



THEMATIC EVALUATION

YOUNG FARMERS

Rural Development Programme 2014-2020

February 2021



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1. Introduction

Young farmers in the agricultural sector are crucial to regenerate the sector, enhance innovation and pave the way for stronger value chains and rural prosperity. The Common Agricultural policy (CAP) of the European Union, actively supports the next generation of farmers through young farmer payments under Pillar 1 and various forms of support for young farmers under Pillar 2, in particular through Measure 6.1 which focuses specifically on the provisions of business start-up aid for young farmers. Indeed, the measure is designed to bring new skills and energy as well as a new and modern professional management to the farming sector.

The definition of 'young farmers' is provided by Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council which states that a *'young farmer is a person who is no more than 40 years of age at the moment of submitting the application, possesses adequate occupational skills and competence and is setting up for the first time in an agricultural holding as head of that holding'*. (Regulation (EU) No. 1305/2013, Article 2(f))

This Thematic Evaluation report has as its key focus the evaluation of Measure 6.1 (Young Farmers) and in doing so, also on Focus Area (FA) 2B of the Rural Development Programme (RDP) for Malta. The focus area is concerned with facilitating the entry of adequately skilled farmers into the agricultural sector and, in particular, generational renewal. **Given that this FA is chiefly addressed by Measure 6.1 of the RDP¹, the Thematic Evaluation exercise carried out in this report aims to assess the progress and effectiveness of this measure registered to date and also the focus area.**

The point of departure in fulfilling this objective involves an exploration of the local agricultural sector with a specific focus on the situation for young farmers. To this end, the following four chapters of this Thematic Evaluation report look into the existing situation for young farmers in the agricultural sector, the challenges faced by young entrepreneurs in the sector, the direction given by the National Agricultural Policy for Malta and the support provided through Measure 6.1 of the RDP when it comes to the future generation of farmers in Malta.

Based on a clear understanding of the local context, the Thematic Evaluation report proceeds to lay down the evaluation design adopted in assessing the progress and effectiveness of Measure 6.1. Chapter 6 details the methods used in the evaluation exercise whereby the evaluation has been designed in line with the *'Guidelines on the Assessment of RDP Results: How to prepare for reporting on evaluation in 2017'* issued by the European Evaluation Helpdesk for Rural Development². As advocated by the European Evaluation Helpdesk, the evaluation consists of a mixed-methods approach which ensures appropriate triangulation of different data sources. More specifically, the evaluation design consists of the following elements:

- Overview of the implementation of Measure 6.1;
- An assessment of the Business Plans and Performance Progress Reports submitted by beneficiaries;
- Telephone survey with beneficiaries of Measure 6.1;
- Interviews conducted with key stakeholders working with young farmers; and
- Structured focus groups with selected beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries.

¹ Around 82% of the total budget of Focus Area 2B are allocated to Measure 6.1 for Young Farmers.

² [Assessment of RDP Results: How to Prepare for Reporting on Evaluation in 2017 | The European Network for Rural Development \(ENRD\) \(europa.eu\)](https://ec.europa.eu/eurlpd/docs/default-source/evaluation-guidelines/guidelines-on-the-assessment-of-rdp-results-how-to-prepare-for-reporting-on-evaluation-in-2017.pdf?sfvrsn=1)

The rest of the report is structured in a manner whereby the results emerging from each method are treated in a separate chapter. Chapter 6 starts off by delving into the results emerging from the assessment of the Operations database as well as the Business Plans and Performance Progress Reports (PPRs) submitted by the beneficiaries. Chapter 7 proceeds to look into the results of the surveys with beneficiaries, followed by Chapter 8 which explores the ideas discussed during the structured focus groups organised with beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries of Measure 6.1. The interviews held with key stakeholders are discussed throughout the report and serve to validate the findings stemming from the different methods used in this evaluation. In this regard, interviews were held with representatives from the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST), Għaqda Bdiewa Attivi (GhBA), Malta Youth in Agricultural Foundation (MaYA) and Atriga Consulting Services³.

³ The representatives of each organisation were the following: Mr Malcolm Borg who is the Deputy Director at the Institute of Applied Science at MCAST and Coordinator of GhBA, Ms Jeanette Borg who is the founder of MaYA and Mr Eman Vella who is a senior consultant at Atriga Consulting Services.

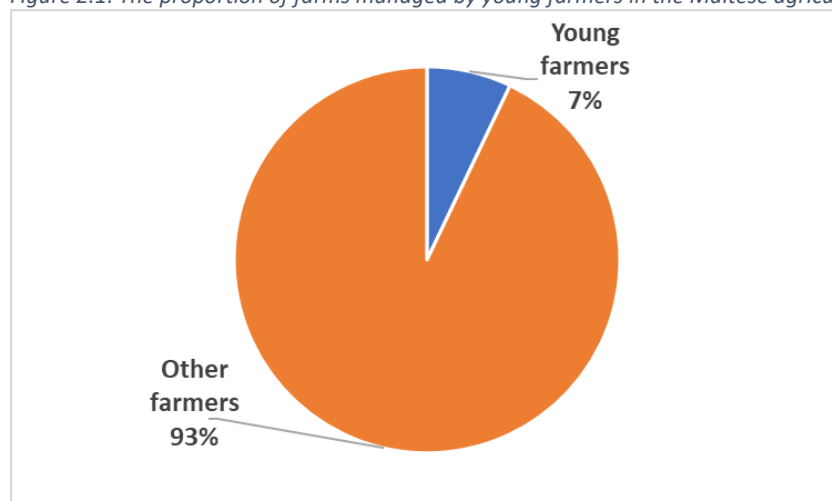
2. The Agricultural Sector and Young Farmers in Malta

In 2019, the agricultural sector in Malta produced about 0.5% of the total Gross Value Added (GVA) generated by the economy (Eurostat) and accounted for about 0.8% of the total gainfully occupied population (NSO, Registered Employment)⁴. As highlighted in the Agricultural Policy for the Maltese Islands (2018-2028), **while the sector's contribution to the Maltese economy is low, it plays a multifunctional role** ranging from food production and food security which are particularly important for an island state. The sector also plays an important role in land stewardship, environmental conservation, recreational landscape and a backdrop for the tourism industry, that go beyond the direct economic relevance.

On the basis of data from the farm structure survey (Eurostat), in 2016, there were a total of 9,310 farms of which around 660 farms were managed by young farmers (up to the age of 39)⁵, accounting for 7% of the total farms in Malta⁶. The term 'farms' refers to the agricultural holding which definition is set out in Regulation (EC) No 1166/2008. An agricultural holding is defined as 'a single unit, both technically and economically, which has a single management and which undertakes agricultural activities, as listed in Annex I of the regulation, within the economic territory of the European Union, either as its primary or secondary activity'.

As the sector continues to be faced with an ageing farming population, more emphasis is being made on the importance of young farmers entering into the agricultural sector to ensure its sustainability. The ageing farming population has a significant influence on the production of agricultural produce, succession planning, successors, and farmland usage. Given recent trends particularly in terms of increased opportunities for off-farm work, ageing farmers increasingly face problems with farmland succession. This movement away from agriculture, risks eliminating the agricultural sector in its entirety. Within this context, attempts to safeguard the agricultural sector are being made to encourage young people to enter or stay within this sector and take on an entrepreneurial role.

Figure 2.1: The proportion of farms managed by young farmers in the Maltese agriculture, 2016



Source: Eurostat

⁴ NSO News Release 116/2020, available at: [News2020_116.pdf \(gov.mt\)](#)

⁵ The age structure on farmers varies across different sources. Indeed, Eurostat investigates the structure of farms through age groups which are not compatible with the definition that is used for young farmers in the Regulation (EU) 1305/2013

⁶ As of 2016, which is the latest data available by Eurostat.

The following sub-section provides an analysis of the available data on young farmers in Malta, between 2005 and 2016, and in comparison with trends in the EU, where possible, in terms of number of farms, farm size, type of farms, standard output and level of education. The objective of this section is to provide a context for this thematic evaluation, highlighting the problems and challenges faced by young farmers. The main data sources are Eurostat, the context indicators provided by the European Commission and the CAP indicators.

2.1 Young farmers: Trends in Malta

The total number of farms in Malta has since 2010 been on the decline, falling from 12,530 to 9,310 in 2016. As indicated above, about 7% of the farms are managed by young farmers under the age of 40. For this analysis, young farmers will include farmers up to the age of 40. The age structure on farmers varies across different sources. Indeed, Eurostat investigates the structure of farms through age groups which are not compatible with the definition that is used for young farmers in the Regulation (EU) 1305/2013.

A breakdown of the age structure of farm managers by age is shown in the Table below whereby it can be observed that **the number of farms has declined across most categories from 2010 to 2016, though most strongly in absolute terms, for the age category between 45 to 54 years.**⁷

Table 2.1: Number of farms by age bracket

AGE/TIME	2005	2007	2010	2013	2016
Total	11,070	11,020	12,530	9,360	9,310
Less than 25 years	30	140	60	60	10
From 25 to 34 years	640	410	530	300	340
From 35 to 39 years	: ⁸	:	:	:	310
From 35 to 44 years	:	1,140	1,510	1,210	:
From 40 to 44 years	:	:	:	:	520
From 45 to 54 years	3,350	3,230	3,230	2,320	2,010
From 55 to 64 years	3,100	3,570	3,940	3,130	3,170
65 years or over	2,400	2,540	3,260	2,350	2,960

Source: Eurostat

The age categories have been aggregated to provide a clearer indication of developments for young farmers. As can be seen in Table 2.2 the number of young farmers, estimated as those up the age of 39 (see footnote 7), increased marginally from 590 to 660 (between 2010 and 2016) while the number of farm managers over the age of 40 have declined substantially by 3,290 or 28%. This implies that **the number of young farmers are not replacing, in a sufficient manner, the older farm workers leading to an overall decline in the size of the sector.**

Table 2.2 Number of farms (young farmers)

	2005	2007	2010	2013	2016	2016-2010	
						Absolute	%
Young Farmers	670	550	590	360	660	70	12%
Others	10,400	10,470	11,940	9,000	8,650	-3,290	-28%

⁷ The age structure on farmers varies across different data sources. Indeed, Eurostat investigates the structure of farms through age groups which are shown in Table 2.1 but which are not compatible with the definition that is used for young farmers in the Regulation (EU) 1305/2013.

⁸ ':' means data is not available

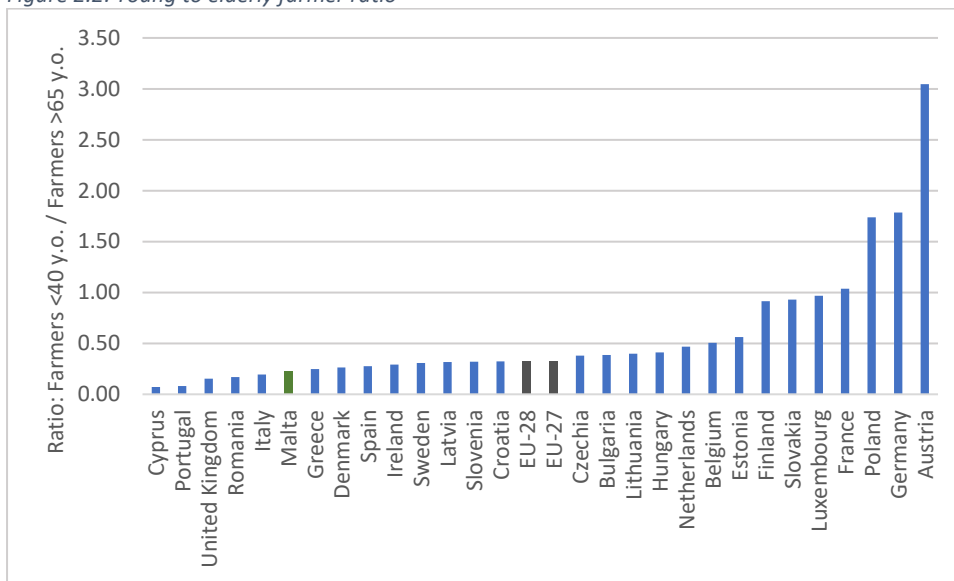
% of young farmers	6%	5%	5%	4%	7%		
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Source: Eurostat, Authors estimate

This observation is further reinforced by the context indicator⁹ for the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) which refers to the ratio of young farmers (younger than 40) to every older farmer (older than 65). In the EU, in 2016, for every 10 older farmers (over the age of 65), there were 3 young farmers (a ratio of 0.3 young to elderly farmers). In Malta, there are only 2 young farmers for every 10 older farmers.

The lowest proportion of young farmers to elderly farm managers is observed in Cyprus and Portugal in contrast to Austria and Germany (Figure 2.2).

Figure 2.2: Young to elderly farmer ratio



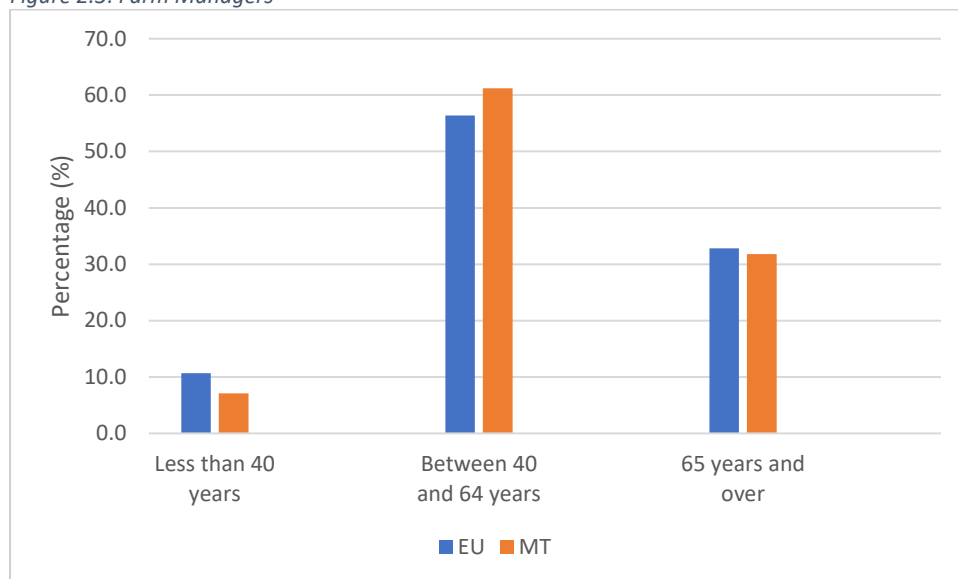
Source: CAP Indicators data

As can be seen in Figure 2.3, in both Malta and the EU, over 50% of the farmers are between the age of 40 to 64 and over 30% are over the age of 65. **In the EU, young farmers account for around 11% of the total population of farmers¹⁰ compared to 7% in Malta.**

⁹ Context indicator 23 - Age Structure of Farm Managers

¹⁰ Context indicators for 2016

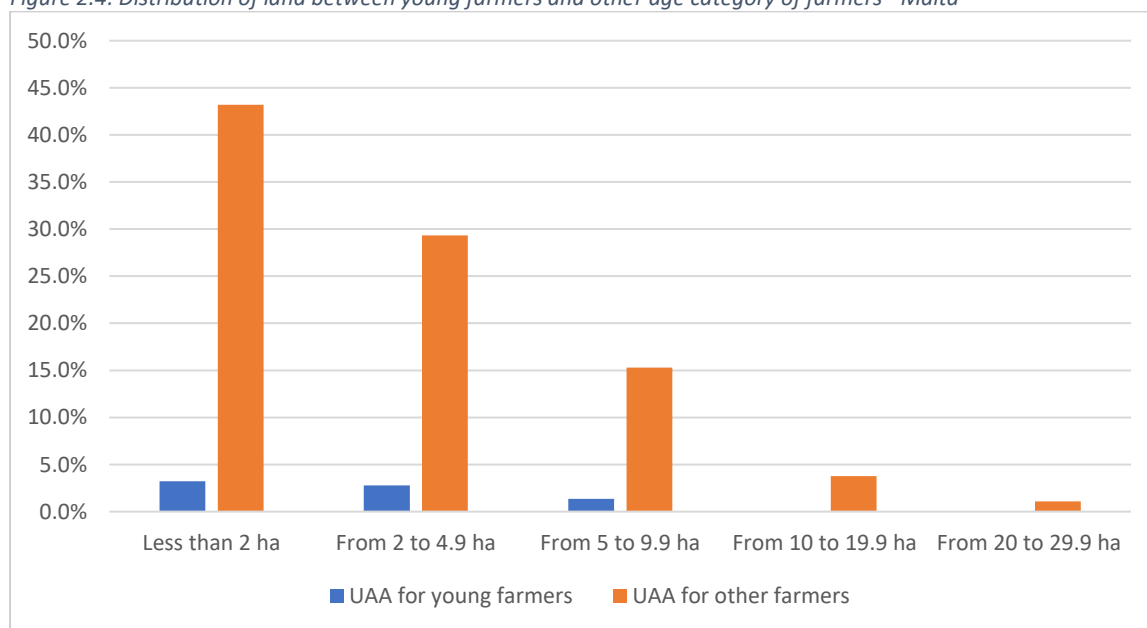
Figure 2.3: Farm Managers



Source Context Indicator (C23)

In terms of the farm area managed by young farmers, this amounted to 8% of the total Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA) in 2016. The majority of the land managed by young farmers, around 76%, is less than two hectares (ha) and only 3% of young farmers have a farm area between 5ha and 9.9ha. As depicted in Figure 2.4, **the majority of land is owned by the older generation of farmers and land which is greater than 10 hectares is managed solely by relatively older farmers.**

Figure 2.4: Distribution of land between young farmers and other age category of farmers - Malta

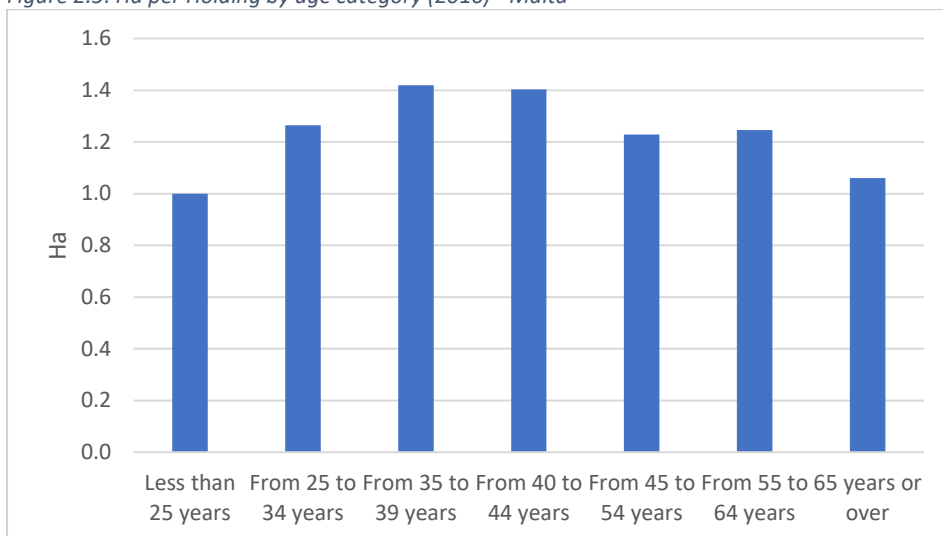


Source: Eurostat¹¹

An assessment of the size of the hectares managed by each category of farmer is shown in the Figure below whereby while the average size of land managed by farmers in Malta is relatively low averaging at about one hectare, the size of the land is in general marginally higher for younger farmers compared to relatively older ones.

¹¹ In this analysis, young farmers are considered up to the age of 45 years as Eurostat data prior to 2016 is not being captured for the bracket 35 to 39 years.

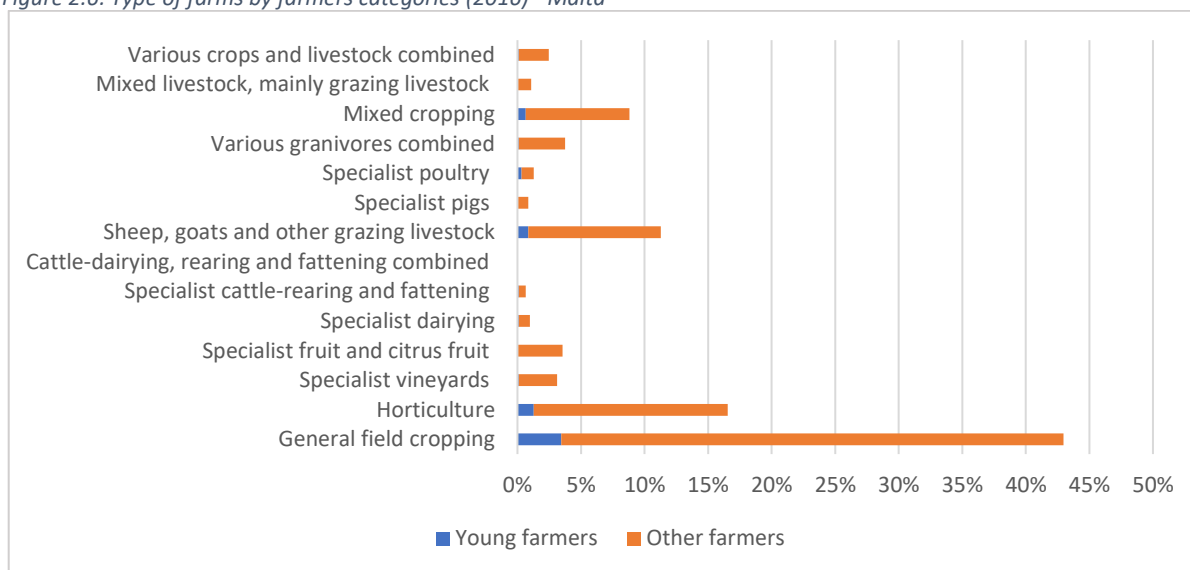
Figure 2.5: Ha per Holding by age category (2016) - Malta



Source: Eurostat¹²

Around 43% of the farms in Malta are engaged in general cropping, of which only 3% are managed by young farmers, yet this represents the highest proportion of farming activity by young farmers. Indeed 48% of the farms managed by young farmers focus on general cropping followed by 18% on horticulture.

Figure 2.6: Type of farms by farmers categories (2016) - Malta



Source: Eurostat¹³

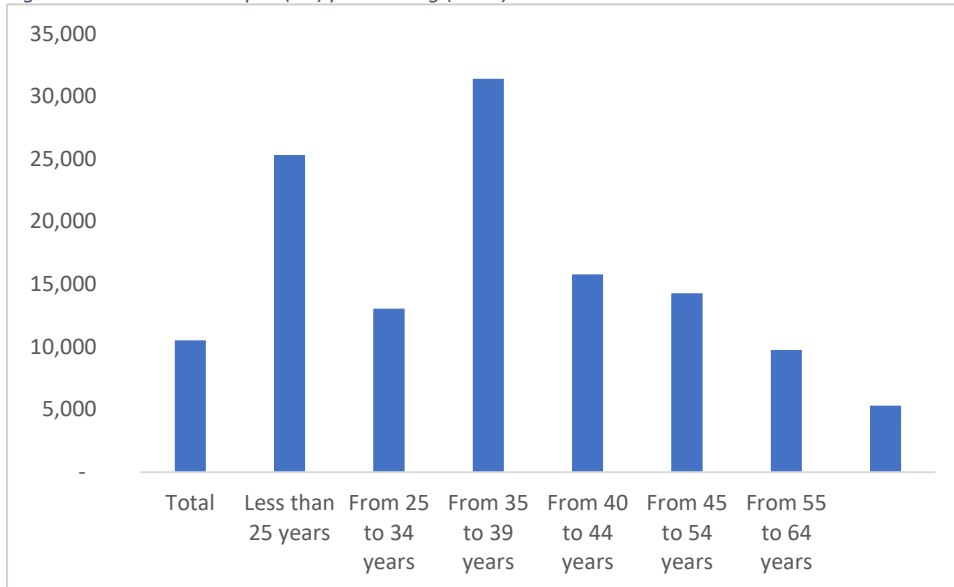
Young farmers contribute to about 15% of the total standard output produced by the sector. It is interesting to note that **the standard output per farmer is higher for young farmers than it is for the elderly farmers potentially due to more efficient techniques of production.** This is also common across Europe where young farmers tend to have larger farms.¹⁴ As shown in Figure 2.7 the standard output per holding is higher for farmers within the age category of 35 to 39.

