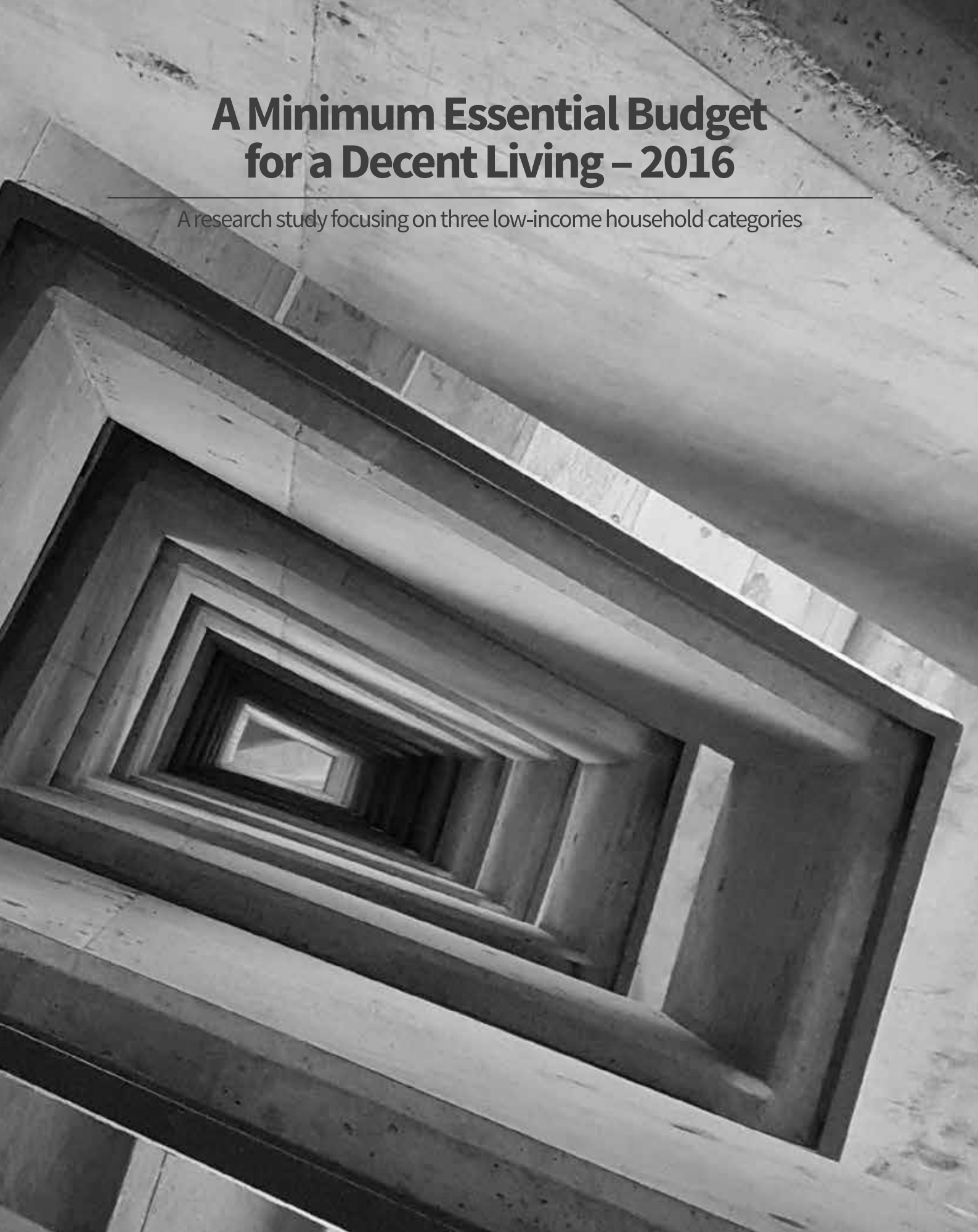


A Minimum Essential Budget for a Decent Living – 2016

A research study focusing on three low-income household categories



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Foreword

Rights-based social protection systems have as a key goal the development of human capital. Effective social protection systems should enable all members of a society to protect themselves from life's social risks, such as illness, dependence on care, disability, unemployment and poverty, and they should also enable everyone to make provisions for their senior years. At the same time, all persons should have the means to be able to manage their daily life with an adequate income for food, clothing, housing, health care, education, mobility and social participation, not only for their own wellbeing, but also that of their family. According to the Caritas Europe document 'Zero Poverty, Act Now - Poverty Among Us', the three main sources that shape conditions for social protection are paid productive employment in the labour market, solidarity within the family and primary networks, and support provided by the welfare state.

It is within this framework that this research study commissioned by Caritas Malta intends to establish the minimum budget required for low-income families to be able to achieve an acceptable and a decent standard of living. The minimum budget for a decent living for three low-income family types has been computed by calculating the actual market value of a prudent basket of essential goods and services, factoring in the various social benefits provided by the State. Adopting the same methodology used in the previous study published in 2012, it establishes a basic minimum budget standard, which standard should be unacceptable for any household not to attain.

