

**EMPLOYMENT
AND
TRAINING
CORPORATION**

**ANNUAL REPORT
2013**

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Developments in the Labour Market in 2013

Labour Supply

Administrative data held by the Employment and Training Corporation showed a labour supply of 165,255 persons at end November 2013. This translates into an increase of 5,404 persons or a 3.4% increase in the labour supply over the previous twelve months. The increase in the labour supply reflected an increase of 4,863 in full-time employment, coupled with an increase of 541 in registered unemployed persons during the period under review.

Full-time Employment

The number of full-time gainfully occupied employees at end November 2013 stood at 157,616. The employment rate, defined as full-time employment as a share in the working age population, improved by 1.9% to 54.8% in November 2013 when compared to a year earlier. Education, Public Administration, Retail and Wholesale Trades and Human Health Activities were the primary contributors to full-time employment at end November 2013. The public sector – which contributed around 26.9% of the gainfully occupied population – expanded by 3.4% to reach 42,345 over the year to November 2013. The increase reflected primarily new recruits in the Education and Human Health activities. Employment in the private sector, at 73.1% of the gainfully occupied population, grew by 3.1% primarily due to gains in the services sector. In particular, additions were reported within the Buildings and Landscape activities, Office Administration, Computer Programming and Consultancy, Activities of Head Office and Management Consultancy Activities.



The major contributor to employment growth was increased female participation in the labour market, with female employment increasing by 6% over the year to November 2013 and reached 56,351 persons. This group made up 35.8% of the gainfully occupied population. Female employment was noticeable through increased employment in the following sectors: education, retail trade, human health activities and public administration services. The employment rate for women continued to improve and was reported at 40% in November 2013 from 37.6% a year earlier. Male employment stood at 101,265 persons or up by 1,669 persons, with the male employment rate at 69.2% at end November 2013 (November 2012: 67.9%).

Part-time Employment

In November 2013, total part-time employment amounted to 57,699 persons representing an increase of 4.2% over end November 2013. During the same period, those registered as part-time primary job holders amounted to 33,447 persons, an increase of 5% on the previous year. Those with a part-time job in addition to their full-time job amounted to 24,252 persons (November 2012: 23,555 persons). Overall, the increase in part-time employment emanated from the female cohort of the labour force.

Unemployment

The registered unemployed population as at end December 2013 stood at 7,401 persons (Table 1), up by 590 over a twelve month period. Registered unemployment in Malta increased by 574 persons to reach the figure of 6,672 persons; in Gozo, the number of registered unemployed totalled 729 persons at end December 2013 (Table 2), up from 713 in the previous year. The registered unemployed population was primarily opting for elementary occupations though there were more jobseekers looking for jobs in skilled and highly skilled jobs than a year before. The unemployment rate at end November 2013 stood at 4.6% (latest current Gainfully Occupied Data is for November 2013), reflecting a 5.4% male unemployment rate and 3.1% female unemployment rate. Unemployment amongst youth stood at 6.3% in November 2013, unchanged from the previous year. By duration of unemployment, those registering for work for less than 12 months represented 56.8% of the total unemployed at end November 2013.

Table 1: Total Unemployment in Malta and Gozo by Gender - Parts 1 and 2

Gender (Parts 1&2)	December 2009	December 2010	December 2011	December 2012	December 2013
Males	5,986	5,216	5,154	5,279	5,637
Females	1,694	1,390	1,433	1,532	1,764
Total	7,680	6,606	6,587	6,811	7,401

Table 2: Unemployment in Gozo – Parts 1 and 2

Gender	December 2009	December 2010	December 2011	December 2012	December 2013
Males	507	459	462	479	495
Females	294	250	241	234	234
Total	801	709	703	713	729

Table 3: Unemployment Analysed by Age Group (Parts 1 and 2)

Age Group	December 2009	December 2010	December 2011	December 2012	December 2013
16 - 19 years	701	502	487	417	409
20 - 29 years	1,785	1,488	1,427	1,408	1,504
30 - 39 years	1,656	1,427	1,422	1,503	1,610
40 - 49 years	1,689	1,434	1,383	1,364	1,529
50 years & Over	1,849	1,755	1,868	2,119	2,349

Jobseekers' Advisory Services

The Jobseekers' Advisory Services Department is committed to offer equitable access to employment opportunities in order to contribute towards the social and economic development of the community.

Registrations and Job Centre Services

As in previous years, ETC continued to improve and develop its services with the aim of reaching more clients and rendering a better service. Between January and December 2013 a total of 26,655 registrations took place. This is an average of 103 per working day. A total of 14,420 jobseekers (unique) used the registration services (parts 1, 2 or 3 of the register). 4,030 of these were new service users.

First time registration services were offered from the Valletta Access Complex. As part of the duties of the registration officers, there is the re-issue of cards which are damaged or have been lost/stolen. In 2013 a total of 1,276 cards were re-issued. In December 2013, first time registration services offered from this complex were temporarily moved to the Valletta Job Centre due to works which needed to be carried out there.

Information sessions were held in a number of ETC outposts. Those organised at the Valletta Access premises included presentations to jobseekers about the courses offered by the Directorate for Lifelong Learning and presentations to students following the first-ever course held jointly between the Institute of Tourism Studies, Malta Enterprise and ETC.

In line with the strategy of the Ministry for the Family and Social Solidarity, the Corporation took active measures to assist persons at risk of poverty. The Cottonera Job Centre participated in a pilot project entitled '*Ninghaqdu kontra l-faqar campaign*' involving a consultation process with various stakeholders. ETC officials identified clients who were interested in forming cooperatives. The Cottonera job centre was also involved in facilitating the coordination of a number of courses within the Cottonera Access Complex. These courses included ECDL and basic computer courses offered by the Directorate for Lifelong Learning.

In 2013, Job Seekers Advisory Services continued to be offered through the Qawra Job Centre. Towards the end of the year, the services started to be offered through new premises that now guaranteed clients more privacy and space. Moreover an additional Employment Advisor was detailed to work at this outpost. This helped to increase the efficiency with which clients are offered a service. Staff at the Qawra Job Centre in collaboration with staff from Qawra Access and the Life Long Learning Directorate organized training programmes at Qawra Access Training Centre. The training programmes were free of charge for persons who receive social benefits. From its end ETC advertised these learning opportunities through the registration chit messaging system and authorities from the Qawra Access advertised the programmes through the local media and the Qawra Access Facebook page and website. A total of 150 registrants applied to participate in these training programmes. Training was offered in the following areas - Customer Care, Internet Awareness, ECDL Part 1, Spanish, English, German, Maltese as a foreign language, Photoshop, and Understanding Child Development.

Personal Action Planning

Between January and end December 2013 a total of 2,450 new personal action plans were developed between the ETC employment advisors and registering jobseekers in Malta and Gozo. In addition to these, 19,515 personal action plan reviews and follow-ups were also carried out. Through these action plans and also through other interview exercises organized during the year a total of 9,502 persons were referred for training.

Between January and December 2013 a total of 1,100 jobseekers, most of whom were long-term unemployed, participated in the Community Work Scheme.

Setting up of a Competency Framework for Employment Advisors

The Corporation, in collaboration with the University of Malta, undertook a project to examine the service level that ETC Employment Advisors were providing to our clients with a view to setting service standards and a relevant competency framework for Employment Advisors working with the Corporation. In the first quarter of 2013 the University of Malta conducted internal research aimed at:

- 1) Defining the service offered by Employment Advisors and Job Centre Clerks;
- 2) Defining the role of the employment advisor within such a service; and
- 3) Identifying the core competencies for a person to be able to carry out such a role.

A number of knowledge and skill areas required by Employment Advisors and registration clerks in order to provide a better service to jobseekers were identified. The information gathered was and will be used by the Corporation to fill skills gaps on the part of its employment advisors through training and information sessions.

Staff members within the Jobseekers' Advisory Unit attended a number of initiatives as part of their professional development. Internal training focused on the services that an occupational therapist can provide to ETC about its clients, the registration procedures, training for EURES frontliners, disability awareness training and data protection.

In addition to such internal training, a number of initiatives were undertaken to promote the professional development of staff at the Jobseekers' Advisory Department. These included talks by competent personnel on MCAST qualifications towards employment, probation services, the needs of LGBT clients, emotional intelligence at work, integration and cultural awareness of third-country nationals, cross-cultural differences and competencies, employment opportunities in the financial sector, time and stress management. Meetings were held with Appogg regarding joint case handling, with officials from the Ministry for the Family and Social Solidarity about how to jointly combat poverty and social exclusion, and with the Malta Tourism Authority about the skills needed to work in the hospitality and tourism industry.

Pilot Project for the Merging of the Previous Supported Employment Caseloads

Following the pilot project which was launched towards the end of 2012 in order to test the mainstreaming of disadvantaged clients of the Supported Employment Section, it was decided that disadvantaged jobseekers are given a better service by ETC if they are specifically catered for by one particular section within ETC which focuses on addressing their needs.

Measures for Young Jobseekers

Two seminars for young jobseekers were organised in 2013, one of which was organised for job seeking graduates. These seminars focused on job seeking skills. The youth section worked as a team to deliver information sessions to various colleges, participated in the Higher Secondary School Career Fair, delivered workshops to one particular college as well as to young registering jobseekers. Most workshops focused on motivation, soft skills such as communication skills, personal qualities, CV writing and interviewing skills. In some of the workshops, employers from different sectors were invited to participate in discussions with the youth and in mock interviews.