¹² Same as footnote 6

¹³ Same as footnote 6

¹⁴ CAP Strategic Objective Brief No. 7

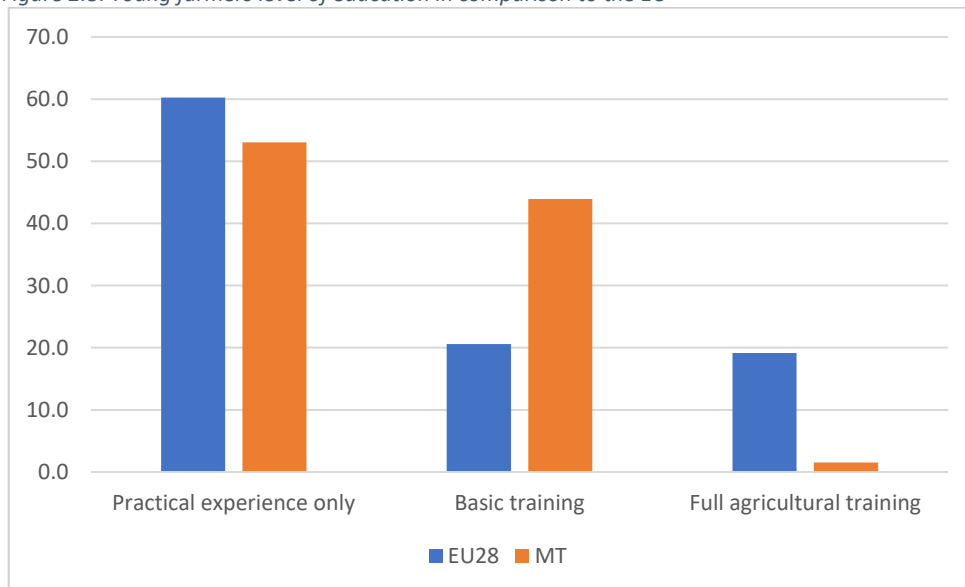
Figure 2.7: Standard Output (SO) per holding (2016) - Malta



Source: Eurostat¹⁵

Similar to the EU, the majority of Maltese young farmers have practical experience but limited training (Figure 2.8). However, **unlike the EU, the percentage of young farmers in Malta with full agricultural training is significantly low at 1.5% compared to 19.1% in the EU.** Indeed, most young farmers in Malta opt for basic training. The reason behind this low percentage could be attributed to succession without training or lack of access to relevant training needs.

Figure 2.8: Young farmers level of education in comparison to the EU



Source: Context Indicator (C24)

¹⁵ Same as footnote 6

3. Challenges Faced by Young Farmers

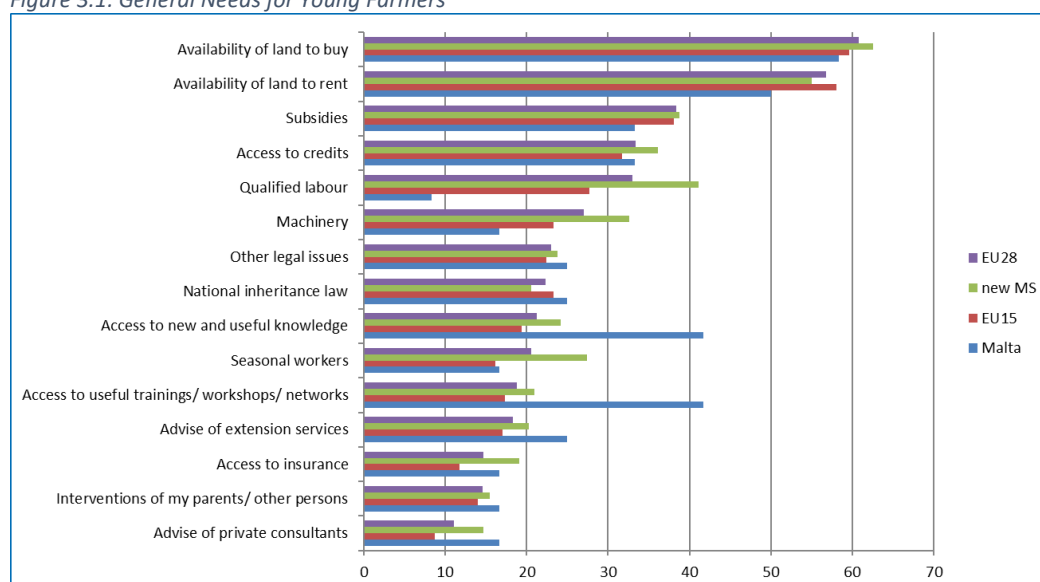
Young farmers face a wide array of barriers to engage in agricultural activity. Amongst the most pressing challenge is the availability of land for farming which tends to be scarce and costly for either purchasing or renting purposes. Fragmentation of land, difficulties in obtaining loans for business investments, problems in accessing markets and resistance from older farmers are also problems which young farmers have to deal with.

This section of the report presents the main challenges and needs identified by young farmers through the following sources:

- An overview of a study carried out by ECORYS in 2015¹⁶ which attempted to identify the needs of young farmers across the EU, including Malta's young farmers. The study was commissioned by the European Commission, Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development (DG AGRI) in order to identify the needs of young farmers and get an overview of the existing exchange schemes for young farmers to develop a guide to establish or improve exchange schemes;
- A survey conducted amongst beneficiaries of Measure 6.1 in part to reaffirm the needs of young farmers;
- Interviews with key stakeholders working with young farmers; and
- Structured focus groups with selected beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries.

In the study conducted by ECORYS a total of fifteen needs were identified, analysed for each EU country, and compared to the EU average. The results depicted in Figure 3.1 present the needs identified for young farmers in Malta which were collected through a survey¹⁷ conducted with young farmers in 2015. These results were reconfirmed through a focus group carried out with a number of representatives of agricultural organisations.

Figure 3.1: General Needs for Young Farmers



Source: ECORYS, 2015

¹⁶ Available at: [DOC 1 \(europa.eu\)](http://europa.eu)

¹⁷ In total 12 responses were collected for Malta, almost 50% of those planned.

The identified main needs for young farmers in Malta include:

1. **Availability of Land:** Similar to the needs of young farmers in Europe, the availability of land to buy or for rent is the most challenging need for young farmers in Malta. This has also been corroborated through the survey conducted specifically for this thematic evaluation as well as through the interviews and focus groups conducted as part of the methodology for this report.

On the basis of the results presented by ECORYS, more than 55% of those interviewed indicated land availability as a key challenge. This challenge is particularly pronounced in a country like Malta, which is the smallest Member State and also the most densely populated country in the EU. Indeed, as highlighted in the Agricultural Policy for the Maltese Islands, the average land holding size in Malta is extremely small especially when compared with the European average due to land scarcity, topography, dense population as well as inheritance regulations that permit land fragmentation.

The challenge of the availability and cost of land is also a dominant issue which featured in the discussions held with key stakeholders working with young farmers. It was stressed that most agricultural land is government owned and leased long term to tenants. This leaves little land available on the market which is privately owned, leading to high costs for purchasing and renting land.

Organisations that participated in the interviews for the purpose of this study, also highlighted that a distinction is to be made between young farmers who already have the agricultural land of their family as opposed to young farmers who are new entrants in the sector. Indeed, it was mentioned that Measure 6.1 has been more effective in supporting young farmers who are already in the sector through their family's participation rather than 'new' young farmers who are interested in entering the sector. This is due to the fact that eligibility for the measure required the transfer of land/farm to young farmers as part of the business plan. In other words, the measure is not deemed to be sufficient to support new entrants in acquiring the land, given that the cost of land is higher than the provision of support available through the measure. This point has also been highlighted in several focus groups undertaken in a paper published by the European Parliament which indicates that the maximum payable amount for Measure 6.1 is insufficient for the establishment of a new farming enterprise, or motivating newcomers to join the industry¹⁸.

During the interviews conducted for the purpose of this report, it was stressed that the availability of land for farmers requires effective coordination between all stakeholders, most notably government, in order to address land policy issues which incentivise the transfer of land as well as the use of abandoned land for agricultural purposes. This issue is explained in further detail in the subsequent chapter.

2. **Access to new and useful knowledge and the access to useful training/ workshops/ networks:** The second most pressing need identified by young farmers in Malta, as outlined in the ECORYS study, is access to knowledge and training, albeit it was mentioned that it is not necessarily the absence of training which is the challenge but the usefulness of training. As highlighted in the previous chapter, around 43% of young farmers in Malta have some form

¹⁸ European Parliament (2017)., 'Research for Agri Committee: Young Farmers – Policy Implementation after the 2013 CAP reform.

of basic training and only 1.5% have full agricultural training while the majority of young farmers rely on practical experience.

While general training courses are available in Malta, it was mentioned during the interviews and focus groups conducted for the purpose of this report, that the material presented in the training courses may not be fully addressing the needs of young farmers. Therefore, what is being emphasised is not the lack of training but the quality and relevance of existing training courses. This also emerged from the interview with the MCAST representative who emphasised the need for training courses to be more practical and to move away from the classroom environment which often tends to be less well-received by farmers. Young farmers in Malta need a holistic set of skills, including the development of a farm strategy, management and financial skills, networking skills and, most importantly, marketing skills. Apart from that, they also require specialised skills, such as skills related to water management skills, waste management skills and legal skills to reduce dependency on professional services, reduce costs and increase efficiency. It was also mentioned that young farmers are typically interested in digitalisation and technology and that they are working towards moving away from traditional methods and incorporating new methods and technologies in their production. The importance of IT skills was also pointed out particularly in terms of reaching a wider market outlay as well as for communicating with relevant authorities.

The timing of training courses is another challenge which limits participation. Timing must be flexible as most farmers manage the farm on their own and therefore lack the support required for them to attend training. Furthermore, the providers of the training courses must be experts with practical knowledge on the local agricultural sector and the challenges faced by the sector.

The lack of advice provided through extension services has also been identified as a need by young farmers.

3. **Market accessibility:** Other needs highlighted by Maltese farmers in the Commission's study include the need for better access to the market in terms of packaging and presenting products, marketing and placing products on the product – needs which are related to the value chain closest to the consumers. The limited number of cooperatives in Malta has been highlighted as a challenge by young farmers through the interviews and focus group conducted for the purpose of this study, as has been the excessive dependence on the middlemen particularly for the sale of crops. Indeed, it has been argued that improving skills related to management, marketing, food safety, handling of food, processing, quality, and even more specialised skills in relation to each sector (e.g. meat, apiculture, etc.) would help young farmers rely less on the middlemen and sell directly to the market.
4. **Lack of access to subsidies and credit:** Another challenge faced by young farmers is the lack of available subsidies and credit. While this challenge is to some extent addressed through Measure 6.1, the financial resources required to set up a farm and maintain a sustainable livelihood through it are sufficiently high, particularly for a young farmer. Indeed, through the Commission's study it was noted that lack of credit history and assets to secure loans is prohibitive to young farmers. As outlined in the note by the European Commission on Strategic Objective 7 of the CAP¹⁹, new entrants may face higher interest rate and low levels of profitability particularly at the beginning of setting up a business which makes it difficult

¹⁹ Source: [cap-briefs-7-structural-change_en.pdf \(europa.eu\)](https://ec.europa.eu/eip/agriculture/cap-briefs-7-structural-change_en.pdf)

for young farmers to repay loans. Across the EU, the level of liabilities for young farmers has been declining over the last decade, signalling difficulties in accessing credit markets. This situation is further exacerbated by the low level of farm capital and owned land by young farmers that can be used as collateral. Across Europe, agricultural enterprises are also less successful in their applications for finance in comparison with SMEs in other sectors.²⁰ Indeed as highlighted in a survey conducted by FI-Compass, young farmers tend to rely more on resources provided by relatives and friends than on the banking system with applications by the agricultural sector, two to three times more likely to be rejected.²¹

The implications of less credit available for young farmers is also manifested in observations highlighted from the FADN data for farmers in Europe whereby age is linked to certain economic features. On the one hand, income and average farm capital per farm are lower for the age group of farmers below 35 years old, in line with the parameters which characterise newly set-up businesses. On the other hand, the average net investment per farm decreases with the age from the group of 35-44 years and there is typically a drop in return on assets as generations pass the mid-40s mark given that older workers tend to invest less in their farms. A similar trend characterises the level of investment per farm, which also declines after this age mark is reached.²²

5. **Inheritance law and legal issues:** These issues are complex in nature and stem from policy related to inheritance and land ownership. The inheritance law in Malta is complex and influences the availability of land. It is argued that families of deceased farmers spend too much time in court to arrange the inheritance issues and as a consequence the land can remain idle for a long time. As documented in the National Agricultural Policy 2018-2028, before 2012, the inheritance law on agricultural land encouraged fragmentation of land through division between siblings as it did not allow horizontal transfer. It only allowed vertical transfer from parents to siblings. This meant that if one of the siblings wanted to transfer the land to another sibling it had to first be relinquished to the parent and the parent then transfer it to the other sibling. The problem arose if there are no sibling or no children as the land could not be transferred to another farmer. This was amended in 2012, whereby a measure of flexibility was introduced including procedures for Government land transfer. Horizontal transfer, to other farmers is also permitted as long as the recipient is a full-time farmer with a minimum annual turnover of €20,000 supported by proof of sale and from the declarations made in VAT returns (National Agricultural Policy 2018-2028). Young farmers often note that this is a stumbling block for them to enter the sector as proof cannot be provided until they have actually started working in the sector. Also it is costly for young farmers whose families do not operate within the sector and thus must purchase the agricultural land.
- 6.
7. Finally, the availability of **qualified labour and seasonal workers are less of a pressing need for young farmers in Malta but nonetheless about 10%** of the respondents in the Commissions study noted that this is a challenge. Most farmers in Malta tend to rely on family members rather than seeking labour through the labour market. This is in part due to the seasonal nature of production whereby the provision of stable employment contracts may lead to an added burden.

²⁰ SAFE data published by the European Central Bank (Data on Maltese firms is not available).

²¹ Survey on financial needs and access to finance of EU agricultural enterprises, Fi-compass, April 2019.

²² https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/food-farming-fisheries/key_policies/documents/cap-briefs-7-structural-change_en.pdf

In summary, the specific needs of young farmers in Malta relate to the availability of land and to a lack of skills which are required to ensure a competitive and sustainable business practice. These are consistent with the challenges faced by young farmers in Europe as outlined in different literature sources. It has also been reiterated in the public consultations undertaken by the Commission on modernising and simplifying the CAP, which indicates that prices and availability of land, low profitability and burdensome administrative requirements are amongst the main barriers to entry for young farmers.

4. The National Agricultural Policy for Malta

In view of the declining number of young farmers attracted to the local agricultural sector, the National Agricultural Policy for the Maltese Islands 2018-2028 put forward a series of measures that aim to alleviate this problem. Indeed, it aims to steer the agricultural sector in Malta into a more sustainable direction by providing the avenues for growth and development, whilst ensuring compliance with the Common Agricultural Policy and other pertinent regulations. One of the critical targets which is central to the vision of the National Agricultural Policy is to **facilitate the entry of young farmers by creating a cost-effective agri-business sector**.

The targets set in the National Agricultural Policy can be achieved by working towards the strategic and operational objectives illustrated in 4.1. As explained in Section 6 of this Thematic Evaluation report, **young farmers applying for support under Measure 6.1 of the RDP are proposing projects which are reflective of the strategic objectives defined by the National Agricultural Policy**, such as food presentation and labelling, competitiveness and diversification and adaptation to and mitigation of geo-climatic conditions. In particular, the fourth strategic policy objective of competitiveness and diversification includes 12 policy measures which are especially addressed towards young farmers and new farm entrepreneurs.

Figure 4.1: The Objectives and Targets forming the National Agricultural Policy



Source: National Agricultural Policy for the Maltese Islands 2018-2028

The National Agricultural Policy also acknowledges that **young people face a number of constraints in remaining or entering the agricultural sector**, principal of which is the relatively low level of income when compared with the level of commitment that is required to work in the sector. Workers in the sector also face the challenges of irregular streams of income and lack of capital to invest in modern

machinery and equipment. The Agricultural Policy highlights that these challenges are accentuating the ageing problem in the agricultural sector, thereby risking the socio-environmental fabric of rural areas. This situation coupled with the fact that the basic farming package (ex: skills, the working capital and farmland) is mostly available to young farmers from farming families, makes incentives targeting generational renewal highly critical. While encouraging generational renewal is key, it is also equally important to ensure the availability of a pool of Maltese agricultural experts who can assist young farmers, especially new entrants in the sector, in becoming more efficient and innovative.

The National Agricultural Policy investigates the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) in relation to each strategic objective with a key strength identified as **young farmers and breeders who are deemed to be more willing to conserve water and resources**. Young farmers and livestock breeders are being brought up in a situation where they face insecurity on the future of their water supply that is predominantly sourced from groundwater. As a result, they are more willing to invest in water conservation and resource efficiency.

In contrast, the Agricultural Policy considers **the lack of access of land and land tenure status as a weakness which is particularly relevant for prospective young farmers**. Another weakness identified in the SWOT exercise is the **absence of sound management structures in agricultural organisations**. The general lack of cooperation exacerbates inefficiencies and wastage of capital through duplicate investments on an individual basis. Young farmers are leaving the sector since their production capability and bargaining power are very poor. To address this issue, the Agricultural Policy promotes an effective cooperative approach which would alleviate most of the economy of scale issues faced by local farmers.

The National Agricultural Policy presents a total of 70 policy measures organised in 4 groups of operational objectives, namely economic objectives, social regeneration, resources, and governance. In relation to young farmers, **the Agricultural Policy aims to promote and support migration towards the cultivation and supply of high quality and value-added market-oriented products** to increase farm-based earnings. This economic objective can be achieved by facilitating the creation of agricultural business incubators and by enhancing Farm Support Services structures. The Agricultural Policy also emphasises **the need to develop and/or adopt new practices, business processes and smart technologies to address current and upcoming challenges faced by the agricultural sector**. This can be attained by encouraging and maximising the use of EU funds and ensuring effective and appropriate training on innovative technologies that can be used in the sector. In this manner, young farmers are able to engage in new processes and methods that allow them to facilitate labour intensity and minimise production costs.

In line with the National Agricultural Policy, the **RDP 2014-2020 provides opportunities for young farmers, who are rewarded through point systems²³, as well as incentivised directly to apply for Measure 6.1 that caters specifically for young farmers**. The measure as is explained further on allows for the provision of a 100% grant which is capped at €70,000. As part of the process of applying for support under Measure 6.1, young farmers have to go through an interview and if the farmer needs training, the farmer must attend training to enhance knowledge in a particular aspect. This helps Maltese farmers to upgrade the farming methods used and invest in innovative means to become more profitable. The creation of innovative opportunities and farming niches is a must to secure the employment of young farmers and rural entrepreneurs.

²³ For instance, Measure 4.1 'Support for Investments in Agricultural Holdings' awards a maximum of 10 points if the applicant or at least one of the farmers forming part of the PO/PG/Farmer Group is a young farmer i.e. is no more than 40 years of age at the moment of submitting the application.

In conclusion, the policies put forward by the National Agricultural Policy seek to ensure that the agricultural sector remains competitive and sustainable in the long run, thereby encouraging young farmers to view the sector as an appealing career in itself.

5. Rural Development Programme Malta (2014-2020)

As outlined in the previous chapters of this Thematic Evaluation report, young farmers face a number of barriers and challenges in entering the agricultural sector. These include difficulties in accessing land due to the high costs of either purchasing or renting, fragmentation of land, difficulties in obtaining loans for business investment through regular commercial channels and resistance from older farmers who are not open to new ideas, innovation in production and marketing, or investment in new processes²⁴. Furthermore, through discussions undertaken with representatives from the sector, the reluctance of older farmers to retire is another challenge faced by young farmers. The age gap between the young farmer and their parents is a critical factor in this regard as family members who are relatively young are unwilling to fully transfer the managerial role of the agricultural holding to their younger relatives.

Against this background, **Measure 6 of the Rural Development Programme 2014-2020 on 'Farm and Business Development'** is a key element in the strategy to encourage a more attractive, innovative, and efficient sector in the future. It has, as its main legal basis, Article 19 of Regulation (EU) No. 1305/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council on support for rural development by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD).

The Regulation provides Member States with significant flexibility for implementing the support for young farmers starting new businesses. In some countries, the support serves as a tool for facilitating farm succession or as a useful incentive for passing the farm from the older generation to young successors. In other countries, it is considered as start-up aid for new entrants to agriculture (European Parliament, 2017)

The implementation of Measure 6.1 in the Maltese RDP aims to specifically assist young farmers²⁵ setting up for the first time, who intend to engage in an agricultural activity as the main holders of a farm or land. It is to be noted that in the previous programme, no specific measures were selected for young farmers. Indeed, the ex-post evaluation of the RDP (2007-2013) noted that while some actions were put in place to stimulate the involvement of young people (e.g., rewarding young farmers with 10% extra points under measure 121), evidence suggested that this had minimal impact on initiating permanent changes and driving the sector towards a socially sustainable model. Although Malta could have implemented measures specifically targeting young farmers and early retirement of farmers, the programme did not include such targeted measures. Consequently, the introduction of Measure 6.1 in the RDP 2014-2020 has been positively received.

The measure provides business start-up support to young farmers encouraging the entry of new young farmers in the local agricultural sector, thereby **contributing directly to the aim of Focus Area 2B which is to facilitate generational renewal in the agricultural sector**. Furthermore, the intention of the measure is to provide support for young farmer start-ups which will **contribute to innovative developments** as a younger and more highly trained generation enters into the rural development sector. Therefore, this measure is also expected to contribute to the cross-cutting objective of innovation.

Within the national context, the Measure is expected to address the following needs which have been identified in the RDP:

²⁴ Source: Malta Rural Development Programme 2014-2020

²⁵ A person, who has 40 years of age or under at the moment of submitting the application and is setting up for the first time in an agricultural holding as head of the holding.

- i. Maltese quality produce: improving quality, traceability, strategic marketing, adding value, branding and promotion;
- ii. Sustainable Livestock: improving resource efficiency, competitiveness and productivity, and welfare; and
- iii. Wider rural economy and quality of life: developing rural tourism, rural skills and promoting social inclusion.

Financial support is provided in the form of a lump sum of €70,000 for each young farmer to overcome the barriers and challenges presented in section three, with 80% payable to the beneficiary upon the signing of the grant agreement while 20% is payable upon completion of the business plan by no later than a maximum five years after receipt of the funding decision. Approved operations under the measure include, amongst others, investment in harvesting and post harvesting technology, upgrading of farm facilities, investment in innovative greenhouse cultivation such as aquaponics, as well as investment in facilities to improve livestock management and production.

Implementation of the business plan must commence within **9 months** of the date of granting of support under this measure and must be implemented within a maximum period of **4 years** from the granting of support under this measure, thereby allowing sufficient time for necessary controls of business plans and final payments (normally up to 1 year).

Support under this measure is **contingent upon a Business Plan that is to be approved by the Managing Authority** and which shall contain the initial situation of the agricultural holding, milestones and targets and details of the envisaged actions. With regards to the Business Plans, during the interviews, it was pointed out that while the submission of a Business Plan is necessary in applying for support under M6.1 as it is part of the regulation, it should be complimented with complementary methods of obtaining the same type of information from young farmers, for example, through interviews with the applicants. The Business Plan should serve as a guideline for the project to happen rather than a hard-bound rule. In fact, the regulations refers to the correct implementation of the business plan rather than actual accomplishment/fulfilment of the business plan. While the plan is in itself important in establishing medium term objectives, it is based on expected results and not necessarily concrete ones. In this vein, more points should be allocated to an interview which is undertaken with applicants, as this could give better visibility of the future plans of young farmers and of the potential contribution of the proposed projects towards the vision for the agricultural sector. Nonetheless, it was also emphasised that the interview with farmers needs to be conducted in a manner which is fair and transparent, and applicants should be informed about the nature of the questions to be discussed during the interview. Farmers need to be given the possibility to explain their project in simple terms. Section 6(b) provides an overview of the Business Plans submitted by young farmers benefitting from Measure 6.1.

