together.” (Statement 7)**

Here, arguments acknowledging different views of religion and gender relations can be made, based on the argument structures above. Once again, the message has to be open-ended, employing the softer variants of argument, such that this allows for future opinion modification. For example, one needs to emphasise that the desirable end would be to get along (“*when it comes to living*

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<sup>3</sup> In all adapted arguments, the underlined sentence represents the hook to the next argument (in this case, the one based on Statement 7).

together”) despite our differences. The following adapted argument demonstrates this more substantively (based on Sammut et al., 2018):

*“The religious and cultural differences between Arabs and the Maltese can be problematic when it comes to living together. This is because Arabic culture can perhaps be different from our culture, when compared to the cultures of other countries, like European ones. The environment which we come from influences how we relate with each other, and our mentalities are different at times. For example, there could be differences between us in terms of how we look at religion, and how we look at the roles of women and men in our society. Nevertheless, contact between us can still result in good outcomes.”*

**Step 3: “As with other cultures, cultural contact between Arabs and the Maltese can be good in some specific respects (e.g., new food, music, etc.)” (Statement 6)**

Eventually, specific benefits of cultural contact (Statement 6 – “As with other cultures, cultural contact between Arabs and the Maltese can be good in some specific respects (e.g., new food, music, etc.)”) should be argued for, based on the cultural and instrumental benefits of contact. Given the Maltese arguments backing this statement (see Figure 1), this message can build on the previous message, arguing that encountering people who practise different cultures results in novel experiences, and thus cultural contact can be beneficial. Moreover, this statement represents a pro-integrationist notion that is close to the mid-point, and thus provides the base for making other arguments supporting good relations between hosts and migrants. The following adapted argument presents what needs to be communicated (based on Sammut et al., 2018):

*“As with other cultures, cultural contact between Arabs and the Maltese can be good in some specific respects (e.g., new food, music, etc.). This is because there are intriguing elements in the Arab world, like good food, for instance, which we can appreciate because of new restaurants that are opening in our country. At the same*

*time, many Arabs bring business and this helps our economy. Cultural contact can also be beneficial because when we meet with people from other cultures, we open our minds to new possibilities and experiences. Nevertheless, for us to have a good experience together, we have to treat each other with respect.*”

**Step 4: “As a minimum, there should be no discrimination between the Maltese and Arabs.”**  
**(Statement 5)**

After sequentially presenting the previous arguments or acknowledging their content, non-discrimination (Statement 5 – “*As a minimum, there should be no discrimination between the Maltese and Arabs*”) should be argued for. This involves acknowledging perceptions of unjustified fear and media bias, and pointing the way forward. As indicated above, this statement represents a reasonably obtainable goal at present. Therefore, effort should be made to consolidate the views on this statement. The goal is to reduce the gap between different levels of endorsement by the majority and the minority of this statement, such that the Maltese endorse non-discriminatory views to a larger extent. Progress can be measured using the integration scale, to see whether the differences between groups diminish following this attempt. The argument for Statement 5 still needs to be made in an open-ended manner, with a view to allowing for public opinion to be staircased further in future if desired (see Appendix E). The following adapted argument presents what needs to be communicated:

*“As a minimum, there should be no discrimination between the Maltese and Arabs. Although the fear of Arabs is prevalent in Malta, this fear is not justified and can cause problems. This is because word spreads fast here in Malta, and many Arabs end up suffering because of the wrongdoings committed by few. Stigma toward Arabs is based on events that happened in our history, which are not a reflection of today’s reality. When this fear is spread on the news and social media, the Arabs among us end up being mistreated because of things that are not their fault. Accordingly, it’s good that – as a minimum – we aspire toward treating each other in the same way. At the same*



*time, perhaps we can go further than that, and focus on that which unites us instead of that which divides us.*”

#### **4.1.2 Discussion: Moving forward**

The strategy outlined above has a number of advantages. Firstly, communication strategies based on these principles have the advantage of avoiding polarisation. By building arguments sequentially instead of immediately pushing for views that are more pro-integrationist, it is more likely that the message is given some consideration rather than being rejected straight away. Identity fears expressed by locals are thus acknowledged whilst simultaneously promoting the endorsement of non-discrimination, thus preventing potential conflict between groups. When the public is engaged with positions that are not perceived as being antagonistic to their own, the chances of shifting public opinion improve. Thus, relevant stakeholders and community leaders are more likely to be brought together.

Secondly, this strategy can engage both groups involved if desired: it is possible for work to be done both *within groups* and *across groups*. Communication within groups can involve persons of influence in the respective communities. This interim strategy needs to involve arguments that make sense to the different communities, as detailed in this report. For instance, in advancing non-discrimination (Statement 5 - “*As a minimum, there should be no discrimination between the Maltese and Arabs*”), arguments concerning unjustified fear and stigma among the Maltese, and the need to treat migrants equally can be used with Maltese communities, as per the above adapted arguments (see Section 4.1.1). Equally, Arabs’ arguments can be advanced with Arab communities (see Figure 1). Given the nature of this statement, arguments by the minority making reference to perceived or actual real-world events would have to be adapted accordingly, for instance by acknowledging experiences of discrimination and the dangers involved, and by exhibiting alternatives to media bias against Arabs (such as the existence of good examples of fair treatment and fair portrayals by the Maltese; see p. 14). Importantly, given that Arabs’ arguments concerned issues like institutionalised discrimination, media bias and racism, such messages will only work if these issues are simultaneously addressed in actuality, beyond the implementation of such

strategies. Therefore, for the above strategy to work, discrimination and biased reporting should be addressed in more concrete terms when they occur. Communication strategies *across groups* can constitute campaigns – for example, through broadcasted messages – that acknowledge the arguments of both groups and nudge the public into embracing the desired item content. Such messages would need to incorporate the arguments made by both groups, so that the message does not simply resonate with the dominant or non-dominant group.

In view of the present findings, we recommend that a first step would be to reduce the gap between groups vis-à-vis endorsing non-discrimination, by communicating arguments with the Maltese that incrementally push for non-discrimination. This would enable the Maltese and Arab views of integration and of each other to converge. Incidents of discrimination should also be addressed, both to improve migrants' lives and to retain the relatively pro-integrationist views among Arabs, thus avoiding polarisation. The integration scale can be used to keep track of public opinion and assess whether goals are being successfully implemented, and whether groups are converging in their views of integration as well as of each other.

## **5.0 CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, this report shed light on the state of intercultural and intergroup relations in Malta. The survey shed light on the main trends being observed in Maltese society. In addition, this report introduces the integration scale, which can be used as a tool for devising communication strategies. Given the findings, we recommend that a communication strategy be devised and implemented with the Maltese. It is recommended that the strategy outlined above is adopted in order to shift public opinion incrementally toward the acceptance of views in line with achievable goals.

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## **APPENDIX A: BACKGROUND LITERATURE**

Intergroup relations remain a widespread issue, and are a topmost concern in the political and research agendas of many European countries, specifically as pertaining to immigration (Verkuyten, 2018). The key to understanding intergroup relations remains that of building valid measures aimed at understanding the factors that perpetuate negative intergroup relations, and the interventions needed to address them (Bar-Tal, 2011). Being at the EU's Southernmost border, Malta has had its fair share of immigration. Moreover, as its most densely populated and smallest member state (Eurostat, 2014), issues surrounding immigration play out in specific ways in the Maltese context, as the island parameters constitute a factor that research must consider.

This literature review starts by looking at intergroup and intercultural relations more broadly, and the various approaches used to study them. It then proceeds to review literature concerning the various acculturation strategies that have been proposed over the years, including some tentative interventions in modifying public opinion. The focus is then narrowed down to the local scenario, outlining the research that has been conducted in the Maltese islands, both vis-a-vis attitudes toward different socio-ethnic groups, and vis-a-vis the Arab minority more specifically. This section concludes by summarizing the current state of the art in terms of interventions, and by outlining the research that has led to the present inquiry.

### **A.1 INTERGROUP AND INTERCULTURAL RELATIONS**

Intergroup relations refer to situations where different people interact – either individually or collectively – in meaningful manners on the basis of their group identification. Intergroup relations have been studied from various perspectives in the social sciences. Among core topics, those relating to social identity, and prejudice and discrimination, have remained salient over the years. Intergroup relations can often result in conflict, of varying degrees. In turn, such conflict may be based on people's social identity needs. Social identity refers to one's sense of belonging to a particular group (e.g., ethnic group, cultural group, national group, etc.), as opposed to others. Different individuals may identify more or less strongly with a particular group, depending on various factors such as the amount one spends thinking about a group, positive feelings toward a



group, and perceptions of similarity between oneself and group members (Cameron, 2004). Research on social identity shows that individuals align themselves with particular groups as opposed to others, and engage in comparison with relevant outgroups in order to enhance their self-esteem (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). For instance, partisan social identity has been shown to be a highly significant predictor of support for party-related ideologies, more so than traditional measures of partisan strength (such as asking someone whether they see themselves as being independent, weak partisans, or strong partisans; Greene, 2004). The strength of one's social identity also predicts perceptions of injustice toward one's ingroup in situations of conflict, and a desire to improve the livelihood of one's ingroup (van Zomeren et al., 2008). Apart from concerns with social identity, group relations may also change due to mutual perceptions of realistic conflict, that is, due to the presence of contrasting group goals and scarce resources which groups can only obtain at the expense of other groups (Jackson, 1993).

