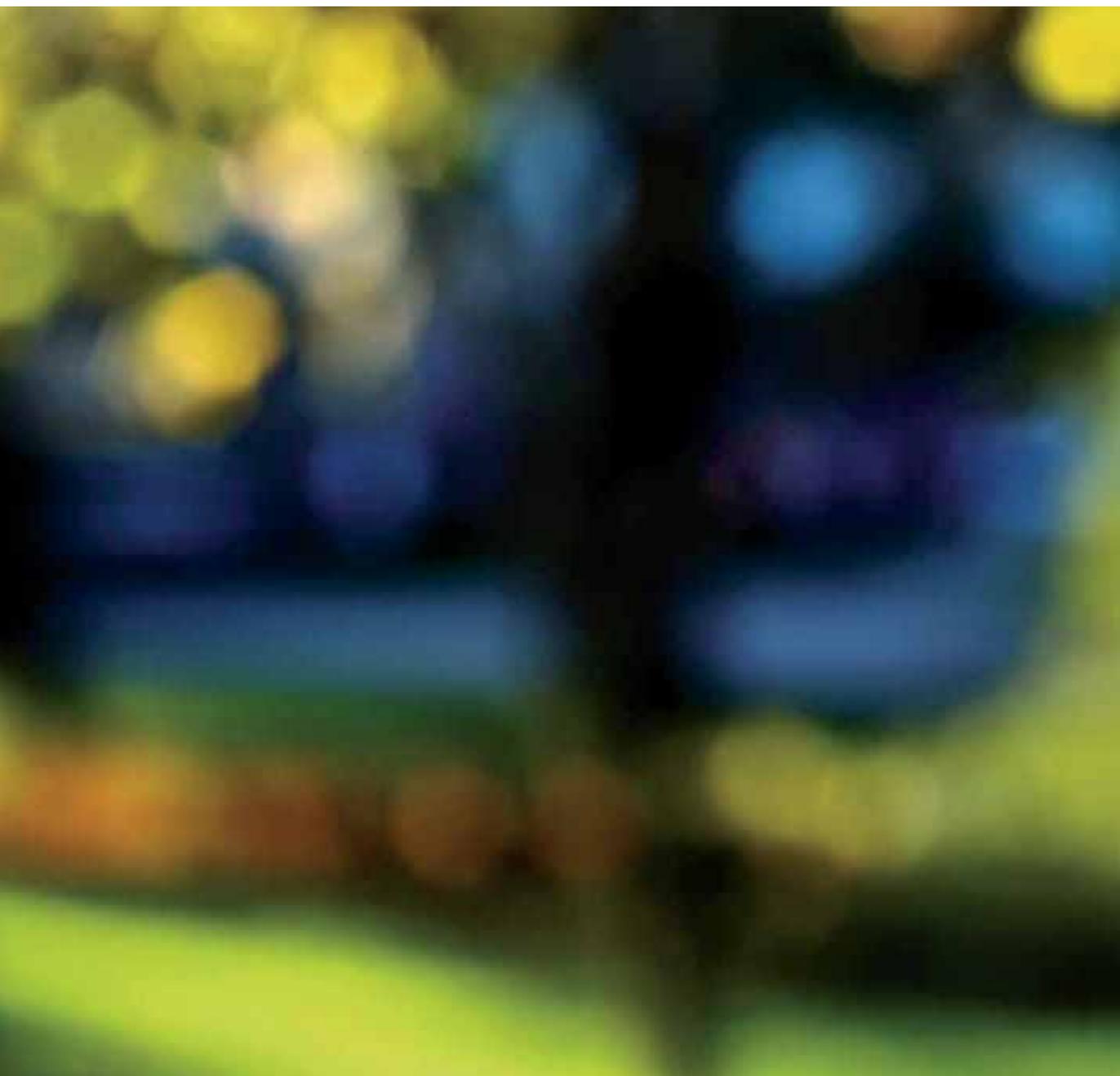


GREEN JOBS FROM A SMALL STATE PERSPECTIVE. CASE STUDIES FROM MALTA.

Saviour Rizzo (ed)



**GREEN EUROPEAN
FOUNDATION**



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Foreword

Nighat Urpani (President, Ceratonia Foundation) and Claude Weinber
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The economic turmoil and the financial crisis faced by most of the European Union Member States can represent an opportunity to address the needs of the time by embarking on the ecological transformation of current production and consumption models in our societies. This transformation of the economy will entail a transformation of Europe's employment strategies. Many of the jobs which are likely to be in demand in the future may involve tasks and require abilities different from those being demanded today. This is why we have to discuss the needed changes to the labour force and to analyse the prerequisites for the creation of green jobs, as well as the characteristics of these jobs.

The European Commission's "Europe 2020" strategy to create a smart, green, inclusive and high employment economy in the next decade is an ambitious project that could be successful if certain conditions are fulfilled. The competences of Europe's workforce must be enhanced through the appropriate educational measures. At the same time, the new impetus to produce higher quality, more innovative and sustainable products has to be embedded in a regulatory and supportive framework to remain competitive in the globalised market economy.

The Green European Foundation (GEF) has been working extensively for the past three years on a Green New Deal for Europe – a comprehensive response to the current economic, financial, social and environmental crisis. The Green New Deal puts forward a set of reforms at micro- and macro-economic levels aimed at ensuring high levels of prosperity and well-being. The creation of decent employment and re-thinking the role work plays in our societies are central parts of this response, and thus need to be thoroughly addressed. This is how the project "Green Jobs from a Small State Perspective" developed by GEF with the support of Ceratonia Foundation in Malta came about. The project discusses the

nature of work in European societies, focusing on the nature and quality of the green jobs that are created in sustainable economies. Questions such as how to create employment strategies that foster a better work-life balance, increased gender equality and allow for more emphasis on leisure time, community participation and family life are a central part of this endeavour.

This collection of articles focuses on the Europe 2020 Strategy to create new skills and employment opportunities and its relevance for Malta, as one of the smallest Member States of the EU. The publication was preceded by a conference on the topic with academia and civil society organisations, and thus it constituted a good opportunity to start discussions about green employment strategies. As reforming the labour market, as well as creating new green jobs is a resource intensive process, Malta was chosen as an example of a small state, without extensive financial, or natural resources that would facilitate this transformation. We find it a worthwhile case study that constitutes an example for other Member States.

One of the basic ideas of Green policy is that an efficient use and a sustainable production of energy are key elements for securing our common future as they will restructure our economy and guarantee social inclusion and security. These new, renewable energy sectors are also labour intensive. If Europe is to retain a strong economy and to remain competitive and innovative in the global market, it needs to ensure that its education and training structures provide training in key competences. Ongoing dialogue between training providers and industry representatives must be created and maintained. Not claiming to have found any ultimate responses to the above indicated issues, the Green European Foundation and Ceratonia Foundation are happy to have raised some questions to help steer the discussions around the type of jobs that need to be created to facilitate a sustainable future.

List of Contributors

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Maria Brown lectures in Sociology at the University of Malta, as well as Systems of Knowledge at Giovanni Curmi Higher Secondary School. She is pursuing her studies at doctoral level with a dissertation on community empowerment and critical education. She contributed with her research work to the EU FP6 Includ-ED Project. Research interests include education, work, social policy and research methods and she has published in these areas.

Christine Cutajar studied at the Universities of Malta and Padova in Italy, where she obtained her first degree in Psychology. Recently she has completed an EDE (Ecovillage Design Education) course in Findhorn Foundation in Scotland, which incorporates the principles of sustainable development for transition towns and design for sustainability. She is currently following a Master

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Saviour Rizzo (Editor) as a former director of the Centre for Labour Studies at the University of Malta has been involved in various programmes and projects related to employment relations. His publications include the National Background Paper on the Restructuring Process in Malta which was submitted to European Commission Employment, Social Affairs, "Evolving Industrial Relations in Malta" (Agenda 2003 – co-authored) "The Dual Worker Family in Malta" (CLS-FES 2006) and peer reviewed articles related to the world of work.

Vivan Storlund studied law at the University of Finland. She is an independent researcher and freelance journalist. Her main fields of research are working life and civil society especially in relation to economic, social and cultural rights as well as social justice. With regards to work, her focus is on work that does not fit the narrow premises of labour law, mainly artistic work.

Chapter 1. The Parameters of a Green Sustainable Economy

Saviour Rizzo

At the polls the Greens may not have succeeded in getting the necessary quota of votes to allow them to share power with the major political parties. Nevertheless they can be heartened by the fact that the principles underlying the policy of a green economy, which they have been vocally espousing since their inception, have seeped in mainstream politics. Indeed the focus on this issue marks a paradigm shift in the political scenario.

In their public speeches politicians and policy makers speak very favourably about the green sustainable policy. They may even express their commitment to the principles underlying its implementation such as the de-carbonization of the economy, the protection of the eco system and biodiversity and the preservation and/or restoration of environmental quality. In their eagerness to convince us of the genuineness of their beliefs or to substantiate their argument they make a number of statements which by and large express the following sentiments:

- the state of the environment is linked to the quality of life;
- a healthy and sustainable environment is considered to be crucial to development and competitiveness;
- we have to put our society on the path which is cleaner and more energy efficient.

If serious efforts have been made to take concrete measures aimed at translating these statements and their underlying principles into viable strategies we would by now have been experiencing green collar job inflation. This has not happened and even the most ardent supporter of green energy will admit that it is very unlikely to happen in the near future. In spite of the wide consensus which the principles underlying the green economy have generated, the deep structural and systematic reform which is needed for their implementation has still not been made. Rather than being perceived as the ideological tools to a restructuring of the economy in a socially responsible way, these principles, to many politicians, smacks more of tokenism and political correctness. Indeed a review of green policy, on a micro and macro level of the economy, reveals a wide gap between rhetoric and reality. This can be confirmed by the way labour statistics are com-

plied on a national and international basis. Green jobs still do not feature in any of the categories of the jobs listed in the Statistical Classification of Economic Activities in the European Community, referred to as NACE (*Nomenclature des activités économiques*) wherein jobs are categorized into 99 different codes each of which comprises various sub-sections of economic activities.

From the foregoing one may conclude that there is a lack of a political will to address the issue. But blaming the political class for their failure to invest in the green economy and/or to promote its underlying principles raises the question about the role of civil society. It has to be emphasized that environmental governance promotes collaboration among diverse parties in order to develop creative and effective solutions to environmental problems, as well to generate commitment to the outcomes that are achieved. The engagement of civil society actors, primarily NGOs, has become an accepted aspect of environmental governance in democratic society. In some areas related to environmental issues such those “not in my backyard” type, environmental activism takes the form of opposition to activities which are believed to be harmful to society.

In the area of green policy there is no scope for this type of opposition. The promotion of green jobs tends to be proactive in nature and hence the activism in this regard by environmentalist groups has to be collaborative in spirit rather than confrontational. The green party in Malta, Alternattiva Demokratika (AD), has been engaging in this type of environmental activism aimed at creating green jobs. The same cannot be said about the other environmentalist movements. This does not of course imply that they are insensitive to the promotion of green jobs. What it does however imply is that in their lobbying they have not shown the same level of sensitivity and have not been vocal about this issue to the same extent as AD. I would even dare say it is not very high on their agenda.

Of course they are not being accused of being in a total state of oblivion about the issue of green jobs and its correlation to sustainable development. The data emanating from the qualitative survey conducted by Briguglio, Brown and Aquilina (*Chapter 2*) reveals that the key persons

involved in the Maltese civil society are aware of and knowledgeable about the potential of a green policy to create jobs and improve the quality of life. They are also aware of the constraints, such as the diseconomies of scale, inherent in a small, island, sovereign state that can pose problems to the implementation of green policy. However they do not believe that these constraints should act as a deterrent. In other words if our political class really believes in the implementation of an economic sustainable policy they have to look for innovative means and exploit the material and human resources available in the island. Consultative and participative process, in which as active players in Maltese civil society they should be actively involved, would, according to these key persons, make the implementation of this policy more effective and successful.

The paper by Baldacchino and Cutajar (*Chapter 3*) tends to corroborate this view since they maintain that these constraints rather than acting as a deterrent could act as a stimulus for craftsmanship and sustainable entrepreneurship. This assertion is made in the context of the valuable contribution which can be made by the artisan to the holistic values of sustainable development. As a small island lacking natural resources Malta depends on the importation of raw material. By using the material available, the local artisan would contribute to the reduction of the products which are imported and in so doing could act as a model of a sustainable entrepreneur. The authors argue that craftsmanship can “increase the resilience of a society by preserving and enhancing the pool of local knowledge and skills”. By engaging in a lively debate about this issue and providing some very insightful perceptions, the two authors drive home the point that we should not let ourselves be subsumed by the forces of globalisation. While acknowledging the impact of these forces and the need to cope with them to maintain the viability of our economy we should also think and act locally. This is not simply an exercise to protect our indigenous culture but should also be an integral part of the sustainable green policy. In a highly liberalised, economic market characterized by mass production and cut-throat competition the survival and sustenance of craftsmanship call for some protective measures. That is one of the policy options recommended to our policy makers by the two authors.

Another valuable human resource which through its proper utilization can give a valid contribution to the goals of a green policy is the elderly. Formosa (*Chapter 4*), on the basis of an in depth interview of five older persons active in voluntary work with environmentalist organisations, argues that Maltese society is not making proper use of this resource. At a time when the demographic statistics show that in Malta the persons aged 60 and over in 2010 represents 23 per cent of the total population and the projections clearly indicate an increasing trend for the next fifty years, this mismanagement of human resources is a searing indictment of contemporary society. The policy options and strategies to address this issue being recommended by Formosa can go a long way to improve the utilization of this human resource.

What these three papers imply is that we have to be resourceful and innovative in the formulation and implementation of a sustainable green policy. Damato (*Chapter 5*) goes to the core of this issue by looking at the possibilities of the Maltese economy through innovative measures and practices to generate green jobs in the manufacturing industry. Damato’s paper focuses on the various facets and sectors within this industry which can contribute to value added economic activities and at same time generate green jobs. It is argued that the limited economies of scale can be a serious constraint to the manufacturing industry of a small country in the sense that it sets limits to the room of manoeuvrability which is needed for eco-innovative initiatives. To provide more space for an innovative entrepreneurial climate, that is so vital for the creation of green jobs, we need to remove or simplify the compliance regulations that entail high operating costs.

But green jobs, Storlund argues in her paper (*Chapter 6*), is not just about innovation but also about the challenges to the conventional economic theory of pay. Whether by default or design this knowledge-based economy operating in a globalised market has increased rather than decreased the number of low-paid jobs. Drawing on the work of Joseph Stiglitz, Storlund argues that a green policy has to be built on the principles of equity and fairness. The thread of the argument in this paper is that if green is the qualifying criterion for work in a sustainable economy, a policy of a basic income could attract more people to work in the green industry.

As contemporary society is grappling with new problems and challenges related to its habitat and environment these five papers enable us to reflect and look critically at ourselves. The analyses and the recommendations made by the authors of these five papers do not offer a patented solution to the contradictions of this society. They however enable us to engage in a lively debate that offers us practical insights of how society ought to be. This ideal can serve to show the terrain which needs to be covered to achieve the aims of a green sustainable economy. The more the policy approximates to that ideal the more effective and successful it is judged to be. The ideals expressed in these five papers may thus offer some parameters for this ongoing debate about the feasibility of policy options related to a sustainable economic development.

Given that these parameters are based on the experiences of the smallest country among the EU member states, doubts may be cast about their relevance to European countries. Such doubts may not turn out to be well founded. It should be stressed that however small in size and population Malta may be, it qualifies as a mature exponent of development in the global village. Indeed it has all the trappings and characteristics of large nation states. Like other developed and developing countries it managed to build a thriving manufacturing base consisting of a clutch of foreign-based, export-oriented firms. In line with the trends in Europe this sector has been registering a continuous decline. To make up for the loss of jobs in this sector efforts

have been made to expand the service industry notably in the Financial Intermediation sector which has been registering significant increases in gainful employment. To make this shift to the service industry and high value economic activity the Maltese economy had to go through a restructuring process which brought changes in the occupational structure. What this implies is that although the external and internal drivers for economic change in Malta may have some peculiar features, by and large they are not dissimilar to those found in other European countries. In other words in the Maltese economic and political scenario there are more forces of convergence rather than divergence from that of the European mainland. Thus the road map that has to be designed and followed towards a green economy need not be much different from that of other European countries.

In constructing self reliant models of development the necessary variables among different economies tend to be more general rather than idiosyncratic. The challenge is to delineate which functions and capacities are necessary and adapt the lessons in the context of the pre-existing conditions and the economic and political exigencies. This is what the papers attempted to do. By highlighting the contradictions inherent in Malta, they may make a valid contribution to the stimulation of awareness of important current trends that offer opportunities for a new approach to the policy of sustainable development and economic restructuring across Europe.

Chapter 2. A Civil Society Perspective of Sustainable Energy Policy and Green Jobs in Malta as a Small EU State

Michael Briguglio, Maria Brown, Diana Aquilina

Abstract

Sustainable energy policy and its potential to create green jobs in Malta, as seen from the point of view of Maltese civil society, provides the basis for a critical analysis of the development of environmental policies in Malta. The discussion is based on data emanating from a qualitative type of survey conducted among the key persons involved in the main organisations representing the Maltese civil society. What emerged from this data is that there is a high level of awareness among members of Maltese civil society about the need to create more green jobs and the formulation of an effective policy of sustainable development. Respondents stressed the challenges inherent in a small island sovereign state suffering from peripherality and insularity. However while acknowledging these constraints, respondents expressed a high degree of optimism about the implementation of an effective green policy. They maintain that part of the solution lies in devising innovative practices by means of which Maltese policy makers would exploit Malta's geographical position and harness all possible material and human resources. However to achieve such a goal the process has been consultative and participative.

SMALL STATES, GREEN JOBS AND SUSTAINABLE ENERGY: THE NEED FOR A GREEN NEW DEAL

Small States: Definition and Challenges

There is no single all-encompassing definition of a small state. However, various researchers use population size as an indicator to define a state as small, medium or large (Bernal, 1998 as cited in The World Bank, 2000, p. 3). For example, the Commonwealth Secretariat defines small states as "countries with a population of 1.5 million or less" (<http://www.thecommonwealth.org/Internal/180407/>). Hence, as per definition, EU small member states include: Malta with a population of 0.4 million, followed by Luxembourg (0.5 million inhabitants), Cyprus (0.8 million) and Estonia (1.3 million) (http://europa.eu/about-eu/countries/index_en.htm).

Small states share characteristics that present special development challenges (The World Bank, 2000, p. 1). These include the presence of small local niche markets, insularity, indivisibility and diseconomies of scale (ibid.). Furthermore, remoteness, susceptibility to natural disasters, limited institutional capacity, limited diversification and openness, access to external capital and poverty are also listed as major threats to small states (The World Bank, 2000, pp. 2-3).

The fate of these small states is often tied to their role as platforms for the needs of international capital. However much they try to exploit the powers and jurisdiction which they possess in order to attain self reliance, they might still be forced to play this role. The models which act as reference point for their development are the large nation states on which they depend for investment, consultancy and the specialisation needed for infrastructural and economic projects. This culture of dependency is also visible in initiatives aimed at sustainable development in a small island sovereign state such as Malta.

The provision of sustainable energy is a major challenge for Malta, the smallest EU member state. Malta has the highest energy dependency rate in the EU and one of the highest rates of tonnes of oil consumption equivalent per inhabitant in the EU (Eurostat, 2010, p. 560-2). It occupies the last position in the EU rating as regards share of renewable energy within final energy consumption (ibid p. 575). This paper aims at providing a critical appraisal of policy making in Malta in the field of sustainable energy and its potential to create green jobs.

Defining green jobs

Angelov and Vredin Johansson (2011) compare various official and academic definitions of green jobs. These range from jobs within industries that aim to minimise environmental impact through a range of environmental policies to a more restrictive definition that comprises jobs within the green sectors of the economy. Hence, there may be varying interpretations of the contribution of green jobs to the economy. Angelov

and Vredin Johansson suggest that the green jobs definition of the United Nations Environment Programme (as cited in *ibid.*) is more appropriate than that of others such as Eurostat, as the former “also focuses on industries and jobs that aim at mitigating a specific environmental problem, like de-carbonising the economy” (Angelov & Vredin Johansson, 2011 p. 247). This definition includes all “work in agricultural, manufacturing, research and development (R&D), administrative, and service activities that contribute substantially to preserving or restoring environmental quality”. (UNEP, 2008, p. 3).

Green jobs in relation to the wider economic, political and social contexts

In Malta, a 2007 study was conducted by the Employment and Training Corporation (ETC) which analysed employment figures in a restricted manner, namely in the “environmental goods and services industry” (such as waste management). Its conclusion was that this growing sector employs around 3% of the labour force and contributes around 2% to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (<http://www.greenjobsmalta.com/downloads/ETC%20Report.pdf>). More recently, the draft National Environment Policy of Malta calls for the creation of green jobs. Without providing specific details, it calls for the increase of such jobs by 50% by 2015, for the preparation of a Green Jobs strategy (and a corresponding training strategy) by 2012, and for the setting up of an incubator for green industries by 2014. The Policy says that relevant stakeholders will be consulted in this regard. (OPM, 2011, p. 30).

The backcloth of this Maltese policy making is the projection made by the United Nations Environment Programme (cited by the GEF, 2009, p. 32), which estimates that wind and solar energy will create around 8 million jobs in a 20-year period. Ernst & Young (*ibid.*) estimate the existence of 3.4 million full-time direct and indirect jobs in Europe in 2004, 2.3 million of which are in pollution management and 1 million of which are in resource management.