Furthermore, **in order to receive support under Measure 6.1, the young farmer must be in the process of applying to become the head of holding for the first time at the time of the application for support**. This implies that the young farmer must (eventually) be able to exercise effective and long-term control over the holding in terms of decisions related to management, benefits, and financial risks. In the case of natural persons, a young farmer must possess a holding or farm, a VAT number, be recognised as a farmer by JobsPlus²⁶ and if engaged in livestock farming, the young farmer must also have the necessary licences and/or permits for holding livestock. In addition, a Standard Output (SO) threshold has been established, set as part of the eligibility criteria. It was initiatively set at a minimum level of €16,000 SO per holding, while the maximum threshold was set at €25,000 SO

²⁶ JobsPlus is Malta's Public Employment Service.

per holding for all sectors. In cases where the land was not productive, the SO was estimated on the basis of the business plan. Eventually this requirement was amended in the Rural Development Programme so that threshold was revised to a minimum of €5,000 SO per holding, while the maximum threshold was set at €250,000 SO per holding.²⁷

The guidelines for the Measure refer to preference to applications which show that the young farmer submitting the application has the necessary resources to implement the project as well as applications with effective project costing proposals, to ensure the viability and added value of the proposed project. Also, proposals which include detailed information on the dissemination of the results achieved by the project and the promotion of EU funding would be given preference.

In order to **support the effective implementation of Measure 6.1, the MA made an agreement with MCAST, a leading public training and vocational institute, to facilitate participation in training particularly for applicants where a weakness in business skills was identified.** Applicants of Measure 6.1 have thus been assessed by an MCAST interviewing board who passed on their recommendations on the training needs of the applicants to the Project Selection Committee (PSC). Following the overview of the CV by the applicants and the interview, the board assessed the potential need of the applicant to attend training in (1) marketing (2) simple business management and bookkeeping and/or (3) technical aspect on his/her specific activity. Based on this assessment, the MCAST Interviewing Board determined the type of training required by the applicant, if any.

Nonetheless, it is also duly noted that the training organised for applicants of Measure 6.1 has been well-received. In most cases, the young farmers that appeared to be the most resistant to the training were actually the ones who considered it to be the most fruitful by the end of the course. This has also been corroborated by the feedback received from other stakeholders who work closely with young farmers. Indeed, in general, it was noted that beneficiaries of Measure 6.1 had quite positive feedback on the training provided, despite the fact that the training was an out-of-pocket expense. In total, from 62 beneficiaries, 29 young farmers were deemed to require the obligatory training to benefit from the measure.

Furthermore, though not obligatory¹, young farmers benefitting from support under Measure 6.1 are also encouraged to participate in general training (supported under Measure 1) on environment and climate change issues, **as well as advice** (supported under Measure 2) specific to their projects concerning environment and climate management. This will help in incorporating long-term adaptation and resilience to climate change within business plans.

The budget allocated towards Measure 6.1 in the Programme stands at €4,300,000 representing 82% of the budget allocated for Focus Area 2B (Table 5.1). In turn, Focus Area 2B is programmed to absorb about 4.2% of the programme's funds. The weight of FA 2B 'Facilitating the entry of adequately skilled farmers into the agricultural sector and, in particular, generational renewal' within rural development programmes varies substantially across Europe. Among 41 reviewed RDP documents by the European Parliament, there are 6 regions where FA 2B has a share of more than 10% of the total RDP budget, while 9 regions considered this priority to be marginal (European Parliament, 2017). The contribution of Measure 6.1 to Focus Area 2B in Malta (at 82%) compares well with the EU average which is 78%.²⁸

Table 5.1: Allocation of Expenditure in Malta RDP

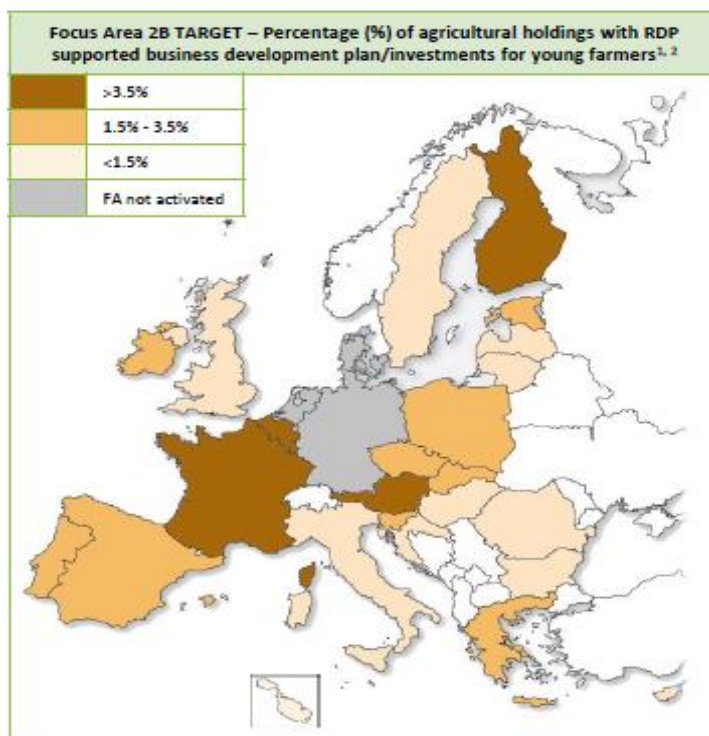
²⁷ Guidance Notes for Applications for Funding under Measure 6.1 – Business start-up aid for young farmers, Version 1.4, October 2018.

²⁸ https://enrd.ec.europa.eu/sites/enrd/files/focus-area-summary_2b.pdf

	2B: Facilitating generational renewal in the agricultural sector		
	Total Expenditure (€)	% of FA 2B	EAFRD (€)
2.2 - farm management	200,000	4%	150,000
4.1 - investments in agric holdings	759,597	14%	569,698
6.1 - business start up for young farmers	4,300,000	82%	3,225,000
Total Focus Area	5,259,597	100%	3,944,698
TOTAL RDP	124,578,429		93,433,822
Focus Area 2B/Total RDP	4.2%		

Source: Author's estimates

Figure 5.1: Focus Area 2B Target



Source: Rural Development Programmes 2014-2020: Key facts & figures FOCUS AREA 2B

Further to Measure 6.1, Measure 2.1 and Measure 4.1 have also been programmed to contribute towards Focus Areas 2B in the Maltese RDP (Table 5.1). The output expenditure target for Measure 2.1 is set at €0.2 million while that for Measure 4.1 refers to a total investment of €0.8 million. Under Focus Areas 2B, there is an additional target on the number of young farmers supported through Measure 4.1 which has been set at 10 holdings.

At an EU level, the implementation of Focus Area 2B is expected to support 176,000 young farmers for business development plan/investments (R3) through the provision of €10.4 billion (public and private) of investment and €76 million for training & skill acquisition actions. Up to 2018, the EU-28 achieved 59.5% of the target value planned for R3 by 2023.²⁹

²⁹ https://enrd.ec.europa.eu/sites/enrd/files/evaluation_publications/air2019_report_chapter_7_december2019.pdf

At a local level, the target set for the percentage of agriculture holdings with RDP supported business development plan/investment for young farmers is 0.48%, referring to a target number of beneficiaries of 60. This target is among the lowest in Europe, reflecting the expenditure allocated to FA 2B but also the size of the agricultural sector in Malta and young farmers operating within it. Other countries with a low target include UK, Romania, Croatia and Latvia (Figure 5.1).

Across Europe, most Member States/regions have been flexible in the application of eligibility criteria. For instance, the attainment of the skill requirements varies within 36 months of setting up the farm. In Malta's case, this 36 month period has been maintained. .

In some Member States/regions, there is also a differentiation in the support rate, with the criteria for such differentiation arranged according to six categories namely:

- by location, e.g., paying larger support to farms in mountain areas or in other areas with natural constraints;
- by size of the established holding, measured either in standard output or hectares;
- by production specialization (e.g., reindeers in FI1_Mainland);
- by amount of the investment – setting-up costs;
- by provision of additional jobs; and
- other, which include cases like full concentration on agriculture in Portugal.

While a well-defined business plan is obligatory, Member States/regional implementations differ in the period for which they are implemented. Nonetheless, the final instalment of the support payment is usually conditional upon the accomplishment of the business plan (European Parliament, 2017).

Most frequently, the lower and upper limits of the size of the developing business are stated in terms of Standard Output (SO), occasionally in hectares or even in number of animals. The ranges of SO values reflect the size of target farms and to some extent differences in price levels. Some Member States (BG, HR) target very small farms, while most others also consider farms ten and more times larger than the lower threshold. Austria represents an extreme case, with a range from 3 hectares up to farms worth €1.5 million.

The common condition is to become an Active Farmer, according to Article 9 of Regulation (EU) No 1307/2013 (Pillar I), within 18 months of signing the contract for the support. Usually, the activity of the farm must last at least 5 years after signing the contract for M6.1 support, although in some instances, such as in the Flanders, this period is extended to 10 years.

The implementation of the **measure in Malta registered good progress**. It was launched in April 2017 up to 2019, with the eighth call leading to a full absorption of the budget. Up to 2018, there were 25 beneficiaries. In the final call, 36 beneficiaries were approved, such that a total of 61 beneficiaries are supported, resulting in an attainment of the result target. The committed expenditure by the end of 2019 amounted to circa €4.2 million, with realised expenditure amounting to circa €3.3 million.

It is also interesting to note that there are a total of 11 beneficiaries for Measure 6.1 who have benefitted from other measures in the Programme. As expected, most of the beneficiaries have benefitted from Measure 4.1, although there are individual beneficiaries who have also benefitted from Measures 4.4, 6.4 and 19.2. Based on the assessment carried out at the end of 2020, there were 8 young farmer beneficiaries who are also benefiting from support under Measure 4.1, such that the target on the holdings, 'Nr of holdings supported for investment in agricultural holdings (support to the business plan of young farmers) (4.1)', is also almost met.

The call is currently closed, and the Managing Authority is currently assessing whether to re-launch the measure (AIR,2020), in view of the new funding allocated as part of the transitional arrangements.

6. Evaluation Methodology

This chapter articulates the approach adopted in evaluating the progress and effectiveness of Measure 6.1 for Young Farmers. The evaluation has been designed in line with the Guidelines on the 'Assessment of RDP Results: How to prepare for reporting on evaluation in 2017' and 'Assessing RDP Achievements and Impacts in 2019' issued by the European Evaluation Helpdesk for Rural Development³⁰. Against this background, the evaluation consists of a mixed-methods approach which ensures appropriate triangulation of different data sources. More specifically, the evaluation design consists of the following elements:

- an assessment of the Business Plans and Performance Progress Reports of beneficiaries;
- a telephone survey with beneficiaries of Measure 6.1;
- interviews with key stakeholders working with young farmers; and
- structured focus groups with selected beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries.

On the basis of the above methods, this Thematic Evaluation report aims to provide an insight on the effects resulting from the implementation of Measure 6.1 which supports young farmers and generational renewal. In turn, this could inform the process of developing a generational renewal strategy under the future CAP Strategic Plans (CSP).

The rest of this chapter delves into the results emerging from the assessment of the Operations database as well as the Business Plans and Performance Progress Reports (PPRs) submitted by the beneficiaries. These inputs to the evaluation methodology shed light on the effectiveness, the secondary contributions and progress of Measure 6.1. The rest of the report looks into the results of the surveys with beneficiaries and the structured focus groups. The interviews held with key stakeholders are discussed throughout the report and serve to validate the findings stemming from the different methods used in this evaluation.

³⁰ Available at: [Assessment of RDP Results: How to Prepare for Reporting on Evaluation in 2017 | The European Network for Rural Development \(ENRD\) \(europa.eu\)](https://enrd.ec.europa.eu/evaluation/publications/assessing-rdp-achievements-and-impacts-2019_en) and https://enrd.ec.europa.eu/evaluation/publications/assessing-rdp-achievements-and-impacts-2019_en

a. The Effectiveness of Measure 6.1

In total, there have been eight calls since Measure 6.1 was launched in 2017. The last call was launched in 2018 and closed in March 2019. In total, there have been 105 applications, of which 62 were approved³¹. However, there has been a withdrawal of an approved application, rendering **the total number of beneficiaries to 61**³².

Out of the 61 beneficiaries benefitting from this measure, the majority are located in Malta (50 beneficiaries) and the rest in Gozo (11 beneficiaries). As shown in Table 6.1, 20 beneficiaries, which account for 40% of the total beneficiaries in Malta, are located in the Northern District.³³

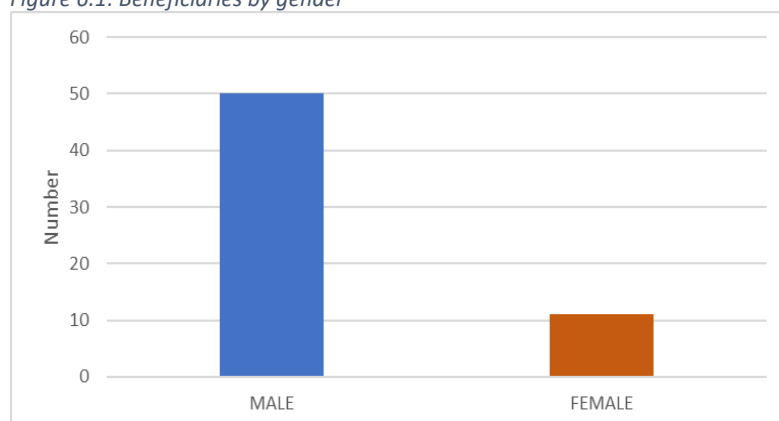
Table 6.1: Beneficiaries by region

District	Number of Beneficiaries
Gozo	11
Malta	50
Northern	20
Northern Harbour	4
Southern Harbour	4
South Eastern	5
Western	17

Source: RD Investment Data³⁴

Around 82% of these beneficiaries are male while 18% are female. In this respect, it is interesting to note that at a ratio of 18%, the proportion of female beneficiaries is higher than the ratio of total female farmers observed at a national level in 2016 which stood at 6%, implying that the measure is successful in attracting young female farmers.

Figure 6.1: Beneficiaries by gender



Source: RD Investment Data

³¹ Data is based on the RD investment data report provided by the Managing Authority (MA) on the 18th of November 2020, which is to be considered as the cut-off date for request of data. There were two applicants listed as draft but since then they were approved, as indicated by the MA.

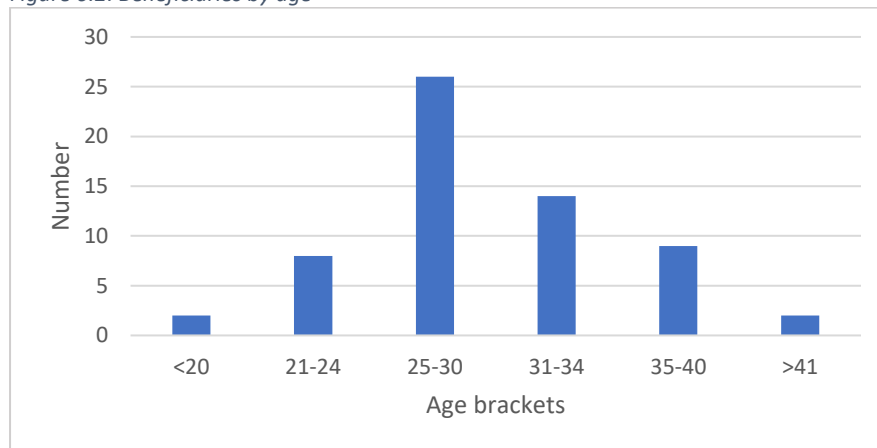
³² Refer to previous footnote. Other withdrawals after this date are not considered.

³³ This refers to the address of the BN and not necessarily the location of the holdings.

³⁴ Refer to previous footnote.

The average age of both male and female beneficiaries is of 30 years with the age distribution of the beneficiaries presented in the Figure below. Most of the beneficiaries are between the age of 25-30.³⁵ About 10 beneficiaries are under the age of 25, which doubles the complement of young farmers which were under that age category in 2016.

Figure 6.2: Beneficiaries by age



Source: RD Investment Data

As can be seen from Table 6.2, **the Measure has been successful amongst the lower age cohorts as it attracts younger farmers to set up their business and enter into the sector.** It is less successful in attracting individuals over the age of 35, who are more likely to have already set their vocational/career role.

Table 6.2: Age Distribution of Young Farmers/ Beneficiaries

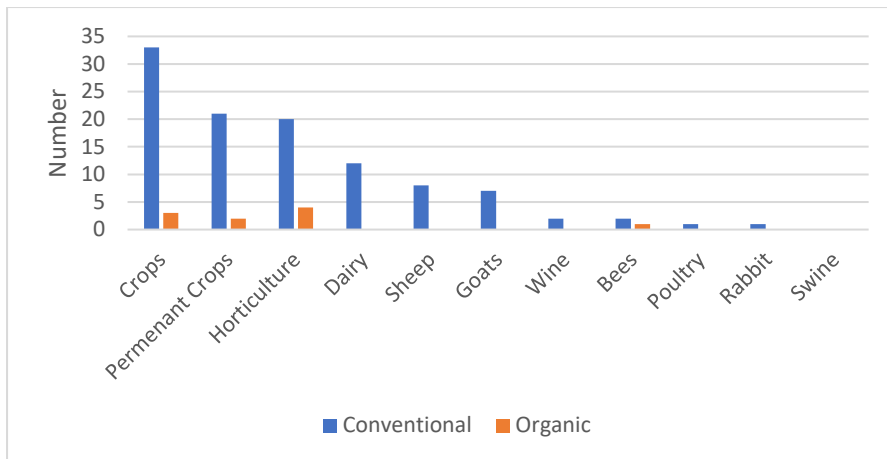
Age	Young Farmer (2016)		Beneficiaries(Measure 6.1)	
Less than 25	10	2%	10	16%
25-34	340	52%	40	66%
35-40	310	47%	11	18%
TOTAL	660	100%	61	100%

Source: RD Investment Data

In terms of the sectors in which these beneficiaries operate, **58% are within the crop sector** of whom the majority carry out their activity in a conventional manner. There are 10 beneficiaries that cultivate products through organic processes. About 36% of the beneficiaries operate in the livestock sector while 7% of the beneficiaries operate in the mixed sector.

Figure 6.3: Beneficiaries by sector

³⁵ Two beneficiaries are over the age of 41 years. However, it was confirmed by the MA that their age was below the stipulated requirement of 40 years at the time of the submitted application.



Source: RD Investment Data

As part of the application process, applicants were also asked to provide their standard output. Initially, a minimum threshold for allowing agricultural holdings access to support under Measure 6.1 was set at €16,000 SO per holding, while the maximum threshold was set at €25,000 SO per holding for all sectors. Eventually, this requirement was widened as explained in the previous chapter. As can be seen from the Table below, the minimum level of standard output for the registered beneficiaries stood at €5,240 while the maximum reached almost €250,000 close to the threshold. **The average level of standard output of the beneficiaries at €44,000 per holding is double the average standard output generated by young farmers at a national level which in 2016 stood at about €22,000.**

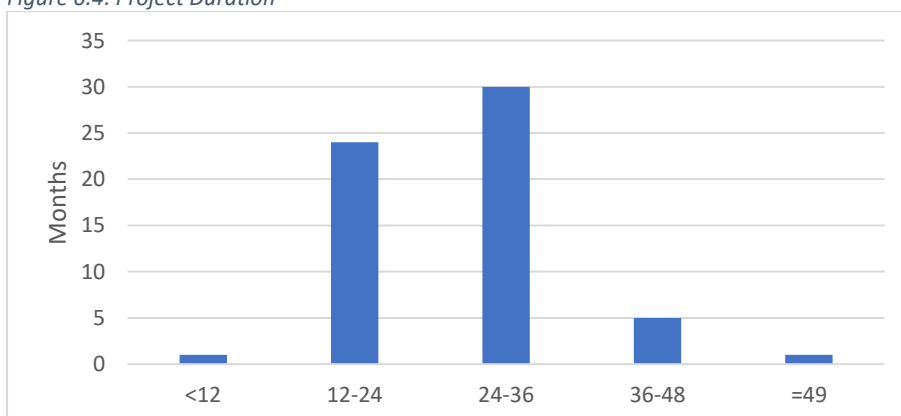
Table 6.3: Standard Output of Beneficiaries

Standard Output €	Holding Level	Livestock	Crops
Min	5,240	348	1,310
Max	245,549	245,549	140,343
Average	44,088	84,547	18,261

Source: RD Investment Data

As indicated previously, applicants were requested to present a business plan outlining the actions requiring funding for the purpose of implementation. **The approved business plans refer to projects of which the majority are expected to be undertaken mainly over a duration of between twelve to thirty-six months.** No further calls are expected to be issued since the budget allocated for this measure has been currently absorbed .

Figure 6.4: Project Duration



Source: RD Investment Data

b. Assessment of Beneficiaries' Business Plans and Performance Progress Reports

The Business Plans submitted by beneficiaries of Measure 6.1 and the Performance Progress Reports (PPRs) which are requested by the Managing Authority (MA) have been a key source of information for the Thematic Evaluation exercise. The Business Plans shed light on the nature of the proposed projects, thereby providing valuable information on the expected impact of the funds as well as the potential secondary contributions of Measure 6.1. The PPRs are designed to monitor the implementation of projects, with beneficiaries asked to include a brief description of the major achievements and progress achieved across a specific time period.

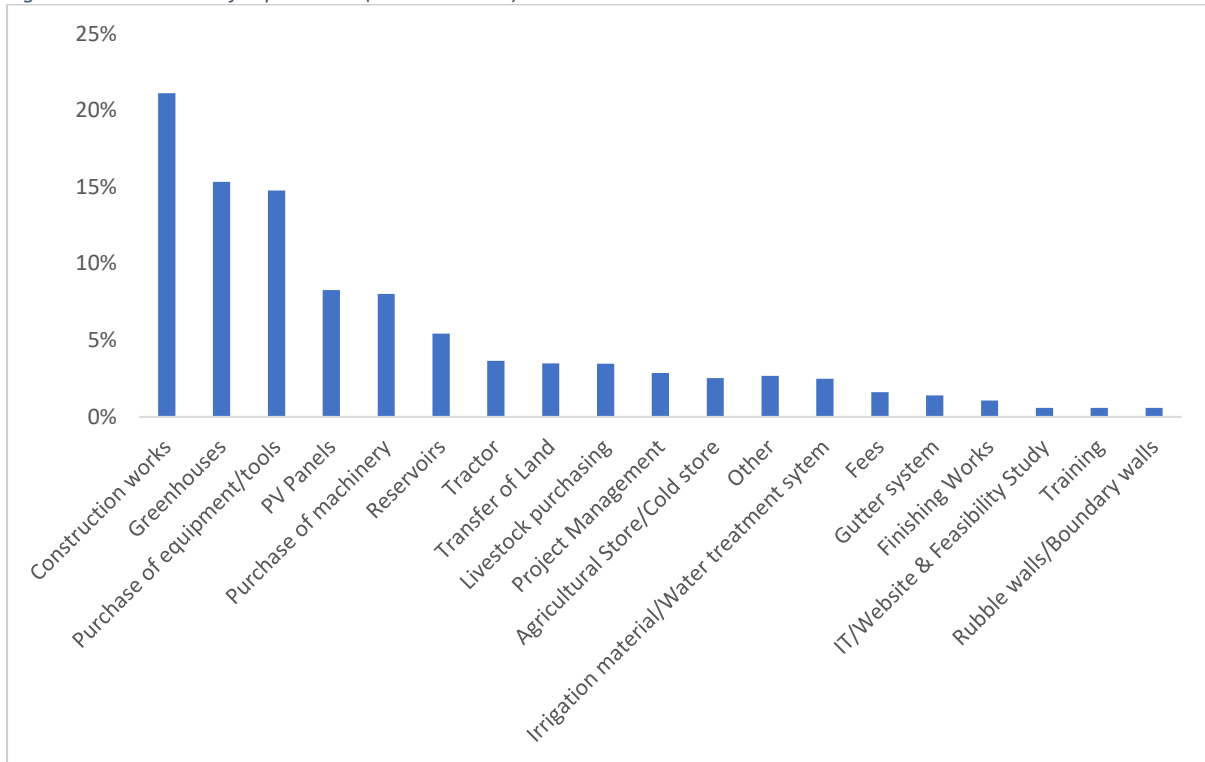
Evaluation of Actions as outlined in the Business Plans

As outlined in the previous section, this evaluation focuses on a total of 61 beneficiaries. The Business Plan of each of these beneficiaries has been assessed in detail, with a special focus on the total investment expenditure proposed by beneficiaries and on the breakdown of that investment expenditure across different types of investment. Based on this analysis, it is noted that **a total investment of over €7.1 million is being proposed by beneficiaries of Measure 6.1**. This investment expenditure represents the investment in its entirety, regardless of whether it is funded from the funds allocated under Measure 6.1 or from other sources. This approach is justified in light of the fact that the support available through Measure 6.1 has facilitated the investment proposed by the beneficiaries.