Career orientation visits, in collaboration with Heritage Malta, were organised for young registering jobseekers to create awareness of possible job opportunities in the heritage sector. Methods of non formal learning were used and jobseekers participated in a hands-on session as an introduction to heritage skills, which is a course offered by MCAST, during their first visit to Bighi. Consequently, during a follow up visit, participation in a treasure hunt at the Malta Maritime Museum helped to heighten their awareness about various jobs in museums.

Measures for Adult Jobseekers

The information sessions offered to adults in 2013 included a session for unaccompanied minor asylum seekers residing at *Dar is-Sliem* and *Dar il-Liedna*, a session on living and working conditions in Malta, a session to single parents to encourage them to find a job, a session on the community work scheme, sessions to promote job opportunities in welding, training courses offered by the Directorate for LifeLong Learning, and information sessions for those willing to work as self employed or willing to form cooperatives.

Intervention Exercises

During 2013, employment advisors were involved in a number of intervention exercises to assist persons who were about to lose their jobs. Such exercises were held at Nylon Knitting, Actavis, Baxter Ltd, Wager Logic, Northway Brokers and Arrow Pharm. A number of information sessions were also carried out for those Armed Forces of Malta personnel who were going to retire from the service.

Staff from the Corporation's Jobseekers' Advisory Services Department participated in a working group of the MFSA Educational Consultative Council. The main work of this Council in 2013 focused on the drafting of a programme for

a foundation course in financial services at level 3. Another interesting project was the drawing up of an industry wide questionnaire on a skills gap survey.

ESF3.60 – Youth Employment Programme (YEP)

The partly ESF-funded Youth Employment Programme (YEP) which was officially launched in 2009 came to an end in 2013. A lasting impact of the good practices of the YEP manifested themselves in various ways.

Nine Colleges requested ETC to hold information talks for their students regarding job seeking skills and other services such as apprenticeship schemes and courses offered by ETC. Most of the students were fifth formers who had a long history of absenteeism, were not keen to continue in education, or were not sitting for any SEC examinations. Other stakeholders, including youth groups and trainee career advisors also requested such information sessions. Information sessions on services offered to youth by ETC were also delivered to four foreign delegations.

The YEP website was kept updated regularly and hence youth continued to use the YEP website as a contact platform to send in various queries regarding employment and requests for career guidance. There were 30 requests from foreign youth wanting to come and work in Malta; 57 requests for career guidance services, summer work queries and opportunities for volunteering; and another 50 requests for information about ETC services and job search.

The YEP website network facilities Facebook and Twitter continued to garner friends: 1,148 friends on facebook and twitter followers amount to 677. In 2013, there were 82,717 visits to the YEP website with 50,304 being unique visitors.

After its termination in 2012, the Youth Employment Programme (ESF project) was nominated to participate in the EU Competition 'Regiostars 2014 – the awards for innovative projects'; however, the award went to a project from another European country.

ESF 3.114 Employment in the Social Economy Project (ESEP)

The Employment in the Social Economy Project aimed to promote an inclusive labour market by encouraging employers whose function was not a commercial one to recruit persons from disadvantaged categories and persons with disability by offering them a grant when they employ one or more persons falling under one of the disadvantaged categories eligible under the project.

In 2013, in order to further facilitate the uptake of the project, the list of eligible clients was extended. The target was to have 200 jobseekers employed as a result of the assistance provided through this Project.

ETC issued 1,600 emails to 'employers' with non-commercial activity informing them about the project. Letters were issued to those who did not receive the emails. One to one interviews were also carried out. Leaflets (printed in both Maltese and English versions) were sent to various ETC outposts, jobseekers who might be eligible for this project and all Local Councils in Malta and Gozo for them to disseminate the information.

Employment Advisors promoted the project amongst eligible jobseekers that fall under their caseload during Personal Action Plan Reviews. ETC also made use of its website, press releases and publicity on radio to further promote this project. Outreach was also facilitated by the project partners (i.e. MEUSAC and the Office for the Commissioner of Voluntary Organisations through the use of their website to further promote this project.

Despite all these efforts, there was a low demand from applicant organisations to engage prospective employees

from disadvantaged groups. Funds allocated for grants were therefore not fully utilised. Out of 27 applications, 10 were withdrawn while six were not accepted. Many of the NGOs contacted claimed that although they were interested in the project, they could not bear the costs that were not financed from ESF.

EURES Malta

The main purpose of the EURES team is to make Maltese jobseekers aware of job opportunities available in other European Union Member States. EURES also helps foreign jobseekers and employers seeking employment or employees in Malta. In 2013 the EURES team implemented several EURES-related activities. These included:

- ETC front line staff were invited to attend two EURES half day training sessions. Speakers for this activity provided the 33 ETC frontline employees that participated with information on mobility and registration rights and other matters concerning certain checks that need to be carried out.
- Introductory EURES information sessions to jobseekers were organized during the job fairs with the aim of informing the public present about EURES and its services.
- Invitations were sent to local employers to participate in various job fairs abroad. Information about these recruitment opportunities were disseminated to employers through the MEA, MHRA and the Chamber of Commerce.
- An email was sent to all University faculties inviting them to collaborate with EURES to organise information sessions for their students. The aim behind these sessions was mainly to explain the function of EURES and the services it provides. The sessions helped students in their queries with regards to job search and other issues. These information sessions were held in collaboration with the YEP programme and the EUPA.
- A stand was set up at Valletta in May 2013 on the occasion of Europe Day. Two EURES Advisors were present to provide information on EURES and its services to passers by. This event was organized in collaboration with MEUSAC.
- In May 2013, EURES also played an active role in the organization and participation of the local Employment and Training Fair. Various local and European employers, EURES Advisors, private recruitment agencies and training service providers participated in this activity. All gave detailed information and advice to clients who were seeking employment both in Malta and in other EU countries. A number of information sessions were organized on both days by various local employers.
- EURES Advisors attended the European Job Days in various countries (Brussels October 2012, Sweden Orebro and Vasteras 5/6th March 2013). During the Job Fairs the EURES Malta representative gave presentation on Living and Working in Malta. In all countries various jobseekers approached the EURES Malta stands to query about job opportunities in Malta. The jobs they queried varied from one country to another.
- EURES also participated in the MCAST Fresher's Week in October 2013. During this three day event the EURES Advisors met with MCAST students who wished to know more about the EURES services or who are considering furthering their careers in other EU countries.
- EURES once again participated in the University of Malta Careers Convention which was held at the University Campus in November 2013. EURES Advisers manned the stand where they handled various queries from both Maltese and foreign students in relation to EURES.
- The EURES Facebook page has continued to be one of EURES Malta's main query and outreach tools. The page now has over 2000 likes.

- The 'Living and Working in Malta' and the 'Labour Market Information' documents have been updated and submitted to the EU Commission. Moreover, they were uploaded on the EURES portal and will be beneficial and useful to those individuals who are considering to moving to Malta since it gives broad information on every aspect of moving to another country.

Such events and activities were possible through the funds received from EURESco within the European Commission.

Employers' Services

Vacancies and Placements

In 2013, a total of 15,683 job vacancies were notified to ETC in Malta (14,791) and Gozo (892). This is the highest number of vacancies ever received. 13,627 of the total vacancies originated from the private sector. Submissions were then made by the Key Account Executives and also by Employment Advisors to potential employers and a total of 4,979 placements were made. This consists of 2,577 men and 2,402 women who were assisted to find employment (Table 4).

2,056 vacancies were received from public sector entities of which 1,529 were filled. Placements in the private sector amounted to 3,450. This shows a higher success rate for ETC in filling vacancies in the public sector.

Table 4: Vacancies and placements							
	Jan - Dec						
Placement Services	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013		
					Total	Malta	Gozo
Job Vacancies	7,791	9,477	13,653	14,234	15,683	14,791	892
Submissions	58,234	71,195	65,806	176,496	256,693	255,198	1,495
Placements	4,027	4,043	3,428	4,298	4,979	4,899	80
Placement to Vacancies Ratio	52%	43%	25%	30%	32%		
Placements in the Private Sector	2,893	2,426	2,229	2,990	3,450		
Placements in the Public Sector	1,134	1,617	1,199	1,308	1,529		

As from 2013, the Employers' Direct Department, apart from receiving and processing applications for employment licences for the employment of third-country nationals, was proactive in assisting those employers that applied to employ foreigners by referring to them details of Maltese and EU nationals who could fill their vacancies.

Employment Licences Unit

In 2013, ETC continued to process applications for the issue of employment licences to third-country nationals.

Employment licences were primarily issued to third-country nationals for occupations in construction, care, cleaning and hospitality.

The largest number of third-country nationals working in Malta come from the following the Philippines, Serbia, Eritrea, China and Somalia.

It is worth noting from Table 5 that the number of third-country nationals working in Malta in December 2013 amounted to 6,316.