A subset of intergroup relations is that of intercultural relations, which have become more acute and relevant in the context of global democracies. Research on intercultural relations extends the concerns of intergroup relations research by focusing squarely on how different cultural backgrounds and practices influence associations between people. Be it social identity or perceived conflictual goals, cultural variables influence the degree to which group members perceive the same issues (e.g., national policies) in differing manners. Accordingly, much intergroup and intercultural relations research over the past decades has shifted towards understanding how different groups perceive each other in different ways, and how such perceptions and representations influence whether policy implementations work or not.

This is based on a line of research indicating that regardless of whether information is portrayed neutrally or in a biased manner, different cultural groups are highly likely to perceive such information in different, sometimes even contrasting manners. They are also likely to attribute bias to such content, which is seen as favouring 'the other side' (Choi, Yang & Chang, 2009). For example, football supporters whose team wins are likely to claim that the result was due to their team's skills and capabilities. Conversely, football supporters whose team loses are more likely to argue that the other team was lucky or that the referee was biased against them. Such phenomena are based on universal cognitive processes, whose continual study has informed our understanding

of intergroup relations over the years (Ross & Nisbett, 2011). Specifically, groups can be closed-minded in relation to the view or aims of the outgroup (Bar-Tal, 2011), and social psychological biases, like naive realism (Ross and Ward, 1996), can potentially result in altogether different appraisals of the same contested grounds for conflict. Naïve realism is a cognitive bias whereby individuals believe that they see things as they really are, and that others' discrepant views are biased and subjective, unlike their own (Ross and Ward, 1996, p. 110-111). Naïve realism underpins various intergroup phenomena. A notable one is that of the hostile media phenomenon, where groups in conflict tend to see neutral media content as being biased and favouring their outgroup (Vallone et al., 1985). Conflicting groups tend to ignore the nuances of their outgroup's beliefs, and rather assume that the outgroup's views are ignorant and manifestly wrong (Sammut and Sartawi, 2012). A possible result of such psychological repertoires is the furthering of spirals of conflict between groups (Sammut, Bezzina & Sartawi, 2015).

Another phenomenon that has been shown to be crucial in understanding intergroup relations and conflict is that of motivated reasoning (Molden and Higgins, 2005). Motivated reasoning is a general form of reasoning whereby instead of aiming for truthful conclusions, individuals reason in such a way as to reach desired conclusions, whether intentionally or not (Kunda, 1990). Motivated reasoning underlies many activities, from health behaviours to reasoning about statistical information to intergroup conflict (see Kunda, 1990). Given its ubiquitous influence on human decision-making and action, motivated reasoning should be considered in research and interventions aimed at improving intergroup and intercultural relations. Issues surrounding mutual perceptions of groups by each other, and mutual perceptions of policies and national strategies thus feature as key concerns in this report.

## **A.2 ACCULTURATION STRATEGIES**

In this applied research area, various models and solutions have been proposed vis-à-vis intercultural relations over the years. One fruitful area of research has been that of intercultural strategies, which refer to the ways in which both dominant and non-dominant groups in society behave toward each other, and expect their counterpart to behave toward themselves. Essentially:

*“When examined among non-dominant ethnocultural groups that are in contact with a dominant group, these preferences have become known as acculturation strategies. When examined among the dominant group, and when the views held are about how non-dominant groups should acculturate, they have been called acculturation expectations”* (Berry, 2011)

Berry (2011) proposes four strategies, which are based on two fundamental issues facing all groups situated in intercultural societies (see also Berry, 1997). These two fundamental issues concern: (a) the extent to which emphasis is placed on retaining one’s cultural heritage and cultural identity; and (b) the extent to which groups are willing to make contact with each other and participate in society as a whole. These two continua give rise to the four different intercultural strategies. Firstly, (a) *assimilation* is the strategy pursued when ethnic groups do not seek to cultivate their identity, but do interact with other groups in society. Secondly, (b) *integration* is pursued when groups simultaneously retain and cultivate their cultures, whilst seeking relationships with other cultural groups in society. Thirdly, (c) *separation* is pursued when groups seek to cultivate and hold on to their culture, whilst abstaining from interaction with other groups. Finally, (d) *marginalization* occurs when groups neither keep their original culture, nor do they seek interactions with others (whether voluntarily or not; Berry, 2011).

Whilst requiring its fair share of modifications and accommodations by both dominant and non-dominant groups, Berry (2006) has argued for integration as the best outcome, especially if the goal is to reduce stress brought about by acculturation pressures in non-dominant groups (Berry, 2006). Nonetheless, other streams of research have explored other strategies, such as assimilation; for instance, research has shown that the Maltese in Britain tend to favour assimilation as a preferred intercultural strategy (Sammut, 2010). Moreover, other researchers have ventured beyond the quadrant above by studying the impacts of having *toleration* as a key characteristic of majority/minority relations. For example, recent research has re-ignited the dialogue concerning the importance of toleration-based approaches in reducing prejudice in situations where dominant groups view minority cultures as being incompatible with their own (Verkuyten, Yogeeswaran & Adelman, 2019). Once again, sensitivity toward the *mutual perceptions and representations* of the groups concerned remain key. For instance, whether minorities perceive their situation as being

one of discrimination toward them, acceptance or toleration, can have effects on both their wellbeing and also influence whether they align themselves more with their ethnic group or with the larger national group in the host country (Cvetkovska, Verkuyten & Adelman, 2020).

### **A.3 INTERVENTIONS OVER THE YEARS**

There have been many interventions seeking to change public opinion, or to redress problems having to do with intergroup and intercultural contact when it goes wrong. Chief among these have been efforts at *intergroup contact*, which is premised on the idea that when conditions are favourable (e.g., when individual group members are of similar status), contact between individuals of conflicting groups can serve to attenuate the negative perceptions that each group holds of the other. Whilst intergroup contact has worked in certain domains, it usually holds little promise in situations of intractable conflict, where there are mutual and deeply ingrained negative outlooks shared between the groups involved. Other approaches, aimed at supplementing intergroup contact, constitute top-down legislative change, intergroup negotiations and even bargaining in settings that allow for dialogue that is conducive to improved relations (Messick & Mackie, 1989). Moreover, other approaches seek to change public opinion such that groups in conflict come to see each other as being part of a common ingroup identity (such as a national category, or broader categories like membership in supranational states, etc.) (Martinez-Ebers, Calfano & Branton, 2019).

What many of these approaches do not consider is how publics argue and think about such matters. That is, whilst fruitful, such approaches do not take into account the qualitative dimension involved in arguing for or against a particular topic of controversy (Billig, 1987). Understanding which arguments make sense among dominant and non-dominant groups in society is indispensable for improved intergroup relations. Outside of intergroup settings, social marketing campaigns aimed at improving societal outcomes have been successful in recent years, both outside and within the local context (Lauri, 2015). In social marketing, the aim is to devise strategies for influencing public opinion, such that groups in society become more open to ideas having to do with societal matters. Whilst such strategies have been influential outside the intergroup domain (e.g., with regards to organ donation; Lauri, 2015), further research and efforts are needed in order to apply social marketing to issues having to do with intergroup and intercultural relations.

#### **A.4 RESEARCH IN THE LOCAL CONTEXT**

In Malta, research in 2010 demonstrated that the Maltese held positive attitudes toward West Europeans, lukewarm attitudes toward East Europeans and Asians, and negative attitudes toward Arabs in Malta (Sammut & Lauri, 2017). Importantly, such socio-ethnic groups held positive attitudes toward the Maltese. The more striking finding of the research by Sammut and Lauri (2017) is that all socio-ethnic groups – that is, the Maltese, West Europeans, East Asians and South Asians – gave the worst rating to Arabs, when asked to rate groups using a 100-point feeling thermometer. The only exception to this were East Europeans, who gave a slightly worse rating to South Asians than to Arabs. In essence, both the majority group and the other minorities in Malta seem to converge in their antipathy toward Arabs. Moreover, for the Maltese, only the rating for Arabs was in the negative territory (below the midpoint of the scale). Nonetheless, Arabs gave relatively high ratings to all groups, and the highest rating to the Maltese. The fact that Arabs were found to hold positive attitudes toward the Maltese, whilst the Maltese hold negative attitudes toward the Arab socio-ethnic group, indicates that it could be possible that an assimilationist strategy is being favoured in the practices of some Arab communities in Malta. In fact, Arabs also demonstrated significantly higher ratings than almost all the other groups on a measure tapping into migrant assimilation (Sammut & Lauri, 2017). These findings therefore inspired further research looking into views held toward Arabs, and the integration of Arabs, in Malta. Before presenting qualitative research concerning the integration of Arabs in Malta, it is worth noting that in 2019, the 100-point feeling thermometers indicated longitudinal trends: that is, the attitudes of the Maltese toward Eastern Europeans and Arabs in Malta have worsened (Sammut & Brockdorff, 2019).