These projections and their fulfilment have of course to be viewed with cautious optimism since the creation of green jobs is uneven and has to be seen in wider economic, political and social contexts. For example, strict environmental policy may lead to the shifting of employment opportunities to less developed countries with more lax regula-

tions. We therefore need to analyse the quality of green jobs, and not simply the quantity (Angelov and Vredin Johansson, 2011, p. 252). This view emphasised by the European Green Party (Pierini, 2010, p. 12), was endorsed by the European Parliament (2010), following the adoption of the report by Green MEP Elisabeth Schroedter (<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//NONSGML+REPORT+A7-2010-0234+0+DOC+PDF+V0//EN&language=EN>). What the foregoing implies is that a green policy has to strike the ideal balance between the social, environmental and economic development. The basis of this balance should be a sustainable and socially just organisation of the entire economy that optimises employment potential, creates gender equality and faces skill requirements through appropriate education and training.

Angelov and Johansson (2011, p. 264) conclude that:

“Greening the economy will unequivocally have three effects on employment: jobs will be created, substituted and eliminated. It is important to know, therefore, what types of jobs will be lost and created in order to help people adapt and to determine what sort of (re)training is necessary.”

The creation of jobs in the sustainable energy sector is one of the objectives that the EU has set in order to address the global financial crisis, climate change and the rise in oil prices. Sustainable energy refers to a number of approaches to and features of energy consumption such as “efficiency of the use of resources” (Fücks in Schreyer & Mez, 2008, p. 7); supporting citizens in their energy consumption practices (*ibid.*) such as increasing equal distribution of energy sources (Hochfeld *et al.*, 2010, p. 16) and fulfilling the “bulk of energy demands” through renewable energy sources (Fücks in Schreyer & Mez, 2008, p. 7), particularly as a contribution to the local climate (*ibid.*).

Green jobs and the sustainable energy sector

The sustainable energy sector includes all jobs related to all renewable energy industries; construction of energy efficient buildings (Schepelmann, Stock, Koska, Schüle & Reutter, 2009, pp. 24-35) and retro-fitting of existing buildings to improve their energy efficiency (Barbier, 2009, p. 9). It has been argued that job-creation potential of the

sustainable energy sector is difficult to estimate accurately and that many studies overlook additional costs, such as tax (Schepelmann *et al.*, 2009, p. 22). It is also predicted that “as renewable industries mature, they will increasingly be marked by difficult issues of competitiveness, trade rules, and wage differentials that are already familiar topics in other industries” (UNEP, 2008, p. 9).

The point that is often made and has already been emphasised in this text is that a sustainable energy policy is a tool to fight climate change (*ibid.*, p. 15; Schreyer & Mez, 2008, p. 9). This rallying cry is relevant to the European Union, as it has declared its intention of decreasing its reliance on oil, gas, uranium and their market prices (Schreyer & Mez, 2008, p. 9) and lowering energy sources import-dependency (*ibid.*). Moreover, the 2007-2008 global recession was identified as a clear sign that the production methods of the twentieth century have become passé (Hochfeld *et al.*, 2010, p. 16). Indeed, “a knowledge economy and a green economy” feature amongst recommendations to overcome the recession and unemployment. Thus, a policy on sustainable energy that embraces the growth of green jobs does not imply falling back on the last resort but rather being at the forefront of economic and social development through a cutting-edge industry (Schreyer & Mez, 2008, p. 9) given that “the microeconomic development of eco-industries is positive and promising” (Schepelmann *et al.*, 2009, p. 32). For instance “renewable energy generates more jobs per unit of installed capacity, per unit of power generated and per dollar invested” (UNEP, 2008, p. 6).

A sustainable energy policy in the EU

Like the industrial revolution and the accompanying radical changes that have occurred (Fücks in Schreyer & Mez, 2008, p. 7) the Green / Third / Efficiency Industrial Revolution can be the cause of “a comprehensive upheaval” (Hochfeld *et al.*, 2010, p. 14). Hence, the need for a well-educated and computer literate workforce; new technologies that can support EU 2020 targets; common action and transnational research involving pilot projects and common research institutions; locating decentralised renewable energy sources mapped on an intelligent European electricity grid and the application of the principle of subsidiarity – whereby supranational communities come into play only when “objectives cannot be attained fully at the local or national levels, or can

only be attained under unfavourable conditions” (Fücks in Schreyer & Mez, 2008, pp. 8-10).

Respective policy in this regard should not be a “first-aid industrial policy” (Hochfeld *et al.*, 2010, p. 21) but a proactive, preventive, competitive approach with broader social goals (*ibid.*) such as “equity...between all countries as well as between social groups within countries” (Steiner, Somavia, Penalosa & Ryder in UNEP, 2008, p. 7). Amongst many proposed features, when it comes to green jobs, proposals include training programmes, research fellowships and exchanges schemes (Schreyer & Mez, 2008, p. 11); combining a sustainable energy economy to financial services, information technology and e-commerce since the latter are of “substantial importance” particularly to small states’ economies (Commonwealth Secretariat/World Bank Joint Task force on Small States, 2000, pp. 45-46) and “the principle of geographical return...(whereby)...value of projects, investments...are distributed according to individual member states’ contributions” (Schreyer & Mez, 2008, p. 11).

Collaboration between EU countries to exploit member states’ potential for sustainable energy will particularly affect small states that are rich in solar energy (Fücks in Schreyer & Mez, 2008, p. 8) thus reducing their geographical vulnerability to insularity, isolation and dependency on fossil fuel and nuclear energy (Schreyer & Mez, 2008, p. 10). Another projected consequence of the policy would be that, as in past conventions and treaties, not all member states are likely to join immediately (Schreyer & Mez, 2008, p. 10), hence a period of transition and negotiations is foreseen. Small states also have the potential for strategic sustainable energy entrepreneurial alliances to overcome limitations of size and human capital (Hochfeld *et al.*, 2010, p. 15). In this context, small EU states and candidate countries have the potential to become hubs for the production of sustainable energy with related social (e.g. welfare), economic (e.g. growth) and political (e.g. EU enlargement) effects.

Within such a context, the European Greens are amongst the main promoters of green jobs, through the framework of the Green New Deal. A main goal in this regard is the shift towards sustainable energy production, until 100% use of renewable energy is reached in 2050. This would create new employment opportunities whilst enhancing European competitiveness,

energy security, and cutting down CO₂ emissions, amongst other improvements (Pierini, 2010, p. 7). The European Greens believe that during the process, a minimum of 20% renewable energy is to be reached within the EU by 2020, whilst CO₂ emissions are to be reduced by 40% in the same period, compared to 1990 levels. Concurrently, a European energy supergrid should be created (ibid., p. 8). In this regard, the EU has opted for a less ambitious 20 per cent reduction of CO₂ emissions and 20 per cent renewable energy, amidst criticism from Greens and Environmental NGOs for being too weak and for being too lenient on carbon offsets (<http://www.planetark.org/wen/50953>). In this context, Malta requires to produce 10 per cent of energy from clean renewable sources by 2020. This includes energy from transport, electricity, heating and cooling (MEPA, 2010, p. 31). Malta was also obliged to limit CO₂ emissions increase by 5 per cent by 2020 (<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2009:140:0136:0148:EN:PDF>).

These projections mark a shift in the medium and long term aims of policy making on a macro and micro level. The “Green New Deal” policy framework, which is a trade mark of this shift will be dealt with in the following section.

The Green New Deal

The idea of the Green New Deal is partially inspired by the USA’s “New Deal” political framework that was realised in the 1930s by President Roosevelt as a state response to the biggest recession in human history, which consisted of a “growing unemployment, a decline in the economic production and a drastic increase of public debt” (Szwed, 2011, p. 7). At that time, however, the New Deal did not give priority to ecological policy, but focused on social and economic issues. In other words, environmental policy was not an element of activism of any country at that time (ibid.).

The Green New Deal, on the other hand, consists of a number of policies that are aimed to address and solve the threats posed to the natural world, the global economy and our livelihoods by a triple crunch that is the financial crisis, climate change and high oil prices (GND Group, 2008, pp. 1-2). The European Green Party is promoting the Green New Deal through macro-economic, financial and social policies aimed at promoting alternatives to the economic, environ-

mental and social crises (<http://europeangreens.eu/greennewdeal/>). It is also being promoted by others such as the Green European Foundation (GEF), Environmental NGOs, the New Economic Foundation and the United Nations (<http://www.gef.eu/about/structure/>).

As a policy framework, the Green New Deal combines stabilisation in the short term with longer-term restructuring of the financial, taxation and energy systems. While it is international in outlook, it requires action at local, national, regional and global levels (GND Group, 2008, p. 3). It is designed to address the contemporary and future threats confronting society and to restore stability to our financial, political and ecosystems through a “joined-up thinking” (GND Group, 2008, p. 6).

The Green New Deal rests on three important pillars. Firstly, it addresses the re-regulation of the financial markets which works toward sustainable economic development. The second pillar rests on the environmental and social restructuring of society, driven by measures that address climate change, education, social justice as well as green industrial policy. The third and last pillar focuses on the renewal of the social contract between the North and South divide and between the rich and poor countries (Bütikofer and Giegold, 2009, p. 9).

The Green New Deal targets state investment in consumption and production activities which not only produce goods and services, but also prevent, limit, minimise or correct environmental damage to water, air and soil, as well as problems related to waste, noise and eco-systems (GND Group, 2008, p. 10). It offers a 10 year action strategy to protect the global climate, propose new economic dynamism, promote new justice and create sustainable jobs. It also presents itself as an opportunity to tackle the present global crises by embarking in a “common effort” (Bütikofer and Giegold, 2009, p. 36). Hence the Green New Deal presents a concrete framework for world economic recovery, whilst creating green jobs in the process.

It is against the background of this global economy that this study tries to explore the viewpoints of Maltese civil society about the importance and incidence of green jobs in Malta. One of the scopes of the investigation in this study is to see whether key players involved in civil society

have the tendency to fall in the dichotomy trap of defining sustainable energy as either a last resort which has to be lumped or a phenomenon of the latest development. Given the scant reference to small states in the EU literature this academic exercise may hopefully fill a part of this lacuna.

METHODOLOGY

The method used to collect data for this analysis was elite interviewing which consisted of a qualitative research survey conducted to a select group of key persons involved in the main organisations representing the Maltese civil society. On the basis of their relative experience and commitments these key persons are considered to be experts in their respective fields.

Elite interviewing is characterised by a situation in which the respondents are chosen because of their high levels of knowledge of the subject matter under discussion and their general intellectual and expressive abilities (Burnham *et al.*, 2004). According to Beth L. Leech (2002, p. 663 as cited in Burnham *et al.*, 2004), "elite interviewing can be used whenever it is appropriate to treat a respondent as an expert about the topic in hand." Catherine Marshall and Gretchen B. Rossman (1999, p. 114 as cited in A. Zammit, 2002) claim that one of the advantages of elite interviewing is that "elites respond well to inquiries about broad areas of content and to a high proportion of intelligent, provocative, open-ended questions that allow them the freedom to use their knowledge and imagination." Nevertheless, there are three main disadvantages in elite interviewing, namely that in certain cases informants may be difficult to contact because of their busy schedules, they can also refuse to be interviewed and if they decide to participate, they can assume control during the interview because of their position and their experience in public life (Marshall and Rossman, 1999, as cited in A. Zammit, 2002).

Unfortunately some organisations did not reply to the recruitment letter, whilst others turned down the invitation due to lack of time and lack of knowledge. Others promised to send feedback, but never did. The organisations that accepted to take part in this survey were the two largest Maltese trade unions namely the Unjoni Haddiema Magħqudin (UHM) and General Workers Union (GWU) and two Environmental NGOs (Nature Trust Malta and Friends of the Earth (FoE Malta) which are two prominent ENGOs in Maltese civil

society. It is to be noted that the combined membership of the two trade unions taking part in this survey, namely GWU and UHM, amount to more than 80% of the total number of registered unionised members in Malta.

DATA ANALYSIS

The Small States' Context

The literature review of this study pointed out the various development challenges such as remoteness, small local niche markets and diseconomies of scale which small island states such as Malta has to face (The World Bank, 2000, pp. 1-3). However, rather than being considered as drawbacks, these challenges are seen by the participating entities in this research as an opportunity to obtain more environmentally friendly measures which are less damaging to the social and natural environment. In fact, UHM's interviewee stated that if the Maltese Government seriously addresses these challenges to create green jobs, this sector can become one of the main sources of employment on the Maltese islands. This point was corroborated by the GWU's interviewee who stated that the benefits of green jobs would

"far outweigh any traditional job losses as better paid jobs will be created."

Furthermore, the interviewee on behalf of FoE was confident that if the Green Jobs project is well implemented, Malta could

"offer its services to other countries especially since it could be seen as a stepping stone to northern African countries that have a huge potential."

Nature Trust's representative added that while the size of a country might be seen as a handicap,

"if used well can be a case example for other states."

The statements are in line with the beliefs expressed by the World Bank (2000, p. 3) wherein it has been emphasising, that addressing these challenges is in everyone's interest, and an ongoing work program of actions, and the successful development in small states depends on innovative initiatives.

Perceptions on The Green New Deal

When respondents were asked to identify the current challenges that Malta is currently facing in this regard the spokesperson of Nature Trust and Friends of the Earth mentioned amongst other factors the current global economic crisis. This is a challenge which the Green New Deal as a policy framework is aiming to address. The financial crises together with climate change and high oil prices are threats that are endangering the global economy, and in the process also causing harm to the environment and people's lives (GND Group, 2008).

According to the GWU's respondent, various NGOs have organised seminars and acted as pressure groups so that Government meets the renewable energy targets by the year 2020 as laid down by the European Union. Even the FoE's interviewee added that his ENGO is

“lobbying with stakeholders in creating more green jobs with an aim in fulfilling a sustainable future.”

The spokesperson of UHM stated that as a trade union, it is

“continuously promoting sustainable energy development, waste separation, recycling of raw material and thus green jobs creation.”

On the other hand the representative of the GWU stated that his union has been actively pressing government to draw out a strategic plan for the creation of a green economy. This point was highly emphasised by the GWU as otherwise the 2020 EU Renewable Energy targets would not be achieved. The stand taken by these organisations and their proposals are in tune with the calls for policies “to protect the global climate, propose new economic dynamism, promote new justice and create sustainable jobs” (Bütikofer and Giegold, 2009, p. 36).

These views about the way Maltese Government is being advised to address the issue of Green Jobs correspond with the ideal of an “expanded vision” as espoused by Barbier (Barbier, 2009). The focus of the “New Deal” is much wider and deeper than that of 1930s which limited its focus to social and economic issues. In other words the “Green New Deal” environmental policy of the new Green Deal is becoming an “element of

activism” (Szwed, 2011, p. 7) in those countries that want to address the critical situation of the environment as well. The respondents to this survey seem to have grasped this new reality.

Green Jobs in Sustainable Energy: the current situation

Respondents showed different degrees of awareness about the incidence and variety of green jobs in sustainable energy sector in Malta. Specific references to sustainable energy sector were sometimes missing in their responses. NGO representatives focused on jobs in the fields of solar and wind energy, albeit Friends of the Earth Malta (FOE) also referred to academics, thus adopting a more holistic vision of employment within the green industry, as proposed by Angelov and Johansson (2011, p. 247).

Friends of the Earth also recognised that research on sustainable energy is being carried out within the University of Malta. Nevertheless with the exception of the GWU, the respondents do not know of any employee training programmes on sustainable energy that are being organised. The General Workers Union (GWU), claimed that in spite of some initiatives in this regard the programmes are limited.

As regards job conditions and wage levels within Malta's sustainable energy sector, the UHM expressed overall satisfaction as it claims that the wages of unskilled workers in the sustainable energy sector tends to be higher than average wages of their counterparts in other sectors. This view is not shared by the GWU spokesperson who referred to the low wages in waste collection and recycling and the poor working conditions similar to those of low paid workers. The Union also expressed its concern about the loss of traditional jobs through the development of the sustainable energy sector in Malta. However it still feels that benefits outweigh negative outcomes.

The Nature Trust spokesperson said that wages in the sustainable energy sector are very low and working conditions are not satisfactory. According to the ENGO the main challenges related to green jobs in the sustainable energy sector are short-term profits, the need to save existing jobs, the current economic context, and lack of knowledge. Friends of the Earth said that in some sectors, such as those employing highly educated workers, wages were reasonably decent, but in others,

wages were on the low side. The ENGO added that conditions vary between one firm and the other.

Friends of the Earth referred to the lack of an adequate investment in the sustainable energy sector. Although it admits that this may be due to Malta's small size and its relatively limited market it still believes that this sector has the potential to expand and in the process create more jobs as happened in other countries such as Austria:

"Low tech and low cost solutions, such as home made solar water heaters have created a niche in countries like Austria".

These responses tend to confirm the concern expressed by Angelov and Johansson (2011, p. 252) and emphasised by the European Greens (Pierini, 2010, p 12) and the European Parliament (2010) on the unevenness in the creation of green jobs and on the need to look at the quality of such employment.

Incidentally ENGOs, in comparison to other civil society organisations, were recognised by respondents as being the ideal agencies for the generation of awareness on the importance of green jobs. As regards the role of employers and the Government in this regard there was no unanimity. The UHM representative identified government as being one of the key agents for the creation of green jobs through Wasteserv which is a Government agency responsible for waste management), and the state-owned Water Services Corporation. The trade unions through their increasing level of awareness of the importance of such jobs could also play a crucial part. The EU was viewed positively with respect to the creation of green jobs, through its Directives and funding. While overall respondents endorsed the EU-wide policies in this respect FOE and GWU said that these policies should take into account the specific context in which they have to be implemented.

A Sustainable Energy Policy? Challenges and prerequisites

There was wide consensus among respondents about the adoption of a policy on sustainable energy. The UHM expressed its willingness to contribute to the promotion and implementation of such a policy. The GWU tends to look more on the strength of Malta's strategic geographical location which may be used to its advantage. It argues that,

"...we feel that our country is very well geographically placed and has the potential to enter the export market."

Another theme emerging from the data analysis is that the implementation of a policy on green jobs in sustainable energy calls for the need of a well-educated workforce, particularly in the fields of engineering, technical, research and environmental management. NGOs were particularly vocal on this need. With regard to the availability of human and material resources related to green jobs in sustainable energy in Malta, there were mixed opinions among respondents. For example, as regards new technologies that can support EU 2020 targets Friends of the Earth pointed out that,

"...not enough investment has been made in this sector. Some out of the box ideas need to be considered too. Low tech and low cost solutions, such as home-made solar water heaters have created a niche in countries like Austria."

Common and transnational actions featured prominently in the respondents' recommendations. The GWU spokesperson referred to the national and EU pipeline projects involving the allocation of Malta on the EU Intelligence Electricity Grid; the installation of an offshore wind farm and the production of gas from landfill waste. In line with the principle of subsidiarity (Fücks in Schreyer & Mez, 2008, pp. 8-10). Friends of the Earth mentioned government strategies that are independent of EU funding, to indirectly support green jobs by granting subsidies on solar water heaters/solar panels. Nevertheless, UHM noted that in Malta, the management of sustainability projects is centralised within Government. The need for increased inclusion of civil society and decentralisation was also sustained by the General Workers Union:

"...the GWU had on several occasions suggested to Government to give its full assistance for the creation of cooperatives to conduct energy audits for households and industry. This is just one example of a concrete proposal put forward by the GWU."

Respondents were also in synch with a policy advised by the World Bank of combining a sustainable energy economy to broader areas of society, such as financial services, information technology and e-commerce (The World Bank, 2000,

pp. 45-46); they recommended that a sustainable energy policy should provide ample space for collaboration. Friends of the Earth made reference to the ongoing research programmes of the Energy Institute at the University of Malta.

The context within which these policies have to be implemented was emphasised by some respondents. The thrust of their argument is that the policy has to be adapted and/or customised to the specific needs and situation of the state concerned:

“The GWU is very much in favour of adopting an EU-wide mainstreamed policy that takes into account Malta’s limitations and economic circumstances.”

What this implies is that the formulation and implementation of a policy on green jobs in sustainable energy calls for consultation, dialogue and decentralisation. Such a consultative and wide participative approach might enable the actors involved in pre-empting the repercussions, such as the loss of traditional jobs, that might result from the enlargement of green jobs in sustainable energy sector.

CONCLUSION

The data emanating from this qualitative survey shows that the representatives of Maltese civil society are aware of and knowledgeable about the shift towards sustainable-energy use and its potential of creating green jobs. They also

acknowledge that it may lead to some jobs losses in particular sectors. But they still believe that benefits, which this shift can bring about, outweigh these negative repercussions. This strong belief is however tempered with a serious concern about uneven developments within the green job market, which may create skill mismatches and give rise to precarious employment. There seems to be a wide degree of consensus among the key players of Maltese civil society that the smooth implementation of a green sustainable policy depends heavily on a holistic and inclusive approach characterised by consultation and decentralisation, and finding the ideal mix of macro and micro policies. Overall respondents believe that smallness should not act as a deterrent to policy makers. Through innovative policy making and exploitation of Malta’s geographical position and its natural and human resources, the shift to a green sustainable economy can be successfully implemented. The supportive role of civil society as amply shown in the responses of its key respondents fulfils the need identified by Sutton to synthesize economic, social and environmental priorities through the involvement of the State and civil society by means of cooperation at international, national and local levels (Sutton 2004). Such support augurs well for the future prospects of green jobs in Malta.

Hence, consciousness on the green job potential exists within civil society in Malta. In itself, this augurs well for the myriad of challenges and opportunities which Maltese society is likely to encounter in relation to sustainable energy use.