Table 5: Full-time employed third-country nationals

Full-time employed third-country nationals	Men	Women	Grand Total
Freedom of movement up to 21 years of age	34	28	62
Freedom of movement by marriage	855	529	1,384
Asylum seekers	342	38	380
Refugees	59	13	72
Persons granted subsidiary protection	136	12	148
Persons granted temporary humanitarian protection	137	8	145
Long-term residents	134	62	196
Third-country nationals	2,198	1,731	3,929
Grand Total	3,895	2,421	6,316

Residence Permits

The Department for Citizenship and Expatriate Affairs started issuing residence cards to EU nationals and request that biometric details are captured for such cards. In view of the fact that their workload has increased considerably, an agreement was reached between ETC and the Department for Citizenship and Expatriate Affairs to facilitate applications by employers whereby ETC was asked to accept residence permits which are valid even on different employers and with less than 6 weeks validity. The applicant must ensure that the permission to stay in Malta does not expire.



Implementation of EU Project: IF13-2011

ETC has been awarded co-funding for the EU project 13-2011. The project targeted 50 ETC front liners that had to be trained on Intercultural Competence and Integration of Third-Country Nationals. A representative from the International Organisation for Migration in Rome provided this training. In addition to such training, 6 ETC employees participated in a 'Train the Trainer' course to be able to provide training to new recruits within their department.

Incomplete Applications

Documents containing missing information were being sent back again to the client rather than having ELU staff chasing endlessly for these documents. This caused an improvement in the quality of applications received as our clients have become more attentive when submitting applications and the number of missing documents has decreased throughout the year.

Appointments for Holders of THP/SP/REF

Holders of THP/SP/REF status who submit payment automatically with an application were given an appointment for the next week to collect the licence without ETC having to separately notify each client that the licence is ready for collection. At one point, these licences were also collected at our reception desk to avoid unnecessary queuing.

Training Services

Apprenticeship Schemes

The apprenticeship framework consists of on-the-job and off-the-job training, which is undoubtedly beneficial for both apprentices and employers. This is normally referred to as the dual system of vocational training, which is very effective in terms of preparing youngsters for the labour market and in providing a pool of qualified workers. Making VET more attractive is a European policy objective and the European Commission is continuously stressing the value of Vocational Education Training (VET) for youth employment and economic competitiveness. A range of policy documents, particularly the Youth Guarantee, call for the expansion of apprenticeship programmes. To support these efforts within the specific country contexts, the European Commission launched a European Alliance for Apprenticeships in July 2013.

In 2013, there were 245 new participants starting apprenticeship programmes in 27 subjects.



The total number of active apprentices in 2013 stood at 568 - 389 of whom were following an apprenticeship under the Technician Apprenticeship Scheme, while 179 were participating in the Extended Skill Training Scheme. On-the-job training provision currently involves 280 employers, 90% of whom hail from the Private Sector. To ensure good quality training at the employer's establishment and at VET Institutes, ETC officials carried out a total of 603 monitoring visits, 409 visits at the employer's establishment and 194 at the VET Institutes.

Trade Testing

The Corporation's trade testing system was made up of 55 Trade Testing Boards in 52 different occupations, and 140 Board Members. The Trade Testing system was set up by the Corporation since its inception in 1990. It caters for individuals who wish to validate their prior learning through a formal certificate which is recognised by the labour market. The Corporation has over the years invested and developed trade testing into the present day professional system which is reputed, highly regarded and appreciated. There are presently three levels of accreditation, that of Operative, Craftsmanship and Technician.

Trade Testing is also a standard and integral component of Apprenticeships, where apprentices and trainees who complete their training are evaluated professionally through the Trade Testing System. Successful Apprentices are awarded the prestigious Journeyman's Certificate. Other non-apprentice trainees who are successful in their Trade Tests are awarded a Certificate of Competence. Following the legal notices issued in September 2012 that govern the validation of non-formal and informal learning, the validation process has been entrusted to ETC, through its trade testing system.

In 2013, there were 54 non-apprentices (normally persons in employment who wish to validate their prior learning), 130 apprentices and 110 trainees who successfully completed and passed their trade tests. A further 74 participants were assessed in childcare services by four Trade Testing Boards by the end of 2013, and results are expected in the first quarter of 2014.

Through Quality Assurance Standards, Trade Testing Boards ensure that their assessments are consistent over time, reliable, fair and valid. The system ensures that the assessment methods and instruments used are of high quality and are fit for purpose.

The Employability Programme – ESF 2.4

The Project consisted of a number of training initiatives aimed at assisting jobseekers, both inactive and employed who needed to learn new skills or upgrade their existing knowledge and skills. The ESF Funds allocated for this project amounted to €5,235,084. All short training courses on this project were closed on 31st December 2012. Longer courses in Childcare and Entrepreneurship ended by the 2nd quarter of 2013. The Training Subsidy Scheme (Academic) commenced in 2011 and is still ongoing. The scheme will close on the 31st July 2014. A total of 141 individuals benefited from the scheme.

IF03-2012 – Integrating Third-Country Nationals (TCNs) in the Maltese Society

Third-Country Nationals wishing to apply for long-term residence permits are required by law to have at least an MQF Level 2 in either English or Maltese Language, whilst also successfully following a course dedicated to aspects of the Maltese culture, economy and environment within the twelve months preceding their application for such permits.

The Employment and Training Corporation is the leader of the IF03-2012 Integrating TCNs in the Maltese Society project, which as the name implies, aims to facilitate TCNs' integration in the Maltese Society. The project sees the Corporation design, organise and co-ordinate the delivery of courses specifically designed to meet these needs.

The implementation of this Project will be concluded in 2014.

Enhancing Employability through Training (EET) – ESF 2.201

In 2013, the Corporation started implementing this EU co-funded project, aimed at upgrading training courses in line with the Malta Qualifications Framework, as well as improve Quality Assurance procedures and processes within the Training Services Division. Other objectives include training subsidies for accredited training delivered through recognised training institutions, a number of Traineeships based on a mix of both hands-on as well as class-based training, along with short and longer courses focused on enhancing the employability of individuals. In line with the introduction of standards in further and higher vocational education, the project also includes continued investments in the trade testing system, a quality assurance system, as well as training and programmes design to align home-grown courses with the Malta Qualifications Framework, leading to recognised accredited level-rated certificates of competence.

Entrepreneurship Programme

Through EET, the training programme for the Entrepreneurship Scheme was updated in 2013. The Corporation has teamed up with Business First (Malta Enterprise) to assist in the latter part of the training programme, which sees trainees build their business plans. Professional free services from business advisors was given to participants of this training to assist them in setting up their own business activities. On the presentation, validation and approval of Business Plans by an independent Board set up for this purpose, participants become eligible for a grant amounting to € 5,000.

A total of 13 new entrepreneurs qualified for the special grants during 2013.



Childcare Courses

Foresight and forward planning have characterised the Corporation's training function along the years. Some years ago, anticipating future demands for the service, along with the inherent need to ensure quality standards in the sector, the Corporation had introduced a new course in childcare services, accredited at MQF Level 4, which set the standards for other training institutions to follow. The programme's design is based on two very strong components, both academic as well as hands-on, under the direct supervision of suitably qualified and experienced practitioners within childcare centres. During 2013, the Corporation continued to invest into this programme, in line with local labour market needs. The academic training programme for childcare courses was further developed, updated and improved. Likewise, the practical training in the latter part of the course has been redesigned to follow the same patterns and methodology implemented with success in Apprenticeships, where Corporation officials monitor practical training for trainee progress, consistency of training outcomes, and assurance of the highest standards. On successful completion, trainees would have achieved the necessary knowledge and level of practical experience necessary to perform effectively and efficiently within the sector from their first day of employment.

Training Subsidy Scheme

The new project provides the necessary framework for persons wishing to follow recognised level-rated courses by suitably accredited institutions in subjects which are not catered for by the Corporation.

By the end of 2013, the Corporation had processed 25 applications for financial assistance by successful participants who concluded their training in such courses. A further 30 applications were under the evaluation process by the end of the year.

Similar assistance has been provided for longer academic programmes ranging from Diploma to Doctoral qualifications. The scheme was concluded by the end of 2013, with applicants currently following such training programmes in the finance, ICT and gaming sectors.

Traineeships

Traineeships are a mix of formal training in theory, hands-on training in workshops where applicable, and hands-on training in Industry. In line with the very objective of the ESF 2.201 project, placing emphasis on Enhancing Employability through Training, there is an emphasis on the hands-on aspect of training imparted directly by Industry Operators in various sectors who participate in these initiatives. Stakeholder consultation meetings are a standard component of the EET programme. By the end of 2013, in close collaboration with stakeholders, the Corporation surveyed the need and demand for Traineeships. In the first quarter of 2014, the result of the exercise will see the launch of a number of traineeships in areas identified by stakeholders through the feedback of their members.

Training Programme Design

In a bid to continue to provide high quality training which is relevant to both industry as well as individuals, the Corporation is utilising European Financial Assistance provided through EET to re-design all home-grown training courses in line with accreditation standards which ensure recognition of competence achieved within the Malta Qualifications Framework. The Training Programmes Design arm is also responsible for the research and development of new training courses to match emerging labour market needs. By the end of 2013, the Corporation submitted 44 new applications for accreditation, of which, 25 courses were accredited and a further 19 were in process at the National Commission for Further and Higher Education (NCFHE) at either MQF Level 2, 3 or 4.