##### **A.4.1 Qualitative interviews: Maltese views on the integration of Arabs**

The findings of such widespread negative attitudes have prompted further qualitative research seeking to understand the arguments of Maltese citizens concerning the integration of Arabs in Malta. Integration, as an intercultural strategy, is one that is presently being pursued at a national level in Malta (Ministry for European Affairs and Equality, 2017), and thus presents itself as a key topic of discussion. Semi-structured interviews were conducted and sought to understand the various arguments that the Maltese make for and against the integration of Arabs in Malta. The

interviews were conducted between December 2015 and January 2016 (Sammut et al., 2018). These results indicated arguments made by the public for and against integration. Such arguments appeal to six main themes: socio-politics, stigma, religion, psychology, culture and economics. The arguments made by the Maltese were overwhelmingly negative, and indicated a lack of resources for constructing a positive view of Islam (Sammut et al., 2018). That is, whilst all argumentative themes had a positive counterpart (i.e., examples of arguments supporting the integration of Arabs), no positive religious arguments were made for Arab integration (Sammut et al., 2018; cf. Buhagiar et al., 2020). Of the argumentative themes, Sammut et al. (2018) present three main arguments: a positive socio-political argument; a negative socio-political argument; and a mixed socio-political argument concerning integration. The most notable argumentative claims (i.e., take-home messages advanced by participants) that emerged from this study were the following: “We never had problems with Arabs, they integrate and we get along”; “Arabs isolate themselves and do not integrate”; “Arabs impose their culture on others”; “Migrants can practise their beliefs as long as they don’t bother or influence others”; and “The more exposed to European culture, the better capable Arabs are of integrating” (Sammut et al., 2018). Such claims variably advanced the following arguments.

Firstly, positive arguments for integration emphasised the long history of Arab-Maltese relations, especially in the domain of mutual trade. Moreover, some participants expressed the possibility of learning from each other and expanding one’s outlook on culture and life in general, through intercultural contact. Participants also noted good examples of interactions with Arabs at work, and the misfortune of discrimination at the workplace:

*“I think they, a lot of them are misunderstood, I think a lot of them are maybe a bit mistreated [. . .] They’re being singled out, you know”* (Sammut et al., 2018)

Negative arguments were more prevalent and were mainly based on a view of Arabic culture as being backward and hindering progress. Participants referenced what they saw as huge differences between Arab and Maltese culture, and the notoriety that Arabs have gained in the global sphere, in order to argue for caution in interacting with Arabs. Moreover, participants expressed

reservations about Islam and argued against the charge of racism made to those who seek to protect the country's local ways:

*“ . . . if I oppose a different culture from mine, or to say, I don't agree with it and it bothers me, whatever, that's because I'm racist. ”* (Sammut et al., 2018)

Finally, participants also made mixed arguments concerning integration, which tended to be noncommittal vis-à-vis integration, or else emphasised both its positive and negative aspects. Respondents also argued that people are different, and as such, the issue of whether locals and hosts actually get along should be seen on a case by case basis. Such arguments however, were also made with reference to culture, and normative implications tended to run through the mixed arguments:

*“You'd have those that would be slightly more, ehm, cultured, more, how do I say it, they have a bit of exposure. ”* (Sammut et al., 2018)

Given the prevalence of cultural considerations in most of the arguments above, this research was followed up by an abductive analysis (Buhagiar et al., 2018) seeking to understand the dominant pattern of argumentation supporting anti-integrationist arguments. More specifically, results pointed towards the ubiquity of arguments from cultural essentialism. These arguments pushed a view of 'Arabic culture' as one that is (a) monolithic, and (b) an essential element of Arabs themselves, thus making the prospect of integration a difficult one. Different forms of cultural essentialism were expressed; these varied in terms of which aspect of 'Arabic culture' they emphasised. Firstly, such arguments were used to *reduce* Arabs to their culture, such that other aspects of their being were ignored by participants. Alternatively, such arguments saw Arabs as being *determined* by their culture, such that if Arabs are bred in a culture of war and conflict, then according to the participants, they would remain prone to violence wherever they go. Arguments from cultural essentialism were also used to *delineate* Arabs as an entity that is clearly separate from the Maltese, and such perceived boundaries were used to argue against integration. Finally, culturally essentialist arguments were also used to depict Arabs as being bound to cause trouble, if not now, then *over time*. Very few positive arguments from cultural essentialism were made;

that is, Arabic culture was rarely seen as being a monolithic yet beautiful or worthy entity. In essence, this abductive analysis demonstrated that cultural issues are a key concern for the Maltese majority vis-à-vis the Arab minority in Malta, and are used to promote anti-integrationism (Buhagiar et al., 2018).

Such studies are in line with recent research showing that racism and discrimination are experienced by minorities in educational settings and at young ages (Cefai et al., 2019). Moreover, local findings are analogous to those at the European level, highlighting the negative attitudes toward Arabs and Islam that are experienced by such socio-ethnic minorities across the continent (see Buhagiar et al., 2020). This also serves to highlight the importance of taking sociocultural contexts into account when doing intergroup relations research. Whilst migrants may reach Maltese shores with neutral or even hopeful expectations, the representations of the dominant group and those of non-dominant groups are not necessarily always in line.

#### **A.5 MOTIVATED REASONING AND ARGUMENTATION**

The literature reviewed above indicated the need for further research looking at people's views on the integration of Arabs in Malta, with the aim of better understanding majority-minority relations in Malta. More specifically, the convergence of antipathy among socio-ethnic groups towards Arabs, justifies the present undertaking. The goal is to arrive at a situation where campaigns can achieve fruitful results in terms of shifting intergroup relations such that these align with desired goals. Importantly, the take-home message from the above research is that mutual perceptions between groups cannot be ignored. Ignoring mutual perceptions risks employing social marketing or other campaigns that are not sensitive to the way that such groups construe the strategies being promoted, be they integration, toleration, assimilation or other strategies.

The literature above on motivated reasoning is in itself a compelling case for exploring how people argue *for* or *against* a specific intercultural strategy, such as integration. This makes it important to use research methods that engage participants in argumentation, as did the above research on Arabs in Malta (Sammut et al., 2018; Buhagiar et al., 2018). In this study, Maltese participants were engaged in *argumentation interviewing* (Sammut et al., 2018), where participants were asked directly for their views concerning the integration of Arabs. After the participants' main *claims* (or



take-home messages) were elicited, the interviewer asked questions aimed at understanding the *warrants*, or reasons for such claims; the *backings*, or assumptions, made by participants to support their reasoning; any statements made by participants as *qualifiers* or *rebuttals* to an argument; and any *data*, or evidence (e.g., personal experiences, things they saw on the media, etc.) the participants found relevant to substantiate their argument. *Argumentation analysis* was then used to analyse the interviews and elicit these various components of argument. This form of analysis involved coding the separate claims made by participants concerning the integration of Arabs. Such claims were then thematically categorized, and the rest of the argument components were subsequently analysed to understand how the main claims were legitimized by participants.

Further conceptual work was then conducted, making use of Kruglanski's (2012) lay epistemic theory, which states that lay individuals reason in such a way as to support specific conclusions, in line with the literature on motivated reasoning (Kunda, 1990). According to lay epistemic theory, individuals reason in such a way as to solve perceived problems, using subjectively relevant evidence, in the service of desired conclusions. What this means to say is that people use their own subjective criteria for adopting a position for or against integration depending on what is meaningful to them personally, rather than some objective or overarching aspiration. The theory has been applied in various domains, most notably in the domain of persuasion, where Kruglanski & Thompson (1999) developed the "unimodel of persuasion", which posits persuasion as a process in which different types of evidence – which can be of any kind, as long as they are subjectively relevant to the reasoning individual – are used to draw persuasive conclusions. The unimodel of persuasion has been very fruitful in re-considering previous data in psychology, and has been applied to areas such as health communication (Kruglanski et al., 2006).

This model is very parsimonious, meaning that it does not make unnecessary assumptions about human reasoning and persuasive behaviour; this makes it very amenable to empirical research where intercultural considerations are foregrounded. Nevertheless, the insights gleaned from the unimodel of persuasion (Kruglanski & Thompson, 1999) are yet to be explored in intergroup relations. Based on the unimodel of persuasion, an argument can be conceptualised as being composed of the following basic structure: a main *claim*, *warrants* and *evidence* used to substantiate this claim, and statements *qualifying* the claim if necessary. Other argument

components (such as *backings* and *rebuttals*, outlined above) become redundant, as this model explores how arguments are used to directly convince and persuade. This allows us to study how members of various groups argue in such a way as to favour their own ingroup goals. The basic structure is also sensitive to cultural differences, and does not utilize argument components that might not feature across all socio-ethnic groups (cf. Rigotti & Greco Morasso, 2009).

## **A.6 CONCLUSION**

This section has provided an overview of intergroup relations research, and more specifically, local research in this domain. Conceptual work vis-à-vis the basic components of argument was also presented. The studies presented in this report were built on these considerations, both conceptually and in terms of the empirical endeavours undertaken. The convergence of negative attitudes toward Arabs in Malta justified the present undertaking.