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Chapter 3. The Artisan: A Sustainable Entrepreneur

Leonie Baldacchino, Christine Cutajar

Abstract

The thrust of the argument in this paper is that artisans can make valuable contributions to the holistic values of sustainable development. These contributions could include both environmental concerns, such as the reduction and recycling of waste and the use of local, natural materials in craft production, as well as the social aspects of developing and preserving local knowledge and skills and the provision of sustainable employment and self-actualisation opportunities. These would in turn be of value in economic terms, as they would enable artisans to develop “prosperous, vibrant enterprises” (Ferraro, White, Cox, Bebbington, & Wilson, 2011, p. 21) which incorporate all three (environmental, social and economic) elements of sustainable development, thus transforming artisans into sustainable entrepreneurs. This paper forms part of a larger research project currently being conducted among artisans in Malta, aimed at assessing the current conditions and practices of Maltese artisans and their traditional craft production in the light of creativity, innovation and sustainability. It reports on an informal preliminary round of research carried out with artisans at the Ta’ Qali Crafts Village in Malta, which sheds some light upon certain unfavourable conditions that are threatening the survival of traditional artisans in Malta. These include unfair competition from mass produced imports, an inadequate certification system for genuine crafts, uninformed and unappreciative local customers, and fluctuations in tourist rates. The paper concludes by giving an outline of the steps that should follow this preliminary research, and by making practical recommendations for the survival, prosperity and sustainability of genuine Maltese artisan enterprises in the context of a market that is not congenial to artisans.

Keywords: Artisans; Crafts; Sustainability; Sustainable Entrepreneurship; Small Island State

1. INTRODUCTION

Human creations which are moulded through the creative process of the artisan are often superficially valued solely on the basis of their aesthetic and functional features. However, delving deeper

into the world of artisans, one may be surprised by the powerful and practical contributions that they could make to the holistic values of sustainable development. This paper aims to show that it is possible and beneficial for artisans to incorporate all three (environmental, social and economic) elements of sustainability into their practice, and that in so doing, they would become sustainable entrepreneurs who could contribute to the fourth element of sustainability: a sustainable culture. This paper presses home the point that artisans could and should be sustainable entrepreneurs, thus making a contribution to the literatures on crafts and on sustainable entrepreneurship.

A second aim of this paper is to identify some of the threats and challenges faced by artisans in Malta, given the small island state context in which they operate, coupled with the particular difficulties inherent to the genuine crafts sector. A third and final aim of this paper is to suggest measures which would encourage artisans to engage in sustainable practices and which would safeguard their existence and prosperity in the face of their ever-increasing vulnerability.

After defining the artisan and reviewing the literature on sustainability and sustainable entrepreneurship, this paper provides an overview of some of the ways in which artisans could incorporate the environmental, social and economic elements of sustainability into their practice in order to become sustainable entrepreneurs. It is against such a background that the threats faced by artisans in Malta are highlighted. The focus of this paper is on artisans who are engaged in commercial activity and are therefore deemed to be subject to the same general conditions as other SMEs operating in a small island state. The literature review sheds light on these conditions, even though it has to be stated that the sector-specific challenges to which artisans are susceptible have not yet been adequately documented in the literature. This paper attempts to identify these challenges by means of an informal exploratory study conducted among artisans at Ta’ Qali Crafts Village in Malta. As this paper forms part of a larger research project currently being conducted among artisans in Malta, an outline of the future research steps is provided,

followed by practical recommendations for the survival and sustainability of the genuine artisan enterprise.

2. DEFINING THE ARTISAN

A common approach in defining the artisan is to refer to the crafts that artisans produce and to the processes involved in their production. The artisan is in fact often called a craftsman, while the practice in which artisans are engaged is termed craftsmanship. This paper adopts a similar approach, defining artisans by virtue of the processes in which they engage and the crafts that they produce. What, then, are crafts and craftsmanship?

Metcalf (1997) draws a distinction between “craft-as-skilful-labour” and “craft-as-a-class-of-objects” (p. 69). The former refers to a skill and “implies learning and expertise applied to work” (p. 69), while the latter refers to a physical object, or to the product of skilful labour. In order to classify as a craft, such a physical object must possess at least one of the following characteristics. First, it must be “crafted”, or “made substantially by hand, utilising the hand itself, hand tools, and to some degree, power tools” (p. 70). Second, an object would be classified as a craft if it is made out of “traditional craft materials, use of traditional craft techniques, and addressing a traditional craft context” (p. 70). To Metcalf, traditional craft techniques and materials are ones which have been in use since the pre-industrial period. Although these criteria are quite flexible, Metcalf maintains that “the more an object exemplifies these characteristics, the more craftlike it is” (p. 69).

Metcalf’s views of crafts are in line with the definition provided in the final report of an international symposium on crafts and the international market held by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) in collaboration with the International Trade Centre (ITC) in 1997. This report defines crafts as those tangible products which artisans mould entirely with their own hands, or partially with the help of tools or machinery, “as long as the direct manual contribution of the artisan remains the most substantial component of the finished product” (UNESCO/ITC, 1997, p. 6). This report further specifies that the values emerging from the unique characteristics of the particular crafts result “from their distinctive features, which can

be utilitarian, aesthetic, artistic, creative, culturally attached, decorative, functional, traditional, religiously and socially symbolic and significant” (ibid.). Although some authors (e.g., Cox & Bebbington, n/d) view crafts as being produced in limited amounts, the UNESCO/ITC report does not place any quantity restrictions in their classification of crafts. It does, however, list the use of raw materials from sustainable sources as part of their definition.

In the view of the above, this paper defines an artisan **as a skilled person who creates objects of aesthetic and/or functional value, mainly by manual labour, using traditional craft techniques and/or materials.**

3. DEFINING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

In line with the huge leaps that have been made over the years where scientific and technological discoveries are concerned, human beings have devised an ever-increasing array of ways in which to use and abuse Earth’s natural resources. Decades ago, it may have appeared that the abundance of nature is infinite, leading to the misconception that nature is ours to exploit, not only to provide the necessities required for survival, but also to lead an indulgent, luxurious life. This has resulted in the squandering of natural resources and the production of excessive amounts of harmful waste and toxins. Recent times have however witnessed a growing awareness that natural resources are not at all infinite, and that human activity has a huge impact on the natural environment. Environmental problems such as climate change are now seen as warning signs from nature that our extravagant lifestyles may be compromising the possibility for future generations to lead healthy, productive lives.

In response to the above, the concept of sustainable development has emerged to promote a more considerate use of natural resources and preservation of the natural environment. This concept originated from the North-American Iroquois tribes’ philosophy which stated that “Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the needs of future generations to meet their own needs”. In 1987, the Brundtland Commission (then known as the World Commission on Environment and Development – WCED) adopted this definition, and named environmental, social

and economic development as the three crucial pillars upon which sustainable development must be built.

In more recent years, culture has been argued to constitute a fourth pillar that is essential for sustainable development, as it is embedded in the value systems of societies and is therefore a key determinant of behaviour. Ehrenfeld (2005) maintains that “underlying cultural values will always trump technology and design in determining behaviour. It is at that bedrock level that the foundation for sustainability must be built” (p. 25). Nurse (2006) concurs and explains that “culture shapes what we mean by development and determines how people act in the world” (p. 37). A culture which is built upon the principles of sustainable development thus provides an internal platform for society to nurture the other three pillars of sustainable development and to incorporate them into daily life. A shift in cultural values is thus pivotal for creating sustainable societies

4. DEFINING SUSTAINABLE ENTREPRENEURSHIP

“Sustainable entrepreneurship is a combination of creating sustainable development on the one hand, and entrepreneurship on the other (Masurel, 2007, p. 191).”

Sustainable entrepreneurship is a spin-off concept which is derived from the notion of sustainable development. Crals and Vereeck (2004) explain that “sustainable entrepreneurs are those companies that contribute to sustainable development by doing business in a sustainable way” (p. 2). While traditional businesses are concerned exclusively with financial gains, sustainable entrepreneurs are also concerned with environmental and social matters. Therefore like sustainable development, sustainable entrepreneurship is built upon the pillars of environmental, social and economic development.

These pillars are sometimes referred to as the 3 Ps: Planet, People and Profit. The first “P”, Planet, refers to the environmental dimension and is concerned with the impact organisations have on the natural environment. This includes the protection of natural resources and ecosystem (Crals & Vereeck, 2004), and involves the “discovery and implementation of new, more environmentally friendly, product or process

technologies” (Katsikis & Kyrgidou, 2007, p. 2). The second “P”, People, relates to the social dimension and is concerned with the behaviour of organisations in social and ethical issues. This includes the way organisations treat their employees and whether they promote social cohesion and protection of human rights (Crals & Vereeck, 2004). The social dimension of sustainable entrepreneurship aims to achieve social change and to make resources available to a larger number of people. While financial gains are understood to be essential in order to ensure viability, the focus of the social dimension is primarily on creating social value (Katsikis & Kyrgidou, 2007). The third “P”, Profit, relates to the economic dimension and refers to the financial results of organisations, together with the use and allocation of resources for employment, investment in machines, and distribution of returns between key players in the entrepreneurial process (Crals & Vereeck, 2004).

Another conceptualisation of the 3 Ps model is the Triple Bottom Line view of entrepreneurship, which evaluates organisations not only on the basis of their financial performance but also in terms of their environmental and social achievements (Chapas, 2003).

It is hereby argued that for entrepreneurs to move towards more sustainable practices, they need to fully embrace the values of sustainability as their personal worldview. These values would ensure that they would always consider the social and environmental aspects when pursuing economic opportunities. This argument stresses the cultural element of sustainability as discussed in Section 3 above, which maintains that the concept of sustainability needs to become embedded in the mindset and cultural values of a society.

5. THE BENEFITS OF SUSTAINABLE ENTREPRENEURSHIP

At this stage, one may ask: Why should an entrepreneur be concerned with anything other than making profit? What would motivate an entrepreneur to invest energy, time and money in safeguarding the natural environment and society, rather than on maximising financial gain? How can the concept of sustainability become ingrained in the entrepreneur’s mindset?

Bos (cited in Crals & Vereeck, 2004) identifies two main reasons for organisations to act in socially and ecologically responsible ways. The first is

because not doing so generates bad publicity for the organisation. The second is concerned with the idealism that drives so many organisations which view themselves as more than solely profit-making ventures.

It is interesting that many large, often multinational organisations publicise their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) practices. Although they may share the true sustainability idealism, it is clear that the CSR publicity is a form of marketing aimed at building a positive reputation as being environmentally and socially conscious. Basu *et al.* (2008) note that unlike large organisations with plenty of cash at their disposal, many SMEs have limited resources and may be unable or unwilling to dedicate the time and funds required to become sustainable. In making a case for sustainable entrepreneurship, it is therefore necessary to demonstrate that there are numerous benefits that could outweigh the costs of investing in environmental and social concerns.

Crals and Vereeck maintain that “sustainable entrepreneurship gives companies an opportunity to distinguish themselves from others” (p. 6), and note that the Dow Jones Sustainability Group Index indicates that sustainable enterprises financially outperform non-sustainable ones. They add various other reasons why enterprises should adopt a sustainable approach. These include being less dependent on depleted resources, higher motivation of employees and attractiveness for new employees, efficient production due to superior technologies and better skilled staff, superior insight in market preferences and opportunities, lower burden from changes in (environmental and social) legislation, and business partnerships with other sustainable entrepreneurs and global players.

Furthermore, although the environmental, social and economic dimensions of sustainable entrepreneurship may be separated to facilitate discussion, Basu *et al.* (2008) note that in practice these perspectives are closely linked. As noted by Crals and Vereeck (2004), “a company does not operate on a deserted island, but is embedded in an economic, social, cultural and ecological environment” (pp. 2-3), all of which constitute threats, obligations and opportunities. Sustainable entrepreneurs have a responsibility not only towards their investors and shareholders, but also towards nature, society and future generations (Basu *et al.*, 2008).

Ultimately, the three dimensions are highly inter-related, as one often leads to the others, with possible problems and opportunities occurring within and among them. Masurel’s (2007) findings indicate that many SMEs invest in environmental measures primarily for employment-related reasons such as care for the well-being of employees. He thus argues that “Planet” and “People” are interconnected. He also identifies a connection to “Profit”:

“improvement of the working conditions may result in employees having better motivation and less sick leave, thus increasing their productivity. This connection between ‘planet’, ‘people’ and ‘profit’ completes the traditional sustainability circle (p. 199)”.

6. THE ARTISAN: A SUSTAINABLE ENTREPRENEUR?

The above discussion leads to one of this paper’s central questions: How can artisans incorporate all three elements of sustainability (environmental, social, and economic) into their practice in order to make the transition towards becoming sustainable entrepreneurs who could contribute to the fourth element of sustainability: a sustainable culture? At this point, one should note that while it is clear that all these elements need to be present to some extent in order to be considered as a sustainable entrepreneur, the specific actions which must be taken and the degree to which they must be incorporated in an enterprise are subjective and debatable. The suggestions provided below are therefore guidelines which, if followed, would lead artisans towards becoming sustainable entrepreneurs. The greater the extent to which these suggestions are embedded within the artisans’ personal values and business practices, the more they may be said to have made the transition towards sustainable entrepreneurship.

First of all, in order for artisans to be considered as sustainable entrepreneurs, they need to engage in practices that are environmentally-friendly. At a very basic level, this would include measures such as the reuse of materials (if possible), the reduction and recycling of waste and the use of alternative energy sources. Furthermore, as argued by Cox and Bebbington (n/d), one should consider what raw materials are used to produce the craft, where these materials originate, how they are transported to the

artisan's workshop and how they are processed during production. Sustainable craftsmanship would aim to minimise its environmental impact by making use of natural raw materials which are not treated chemically and which do not need to be transported over long distances. Cox and Bebbington suggest that a way of reducing one's carbon footprint is to work from home so as to reduce the environmental impact of commuting to other destinations.

Even if it is not always possible for artisans to follow Cox and Bebbington's suggestions, a case can still be made for the relative environmental sustainability of craftsmanship. When one recalls that crafts are, by definition, made primarily by hand, it is easy to see that the environmental impact of craft production is negligible when compared to that of the millions of mass-produced items that are churned out by factories in locations like Asia where preservation of the natural environment may not be at the top of the priorities list.

Secondly, sustainable entrepreneurship requires artisans to make some contribution to the social dimension of sustainability. On an individual level, craft production may be argued to provide artisans with employment and self-actualisation opportunities. Recalling Metcalf's (1997) notions of "craft-as-skillful-labour" which "implies learning and expertise applied to work", and "craft-as-a-class-of-objects" which must be produced primarily by hand (p. 69), one may appreciate that craft production is a personally-involving and fulfilling endeavour that allows artisans to put their skills and knowledge to good use and to enjoy the fruits of their labour in the form of their final hand-made product. On a community level, it may be argued that craft production involves the development and preservation of a set of localised skills and knowledge which are cherished and passed on through generations. The greater the extent to which a society is equipped with its own pool of skills and knowledge, the better able it is to sustain itself, and the less it needs to depend upon external sources for its survival. Craft production may therefore pave the way to a more resilient and sustainable society.

Thirdly, the economic element cannot be overlooked in sustainable entrepreneurship. An enterprise which operates at a financial loss cannot be considered to be sustainable, so artisans need to ensure that they are also capable

of nurturing their economic development. Their craftsmanship needs to lead to the generation of financial gains in order for them to be able to support themselves and their families, as well as to continue producing their crafts. In simple terms, the artisans need to sell their crafts and make adequate financial returns relative to the time they spend in producing their crafts. According to Ferraro *et al.* (2011) besides offering opportunities to "reduce environmental footprints; enhance social equity (and) build resilient communities", craft production may also lead to the development of "prosperous vibrant enterprises" (p. 21). Artisans therefore require adequate business-related skills to ensure that they are able to make profit from their crafts, especially if this is their main source of income.

As explained above, culture has recently been argued to be a fourth element of sustainability. According to Cox and Bebbington (n/d), the connection between craft and sustainable development is probably the strongest at a cultural level as it increases cultural identity in both traditional and modern practices. As artisans develop their own unique techniques and "tricks" for producing their particular craft, they contribute towards the development of their local culture. This is in line with the UNESCO/ITC report (1997) which defines crafts as being "culturally attached" (p. 6).

It is clear from the above discussion that it is indeed possible for artisans to incorporate all elements of sustainability into their practice and in the process become key players in the transition towards sustainable entrepreneurship. It is also clear that there is much to be gained in environmental, social, economic and cultural terms if artisans were to be encouraged to engage in sustainable practices as suggested above. However as noted by Cox and Bebbington (n/d), the logic of industrialism, with its heavy machinery and mass-production lines aimed at the maximisation of profit, constitutes a serious threat to the survival of the artisan. There is nowadays a "general tendency of technology and capitalism to replace the more genuine and authentic forms of hand made production" (p. 12), such that it is seldom economically viable for artisans to persist in their craft production.

It is hereby argued that the challenges that are faced by artisans in Malta need to be identified and understood in order to devise a plan of action to safeguard the existence, prosperity and sus-

tainability of genuine artisans in the face of their ever-increasing vulnerability. These challenges are explored in the sections that follow.

7. CHALLENGES FACED BY ARTISANS IN MALTA: INSIGHTS FROM THE LITERATURE

As indicated in the introduction, the focus of this paper is on profit-oriented artisans, rather than on those artisans who are engaged in craft production as a hobby or for other non-financial gains, as it is the former who may meet the criteria of sustainable entrepreneurship within an economic dimension, as explained above. It may safely be assumed that all of these artisans would fall into the Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) category which comprises 99% of all businesses in Malta. They may therefore be argued to be subject to the same general conditions as other SMEs operating in Malta.

Malta is a small island state with a total land area of 316 square kilometres and a population of just over 400,000. It is located 93 kilometres south of Sicily in the heart of the Mediterranean Sea. This acts as a natural barrier that isolates Malta from the rest of the world and gives rise to the remoteness and insularity that are typical of many small island states (Baldacchino, Cassar & Caruana, 2008). As a result, travel and transportation costs to and from Malta are higher, making it more difficult for Malta to form part of major centres of trade and commerce (Baldacchino, 1999; Sultana, 2006).

Many authors consider small island states to be “doomed by the accident of geography” (Baldacchino, 2002, p. 254). Their small size, remoteness, isolation and lack of natural resources increase their exposure to uncontrollable external forces and gives rise to economic vulnerability (Briguglio & Kisanga, 2004). Malta’s natural resources are limited to limestone deposits and salt, creating a heavy reliance on import for raw materials in most industries. A limited domestic market makes Malta’s economy dependent on an export market for local products (Buttigieg, 2004). The absence of natural resources often forces small states to rely heavily on their human resources to generate wealth (Baldacchino, 1995).

According to Witt (2004), micro and small organisations (such as those typically operated by artisans in Malta) are subject to the Liability

of Smallness. This refers to the small size and associated lack of resources and added vulnerability of organisations that are in the early stages of development.

Furthermore, the Open Systems approach posits that organisations (including SMEs) are open systems made up of interrelated components and enclosed by boundaries of varying degrees of permeability (Cummings, 2005a). They are “inhabitants of a larger system encompassing the environments in which they operate and on which they depend for resources” (Baum & Rowley, 2002, p. 6). Such higher level systems or supersystems include the economic system of the country, together with various social, cultural and demographic factors (Arnold, Cooper & Robertson, 1998), all of which “provide constraints and opportunities” for their subsystems (Cummings, 2005b, p. 385). In this view, the SMEs of artisans may be considered to be highly permeable open systems which in turn exist within a larger open system (the Maltese environment). They are thus open to a double dose of vulnerability: as highly permeable open systems they are exposed to forces in the Maltese context, which is in turn highly susceptible to shocks in its own external environment (Baldacchino *et al.*, 2008).

A recent study conducted among entrepreneurs in Malta found that creativity and innovation are among the key success factors which enable local entrepreneurs to overcome the challenges posed by Malta’s small island state context (Baldacchino *et al.*, 2008). It would be interesting to explore whether these findings hold true for the crafts sector. This will be further discussed below.

One may note that the very challenges posed by Malta’s small island state context could be seen to be facilitators for craftsmanship as sustainable entrepreneurship. For example, the expense associated with the importation of raw materials could be used as an impetus for local artisans to make use of locally sourced natural resources, which although are limited, could be moulded by creative artisans into innovative crafts. Furthermore, the limited domestic market and the expense associated with exporting from an island need not be a disincentive. Instead artisans, whose crafts are produced by hand and often in limited numbers, could aim at developing the local market. This would be greatly enhanced by a promotional campaign for local crafts as shall be recommended in *Section 10.2* below.

Finally, since craftsmanship has been suggested to increase the resilience of a society by preserving and enhancing the pool of local knowledge and skills, it could be argued that artisans are in a strong position to overcome the vulnerability associated with a dependence on external systems for resources.

8. CHALLENGES FACED BY ARTISANS IN MALTA: INSIGHTS FROM AN EXPLORATORY STUDY

Besides the general conditions faced by SMEs in Malta, artisans are also argued to be susceptible to sector-specific challenges which have not yet been adequately documented in the literature. An informal exploratory study (which forms part of a larger ongoing research project) was conducted in July 2011 among artisans at Ta' Qali Crafts Village in Malta to shed some light on the matter.

8.1. Method

Informal interviews consisting of open-ended questions were conducted with six respondents who are engaged in the crafting and/or selling of filigree, Maltese lace, plaster models and wrought iron works. The questions elicited information on the current economic satisfaction of the artisans, on the difficulties that they face, on their experiences with local agencies such as the Malta Crafts Council (MCC) and on the role of innovation in their practice.

All respondents were informed that this study had been approved by the University of Malta Research Ethics Committee, and assured that their rights to anonymity, confidentiality and non-participation would be respected at all times. Where appropriate, the nature of the craft produced by the respondents is revealed in the section below in relation to a particular finding. However, when reporting on findings which could have negative repercussions for one or more of the artisans (e.g., when complaints are made about the local authorities), no details are provided about the sort of craft produced by that respondent in order to ensure the artisans' anonymity. All respondents are assumed to have participated in this study voluntarily and with full informed consent, and to have provided factual and sincere answers to the questions asked.

8.2. Key Insights

A predominant theme which emerged from the interviews with the artisans in this exploratory study is concerned with unfair competition from foreign markets. Three respondents complained that since the EU liberalised the market, copycat items – including the filigree Maltese Cross – are being mass-produced in Asia, imported to Malta and then sold as Maltese crafts at a significantly lower price (often around 30% cheaper).