Throughout the coming year, the ETC will be submitting additional home-grown courses in order to have all such courses offered through EET accredited by the NCFHE. Furthermore the Unit will be researching the development of new courses to meet labour market demands in specific industries or skills, whilst seeking to extend accessibility to continuous further and higher vocational education suited to the needs of the individuals.

Quality Assurance

The report drawn up by the European Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) emphasizes the importance of the following within an internal QA system: policy and procedures for QA, approval, monitoring and periodic review of programmes and awards, assessment of students, quality assurance of teaching staff, learning resources and student support, information systems and public information.

Although the Corporation had such systems and procedures in place, prior to ESF 2.201, there was no formal Quality Assurance set-up. EET has assisted the Corporation in the setting up of a professional Quality Assurance Team, with the objective of systematically reviewing internal quality procedures, training programmes, ensuring acceptable and consistent standards in training content, delivery and assessment methodology, and meeting the rigours set at the European regulatory level.

The NCFHE is the responsible body for the licensing of all further and higher education providers in Malta. According to Article 11 of Legal Notice 296/2012, all public further or higher education providers shall be deemed to have a licence. During this year, through the establishment of the Quality Assurance Unit, ETC underwent all the necessary compliance procedures, and was notified by NCFHE that it is licensed as a Further and Higher Education Institution. NCFHE further notified license holders, that these are required to undergo periodic external quality audits, to ensure that the established standards are maintained.

Short Courses

A major focus of the EET project is the integration of the various initiatives within the project aimed at securing delivery of formally accredited and level-rated short training programmes which not only target jobseekers and the inactive, but also persons in employment and active aging through the planning, co-ordination and delivery of such courses to the widest audience possible. In order to improve accessibility to such courses, the Corporation has extended training provision to twelve hours daily during week-days, and up to six hours on Saturdays. Furthermore, 2014 shall see such courses being distributed towards out-reach training centres, to take training closer to individuals able, interested and willing to follow such training and re-training closer to home.

Employment and Training Schemes

Employment Aid Programme

The Employment Aid Programme (EAP) which is co-financed by the European Social Fund is managed by the ETC as the Intermediary Body. This programme contributed towards the integration of disadvantaged and disabled persons in the labour market. It facilitated access to employment through financial assistance to employers and upgrades the skills of those furthest away from the labour market through work experience. For a definite period, employers received a grant equivalent to 50% of the wage costs in the case of disadvantaged persons or 75% for the first year and 60% for the subsequent second and third years (excluding NI) in the case of persons with disability. Due to the successful uptake of this Programme, in 2013, an additional €1,962,500 were allocated on this programme. This brought the total allocated budget to €14,962,500.

From the launch of the project till end December 2013, 2,540 Grant Agreements remained valid with an expected expenditure of about €13 million, of which 553 grant agreements amounting to €2.7 million were allocated to Gozo. Out of the 2,540 persons supported, 1,134 were women. In addition, 1,316 youths (15-24 years) and 203 older (55 – 64 years) unemployed or inactive persons found work with the aid of this Programme. In 2013, the retention rate of the persons engaged on the EAP remained consistent; in fact 85.6% of the participants were still in employment six months after the subsidy period.

In 2013, ETC focused on the disbursement of funds whereby more than €5.4 million have been paid. Till end 2013, disbursements of subsidies towards EAP beneficiaries reached almost €9 million, of which €1.9 million were disbursed to beneficiaries from Gozo. During this year, the Corporation reviewed its processes, enrolled staff and implemented simplifications which facilitated the successful achievement of set targets. Whilst progress in disbursement during the year under review is evident, in 2014 the Corporation intends to keep up the rhythm to ensure the disbursement of the whole approved budget.

In October 2013 ETC launched an extension to this Programme, whereby applications re-opened for a definite period for Gozo based business operations and Gozitan applicants with a view to stimulating job creation in Gozo. ETC widened the eligibility criteria in line with the Commission Regulation (EC) No 800/2008 - General Block Exemption Regulation and introduced further simplifications to reduce the administrative burden throughout the process. During the extended timeframe of applications, over 170 different Undertakings/Self-employed persons submitted more than 420 applications of which 219 were for female participants. These applications will enable the full utilization of the additional budget (€1,962,500) through the potential employment of over 350 individuals. Most of the Grant Agreements will commence on the 2nd January 2014 and will all be completed by the 31st December 2014.

Training Aid Framework

The Training Aid Framework (TAF) was a scheme which was also co-financed through the European Social Fund under Malta's Operational Programme II, *Empowering People for More Jobs and a Better Quality of Life* for the 2007-2013 programming period.

The scheme was launched in February 2009 with a total budget of €8,851,620 and was planned to terminate in December 2013. In view of the success of the scheme, the funds allocated for TAF were fully committed by mid-2012, leading to the closure of the scheme in June of that year.

The ETC received and approved a total of 4,420 applications which by far exceeded the initial target of 475. In total, out of the 4,420 approved applications, 3,871 continued to be processed and their respective Grant Agreements

were signed. Throughout the implementation of the scheme a number of de-commitments took place which further reduced these figures to 3,068 Grants with a total value of €8,739,630 as at end December 2013.

The disbursement has experienced a sharp increase in 2013 whereby a total of 1,123 claims with a total value of €2,593,764 were processed for payment, out of which 867 with a value of €1,993,142 were paid during the same period. The total value of processed claims in 2013, amount to 30% of the total eligible committed budget and was mostly processed in the second half of 2013.

This boost in the disbursement was achieved as a result of various changes in the processing of claims including: simplifications in the checks as approved by other entities; implementing checks in a more parallel rather than linear manner (such as sending the claims for second stage evaluation whilst awaiting for clarifications from beneficiary, procurement revision and mapping being conducted from separate sub-units); centralization and simplification of data collection; centralization of scanning and uploading and a significant increase in human resources. These changes were crucial for reaching the disbursement and SOE (Statement of Expenditure) targets of approximately €2 million.

In view of the experience gained, as well as the number of solutions adopted to mitigate the problems encountered, the disbursement process was proceeding much more efficiently than at the beginning of the year and despite the number of problematic claims being processed, the scheme is expected to be successfully completed in the coming months.

Inclusive Employment Services

Persons with Disabilities

During 2013, 83 persons with disability were placed in employment, while 132 were trained. Moreover, 332 clients had an appointment with the ETC Medical Officer, while 177 clients were assessed by the Occupational Therapist.

Community Inclusive Employment Scheme

This scheme was launched in 2012 with the involvement of the Corporation, who in collaboration with interested Local Councils, facilitated the application and matching of registering jobseekers with the needs of the applicant Local Councils. Twenty persons with disability were employed through this scheme on a contract of three years with payment based on the national minimum wage, worked on a pro-rata basis in accordance to the number of hours worked. Participants still retained their disability allowance, enjoyed current conditions of work and could either work on a full-time basis, or on reduced hours, or part-time basis, according to their work abilities.

ESF 3.113 Employment Support for Persons with Disabilities (ESPD)

The Employment Support for Persons with Disabilities is an ESF-funded project which contributes towards the integration of disabled persons in the labour market through the services of an Occupational Therapist and/or Occupational Psychologist. This project provides support services that include learning support assistance during training, job coaching and personal assistance allowance to employers during work exposure and/or employment.



This project is driven by the ETC's belief that the highest form of social inclusion is reached through labour market inclusion.

In 2013, the Corporation was granted permission to increase its operational capacity within the Job Bridge Programme through the employment of four additional employment support workers and one administrative clerk. It also managed to obtain funding to employ support workers to support to registered disabled persons either during training, work exposure schemes, and/or employment.

Single Assessment Procedure for Persons with Disability

At present disabled people who wish to avail themselves of various services and benefits afforded to them by the State need to register with three different entities (namely ETC, KNPD and DSS) which use different systems and different sets of criteria. In order to reduce bureaucracy and address duplication of work, it was decided that the different registers used by these entities are merged.

The new system will also be addressing a weakness in the current registration system – that of distinguishing between disabled people who have severe impairments and those whose impairments of a less serious nature. Making this distinction is crucial in eventually ensuring that resources, services and benefits allocated by the State to disabled people are availed of by those who need and deserve them most. Furthermore, the system being proposed will enable one single assessment procedure to be put in place, which would replace the various procedures currently being used by the DSS, ETC and KNPD vis-a-vis the different benefits that disabled people may be entitled to.

Thus a working group headed by the Department of Social Security, in which ETC was a participant, was set up to propose changes to the current system of registration of disabled persons by merging the three different registers held by these entities into one register. By the end of 2013 the working group was able to conclude Phase I – the production of a single application and medical form and also map out how the new system will work. Phase II will now be the revision of the invalidity and disability pension system. This is set to be concluded in 2014.

Activities in Relation of Former CCF Inmates and Substance Abusers

In 2013, 21 from the most vulnerable groups of jobseekers were placed in employment, while 10 from the same group attended training programmes.

Advisory Drug Misuse Board

Registered jobseekers that are on a daily methadone treatment are referred to this Board. The Board made up from the Detox Medical Officer, the Assistant Director of Social Security Department and an ETC Employment Advisor, decides on whether these jobseekers are fit for employment. Furthermore, if jobseekers are certified fit for work the Board sets up a personal action plan for them to follow. Those who are certified unfit are referred to the Department of Social Security. During 2013, 34 jobseekers were called in for an interview by the Advisory Drug Misuse Board.