**APPENDIX B: SCALE FORMATION**

The interviews with both Maltese and Arab participants were analysed using argumentation analysis: this involved noting the central arguments made by participants, and the justifications participants provided for their arguments. This yielded a set of arguments against and for integration, or else arguments stating that integration is not or is taking place, for each set of interviews. Accordingly, this meant that such claims could be *thematically organized*, such as to yield different Statements (henceforth referred to as Items), that variously supported or opposed integration, to various degrees. Consider the below examples:

**Example: argument by Maltese**



**Example: argument by Arabs**



In these examples, very similar claims are made, however they are legitimated with reference to different reasons and different examples. That is, the claims are *mutually intelligible* across social

groups, even though the warrants, evidence and qualifiers sustaining such claims can differ in their prevalence and currency within said groups. Based on this reasoning, the claims relevant to integration, made by both Arabs and the Maltese, were thus thematically categorized on the basis of their similarities. This meant that different sets of arguments, made by both Maltese and Arab participants, were noted for their correspondence to each other (e.g., if they treated a similar theme). When arguments corresponded to each other to a sufficient degree, these were categorized under one item which they helped formulate. The items were worded in such a way that the eventual scale would be as symmetrical as possible, that is, using adjectives and other operators indicating different degrees of strength, both for or against integration. As such, participant claims informing the scale items may have been used to support a softer or a stronger version of the item itself (e.g., no group argued directly for racism, but an item supporting racism was necessary to counterbalance the fully integrationist end of the scale). This process resulted in 12 items. Given that this scale was based on both sets of interviews, this scale made sense for both the Maltese and Arabs in Malta.

The 12 items were then subjected to expert rankings. 15 experts, from various backgrounds related to intercultural relations, were asked to rank the items in order, with the 1st item being the most pro-integration all the way to the 6th item, which was the least pro-integration. Similarly, item 7 to item 12 were ranked, with item 7 being the least anti-integration (within the anti-integration items) and item 12 being the most anti-integration item. It is worth noting that the scale had no midpoint, as it would be unclear whether a midpoint, in this case, references neutral attitudes toward integration or else ambivalence or disinterest in the topic. The mean expert ranking for each item was taken as the position of each item. The means of all the 12 items approximated a normal curve, with the values of the most pro-integration items, and those of the most anti-integration items, being more distant from the items toward the middle of the scale. The scale ranged from the belief that people can beneficially live together whilst keeping their different religions and cultures, all the way to the view that racism is sensible.

The fact that the ranking of the scale was made on the basis of expert rankings ensured a relatively common metric in the scaling exercise. 'Integration' is a term that has multiple meanings for different people, depending on their social background and their views on integration itself.

Accordingly, relying on expert rankings ensured that the project (see Buhagiar & Sammut, 2020) being discussed (in this case, integration) had a somewhat similar meaning to the experts involved, not least based on their training and formal education. At the same time, having expert rankers from different backgrounds ensured the heterogeneity needed for the scaling exercise not to be skewed in favour of one dominant interpretation. The formation and ranking of the scale put us in an excellent position to be able to survey the views of integration circulating among the Maltese and Arabs in Malta.

## APPENDIX C: DEMOGRAPHICS

			<b>Maltese</b>	<b>Arabs</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Gender</b>	Frequency	Male	83	38	121
	% in group		46.4%	44.2%	45.7%
		Female	96	48	144
			53.6%	55.8%	54.3%
<b>Age</b>	Frequency	18-30	71	63	134
	% in group		32.7%	60.0%	41.6%
		31-50	97	36	133
			44.7%	34.3%	41.3%
		51+	49	6	55
			22.6%	5.7%	17.1%
<b>Region</b>	Frequency	Gozo and Comino	10	0	10
	% in group		5.7%	0.0%	3.9%
		Northern	45	9	54
			25.9%	10.7%	20.9%
		Northern Harbour	44	57	101
			25.3%	67.9%	39.1%
		South Eastern	14	5	19
			8.0%	6.0%	7.4%
	Southern Harbour	20	7	27	
		11.5%	8.3%	10.5%	
	Western	41	6	47	
		23.6%	7.1%	18.2%	

			<b>Maltese</b>	<b>Arabs</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Education</b>	Frequency	Primary	0	1	1
	% in group		0.0%	1.3%	0.4%
		Secondary	38	6	44
			21.3%	7.5%	17.1%
		Post-Secondary	44	16	60
			24.7%	20.0%	23.3%
		Tertiary	96	57	153
			53.9%	71.3%	59.3%
<b>Occupation</b>	Frequency	Worker	155	45	200
	% in group		86.6%	52.3%	75.5%
		Student	5	34	39
			2.8%	39.5%	14.7%
		Homemaker	8	4	12
			4.5%	4.7%	4.5%
		Pensioner/ Retired	10	0	10
			5.6%	0.0%	3.8%
		Unemployed	1	3	4
			0.6%	3.5%	1.5%
<b>Relationship Status</b>	Frequency	Not married	77	47	124
	% in group		43.0%	54.7%	46.8%
		Married	97	36	133
			54.2%	41.9%	50.2%
		Separated/Divorced/Annulled	3	3	6
			1.7%	3.5%	2.3%
		Widow(er)	2	0	2
			1.1%	0.0%	0.8%

			<b>Maltese</b>	<b>Arabs</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Religion</b>	Frequency	Christianity	147	2	149
	% in group		82.1%	2.3%	56.2%
		Islam	1	82	83
			0.6%	95.3%	31.3%
		None	27	2	29
			15.1%	2.3%	10.9%
		Other	4	0	4
			2.2%	0.0%	1.5%
<b>Living in Malta</b>	Frequency	1 year – 2 years	0	9	9
	% in group		0.0%	10.5%	3.5%
		2 years – 4 years	2	14	16
			1.2%	16.3%	6.2%
		5 years or more	170	63	233
			98.8%	73.3%	90.3%
<b>Mentalities</b>	Frequency	Civic	59	34	93
	% in group		32.6%	39.5%	34.8%
		Pragmatic	23	7	30
			12.7%	8.1%	11.2%
		Localised	33	13	46
			18.2%	15.1%	17.2%
		Reward	43	24	67
			23.8%	27.9%	25.1%
		Survivor	23	8	31
			12.7%	9.3%	11.6%



## APPENDIX D: CROSS-TABULATIONS

Table D.1

## Maltese and Arab views on integration

Score	Group	Mean	Standard Deviation
<b>Maltese &amp; Arab views</b>	Maltese	18.47*	55.5
	Arab	73.24*	31.2
<b>Mutual attributions</b>	Maltese (to Arab)	24.29*	41.6
	Arab (to Maltese)	7.15*	46.7
<b>Arab views &amp; Maltese attributions</b>	Arab	73.24*	31.2
	Maltese (to Arabs)	24.29*	41.6
<b>Maltese views &amp; Arab attributions</b>	Maltese	18.47	55.5
	Arab (to Maltese)	7.15	46.7

The lowest possible score on the Integration scale is -126 (anti-integration), and the highest possible score is +126 (pro-integration).

\* Differences between groups are statistically significant ( $p < 0.05$ ).

**Notes:**

Arab participants expressed significantly more favourable views toward integration (mean = 73.24) than the Maltese (mean = 18.47),  $t(313) = -11.315$ ,  $p < .001$ .

Maltese participants attributed a significantly higher mean overall score to Arabs (mean = 24.29), than Arabs attributed to the Maltese (mean = 7.15),  $t(320) = 3.329$ ,  $p < .001$ .

There were significant differences between what the Arabs think (mean = 73.24) and what the Maltese think that Arabs think (mean = 24.29) on integration,  $t(265.4) = -11.801$ ,  $p < .001$ .

The difference between what the Maltese think (mean = 18.47) and what Arabs think that the Maltese think (mean = 7.15) was not statistically significant,  $t(240.5) = 1.915$ ,  $p = .057$ .

**Note D.1. Mentalities and views on integration**

Within the **Maltese** group, a one-way ANOVA revealed a significant effect of mentalities on views on integration,  $F(4, 176) = 3.526$ ,  $p < .01$ ,  $\eta^2 = 0.074$ ; and post-hoc comparisons using Tukey's range test revealed significant differences ( $p < .01$ ) between those expressing a Civic mentality ( $M = 35.78$ ,  $SD = 53.5$ ) and those expressing a Reward mentality ( $M = 0.33$ ,  $SD = 50.0$ ).

Within the **Arab** group, a one-way ANOVA revealed a significant effect of mentalities on views on integration,  $F(4, 81) = 4.131$ ,  $p < .01$ ,  $\eta^2 = 0.169$ ; and post-hoc comparisons using Tukey's range test revealed significant differences ( $p < .01$ ) between those expressing a Reward mentality ( $M = 86.0$ ,  $SD = 19.4$ ) and those expressing a Survivor mentality ( $M = 49.0$ ,  $SD = 32.2$ ).