In estimating the total investment expenditure from the Business Plans, a minimum investment expenditure of €70,000 was assumed. In other words, an investment expenditure of €70,000 was assumed for those beneficiaries who indicated a total investment expenditure less than €70,000 in their Business Plan. This is because all the beneficiaries under Measure 6.1 were awarded a minimum of €70,000 and the Business Plan may not be an accurate representation of the amounts effectively spent. In essence, a key limitation of this analysis is that the Business Plans only provide projected and not actual figures. It is only during the ex-post evaluation that these figures can be confirmed.

A breakdown of the investment components is shown in the Figure below, whereby the majority of the expenditure is linked to construction works, the development of greenhouses and purchase of equipment. About 8% of the expenditure is also earmarked for the purchase of PV panels.

Figure 6.5: Allocation of expenditure (Business Plans)



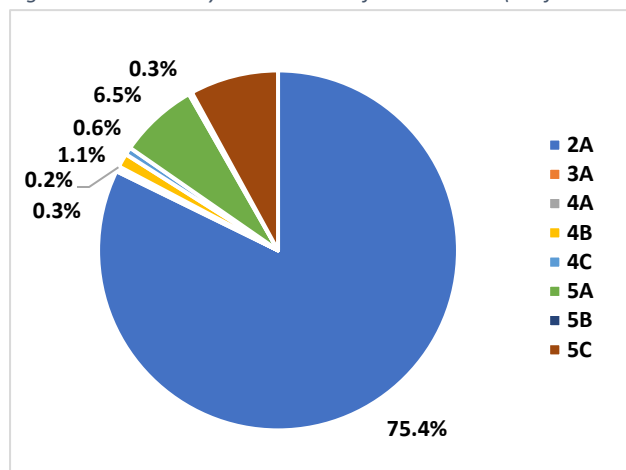
Source: Measure 6.1 Beneficiaries' Business Plans

c. Secondary Contributions

While Measure 6.1 is programmed under Focus Area 2B - *Facilitating generational renewal in the agricultural sector* - the actions which will be undertaken through the implementation of the business plans will have an impact on other focus areas of the RDP. This is an important consideration as the identification of secondary contributions also contributes towards the progress of result indicators across other focus areas, as outlined in the Guidelines issued by the Evaluation Helpdesk (2017).

The Figure below refers to the secondary contributions generated through the implementation of Measure 6.1, as has been identified through the assessment of the business plans. Indeed, the implementation of the business plans is expected to contribute towards environmental and climate change objectives namely through actions which contribute towards Priority 4 and Priority 5, as well as marginally towards Priority 3. **In total, 92% of the total investment expenditure proposed by young farmers is expected to lead to secondary contributions towards Focus Areas (FAs) other than Focus Area 2B.**

Figure 6.1: Secondary Contribution of Measure 6.1 (% of Investment Expenditure)



Source: Author's estimates based on Business Plans

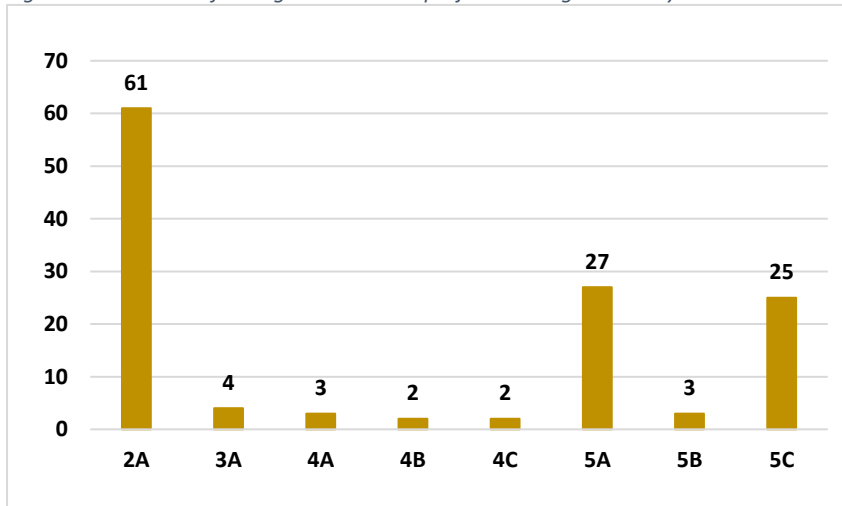
Indeed, the types of investments proposed by young farmers (e.g.: purchase of equipment, machinery, greenhouses, etc.) is not only expected to lead to generational renewal through the entry of young farmers into the sector but in most cases, where the young farmers are taking over an existing farm, the investment is also expected to lead to the restructuring of farms and to contribute to secondary benefits in terms of higher market participation and agricultural diversification. Against this background, **it is expected that around 75% of the total investment expenditure enabled by Measure 6.1 would have a secondary contribution towards Focus Area 2A.**

Other FAs towards which the investment enabled by Measure 6.1 is projected to contribute, are FAs 5A and 5C, which relate to water efficiency and the use of renewable sources of energy. This may be explained by the fact that young farmers and breeders are usually more willing to conserve water and resources³⁶. Given that young farmers and livestock breeders face more insecurity on the future of their water supply compared to older generations of farmers, they are typically more willing to invest in water conservation and resource efficiency.

In terms of the number of young farmers, it is noted that **all the young farmers benefitting from Measure 6.1 have proposed project elements which are expected to have secondary contributions towards FA 2A.** As depicted in the Figure below, there is also a notable number of young farmers that have proposed projects which are expected to have secondary contributions towards FAs 5A and 5C.

³⁶ https://agrikoltura.gov.mt/en/agricultural_directorate/Documents/nationalAgriculturalPolicy/napFinal.pdf

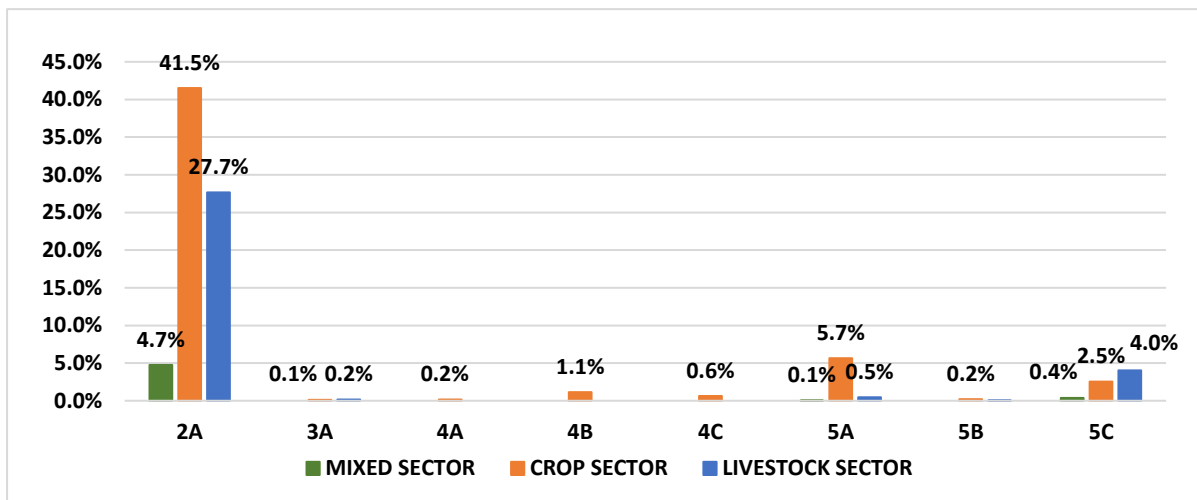
Figure 6.2: Number of Young Farmers with projects having secondary contributions



Source: Author's estimates based on Business Plans

By combining the data extracted from the Business Plans with the data from the operations database, the secondary contributions of Measure 6.1 were also analysed by the main area of activity. This analysis indicates that **most of the investment expenditure (52%) under the crop sector is expected to have a secondary contribution**. Furthermore, this analysis confirms that most of the investment is expected to lead to secondary benefits towards FA 2A.

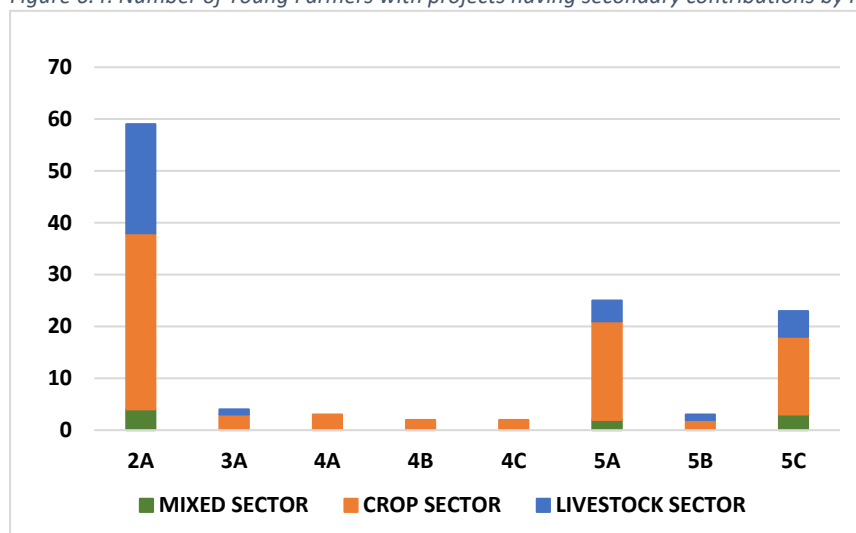
Figure 6.3: Secondary contributions by main area of activity (% of Investment Expenditure)



Source: Author's estimates based on Business Plans and IACS data

When considered in terms of the number of beneficiaries (rather than expenditure), it is also evident that the secondary contributions towards each FA presented in the Figure below are related to young farmers engaged in the crop sector.

Figure 6.4: Number of Young Farmers with projects having secondary contributions by main area of activity



Source: Author's estimates based on Business Plans and operations database

In conclusion, the assessment of the Business Plans indicates the following:

- A total investment of over €7.1 million is expected to be enabled by Measure 6.1 of which about €4.3 million is RDP funded;
- Around 92% of the total investment expenditure proposed by young farmers is expected to lead to secondary contributions towards Focus Areas (FAs) other than Focus Area 2B;
- It is expected that around 75% of the total investment expenditure enabled by Measure 6.1 would have a secondary contribution towards Focus Area 2A and this is mainly focused on increasing the competitiveness of the farms;
- Indeed, all the young farmers benefitting from Measure 6.1 have proposed projects which are expected to have secondary contributions towards FA 2A; and
- Most of the investment expenditure (52%) which is expected to have a secondary contribution towards Focus Area 2A is taking place in the crop sector.

d. Assessment of Progress based on the Performance Progress Reports

The Performance Progress Report (PPR) is a tool used by the MA to monitor the progress registered in the projects proposed by young farmers. An assessment of the PPRs submitted by the beneficiaries as at the **end of June 2020** indicates that **the average completion rate of the projects being supported by Measure 6.1 stands at around 39%**. This refers to a self-declaration by the beneficiaries.

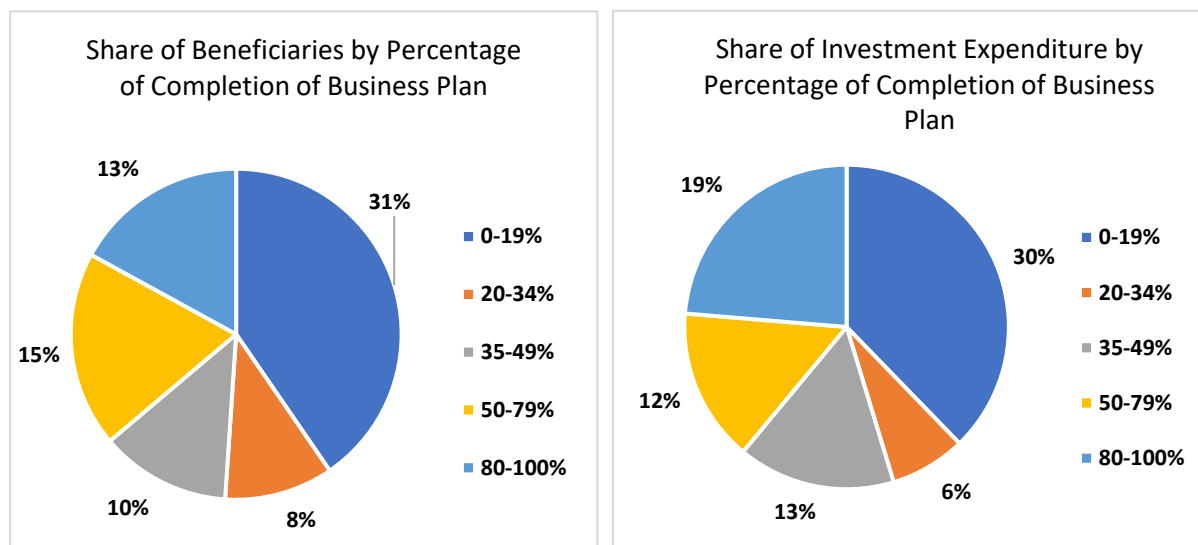
As indicated in Figure 6.5, at 31%, most of the beneficiaries recorded a completion rate falling between 0% to 19%. The same observation can be made when considering the share of investment expenditure associated with different categories of completion rate. According to the PPRs submitted by the beneficiaries, delays in the implementation stage are attributed to various factors such as the time taken to acquire the necessary permits and/or the tenure of the land, finding contractors that are willing and able to carry out the work in a timely manner, obtaining quotations from suppliers and contractors and procurement delays due to the COVID-19 situation.

Given some of these challenges, a number of beneficiaries have opted to submit a formal change request to the MA. Indeed, there were 13 beneficiaries who requested a change in their proposal and

whose requested change has been approved by the MA³⁷. Some of the beneficiaries requested an extension of the project whereas others requested a change in the investment items, chiefly with the aim of improving the project and making it more cost-effective.

Nevertheless, the Figure below also indicates that a notable number of the beneficiaries have also recorded good progress in their proposed projects. Indeed, **around 28% of the beneficiaries have achieved a completion rate of 50% or higher**. Similarly, in terms of investment expenditure, it can be observed that around 31% of the total investment expenditure proposed under Measure 6.1 is related to projects which have recorded a completion rate of 50% or higher.

Figure 6.5: Percentage Completion of Business Plan (% of Beneficiaries and % of Investment Expenditure)³⁸



Source: Author's estimates based PPRs

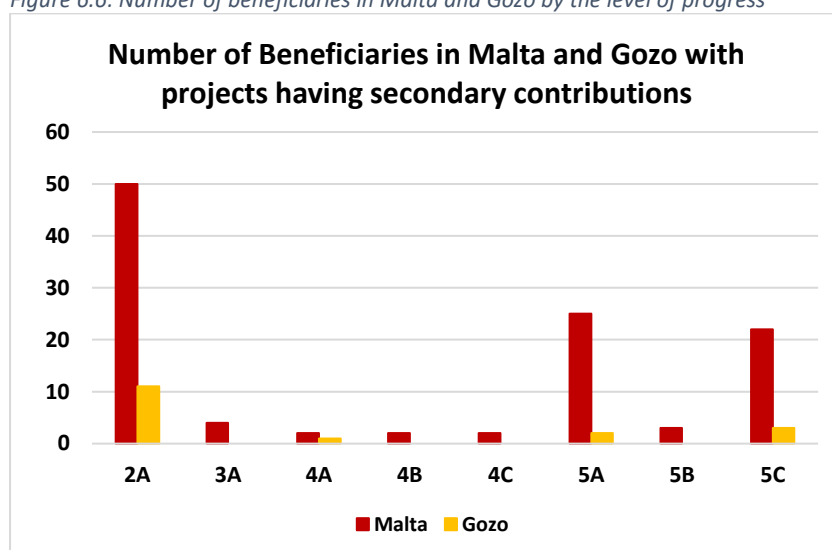
The subsequent Figure provides a snapshot of the level of progress recorded by young farmers in Malta compared to young farmers in Gozo. This appears to indicate that young farmers in Gozo are recording better progress in their projects. Indeed, **the average completion rate of young farmers in Gozo is estimated to stand at 53% compared to 36% registered by young farmers in Malta**.

Furthermore, from the Figure below, it can be noted that from a total of 8 young farmers who have projects in Gozo and who have indicated the completion rate of their Business Plan, around 63% have indicated a completion rate of 50% or higher. In comparison, from a total of 39 young farmers who have projects in Malta and who have indicated the completion of their Business Plan in the PPR, only around 31% have indicated a completion rate of 50% or higher.

³⁷ There was a total of 19 beneficiaries that requested a change in their proposed project. Some of the requests were rejected and others are still being considered.

³⁸ Percentages may not add up to 100% since not all beneficiaries indicated the percentage completion of the Business Plan in their Performance Progress Reports.

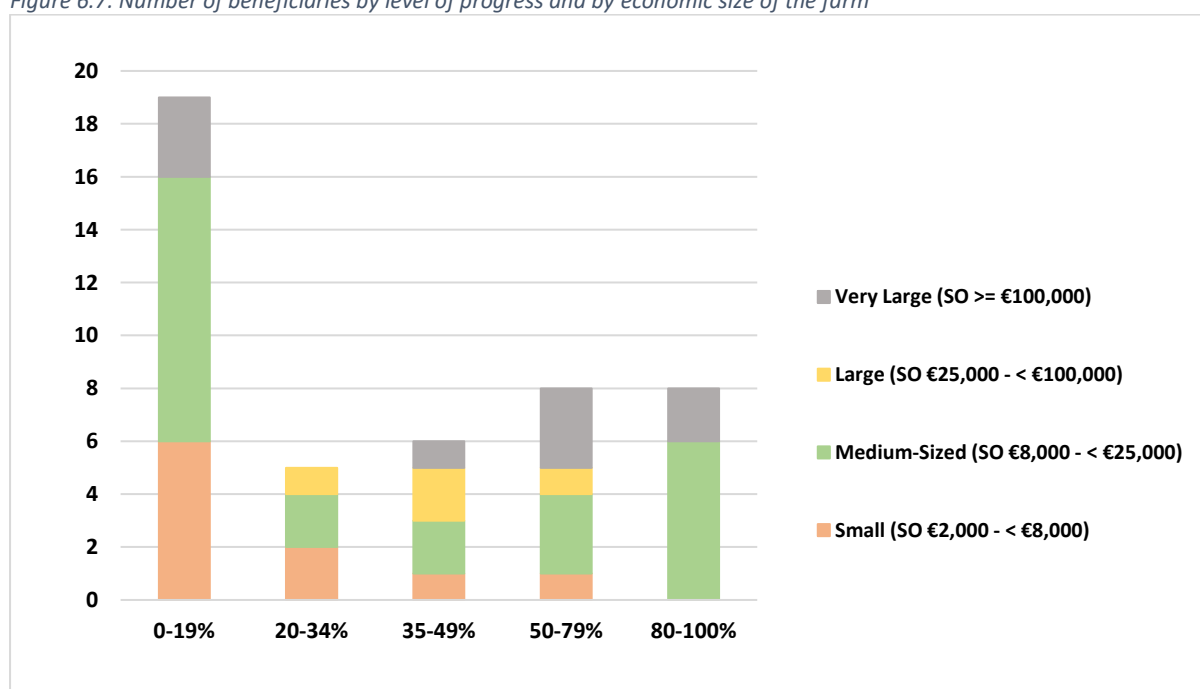
Figure 6.6: Number of beneficiaries in Malta and Gozo by the level of progress



Source: Author's estimates based PPRs and operations database

The level of progress recorded by the beneficiaries has also been evaluated across different classifications of economic size of the farm. About 19 of the beneficiaries have registered relatively low progress with the majority classified as small or larger holdings. On the other hand, the majority which have registered significant progress are the farms which are classified as medium to large. . Indeed, **from a total of 17 farms whose completion rate exceeds 50%, 88% are classified as medium, large or very large agricultural holdings whereas 12% are classified as small or very small farms.** This notion is also evident in the Figure below which shows that beneficiaries with medium, large and very large farms tend to represent a significant share of the total beneficiaries recording higher progress.

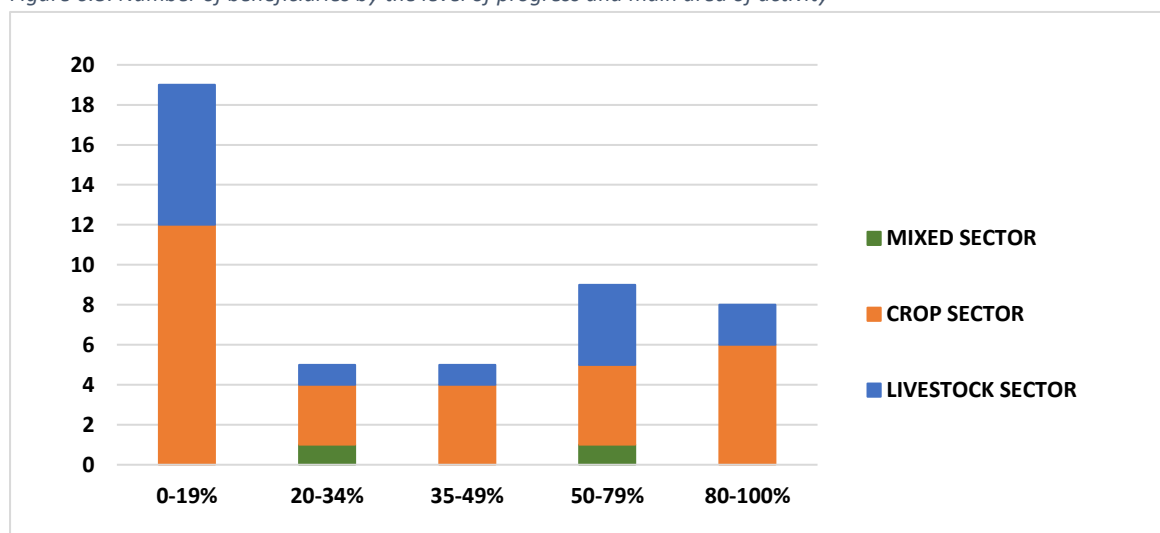
Figure 6.7: Number of beneficiaries by level of progress and by economic size of the farm



Source: Author's estimates based PPRs and operations database

Finally, the level of progress is assessed across different areas of activity. Based on this analysis, it can be concluded that the highest progress was recorded in the mixed sector³⁹ at 49%. Nevertheless, as shown in the Figure below, the number of beneficiaries engaged in the mixed sector were only two. Against this background, **it appears that Measure 6.1 was relatively more successful in the crop sector since there was a relatively higher take-up of Measure 6.1 in this sector and the beneficiaries in this sector also appear to be recording good progress in their projects.** Indeed, the average completion rate of projects in the crop sector is estimated at 40% whereas that in the livestock sector it is equal to 35%.

Figure 6.8: Number of beneficiaries by the level of progress and main area of activity



Source: Author's estimates based PPRs and IACS data

In conclusion, the analysis of the PPRs points towards the following:

- The average completion rate of the projects being supported by Measure 6.1 as at the end of June 2020 stood at around 39%;
- Around 28% of the beneficiaries have achieved a completion rate of 50% or higher;
- The average completion rate of young farmers in Gozo is estimated to stand at 53% compared to 36% registered by young farmers in Malta;
- From a total of 17 farms whose completion rate exceeds 50%, 88% are classified as medium, large or very large agricultural holdings whereas 12% are classified as small or very small farms; and
- It appears that the implementation of Measure 6.1 has been relatively more successful in the crop sector since there was a relatively higher take-up of M6.1 in this sector and the beneficiaries in this sector also appear to be recording good progress in their projects.