Interviews Carried out at the Detox Centre and the CCF

In 2013, ETC provided a monthly outreach service at the Detox Centre. Social workers situated at the Detox Centre refer interested clients for this service. The service consists of individual assessment, career exploration,

skills identification and referrals to a work exposure scheme. A total number of 38 former substance abusers on methadone treatment benefited from this service.

During the same year collaboration between the ETC and the CCF continued to be strengthened. Over the past year, 30 CCF inmates who were nearing the end of their prison sentence were profiled and given information about ETC services. These activities were carried out at the CCF.

Cooperation Agreements

During 2013 Cooperation agreements signed with Caritas Malta, Oasi Foundation, Richmond Foundation and Inspire resulted in the referral of 192 jobseekers for different services including placement services as shown in Table 6 below.

Table 6: ETC cooperation agreements with NGOs			
Cooperation Agreements	Client Groups	Training	Placements
Inspire	RDPs	25	4
Richmond Foundation	RDPs	15	4
Caritas Malta	Former Substance Abusers	126	23
Oasi Foundation	Former Substance Abusers	26	4

Work Exposure Schemes

Bridging the Gap Scheme & Community Work Scheme

In 2013, 59 clients benefited from the Bridging the Gap Scheme. Out of these, 36 were Registered Disabled Persons (RDPs), while the other 23 were clients from other vulnerable groups. Monitoring visits for clients who were following the Bridging the Gap Scheme were carried out to ensure that the scope of the scheme is being reached. Throughout the past year, 40 'special cases' jobseekers and 84 RDPs were placed on the Community Work Scheme.

Job Bridge Programme

The Programme aims to prepare young persons with an intellectual disability for active participation in the labour market and sustain each young person's informed choice, potential and support needs. It provides work preparedness skills training to assist these young individuals in building their competence to integrate in an effective manner in the labour market through the Supported Employment method.

The programme started in February 2013 and will end in January 2014. A total of six participants (3 men and 3 women) participated in it, with the assistance of two supported employment officers. During the programme, participants benefited from the stipend together with the Smart Card.

During the first weeks of the programme a Vocational Profiling exercise for each and every participant took place. This allowed for the gathering of information on the participants' career aspirations. With the information collected serving as the basis, the participant and the Employment Support officer then agreed on the action plan which

needed to be taken. This included the support that the participant needed in areas like independent use of transport, employment skills, CV writing skills, job awareness and work experience placement.

During the programme, the participants also participated in several information sessions delivered by the Health & Safety Unit, Aġenzija Żgħażaġh, the Health Promotion & Disease Prevention Department, Microsoft Malta, and the Food Safety Commission.

Additionally, the participants took part in job awareness visits to a number of work establishments. Each visit was preceded by a short information session. A follow-up session was also held after each visit. Job Bridge participants were also given the opportunity to participate in different ETC in-house job tasters. This consisted of office work at the Corporation's offices at Hal Far and gardening at the Corporation's premises in Pembroke.

During the programme, participants were given the opportunity to undergo a twelve-week work experience placement. Three of the participants spent this time with a Local Council, and the other three spent this time with private sector employers. Throughout this twelve week placement, the participants were still supported by their Employment Support officer.

Following the work experience placement, participants will be placed on the Corporation's Bridging the Gap Scheme. This scheme is used to assist in the placement in the labour market of persons with disability. Whilst on the scheme participants will be receiving an allowance equivalent to 80% of the minimum wage, paid on a pro-rata basis depending on the number of hours of work.



Gozo Operations

Employment Aid Programme

Following the successful launch and take up of the previous EAP, the ETC has launched the extension of the EAP, specifically for Gozo. Over €1.9 million have been allocated for this initiative. The Scheme was launched in October 2013. The reaction from employers was very encouraging. The scheme is expected to have a positive impact on the Gozitan employment levels and the economy.

Work and Training Exposure Scheme

The ETC branch in Gozo launched another scheme called the 'Work and Training Exposure Scheme'. An information session for all Gozitan employers and self-employed individuals was held. This scheme is one of the initiatives mentioned in the Budget 2013, specifically targeting the Gozo Labour Market, with a budget allocation of €1.1 million. Through this scheme, the ETC will give the opportunity to those persons who are inactive and/or registering on Part 1, to obtain work experience in the private sector. The results of this scheme were extremely encouraging, since more than 527 trainees and 385 employers / self-employed applied and benefited from it.

ETC Board of Directors meeting in Gozo

The ETC Board of Directors held a meeting in Gozo on Friday, 11th October 2013. This meeting was also attended by the Minister for Gozo and other stakeholders like the Gozo Tourism Association, the Gozo Business Chamber, the Local Councils Association and the General Retailers and Traders Union. During this meeting the Directors had the opportunity to listen to the labour market needs of employers' associations based in Gozo and to review the activities and initiatives taken by the ETC in Gozo and outline the policies for the coming year.

Community Work Scheme

The Community Work Scheme was a very popular scheme in Gozo with 13 Local Councils and 21 NGOs participating in it. As at December 2013, the number of registrants who are participating in it was 85.

HRIU Set-Up in Gozo

In 2013, the functions of the Human Resources Information Unit (HRIU) were completely transferred to Gozo and are now being administered by the Gozo branch. In line with Government policy it is the intention of the Corporation to transfer other back office operations to Gozo, to lead by example in the creation of jobs in Gozo.

Open Days

During the year, ETC organised several Open Days and assisted different employers in the recruitment of their prospective employees.

Strategy, EU Affairs and Labour Market Intelligence

Overview of the European Semester and ETC's role in it

The Strategy, EU Affairs Department and Labour Market Intelligence Department within the Employment and Training Corporation is actively involved in the European Semester cycle. In 2010, the European Commission launched the Europe 2020 Strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. These mutually reinforcing priorities are expected to increase growth through more opportunities for employment, higher productivity and a continuous focus on social cohesion. To this effect, the European Union has set its targets which all Member States have translated into national targets to be achieved by 2020.

In this regard, the European Commission has set up the European Semester whereby each year it carries out a detailed analysis of EU Member States' programmes of economic and structural reforms and provides them with recommendations for the year. Policy advice is given to Member States before they start to finalise their draft budgets for the following year and by the end of June the European Council formally adopts the country-specific recommendations. The European Semester starts with the adoption of the Annual Growth Survey. The 2013 Annual Growth Survey priorities included:

1. Pursuing differentiated, growth-friendly fiscal consolidation;
2. Restoring lending to the economy;
3. Promoting growth and competitiveness for today and tomorrow;
4. Tackling unemployment and the social consequences of the crisis;
5. Modernising public administration.

In terms of employment, Member States concurred towards collectively aiming to reach a 75% target for employment of persons aged between 20 and 64. In order to contribute towards achieving this target, in 2010 Malta has set its national target of 62.9% employment rate by 2020. The target was established by taking into consideration Malta's national situation and its starting position. Therefore, Malta has made concentrated efforts to successfully reach this realistic target by taking up new measures whilst also continuing to build upon existing measures. In fact, the employment rate in Malta has been steadily increasing since 2009 and in 2013 the national target was not only reached but it has been exceeded, standing at 63.1% in 2012. In view of this, Malta has revised its 2020 national employment target.

In seeking to address the Country-Specific Recommendations, measures were announced in Malta's National Reform Programme in April 2013 aimed at addressing the various aspects of the Maltese economy, as well as covering the national targets progress achieved under the Europe 2020 strategy. In terms of employment, Malta has been guided by priorities aimed at:

- Taking measures to increase the employment rate of older workers;
- Ensuring concrete delivery of measures taken to increase tax compliance and fight tax evasion;
- Increasing labour market relevance of education and training to address skills gap;
- Supporting the improving of labour market participation of women.

In response to the above priorities, the Employment and Training Corporation has pursued the design, development and implementation of schemes and measures aimed at addressing such issues. The Corporation is playing a role in contributing towards achieving the aims of the "Youth on the Move" flagship initiative intended to facilitate the integration of young people into the labour market, and the "Agenda for New Skills and Jobs" flagship initiative that seeks to modernise labour markets and empower people through skills development in an effort to increase labour market participation, and improve labour market matching and

mobility. ETC is also playing a key role in enhancing the employability of jobseekers, inactive and those already in employment. ETC is also engaged in managing transitions in the labour market, particularly by facilitating access to training and in some cases by offering the opportunity to acquire job experience in various, different working environments.

The Corporation provided its feedback from an employment perspective on salient national and European matters, including those related to the National Reform Programme, the Country Specific Recommendations, active labour market policies, active inclusion, training, skills development, active ageing, youth employment, European funding mechanisms, and EURES and Mobility amongst other topics. In addition, it updated the progress and data on the measures included in the NRP through internal coordination.

Furthermore, ETC furnished Government Ministries, particularly the Ministry of Education and Employment, with its comments, reactions and analysis on documentation presented in the European Council, European Parliament, and the European Commission. It also extensively answers questionnaires relating to Public Employment Service efficiency, adjustment to the crisis strategies, anti-crisis measures, youth employment, and supply of skills by the training system. This role has intrinsically involved in-depth liaison with the Directorate for EU Affairs within the Ministry of Education and Employment, the Economic Policy Department of the Ministry of Finance, and the Permanent Representation of Malta in Brussels in relation to the various issues discussed by the Employment Committee.