Table D.2

## Maltese views on integration and Arab perceptions of Maltese views

SCALE	Group	Mean	Standard Deviation
<b>Item 1 – Extremely pro-integration</b> The Maltese and Arabs can definitely get along whilst fully keeping their cultural and religious differences – living together is highly beneficial.	Maltese	4.69	1.816
	Arab attributions to Maltese	4.40	1.752
<b>Item 2 – Highly pro-integration</b> It would be better for society if the Maltese and Arabs engage with each other (e.g., at work, at school, etc.) instead of isolating themselves.	Maltese	5.23*	1.751
	Arab attributions to Maltese	4.01*	1.712
<b>Item 3 – Quite pro-integration</b> Having Christian and Muslim places of worship side by side makes for a strong and diverse society, both here in Malta and elsewhere.	Maltese	4.35*	1.935
	Arab attributions to Maltese	3.62*	1.767
<b>Item 4 – Rather pro-integration</b> The similarities between Arab and Maltese culture, heritage, language and mentality can help us get along.	Maltese	4.24	1.845
	Arab attributions to Maltese	4.20	1.643
<b>Item 5 – Somewhat pro-integration</b> As a minimum, there should be no discrimination between the Maltese and Arabs.	Maltese	5.35*	1.755
	Arab attributions to Maltese	3.82*	1.833
<b>Item 6 – Slightly pro-integration</b> As with other cultures, cultural contact between Arabs and the Maltese can be good in some specific respects (e.g., new food, music, etc.).	Maltese	4.94	1.731
	Arab attributions to Maltese	4.67	1.536

SCALE	Group	Mean	Standard Deviation
<b>Item 7 – Slightly anti-integration</b> The religious and cultural differences between Arabs and the Maltese can be problematic when it comes to living together.	Maltese	5.15*	1.744
	Arab attributions to Maltese	4.11*	1.794
<b>Item 8 – Somewhat anti-integration</b> Migrants would do well to keep certain cultural practices private in order to get along with the locals.	Maltese	4.76	1.938
	Arab attributions to Maltese	4.91	1.676
<b>Item 9 – Rather anti-integration</b> Arabic Islamic culture and Maltese Christian culture are too contrasting for us to get along well.	Maltese	4.24	2.018
	Arab attributions to Maltese	3.99	1.800
<b>Item 10 – Quite anti-integration</b> At the end of the day, the Arabs or the Maltese will want to impose their way of life on the other.	Maltese	4.74*	1.821
	Arab attributions to Maltese	3.85*	1.859
<b>Item 11 – Highly anti-integration</b> It would definitely be better if the Maltese and Arabs avoid dealing with each other altogether.	Maltese	3.29	2.038
	Arab attributions to Maltese	3.14	1.706
<b>Item 12 – Extremely anti-integration</b> Racism between the Maltese and Arabs makes sense – we simply should not mix.	Maltese	3.12*	2.024
	Arab attributions to Maltese	3.61*	1.811

*Responses were given on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).*

*\* Differences between groups are statistically significant ( $p < 0.05$ ).*

**Table D.3**  
**Arab views on integration and Maltese perceptions of Arab views**

SCALE	Group	Mean	Standard Deviation
<b>Item 1 – Extremely pro-integration</b> The Maltese and Arabs can definitely get along whilst fully keeping their cultural and religious differences – living together is highly beneficial.	Arabs	6.15*	1.343
	Maltese attributions to Arabs	4.54*	1.700
<b>Item 2 – Highly pro-integration</b> It would be better for society if the Maltese and Arabs engage with each other (e.g., at work, at school, etc.) instead of isolating themselves.	Arabs	6.30*	1.285
	Maltese attributions to Arabs	4.82*	1.661
<b>Item 3 – Quite pro-integration</b> Having Christian and Muslim places of worship side by side makes for a strong and diverse society, both here in Malta and elsewhere.	Arabs	5.70*	1.732
	Maltese attributions to Arabs	4.27*	1.879
<b>Item 4 – Rather pro-integration</b> The similarities between Arab and Maltese culture, heritage, language and mentality can help us get along.	Arabs	5.48*	1.468
	Maltese attributions to Arabs	4.33*	1.635
<b>Item 5 – Somewhat pro-integration</b> As a minimum, there should be no discrimination between the Maltese and Arabs.	Arabs	6.16*	1.374
	Maltese attributions to Arabs	5.49*	1.722
<b>Item 6 – Slightly pro-integration</b> As with other cultures, cultural contact between Arabs and the Maltese can be good in some specific respects (e.g., new food, music, etc.).	Arabs	5.76*	1.362
	Maltese attributions to Arabs	4.93*	1.509

SCALE	Group	Mean	Standard Deviation
<b>Item 7 – Slightly anti-integration</b>	Arabs	3.09*	1.830
The religious and cultural differences between Arabs and the Maltese can be problematic when it comes to living together.	Maltese attributions to Arabs	4.40*	1.777
<b>Item 8 – Somewhat anti-integration</b>	Arabs	4.68*	1.863
Migrants would do well to keep certain cultural practices private in order to get along with the locals.	Maltese attributions to Arabs	2.97*	1.709
<b>Item 9 – Rather anti-integration</b>	Arabs	2.83*	1.795
Arabic Islamic culture and Maltese Christian culture are too contrasting for us to get along well.	Maltese attributions to Arabs	4.18*	1.842
<b>Item 10 – Quite anti-integration</b>	Arabs	3.21*	1.895
At the end of the day, the Arabs or the Maltese will want to impose their way of life on the other.	Maltese attributions to Arabs	4.49*	1.785
<b>Item 11 – Highly anti-integration</b>	Arabs	1.68*	1.451
It would definitely be better if the Maltese and Arabs avoid dealing with each other altogether.	Maltese attributions to Arabs	2.99*	1.732
<b>Item 12 – Extremely anti-integration</b>	Arabs	1.72*	1.244
Racism between the Maltese and Arabs makes sense – we simply should not mix.	Maltese attributions to Arabs	2.87*	1.667

*Responses were given on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).*

*\* Differences between groups are statistically significant ( $p < 0.05$ ).*

**Table D.4**  
**Maltese and Arab views and attributions on Item 8**

Score	Group	Mean	Standard Deviation
<b>Maltese &amp; Arab views</b>	Maltese	4.76	1.94
	Arab	4.68	1.86
<b>Maltese views &amp; Arab attributions</b>	Maltese	4.76	1.94
	Arab (to Maltese)	4.91	1.68
<b>Arab views &amp; Maltese attributions</b>	Arab	4.68*	1.86
	Maltese (to Arab)	2.97*	1.71
<b>Maltese views &amp; Maltese attributions</b>	Maltese	4.76*	1.94
	Maltese (to Arab)	2.97*	1.71
<b>Arab views &amp; Arab attributions</b>	Arab	4.68	1.86
	Arab (to Maltese)	4.91	1.68

*Responses were given on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).*

*\* Differences between groups are statistically significant ( $p < 0.05$ ).*

**Notes:**

*There were no significant differences between Maltese (mean = 4.76) and Arab views (mean = 4.68) on Item 8,  $t(320) = .390$ ,  $p = .697$ .*

*There were no significant differences between Maltese views (mean = 4.76) and Arabs' perception of Maltese views (mean = 4.91) on Item 8,  $t(234.7) = -.711$ ,  $p = .478$ .*

*The Maltese perceived Arabs as endorsing Item 8 to a significantly lower degree (mean = 2.97) than Arabs actually do (mean = 4.68),  $t(320) = -8.163$ ,  $p < .001$ .*

*The Maltese perceived Arabs as endorsing Item 8 to a significantly lower degree (mean = 2.97) than the Maltese themselves do (mean = 4.76),  $t(216) = 11.009$ ,  $p < .001$ .*

*There were no significant differences between Arabs' views on Item 8 (mean = 4.68), and Arabs' perception of Maltese views (mean = 4.91),  $t(104) = -1.022$ ,  $p = .309$ .*

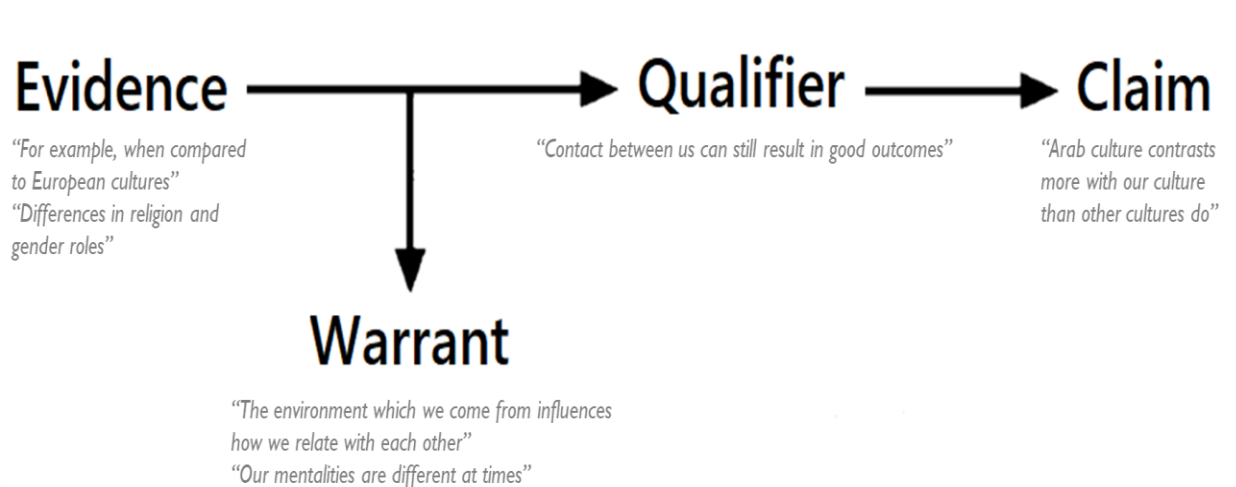
**APPENDIX E: ARGUMENT STRUCTURES AND ADAPTATIONS**

The following are the schematic illustrations for staircasing public opinion with the Maltese vis-à-vis Items 8, 7, 6 and 5. The equivalent summarised version of the adapted argument is presented in the report.