To add insult to injury, one artisan admitted to selling both genuine local crafts and imported products from the same shop with no labels that would enable a customer to distinguish the genuine Maltese products from the imported items. Consequently, uninformed customers would likely purchase the cheaper product to the detriment of the artisan whose sales of genuine Maltese crafts are dwindling.

A possible solution to this problem would entail clearly marking the genuine Maltese crafts so that customers would be able to make informed purchasing decisions based on factors other than price alone. One respondent explained that the crafts sold in his shop (Maltese lace) are certified as genuine Maltese crafts by the Malta Crafts Council (MCC). When asked to explain the process of this certification, he explained that the MCC certifies that the items produced by his enterprise are genuine crafts and provides stickers and labels to be placed on the items. He further explained that it is the artisans' responsibility (or that of their employees) to affix the stickers and labels.

When one considers that a shop may sell both local and imported products and that it is up to the artisans, shop owners or employees to place the certification on the items they have for sale, one may wonder whether this could give rise to an unethical and unsustainable practice of selling imported items as genuine local crafts to unsuspecting buyers. This may be tempting to a seller as it would provide wider profit margins on the imported products, but it would be highly counterproductive for Maltese craft production which may well come to a halt if faced with such deceitful actions.

Discussing the issue of pricing, the artisans who felt threatened by the competition from Asian imports agreed that the amount of time and effort required to produce their crafts makes it impossible

to reduce their selling prices to be able to compete with their Asian competitors without incurring financial losses. They reported that this predatory situation has forced many artisans to close down their business and seek alternative employment. The respondents interviewed in this study are thus among “the very few lucky ones who still work in this field”, as one of the artisans commented.

One may suppose that the plans for upgrading the Ta’ Qali Crafts Village would be beneficial to artisans, but the respondents in this study were vocal in their criticism of these plans. One artisan explained that importers and sellers of mass-produced copycat items have been given permits to set up large premises where they can showcase and sell their products, thus overshadowing the smaller shops where the Maltese artisans sell their genuine crafts. This artisan stated that he could never compete with these types of entrepreneurs on an equal footing and expressed his fears that eventually he might be forced to close down.

Besides the issue of unfair competition, another recurring theme that emerged from these interviews concerns the support (or lack of) from the local authorities, media, and consumers. Two respondents in particular complained that the local authorities do not provide adequate support and that Maltese buyers do not appreciate Maltese crafts. One complained that he had attempted to make contact with two journalists to feature an exhibition of his work in the press, but unfortunately this never materialised due to a lack of interest on the part of the journalists. This artisan explained that these conditions are very de-motivating: “it kills my enthusiasm for craft-making”. Another respondent lamented the lack of support from the local authorities: “They [MCC] organise some meetings but they do not hear me, so why should I go and waste my time? I end up always doing my own thing... I’m on my own”. He further added that “people do not appreciate it [his craft skills and products], especially the Maltese”. Coupled with fluctuations in tourist visits and the associated drop in sales to overseas buyers as reported by these respondents, an unappreciative local market dampens the competitive spirit of the artisans involved in the Maltese crafts sector.

A final theme of interest in this study deals with the role of innovation in craft production. Three respondents reported having engaged in innova-

tive practices in recent years – two of these create plaster models while the other is a wrought iron worker. Two of these respondents – one of the plaster modellers and the wrought iron worker – claimed that innovation helped increase their levels of productivity, boost sales, employ more people to deal with the added workload, and create a safer working environment. In these cases the innovation took the form of new craft designs, the adoption of novel craft-making processes and the introduction of new machines to aid their craft production. One of these artisans proudly reported that his products have won two awards, including one by the MCC for innovation. Meanwhile, the third artisan who attempted to innovate his craft-making enterprise reported a disappointing current level of sales. This artisan had created his own techniques and methods for plaster model making a few years ago, during a time where business was flourishing, but the challenges that he is now facing are overwhelming.

8.3. Limitations

As outlined above, these insights were obtained from six informal interviews in an exploratory study conducted as part of a larger ongoing research project among artisans in Malta. The aim of these interviews was simply to test the waters and to obtain some early indications to guide the development of the rest of this research project. Neither can the findings of this exploratory study be generalised to other artisans in Malta, nor can firm conclusions be drawn from them at this stage.

For example, although three of the artisans interviewed reported the introduction of innovative designs, processes and machinery, one cannot yet deduce that artisans in Malta are innovative. Furthermore, although previous research has found that innovation is among the key success factors of SMEs in Malta (Baldacchino *et al.*, 2008), and although two artisans in the present study reported that their innovative practices have led to benefits such as an increase in sales, one cannot yet conclude that all artisans will benefit from innovation or that the findings of Baldacchino *et al.* (2008) are applicable to the crafts sector. However limited in its scope and findings this qualitative survey may seem to be, it highlights the sector-specific challenges which the Maltese artisan has to face in a highly liberalised and open globalised market. The point that is being stressed is that further research, based

on these insights, is needed in order to provide more valid and reliable data. The findings of this exploratory study are indicative of fertile ground for future research and they augur well for the upcoming steps in this research project.

9. FUTURE RESEARCH

The next steps in this research project will hopefully obtain further support for the preliminary findings presented above and obtain further insight into other issues of relevance. The threats and challenges faced by local artisans need to be extensively investigated, and a plan of action needs to be devised based not upon unfounded assumptions but on the reality of the current situation. The extent to which artisans are engaging in sustainable practices (if at all) shall also be investigated to gauge the potential for a successful transition of Maltese artisans towards sustainable entrepreneurship.

Of central interest to this research project is the role of innovation in the crafts sector. The preliminary findings of this exploratory study indicate the presence of innovative practices among some artisans in Malta. They also suggest that innovation may be as beneficial to artisans as it is to SMEs in other sectors, as argued by the literature on enterprise success (e.g., Pasanen, 2003; Ramsey, 2005) and as found by Baldacchino *et al.* (2008) in their study with entrepreneurs in Malta. However it is not yet clear how craftsmanship, which by definition is traditional in nature (Metcalfe, 1997) could embrace and benefit from innovation, which by definition involves novelty and “getting rid of the old” (Von Oetinger, 2004, p. 35). The link might be in the shift towards sustainable entrepreneurship, where artisans would adopt innovative practices for environmental, social and economic aims while preserving the traditions inherent to their crafts. Some light is expected to be shed on these issues by the end of this ongoing research project.

Finally, the artisans identified in this research project as being highly sustainable, innovative and/or successful could be further studied in order to identify their core skills, competences and practices and to create examples of best practice for other artisans to learn from.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

Several recommendations may be made in the light of what has been reviewed, discussed and revealed in this paper. These may be split into recommendations which would facilitate the transition of artisans towards sustainable entrepreneurship, and those which would help artisans in Malta to overcome the challenges they are facing. Taken together, these recommendations would provide an indication of how the survival, prosperity and sustainability of the genuine Maltese artisan and the crafts they painstakingly produce may be safeguarded in these treacherous times.

10.1. Catalysing the Transition of Artisans towards Sustainable Entrepreneurship

First, as explained above, the transition towards sustainability requires a shift in cultural values (Ehrenfeld, 2005; Nurse, 2006). The first step in this slow process would be for individuals to become aware of the impact that their everyday behaviour has on the three elements of sustainability and to understand the crucial role that they play in preserving the world in which they live for the benefit of present and future generations. This would hopefully lead to the formation of an idealism of sustainability which would permeate throughout the entire society, including the business practices of artisans. This is however unlikely to happen overnight (if at all in our lifetime), so further actions are required to catalyse the adoption of sustainability practices among artisans.

The artisans need to be shown that there are various benefits to be reaped from adopting sustainable practices, as outlined in *Section 5* above. Then they need to learn about the ways in which they can become sustainable entrepreneurs as suggested in *Section 6*. Additionally they should be offered incentives, such as tax-cuts or other fiscal benefits, to reward the adoption of sustainable practices. For example artisans could be rewarded for environmentally-friendly measures such as the reuse of materials (if possible), reduction and recycling waste, and adoption of alternative energy sources. Similarly, they could be incentivised to impart their craft-specific skills and knowledge to the next generation to ensure that their skills and tricks of the trade do not die out with an ageing and waning population of artisans. This could begin with an introductory course delivered by artisans to students on the basics of

craft-making. This course would be aimed at generating interest and appreciation for craft-making among the younger generation. Once such interest is created, an apprentice sponsorship scheme which provides further specialised training could be introduced for those students who would like to take on craft-making as their profession. It is imperative that the values of sustainability are ingrained in these young minds at a very early age so that they can act as catalysts for the shift towards a culture of sustainability.

Another possible incentive may be the introduction of a sustainability grading and certification system, whereby those artisans who meet enough of the criteria of sustainable entrepreneurship would be awarded the sustainability certificate together with public acknowledgement. As explained above, publicising a concern for environmental and social issues has become a popular marketing tactic as it creates a positive impression of a caring organisation (Basu *et al.*, 2008). This suggested sustainability certification system would therefore provide artisans with the opportunity of jumping on this marketing bandwagon and could be treated as a pilot project which, if successful, could later be extended to enterprises in other sectors.

As economic development cannot be overlooked in sustainable entrepreneurship, artisans require adequate training in business and management skills to ensure that they are capable of running a profitable and economically sustainable enterprise.

10.2. Overcoming the Challenges faced by Artisans in Malta

One of the key challenges identified by the artisans in this study concerns the unfair competition from mass-produced imports which are sometimes sold to unsuspecting buyers as genuine Maltese crafts. It is unreasonable to argue that such imported products should be banned, but it is crucial that they can be easily distinguished from genuine Maltese crafts and that the value of the latter is conveyed to buyers. This would create a level playing field upon which local crafts are better able to compete with the imported items while safeguarding the freedom of buyers to make their own informed choices concerning what they would like to purchase.

The current certification system used by the MCC as explained in Section 8.2 above is clearly inadequate for this purpose. It should therefore be

addressed and upgraded to avoid misuse and to enable all buyers to recognise genuine Maltese crafts from imported items. A revised system would include greater monitoring by the authorities to ensure that only genuine Maltese crafts are sold as such, coupled with penalties for anyone caught abusing the system.

Additionally, the value of genuine hand-made Maltese crafts should be emphasised to buyers to help them understand the higher price they are being made to pay for locally produced crafts. While the tourism industry is key for the local economy, emphasis also needs to be made on addressing the local market to ensure a more stable and sustainable local economy. The artisans interviewed in this study complained of an uninformed and unappreciative local market. The recommendation made above concerning introductory courses on crafts and apprenticeship schemes for artisans would contribute to raising the interest of the public, but it is not enough. What could be of great benefit for the crafts sector is a marketing campaign designed to educate the public about the presence of imported copycat items, to promote the value of genuine Maltese crafts, and to highlight the importance of supporting local artisans for the benefit of the local economy as a whole.

A final recommendation concerns the need to create more favourable conditions for artisans to operate their businesses. The difficulties of local artisans need to be acknowledged by the authorities, and these in turn need to provide further support to safeguard the survival, prosperity and sustainability of local artisans. Such acknowledgement and support would generate feelings of appreciation and empowerment among artisans, and these would in turn offset the de-motivation reported by some of the artisans in this study in the face of the seemingly insurmountable challenges that they are currently facing.

11. CONCLUSION

The aims of this paper were to show that it is possible and beneficial for artisans to make the transition towards sustainable entrepreneurship, to identify some of the threats and challenges faced by artisans in Malta, and to make recommendations which would encourage artisans to engage in sustainable practices and which would safeguard their existence and prosperity in the face of their ever-increasing vulnerability.

It began by defining the artisan, crafts and craftsmanship, and by reviewing the literature on sustainability and sustainable entrepreneurship. The benefits of sustainable entrepreneurship were outlined in order to explain why everyone (including an artisan) should be concerned not only with financial gains but also with environmental and social issues. These were followed with an overview of some of the ways in which artisans could incorporate the environmental, social and economic elements of sustainability into their practice in order to become sustainable entrepreneurs.

On the basis of the premise that artisans who make the transition towards sustainable entrepreneurship have the potential to make very valuable contributions to the environment, society and the economy, the paper provides a critical appraisal of the threats and challenges being faced by local artisans and of the measures that need to be taken to protect and assist them in the present highly competitive world market. To this

end, the literature on the constraints that SMEs in general face when operating in a small island state like Malta was briefly reviewed as it is widely accepted that the economic activities of SMEs and the artisans operating in the craft sector have much in common. This was followed by a report on an exploratory study conducted among artisans at the Ta' Qali Crafts Village to offer some insights on the sector-specific challenges faced by artisans in Malta. In the light of these insights some recommendations, aimed at improving the plight of the Maltese artisans, were made.

To conclude, it is worth stressing once again that we are in dire need of a shift towards a culture which nurtures the values of sustainability in order to safeguard the world in which we live for present and future generations. It has been argued that artisans can play an important role in this shift provided that they receive adequate assistance and support to ensure their survival and to facilitate their own transition towards sustainable entrepreneurship

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Chapter 4. Older Persons and Green Volunteering: the Missing Link to Sustainable Future?

Marvin Formosa

Abstract

The empirical study featuring in this paper is contextualised within the statistics provided by a national survey on older volunteerism. Older volunteers are nowadays viewed as a valuable resource, a reliable and experienced labour pool. In Malta, many persons aged 60 and above volunteer many hours each month in local environmental organisations in their goal to preserve the earth for future generations even though they will not personally see the benefits. Through the data emanating from a qualitative survey this paper highlights the possible positive returns accruing from green volunteering in later life which are of a physical, cognitive, and social nature. It thus argues that there is a potential for a greater number of older people to volunteer in green non-governmental organisations. It is on this basis that a number of policy options and action strategies to improve the engagement of older persons in green volunteering are recommended. These include expanding the participation by older persons who are ageing actively, presenting green volunteering as a course module in pre-retirement educational programmes, advertising green volunteering as a means of self-actualisation rather than as a form of unpaid work, and designing green volunteer roles that do not necessitate high levels of education.

INTRODUCTION

The subject matter of the discussion in this paper is the interface between volunteerism and sustainable development, with an emphasis on the role that older adults can play in ensuring a better future. In most countries there is a strong interest at local, state, and national level in strengthening volunteering roles in environmental management. Malta is certainly no exception. However, the field is firmly located in, and around, the younger and adult “territories” of the life course, with older persons being generally excluded from both policy positions and empirical research. This paper delves into the patterns of older adults in green volunteerism, and the extent to which such activities can be individually enriching and socially beneficial to the community, whilst at the same time also leading to better

levels of sustainable development. The premise of the argument is that the presence of older persons in green volunteerism holds an important potential for a sustainable future. The presentation of this argument is divided into four sections. The first provides an overview of the background context – namely, older persons, volunteering, and green volunteerism in later life. Whilst the second section provides some information on the methodology of the study, the third provides an analytical appraisal of the data emanating from a qualitative survey. Finally, the paper recommends a number of policy options and action strategies to improve the engagement of older persons in green volunteering.

THE BACKGROUND CONTEXT

Malta’s population has evolved out of a traditional pyramidal shape to an even-shaped block distribution of equal numbers at each age cohort except at the top (NSO, 2011a). Whilst in 1985 the percentage of the 60+ and 75+ cohorts measured 14.3 and 3.8 percent, during 2010 the total number of persons aged 60 and over totalled 95,145 representing 23 per cent of the total population. The largest share of the elderly population is made up of women, with 55 per cent of the total. Single families headed by older females predominate, with older women being more frequent users than older men of health and social care services. Population projections indicate an increasing trend in the percentage of population aged over 59, from 23 per cent in 2010 to 38 per cent in 2060. This is due to a decline in birth rate (1.3 per family), and an increase in life expectancy at birth for men/women from 70.8/76.0 years in 1985 to 77.7/81.4 years in 2005. The *2009 Statistics on Income and Living Conditions* reveal that older persons are at a higher risk of poverty than their younger counterparts (ibid. 2011b). The risk-at-poverty rate for persons aged 60 and over stood at 19 per cent while that for younger age groups stood at 14 per cent. From the same survey, it also resulted that nearly 65 per cent of the elderly felt that they could not afford to pay for one week’s annual holiday away from home and 11 per cent could not afford to eat a meal that includes meat, chicken, fish (or vegetarian equivalent) every second day. Moreover, 31 per cent

Table 1 : Maltese population by sex (2010)

Age	Men	Women	Total	% of population
Total	207,586	210,031	417,617	100
0-59	164,762	157,710	322,472	77
60+	42,824	52,321	95,145	23
60-74	32,426	35,509	67,935	16
75+	10,398	16,812	27,210	7
60-64	14,931	15,416	30,347	7
65-69	9,929	10,997	20,926	5
70-74	7,566	9,096	16,662	4
75-79	5,236	7,593	12,829	3
80-84	3,090	5,088	8,178	2
85-89	1,562	2,911	4,473	1.5
90+	510	1,220	1,730	0.5

Source: National Office of Statistics, (2011a)

said that their household could not afford to face unexpected expenses of €450 and over and 13 per cent said that they were not able to keep their home adequately warm. The number of employed older persons is relatively low as only about 7.1 per cent of the older population was in gainful employment in 2010 (ibid., 2011c).

Of course, the aforementioned statistics do not throw light on the more humanistic dimensions of ageing and later life. This paper embraces the following qualitative definition of older persons: “people, whatever their chronological age, who are post-work and post-family, in the sense that they are less or no longer involved in an occupational career or with the major responsibilities for raising a family” (Findsen and Formosa, 2011: 11). Similar to international trends, the 2005 Census reported a negative correlation between age and educational status (NSO, 2007). As much as 65 per cent of persons in the 60+ cohort had a primary level of education or less, with 80 percent holding no educational qualifications. Some 17 percent of persons aged 60+ were illiterate. Although Census data is not broken down by gender, research has found older women to hold a lower educational level compared to men (Formosa, 2005). However, as a result of the implementation of educational policies in the post World War II years – especially the Compulsory Education Ordinance in 1946 which set the compulsory school leaving age at fourteen – older cohorts boast a better educational record than the preceding ones (ibid, 2010). This means that in the

coming two decades the educational disparity between older and younger cohorts will be more equitable.

Volunteering

Industrial societies are characterised by an increase of people’s life-and health-expectancy so that a large percentage of citizens enjoy some fifteen to twenty years of active retirement. While this can take many different forms, the present research focuses on the extent that older persons participate in volunteer work. Throughout this study volunteering work is defined as “unpaid work provided to parties to whom the worker owes no contractual, familial or friendship obligations” (Wilson and Musick, 1997: 694). The setting up of voluntary organisations under Maltese law is regulated by the Voluntary Organisations Act (Government of Malta, 2007). The law was introduced by means of Act XXII of 2007 with the intention of regulating a wide-ranging sector which had hitherto been largely left to its own devices. The law also established the office of the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisation, who is the authority in charge with overseeing the enrolment process for voluntary organisations. According to the Voluntary Organisations Act, a Voluntary Organisation is an organisation which is created or established for any lawful purpose, as non-profit making, and is voluntary. The law also establishes a procedure for the enrolment of Voluntary Organisations in a “Register of Voluntary Organisations”. Enrolment requires the

fulfilment of a number of requirements, including the submission of annual accounts and identification of the administrators of the organisation. It is noteworthy that it is not enrolment which confers the status of "Voluntary Organisation"; any organisation that fulfils the above criteria is a Voluntary Organisation. However, enrolment confers a number of important advantages to the organisation. An enrolled Voluntary Organisation may (i) make collections without the need to obtain any further authorisations, (ii) receive or be the beneficiary of grants, sponsorships or other financial aid from the Government, any entity controlled by the Government or the Voluntary Organisations Fund, (iii) be the beneficiary of any policies supporting voluntary action as may be developed by the Government, (iv) receive or be the beneficiary of exemptions, privileges or other entitlements in terms of any law, and (v), be a party to contracts and other engagements for the carrying out of services for the achievement of its social purpose at the request of the Government or any entity controlled by the Government.

The National Statistics Office has also published a number of reports relating specifically to local volunteering. The *Time-use study* (NSO, 2004) collected information on how the Maltese population, aged 10 years and over, spends its time. Data shows that volunteering time, both on week-

days and weekends, tends to increase with rising age (*tables 2 and 3*). Persons aged 65 years and older engaged in volunteerism for about 0.7 and 0.9 hours every weekday and weekend respectively (national average 0.4/0.8). The same study reports that retired persons in Malta engaged in volunteerism for about 0.8 and 1.0 hours every weekday and weekend respectively.

More recently, the 2009 *Survey on Income and Living Conditions* (NSO, 2010) revealed that 27,250 persons aged 12 and over (8 per cent of the total population in this age bracket) were doing some form of voluntary work. Just over half these persons were contributing in a voluntary organisation, while 41 per cent were working in other institutions. Fifty-two per cent of voluntary workers were females.

When analysing the distribution by age, 36 per cent were aged between 25-49 while 32 per cent fell within the 50-64 bracket. As regards the number of volunteers aged 65 and over, this was reported to amount to 3,690 – or 4.2 per cent of the total number of persons aged 65 plus in 2009. The largest proportion of persons doing voluntary work (32 per cent) were doing so through membership organisations. They were followed by organisations engaged in social work activities (28 per cent) and religious organisations

Table 2: Volunteer work (hours and per cent) per weekday and weekend by age

WEEKDAYS								
Age	10-14	15-24	25-34	35-44	44-54	55-64	65+	Total
hrs/per cent	0.5/2.1	0.2/0.8	0.1/0.4	0.2/0.9	0.2/0.8	0.8/3.3	0.7/2.9	0.4/1.7
WEEKENDS								
Age	10-14	15-24	25-34	35-44	44-54	55-64	65+	Total
hrs/per cent	0.9/3.8	0.5/2.1	0.5/2.1	0.7/2.9	0.8/3.3	1.0/4.2	0.9/3.8	0.8/3.3

Source: National Statistics Office, (2004)

Table 3: Volunteer work per weekday and weekend by employment

WEEKDAYS							
Status	Employed	Unemployed	Student	Retired	Housekeeper	Other	Total
hrs/per cent	0.3/1.3	0.3/1.3	0.3/1.3	0.8/3.3	0.4/1.6	0.7/2.9	0.4/1.7
WEEKENDS							
Status	Employed	Unemployed	Student	Retired	Housekeeper	Other	Total
hrs/per cent	0.6/2.5	0.6/2.5	0.8/3.3	1.0/4.2	0.8/3.3	0.9/3.8	0.8/3.3

Source: National Statistics Office, (2004)

(21 per cent). Forty-six per cent of persons engaged in voluntary work participated actively in the organisation’s activities, while a quarter had an administrative role, with the remainder having a supportive role. Forty per cent of these workers had been doing voluntary work for more than 10 years, while 32 per cent had been involved for less than 5 years.