³⁹ This refers to mixed farming - The practice of growing cash crops and raising livestock on the same farm.

7. Results of Beneficiaries' Survey

In order to gauge the potential impact of Measure 6.1, a questionnaire⁴⁰ consisting of 27 questions was prepared and conducted through telephone interviews with beneficiaries during the month of November. Prior to the telephone interview, a formal letter⁴¹, approved by the Managing Authority, was sent to the beneficiaries explaining the purpose of the questionnaire and its importance for evaluation purposes. **Out of 61 beneficiaries, 58 responded to the telephone interview, achieving an overall response rate of 95%.** Unfortunately, the questionnaire could not be conducted amongst non-beneficiaries given the timeframe established to undertake the thematic evaluation and difficulties in identifying sufficient non-beneficiaries within the timeframe.

The objective of the questionnaire was to address the following areas:

1. Implementation of Measure 6.1
2. Changes to the business plans and reasons for such changes
3. Re-affirmation of the needs of young farmers
4. Extent to which Measure 6.1 met the needs of young farmers
5. Skills Development
6. Expected impact of the measure

Specific to the needs of young farmers, the questionnaire took into consideration the needs identified through existing literature on young farmers.

a. General Background

On the basis of information collected through the questionnaire as well as that outlined in previous sections of this report, it can be noted that **most of the beneficiaries operate in the crops sector** followed by young farmers operating in the dairy sector. As indicated in Figure 7.1, **out of the survey respondents, 45% own the land on which they operate and 55% rent the land.**

Figure 7.1: Utilised Agricultural Area

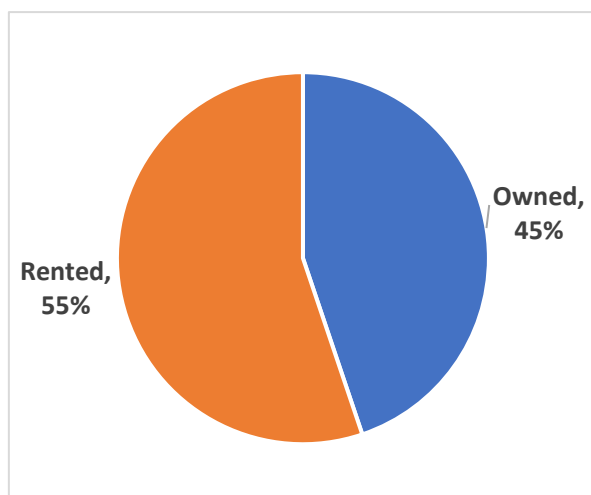
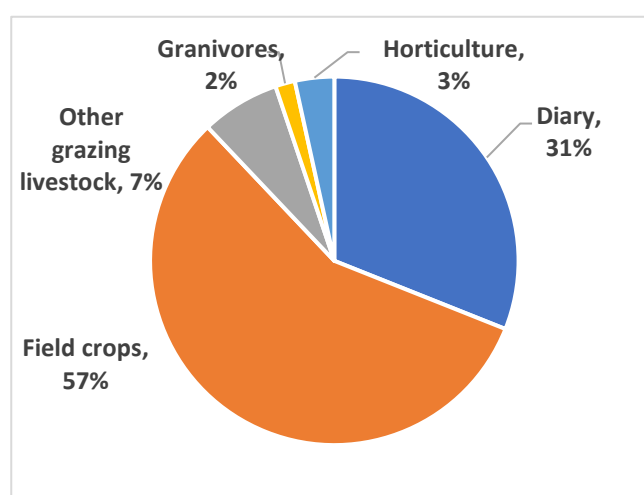


Figure 7.2: Agricultural Activity



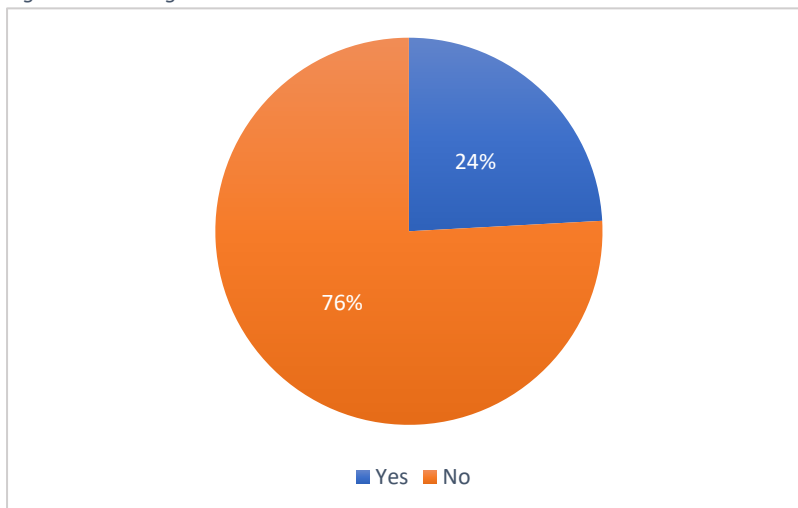
⁴⁰ Available both in Maltese and English. Refer to Annex I.

⁴¹ Refer to Annex II.

As indicated in previous sections of this report, applicants for Measure 6.1 had to submit a business plan with their application describing the objectives of their business, how the objectives are in line with the RDP and how the farmer intends to achieve its goals over a three-year period. The business plan also had to include a roadmap from a financial and operational standpoint. An analysis of the business plans has been presented under 6(b), wherein it was indicated that the business plans are expected to cover a total investment of about €7.1 million. This implies that beyond the provision of support offered through Measure 6.1, the beneficiaries will be engaging in further investment in order to implement their business plans.

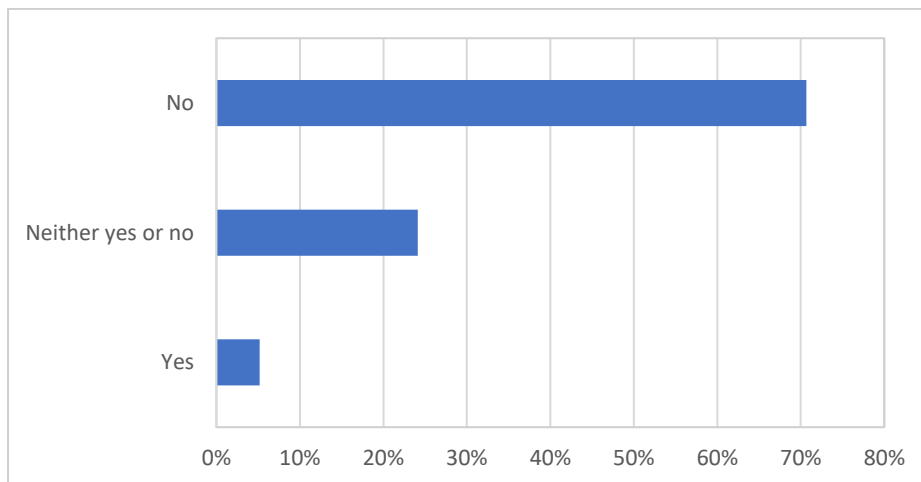
Through the questionnaire, beneficiaries were asked about their intentions to make further changes to the business plans in the foreseeable period. In this regard, **about 76% of the respondents indicated that they do not foresee any significant changes to their submitted business plans**, beyond those already outlined in the Progress Reports. Those who did refer to modifications mainly referred to changes in their investment components such as for example including PVs and solar panels.

Figure 7.3: Changes to Business Plan



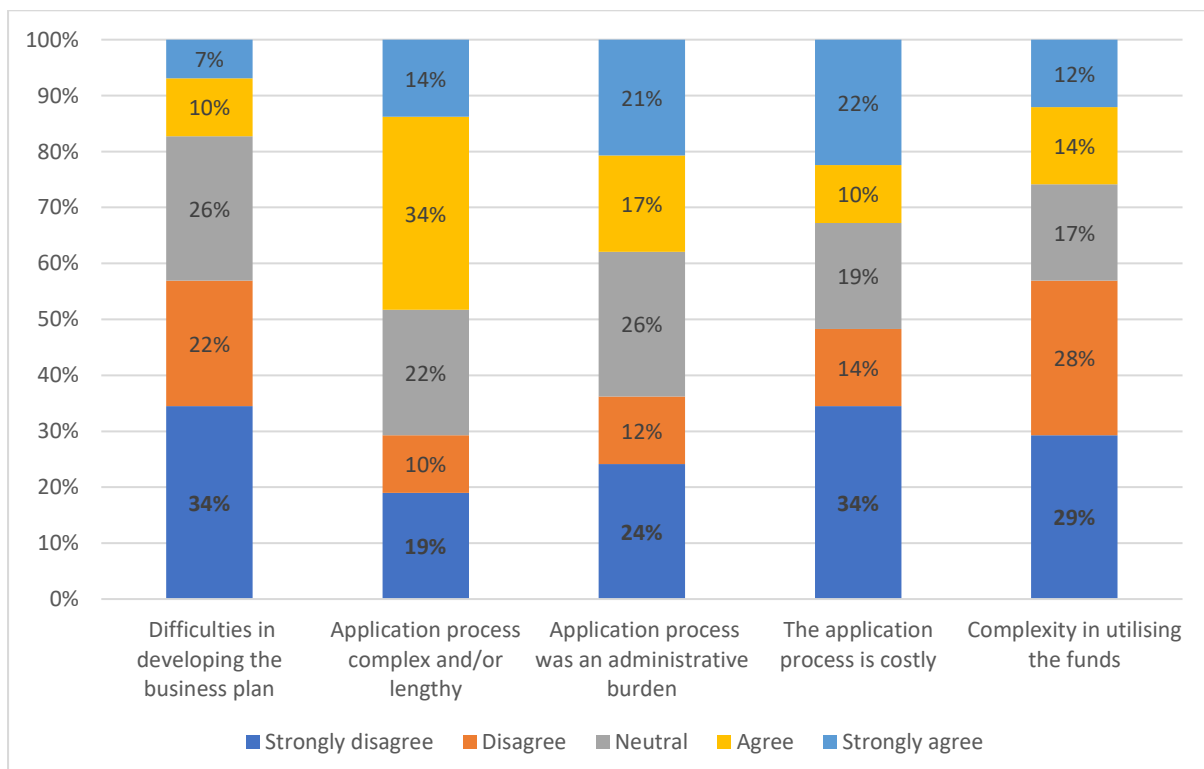
Respondents were also asked whether the impact of COVID-19 has brought about any modifications to their business plan. As can be seen from Figure 7.4, **about 70% of the respondents indicated that COVID-19 did not trigger any modifications to their business plan** while 5% indicated that modifications will be undertaken. Modifications indicated by the latter group of respondents chiefly related to changes in their operations to ensure the safety of their products.

Figure 7.4: COVID-19 and expected deviations from the business plans



In terms of the application process for Measure 6.1, most of the respondents indicated that they did not find the application process costly and no difficulties were encountered in developing a business plan. In fact, as indicated in Figure 7.5 below, 56% disagree with the statement that there were difficulties in developing the business plan. This is chiefly attributed to the fact that the majority of beneficiaries sought the assistance of experts in order to develop their business plans. This was also reaffirmed through the interviews conducted with stakeholders whereby it was noted that most farmers engaged consultants to prepare the business plans. Furthermore, most of the respondents have not faced difficulties in utilising the funds for Measure 6.1 mainly due to the fact that a lump sum payment is provided for this measure.

Figure 7.5: Difficulties encountered during the application process



In contrast, the majority of respondents were of the view that the process of applying for Measure 6.1 is rather complex and lengthy. Applicants are often engaged in their farming activity for a significant proportion of the day and thus find little time to develop the necessary business skills. This was further corroborated during the interviews conducted with stakeholders who work closely with farmers in the sector. Indeed, during such interviews, it was pointed out that farmers do not necessarily have the skills to develop business plans and hence they needed to engage specific experts. Nevertheless, the development of the business plan for this measure provided an opportunity for young farmers to take stock of where they intend their business to head within the foreseeable future.

When it comes to the administrative burden in the implementation of the measure, 36% of the respondents disagree while around 38% agree and 26% are neutral about this aspect. As for the costs involved and the complexity in utilising the funds, most of the respondents disagree that the costs are significant (48%) or that there is complexity in utilising the funds (57%).

b. The needs of young farmers

The questionnaire also delved into the needs of young farmers in relation to land, access to finance, access to the agricultural sector, labour, training, and advisory services. This section ties in with section 3 of this report, which presents the needs of young farmers as outlined in different studies, including the one commissioned by the European Commission and carried out by ECORYS in 2015.

This section presents the needs of young farmers and their relative importance, based on the replies provided in the questionnaire. In this sense, the responses do not necessarily reflect the needs of young farmers in general, due to the fact that non-beneficiaries were not included in the survey.

i. Availability and Cost of Agricultural Land

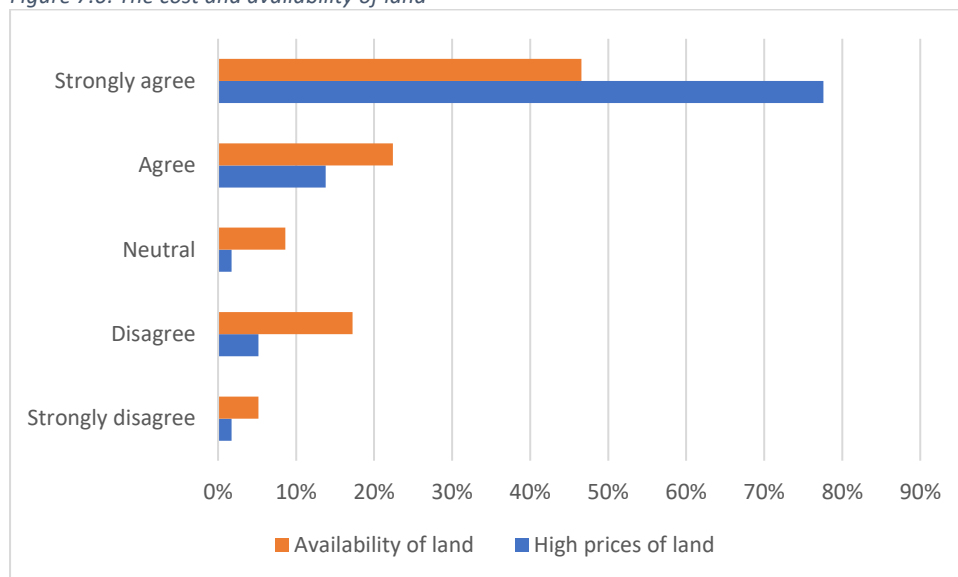
Consistent with the observations outlined in the Commission's study (Ecorys, 2015) and other literature⁴², the most significant issue is the **high price of land** which young farmers face to set up their business. Indeed, **almost 80% of the survey respondents indicated that they strongly agree that this is a pressing issue** which needs to be addressed. This is followed by the availability of land, with 47% of the respondents strongly agreeing that this is a significant challenge.

This was also a dominant issue in the discussions held with key stakeholders working with young farmers as well as during the focus groups organised with beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries. Indeed, the participants emphasised that in assessing the effectiveness of Measure 6.1, one should distinguish between those young farmers that come from a farming family and thus already have the land of their family, and those who do not come from a farming family and thus would need to purchase the land in order to set up a business. The latter group tends to face higher challenges since the land is costly and the funds available under Measure 6.1 are not sufficient to cover the price of land. Indeed, this challenge is also recognised in the Agricultural Policy for the Maltese Islands which indicates that farmland or animal farms are not easily obtainable by persons coming from outside the sector and

⁴² Such as: European Parliament (2017), Research for AGRI Committee – Young Farmers – Policy implementation after the 2013 CAP reform, available at: [Research for AGRI Committee - Young farmers - Policy implementation after the 2013 CAP reform \(europa.eu\)](https://www.europa.europa.eu/press-communication/infobox/infobox_101717_en.htm)

thus, even if there could be interested youths to embark on new farming niches, the stumbling blocks to enter the sector are huge.

Figure 7.6: The cost and availability of land



Factors contributing towards the scarcity of land include the fact that farmland in the Maltese Islands is predominantly Government-owned and is leased to farmers through agricultural leases that are renewed every year⁴³. Apart from the size of the island and its high population density, other reasons for the scarcity and high cost of land which emerged from discussions held with stakeholders, include the following:

1. The relatively high degree of abandoned land which is not being put into effective use. It was suggested that government should take stock of the abandoned land which is available and put it for the use of the agricultural sector.
2. The fragmentation of land resulting from the land being split for inheritance purposes, which in turn limits the productivity of land. It was noted that there is a lack of mechanisms through which consolidation of agricultural land can take place, such as through reciprocal exchange between lease holders.

It is to be noted that, due to the higher costs faced by Maltese farms and other challenges, the entire agricultural area in Malta has been designated as a Less Favoured Area under the Common Agricultural Policy. Other reasons cited for including all of the agricultural area in Malta as an Area of Natural Constraint⁴⁴ include:

- The fragmentation of farms and the increasing number of smaller fields, as a result of customary inheritance practices on Malta;
- The ageing labour workforce where only a small proportion of the total farming population is under 40;

⁴³ Parliamentary Secretary for Agriculture, Fisheries and Animal Rights (2018), National Agricultural Policy, available at: https://agrikoltura.gov.mt/en/agricultural_directorate/Documents/nationalAgriculturalPolicy/napFinal.pdf

⁴⁴ Guidance Notes for the Submission of Applications for Funding under Measure 13.3 – “Compensation payment to other areas affected by specific constraints”

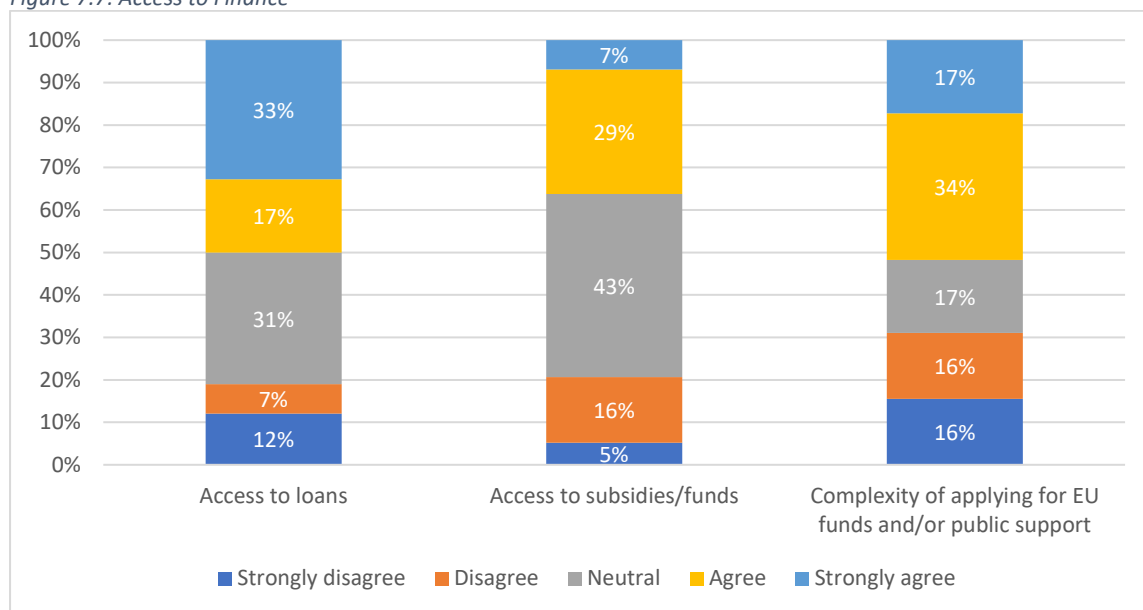
- Insularity factor of the Maltese Islands which leads to considerable transport costs being incurred on required imports such as feed ingredients, seeds, pesticides, equipment and machinery;
- Lack of water resources which constitutes a significant restriction on the productivity of the Maltese agriculture sector; and
- Scarcity of arable land with a trend towards over-cropping, together with poor soil fertility, increasing soil erosion, low yields per hectare and lack of crop rotation methods.

ii. Access to Finance

Access to finance in the questionnaire is grouped under three main areas namely:

1. Access to loans;
2. Access to subsidies and funds; and
3. Complexity of applying for EU funds.

Figure 7.7: Access to Finance



Most of the respondents agree that there are barriers related to access to finance. **Around 50%⁴⁵ of the respondents indicate that access to loans is a challenge**, given that young farmers often are restricted in the collateral which can be offered for the provision of loans. Furthermore, the agricultural sector is by its very nature subject to risks which are outside its control, such as weather conditions, and which limit productivity and dent the ability of young farmers to access loans. Furthermore, in general, young farmers face complexity in applying for EU support and/or public support which restricts their ability to access alternative sources of finance. On a positive note, the availability of subsidies/funds, such as those offered through the RDP, mitigates these specific challenges faced by young farmers.

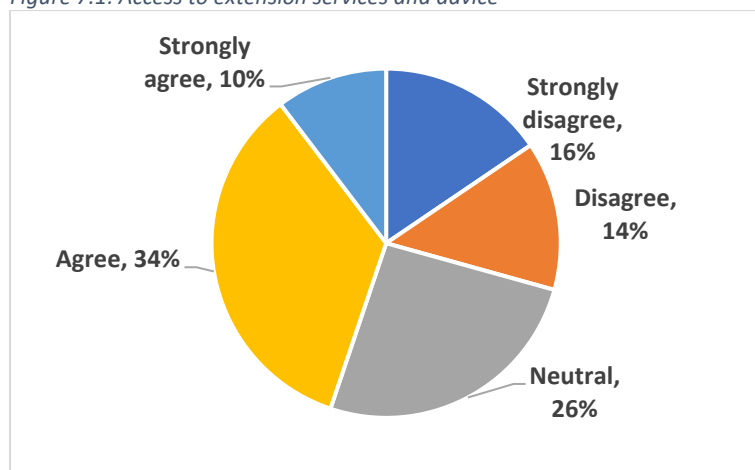
⁴⁵ Includes both the 'strongly agree' and 'agree' responses.

These challenges are also consistent with the study conducted by the Commission (2015)⁴⁶ whereby it was noted that 34% of young farmers consider access to loans and subsidies as challenges. This also ties in with the discussions held during the interviews whereby it was pointed out that due to the ceiling on the support offered through Measure 6.1, some of the beneficiaries joined forces so that their business would be composed of a number of young farmers, thereby giving them access to a larger sum.

iii. Access to Advice and Extension Services

With respect to the provision of advice for young farmers, **44% of the respondents agree that the lack of advice and extension services is a challenge**. Access to advice and assistance is not only related to the use of external consultants, which can be a barrier in itself in terms of cost, but also assistance and advice from the authorities during the application process. In the focus groups, the results of which will be explored in the subsequent chapter of this report, participants discussed the need for better guidance by the authorities and clarity on the eligibility criteria for accessing funds.

Figure 7.1: Access to extension services and advice



iv. Access to qualified labour and training

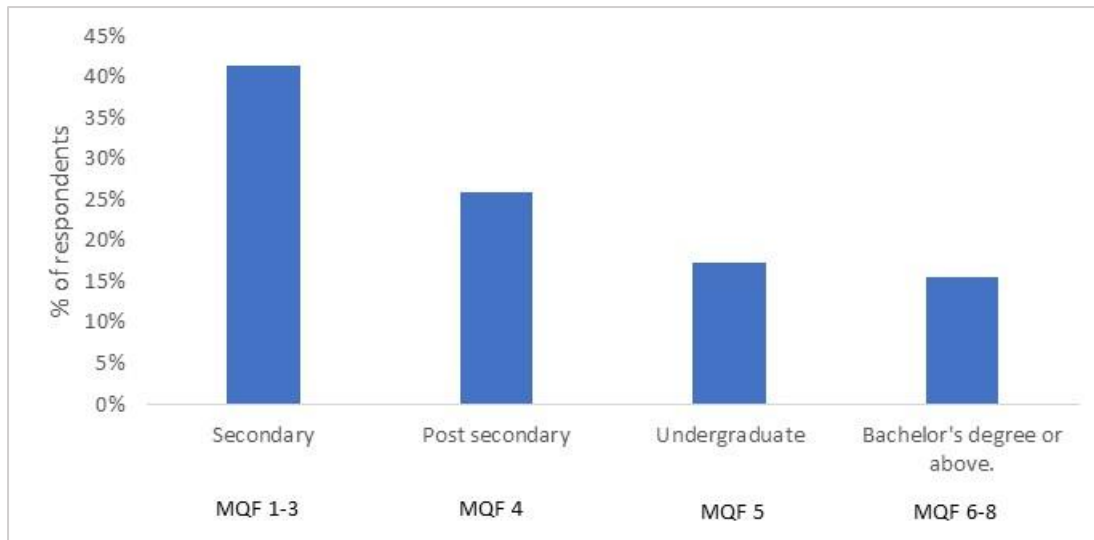
Around 50%⁴⁷ of the respondents indicated that access to qualified labour and access to training remain lacking in Malta. Also, over 55% of the respondents indicated that the lack of replacement on the farm leads to a challenge for farmers, as they cannot be replaced to engage in another activity, such as training.