Employees from the Strategy, EU Affairs and LMI Department played an active role in representing the Maltese Government on the EU Commission Employment Committee – both Core Group and Ad hoc. Committee meetings discuss important issues such as the Annual Growth Survey, the Joint Employment Report, and the Joint Assessment Framework, the social dimension of the Economic and Monetary Union, active labour market policies, participation in the labour market, and PES effectiveness and efficiency, whilst also delving into themes of the Youth Guarantee, ex-ante coordination of major economic reforms, and the involvement of social partners in employment policies.

In the follow-up to addressing the Country Specific Recommendations (CSRs), EMCO carried out multilateral surveillance to monitor the policies and measures undertaken by Member States to implement the Europe 2020 Strategy. All CSRs addressed to Member States which cover labour market issues are reviewed throughout the annual cycle of surveillance. In this regard, in 2013 Malta was reviewed during thematic reviews on Early School Leaving, and examined other Member States on Youth Employment. Moreover, country examinations on the employment part of the NRPs take place during EMCO meetings as a final step for the Committee's preparatory work on the opinion on the Commission recommendation to the Council for Country Specific Recommendations.

During 2013, the main themes covered at EU level, which required input from the Corporation included:

Youth Guarantee

The Youth Guarantee was established as a new approach to tackle youth unemployment. The Member States endorsed the principle of the Youth Guarantee in April 2013. The main aim of the Youth Guarantee is to provide supportive measures in order to ensure that all young people up to the age of 25 years receive a good-quality offer of employment, continued education, apprenticeship or traineeship within four months of becoming unemployed or leaving formal education. The Youth Guarantee Scheme was formally adopted by all Member States on the 22nd April 2013. Member States which had an unemployment rate above 25% had to present a Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan by October 2013 whereas; countries, including Malta which had an unemployment rate of less than 25% will have to provide the implementation plan by spring 2014.



Third-Country Nationals

- *Seasonal Workers Directive*

At EU level, committees are discussing the Seasonal Workers Directive which was proposed by the Commission in July 2010. The directive on seasonal workers is mainly targeted at low-skilled migrants. Once adopted the new directive will address *'seasonal workers who retain their principal place of residence in a third-country stay legally and temporarily in the EU to carry out an activity depending on the passing of the seasons, typically in agriculture or tourism.'*

The main objective of this directive is to ensure that seasonal migrant workers enjoy equal treatment regarding work conditions, social rights and access to legal redress. This directive defines exactly what is meant by seasonal work and clarifies the role of agencies to avoid human trafficking and exploitation. Furthermore, this directive focuses on conditions of admission, procedures, renewal and extension, sanctions and compliant mechanisms, duration of stay, equal treatment and accommodation.

- *Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purpose of research, studies, pupil exchange, remunerated and unremunerated training, voluntary service and au pairing (Recast)*

The main objective of the new proposal is to support social, cultural and economic relationships between the European Union and third-countries. This is to foster the transfer of skills and know-how and to promote competitiveness. Additionally this proposal supports the objectives of the Europe 2020 Strategy and the EU Global Approach to Migration and Mobility. The setting up of a common admission procedure will secure a legal status for trainees and au-pairs and can serve as a safeguard from exploitation.

- *Proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals in the framework of an intra-corporate transfer.*

The proposal for a directive on the conditions of entry and residence on third-country nationals in the framework of an intra-corporate transfer (ICTs) is currently being discussed at EU level. Intra-corporate transferees are persons who provide services from one entity of a multinational company to another entity of the same company in a different country. The aim of this proposal is to create a European Union wide scheme to attract highly-qualified managers, specialists and trainee employees in the framework of transfers from an undertaking outside the EU to an entity of that undertaking established in a Member State. The European Council and the European Parliament conducted a first trilogue on 13 November 2012. A fifth trilogue took place on 17 December 2013. Furthermore, throughout the process the representative of the Council, the Parliament and the Commission conducted numerous technical meetings.

Free Movement of Workers

- *Proposal for a Directive on measures facilitating the exercise of rights conferred on workers in the context of freedom of movement for workers*

During the second quarter of 2013, the European Commission submitted a proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on measures facilitating the exercise of rights conferred on workers in the context of freedom of movement for workers. The Directive aims to enhance labour mobility in the EU by preventing discrimination and reducing the incidence of unfair practices migrant workers face in Europe. The proposal requires Member States to put in place measures to better apply and enforce the free movement of workers, for example through the creation of national bodies to inform EU migrant workers about their rights, the provision of redress mechanisms at national level, and the possibility for civil society organisations to engage in administrative or judicial procedures on behalf of individual workers in cases of discrimination.

Network of Heads of Public Employment Services (HoPES)

- *Proposal for a Decision of the European Parliament and of the Council on enhanced co-operation between Public Employment Services (PES)*

During the second quarter of 2013, the Commission adopted a proposal for a Decision of the European Parliament and of the Council on enhanced cooperation between Public Employment Services. This proposal, aims to strengthen cooperation between the Public Employment Services of the Member States. Strengthening cooperation between PES in the EU has been recognised as a crucial element to achieve the employment targets of the Europe 2020 Strategy. The Commission has regularly advocated for the modernisation of PES service delivery, for partnerships between PES and other employment services. Hence, the EPSCO Conclusions of 28 February 2013 called for partnerships between public and private employment services, employers, social partners and youth representatives when delivering youth guarantee schemes. Furthermore, this proposal establishes a European Network of Public Employment Services providing a platform for comparing their performance at European level, identifying good practices and fostering mutual learning in order to strengthen service capacity and efficiency. This proposal aims to expand, reinforce and consolidate on-going initiatives for the benefit of all PES. During 2013 ETC's senior management also attended and represented Malta during meetings conducted by the EU level Heads of Public Employment Service Network.

Economic and Monetary Union (EMU)

A blueprint for a deep and genuine Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) was adopted by the European Commission

on the 28th November 2012. The aim of this blueprint was to set out a vision for a strong and stable architecture for the political, fiscal and economic components of the EMU. As a result, during the second quarter of 2013 the European Council recalled that the social dimension should be strengthened. The European Council also stressed the importance of better monitoring and of taking into account of the social and labour market situation in the EMU. Furthermore, this communication noted that employment and social policies fall very largely under the national competence of the Member States. Hence, to strengthen the social dimension of the EMU, the Commission proposed a number of initiatives with particular focus on:

- Reinforced surveillance of employment and social challenges and policy coordination;
- Enhanced solidarity and action on employment and labour mobility;
- Strengthened social dialogue.

The Commission proposed a scoreboard of key indicators. The aim of this scoreboard is to serve as an analytical tool to allow better and earlier identification of major employment and social issues. To this effect, the Joint Employment Report presented in November 2013 included for the first time a scoreboard on employment and social policies.

National Strategy Documents

During 2013, ETC was requested to provide feedback on a number of salient national strategy documents, including the National Youth Employment Strategy, the Early School Leaving Strategy and the Active Ageing Strategy. It was also entrusted with the monitoring and coordination of progress achieved on budgetary measures. It liaises with the relevant departments within ETC to monitor, assess and update the measures undertaken by ETC related to youth, skills, women and the labour market, activation of long-term unemployed, activation of older workers, and employability amongst others. The Corporation updated ETC's measures listed in the National Reform Programme that address the CSRs, which include measures to increase the employment rate of older workers, ensure concrete delivery of measures taken to increase tax compliance and fight tax evasion, increase labour-market relevance of education and training to address skills gaps, and support the improving of labour market participation of women.

Labour Market Intelligence

In 2013, the Labour Market Intelligence Unit supplied ETC with regular detailed disaggregation of administrative data about the labour market which contributed to the formulation and design of policies, measures and programmes. ETC continued to improve the quality, reliability and relevance of labour market information through more detailed and in-depth reports and statistics primarily relating to the employment, unemployment, redundancies, vacancies, placements, inflows and outflows, part-time employment, unemployment among refugees, employment by nationality and occupation and employment generated in Gozo, to name a few. In addition, various research was undertaken to uncover employment bottlenecks, such as that related to the low participation rates, inactivity and unemployment rates among various disadvantaged groups. Through the detailed analysis of the composition of the domestic workforce, ETC provided the evidence-base needed for policy makers to identify the main characteristics of unemployed registrants and to design the needed tools and support to facilitate the transition to work for these jobseekers.

Monthly employment and unemployment statistics compiled by ETC were published through the National Statistics Office. The employment figures for the full time and part-time employment for the period 2008 to 2012 were revised by ETC and were subsequently published in the Gainfully Occupied Population Release of October 2013. The Labour Market Policy Database for 2013, which is a project in conjunction with the National Statistics Office aiming to produce a harmonized database among Member States, was compiled and forwarded to NSO for the eventual transmission to the EU. As from October 2013, employment by occupation is now being collected under the new ISCO 08 classification.

Law Compliance

The ETC's Law Compliance Unit (LCU) is responsible for the identification of infringements and abuses in the social system, as contemplated in the Employment and Training Services Act 1990 and in Legal Notice 110 of 1993, by taking action against:

- Jobseekers who are registering for employment whilst working;
- Employers who fail to notify ETC of a new employee, whereby employers are legally bound to fill in an ETC engagement form for their employees;
- Employers who employ minors or third-country nationals working without the necessary employment licences.