The most common purpose for doing voluntary work was that people felt it was their moral duty; persons citing this reason comprised 47 per cent of the total. This was followed by 23 per cent of persons who said they did voluntary work to meet new people or for recreation, and another 12 per cent said they did so out of sympathy for the needy. Nineteen per cent of persons provided other reasons. When asked how many hours they spent volunteering in a typical month, one-third said they spent less than 10 hours in such activities. The survey also revealed that a further 27 per cent spent 10-19 hours, while 25 per cent volunteered for 30 hours or more. Males tended to spend longer hours doing voluntary work than females; the average number of hours per month stood at 26 and 21 hours respectively. Persons doing informal voluntary work were most likely to spend more time volunteering. Indeed, persons in this category spent an average 40 hours per month volunteering, as opposed to 27 hours for persons working within a voluntary organisation and 20 hours for those volunteering with another entity. Unemployed and retired persons, as expected, spent more time volunteering than persons who were working, though persons whose status was “other inactive”, such as housewives and students, spent the least time doing voluntary work. Of all those aged 12 and over living in private households, 5 per cent were members of a voluntary organisation.

Green volunteerism in later life

In recent years, green volunteerism has gained increasing visibility as an example of civic engagement. Following Bushway and colleagues, green volunteerism

“includes either group or solitary activities that may be formal – where people commit their time and skills to an organisation on a regular basis, such as docents at a nature preserve or park – or less formal – such as regular participation in outings to remove invasive weeds.”
 Bushway *et al.*, 2011: 1

The benefits of green volunteerism are various. They are however much more evident, when “environmental volunteer activities directly engage members of the public in the generation of data and discussion of issues of personal and public concern, confidence in science-based decision making in environmental management may be reinforced” (Bushway *et al.*, 2011: 2). Green volunteerism also produces mental and physical health effects, as well as a connection to the natural world that is within the realm of the spiritual (Becker, 2001). The participation of older adults in green volunteerism has been given scant attention in academia. The 2008 Cornell National Social Survey, conducted by the Survey Research Institute (SRI), specifically addressed citizens’ connections to environmental management (Bushway *et al.*, 2011). As much as 80 percent of respondents felt that they would do what is right for the environment, even if it meant spending additional time and money, with respondents being unanimous in their responses regarding the importance of maintaining the environment for future generations. Similar trends were noticed when data is limited to adults aged 55 plus (table 4).

Table 4: Connections to environmental management among adults over 55

Would do what is right for the environment no matter the cost	83%
Think we should maintain the environment for future generations	96%
Have a membership in environmental organisations	12%
Engage in volunteer activities related to the environment	15%

Source: Bushway *et al.*, (2011: 3)

Librett and colleagues (2005) have conducted empirical research on the participation of older persons in green volunteerism. This study reported that older adults who volunteered in environmental activities were nearly “three times more likely to meet physical activity recommendations than those not volunteering on environmental projects” (Bushway *et al.*, 2011: 4). Although it may be argued that further research is needed to validate this statement, these findings support the thesis that environmentally-based volunteer programs could “simultaneously improve individual health, increase access to physical activity for the community, and improve the environment” (Librett *et al.*, 2005: 12). Pillemer (2010) provided a number of reasons why environmental volunteering and civic engagement has the potential to be highly beneficial for older people. These include

- ...volunteering that involves physical activity, as does most environmental volunteering, has major health benefits for older persons;
- environmental volunteering promotes better health outcomes because it leads to increased exposure to nature...;
- environmental organizations are age-integrated; unlike many senior centers and related facilities, they bring together people of different ages in meaningful activities;
- ...environmental volunteering has been more successful in [engaging men in later-life volunteering] because it is consistent with older men’s lifelong patterns...
Pillemer, 2010: 11

Pillemer also examined the possible difficulties that older persons face in taking part in green volunteerism and reported three potential barriers

First, some people felt they had insufficient expertise or knowledge about environmental issues and science to contribute effectively. Second, they were unaware of opportunities for environmental stewardship in their communities and were unsure how they could become involved. Finally, environmental volunteer activities were not perceived as socially fulfilling compared with other types of opportunities [e.g., volunteering in schools or churches]. Pillemer, 2010: 12

METHODOLOGY

This paper developed as a follow-up study to a national survey on older volunteerism in Malta commissioned by the office of the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisation (Formosa, forthcoming). The aim of the follow-up study, which elicited the data and discussion presented herein, was threefold – namely, to (i) unearth the participation patterns of older persons in Malta involved in green volunteering, (ii) to make recommendations about a number of policy options and action strategies – at national, local, and community levels, and (iii), to improve the engagement of older persons in green volunteering. This generated four key objectives namely:

- gathering information on the character of green volunteerism in later life;
- discerning the motivations that inspire and encourage older persons to engage in green volunteerism;
- uncovering the benefits that ensue from participating in green volunteerism for older persons; and
- developing social policy strategies to recruit and support older persons as green volunteers.

Due to the character of the aforementioned aim and objectives, the study opted for a qualitative methodology which “is concerned with how ordinary people manage their practical affairs in everyday life, or how they get things done” (Neuman, 2002: 71). More specifically, qualitative studies constitute the “systematic analysis of socially meaningful action through the direct detailed observation of people in natural settings in order to arrive at understandings and interpretations of how people create and maintain their social worlds” (*ibid.*). The deployed method of data collection consisted of the “semi-structured interview” with fourteen older persons participating in green volunteerism. In semi-structured interviews, the interviewer is normally required to ask specific open-ended questions but is free to probe beyond them if necessary with the interview developing as a joint product of what the interviewees and interviewers talk with each other. Therefore, semi-structured interviews contain the advantages of both standardised and non-standardised interviews such as flexibility, control of the interview situation, and collection of supplementary information (Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias, 1996). Data was analysed following Glaser and Strauss’s (1967) grounded-theory

approach which advises to assign codes, annotations, and memos to data arising from observations, conversations, and interviews.

OLDER PERSONS IN GREEN VOLUNTEERISM

In Malta, one finds many non-government organisations engaged in green volunteerism. Key organisations include (i) *Friends of the Earth* which aims to be the human voice of the earth to bring about a peaceful, just, equitable and sustainable society, respectful of present and future generations by inspiring change and promoting solutions; (ii) *Flimkien ghal ambjent ahjar* which lobbies for the better preservation and use of the heritage of the Maltese islands, not only for the sake of preservation but also as an agent of social regeneration in areas such as lower Valletta, the Three Cities and Gozo; and (iii), *Nature Trust* which lobbies to get legal protection for various plants and animals in the Maltese Islands, helping to save from extinction some of the local endemic species, as well as engaging in environmental education. All three organisations were contacted with the scope that coordinators link the research with possible older volunteers for interview purposes. However, this strategy proved unsuccessful since, despite the aid of coordinators, no older volunteers made themselves available for interviewing purposes. Faced with such a failure, and running out of time, older volunteers were successfully contacted and interviewed through snowball sampling. The list of interviewees, and their key characteristics, is presented in *table 5*.

The participants in the study were all over 60 sixty years old, in full-time retirement, and devoted many hours per week of unpaid volunteer work to improving the environment. The character of their work in green volunteerism was various:

■ James is involved in activities that protect the environment, halting environmental destruction, and saving wildlife. He is active in fund raising and in various campaigns such as those related to climate change and those against the introduction and use of genetically modified food. James is very concerned that natural sites are being turned in property development sites and claims that he is ready to do all he can to “halt the rape of Malta”.

■ Rita works with families and young children to bring about greater levels of awareness on a myriad of environmental issues ranging from tree planting and waste management. She believes that the promotion for green living must be based on a bottom-up approach as politicians will not draft and implement eco-friendly policies unless citizens pressure them to do so. Rita is very concerned about the way consumerism is denting people’s quality of life.

■ Carmen helps with the farming of organic products and volunteers in promoting eco-friendly products ranging from dishwasher liquid to cosmetics. She is very conscious of the harms that the “dangerous chemicals found in most daily items such as food, cleaning apparel, and even toys” is doing to the environments and our bodies. Carmen dreams and hopes that one day organic food and eco-friendly items will be staple items in family’s shopping lists.

Table 5 : List of interviewees

Pseudonym	Age	Gender	Education attainment	Volunteering hours per week
James	65	male	secondary education	10
Rita	66	female	primary education	8
Carmen	63	female	primary education	10
Joe	69	male	primary education	random
Peter	69	male	secondary education	random
Michael	70	male	secondary education	random

■ Peter is engaged in monitoring activity that threatens wild birds, such as illegal hunting and trapping, and urban development in conservation areas on the Maltese islands. He is also interested in taking a more active part in monitoring the quality of the sea and the air. Peter believes that we cannot take the environment for granted and that one has to ensure that economic development does not harm the earth system.

■ Joe and Michael are involved in earth cleaning campaigns such as beaches and valleys. They are both concerned about the extensive use of plastics that people use for and during their outings, items which cannot be recycled, and end up building mountains of public dumps. Joe and Michael are also deeply concerned about the plastic and other non-biodegradable rubbish which ruins the eco-system and pose a threat to both wildlife and vegetation.

Motivations

The study uncovered three key types of motivational categories amongst green volunteers – namely, altruistic motivation, ideological motivation, and leisure-time motivation. Volunteers provided altruistic types of responses when asked why they volunteer, highlighting how they want to preserve the earth for future generations, limit the destruction of natural areas, and engage in sustainable living:

Everything I do is for future generations for my children, and their grandchildren. We have made so many mistakes in recent years, destroyed so many fields, and polluted the air we breathe and the sea which we enjoy so much in the summer, that I feel a responsibility to try, as much as possible, to improve the local environment. Future generations have a right to a much cleaner environment.

Peter

Others were motivated by an ideological commitment, driven by post-materialist values. These volunteers prioritised the preservation and sustainability of eco-friendly environments over material advancement and profit:

Success must not solely be measured by how much money we have in our pockets. It is meaningless to have the best available car possible and then having children suffering from asthma because these cars are pollut-

ing the environment. We have to think about quality of life in a holistic manner. If we have to earn a bit less but then experience a much cleaner environment, then so be it.

Joe

Finally, some volunteers who have significant leisure time on their hands are motivated to engage in volunteering, as a means to do something enjoyable and interesting, or to enhance personal development by learning new skills and gaining training. Indeed, some volunteers were not driven by some progressive or radical motives in their engagement in green volunteerism, but only did so because they enjoyed the work and perhaps more importantly, the company of fellow volunteers:

I am no extremist. I have voted all my life for the [Nationalist Party] which, in many ways, is directly responsible for the destruction of the sites that we are now working hard to preserve and conserve... I engage in [green volunteerism] because I enjoy it, gives me a purpose to live, retirement can be quite a problem if you do not have tasks to do and objectives to reach. I also enjoy meeting the people who volunteer beside me in [the organisation].

James

Individual benefits

Volunteers indicated that they experienced improved physical functioning as a result of “helping out”. Perceptions of positive changes in their physical health were highly common amongst older volunteers:

Since I started volunteering in [this organisation], I feel healthier. I move more and am less at home where I tend to overeat. When volunteering you are always on the go, walking, going up and down the stairs... When we stop for Christmas and Easter periods, or when it is too hot such as August, I start feeling stiff. I worry that if I will stop volunteering I will start suffering from arthritis.

Peter

The experience of volunteering also resulted in improved levels of emotional well-being, life satisfaction, self-esteem, and overall morale. Respondents reported that the act of engaging in green volunteerism instilled in them higher degrees of happiness, optimism, and self-worth

on one hand, and fewer symptoms of depression, anxiety, and somatisation on the other.

I have always suffered from depression. I worry a lot, about everything. Working and raising my children made me very depressed because I was always waiting for something bad to happen. When I retired my depressive symptoms increased as I had too much time on my hands and so little things to do. Volunteering keeps me active, keeps me doing something. Actually, it has made me happy!

Rita

Volunteering in eco-friendly activities aided older persons in combating loneliness, as volunteering leads to social networking, and is also useful in gaining “useful” social contacts. In other words, volunteering emerged as a successful strategy in combating both social isolation and social exclusion. In short, green volunteering resulted in improved levels of social capital:

The best thing about this is that, in addition of doing something good for the environment, is that you meet same-minded people, and that you make many friends. I am not very good at making friends, I am very shy, but at the organisation I am meeting other retirees, just like me, and we talk and help each other. We also meet for a coffee when we are not volunteering.

Carmen

Environmental benefits

The study also noted that green volunteering on behalf of older persons leads to a range of environmental benefits such as (i) enhancing the environmental and aesthetic values of the area, (ii) rehabilitating areas for future generations to enjoy, (iii) conserving native flora, fauna and remnant vegetation, (iv) fostering community support and stewardship of natural areas, and (vi), encouraging active community involvement in the management of natural areas. Indeed, green volunteering produces practical environmental improvements at a relatively low cost. As Church and Elster (2002: 32) underline, “while the direct environmental impacts of most local projects are indeed limited and are mostly restricted to improvements in their own localities ...the collective impact of such projects on national targets for sustainable development is increasingly significant”. Indeed, a related benefit of environmental

volunteering is the impact it has on the environmental awareness, knowledge, attachment and sense of responsibility of volunteers.

It is also positive to note that Foster-Smith and Evans (2002: 207) report that the monitoring by volunteers is not generally “significantly different” from that collected by scientists, indicating that volunteers who are appropriately trained have the ability to collect data accurately and thereby make valuable contributions to environmental knowledge. At the same time, green volunteering results in a number of educational benefits for participants such as (i) learning more about environmental problems and proactive solutions, (ii) learning and building new skills for the conservation of natural and cultural heritage, (iii) getting actively involved and learn new skills for managing natural areas, (iv) creating peer pressure as volunteers go out into the community as advocates and encourage others to also learn and change their attitudes and behaviour, (v) adding variety to one’s work experience and make contacts with potential employers, as well as (vi) gaining on-the-job experience before committing to further education or a career change (The Volunteer Coordinators Network, 2011). Although there is no data in this study that can explicitly confirm these benefits, the responses given in the survey implicitly suggest that it is very likely that the older persons who engage in volunteerism benefit from the above-mentioned positive outcomes.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

On the basis of the foregoing recommendations are being made for the adoption of policy options and the formulation of action strategies – at national, local, and community levels with the aim of improving the engagement of older persons in green volunteering. These include expanding participation by older persons who are ageing actively, presenting green volunteering as an option in Pre-retirement Programmes, advertising green volunteering as a means of self-actualisation rather than as a form of unpaid work, and designing green volunteer roles that do not necessitate high levels of education.

Expand participation by older persons who are ageing actively. Older adults who are ageing actively attend community centres, go to the cinema, restaurants, theatres, and libraries, as well as spending extensive time with family, friends,

and acquaintances. Undoubtedly, many of these older persons would be very willing to engage in green volunteerism. Eco-friendly societies must engage in more efficient recruitment strategies that will involve locating new volunteers in such places through effective and efficient advertising.

Present green volunteering as an option in Pre-retirement Programmes. There is a real urgency in planning and carrying out learning programmes for those persons who are nearing retirement age. In such learning programmes a component focusing on “green volunteering” should be included. Volunteering in eco-friendly is to be presented as an interesting and constructive way to spend time in later life. Facilitators in pre-retirement programmes are to present learners with the vast range of eco-friendly volunteer organisations in which one can join and become active during retirement.

Advertise green volunteering as a means of self-actualisation rather than as a form of unpaid work. Running counter to the general emphasis on paid work, an educational campaign on green volunteering is warranted, one which presents this activity as a way to make new friends, do something worthwhile as regards the environment, and achieve personal fulfilment and self worth. It must be stressed that green volunteerism promotes better health outcomes, as it leads to increased exposure to nature, and that – unlike senior centres – they hold a potential for inter-generational activities since they bring together people of different ages in meaningful pursuits.

Design green volunteer roles that do not necessitate high levels of education. As older people with a high level of education and who are in better health tend to participate more actively in volunteering opportunities, space should also be provided for older persons with lower level of education and those who have health problems. In other words there is a need to ascertain that there are available roles for people who might be in relatively poorer health and in low-income brackets by offering transportation, reimbursement for travel and free lunches.

CONCLUSION

This paper discussed the findings of study on older persons who are engaged in volunteer work with eco-friendly non-governmental organisation. It is safe to assume that their work makes a very valid contribution to the preservation of the earth and the sustainability of the economy. At the same time, the positive effects that green volunteerism holds for the older persons themselves were also highlighted. A number of policy options and action strategies to improve the engagement of older persons in green volunteering were recommended.

What has to be underlined is that for green volunteering to improve both its presence and quality, eco-friendly organisations must also do their part by working hard to become more “age-friendly”. Such organisations must be well disposed to make special and necessary accommodations to cater for the different and maybe specific needs of older persons. Most importantly, locations of work must be made more physically accessible, and a range of volunteer jobs is to be provided for people with different physical and cognitive abilities. This, of course, implies making more efficient transportation arrangements, and offering more daytime activities given that many older people tend to be reluctant to leave their homes late in the evening and at night. In other words, there is an urgent need for eco-friendly organisations to recognise the heterogeneity of the older volunteer population, and that a “one size fits all” approach will not work in ageing societies. Addressing adequately these issues may go a long way in increasing the intake of older persons in green volunteerism, as well as more intense levels of involvement. Perhaps this might be part of the solution, in eliminating one of the key missing links that is acting as a constraint to a more sustainable future.

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Chapter 5. The Green Industry's Potential to Drive Local Innovation in the Manufacturing Sector: Malta a Case Study for a Smart Specialisation Strategy in Eco-innovation

Andre Damato

Abstract

The green industry is facing growth due to various economical, social, political and environmental factors. This paper provides the context of innovative technologies within the local manufacturing green industry, in particular those related to renewable energy and energy efficiency. In exploring what constitutes a smart specialisation strategy, a consultation process with key players from different pillars of interest, mainly: Academia, Industry, Government, Political Parties and Public NGOs, was conducted in an effort to identify a range of different perspectives and understandings of such a strategy at a local level. This process was mapped onto a SWOT analysis and Scenario Planning exercise, highlighting the present context of the local green manufacturing industry. This research concluded by drawing on this research to identify a general framework for developing a specialisation strategy and approach for eco-innovation for small countries like Malta.

INTRODUCTION

This paper provides an evaluation of the factors stimulating the growth of the green industry and how this impacts on local innovation, particularly in the manufacturing sector in small countries. Governments, under pressure to meet low carbon targets, are seeking to capitalise on the opportunities opening up through the green economy and eco-innovation by designing strategies to stimulate investments in this sector. Such strategies need to be “smart” by building on local capacities and know-how, addressing local priorities and needs and focusing on niche areas of comparative advantage based on specialisation. In exploring what constitutes a smart specialisation strategy, a consultation process with key players was undertaken in an effort to identify a range of different perspectives and understandings of such a strategy at a local level. This research concludes by drawing on this research to identify a general framework for developing a specialisation strategy and approach for eco-innovation for small countries like Malta.

Global demand for natural resources is growing fast, European fish stocks are depleting and the sustenance of forests and soils is being increasingly threatened by climate change. Energy demand is increasing at an alarming rate with an average 1.3 percent growth per year, so leaders are calling for new technology innovations to meet a spike in demand that adhere to Governmental Energy policies. (Shen & Zeng, 2009, p. 27)

The challenge of climate change, security of supply and the culmination of three fundamental world crises (*Financial, Energy and Environmental*) have led to a major shift in global government policy. Due to the ageing infrastructure assets in the developed world and on the other hand an increase in energy demands from new economies, the green industry makes more sense today than ever to policy makers, the industry and consumers alike (Anex, 2000). The Green Industry proposes different innovative solutions in meeting today's and tomorrow's electrical and power demands. It is envisaged that within the next three years the green industry will create over two million jobs in the EU, many of which are within the manufacturing and services industry. Climate change challenges and agreements within the EU and beyond are increasing the pressure for countries to adopt a green agenda, which is undoubtedly resulting in the growth of the green industry. Furthermore, innovation, the creation and adoption of new, cleaner technologies and know-how will provide a means to achieve economic growth together with environmental goals at significantly lower costs (Cassingena Harper & Crehan, 2005. p. 11).

The MANUFUTURE 2004 stressed the “need for the development and implementation of a European manufacturing strategy based on research and innovation which would promote industrial transformation” (from resource-intensive to knowledge-intensive manufacturing), and a shift to innovating clean production based on knowledge and capital.

The key drivers of change affecting the manufacturing industry include:

- The rapid advances in science and technology
- Environmental challenges and sustainability requirements
- Regulatory environment and standards
- Values and public acceptance of technology

Investing in a green economy and having people working in green industries are both politically attractive and economically promising. Governments around the globe have enacted legislation designed to assist green businesses and to ensure that the employers in this industry have access to the workforce. (OECD, 2008) These initiatives include tax credits to biotechnology businesses for employee training and conducting research on the future workforce needs of green industries. The key drivers (political, economical, social and technological) which have contributed directly or indirectly towards the growth of the green industry are identified in *Figure 1*.