The lack of training and ability of farmers to invest in their skills is also evident through context indicator C24 which is explored in Section 2.1 of this report and which indicates that 1.5% of young farmers have full agricultural training and are therefore fully qualified. Furthermore, it is interesting to note that the educational level of beneficiaries participating in the survey, as depicted in the Figure 7.10, mainly reaches secondary and post-secondary level.

⁴⁶ Available at: [DOC 1 \(europa.eu\)](https://ec.europa.eu/eip/agriculture/doc1)

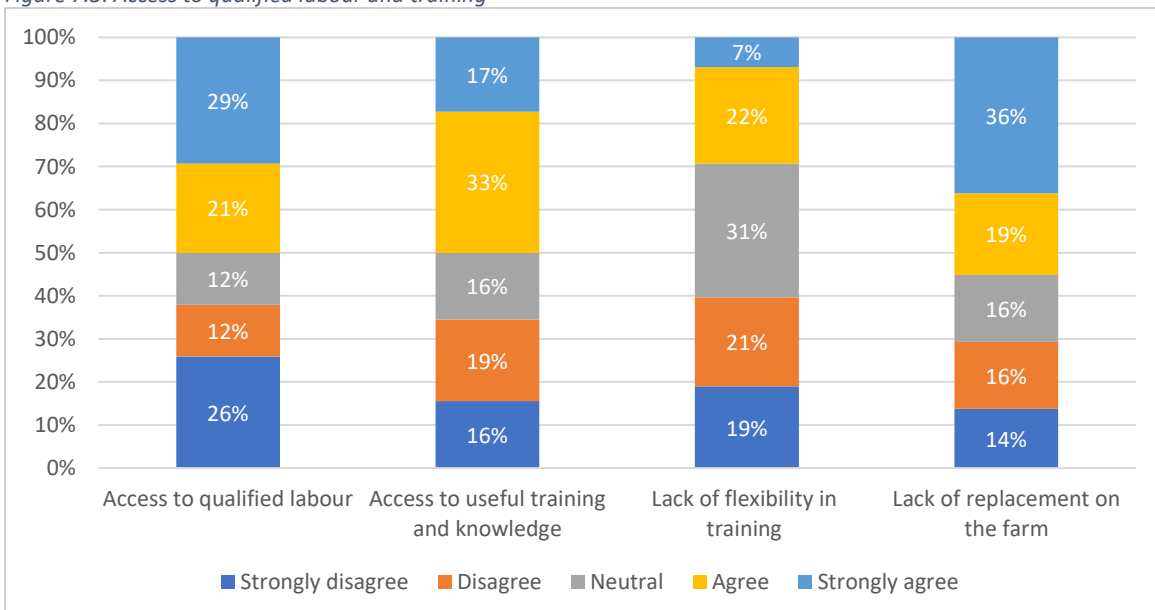
⁴⁷ Respondents who referred to 'Strongly agree' and 'Agree'.

Figure 7.2: Educational level of beneficiaries



Specific to training and knowledge, half of the respondents agreed that access to training is also a challenge. This is also one of the highest ranked needs in the Commission’s study⁴⁸, with more than 40% identifying it as a challenge. Young farmers who participated in the focus groups confirmed that training is essential but there are challenges in accessing it.

Figure 7.3: Access to qualified labour and training



About 55% of the respondents indicated that they are not able to attend training because they do not have anyone to replace them on the farm. Most farmers manage their activity on their own and oversee the entire cycle of production. This leaves them with no time to attend training. Also, 29% have indicated that a lack of flexibility with respect to timing and learning methods are also challenges for young farmers.

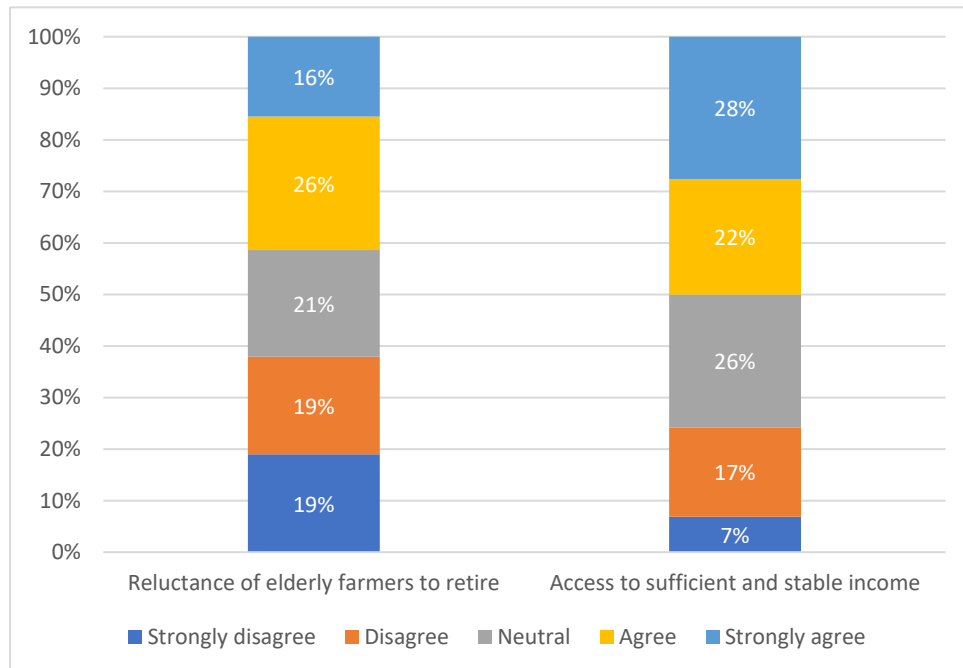
⁴⁸ Available at: [DOC 1 \(europa.eu\)](#)

v. *Entry to the agricultural sector*

Two needs assessed through the questionnaire that can be classified as entry challenges to the sector include the reluctance of elderly farmers to retire as well as access to a sufficient and stable income. In this respect, **42% of the respondents indicated that the reluctance of elderly farmers to retire is a challenge particularly as it inhibits the availability of land for farming by the younger generation.** This in itself presents wider challenges since older generation workers tend to have a more conservative farming approach and oppose changes to agricultural practices, especially if this includes changes in costs⁴⁹.

As for income stability, 50% agree that the lack of income stability is a challenge for young farmers. Agricultural prices are volatile, and the sector is vulnerable to shocks which are outside its control. The relatively low income coupled with variability in income does not entice young farmers to enter the sector. This is even more so pronounced in light of the favourable conditions experienced by the Maltese economy over the last few years whereby other economic sectors have registered strong growth, thereby enticing younger workers to these sectors.

Figure 7.4: *Entry to the agricultural sector*



Participants were also asked whether the identified needs are addressed through the implementation of Measure 6.1. Most respondents indicated that the need which is mostly addressed is ‘access to subsidies and funds’, followed by ‘access to loans’ (presumably due to the fact that the funds offered through Measure 6.1 allowed for a more sustainable business). Respondents also indicated that the availability of funds allowed land titles (for those coming from a farming family) to be transferred to the young farmer. In addition, respondents indicated that the implementation of the measure contributed towards addressing the training needs of young farmers, given that some of the

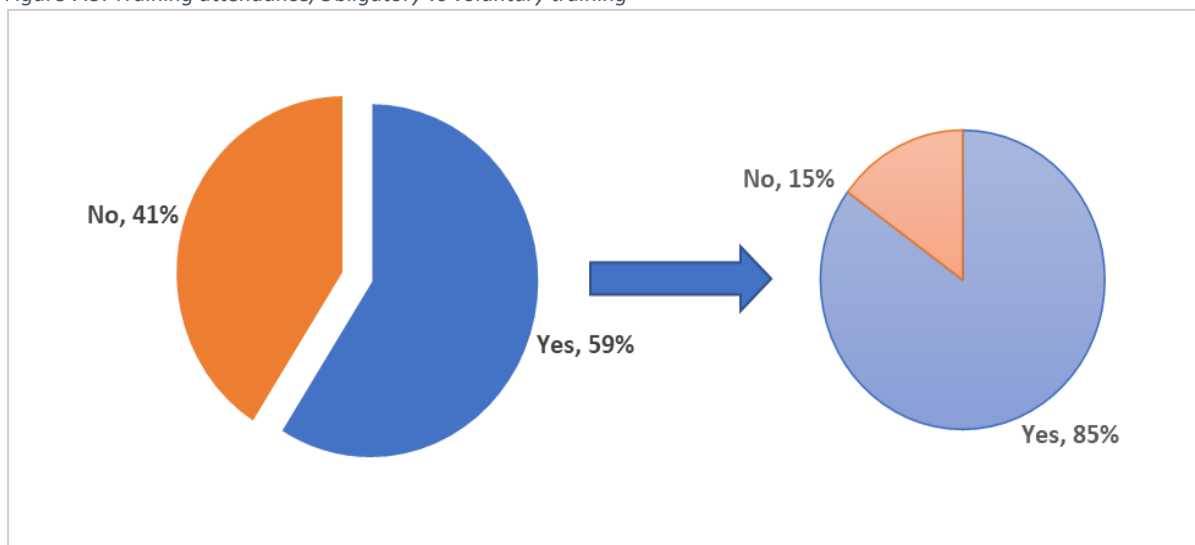
⁴⁹ Parliamentary Secretary for Agriculture, Fisheries and Animal Rights (2018), National Agricultural Policy, available at: https://agrikoltura.gov.mt/en/agricultural_directorate/Documents/nationalAgriculturalPolicy/napFinal.pdf

beneficiaries were required to engage in training on business skills to ensure the effective implementation of their business plans.

c. Skills Development

Specific to skills development, 59% of the respondents attended training. Out of these, 85% attended the obligatory training provided by MCAST as a condition to benefit from the funds. It is also interesting to note that 62% of the respondents indicated that they would like to attend other training in the future.

Figure 7.5: Training attendance/Obligatory vs voluntary training



During discussions with agricultural organisations and with the focus groups, it was emphasised that training should also focus on the development of soft skills for young farmer. Young farmers would also benefit from training which focuses on the end phase of the supply chain, including outreach to customers as well as training on the overall management of the farm, including the development of farm strategies, management and financial skills, networking skills and marketing skills. Participants in the focus groups indicated the importance of such skills particularly in today's globalised market environment.

It was noted that young farmers required specialised training in skills such as those related to water management skills, waste management skills and legal skills to reduce dependency on professionals, reduce their costs and increase efficiency.

In the telephone survey, beneficiaries were also asked on the extent to which their knowledge improved following access to Measure 6.1, across a range of skills. In this respect they were asked to rate their skills before and after receiving support through this Measure. The skills explored were the following:

1. Management, Strategic and Marketing skills
2. Skills related to applying for subsidies/ grants/credit
3. Financial skills
4. Networking skills/ Ability to create a partnership
5. Operational skills (which may include food processing, water management and waste management amongst others)

Respondents ranked their level of knowledge from a scale of 1 (very poor) to 5 (excellent). The difference between the 'before' and 'after' situation refers to the extent to which skills were enhanced.

Table 7.1: Level of improvement in skills after the implementation of M6.1

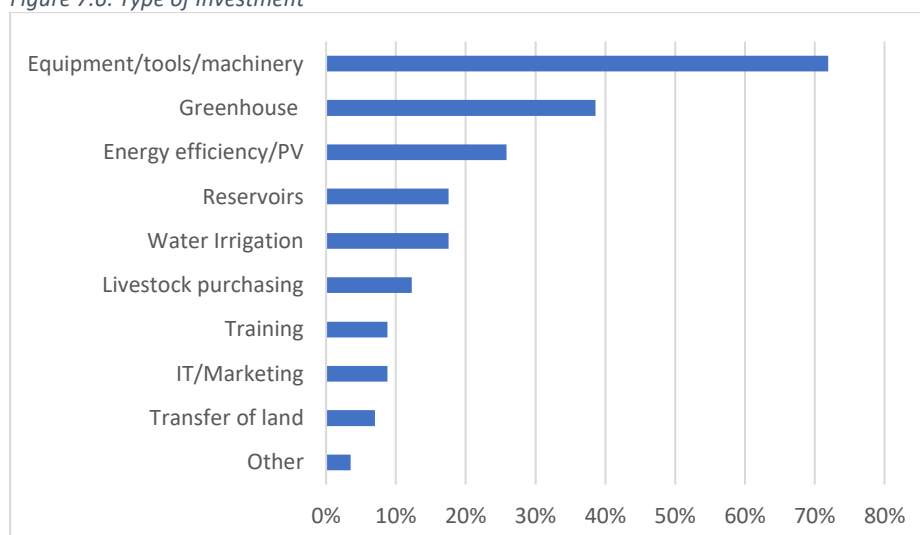
Difference (Level of Improvement)	Number of Respondents				
	Management, Strategic and Marketing skills	Skills related to applying for subsidies/ grants/ credit	Financial skills	Networking skills/ Ability to create a partnership	Operational skills
0	27	27	27	41	25
1	19	12	11	5	13
2	9	19	17	9	17
3	2	0	2	3	3
4	0	0	0	0	0

Table 7.1 shows the difference before and after the implementation of Measure 6.1 with a difference level of '0' implying no change in the level of skills. As can be seen from the Table, the highest improvement can be observed for skills related to the applications of subsidies, followed by financial skills and operational skills. In contrast, there was less of a marked improvement in skills related to management, strategic and marketing skills.

d. Improving Competitiveness

In order to determine the effectiveness and impact of Measure 6.1, respondents were also asked to provide an indication of the expected impact. **Over 70% of the beneficiaries are investing in equipment, followed by greenhouses (39%) and photovoltaics or other type of energy efficient systems (26%).** Only few have spent part of the grant on the transfer of land.

Figure 7.6: Type of Investment

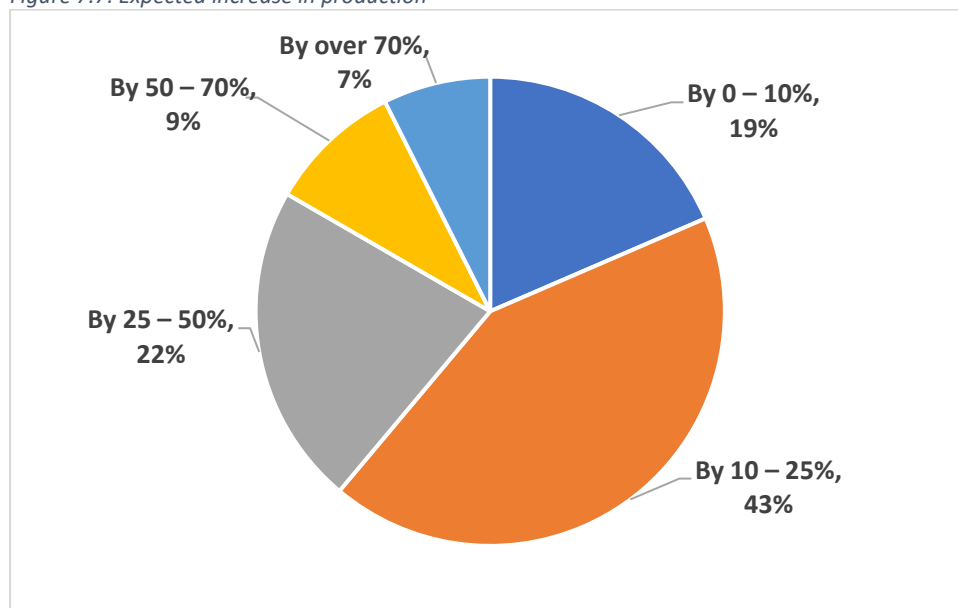


It is interesting to note that about 71% of the respondents indicated that they would not have executed the project without the support provided through Measure 6.1. This provides a good indication of the importance of the assistance awarded by the Measure. While by definition the remaining 29% would have still executed the business plan without the provision of the aid, it is to be

stressed that the elimination of deadweight loss from the provision of loss is not entirely possible. Indeed, according to Davis, Caskie and Wallace (2013) a New Entrants Scheme similar to the young farmers scheme, has an important impact on farm performance due to its potential dynamic impacts of the farm investments but it is likely that some deadweight can incur in cases where farmers finance from the grant the investments they would have done anyway.

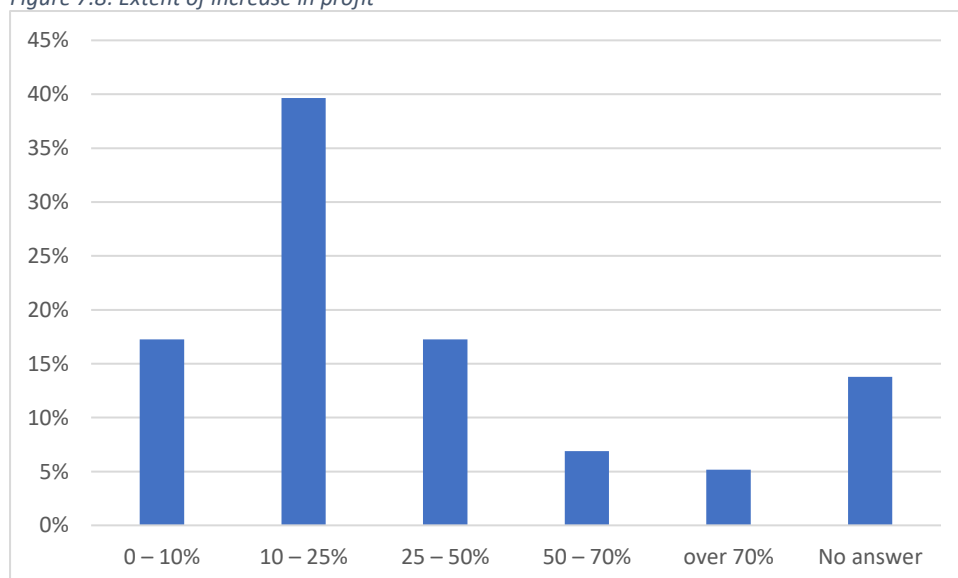
In addition, **around 86% of the respondents indicated that as a result of the implementation of Measure 6.1, their competitiveness is expected to increase.** Indeed 43% of the respondents who have undertaken investment in equipment, greenhouses, energy efficient systems, IT systems and/ or livestock, expect production to increase by 10% to 25% while 19% of the beneficiaries are expecting an increase between 0% and 10% as shown in the Figure below.

Figure 7.7: Expected increase in production



For around 40% of the beneficiaries, profit is expected to increase between 10% to 25% due to the investment and about 17% are expecting an increase in profit of about 25% to 50%

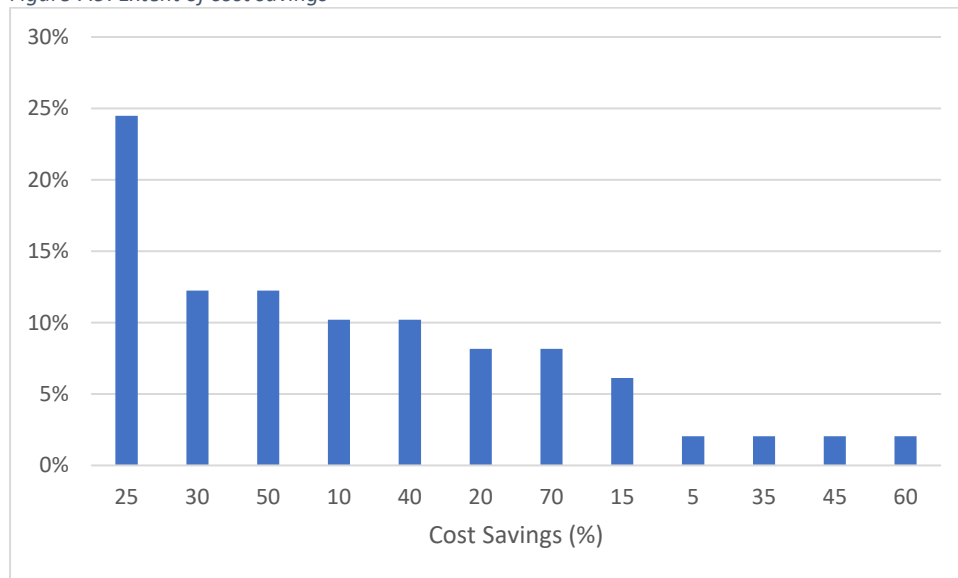
Figure 7.8: Extent of increase in profit



In terms of employment, 62% do not intend to engage new employees to help them with the implementation of the proposed project. Those that are likely to engage in an increase in staff have referred to a total figure of about 34 new jobs in order to ensure the implementation of the business plan.

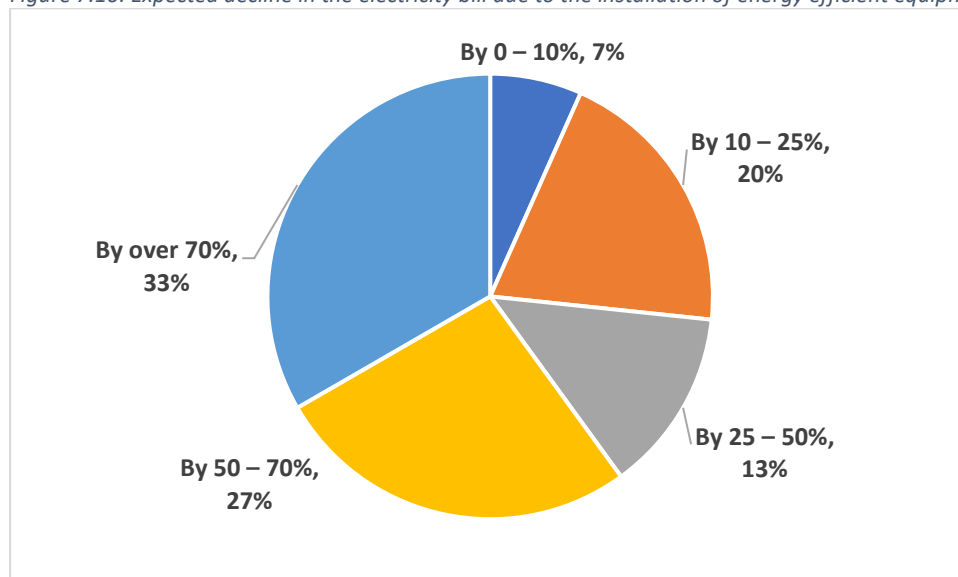
As for cost savings, 84% of respondents expect a positive outcome due to the implementation of Measure 6.1, with 24% of the respondents indicating that they are expecting cost savings of around 25%.

Figure 7.9: Extent of cost savings



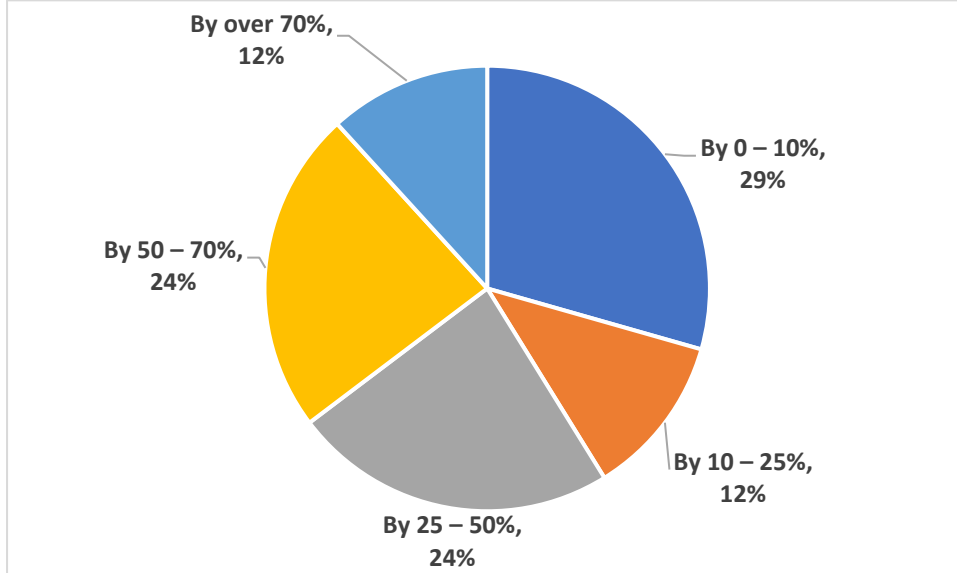
As indicated in Chapter 6, most projects entail investment in photovoltaic panels or other energy efficient systems. **About 26% of the respondents who have engaged in this type of investment are expecting their electricity bill to decline**, of which around 60% of the respondents are expecting the electricity bill to decline by more than half.