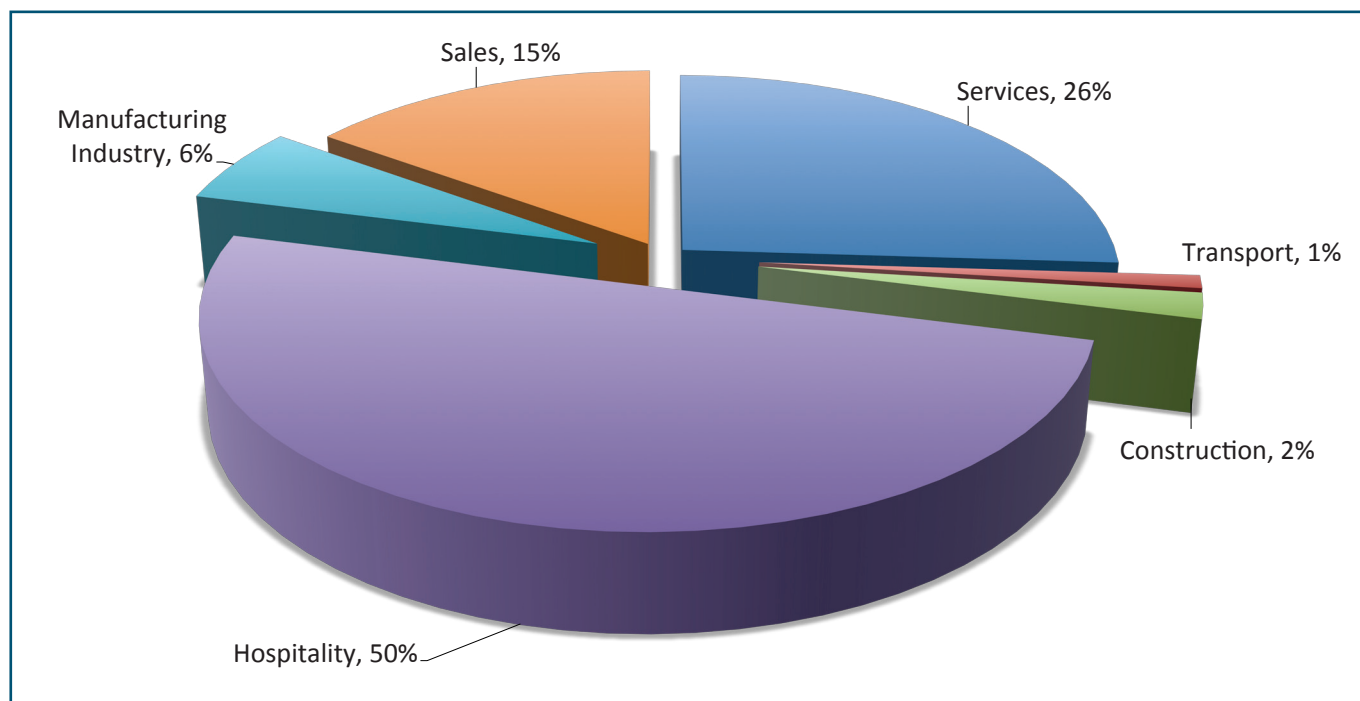
In 2013, the ETC Law Compliance Unit continued with its strategy of improving its effectiveness through more focused inspections. Between January and December 2013, a total of 4,514 inspections were carried out whereby 2,422 law infringements were identified. Most of the cases related to Maltese workers found working illegally in establishments since their employer failed to notify ETC with their respective employment. In such cases, however, ETC issued an information note to the employer whereby s/he was invited to regularize the employment of persons identified during the inspections. The Corporation believes in educating the employers in complying with the legal provisions and in fact by the end of 2013, around 715 persons had already regularised their position and thus contributed towards the increase in the gainfully occupied population figures. If, on the other hand, the employer did not abide by the provisions listed in the notification, then an administrative fine was imposed; and if the employer still did not regularize the position of irregular employees notwithstanding the notification and penalty letter, then legal action was taken against him/her. The infringements-to-interviews ratio during 2013 remained constant at 31% when compared to the performance in 2012.

Table 7: Law Compliance Data

	Oct - Sep	Oct - Dec	Jan - Dec				
	2006-7	2007-8	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Number of infringements by category							
Working and registering	197	145	171	118	108	68	40
Employment of minors	26	12	15	20	22	11	12
Employment of foreigners	302	291	365	373	261	192	130
Employment not reported to ETC	1,589	1,727	1,498	1,243	1,958	2,456	2,240
Total	2,114	2,175	2,049	1,754	2,349	2,727	2,422
Number of inspections	3,484	4,119	3,553	3,745	3,827	3,831	4,514
Number of infringements	2,114	2,175	2,049	1,754	2,349	2,727	2,422
Number of interviews	6,828	7,643	6,857	6,492	7,159	7,313	6,794
Infringements to interviews ratio	31%	28%	30%	26%	32%	31%	31%

Figure 1 illustrates the distribution of the infringements identified during 2013 by main economic sectors. One can easily identify that the highest share was registered within the hospitality sectors (which includes mainly hotels and catering establishments).

Figure 1: Infringements by Economic Sector



During 2013, a total of 11 court sittings were held during which 406 cases were presented and 245 cases were processed. Cases presented included instances of employers found employing persons illegally (including minors and non-EU nationals) and against persons who were found working and registering at the same time.

During 2013, a number of registration machines in a number of area offices around Malta experienced technical difficulties and thus required immediate attention in order not to hinder registration of jobseekers. In this regard, the services of the law compliance officers were required for a period of 120 days to register such jobseekers until the faulty machines were repaired or replaced. This resulted in less inspections being conducted during such period, hence resulting in less identified infringements. During the same period, the law compliance office was involved in a checking exercise of all the street names contained in the ETC database in order to remove any duplicate or erroneously coded names. This project was a success since over 15,000 records out of the existing 31,500 (almost 50%) were normalized.

People Management and Corporate Services

People Management

A number of recruitment drives took place during 2013 to employ new staff to work on a number of ESF projects, to replace employees who resigned from the Corporation, as well as to temporarily replace staff members who have taken up family-friendly measures.

Training for ETC employees was held in a number of areas and which training was based on outcomes resulting from staff performance appraisals. Training was varied and included advanced Maltese literacy, analytical and critical skills, basic counselling, career guidance, customer care skills, decision making skills, use of IT office packages, EU funding, fire awareness, project management and teambuilding skills. ETC is this year currently sponsoring two staff members to pursue a first degree in Youth Community Service and a Masters Degree in Performance Management and Workplace Learning.

Several databases were updated progressively and a knowledge base repository was created. These include a staff work history and qualifications achieved by all staff members built on the NVQ eight-level system.

The Policy Manual was updated and all memos issued throughout these last years have been updated. The Corporation has two manuals, one for People Management and the other for Corporate Services.

Corporate Social Responsibility and Staff Welfare

Throughout the year various fund raising events were organised. The Committee's beneficiary this year was *Dar Nazareth*.

The ETC's football results registered in the 3rd Division MESA (Malta Employees Sports Association) was a success. ETC is ranking in the third place at end of 2013.

The yearly immunization programme continued as has been done in the previous years. The objective is to safeguard the employees' health. The Corporation is also offering a full eye and eyesight test by a qualified person at the Corporation's expense for those working on Visual Display Units.

The employees annual general meeting was held in February 2013. Once again this served to increase networking amongst staff members, besides as a means of knowledge sharing of operational activities taking place at the Corporation.

Corporate Services

A number of projects were conducted throughout 2013. This also involved continuous planning and scheduling of maintenance works at the Hal Far premises and other sites. 846 tasks were performed by the ETC maintenance staff.

All library books have been inserted on the Corporation's intranet which now means easy retrieval of information and easier location of books. A number of magazine articles were also inputted. The Corporation has also embarked on organizing its archives. This has reached an advanced stage and will soon be concluded. In essence all information has been captured electronically and tracking has now been facilitated to a great amount.

The Corporate Services Manual has also been set up. This manual comprises of 96 procedures pertaining to health and safety issues, as well as other pertinent information regarding corporate services. Amongst the most important are accident/incident forms procedure, fire reporting and evacuation procedures, threatening phone calls procedure, minimum health and safety requirements at workstations, safety checklists, cleaning schedules, security policies, safety in lifts, stress and safety policy, electrical hazards identification, mechanical hazards and machine safeguarding identification at Skills Centre workshops and a safety first corporate culture policy.

Information and Communications Technology

Software Development

During the past year, major software projects were undertaken. The Corporation was highly dependent on limited skills due to the fact that its core database was implemented on an Informix server. This resulted in limited availability of resources and exorbitant maintenance costs. To reduce costs and improve the Corporation's ICT operations, it has been decided to redesign the core database and migrate it from Informix to MS SQL Server. Due to the complexity as well as the dependencies on different applications, this is being done in phases. During the past year, the first phase has been concluded. This included the data as well as applications related to employment, profiling and medical appointments.