METHODOLOGY

This study made use of a particular form of qualitative interviewing, namely convenience sampling. Forty seven distinct qualitative interviews were undertaken with stakeholders appertaining to five

pillars of interest, namely: Government, Political Parties, Academia, local Industry and non-profit organisations.

Interviewees from the public sector included policy makers, civil servants from the Ministry of Finance, Malta Environment and Planning Authority (MEPA) and members from Malta Council for Science and Technology (MCST) whilst those from political parties included the spokespersons for the environment and/or industry from Partit Nazzjonalista (PN), Partit Laburista (PL) and Alternattiva Demokratika (AD). Interviewees from the Academia pillar included members from the Faculty of Engineering, Faculty of Science, Faculty of Economics, Management and Accounting, Faculty of Arts, Faculty of ICT, Institute for Sustainable Development, The Edward de Bono Institute for the Design and Development of Thinking. Members from the Public pillar included spokespersons from Malta Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Association (MERE), Friends of the Earth, National Youth Council, Greenhouse and Żminijietna – Voice of the Left. In the industry section which was the most significant pillar for our research a select group of companies was chosen to represent the local green manufacturing and retail industries operating in Malta. Mainly this pillar is composed of four sub pillars, basically: a) Local companies manufacturing green

Figure 1: Various forces contributing towards the growth of the green industry

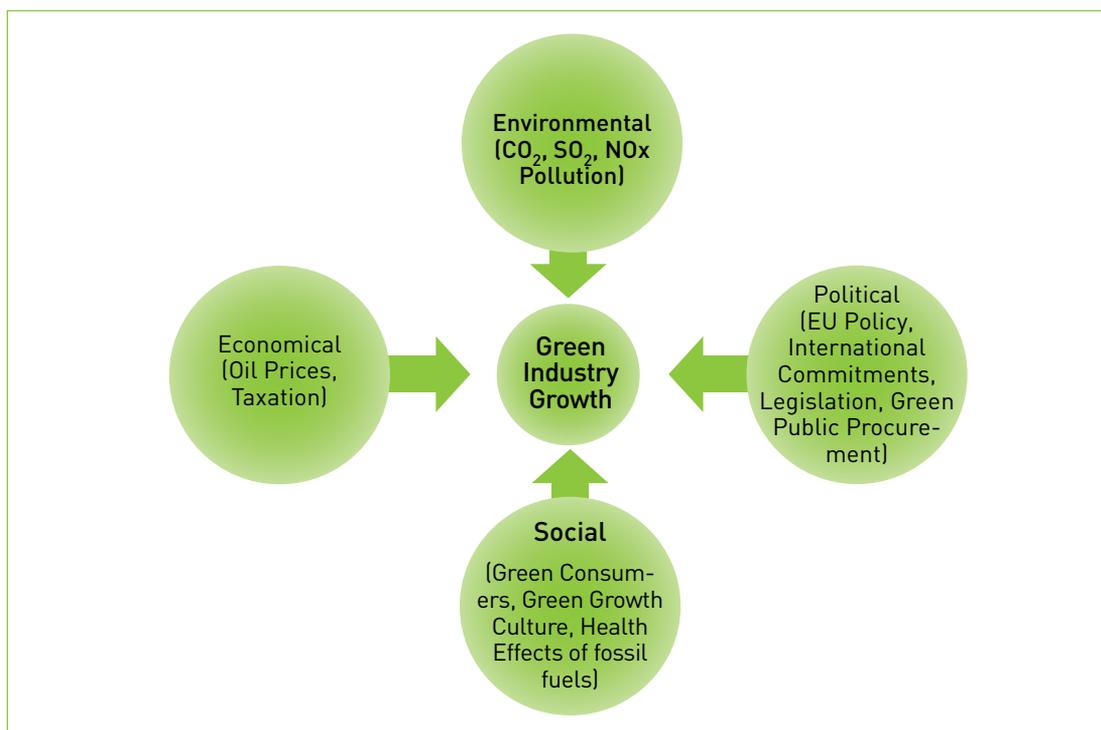
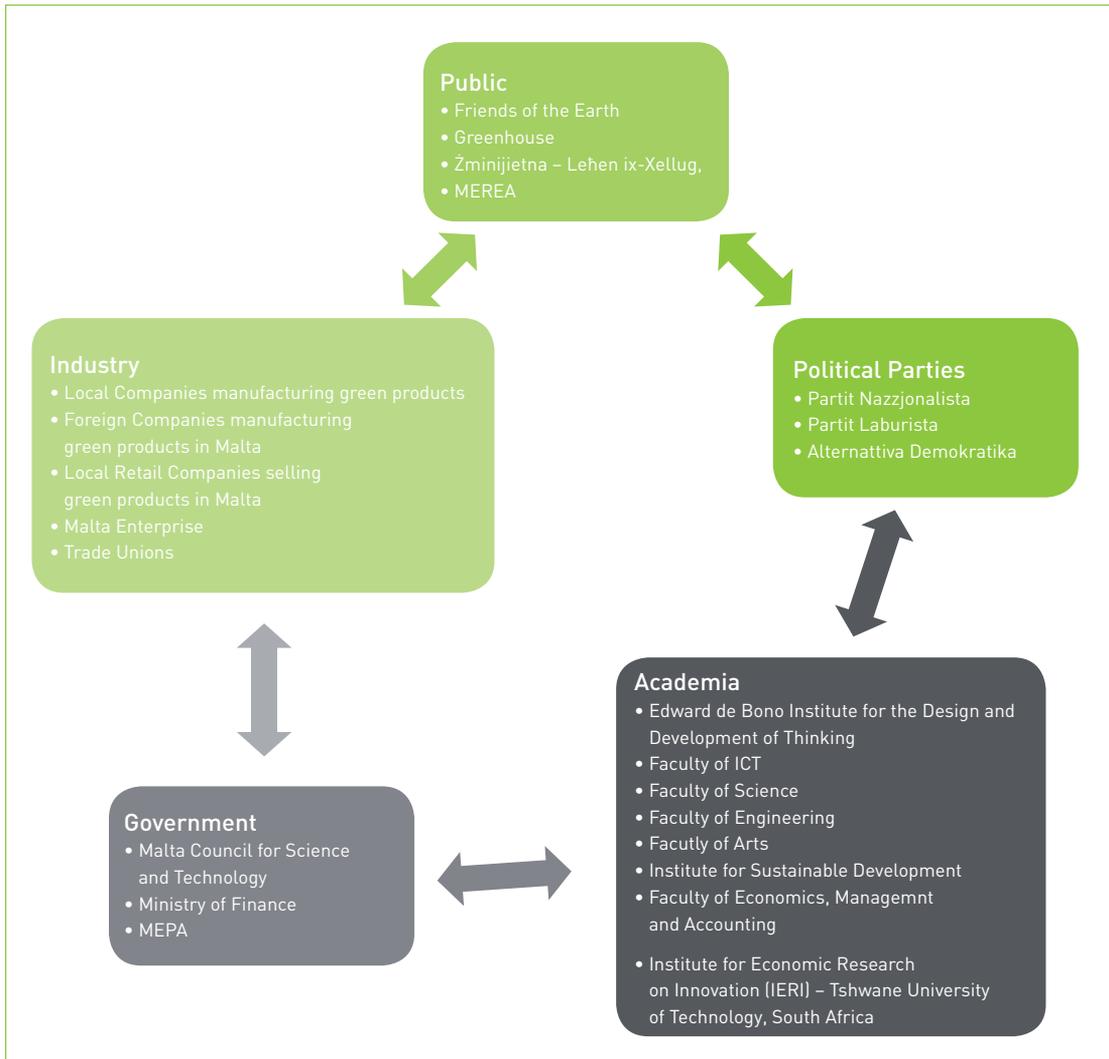


Figure 2: Key drivers that affect Green industry

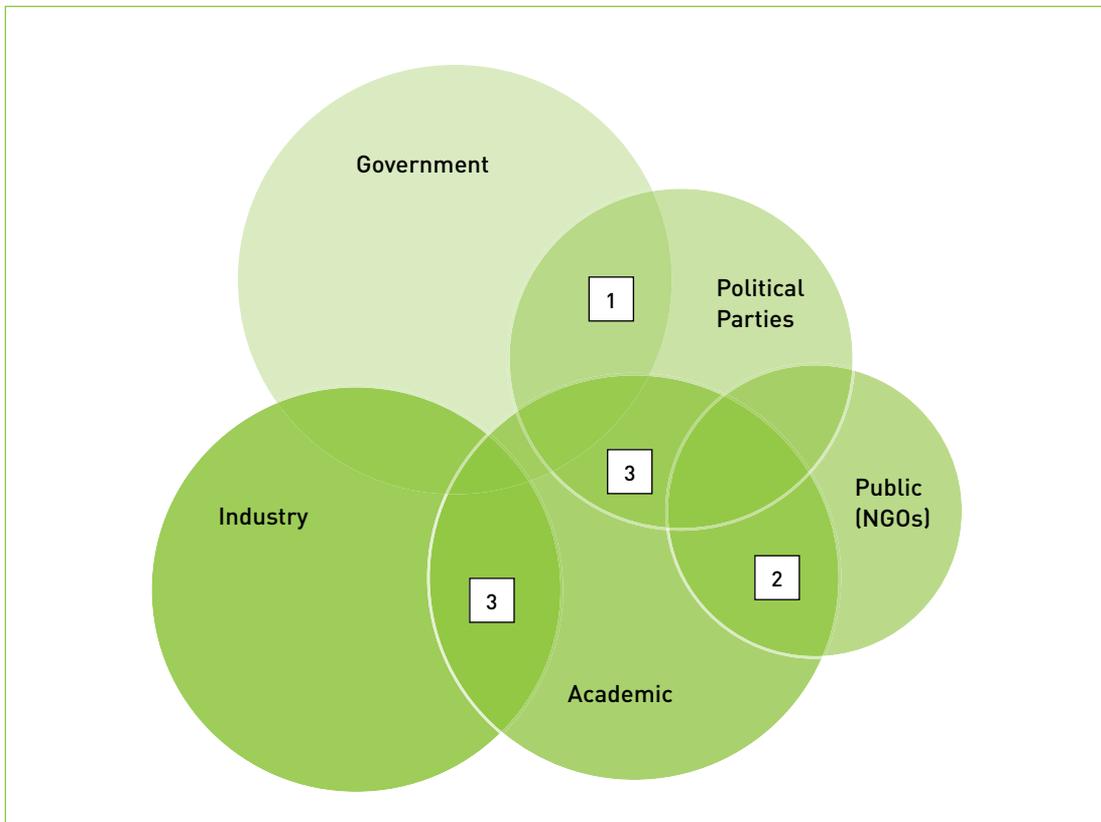


products, b) Foreign companies manufacturing green products in Malta, c) Manufacturing companies currently not producing for the green industry but holding potential, such as the aluminum and sheet metal areas, d) Local retail companies selling green technologies in Malta, such as companies importing and selling solar PV systems.

A SMALL STATE VERITY: OVERLAP OF ROLES BETWEEN MEMBERS FROM DIFFERENT PILLARS

The most striking point in a small state such as Malta, is that a number of interviewees tend to play various particular roles within society and thus could fall under various pillars of interest. This phenomenon proved to be highly beneficial for this research since interviewees helped the researcher examine both inter-pillar cohesion and extra-pillar coupling tribulations from different perspectives *Figure 3* depicts the overlap of roles between the five pillars of interest.

Figure 3: A small state verity: Overlap of roles between members from different pillars



This research is contextualised in the theoretical work carried out on smart specialisation and applying it to the small country context in order to define effective strategies in stimulating locally driven eco-innovation. In this process this research draws on the academic fields of innovation policy and entrepreneurship as well on approaches from the study of creativity and foresight.

Smart specialisation bridges with creativity and foresight in terms of how decisions on priority-setting and identifying niche areas are taken. This delicate process includes choosing who is it to be consulted, how and to what end/purpose. Given that eco-innovation needs to be driven by industry, firms should be actively involved and engaged in decisions regarding specialisation. Such decisions need to take account of local existing capacity and how firms are planning to develop and grow in the short, medium and long-term.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research focused on the following two questions:

- 1) What is smart specialisation strategy in green industry in the context of a small county like Malta?
- 2) What are the particular challenges and advantages of such an approach?

1. SWOT Analysis Findings

Addressing these two questions calls for the identification of the factors that are favourable or unfavourable for the growth of green industry in Malta. A SWOT analysis based on the responses of the interviewees taking part in the semi-structured interview which was part of the survey proved to be useful in the identification exercise of these factors. This analysis provides an in-depth understanding of the context for developing a smart specialisation strategy in green industry marking the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats of various aspects of interest, such as government administration,

policy, educational, social, technological and industry.

Strengths

- One of the interviewees from the Political cluster explained that Malta enjoys a stable political and regulatory environment.
- The government representative stated that the Maltese government has already introduced the idea of green procurement in various government departments.
- Interviewees representing two of the NGOs remarked that there has been an increase in public and industry awareness on environmental issues.
- Interviewee representing the Manufacturing sector explained that industry standards in Malta are considered very high and are at a par with European levels.
- A representative of Industry remarked that competitive labour market rates provide Malta with a competitive advantage.
- One of the academics remarked that Malta has a strong multi-lingual workforce, being the only EU country (of course apart from UK and the Republic of Ireland) where the English language is one of its official languages.
- Another interviewee from the Academic side explained the positive possibility of a spillover effects from high innovation sectors in Malta such as within the ICT, aviation and advanced micro-technology industries.
- Interviewee from the Government cluster remarked that Malta has an excellent location and facilities for conferencing and research.

Weaknesses

- One of the NGO's remarked that in general as regards renewable energy, the local government is not meeting EU legislation and targets. Malta seems to be lagging behind in the uptake of alternative energies.
- Lack of relevant statistics and related resources relating to the green industry was highlighted by Resale cluster interviewee. There are few empirical studies related to green industry in Malta. These studies have been commissioned by government to entities such as the Employment and Training Corporation (ETC), Malta Environment and Planning Authority (MEPA) and the University of Malta.
- Resale cluster interviewee highlighted that there exists lack of coordination between gov-

ernment departments. In particular sometimes personnel from a particular government department do not know that a particular scheme or policy by another government entity had been published or is in the pipeline.

- Government and Resale participants remarked that Malta lacks a national green economic policy, that could be instrumental in attracting local and foreign direct investment in this sector.
- Industry interviewee stated that the training grant application process of ETC is very cumbersome and complex.
- An interviewee from the Manufacturing cluster remarked that quality certification of green technologies poses difficulties for local green manufacturing companies. The cost involved in the ISO and eco-labelling certification are considered to be relatively high for firms operating in the Maltese small market economy. Furthermore, EU-Government solar technology grants for consumers require that the products are eco-labelled, making it very difficult for local manufacturers to sell their technologies locally via these schemes.
- Members from the NGO cluster remarked that when compared to other countries, the price of solar technologies in Malta is relatively high. This could be due to possible extra inflation of prices by local importers and due to high transportation costs incurred by importers. Furthermore aspects of the green manufacturing industry are not so green, in particular those related to the manufacture of solar energy technologies, create wastes by-products even though most of these can be recycled.
- Various interviewees remarked that the collaboration between the University of Malta and the local industry is limited.
- Industry interviewee stated that Malta's limited natural resources necessitate that nearly all of the raw materials needed to produce green technologies, have to be imported. Furthermore, manufactured products need to be exported and transported via different transport networks such as road surface and air. This raises the cost of the product, thus making the product less competitive on the international market.
- An interviewee from the Manufacturing sector remarked that lack of raw materials, necessitates that these have to be imported. The fact that finished green technology systems are large in size, necessitates high freight costs for export.

Opportunities

■ One of the Academic cluster interviewees stated that the Edward de Bono Institute for the Design and Development of Thinking can aid the industry by organising lectures and seminars on the use and practice of various thinking tools, the implementation of idea management systems and the fostering of creativity and innovation in organisations.

■ An interviewee from the Academic cluster remarked that the Institute for Sustainable Development at the University of Malta will soon be launching a website as a hub for information and support mechanisms for the general public, in particular for those in the entrepreneurship world.

■ A representative from the Manufacturing cluster stated that via in-house research they are studying the development of special solar water heaters tailor-made for the particular needs of Maltese population and the features of Malta's climate. Furthermore the same entity is developing a solar water heater that could be fixed with balcony railings. This can be an incentive to a significant number of the Maltese population who live in apartments which provide limited space on their roofs for the installation of solar water heaters.

■ A representative from the manufacturing cluster stated that Maltese companies should try and identify areas that need a high quality input such as manufacture of glass bulbs used in UV water filters for water recycling which are currently being produced in Malta.

Threats

■ A member from the NGO cluster commented that in the field of science and technology Malta is suffering from a brain drain as a substantial number of qualified persons specialising in these areas of study, due to better pay and prospects in other countries, are going abroad to seek employment.

■ Member of the Government cluster remarked that sometimes the Maltese government is forced to recruit foreigners to make up for the shortages in the area of renewable energy and environmental policy. The snag is that these foreigners sometimes fail to adapt and attune their expertise to the requirements of Malta's micro state status. One of the Industry cluster interviewees explained that Malta has limited physical space for the installation of renewable technology products. The demolition of terraced houses to make space for blocks of apartments with a penthouse on the roof is aggravating this problem.

2. The Context: Various Eco-innovation Manufacture facets within the local Green Industry

The research has helped identify various facets for eco-innovation within the local green industry, in particular within the wind and solar renewable energy and water heating systems.

Wind Energy

There are various components of wind turbine systems which can be manufactured or assembled locally. One particular case is the transmission system, which even though it might be difficult to manufacture from scratch, local companies could assemble the transmission system tailored to particular systems and design. At present there are companies in Malta that manufacture generators, which however do not operate on wind turbines. Local companies that manufacture generators can move into manufacturing generators of wind turbines. Furthermore, there is a niche market of wind turbine electronics such as switches. The blades of wind turbines are manufactured either from fibre glass or from wood. In Malta we have a number of industries manufacturing fibre glass products which could be interested in manufacturing the blades for the wind turbines

Solar Water Heaters

Currently in Malta at least one company is already producing solar water heater tanks of stainless steel selling the full stainless steel model and the stainless steel glass lined models. Whilst stainless steel is considered as a weaker substitute to glass, stainless steel tanks are considered to be high quality products, and very durable. This area is of medium to high value added, with most of the production process needing high skilled labour input. Stainless steel tanks have the potential of being the main locally manufactured component of exporting solar water heater systems made and assembled in Malta. Solar water heater stands are currently being manufactured in Malta, mostly from aluminum. The numerous local companies in the area of sheet metal, stainless steel and aluminum can serve as a support base for the manufacturing of solar water heater stands and frames.

Solar Water Heater assembly also presents various possibilities, even though this operation is of limited value added. EU experience has shown

that the assembly of green technologies could possibly lead to the development of supporting industries and also aids in attracting horizontal integration. Furthermore the assembly of solar water heaters can be induced in Malta by the introduction of *do it yourself* assembly kits of these technologies, as happened in other EU countries.

Photo voltaic (PV) systems

There are various facets and sectors related to the manufacture of photo voltaic systems. As discussed earlier this area includes high value added sectors which with its high demand, makes it potential for growth. Currently in Malta there is at least one foreign owned company that produces products that are used in the manufacture of PV systems. In particular this company produces semi conductor tubes that are used for lamps in the sterilisation process when manufacturing silicon PV chips. This area is high value added demanding high quality skilled labour input, with a medium level of automation. However, as is the case with the semi-conductor chip industry all the raw materials for this productive sector have to be imported. When compared to the semi conductor chip industry, PV cells are of less value added nature since they are much less complicated and thus require less expertise, capital and skill. The economics of feasibility make it difficult to be competitive in a sector which has been well exploited by other countries. In this context the most feasible solution for the manufacture of PV systems in Malta will be to group with an established European company to set up a plant in Malta. This has been successfully achieved lately in Sicily. The advantage of this initiative is that the foreign entity will bring its expertise to Malta together with the direct investment that is needed for such a venture. Furthermore the end product will be branded. In this way the foreign partner will use its established market, and thus will use Malta to ship to countries preferably within the Mediterranean region.

As regards physical space for PV plants to achieve economical feasibility a large enterprise would be necessary. A plant in the Bulebel or Marsa industrial estate region will possibly suffice. Whilst this plant could also serve the local population, it must focus on exports.

3. Green Specialisation Framework Strategy

Having formulated a green specialisation general framework strategy for small countries like Malta based upon the previous sections of this study, the following section tries to design a smart specialisation strategy in the green industry for small countries which would be relevant to and applicable in the context of a small country like Malta. Although the context is a small country within the EU, the general strategy can also be applied to small countries in other continents.

3.1 Formulation of a green Technology policy

Countries selecting the green industry as a specialisation area should formulate a green technology policy. The aim for this policy is to effectively direct investment, research and innovation towards this area. Furthermore a strategic committee should be responsible for the holistic implementation and materialisation of the green technology policy. For this to have full political support it would be a good idea if the respective minister would head the main strategic committee, together with local and possibly foreign sector experts. This will ensure that the policy is being given its due importance and effective measures are being implemented.

3.2 Reduction of high compliance cost regulation

Industry compliance regulation at times entails high and rising costs, increasing the difficulties for local manufactures. This must be seen in the context that manufacturers within small countries have limited economies of scale. This may lead firms to be conservative in their approach. Such an approach tends to leave little room for eco-innovation, since each time innovation is implemented at a large scale, compliance related costs increase exponentially. In this context regulation that is reaping little or no benefits, together with compliance regulation entailing high operating costs should be removed and lightened in order to make space for a more innovative entrepreneurship climate. This is particularly true for areas supporting the green industry, such as regulation related to VAT departments, environmental and industry related authorities and entities.