**Item 8 “Migrants would do well to keep certain cultural practices private in order to get along with the locals.”**



**Item 7 “The religious and cultural differences between Arabs and the Maltese can be problematic when it comes to living together.”**



**Item 6 “As with other cultures, cultural contact between Arabs and the Maltese can be good in some specific respects (e.g., new food, music, etc.).”**



**Item 5 “As a minimum, there should be no discrimination between the Maltese and Arabs.”**

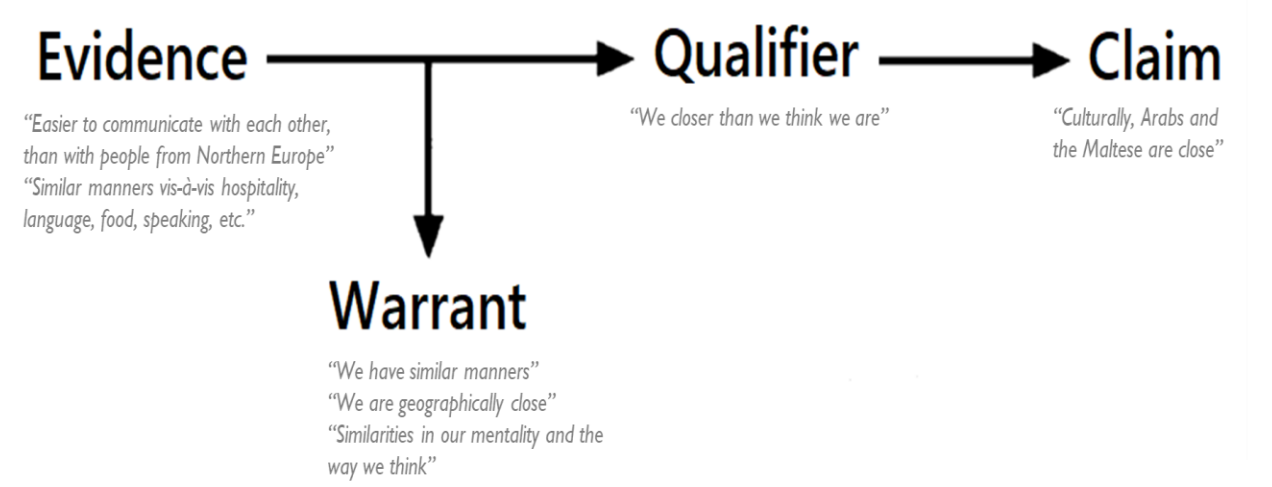




The following are the adapted arguments and schematic illustrations for staircasing public opinion vis-à-vis Items 4, 3, 2 and 1. The sentences in bold represent the scale item. The underlined sentences represent the hook to the next argument. Arguments were adapted accordingly, based on the reasoning expressed in Section 4.1.1.

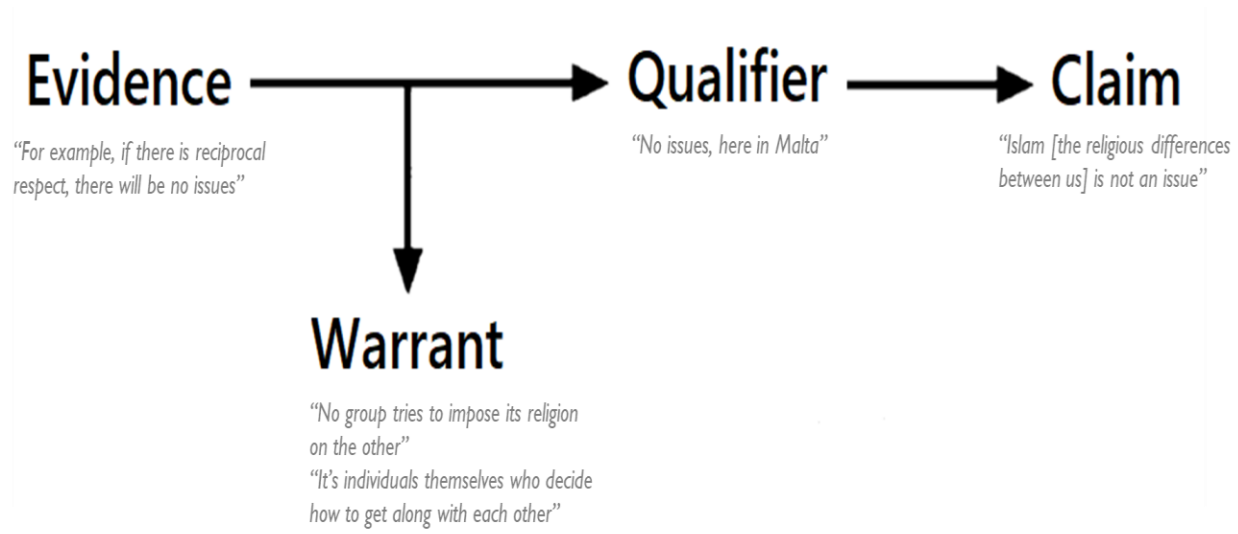
**Item 4: “The similarities between Arab and Maltese culture, heritage, language and mentality can help us get along.”**

*“The similarities between Arab and Maltese culture, heritage, language and mentality can help us get along. This is because, culturally, the Maltese and Arabs are close to each other – more so than we think. For example, sometimes it’s easier to communicate with each other, than with people from Northern Europe. Moreover, we have similar manners when it comes to hospitality and especially language – and even in small things like food, cooking and the fact that we sometimes shout or use our hands whilst speaking. The fact that Malta is geographically close to Arab countries, led to there being similarities in our mentality and the way we think. Accordingly, we should learn to use these similarities such that we have a more united society.”*



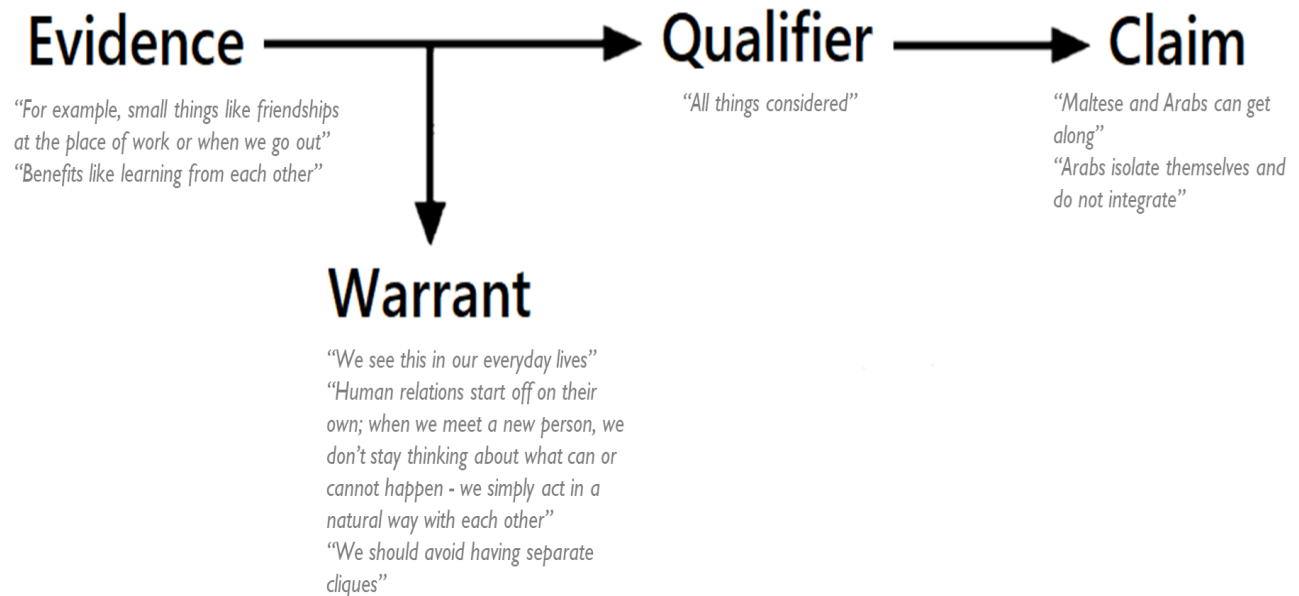
**Item 3: “Having Christian and Muslim places of worship side by side makes for a strong and diverse society, both here in Malta and elsewhere.”**