A new HRMS system that was designed in the previous years was concluded, tested and commissioned successfully during the past year. Despite the huge impact that the implementation of such application had on the Corporation, the change-over was smooth.

The profiling system that was in use until the beginning of 2013 had a number of short-comings. As a result it has been redesigned to provide the users with the required additional functionality while making use of new technologies.

A new Intranet was designed, developed and made available for use. The plan is to utilise it not only to facilitate communication, but also to provide document repository functionalities as well as business intelligence.

During the past year, ETC felt the need to improve the testing environment. Testing lacked in all areas and as a result we have started to include more testing efforts. We procured a tool and implemented tests within the applications to improve the performance and reliability of the applications that are developed in-house.

Hardware

The Corporation needed to heavily increase its investment in the ICT hardware infrastructure. The Corporation's data centre had been pending a major overhaul for a number of years. We have been able to achieve a secure and professional data centre. While improving the main data centre we have also ensured improvements in the DR Site. These improvements included better organization of structured cabling as well as physical security. It is planned that by the end of the second quarter of 2014 the DR site will be fully functional.

During the past year, we continued to virtualize the servers to achieve improved manageability as well as redundancy and guaranteed availability of the systems themselves. The SAN was procured and implemented. This improved the storage and backup facilities of the corporate data while serving as a redundancy platform for the servers themselves. Towards the end of 2013 we managed to conclude the procurement of the Network Infrastructure via the tendering procedure.

Financial Services

Finance Unit

In 2013 the Direct Credit system has been updated to be compliant with SEPA Regulations. A total amount of 71 direct credit files has been generated which covered almost 6,600 payments while only 973 cheques have been issued.

As recommended by the National Audit Office, the Finance Unit amended the Corporation payroll schedule so that with effect from January 2014 it has become aligned to the schedule adopted for payment of general public service employees.

During 2013 the Finance Unit was involved in various ESF Projects with regard to payments of employees and other expenses. The Finance Unit has issued 94 claims for a total amount of €278,957 in respect of ESF Projects in 2013. In addition, it co-ordinated with the Planning and Priorities Co-ordination Division to attain re-imbursement for staff salaries under Technical Assistance amounting to €213,692.

A new Asset Register has been created to record all assets bought through ESF project financing to enable the Corporation to properly account for and disclose these assets in the Corporation's financial statements.

Procurement and Purchase Control

The Public Procurement and Purchase Control Unit maintained its support to other divisions within the Corporation in handling the tendering processes and in provided assistance in the formulation of tender documentation. Due consideration was given so that the administration of tendering procedures are all in line with the requirements of public procurement regulations.

During 2013, fifteen tenders co-funded by EU Funds (namely through ESF and Integration Fund projects) for the value of €876,855 were prepared by the Unit and project personnel. Out of these, nine calls for tenders (valued at €263,000) were awarded, two were cancelled, no bids were received for another two, while the submissions for a further two calls (valued at €260,000) were still being adjudicated by the end of 2013.

With regard to tenders funded by the Corporation (through National funding) eleven calls for tenders amounting to €400,880 were issued. Out of these, seven calls for tenders (valued €273,880) were awarded, one is still pending, while a further 3 tenders (valued €127,000) were still being adjudicated by the end of 2013.

During the period under review, 12 public calls for quotations were issued having an approximate value of €69,054. Out of these, 8 quotations were awarded while the remaining 4 were cancelled.

Therefore, the global value of tenders and quotations awarded during 2013 amounted to €605,934. During the period under review, the PPU also provided support to tender adjudicating committees, including preparation of relevant reports for approval by the ETC Board of Directors.

Appendices

Profile Of Trainees Attending Etc Training Programmes In Malta							
Training Programme	Total	Gender		Age Groups			
	No. Of Trainees	Males	Females	16 - 24	25 - 39	40 - 54	55 +
Care Workers							
Childcare	43	0	43	19	12	12	0
Sub Total	43	0	43	19	12	12	0
Construction							
Plastering Including Graffiato	9	9	0	1	5	3	0
Sub Total	9	9	0	1	5	3	0
Electrical							
Domestic Installations - Licence A	17	17	0	6	6	5	0
Basic Electrician's Mate (City & Guilds)	10	10	0	3	4	1	2
Sub Total	27	27	0	9	10	6	2
Health, Safety And Security							
Basic First Aid	175	74	101	38	63	63	11
First Aid	14	0	14	4	5	5	0
Health And Safety	27	21	6	3	9	11	4
Private Guards	174	130	44	41	53	64	16
Private Guards (Refresher Course)	170	145	25	9	56	79	26
Sub Total	560	370	190	95	186	222	57
Job Search							
Job Club	88	67	21	23	18	27	20
Job Search Seminar (In Maltese)	341	210	131	90	72	123	56
Job Search Seminar (In English)	37	22	15	5	25	6	1
Job Skills	193	109	84	64	45	62	22
Sub Total	659	408	251	182	160	218	99
Language And Numeracy Skills							
Effective Business Writing	14	2	12	1	7	5	1
Basic English For Foreigners	18	14	4	3	10	4	1
English Literacy - Level 1	38	33	5	11	12	12	3
English Literacy - Level 2	27	19	8	3	14	7	3
Maltese Literacy - Module 1	53	49	4	5	18	20	10
Maltese Literacy - Module 2	14	11	3	0	7	4	3
Maltese Literacy - Module 4	7	7	0	0	2	3	2
Basic Maltese For Foreigners	30	19	11	0	16	9	5
Youth Inc English - Level 1	12	7	5	12	0	0	0
Youth Inc English - Level 2	13	7	6	13	0	0	0
Youth Inc English - Level 3	26	16	10	26	0	0	0
Youth Inc English - Level 4	18	9	9	18	0	0	0
Youth Inc English - Level 6	12	7	5	12	0	0	0
Youth Inc Maltese - Level 2	8	5	3	8	0	0	0
Youth Inc Maltese - Level 3	11	5	6	11	0	0	0
Youth Inc Maltese - Level 4	9	3	6	9	0	0	0

Youth Inc Maltese - Level 5	17	10	7	17	0	0	0
Youth Inc Maltese - Level 6	16	13	3	16	0	0	0
Youth Inc Numeracy - Level 1	37	20	17	37	0	0	0
Youth Inc Numeracy - Level 2	20	13	7	20	0	0	0
Youth Inc Numeracy - Level 3	11	6	5	11	0	0	0
Youth Inc Numeracy - Level 4	6	2	4	6	0	0	0
Sub Total	417	277	140	239	86	64	28

Trades							
Carpentry & Joinery	7	7	0	2	3	1	1
Gardening & Landscaping	18	17	1	5	7	5	1
Vehicle Spray Painting	32	32	0	18	10	2	2
Sub Total	25	24	1	7	10	6	2

Malta Total	1740	1115	625	552	469	531	188
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Profile Of Trainees Attending Etc Training Programmes In Gozo

Training Programme	Total	Gender		Age Groups			
	No. Of Trainees	Males	Females	16 - 24	25 - 39	40 - 54	55 +

Electrical							
Basic Electrician's Mate	11	10	1	5	3	2	1
Sub Total	11	10	1	5	3	2	1

Health, Safety And Security							
Basic First Aid	18	7	11	6	9	2	1
First Aid	34	12	22	11	10	12	1
Health & Safety	13	13	0	5	4	4	0
Sub Total	65	32	33	22	23	18	2

Hospitality And Customer Services							
Food Handlers - Category B	45	14	31	10	17	15	3
Sub Total	45	14	31	10	17	15	3

Job Search							
Job Skills	26	18	8	17	9	0	0
Sub Total	26	18	8	17	9	0	0

Total Gozo	147	74	73	54	52	35	6
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Grand Total Malta And Gozo	1887	1189	698	606	521	566	194
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Profile Of Trainees Attending Etc Traineeship And Entrepreneurship Schemes

Scheme	Total	Gender		Age Groups			
	No. Of Trainees	Males	Females	16 - 24	25 - 39	40 - 54	55 +

Entrepreneurship Scheme							
Started Scheme	15	7	8	3	3	9	0
Mentoring	10	5	5	2	3	5	0
Completed Training	19	10	9	3	7	8	1
Presentation Of Business Plan	5	3	2	0	2	3	0
Award Of Enterprise Grant	3	0	3	1	1	1	0

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Gender		Age Groups				LTU / VLTU	Persons with Disability	Special Cases		
								Former Convicts	Former Substance Abusers	Social Cases
Males	Females	Total	16-24	25-39	40-54	55+				

Placed in Employment	2,548	2,395	4,943	2,211	1,679	813	240	37	74	21	23	8
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New Personal Action Plans	1,596	820	2,416	517	760	766	373	297	65	12	17	6
Renewed Personal Action Plans	14,696	4,819	19,515	3,525	6,616	6,532	2,842	5,387	1,790	434	645	190
Total	16,292	5,639	21,931	4,042	7,376	7,298	3,215	5,684	1,855	446	662	196

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T	1,221	698	1,919	624	531	568	196	507	88	10	4	4
T	Trained through mainstream courses											

Trained through Cooperation Agreements with NGOs	159	38	197	41	131	21	4	---	44	---	153	---
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Apprenticeship Schemes			
Technician Apprenticeship Scheme (TAS)	330	59	389
Extended Skill Training Scheme (ESTS)	136	43	179

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