3.3 Government green procurement

Governments of small countries can continue aiding and supporting the green industry by increasing green procurement amongst their various departments and authorities. As purchasers, public authorities have huge buying power and there is enormous scope for them to influence suppliers to innovate and produce more environmentally friendly goods and services. Furthermore, the government has the potential to persuade private sector companies and the general public to change their consumption habits, and thus help the green industry grow. This initiative can make use of the EU GPP training toolkit.

3.4 Creation of Green cluster Industrial Park (Green Park)

Governments of small countries should select a physical area for the re-development of an industrial park dedicated to the research, development and innovation of green related technologies and energy efficiency. The green park could be administered by a government's authority and leased at sub-commercial competitive rates for manufacturing, assembly, maintenance, consultancy and research and innovation oriented purposes. Whilst helping in the creation of jobs and the development of technical skills this park will indirectly help supporting industries as well as helping in the spillage of green, technical and manufacturing skills into adjacent areas.

3.5 Fellowships for technology and policy research related to green manufacturing

Government should classify research on green technologies, the environment and environmental policy as priority areas when it comes to student scholarships and support. Supporting students and academic institutions financially when carrying out studies at Masters and PhD level in this area will help move research towards the green direction.

3.6 Careers Fair on Green Manufacturing

Governments in collaboration with the industry could organise a yearly green manufacturing careers' fair. The aim of this fair will be to dis-

play possible vacancies and careers within the green manufacturing technology fields and other related areas. Possible careers will be those related to solar and wind technology engineering, ICT, maintenance and installation, high precision engineering, aqua marine culture, energy efficiency research and eco-innovation. This fair will be the initiative of the government in full collaboration with industry stakeholders. The fair will enable the local and international green related entities, to advertise their products, inform the public and increase and develop contacts.

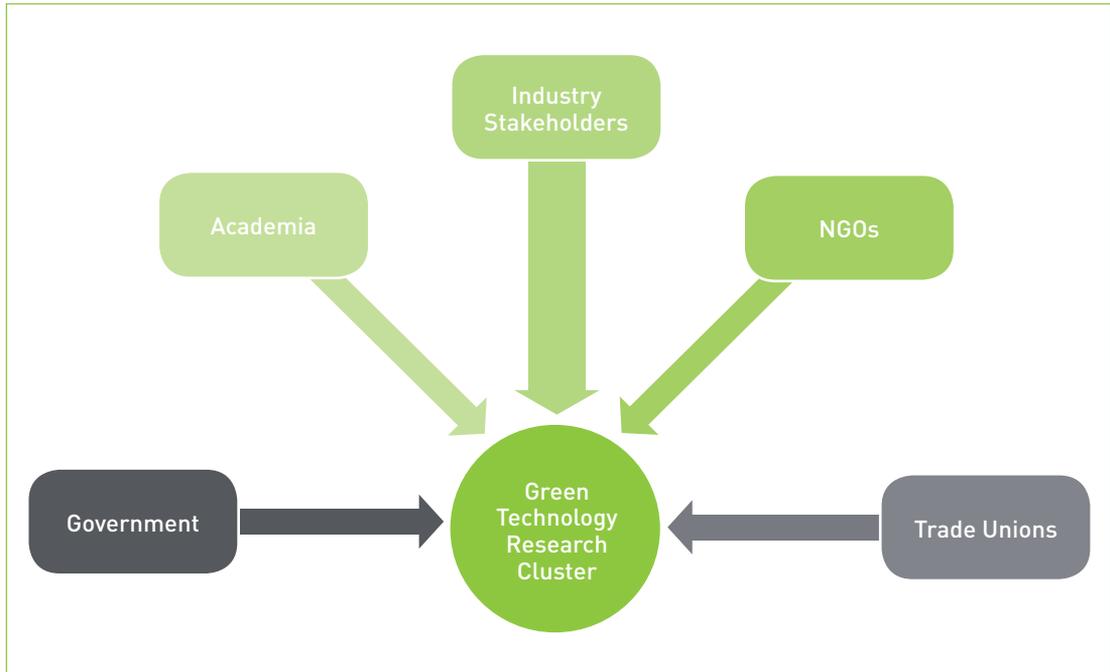
3.7 The Green Industry as one of the pillars for National branding

National branding is deemed fundamental in ensuring that green technology specialised countries are appropriately positioned in the markets which are being targeted. This could also be achieved by linking specific brands of products and services within the green industry to the national brand.

3.8 Formation of a green technology research cluster

Governments should be responsible for aiding the grouping and development of a local green technology research cluster. This consortium will comprise government officials, academics, NGOs representatives and industry stakeholders. The main aim of this unit will be research, development, innovation and commercialisation of green technologies. The cluster will also be able to make alliances with international industry research groups to study, develop and commercialize green technologies. Trade unions can also give a valid contribution by forming part of the cluster. Figure 4 depicts the formulation of a green technology research cluster, the arrows pointing from the consortia to the cluster represent the effort and input from the respective entities. The arrow width represents the foreseen relative effort and input needed from each of the entities. Trade Unions could also contribute to this research cluster by providing training, premises, labour and project development together with labour representation. Furthermore, it would be a good idea if countries would disseminate knowledge by participating in existing wider international clusters.

Figure 4: Composition of a Green Technology Research Cluster



3.9 Public Awareness via NGOs

Governments should support NGOs, in particular environmental ones, wishing to organise educational activities relating to green technologies. Governments can introduce schemes whereby printed material and other equipment used for public awareness on green technologies will be partially or fully financed by the government. Empowering the public by strengthening their belief that they are making a difference through NGOs could be an important element of a successful green educational strategy. Upbeat and positive messages that educate consumers could further be used to create this sense of empowerment. To make the system fully feasible, governments can issue tenders for the printing of published material, whereby organisations will get their published material printed via government selected third parties.

3.10. Technical green skills and know how

Plumbers, electricians, builders and persons with similar or related trades, that are now being asked to install these new environmen-

tal friendly technologies, for both domestic and industrial use should be given the opportunity to train in basic green technology skills via government educational institutions. These skills can be learned through trade courses organised by technical educational institutions, and offered on a part-time and full-time basis. Furthermore these institutions could include modules or sub-units relating to green industry technologies in the course programmes of engineering and plumbing and other trades. They can also formulate a course specially designed for technical skills within green industry technologies.

3.11. E-Green Platform

Small countries specialising in the green industry should opt for the development of an Internet based electronic platform related to green technologies and the local green industry cluster. The aim of this electronic platform which will be vested in a website, will be to create links and networks between industry stakeholders. Another aim of this platform would be to offer and direct the public towards green technology courses, possibly online via the same platform.

Figure 5: E-Green Platform



3.12 Marketing of Green Technology Strategy, Park and Cluster

Governments should give importance to the disseminating of information related to the green technology strategy, park and cluster to industry, academia and public sector. This should be carried out in a professional manner through a marketing campaign carried both within that country and on an international basis with the aim of attracting and strengthening investment in the area. A secondary aim of the campaign will be to market the green manufacturing and R&I incentives locally and abroad using government and partner media such as websites and newsletters. A special emphasis should also be given to inform and aid the networking of players within the green cluster.

The marketing should be carried out through:

- the setting up of an online database listing companies and consultants offering green services and technologies, banks offering venture capital and technology needs;

- the organisation of various breakfast briefings with banks, business networks and venture capital organisations;
- the mobilisation of local environment NGOs through a dedicated activity;
- the launch of an award for research and innovation in green manufacturing.

It is highly important that the green research development cluster is well-promoted to develop and strengthen. Marketing should be done amongst the following players:

- public sector (targeting the green procurement initiative);
- banks (local and foreign) and other financial intermediaries;
- research laboratories;
- intermediaries in Europe.

CONCLUSION

The focus of this paper is on smart specialisation and applied to a small country context in order to define effective strategies in stimulating locally driven eco-innovation. It draws on the academic fields of innovation policy and entrepreneurship approaches from the study of creativity and foresight. The main conclusion is that green strategies and policies call for an innovative management. In other words it encompasses on the demand side measures supporting innovation management

such as public procurement, research driven clusters and supply measures like the development of specialised industrial parks. As it explores the discovery of smart specialisation domains in which a region can hope to excel it calls on the academic domain to aid in the development of the smart specialisation strategy. Indeed this paper provides the practical skeleton for other academic studies, where the aim of the study will be in developing an innovation framework for the manufacturing industry, based on a country case study.

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Chapter 6. Basic Income: How it fits in the Policy Framework for Green Jobs

Vivan Storlund

“Prosperity for the few founded on ecological destruction and persistent social injustice is no foundation for a civilized society.”

Tim Jackson, Prosperity without growth

Abstract

The basic argument in this paper is based on the premise that when green is the qualifying criterion for work rather than profit or economic growth, the world of work and the economic scenario in which it has to operate assume a different dimension. The focus of this new dimension is here placed on work performed in the intersection between employment and entrepreneurship. This is a grassroots level hibernation sphere for innovation and thus also a fertile breeding ground for green jobs. A green job in this context is being associated with meaningful work. What makes work meaningful is its potential to enable the worker to participate meaningfully and creatively in the life of society in less materialistic ways. This does not however mean that the instrumental value of work has to be ignored. In whatever perspective work is perceived it ultimately has to assure one's survival and well being. Herein lies the principle of basic income. This paper challenges the conventional economic theory of pay and argues that a national and/or macro policy of basic income can be very conducive to the creation and sustenance of green jobs.

Work in the intersection between employment and entrepreneurship can be characterised as “meaningful”, as there is some value attached to it that the pursuer considers worth striving for, as opposed to merely a bread-winning job. Such work represents both personal aspirations and human and social concerns. James Robertson sees this kind of individualised work, “ownwork”, as he calls it, as the future mode of employment (1985/2006).

How work in this sector should be compensated is a big challenge, to which a basic income could be a solution. In addition to securing people's subsistence, a basic income would serve multiple purposes such as providing start-up funding both for work aimed at profit and non-profit work. A basic income would furthermore serve the envi-

ronment in multiple ways as it facilitates people's individual work that often is small-scale and thereby mostly local and light. In Robertson's words ‘ownwork’ will enhance the informal economy which will become one of the main areas for further economic growth and social progress (1985/2006).

A reassessment of the notion of work is generally called for. This should be linked to green economics that challenges the narrow scope of mainstream economics. Green economics look for solutions that simultaneously address poverty, climate change and biodiversity within an equitable framework. It is a question of re-orientating ourselves and our economics, “manoeuvring it back onto its rightful course to a better “life-world” result,” says Miriam Kennet. (2008, p. 19).

Research in Namibia and South Africa as well as a basic income project in Namibia illustrate the potentials of a basic income as a means of facilitating new venues for subsistence and work. In affluent societies a basic income would greatly enhance the creative sector and activities in civil society. A basic income would assist in levelling the very uneven playing field we face on many fronts.

THE BIGGER PICTURE

There are both economic, environmental and governmental system failures that need to be assessed and the issues renegotiated. To do that we need, on the one hand, new paradigms to allow for alternative approaches to the problems we face, on the other, we need new social instruments to correct these failures, basic income schemes being one of them. Joseph Stiglitz and James Robertson who have been in the economic epicentre, as well as Tim Jackson, whose major focus is sustainable development, will here paint the bigger picture, and offer their alternatives to present day impasses.

Nobel Price winner Joseph Stiglitz was economic adviser to the American President Bill Clinton 1993-1997 and senior vice president and chief economist at the World Bank 1997-2000. He gives us the promise “Another World is Possible” (Chapter 1) in his book Making Globalisation

Work (2006). Furthermore he was involved in the World Commission on the Social Dimensions of Globalization, appointed by the International Labour Organization (ILO) and chaired by presidents Benjamin W Mkapa (Tanzania) and Tarja Halonen (Finland) (2004). Thereafter he directed the Commission set up by the French President Nicolas Sarkozy, to consider the measurement of economic performance and social progress. Main members of the commission were Amartya Sen and Jean-Paul Fitoussi (www.stiglitz-sen-fitoussi.fr). The report was presented in September 2009.

Stiglitz considers that the latter commission's report (here called the Stiglitz commission) and its implementation may have a significant impact on the way in which our societies look at themselves and, therefore, on the way in which policies are designed, implemented and assessed (2009, p. 9).

James Robertson, again, gives us a model that combines a new economic order with a basic income. He has arrived at these models after extensive experience of how things work in practice. He started as a policy-making civil servant in Whitehall in the 1950s and 1960s, during the decolonisation process, of which he had first hand experience. "It was a very exciting time for a young man", Robertson tells (at <http://www.jamesrobertson.com/about-james-robertson.htm>). Then he worked in the Cabinet Office, participating in the central processes of government, "getting a privileged bird's-eye, worm's-eye view of how they worked." Thereafter he gained experience of mergers in the public service, which were "very educative and very frustrating." After that he turned to the private sector getting involved with management consultancy and systems analysis. He set up the Inter-Bank Research Organisation for the British banks (1968-1973). His next excursion, as he puts it, was to stand for Parliament in 1974, in support of the Campaign for Social Democracy, "Another learning experience." The lessons he learned was that, "although effective processes of conventional politics and government may still be needed to implement radical changes, different processes of 'pre-political' action are needed to get radical changes on to mainstream policy agendas." As part of this agenda he has, among others, created the New Economics Foundation.

Through his work "Prosperity without growth? Transition to a sustainable economy" (2009), Tim Jackson links together different strands.

He points to how narrowly government has been associated with material aims, "hollowed out by a misguided vision of unbounded consumer freedoms". Jackson considers that the concept of governance itself stands in urgent need of renewal. He sees the current economic crisis as "a unique opportunity to invest in change". The short-term thinking that has plagued society for decades should be substituted with the challenging task of "delivering a lasting prosperity" (2009, Foreword).

WHAT KIND OF PROSPERITY

For Jackson prosperity means that human beings should flourish within the ecological limits of a finite planet. "The challenge for our society is to create the conditions under which this is possible. It is the most urgent task of our times." (2009, Foreword).

Jackson considers government to be the principal agent for protecting our shared prosperity, in contrast to the narrow pursuit of growth that "represents a horrible distortion of the common good and of underlying human values". (2009, p.11). The Stiglitz commission moves along these same lines. Its report is, first of all, addressed to political leaders. "New political narratives are necessary to identify where our societies should go." (2008, p. 10). The Stiglitz commission advocates a shift of emphasis from a "production-oriented" measurement system to one focused on the well-being of current and future generations, i.e. toward broader measures of social progress (Stiglitz, 2008, p. 10).

The small island-state Vanuatu captures in an excellent way the effect of looking at things differently. According to the conventional way of measuring well-being, the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) Vanuatu has been classified as one of the least developed countries in the world. Yet the quality of life for most people, according to Anita Herle (2010, transcript of radio program) is remarkably high. This is how she pictures the situation in Vanuatu:

"Nobody is hungry and there is a food security that comes from local access to fertile gardens. There's no homelessness, everyone is cared for within extended family units. There's relatively little violence, and disputes are resolved within communities by traditional leaders, and the rich natural resources

have been sustained for centuries through excellent traditional resource management.”

In 2006 Vanuatu was declared to be one of the happiest countries in the world by the New Economics Foundation (Herle, 2010), the institution created by James Robertson.

Namibia may illustrate the reverse of this picture. There it becomes clear that the economic growth and “sound” macro-economic indicators that Namibia had had since independence, did not translate into sustained benefits for the majority of the population (Kameta, Haarman, C, Haarman, D, Jauch, H, 2007, p. 20). This can be seen in the operations of the international company Ramatex. This company has contributed to the emergence of a large number of “working poor” in full-time employment, unable to meet even their basic needs. This stands in sharp contradiction to the Namibian government’s stated objective of promoting decent work in line with ILO standards, Kameeta *et al.* note (2007, p. 18). The hope that the private sector would become a large-scale job-creator with substantial impact on employment has not been fulfilled (Kameeta *et al.* 2007, p. 20).

WELL-BEING ASSESSED

The Stiglitz commission recommends that when evaluating material well-being, one should look at income and consumption rather than production. (Recommendation 1). Likewise, the household perspective should be emphasised. (Recommendation 2). The commission notes that without this change of focus one may get misleading indications about how well-off people are, which might result in wrong policy decisions. (2008, pp. 12-13).

The effects of foreign investment may be illustrated by Namibia and the case of Ramatex. The government invested about N\$ 120 million in public funds to set up infrastructure for Ramatex. Kameeta *et al.*’s assessments of the effects are the following:

“The financial support that Ramatex received from the Namibian government is equivalent to the salaries of all workers for 40 months – more than 3 years! A huge investment by any standard which could only be justified if Ramatex’ operations in Namibia would lead to long-term sustainable jobs of decent quality. Otherwise one may well argue that the huge

public investments could have been spent more efficiently on other programmes aimed at job creation.” (Kameeta *et al.*, 2007, p. 18).

Experiences from South Africa also show that the government’s efforts to create jobs have not been effective. The cost of a South African workfare programme amounts to several times the cost of a basic income grant, yet it fails to distribute benefits to those most in need of social assistance (Samson, Haartmann, C. & Haartmann, D., 2001, cited in Kameeta *et al.* 2007, p. 21).

Another aspect that C. Haarmann and D. Haarmann (2005) have brought to the fore is that people in disadvantaged communities carry a disproportionately high burden for caring for other people. The informal social security system effectively imposes an informal tax on the poor. Whereas the richest households support other households with only about 8% of their income, the poorest households spend up to 23% of their meagre incomes on other poor people. In economic terms this constitutes a regressive tax on the poor, diminishing their ability to save and invest, and thereby diminishing the chance to enhance their own economic opportunities (cited in Kameeta *et al.* 2007, p. 9).

Scarcity is also reflected in the local economy. The absence of substantial amounts of cash in the local economy prevents businesses and local projects from becoming successful and sustainable. Especially in small rural communities, the limitation on the demand side to actually pay for the provision of goods furthers the monopoly situation of larger businesses, exploiting the little cash there is. These monopolies are very effective in outmanoeuvring upcoming new business into bankruptcy, and then raising prices again (Haartmann, C. & Haartmann, D, 2004, cited in Kameeta *et al.* 2007, p. 9).

Governments have not fared much better in the affluent part of the world when it comes to promoting citizens’ well-being. The pattern is the same. Analysing the global crisis, social protection and jobs, Joseph Stiglitz notes (2009, p. 3) that the level playing field has been destroyed for years to come because of the bailouts, not only of financial institutions but also the promise that this could be the case with big companies, as signalled by the US and Western European governments. “This has changed the propensity of these companies to undertake risk, because

if they undertake big risks and lose, taxpayers pick the losses up. If they win, they get the profits.”(2009, p. 3).

What are we left with? Stiglitz observes:

“The people in the global economy have the same skills as before the crisis, and the machines and real resources are the same as before the crisis. The problem is that there is an organizational failure, a coordination failure, and a macro-economic failure.” (2009, p. 11).

Robertson has developed a model for monetary reform that would correct the failures Stiglitz refers to. A basic income complemented and reinforced by such a monetary measure would offer a two-pronged approach to address the issue of financial stability different from the policy of bailing out banks adopted by several governments. This is how Robertson sees the new economic system and a basic income interact. Writing in 2009 Robertson notes that there is growing awareness of the need for “quantitative easing”, financial jargon for getting central banks to create large sums of money and pump them into the economy. The question for today’s policy-makers is how and where are they to be pumped in?

“If central banks themselves were accused to keeping the money supply at the right level, and if arrangements already existed for the regular distribution of a Citizen’s Income, the answer would be easy: vary the size of the Citizen’s Income as required. This would inject the money into the economy where it would circulate quickly and would directly benefit those who most need it in economic downturns.” (2009, p. 6).

Robertson’s scheme is based on taxing the value of common resources as an alternative to present taxes on incomes, profits, value added and other financial rewards for useful work and enterprise. Public spending would in his scheme be shifted to distributing a Citizen’s Income, as a share in the value of the common resources, “away from perverse subsidies and heavy spending on big governmental and business organisations to provide dependency- reinforcing services to welfare consumers.” (2009, p. 2).

And here the perception of work is central as a diversified view of work offers an exit from the organisational failures pointed to here.

A DIVERSIFIED WORKING LIFE - A DIVERSIFIED VIEW OF WORK

The uniform view of work that was typical for the industrial society is no longer valid. Work is today increasingly performed in some form that is a deviation of the old model of ‘long-duration, full-time employment’. There is therefore an urgent need to reassess the notion of work, its compensation and regulation. In addition, there are strong economic, social, cultural and environmental reasons for a new approach to work, as highlighted above.

In practice one can talk about at least two parallel working lives

- the “traditional” work performed in an employment relationship;
- work performed outside an employment relationship such as freelance work, artistic work, research without funding, voluntary work, developing a product or trying out a business idea.

An employment relationship forms the basis for labour legislation with associated rights and obligations at work, and also work-related social security. To its nature it is instrumental and value neutral. The second category of work can be characterised as meaningful for the one doing the work and it often reflects the new thinking that is required from changed social circumstances, of which green work is an essential part. Yet, work performed in this sector lacks legal protection, support or proper compensation.

A welcomed reassessment of work and its regulation is the Supiot Report. On the invitation of the European Commission, a group of lawyers and economists looked at the needs for reforming labour law. The report of the committee, lead by Alain Supiot, has been characterized as “one of the most original contributions to thinking on the reform of the employment relationship and employment law.” (Marsden & Stephenson, 2001, p. 1).

Three fundamental observations are made in the Supiot report:

- the employment relationship in its existing form has reached its limits as many firms need more flexible relationships with their employees than it can currently provide;
- tinkering at the edges with special types of employment contract for different categories of workers has diluted protection without increasing new jobs; and
- reform of the employment relationship poses severe problems for labour law, collective bargaining and social insurance, because they have all based themselves on the standard employment relationship (Marsden & Stephenson 2001, p. 3).