*“Having Christian and Muslim places of worship side by side makes for a strong and diverse society, both here in Malta and elsewhere. In truth, the religious differences between us are not an issue when it comes to living together. This is because the fact remains that here in Malta, we never had situations where a group tried to impose its religion on another group forcefully. It’s individuals themselves who decide how to get along with each other; if there is reciprocal respect, the diversity in places of worship does not have to be a problem. To the contrary, if people with different views manage to relate more with each other, this would be beneficial because there would be less distance between us.”*



**Item 2: “It would be better for society if the Maltese and Arabs engage with each other (e.g., at work, at school, etc.) instead of isolating themselves.”**

*“It would be better for society if the Maltese and Arabs engage with each other (e.g., at work, at school, etc.) instead of isolating themselves. All things considered, the Maltese and Arabs can get along. We see this in our everyday lives, when it comes to small things like friendships at the place of work or when we go out. Human relations start off on their own; when we meet a new person, we don’t stay thinking about what can or cannot happen - we simply act in a natural way with each other. On the one hand, relating with one another is good, as we avoid isolating ourselves from each other and forming separate cliques, thus preventing negative consequences. On the other hand, relating with one another can also lead to certain benefits, like for example learning from each other.”*




**Item 1: “The Maltese and Arabs can definitely get along whilst fully keeping their cultural and religious differences – living together is highly beneficial.”**


*“The Maltese and Arabs can definitely get along whilst fully keeping their cultural and religious differences – living together is highly beneficial. In reality, Arabs have been in Malta for a long time and we never had problems with each other because they always integrated in one way or another. If it were true that there are problems because of our differences, then we would not be working together and getting along with one another in our daily lives. Many Maltese who visited or used to work in Arab countries, still have friends from those countries – till this very day. It’s a beautiful thing to be able to show appreciation toward each other and to enjoy the various cultures there are around us.”*

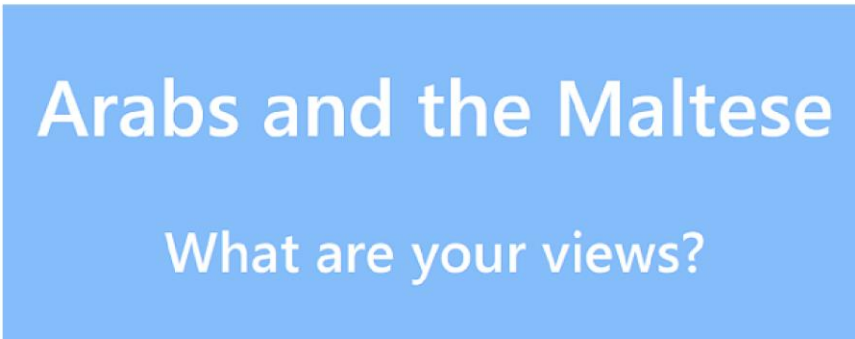


**APPENDIX F: NATIONAL SURVEY**

English version (the Maltese and Arabic versions of the survey are available by the authors):

- 

L-Għarab u l-Maltin  
X'taħseb?
- 

العرب والمالطيون  
ما هي وجهات نظرك؟
- 

Arabs and the Maltese  
What are your views?

**Welcome.**

**In this anonymous survey, we are asking both Maltese and Arab participants to tell us what they think of the relations between the Maltese and Arabs in Malta. We invite you to take a moment to tell us your views by answering this questionnaire, which should take around 10 minutes to complete. Your participation in this research is on a voluntary basis, and no data that reveals your identity will be requested during this questionnaire. Only adults (18+) who live in Malta are allowed to take part in this survey.**

**Your views are very important to us.**

**We thank you in advance for your collaboration.**

This study is being carried out by PhD student Luke J Buhagiar (luke.buhagiar@um.edu.mt) under the supervision of Prof Gordon Sammut (gordon.sammut@um.edu.mt) from the University of Malta. By clicking below, you confirm that you have read the above information, that you are an adult and that you consent to participate in this research.

[Click here to continue](#)

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Age (in years)

Which of the following categories do you fall under?

- Maltese** (of non-Arab origin)
- Arab origin** (with or without Maltese nationality/ citizenship)
- Mixed Arab and Maltese origin** (with or without Maltese nationality/ citizenship)

[Click here to continue](#)

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**Maltese** (of non-Arab origin)

40%

Thanks again 😊

**In this section, we would like to know what you think about the following statements concerning relations between the Maltese and Arabs in Malta.**

**We would also like to know what you think that Arabs in Malta think about the same statements.**

**Please answer the following questions using a scale from 1 to 7.**

The Maltese and Arabs can definitely get along whilst fully keeping their cultural and religious differences – living together is highly beneficial.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5                      6                      7

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the above statement?

I strongly disagree

I strongly agree

To what extent do you think that Arabs in Malta agree or disagree with the above statement?

They strongly disagree

They strongly agree

It would be better for society if the Maltese and Arabs engage with each other (e.g., at work, at school, etc.) instead of isolating themselves.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5                      6                      7

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the above statement?

I strongly disagree

I strongly agree

To what extent do you think that Arabs in Malta agree or disagree with the above statement?

They strongly disagree

They strongly agree





As with other cultures, cultural contact between Arabs and the Maltese can be good in some specific respects (e.g., new food, music, etc.).

1                      2                      3                      4                      5                      6                      7

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the above statement?

I strongly disagree I strongly agree

To what extent do you think that Arabs in Malta agree or disagree with the above statement?

They strongly disagree They strongly agree

The religious and cultural differences between Arabs and the Maltese can be problematic when it comes to living together.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5                      6                      7

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the above statement?

I strongly disagree I strongly agree

To what extent do you think that Arabs in Malta agree or disagree with the above statement?

They strongly disagree They strongly agree

Migrants would do well to keep certain cultural practices private in order to get along with the locals.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5                      6                      7

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the above statement?

I strongly disagree I strongly agree

To what extent do you think that Arabs in Malta agree or disagree with the above statement?

They strongly disagree They strongly agree

---

---

Arabic Islamic culture and Maltese Christian culture are too contrasting for us to get along well.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5                      6                      7

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the above statement?

I strongly disagree I strongly agree

---

---

To what extent do you think that Arabs in Malta agree or disagree with the above statement?

They strongly disagree They strongly agree

---

---

At the end of the day, the Arabs or the Maltese will want to impose their way of life on the other.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5                      6                      7

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the above statement?

I strongly disagree I strongly agree

---

---

To what extent do you think that Arabs in Malta agree or disagree with the above statement?

They strongly disagree They strongly agree

---

---

It would definitely be better if the Maltese and Arabs avoid dealing with each other altogether.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5                      6                      7

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the above statement?

I strongly disagree I strongly agree

---

---

To what extent do you think that Arabs in Malta agree or disagree with the above statement?

They strongly disagree

They strongly agree

---

---

Racism between the Maltese and Arabs makes sense - we simply should not mix.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5                      6                      7

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the above statement?

I strongly disagree

I strongly agree

---

---

To what extent do you think that Arabs in Malta agree or disagree with the above statement?

They strongly disagree

They strongly agree

---

---

[Click here to continue](#)

Powered by Qualtrics 

**Arab origin** (with or without Maltese nationality/ citizenship)

40%

Thanks again 😊

In this section, we would like to know what you think about the following statements concerning relations between the Maltese and Arabs in Malta.

We would also like to know what you think that the Maltese think about the same statements.

Please answer the following questions using a scale from 1 to 7.

The Maltese and Arabs can definitely get along whilst fully keeping their cultural and religious differences – living together is highly beneficial.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5                      6                      7

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the above statement?

I strongly disagree I strongly agree

To what extent do you think that the Maltese agree or disagree with the above statement?

They strongly disagree They strongly agree

It would be better for society if the Maltese and Arabs engage with each other (e.g., at work, at school, etc.) instead of isolating themselves.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5                      6                      7

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the above statement?

I strongly disagree I strongly agree

To what extent do you think that the Maltese agree or disagree with the above statement?

They strongly disagree They strongly agree





They strongly disagree They strongly agree

---

---

Arabic Islamic culture and Maltese Christian culture are too contrasting for us to get along well.

1                    2                    3                    4                    5                    6                    7

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the above statement?

I strongly disagree I strongly agree

---

---

To what extent do you think that the Maltese agree or disagree with the above statement?

They strongly disagree They strongly agree

---

---

At the end of the day, the Arabs or the Maltese will want to impose their way of life on the other.

1                    2                    3                    4                    5                    6                    7

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the above statement?

I strongly disagree I strongly agree

---

---

To what extent do you think that the Maltese agree or disagree with the above statement?

They strongly disagree They strongly agree

---

---

It would definitely be better if the Maltese and Arabs avoid dealing with each other altogether.

1                    2                    3                    4                    5                    6                    7

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the above statement?

I strongly disagree I strongly agree

---

---

To what extent do you think that the Maltese agree or disagree with the above statement?



They strongly disagree They strongly agree

---

---

Racism between the Maltese and Arabs makes sense - we simply should not mix.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5                      6                      7

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the above statement?

I strongly disagree I strongly agree

---

---

To what extent do you think that the Maltese agree or disagree with the above statement?