Figure 7.10: Expected decline in the electricity bill due to the installation of energy efficient equipment and/or PV panels



As for water systems, **28% of the respondents are investing in irrigation systems and/or reservoirs.** Figure 7.19 indicates that **of these, 24% of the respondents are expecting a decline in water consumption ranging between 25% to 50% and 24% are expecting a decline ranging between 50% to 70%.**

Figure 7. 11: Expected decline in the water consumption bill due to the installation of irrigation system and/or reservoir



8. Focus Groups

This section of the report delves deeper into the discussions that emerged from the focus groups that were held among young farmers, both beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries, in order to have more visibility of the challenges faced by young farmers and to discuss the specific challenges related to the implementation of Measure 6.1.

The focus group with the beneficiaries was held online on 7th December 2020 (See Annex III). A group of six beneficiaries participated who were selected based on the identification of a possible innovative element in their business plans. Indeed, these young farmers included farmers engaged in floral production, in hydroponics and in implementing new technology in viticulture and in livestock farming. Innovation is a cross-cutting objective in the Rural Development Programme and the evaluators sought to determine the extent to which innovation is promoted through the implementation of Measure 6.1. This is also important in line with considerations whereby Sutherland *et al.*, (2015) indicate that starting farmers are more engaged in diversifying activities and setting up new markets.

A second focus group with non-beneficiaries was held online on 14th December 2020. As a result of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), the evaluators did not have access to the list of non-beneficiaries and therefore they could not be contacted directly. Consequently, in order to identify the participants for this focus group, agricultural organisations such as MaYA⁵⁰ (See Annex IV) and Għaqda Bdiewa Attivi promoted the focus group among their members. Seven participants participated in this focus group with some participants coming from a farming family while others were completely new entrants to the sector. These young farmers included farmers engaged in both the crops and livestock sectors.

Given that the sessions were held online, the number of participants was restricted to ensure that an effective conversation could be undertaken. Structured questions were prepared by the evaluators for both groups (as per Table 8.1 ?).

⁵⁰ [IMPORTANT NOTICE for Young Farmers who... - Malta Youth in Agriculture | Facebook](#)

Table 8.1: Summary of Focus group results

	Beneficiaries	Non-Beneficiaries
Measure 6.1	The eligibility criteria on the standard output led to the exclusion of some agricultural sectors such as beekeeping	The design of the measures favoured farmers who came from a farming family rather than new entrants to the sector.
Innovation	Innovation should be defined and promoted.	Innovation should be defined.
Budget (€70k)	Not considered sufficient to implement innovation which typically requires a high level of investment and may be risky.	Budget is too low to implement new projects in the agricultural sector considering the expenses related to the acquisition of land, particularly for farmers who come from non-agricultural family.
Skills	Skills are crucial especially within the innovation context.	
Market size	The market is too small but there are challenges in accessing the export market.	
Supply Chain	Too fragmented. However, there are other supply chains which are yet unexplored.	Support is needed to help farmers sell their product in a profitable manner to safeguard farmers income from volatile prices.
Export	Process is too complicated and expensive, and local production is not enough to cater for foreign demand.	Large investment required to tap into the export market. The local sector is in general constrained by capacity.
Compliance	If farmers want to expand their market, they need to become compliant to meet the required standards.	
Land	Land is scarce and expensive which limits agricultural activity.	Land is scarce and expensive, and a better legal structure is required to avoid fragmentation of land.
Cooperation		Cooperation should be broader including collaboration between farmers and avoid thresholds constraints that are too high.
Permits	Sometimes the requirements put forward by authorities are not consistent. There are a lot of bureaucracy and delays.	
Standard output		The established threshold led to the exclusion of certain sectors such as beekeeping.

a. Focus Group with Beneficiaries

The discussion in the focus group with beneficiaries initially focused on innovation as it is the main criteria upon which beneficiaries were selected to participate in the focus group. The discussion then evolved to general challenges faced by young farmers who are beneficiaries of Measure 6.1, particularly with respect to the environment and climate change. Beneficiaries also discussed their future vision and the adjustments that they would like to see in the RDP. This section provides an overview of this discussion.

According to the participants in this focus group, the innovation element was not promoted enough in the RDP. In general, there was consensus that a grant of €70,000 is not sufficient to implement innovation, particularly since there are typically higher risks associated with the implementation of innovative practices. When asked if innovation should be part of the selection criteria, participants noted that the term 'innovation' is wide and its inclusion in the selection criteria would require a clear definition of the term. The participants were of the view that even if a concept is already well-established outside of Malta, it is still to be considered as innovative if it is a new concept in Malta. This view is also shared by the representative of GhBA, who during the interview explained that it is important to distinguish between innovative projects which are feasible and thus can have an impact on the sector and those which may be innovative but are not feasible within the local context. A successful story of a young farmer who put forward a project proposal involving the cultivation of roses was provided as an example of a project that is relatively innovative in the local context and which is equally realistic and feasible.

Skills also play an important role in the implementation of innovative elements. Farmers which have invested in their skills are more likely to engage in innovative activity. Indeed, during the focus group, two farmers indicated that they managed to apply an innovative element to their projects as a result of the acquisition of skills which contributed towards the identification of niches for their business. Using the knowledge attained from his studies, one farmer carried out a sectoral analysis to identify potential niche sectors in which he could operate, taking into consideration a number of factors, such as connection to the grid, road accessibility and family skills amongst others. Another farmer, for instance, used his engineering background to convert to soilless production, therefore ensuring that he is in a good position to address the demand of his customers throughout the whole year. This farmer has invested in greenhouses which includes climatic controls, smart irrigation and has also invested in training from qualified agronomists.

When queried about the challenges faced by young farmers, participants noted that the agricultural system in itself can pose a challenge when it comes to consumer outreach. Particularly for the smaller farmers, there is no alternative option than the Pitkali Market Centre as part of their supply chain. Producing and selling the goods to consumers at the end of the supply chain requires a significant amount of resources which they lack. Over the years, this has created a sentiment of discouragement which is also passed on from one generation to the next. Some farmers have decided to opt for an alternative supply chain and sell directly to the distributors and supermarkets, but this too requires a significant amount of resources. Another challenge emerged from the interviews, whereby it was noted that a barrier to innovation in the local agricultural sector is that there is little distinction between the end products. In other words, given that most of the agricultural products are sold through the same supply chain (the Pitkali Markets Centre), those farmers engaged in innovative farming methods end up selling their products together with the products of farmers who do not put as much effort in upgrading their production process.

Participants also referred to fragmentation in the supply chain as there are missing elements especially when it comes to the end of the supply chain such as the marketing of the end-products. The importance of marketing was also emphasised during the interview with MaYA whereby it was suggested that more weight should be applied to projects which include elements of innovation and marketing. This is in view of the fact that the lack of effective marketing impinges on the image of the local agricultural sector. It is critical that the general public and relevant stakeholders are aware of the projects and activities being implemented by local farmers. For example, for Measure 4.1, the applicants are encouraged to upload a banner on social media about their projects, hence making the general public aware of projects being supported through the RDP. This practice needs to be more widespread and possibly incentivised through the provision of higher evaluation marks for those beneficiaries who intend to market their project.

Participants also reiterated that the biggest challenge to entry in the agricultural sector is land. According to the farmers, the solution is not necessarily the provision of EU funds but a change in national policy. From the perspective of the Lands Authority and the Government, it is important to take stock of the land that is available and its respective use. Regardless of the amount of funds that is injected in the sector, the availability of land and the associated costs, such as the costs of transferring land, are a major stumbling block. Some farmers had to find partners in order to have access to a larger number of funds since the €70,000 provided under Measure 6.1 is not deemed to be sufficient.

Other challenges include delays in the issue of permits which are required for the implementation of measures in the RDP as well as inconsistency in the requirements put forward by some Authorities. This said, participants recognise the fact that such problems are mostly national and not to be tackled by the RDP. Nonetheless, these issues ultimately also have a bearing on the implementation of the programme. Higher cooperation across the relevant authorities is required to ensure effective implementation of the RDP measures. For instance, in Armenia a farmer applies directly with the local council for a greenhouse. In Malta, building a greenhouse requires the services of consultants and authorisation from various authorities. This leads to excessive costs which also dents the competitiveness of the sector.

This challenge was also outlined during interviews carried out with stakeholders. More specifically, the representative of MaYA indicated that bureaucracy is an issue which discourages a significant number of potential applicants. For instance, acquiring the necessary land and environmental permits is proving to be a major hurdle for young farmers to set up and implement their projects. This is exacerbated by the fragmentation which exists at the level of the public departments and authorities dealing with agricultural matters. For example, an applicant that has a parcel of land and is seeking to acquire the necessary permits to implement a project is likely to have to communicate with several departments falling under different Ministries. This discourages potential applicants from putting forward innovative projects or from applying for funds in the first place. Indeed, there are beneficiaries which prefer to submit a straightforward application involving, say, the purchase of a tractor rather than going for a project consisting of multiple types of investments and which potentially includes an innovative element. The requirements of the application and implementation process need to take into account the practical realities of the sector, including the time constraints of farmers engaged in agricultural activity. There should also be more upfront guidance on the application process from the responsible authorities. Another issue noted by stakeholders is that difficulties in acquiring the necessary permits led to some projects taking longer than expected or to changes in the Business Plans originally submitted. In addition, the COVID-19 situation exacerbated this issue, leading to further delays.

b. Focus Group with Non-Beneficiaries

A focus groups was also conducted amongst young farmers who are non-beneficiaries in order to assess their perspective and challenges. Once again, the participants noted that the main issue is related to the title of land. One of the main requirements of Measure 6.1 is that agricultural land is registered on the name of the beneficiary. However, there are instances where the land is rented, and the owners refuse to include the name of the young farmer on the land, thereby impeding the young farmers from applying for Measure 6.1. Other challenges related to land include its cost and its availability. Some participants noted that the financial support provided by Measure 6.1, which can be used for the purchase of land, is not sufficient when one takes into consideration the price of agricultural land in Malta. Notwithstanding, it is also noted that the maximum allowable ceiling for lump-sum support used in the Maltese RDP is based on a level of €70 000 as set be Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013. Indeed, given this limitation, funds have mainly been given to young farmers who transferred the land title on their names, due to the fact that they come from a family of farmers rather than 'new' farmers who needed to purchase the agricultural land. Hence the emphasis appeared to be more on the regeneration of farmers rather than the attraction of 'new' young farmers into the sector. The latter however also require support in order to enter the agricultural market.

Specific to the challenges brought about by land availability, participants noted that national policy needs to address this limitation as it is seriously restricting the viability of the sector. Government needs to take stock of abandoned land and ensure that land regulations promote the use of land for productive purposes. Land supply is currently restricted and the availability of land which has been abandoned would enhance availability for both existing and new young farmers. Furthermore, there is the need for a better legal structure to avoid land fragmentation as this impinges on the use of land for productive purposes and does not allow for large production and expansion.

Given the restrictions faced by farmers in terms of availability of time, costs, and resources, it is difficult for any farmer to invest in innovation that goes beyond the realm of adopting techniques which are used in other countries. Support should also be given for the less traditional sectors which are indigenous to Malta such as capers and prickly pears.

The local agricultural sector is faced with strong competition and therefore efficiency in operation is critical to the sustainability of the holding. This is particularly relevant when one considers that the local agricultural sector faces numerous challenges including those related to the economic viability of the sector and that the sector is inherently small and therefore lacks the ability to exploit economies of scale. Therefore, measures should not focus explicitly on expanding the holdings' operations but also on improving the viability and competitiveness of the holding. This is because an increase in the size of the holding does not necessarily imply an increase in efficiency.

The Standard Output (SO) threshold which was one of the eligibility criteria of Measure 6.1 also created a hurdle for some young farmers. The participants indicated that initially the SO level was set too high for the Maltese agricultural sector, thereby automatically excluding a significant number of farmers. The authorities subsequently revised this criterion in additional calls. While this was a positive development, it also contributed to a degree of confusion amongst those interested in applying for the Measure.

This sentiment was also shared by the stakeholders interviewed during this evaluation. The representative of MaYA remarked that the SO is difficult to calculate and the SO threshold is relatively high. Indeed, the representative of MaYA explained that this made it difficult for certain young farmers to reach the eligibility criteria. For instance, there were a notable number of young beekeepers who

were interested in obtaining support from M6.1 but the required SO made it very difficult for them to reach the eligibility criteria. As a result, there were a number of young farmers that were discouraged to apply for Measure 6.1 and instead resorted to applying for Measure 4.1. Furthermore, it is important that any changes in criteria during the programming period, such as the change in the SO threshold, are well-communicated with potential applicants and agricultural organisations. This will ensure that any interested young farmers would be aware of such changes and can thus make the necessary considerations.

Other stakeholders also remarked that given their age, young farmers have been in the sector for a relatively low number of years. Against this background, it is unlikely that during the few years that they have been in operation that they would have managed to reach a SO equivalent to that required by Measure 6.1. On the other hand, there are other young farmers who, since they took over the agricultural holding of their family, had a SO which was above the threshold required. Against this background, the criteria should be set in a way which does not inadvertently leave out parts of the agricultural sector but rather all the sector should be eligible.

Also, it was noted that it is critical for the evaluation board to be well versed with the technicalities of the sector and the nature of the investments being proposed by the young farmers since the requirements of one sub-sector are not necessarily the same as another. At the same time, it is also appreciated that the agricultural sub-sectors vary and therefore it is difficult to engage experts which are well versed in all areas of the agricultural sector.

Participants were also asked about the extent to which they consider cooperation to be important particularly within the context of the local agricultural sector. It was noted that cooperation should be considered more broadly rather than restricted to the definition outlining some of the measures under Measure 16. This notion was also expressed by the MaYA representative, whereby it was pointed out that while there is a lot of drive towards cooperation, it is evident that it is difficult to achieve. In fact, many measures related to cooperation had to be removed or altered in the RDP. The representative of MaYA explained that cooperation should not be seen only in terms of business partners but also in terms of building cooperation with other players, such as suppliers. The definition of cooperation needs to be broader and more reflective of the local context. In other words, rather than aiming for large cooperation projects, funds should be more directed to potentially smaller initiatives which could actually be more practical to implement (ex: a partnership between farmers, local cooperatives, cooperation between farmers and private enterprises, etc.). Even for foundations like the MaYA that are open for cooperation, making use of cooperation funds proves to be difficult. Cooperation can also be with the government itself which has more experience in the implementation of funds. Furthermore, in view of the success of the bottom-up approach adopted in the LEADER in Malta, it is suggested that the same principle is applied in the cooperation fund available in the future.

With regards to cooperation, the MaYA representative also pointed out that a higher weight should also be allocated to Measure 6.1 for those applicants who seek to engage in cooperation (ex: cooperating with other farmers and private enterprises to sell their product). Nonetheless, it is important that wherever cooperation is mentioned in the Business Plan, written approval is provided, showing that the other parties agree and are aware of this possible cooperation. Anyone can relate their intention to cooperate with other entities, however it is equally important for applicants to prove it.

Another key challenge noted by the participants in this focus group is income variability which inhibits the sustainability of young farmers. This is in part due to volatility in agricultural prices brought about, in part, by the vulnerability of the sector to risks which are outside the control of the farmer, such as

weather conditions. This volatility coupled with the low profitability of the sector is leading to the shrinkage of the sector. Furthermore, higher salaries offered in other economic sectors within Malta is leads to a situation where young farmers are not enticed to be active in the agricultural sector.

9. Conclusion and Recommendations

This thematic evaluation has focused specifically on Measure 6.1 which allows for the provision of support directly to young farmers under EAFRD. In Malta, young farmers manage about 7% of the total farms in Malta⁵¹ and 8% of the UAA. Young farmers are not replacing, in a sufficient manner, the older farm workers leading to an overall decline in the size of the sector.

Over 70% of the young farmers manage less than two hectares (ha) and only 3% have a farm area between 5ha and 9.9ha. Young farmers contribute to about 15% of the total standard output produced by the sector but the standard output per young farmer is higher than that for older farmers due to more efficient techniques of production.

Similar to the EU, the majority of Maltese young farmers have practical experience but limited training. The proportion of young farmers in Malta with full agricultural training is significantly low at 1.5% compared to 19.1% in the EU.

The specific needs of young farmers in Malta mainly relate to the availability of land and to a lack of skills which are required to ensure a competitive and sustainable business practice. These are consistent with the challenges faced by young farmers in Europe as outlined in different literature sources.

Specific to Measure 6.1, the budget allocated, at €4.3 million, represents 82% of the budget allocated for Focus Area 2B, while the focus area absorbs about 4.2% of the programme's funds. The result target set for the Focus Area 2B is the percentage of agriculture holdings with RDP supported business development plan/investment for young farmers. This stands at 0.48%, referring to target number of beneficiaries of 60 young farmers.

The implementation of the measure in Malta has registered very good progress. The result target of 60 farm holdings supported under this focus area has been attained as there are 61 beneficiaries for Measure 6.1. The committed expenditure by the end of 2019 amounted to circa €4.2 million with realised expenditure amounting to circa €3.3 million.

There are a total of 11 beneficiaries under Measure 6.1 who have benefitted from other measures, of which 8 young farmers are also benefiting from support under Measure 4.1. Against this background, the target on the 'number of holdings supported for investment in agricultural holdings (support to the business plan of young farmers)' is in the process of being met.

Young farmers applying for support under Measure 6.1 of the RDP are proposing projects which are reflective of the strategic objectives defined by the National Agricultural Policy, such as food presentation and labelling, competitiveness and diversification and adaptation to and mitigation of geo-climatic conditions.

Around 82% of the beneficiaries are male, with an average age of 30 years, while 18% are female. In this respect it is interesting to note that at a ratio of 18%, the proportion of female beneficiaries is higher than the ratio of total female farmers implying that the measure is successful in attracting young female farmers.

Measure 6.1 has been mostly successful amongst the lower age cohorts as it attracts younger farmers to set up their business and enter into the sector. It is less successful in attracting individuals over the

⁵¹ As of 2016, which is the latest data available by Eurostat.

age of 35 who are more likely to have already set their vocational/career role. The average level of standard output of the beneficiaries at €44,000 per holding is double the average standard output generated by young farmers in 2016 which stood at about €22,000.

Measure 6.1 has been more effective in supporting young farmers who are already in the sector through their family's participation rather than 'new' young farmers who are interested in entering the sector. In other words, the measure is not deemed to be sufficient to support new entrants in acquiring the land, given that the cost of land is higher than the provision of support available through the measure. This is similar to the point highlighted in a paper published by the European Parliament⁵² which indicates that the maximum payable amount for Measure 6.1 is insufficient for the establishment of a new farming enterprise, or motivating newcomers to join the industry.

In total, from 62 beneficiaries, 29 young farmers were deemed to require the obligatory training to benefit from the measure. They attended the courses as an out-of-pocket expense, with training focusing on business development. The training was well received such that in most cases, the young farmers that appeared to be the most resistant to the training were actually the ones who considered it to be the most fruitful by the end of the course.

A total investment of over €7.1 million is expected to be enabled by Measure 6.1, of which about €4.3 million is RDP funded. The majority of the expenditure is linked to construction works, the development of greenhouses and purchase of equipment. About 8% of the expenditure is also earmarked for the purchase of PV panels.

The types of investments proposed by young farmers is not only expected to lead to generational renewal through the entry of young farmers into the sector but in most cases where the young farmers are taking over an existing farm, the investment is also expected to lead to the restructuring of farms and to contribute to secondary benefits in terms of higher market participation and agricultural diversification. Against this background, around 75% of the total investment expenditure enabled by Measure 6.1 will have a secondary contribution towards Focus Area 2A. Indeed, all young farmers have an investment component which contributes towards FA 2A. Other FAs towards which the investment enabled by Measure 6.1 is projected to contribute are FAs 5A and 5C, which relate to water efficiency and the use of renewable sources of energy.

In terms of progress, by the end of June 2020, the average completion rate of the projects being supported by Measure 6.1 stood at around 39%. Delays in the implementation stage are attributed to various factors such as the time taken to acquire the necessary permits and/or the tenure of the land, finding contractors that are willing and able to carry out the work in a timely manner, obtaining quotations from suppliers and contractors and procurement delays due to the COVID-19 situation.

On the basis of the telephone survey, which was conducted amongst beneficiaries, 71% of the respondents indicated that they would not have executed the project without the support provided through Measure 6.1. This provides a good indication of the importance of the assistance awarded by the Measure. In addition, most of the respondents, that is around 86%, indicated that as a result of the implementation of Measure 6.1 their competitiveness is expected to increase. Indeed 43% of the respondents which have engaged in investment in equipment, greenhouses, energy efficient systems, IT systems and/ or livestock, expect production to increase by 10% to 25. Most of the respondents, that is around 86%, indicated that as a result of the implementation of Measure 6.1, their competitiveness is expected to increase with 43% of the respondents expecting production to

⁵² [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2017/602006/IPOL_STU\(2017\)602006_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2017/602006/IPOL_STU(2017)602006_EN.pdf)

increase by 10% to 25% For around 40% of the beneficiaries, profit is expected to increase between 10% to 25%.

In terms of employment, 62% do not intend to engage new employees to help them with the implementation of the proposed project. Those that are likely to engage in an increase in staff have referred to a total figure of about 34 new jobs in order to ensure the implementation of the business plan.

As for cost savings, 84% of respondents expect their savings to decline due to the implementation of Measure 6.1 with 24% of the respondents indicated that they are expecting cost savings of around 25%. About 26% of the respondents who have engaged energy efficient equipment and PV panels expect their electricity bill to decline, of which around 60% of the respondents are expecting the electricity bill to decline by more than half. In terms of water use, 28% of the respondents are investing in irrigation systems and/or reservoirs, of which 24% are expecting a decline between 25% to 50%.

Recommendations

This final section presents a set of recommendations emanating from the Thematic Evaluation distinguishing between recommendations to be considered at a national level and those which can be considered for the implementation of the RDP Programme.

National Recommendations

The impact of the CAP must always be considered in relation to national policies and therefore policy which hinders the promotion of young farmers must be adequately addressed. In this respect, one of the pressing needs that has been highlighted throughout this report is the lack of available land for farmers. Most agricultural land is government owned and leased long term to tenants. This leaves little land which is available on the market which is privately owned, leading to high costs for purchasing and renting land. This also makes it unaffordable for new entrants into the market.

As also highlighted in the National Agricultural Policy, changes to national land policy are required with effective coordination between all stakeholders, most notably government. Efforts are required to take stock of abandoned land and ensure that land regulations promote the use of land for productive purposes. Furthermore, there is the need for a better legal structure to avoid land fragmentation as this impinges on the use of land for productive purposes and does not allow for large production and expansion. Land policy should incentivise the transfer of land as well as the use of abandoned land for agricultural purposes and incentives are required for older farmers to pass on their land to younger farmers.

Other challenges include delays in the issue of permits which are required for the implementation of measures in the RDP as well as inconsistency in the requirements put forward by some Authorities. Cooperation across authorities is thus required and procedures need to be simplified.

Farmers in Malta, including young farmers, are in need of a holistic set of skills and national policy needs to focus on the identification of these needs and ensure effective implementation of training course and advisory services. The National Agricultural Policy also refers to the need to integrate educational courses aimed at up skilling farmers and livestock breeders both through educational institutions as well as through the provision of dynamic extension services. Also, at a national level, young farmers could benefit from sharing of examples of good practise related to farming and innovative practices and their projects should be showcased.