There is a promise of something new in the experts' observations. The fundamental redesign of employment that Supiot and his colleagues propose includes the idea of an equivalent to citizenship rights in the arena of work. A person would have an "occupational status" that establishes a citizen's right involving access to markets and trade. It would also cover the transition between different kinds of activity, market and non-market work, training, re-training, and so on. The right to an income and other advantages would also apply in regard to socially recognised non-market activities. By making workers' employment rights less dependent on their current jobs, such changes would spread the risks of short term and uncertain employment more widely, making them more acceptable to workers and so encourage the development of activities that require them. (Marsden & Stephenson 2001, p. 6). This is a good start, although the report tends to focus on employment and firms without sufficient consideration of ownwork. Unfortunately, politicians have not been ready to act on these proposals (see Supiot 2006 and 2009). Nevertheless the report is a step in the right direction and hopefully its proposals could pave way for a basic income.

MEANINGFUL WORK

The Stiglitz commission points to the challenges we face in perceiving the value of work particularly in activities such as medical services, educational services, information and communication technologies, research activities and financial services (Stiglitz commission, 2008, p. 11).

The employment-based perception of work is incapable of capturing substantive aspects; value considerations do not fit the paradigm. Be the products things we need or don't need, be the work something we are passionate about or something we do for our livelihood, anything goes as long as focus is placed on work performed in an employment relationship, a salary is paid and the economic transactions are registered as part of the gross domestic product, GDP. This is the dominant perception of work.

"The exchange of cash is the key", Marilyn Waring observes about how we measure GDP (2000, p. 53) and gives an African perspective on this phenomenon:

"The transactions can be immoral and illegal and universally condemned, but no one cares. Resources are mined, skies are polluted, forests are devastated, watercourses become open sewers and drains, whole populations are relocated as valleys are flooded and dammed, and labour is exploited in chronically inhumane working conditions. The statistics record economic growth."

The Stiglitz commission's response to this state of affairs is to broaden income measures to non-market activities (Recommendation 5).

Household work is not recognized in official statistics, yet it constitutes an important aspect of economic activity. The commission notes that the reason for excluding such data is not so much conceptual difficulties as uncertainty about the data. There has been progress in this arena and the commission considers that more systematic work should be undertaken. "This should start with information on how people spend their time that is comparable both over the years and across countries." (2008, p. 14).

What this boils down to can hardly be better told than Marilyn Waring does (2000, p. 53):

"Consider Tendai, a young girl in the Lowveld in Zimbabwe. Her day starts at 4.00 am when, to fetch water, she carries a 30-litre tin to a borehole about 11 kilometres from her home. She walks barefoot and is home by 9.00 am. She eats a little and proceeds to fetch firewood until midday. She cleans the utensils from the family's morning meal and sits pre-

paring a lunch of *sadsa* for the family. After lunch and the cleaning of the dishes, she walks in the hot sun until early evening, fetching wild vegetables for supper before making the evening trip for water. Her day ends at 9.00 pm after she's prepared supper and put her younger brothers and sisters to sleep. Tendai is considered unproductive, unoccupied and economically inactive. According to the International Economic System, Tendai does not work and is not part of the labour force."

In the affluent part of the world we have groups of highly educated hard-working persons who contribute greatly to a nation's both material and spiritual wealth – artists. Yet, they don't reap the profit. Artists have made the creative sector one of the fastest growing sectors of the economy. Here some EU statistics from the study *The Economy of Culture in Europe* (2006, p. 6).

- Turnover: The cultural and creative sector turned over more than € 654 billion in 2003, compared to ICT manufactures € 541 billion in 2003 and the car manufacturing industry, € 271 billion in 2001.

- Value added to EU GDP: the cultural and creative sector contributed to 2.6% of EU GDP in 2003. During that same year.

- Chemicals, rubber and plastic products accounted for 2.3%.

- Real estate activities 2.1%.

- Food, beverage and tobacco manufacturing 1.9%

- Textile industry 0.5%.

- Contribution to EU growth: the overall growth of the sector's value added was 19.7% in 1999-2003. The sector's growth during this period was 12.3% higher than the growth of the general economy.

And how does this translate into work? In 2004, 5.8 million people worked in the cultural and creative sector, equalling 3.1% of the total employed population in EU25. While total employment in the EU decreased in 2002-2004, employment in this sector increased by 1.85%.

Here we can talk about both meaningful work and green jobs. And here we see a lot of deviations from 'the standard'. The share of independents is more than twice that in total employment (28.8% against 14.1%). This means own work is performed in the intersection between employment and entrepreneurship. And those who are employed are often so on a more irregular basis. 17% are temporary workers, compared to 13.3% in total employment,

whereas the share of part-time workers is one out of four against 17.6% in total employment. Another distinctive feature is that people working in this sector generally have a high level of education. 46.8% possess a university degree, whereas the percentage in total employment is 25.7% (2006, p. 6). This triggers the question how human capital is treated in present day structures.

HOW THINGS ARE RELATED

In their book *The Spirit Level, Why Equality is better for Everyone*, Wilkinson and Pickett (2010, p. 5) observe that we have got close to the end of an era that has lasted for thousands of years, when economic growth has meant an improvement in people's quality of life. In the rich countries economic growth has largely finished its work. "We are the first generation to have to find new answers to the question of how we can make further improvements to the real quality of human life." (2010, p. 11). Their answer is equality:

"The powerful mechanism which makes people sensitive to inequality cannot be understood in terms either of social structure or individual psychology alone. Individual psychology and societal inequality relate to each other like lock and key. One reason why the effects of inequality have not been properly understood before is because of a failure to understand the relationship between them." (Wilkinson & Pickett 2010, p. 33).

The question of equality is of great relevance for those working in the intersection between employment and entrepreneurship. Many of them are discriminated against in regard to pay. As they mostly lack the support structures that a work place, labour legislation or collective agreements accord, the conditions under which they work can be quite burdensome. Insecurity is often a constant companion. A Canadian study, *Impact of Arts-Related Activities on the Perceived Quality of Life*, revealed that there was no connection between 66 different art genres and the artist's reported sense of psychological well-being. The researchers, A. C. Michalos and P. M. Kahlke, (2008) were surprised, as it is generally recognized that art contributes to people's well-being. They were probably unaware of the hardship that is often associated with artistic work. So a basic income would be a compensation for society's lacking ability to compensate artists for their work. So much so, as artistic

work is an ideal means of improving prosperity without growth.

TO BE RENEGOTIATED

The constant call for economic growth is a major reason for both social and economic ills, but something that is not easily questioned. “Questioning growth is deemed to be the act of lunatics, idealists and revolutionaries”, Tim Jackson observes in the Foreword to his report “Prosperity without growth?” (2009, p. 7). But this myth about growth has failed us, Jackson notes:

“It has failed the two billion people who still live on less than \$2 a day. It has failed the fragile ecological systems on which we depend for survival. It has failed, spectacularly, in its own terms, to provide economic stability and secure people’s livelihoods.” (Foreword, 2009).

Therefore it needs to be questioned. Jackson’s primary recipe is a new macro-economics for sustainability. The presumption of growth in material consumption can no longer be the basis for economic stability. The folly of separating economy from society and environment must be substituted by ecological and social sustainability (Jackson 2009, p. 10).

Structural change, Jackson notes, must lie at the heart of any strategy to address the social logic of consumerism. “It must consist in two main avenues. The first is to dismantle the perverse incentives for unproductive status competition. The second must be to establish new structures that provide capabilities for people to flourish – and in particular to participate meaningfully and creatively in the life of society – in less materialistic ways.” (2009, p. 11).

HOW A BASIC INCOME FITS THIS PICTURE

A basic income has been tried out in a deprived village Otjivero in Namibia. This is what Jacob Zetterman reported in 2008 after the project had been running for half a year. (<http://www.dagen.se/dagen/Article.aspx?ID=160382>)

Did it turn out, as the critics feared, that people who get money for free become passive and shy working; that in the long run, it leads to society’s collapse; that the only ones to profit from the concept are alcohol dealers and prostitutes?

No, not according to the half-year report from the project. According to this report there are now more people working at Otjivero, and there has been several start-ups since the basic income was introduced. The malnutrition of children under the age of five has decreased from 42% to 17%. More children are attending school and the payment of school fees has doubled. The number of school dropouts has decreased from more than 30% to 5%.

In 2011 this result was confirmed by Guy Standing, one of the architects of the Namibia project. In 2011 he is working on two pilot projects for cash transfers in India (*The Times of India*, 4 October 2011).

At Otjivero, the effects the basic income had had on health was remarkable. The local health clinic reported that its income had increased five times as more people were able to afford health care. Thanks to an improved diet the medicines for HIV-infected persons were more effective. Further, poverty-related violence had decreased by 20%, according to the first half-year report.

The basic income had up till then proved to be a success, and Bishop Kameeta, who directed the project, said in a speech that they now could look towards a promised land that is said to exist beyond the desert march of the poor Namibians. – “It was a society that stood up against poverty and assumed its dignity, this is what we saw.” (<http://www.facebook.com/photo.php?v=1110435337885>)

THE EFFECTS OF ECONOMIC SECURITY

A number of preconceived ideas had to be done away with when a cash transfer system was tried out in South Africa. One of them was the generally held view in conventional economic theory that a basic income might “undermine labour force participation by reducing the opportunity costs of not working”. When empirically tested against the cash transfer systems in South Africa the researchers found that:

- Social grants provide potential labour market participants with the resources and economic security necessary to invest in high-risk/high-reward job search.
- Living in a household receiving grants is correlated with a higher success rate in finding employment.

■ Workers in households receiving social grants are better able to improve their productivity and as a result earn higher wages (Samson *et al.*, 2004 in Kameeta *et al.*, 2007, p. 22).

In regard to the Namibian model for a basic income “The Basic Income Grant”, BIG, Kameeta *et al.* maintain that it is more than an income support programme.

“It provides security that reinforces human dignity and empowerment. It has the capacity to be the most significant poverty-reducing programme in Namibia, while supporting household development, economic growth and job creation. The cost is ranging from 2.2% to 3.8% of national income.”

Over time, Namibia’s economy will benefit from the long-term growth impact of the Basic Income Grant (Kameeta *et al.*, 2007, p. 23). This report was presented in 2007, thus before they tried out a Basic Income Grant in 2008, with the unambiguously positive results we have seen above.

(<http://www.facebook.com/#!/photo.php?v=1110435337885>)

BASIC INCOME – A WAY OF PROMOTING PROSPERITY

The prosperity Jackson is in search of is a less materialistic society that will enhance life satisfaction. It is a more equal society that will lower the importance of status goods. It is a less growth-driven economy that will improve people’s work-life balance. Enhanced investment in public goods will provide lasting returns to the nation’s prosperity (Jackson, 2009, p. 11).

A basic income would give people the opportunity to opt out of activities that burden the environment, in which they are engaged solely for the sake of their livelihood. Those who are involved in own work, again, to a great extent contribute to social prosperity through culture, caring functions and other voluntary work rather than environmentally harmful activities.

A lot of human energy goes into work in the intersection between employment and entrepreneurship that might or might not be business one day. Whether one is successful or not, should not be an issue as great leaps in development often originate in somebody’s failure or mistake. It is work ‘outside the structures’ rather than employ-

ment that drives development. It is here that much green jobs see the light.

The one size fits all view of work as employment and economic profit needs to be substituted with a ‘both and’ approach. Old and new work formats should be seen as complementary. The notion of meaningful work cuts across formal divisions of work categories such as private and public employment. This is important because outsourcing has blurred the borderline between public and private. Making meaning a part of the equation will give leeway for work in civil society as complementary to work for profit, allowing them to be pursued parallel without internal competition. Or as Robertson says “We will do what we see to be our own good, useful and rewarding work – for ourselves, other people and society as a whole (Robertson, J., 2006 Preface, p. 2). This will bring changes to national economies in the kinds of work people do, the ways they work, and the way society organises work (Robertson, 2006, p. 3).

MAKING PEOPLE PART OF THE EQUATION

As noted above, the Stiglitz commission advocates a shift of emphasis from a “production-oriented” measurement to one focused on the well-being of current and future generations, *i.e.* toward broader measures of social progress (Stiglitz, 2009, p.10). Here Wilkinson and Pickett’s book “The Spirit Level why Equality is better for Everyone”, fills a void. They see that the extraordinarily positive reception their book has received is a sign that there is a “widespread appetite for change and a desire to find positive solutions to our problems.” They point to the social failings that has led to pessimism, and on top of that, the economic recession and its aftermath of high unemployment. “But the knowledge that we cannot carry on as we have, that change is necessary, is perhaps grounds for optimism: maybe we do, at last, have the chance to make a better world.” (Wilkinson & Pickett, 2010, p. 11).

In their book Wilkinson and Pickett show that “the quality of social relations in a society is built on material foundations. The scale of income differences has a powerful effect on how we relate to each other. Rather than blaming parents, religion, values, education or the penal system, we will show that the scale of inequality provides a powerful policy lever on the psychological well-being of all of us” (2010, p. 5).

WHAT NEXT?

The Stiglitz commission regards its report as opening a discussion rather than closing it. The report points to issues that ought to be addressed, such as societal values, what we, as a society, care about, and whether we are really striving for what is important.

At the moment of writing (28.10.2011) 795,486 persons around the globe have signed Avaaz' petition The World vs. Wall Street in support of the thousands of Americans who have non-violently occupied Wall Street – “an epicentre of global financial power and corruption”. The occupants call for real democracy, social justice and anti-corruption.

(http://www.avaaz.org/en/the_world_vs_wall_st/)

This adds a “western” dimension to the Arab spring where ordinary citizens began claiming their right against oppressive or undemocratic regimes starting in Tunisia, followed by Egypt, Libya, Yemen, Syria, Morocco (?). In the Avaaz posting on the internet on 5 October 2011 launching the Wall Street petition, they note that 2011 could be our century's 1968.

In the 1980s Anna Christensen pointed to the failures raised in this paper, in the form of tensions inherent in the wage-labour society. Writing in the context of future studies, she notes that changes have to emerge from the cracks and paradoxes inherent in a society which is built on wage labour. This change will come about among groups that refuse to adapt themselves to the value order of society, among women, part-time workers, among young people outside the wage labour system that refuse to be miserable and to accept the oppression and humiliation of “employment enhancing measures”. What the new order will look like, nobody knows, it can only grow through practice, Christensen notes (1983, p. 23).

And here we have a parallel with the project economy and the control embedded in it. The message of my contribution is to allow things to grow without external interference. The central question therefore is to give space for a sound development of today's potentials. A basic income would allow for this. And the Arab spring, as well as the occupation of Wall Street, show that people want change – social justice.

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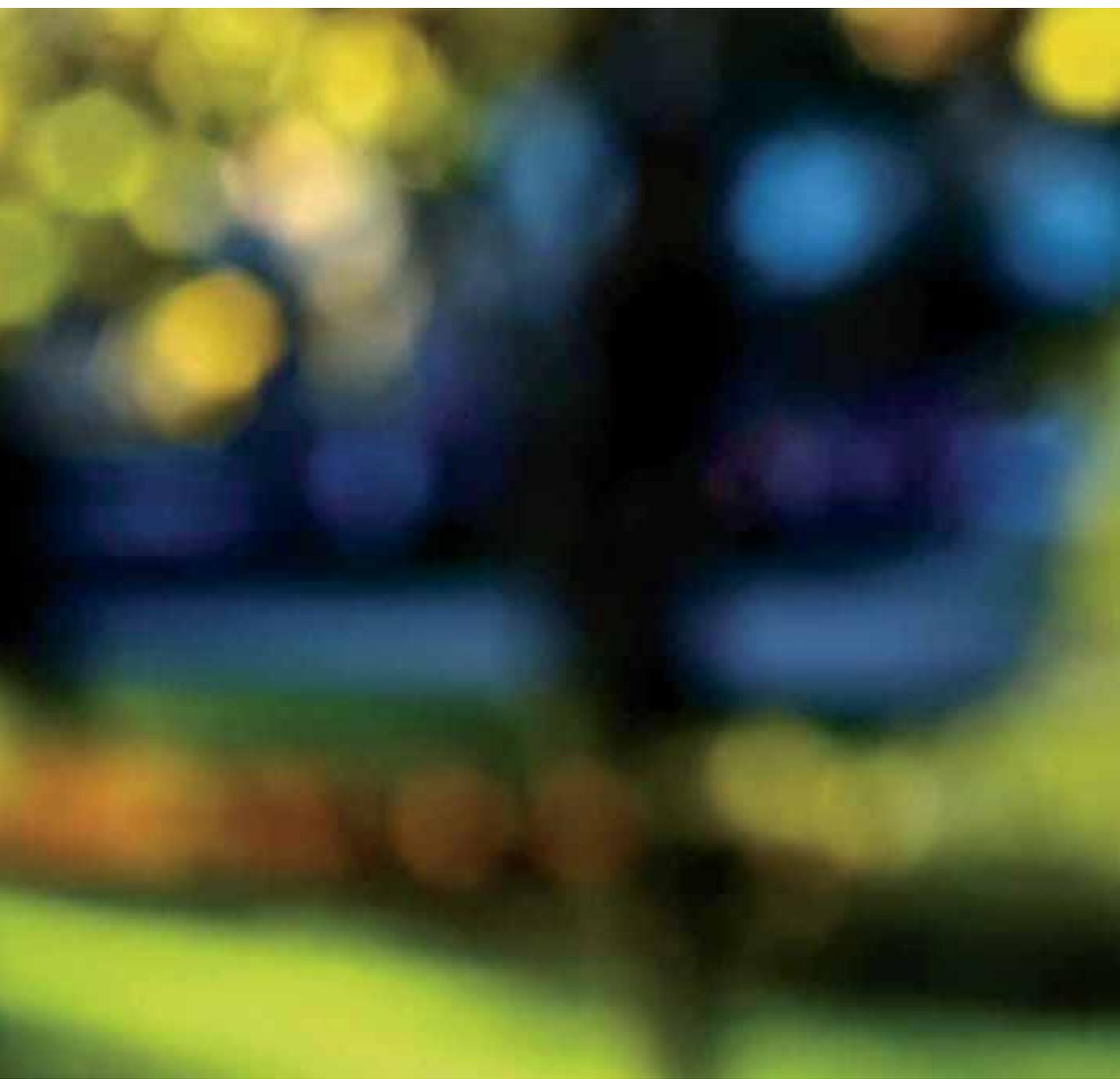
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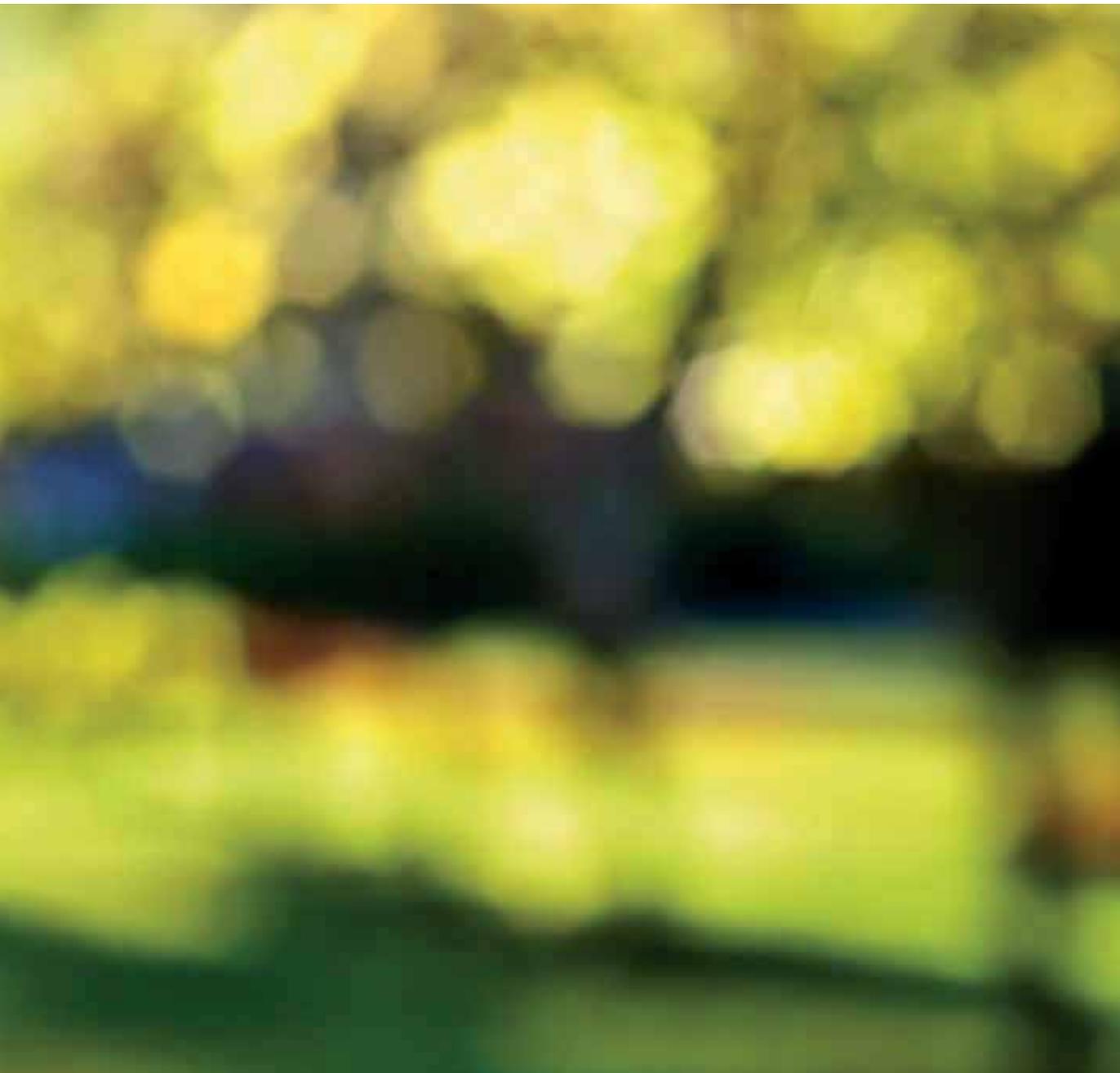
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