They strongly disagree They strongly agree

---

---

[Click here to continue](#)

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**Mixed Arab and Maltese origin (with or without Maltese nationality/ citizenship)**

40%

Thanks again 😊

In this section, we would like to know what you think about the following statements concerning relations between the Maltese and Arabs in Malta.

We would also like to know what you think that the Maltese and Arabs in Malta think about the same statements.

Please answer the following questions using a scale from 1 to 7.

---

The Maltese and Arabs can definitely get along whilst fully keeping their cultural and religious differences – living together is highly beneficial.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5                      6                      7

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the above statement?

I strongly disagree I strongly agree

To what extent do you think that the Maltese agree or disagree with the above statement?

They strongly disagree They strongly agree

To what extent do you think that Arabs in Malta agree or disagree with the above statement?

They strongly disagree They strongly agree

---

It would be better for society if the Maltese and Arabs engage with each other (e.g., at work, at school, etc.) instead of isolating themselves.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5                      6                      7

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the above statement?

I strongly disagree I strongly agree

To what extent do you think that the Maltese agree or disagree with the above statement?

They strongly disagree

They strongly agree

Progress indicator bar for the first question.

To what extent do you think that Arabs in Malta agree or disagree with the above statement?

They strongly disagree

They strongly agree

Progress indicator bar for the second question.

Having Christian and Muslim places of worship side by side makes for a strong and diverse society, both here in Malta and elsewhere.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the above statement?

I strongly disagree

I strongly agree

Progress indicator bar for the third question.

To what extent do you think that the Maltese agree or disagree with the above statement?

They strongly disagree

They strongly agree

Progress indicator bar for the fourth question.

To what extent do you think that Arabs in Malta agree or disagree with the above statement?

They strongly disagree

They strongly agree

Progress indicator bar for the fifth question.

The similarities between Arab and Maltese culture, heritage, language and mentality can help us get along.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the above statement?

I strongly disagree

I strongly agree

Progress indicator bar for the sixth question.

To what extent do you think that the Maltese agree or disagree with the above statement?

They strongly disagree

They strongly agree

Progress indicator bar for the seventh question.

To what extent do you think that Arabs in Malta agree or disagree with the above statement?

They strongly disagree

They strongly agree

---

---

As a minimum, there should be no discrimination between the Maltese and Arabs.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5                      6                      7

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the above statement?

I strongly disagree

I strongly agree

---

---

To what extent do you think that the Maltese agree or disagree with the above statement?

They strongly disagree

They strongly agree

---

---

To what extent do you think that Arabs in Malta agree or disagree with the above statement?

They strongly disagree

They strongly agree

---

---

As with other cultures, cultural contact between Arabs and the Maltese can be good in some specific respects (e.g., new food, music, etc.).

1                      2                      3                      4                      5                      6                      7

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the above statement?

I strongly disagree

I strongly agree

---

---

To what extent do you think that the Maltese agree or disagree with the above statement?

They strongly disagree

They strongly agree

---

---

To what extent do you think that Arabs in Malta agree or disagree with the above statement?

They strongly disagree

They strongly agree

---

---





To what extent do you think that the Maltese agree or disagree with the above statement?

They strongly disagree

They strongly agree

To what extent do you think that Arabs in Malta agree or disagree with the above statement?

They strongly disagree

They strongly agree

Racism between the Maltese and Arabs makes sense - we simply should not mix.

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the above statement?

I strongly disagree

I strongly agree

To what extent do you think that the Maltese agree or disagree with the above statement?

They strongly disagree

They strongly agree

To what extent do you think that Arabs in Malta agree or disagree with the above statement?

They strongly disagree

They strongly agree

[Click here to continue](#)

80%

**We would now like to ask you about your views concerning life in general and related matters.**

**Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following five statements by choosing a number from 1 to 5, where 1 means "strongly disagree" and 5 means "strongly agree".**

Strongly disagree Strongly agree

1 2 3 4 5

**PY24.** The future depends on us and the choices we make. We need to work to fix institutions, laws and policies so that they can cater better to the needs of the people and society.

**WZ05.** To succeed, we need to adjust to our life situations. Sometimes we have to close an eye to the rules to help our loved ones.

**KH30.** In life, we need to help one another and improve our communities. We need to follow local rules and customs so that there can be order in society.

**UL03.** In life, we get what we deserve. One needs to make the best of what life offers and if one works hard enough, one will ultimately succeed.

**XY20.** People are what they are and one has little control over what will turn out in the end. One needs to live day by day and let tomorrow take care of itself.

**Which one of the five statements that you have just read comes closest to your view?**

**PY24**

**WZ05**

**KH30**

**UL03**

**XY20**



Show how much you favour or oppose each idea by selecting a number from 1 to 6 on the scale below, where 1 means “strongly oppose” and 6 means “strongly favour”. You can work quickly; your first feeling is generally best.

Strongly oppose Strongly favour  
1 2 3 4 5 6

Some groups of people must be kept in their place.

( \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

It's probably a good thing that certain groups are at the top and other groups are at the bottom.

( \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

An ideal society requires some groups to be on top and others to be on the bottom.

( \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Some groups of people are simply inferior to other groups.

( \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Groups at the bottom are just as deserving as groups at the top.

( \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

No one group should dominate in society.

( \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Groups at the bottom should not have to stay in their place.

( \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Group dominance is a poor principle.

( \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

We should not push for group equality.

( \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

We shouldn't try to guarantee that every group has the same quality of life.

( \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

It is unjust to try to make groups equal.

( \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Group equality should not be our primary goal.

( \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

We should work to give all groups an equal chance to succeed.

( \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

We should do what we can to equalize conditions for different groups.

( \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

No matter how much effort it takes, we ought to strive to ensure that all groups have the same chance in life.

( \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Group equality should be our ideal.

( \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements by choosing a number from 1 to 6, where 1 means “strongly disagree” and 6 means “strongly agree”.**

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

1                      2                      3                      4                      5                      6

I don't like situations that are uncertain.

( \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I dislike questions which could be answered in many different ways.

( \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I find that a well ordered life with regular hours suits my temperament.

( \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I feel uncomfortable when I don't understand the reason why an event occurred in my life.

( \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I feel irritated when one person disagrees with what everyone else in a group believes.

( \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I don't like to go into a situation without knowing what I can expect from it.

( \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I have said something bad about a friend behind his or her back.

( \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

When I have made a decision, I feel relieved.

( \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

When I am confronted with a problem, I'm dying to reach a solution very quickly.

( \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I would quickly become impatient and irritated if I would not find a solution to a problem immediately.

( \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I don't like to be with people who are capable of unexpected actions.

( \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

There have been occasions when I have taken advantage of someone.

( \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I dislike it when a person's statement could mean many different things.

( \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I find that establishing a consistent routine enables me to enjoy life more.

( \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I enjoy having a clear and structured mode of life.

( \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I do not usually consult many different opinions before forming my own view.

( \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I dislike unpredictable situations.

(  )

When I hear people talking privately, I avoid listening.

(  )

**Show how much you agree or disagree with the following statement using the slider below, where 0 means “strongly disagree” and 100 means “strongly agree”.**

Strongly disagree Strongly agree  
0      10      20      30      40      50      60      70      80      90      100

I feel I belong in my neighbourhood.

[Click here to continue](#)

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100%

In this final section, there are a few quick questions about yourself.

**Gender**

- Male
- Female
- Other

**Relationship Status**

- Married
- Not married
- Separated/ Divorced/ Annulled marriage
- Widower/ Widow

**Education (the highest level you have completed)**

- Primary
- Secondary
- Post-secondary (e.g. Sixth form, etc.)
- Tertiary (e.g. University, etc.)
- No formal education

**Occupation**

- Homemaker
- Pensioner / Retired
- Student
- Worker
- Unemployed

**Religion**

- Christianity
- Islam
- Judaism
- None
- Other

To what extent do you identify with your religion on a scale from 1 to 10?

I do not identify at all

I identify completely

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Nationality

Town/Village where you live

How long have you been living in Malta?

Less than 6 months	Between 6 months and 1 year	Between 1 year and 2 years	Between 2 years and 4 years	5 years or more
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

[Click here to submit your responses](#)

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Grazzi talli ħadt il-ħin sabiex timla das-servej.

It-twegibiet tieghek ġew irreġistrati.

Jekk ikollok xi mistoqsijiet, jekk jogħġbok ibgħat lill-istudent tal-PhD Luke J Buhagiar: [luke.buhagiar@um.edu.mt](mailto:luke.buhagiar@um.edu.mt)

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نشكرك على الوقت الذي أمضيتَه في إجراء هذا الاستبيان.

لقد تم تسجيل أجوبتك.

إذا كان لديك أي استفسارات، يرجى الاتصال بالطالب في درجة الدكتوراه  
Luke J Buhagiar: [luke.buhagiar@um.edu.mt](mailto:luke.buhagiar@um.edu.mt)

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We thank you for your time spent taking this survey.

Your responses have been recorded.

Should you have any queries, please contact PhD student Luke J Buhagiar: [luke.buhagiar@um.edu.mt](mailto:luke.buhagiar@um.edu.mt)

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