Programme Recommendations

Through the transitional provisions for support from EAFRD leading to additional funds transferred to the Programme, the MA should consider the extension of Measure 6.1. As expressed by stakeholders, there is demand for the measure, and this thematic evaluation has highlighted the positive impact of the measure. The measure has been effective in addressing the financing needs of young farmers.

In extending further the Measure, consideration should be given to the fact that the measure has been more successful in supporting young farmers that come from a farming family. As stressed also in the Agricultural Policy for the Maltese Islands, farmland or animal farms are not easily obtainable by persons coming from outside the sector and thus, even if there could be interest by youths to embark on new farming niches, the stumbling blocks to enter the sector are huge. Therefore, consideration should be given to differentiate support for young farmers who are new entrants to the sector as opposed to those who are already active in the sector.

In line with the recommendations outlined in the focus group, more weight could be considered in the selection process for projects which include elements of innovation and marketing. Also, higher weight could be considered for those applicants who seek to engage in cooperation (ex: cooperating with other farmers, private enterprises and so on to sell their product).

Given the positive outcome driven through the provision of training to young farmers, further efforts should be also considered for the development of tailor-made courses that are specific for young farmers particularly in terms of the development of marketing, IT and digitalisation skills. Also, young farmers would benefit from training which focuses on the end phase of the supply chain including outreach to customers as well as training on the overall management of the farm including the development of farm strategies, management and financial skills, networking skills and marketing skills. Young farmers also require specialised training in skills such as those related to water management skills, waste management skills. It is imperative that such training is provided within a schedule which is convenient for young farmers. Also, learning methods should focus less on theoretical approaches and more on practical and hands-on approaches. On a positive note, it is reiterated that 62% of the respondents to the telephone survey indicated that they would like to attend other training in the future.

Project selection should not focus explicitly on 'enlarging' operations but also on improving the viability and competitiveness of the holding as an increase in size does not necessarily imply an increase in efficiency. The sector faces strong competition and therefore efficiency is a key factor. This is relevant for Measure 6.1 as the submission required a business plan on which emphasis was placed on the enlargement of the holding.

Furthermore, it is important that any changes in criteria during the programming period, for any of the measures are well-communicated with potential applicants and agricultural organisations. This will ensure that any interested beneficiaries are aware of such changes and can thus make the necessary considerations.

Finally, ensuring that the needs of young farmers are effectively addressed beyond the implementation of the current programme should also be considered. Generational renewal is also expected to play an important part in the future CAP strategic Plan. Indeed, attracting young farmers and facilitating business development in rural areas is one of the nine Strategic Objectives of the CAP post 2020. The regulation proposal ⁵³ notes that at least 2% of the national envelope for direct payments will have to be devoted towards this objective. This amount can either be allocated in the

⁵³ COM/2018/392 final - 2018/0216 (COD)

form of top up income support under Pillar I and/or lump sum payment grant under Pillar II. Specific to Pillar II, the maximum amount of aid for the installation of young farmers and rural business start-ups has been increased from €70,000 (as in the current Programme) to € 100,000.

Worth considering in the design for the upcoming programme is the preferential conditions which may be set for young farmers for investment support and possibly the promotion of cooperation between older and younger farmers. Also, within the Agriculture Knowledge and Innovation System (AKIS), consideration could be given to the needs of young farmers to ensure that young farmers benefit from these interventions.

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Annex I: Telephone Survey



INTERVISTA BIT-TELEFON MAL-BDIEWA ŻĠHAŻAĠH LI JIBBENEFIKAW MILL-MIŻURA 6.1

Jekk jogħġbok ikkonferma li int beneficijarju taħt il-miżura 6.1 għall-bdiewa żgħażaġh taħt il-Programm tal-Iżvilupp Rurali għal Malta.

Iva	
Le	

Dettalji tal-bidwi żaġħżuġh

1. Intervistatur jikkonferma l-isem u ID tal-applikant:

Din għandha tiġi mimlija mill-intervistatur mill-informazzjoni provduta:

Isem u kunjom	
ID	

2. X'inhu l-ogħla livell ta' edukazzjoni tiegħek?

Livell Sekondarju (MQF 1-3)	
Livell Post-Sekondarju (MQF 4)	
Undergraduate Diploma/VET Higher Diploma/Foundation Degree (MQF 5)	
Baċċellerat jew aħjar (MQF 6-8)	

3. Fiex qed jintefqu l-fondi li inataw lilek bis-saħħa ta' dan il-programm?

Żona agrikola maħduma u propjeta' tiegħek	
Żona agrikola maħduma u mikrija	

4. Indika in-numru ta' ettari / tmien ta' raba li huma:

Żona agrikola utilizzata u propjeta' tiegħek	
Żona agrikola utilizzata u mikrija	

5. X'inhi l-attivita' prinċipali tal-art agrikola tiegħek? *Jekk jogħġbok għażel waħda minn dawn.*

Halib	
Mhux fis-settur agrikolu (FI-industrija tal-ikel, eċċ...)	
Ortikultura	
Inbid	
Ħxejjex (Uċuħ tar-raba')	
Bhejjem oħrajn li jirgħu	
Granivori	
Uċuħ tar-raba oħrajn permanenti	
Settur imħallat (Trobija ta kemmbhejjem u ħxejjex)	

6. Tistenna xi tibdil fil-futur qarib rigward il-pjan ta' negozju li ssottomejt?

Iva	Mur fuq Q 6.1
Le	Mur fuq Q 6.2

Importanti li jekk ikun hemm xi tibdil, l-Awtorità ta' Gestiġni għandha tiġi notifikata skont il-proċeduri stabbiliti. Ir-risposta' li qed tingħata f'dan il-kwestjonarju m'hijiex ekwivalenti għal notifika għall-bdil.

6.1 Jekk iva, provdi iktar dettalji fuq kif dan il-pjan ta' negozju huwa mistenni li jiddevja minn dak oriġinali:

6.2 COVID-19 huwa kawża ta' dan it-tibdil?

Iva	
Le	

7. X'miżuri tal-immaniġjar ta' riskju ħadt matul il-pandemija COVID-19?

8. Fuq skala ta' 1 sa 5, b'1 tfisser 'assolutament ma naqbilx' u 5 tfisser 'naqbel ħafna', jekk jogħġbok provdi l-opinjoni tiegħek fuq dawn id-dikjarazzjonijiet relatati mal-għajnuna li rċevejt mill-Miżura 6.1 (Bdiewa Żgħażaġh):

	1 Assolutament ma naqbilx	2 Ma naqbilx	3 Newtrali / Mhux deċiż	4 Naqbel	5 Naqbel ħafna
Kellek dffikultajiet sabiex tiżviluppa pjan ta' negozju					
Sibt il-proċess ta' applikazzjoni kumpless u/jew twil iżżejjed					
Thoss li l-proċess ta' applikazzjoni huwa piż eċċessiv ta' amministrazzjoni					
Il-proċess ta' applikazzjoni huwa għali					
Il-miżura jew applikazzjoni wasslet għal kumplikazzjonijiet fl-użu tal-fondi					

Il-bżonn ta' bdiewa żgħażaġh

9. Fuq skala ta' 1 sa 5, b'1 tfisser 'assolutament ma naqbilx' u 5 tfisser 'naqbel ħafna', kemm taħseb li dawn il-fatturi li ġejjin qed jaffettwaw lil-bdiewa żgħażaġh *b'mod ħazin*:

	1 Assolutament ma naqbilx	2 Ma naqbilx	3 Newtrali / Mhux deċiż	4 Naqbel	5 Naqbel ħafna
Il-prezzi għoli tal-art					
Il-fatt li l-bdiewa anzjani ma jkunux iridu jirtiraw					
L-art disponibbli għall-kiri jew għall-bejgħ					
L-aċċessibiltà' għas-self ta' flus					
L- aċċessibiltà' għall-sussidji jew fondi					
Il-kumplessità' biex tapplika għall-fondi tal-UE (EU) u/jew sapport ieħor pubbliku					
Aċċess għal ħaddiema kwalifikati					
L-aċċess għal dħul suffiċenti u stabbli					
L-aċċess għal taħriġ					

In-nuqqas ta' flessibilita' fit-taħriġ (eż: ħin, metodi ta' taqħlim, eċċ)					
Il-fatt li m'hemmx min jibdilli fir-razzett					
Nuqqas ta' aċċess għal servizzi ta' pariri u estensjoni					

10. Indika 3 htigijiet mil-lista t'hawn taħt, li gew parzjalment jew kompletament indirizzati bis-sapport li rċevejt taħt il-Miżura 6.1 (bdiewa żgħażaġh) tal-Programm tal-Iżvilupp Rurali għal Malta.

Htigijiet Ewlenin	Għażel 3
Il-prezzijiet għoljin tal-artijiet	
Il-fatt li l-bdiewa anzjani ma jkunux iridu jirtiraw	
L-art disponibbli għall-kiri jew għall-bejgħ	
L-aċċessibiltà għas-self ta' flus	
L- aċċessibiltà għall-sussidji jew fondi	
Il-kumplessità biex tapplika għall-fondi tal-UE (EU) u/jew sapport ieħor pubbliku	
Aċċess għal haddiema kwalifikati	
L-aċċess għal dħul suffiċenti u stabbli	
L-aċċess għal taħriġ u għarfien t' użu	
In-nuqqas ta' flessibilita' fit-taħriġ (eż: ħin, metodi ta' taqħlim, eċċ)	
Il-fatt li m'hemmx min jibdilli fir-razzett	
Nuqqas ta' aċċess għal servizzi ta' pariri u estensjoni	

Żvilupp ta' hiliet

11. Jekk jogħġbok indika jekk attendejtx xi korsijiet ta' taħriġ minn mindu applikajt għas-sapport taħt il-Miżura 6.1

Iva	Mur fuq Q 12
Le	Mur fuq Q 15

12. Dan kien taħriġ obbligatorju?

Iva	Mur fuq Q 15
Le	Mur fuq Q 13

13. Jekk jogħġbok provdi dawn id-dettalji:

L-isem tal-kors tat-taħriġ	
L-isem ta' min provda s-servizz	

14. Qed tippjana biex tattendi korsijiet ta' taħriġ oħrajn fil-futur?

Iva	
Le	

15. Ikkumpara l-hila tiegħek fil-kompetenzi t'hawn taħt, bejn kif kienu qabel u wara li irċevejt sapport mill-Miżura 6.1 tal-Programm tal-Iżvilupp Rurali għal Malta.

		Batut/a hafna	Batut/a	Medja	Tajjeb/ Tajba	Tajjeb/ Tajba hafna
Filiet relatati mal-immanigar, strategija u promozzjoni tal-prodott agrikolu	Qabel					
	Wara					
Filiet relatati mal-applikazzjoni tas-sussidji/grants/kreditu	Qabel					
	Wara					
Filiet finanzjarji	Qabel					
	Wara					
Filiet interpersonali u dawk relatati mal-abbilta' biex issib u tohloq shab godda	Qabel					
	Wara					
Filiet operattivi (li jistgħu jinkludu l-ipproċessar tal-ikel, immanigjar tal-ilma, immanigjar tal-iskart, eċċ...)	Qabel					
	Wara					

Titjib tal-kompetittività'

16. Kieku ma rċevjtx il-fondi taħt il-Miżura 6.1 (Bdiewa żgħażaġh), xorta kont tikkunsidra tmexxi bil-*Business Plan* li ippreparajt għan-negozju tiegħek?

Iva	
Le	

17. Bis-sapport li rċevjtx taħt il-Miżura 6.1, taħseb li ser jkollok zieda ta' profitti fl-attività' agrikola tiegħek?

Iva	Mur fuq Q 18
Le	Mur fuq Q 19

18. Jekk iva, b'kemm qed taħseb li se jżiedu l-profitti mill-attività' agrikola?

B' 0 – 10%	
B' 10 – 25%	
B' 25 – 50%	
B' 50 – 70%	
B' iktar minn 70%	

19. Jekk le, għalfejn?

--

20. Sabiex timplimenta il-proġett li qed tippromponi, qed tippjana biex timpjega haddiema godda?

Iva	Mur fuq Q 21
Le	Mur fuq Q 22

21. Kemm-il haddiem?

Provdi numru.

22. Tistenna li tiffirka xi spejjeż bis-saħħa tal-investiment li qed tippromponi?

Iva	Mur fuq Q 23
Le	Mur fuq Q 24

23. Indika persentaġġ ta' kemm taħseb li ser tiffranka spejjeż.

<i>Provdni persentaġġ %.</i>

24. Indika it-tip ta' investiment li qed jiġi appoġġjat bis-saħħa tal-Miżura 6.1 għall-bdiewa żgħażaġħ:

Kiri/Trasferiment ta' art li għal dan hlas kien provdut	Mur fuq Q 25
Serer u/jew imħażen agrikoli	Mur fuq Q 26
Xiri u installazzjoni t' apparat/ghodda/makkinarju	Mur fuq Q 26
Xiri ta' bhejjem	Mur fuq Q 26
IT/Sit elettroniku/Kummerċjalizzazzjoni/Studji	Mur fuq Q 26
Taħriġ	Mur fuq Q 26
Tagħmir tal-enerġija effiċjenti / Pannelli fotovoltajċi	Mur fuq Q 27
Materjal għall-irrigazzjoni/Sistemi tal-iffiltrar jew trattament tal-ilma	Mur fuq Q 28
Gibjun	Mur fuq Q 28
Oħrajn, jekk jogħġbok speċifika	

25. Indika l-eta' tal-persuna li trasferiet il-propjeta' waqt il-hin tat-trasferiment

Eta' (bejn wieħed u ieħor)	
----------------------------	--

26. Kemm tistenna li l-produzzjoni se tiżdied b'riżultat tal-investiment?

B' 0 – 10%	
B' 10 – 25%	
B' 25 – 50%	
B' 50 – 70%	
B' iktar minn 70%	

27. B'kemm taħseb li l-kont tad-dawl se jonqos wara l-installazzjoni ta' tagħmir tal-enerġija effiċjenti u/jew pannelli fotovoltajċi?

B' 0 – 10%	
B' 10 – 25%	
B' 25 – 50%	
B' 50 – 70%	
B' iktar minn 70%	

28. B'kemm taħseb li l-kont tal-konsum tal-ilma se jonqos wara l-installazzjoni ta' sistema tal-irrigazzjoni u/jewgibjun?

B' 0 – 10%	
B' 10 – 25%	
B' 25 – 50%	
B' 50 – 70%	
B' iktar minn 70%	

Annex II: Letter to Beneficiaries

EMCS Limited
Level 2, Regional Business Centre
University Heights, Msida MSD 1751 - Malta
T +356 2777 2777 F +356 2131 8677
E info@emcs.com.mt
www.emcs.com.mt



[Isem]

[Indirizz]

[Data]

Għażiż/a [Titlu u kunjom]

Re: Sapport taht il-miżura 6.1 (Bdiewa żgħażaġh) fil-Programm tal-Iżvilupp Rurali għal Malta

B'referenza għall-ittra mehmuża mill-Awtorità ta' Ġestjoni għall-Programm tal-Iżvilupp Rurali għal Malta 2014-2020 EMCS Ltd flimkien mal-partecipazzjoni ta' E-Cubed Consultants u Adi Associates qed iwettqu evalwazzjoni sabiex jiġbru iżjed informazzjoni rigward il-Miżura 6.1 (Art 19 ta' Reg (EU) 1305/2013), dedikata għall-bdiewa żgħażaġh. Dan il-proċess huwa maħsub sabiex jikkontribwixxi fit-titjib tal-implimentazzjoni ta' dan il-Programm. Din l-evalwazzjoni qed tiġi ffinanzjata mill-Fond Agrikolu Ewropew għall-Iżvilupp Rurali.

F'qasir żmien, int ser tiġi kuntattjat/a minn wieħed mir-riċerkaturi tagħna li ser jistaqsik sett ta' mistoqsijiet li jagħmlu parti minn dan il-proċess. Għall-informazzjoni tiegħek, mehmuża għandek issib kopja ta' dan il-kwestjonarju. Jekk jogħġbok żomm f'moħħok li:

- Il-mistoqsijiet ser jassistu fl-evalwazzjoni tal-Miżura konċernata.
- Dettalji personali ser jiġu mistoqsija biss sabiex jikkonfermaw li int benefiċċjarju taht il-Miżura 6.1.
- Kwalunkwe informazzjoni ser tibqa' strettament kunfidenzjali.
- Il-kwestjonarju ser jsir b'mod anonimu, u hadd m'hu ser jkun jista' jitraċċja it-tweġibiet tiegħek.
- Kwalunkwe rapport ser jiġi ġenerat permezz tal-agregazzjoni u analiżi tal-informazzjoni kollha miġbura f'daqqa.

Fid-dawl ta' dan, huwa importanti hafna li tkun onest fit-tweġibiet tiegħek. F'każ li jkollok xi diffikultajiet jew mistoqsijiet, tiddejjaxq tagħmel kuntatt magħna. Grazzi tal-kooperazzjoni tiegħek.

Dejjem tiegħek,

Alison Mizzi
Direttur

F'kollaborazzjoni ma'



Programm tal-Iżvilupp Rurali għal Malta 2014-2020

Proġett parzjalment iffinanzjat mill-Unjoni Ewropea
Rata ta' Ko-finanzjament:
75% Unjoni Ewropea; 25% Gvern ta' Malta



*Il-Fond Agrikolu Ewropew għall-Iżvilupp Rurali:
L-Ewropa tinvesti f'żoni rurali*

Directors: John Farrugia, Geraldine Schembri, Robert Geismann, Stefano Mallia
Bankers: HSBC plc; IBAN MT67 MMEB 4406 0000 0000 0623 3019 001
Registered in Malta Company number C 68521

SESSJONI TA' KONSULTAZZJONI

It-Tnejn 14 ta' Dicembru, 2020 fil-5:00pm

BDIEWA ŽĠHAŽAGĦ

L-Awtorità tal-Immaniġġjar tal-Programm tal-Iżvilupp Rurali, fi ħdan id-Diviżjoni għall-Fondi u l-Programmi, għaddejja bl-evalwazzjoni tal-Programm tal-Iżvilupp Rurali għal Malta 2014-2020.

Din l-evalwazzjoni qed issir minn EMCS bil-partecipazzjoni ta' E-Cubed Consultants u Adi Associates. Bħala parti mill-proċess, bħalissa qed issir evalwazzjoni tal-Miżura 6.1 Bdiewa Žgħażagħ.

Ir-riċerkaturi jixtiequ jisingħu mingħandkom il-bdiewa žgħażagħ li ma bbenefikawx mill-Miżura 6.1 f'sessjoni virtwali li se tittella' fid-14 ta' Diċembru 2020 fil-5pm.

IRREGISTRA

eu-funding@emcs.com.mt



EMCS
TAX > ADVISORY

E
E-CUBED CONSULTANTS
Economics for Creative Solutions

Adi
ASSOCIATES



Programm tal-Iżvilupp Rurali għal Malta 2014-2020

Proġett parzjalment iffinanzjat mill-Unjoni Ewropea
Rata ta' Ko-finanzjament:
75% Unjoni Ewropea; 25% Gvern ta' Malta



**Il-Fond Agrikolu Ewropew għall-Iżvilupp Rurali:
L-Ewropa tinvesti f'żoni rurali**

FOCUS GROUP

Monday, 14th December, 2020 at 5:00pm

YOUNG FARMERS

The Funds and Programming Division (Managing Authority of the EAFRD) has commissioned an evaluation study on the Rural Development Programme 2014-2020.

The evaluation is being carried out by EMCS with the participation of E-Cubed Consultants Ltd and Adi Associates who are currently in the process of undertaking a thematic evaluation on young farmers, more specifically Measure 6.1 Young Farmers.

If you are a Young Farmers who did not benefit from Measure 6.1 you are invited to take part in a focus group on Monday, December 14, 2020 at 5:00pm.

REGISTER

eu-funding@emcs.com.mt



EMCS
TAX > ADVISORY

E
E-CUBED CONSULTANTS
Economics for Creative Solutions

Adi
ASSOCIATES



Rural Development Programme for Malta 2014-2020

Part financed by the European Union
Co-financing Rate:
75% European Union; 25% Government of Malta



*The European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development:
Europe investing in rural areas*

SESSJONI TA' KONSULTAZZJONI

It-Tnejn, 14 ta' Diċembru 2020, fil-5pm

BDIEWA
ŽĠHAŽAĠ

Bdiewa li għandhom inqas minn 41 sena
li ma bbenefikawx minn fondi tal-UE
huma mistednin jipparteċipaw f' din
id-diskussjoni.

IRREGISTRA

eu-funding@emcs.com.mt / +356 2777 7777

EMCS
TAX > ADVISORY

E
E-CUBED CONSULTANTS
BUSINESS & TAX CONSULTANTS

Adi
ASSOCIATES



Programm tal-Iżvilupp Rurali għal Malta 2014-2020

Proġett parzjalment iffinanzjat mill-Unjoni Ewropea
Rata ta' Ko-finanzjament:
75% Unjoni Ewropea; 25% Gvern ta' Malta



Il-Fond Agrikolu Ewropew għall-Iżvilupp Rurali:
L-Ewropa tinvesti f'żoni rurali

FOCUS GROUP

Monday, 14th December, 2020 at 5:00pm

YOUNG
FARMERS

All farmers under the age of 41 who did not benefit from EU funds are invited to join this discussion.

REGISTER

eu-funding@emcs.com.mt / +356 2777 7777

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E
E-CUBE CONSULTANTS
BUSINESS & TAX CONSULTANTS

Adi
ASSOCIATES



Rural Development Programme for Malta 2014-2020

Part financed by the European Union
Co-financing Rate:
75% European Union; 25% Government of Malta



*The European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development:
Europe investing in rural areas*

Annex IV: Letter to Stakeholders

MINISTERU GĦALL-AFFARIJJIET BARRANIN U
EWROPEJ

SEGRETARJAT PARLAMENTARI
GĦALL-FONDI EWROPEJ



MALTA

MINISTRY FOR FOREIGN AND EUROPEAN
AFFAIRS

PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARIAT
FOR EUROPEAN FUNDS

Id-Divizjoni għall-Fondi u Programmi

Funds and Programmes Division

LIL MIN TIKKONĊERNA

**Suġġett: Talba għall-kooperazzjoni fl-evalwazzjoni tal-Programm tal-Iżvilupp Rurali għal Malta
2014-2020**

Għażiż sinjur/a,

L-Awtorità ta' Gestjoni tal-Programm tal-Iżvilupp Rurali fi hdan id-Divizjoni għall-Fondi u Programmi għaddejja bl-evalwazzjoni tal-Programm tal-Iżvilupp Rurali għal Malta.

Din l-evalwazzjoni qed tiġi mwettqa minn EMCS Ltd bil-partecipazzjoni ta' E-Cubed Consultants u Adi Associates. Bħala parti mill-proċess ta' evalwazzjoni, f'dan il-mument, qed issir evalwazzjoni fuq il-Miżura 6.1 (bdiewa żgħażaġh) (Artikolu 19 tar-regolament (UE) numru 1305/2013 tal-Parlament Ewropew u tal-Kunsill tas-17 ta' Diċembru 2013 dwar appoġġ għall-iżvilupp rurali mill-Fond Agrikolu Ewropew għall-Iżvilupp Rurali (FAEŻR)). Għal dan il-ghan, ser jinżammu numru ta' intervisti u laqgħat ma' diversi partijiet konċernati.

F'dan il-kuntest, il-kuntrattur jista' jikkuntattja sabiex tikkontribwixxi għal dan il-proċess. Naprezzaw il-kooperazzjoni tiegħek f'dan ir-rigward.

F'każ li jkollok xi diffikultajiet jew mistoqsijiet, tiddejjax tagħmel kuntatt miegħi fuq id-dettalji t'hawn taht.

Nirringrazzjak bil-quddiem għall-kooperazzjoni tiegħek.

Dejjem tiegħek,

Kenneth Scicluna

Chief Coordinator (Agriculture & Rural Development)

Email: rdd.mfea@gov.mt

Telephone: +356 2200 1146



Programm tal-Iżvilupp Rurali għal Malta 2014-2020

Proġett parzjalment iffinanzjat mill-Unjoni Ewropea
Rata ta' Ko-finanzjament:
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**Il-Fond Agrikolu Ewropew għall-Iżvilupp Rurali:
L-Ewropa tinvesti f'żoni rurali**

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