Caritas believes that effective anti-poverty strategies and welfare policies should be evidence-based and incorporate a multiplicity of indicators on poverty, deprivation and social exclusion. It also acknowledges that measuring poverty in all its multi-dimensionality is a methodologically challenging task.

This updated edition of the Minimum Budget for a Decent Living does not claim to be a comprehensive piece of research on deprivation in Malta. The purpose of this study is to serve as a practical instrument, reflecting current social realities, with the goal of helping policy makers design efficient and adequate income support for all.

On behalf of Caritas Malta I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all persons who contributed to this study, particularly the core research team led by Dr. Suzanne Piscopo. I hope that this study will once again spur a critically reflective discussion and a genuine concerted effort by all interested stakeholders to make a decisive impact on ensuring that all persons in the Maltese islands have the resources to lead a decent life with dignity.



Leonid McKay
Director Caritas

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Executive Summary

This study serves to fulfil the mission of Caritas Malta to promote human development and social justice, while mitigating poverty and lack of dignity. It aims to bring to the forefront a significant matter which is pertinent to the wellbeing of the most vulnerable population groups in Maltese society – income adequacy and social protection.

In 2010, Malta set a target to reduce the number of individuals at-risk-of-poverty or social exclusion by 6,560. Since then a number of financial benefits, as well as measures and reforms have been implemented in the childcare, education and employment sectors as enabling social policies. Yet the 2014 Survey on Income and Living Conditions (NSO, 2015e) showed that 65,987 persons living in private households had an equivalised income below the monetary at-risk-of-poverty threshold of €7,672 annual income. Individuals living in single parent households, children and the elderly were found to be more susceptible to being at-risk-of-poverty.

This study builds on a previous study published in 2012 which used a Budget Standard Approach to describe and cost the *minimum essential budget* required by different households to live decently in Malta. (McKay, Farrugia, Sammut & Piscopo, 2011) The two key overarching objectives of this second edition of the Minimum Essential Budget for a Decent Living (MEBDL) are:

1. *To revise the minimum essential components of a basket of basic goods and services to achieve a decent standard of living in Malta as laid out in the 2012 MBDL study;*
2. *To calculate the minimum essential budget for three different low-income household categories in Malta based on this basket.*

The households of interest are those comprising a) Two adults and two dependent children; b) A lone parent and two dependent children; and c) An elderly couple (65+). Adults are assumed to be within the 30-45 age cohorts, while children are of senior primary or secondary school age (10-15 years of age).

A multi-disciplinary team was involved in identifying a list of goods and services deemed essential for a particular household type to achieve a decent standard of living. The 'minimum' agreed benchmark is the result of a consensus approach between the members of the research team and the professionals and other relevant individuals consulted. The basic components of the basket are Food, Clothing, Personal Care, Health, Household Goods, Maintenance and Services, Education and Leisure, Transport and Housing. The prices of each item reflect the market price for the reference month of November 2015, with the exception of elements of Clothing and of Household Goods, Laundry and Care and Services. The cost for these latter components has been based on the average consumer expenditure of the lowest income

quartile (earning less than €10,585), according to the Household Budgetary Survey (2008) and making an allowance for inflation between 2011 and 2015.

The annual costs for the MEBDL for the three household types are:

1. €11,445.99 for two adults and two dependent children;
2. €9,197.37 for a lone parent and two dependent children; and
3. €6,526.72 for an elderly couple (65+).

It is assumed that the household members reside in a Housing Authority subsidised dwelling, receive free food and energy and water benefits, are all in good health and free from any disability, and that they participate in free leisure and cultural activities. It is also assumed that the children attend state schools and that at least one individual in the household is eligible for free medicines.

Looking at basket share, the results indicate that the highest proportion of the total cost of the MEBDL goes to Food, ranging from 45 to 54 percent for the three household types. The next highest cost is for the combined Household Goods, Laundry and Care, and Services, which ranges from 18 to 29 percent. Finally, at much lower proportions, one finds the cost of Clothing, Transport and Personal Care at around 7 to 8 percent for the household types with children, but slightly higher for Personal Care and significantly lower for Transport for the households comprising two elderly individuals.

An augmented MEBDL was considered, where the added costs of running a private car, eating out at least once a month and paying commercial rental rates were computed. These items would increase the cost of the Transport, Food and Housing categories significantly, particularly if the household resided in unsubsidised private rented dwellings.

A separate exercise showed that households with dependent children subsisting on one National Minimum Wage, or on Social/Unemployment assistance and applicable benefits/allowances do not have an adequate income in relation to the established researched minimum essential baskets. In the case of households receiving a Guaranteed Minimum Pension, the minimum essential budget for a decent living is achieved. However, it may be argued that the described minimum basket does not allow for adequate social participation and does not consider additional expenses, particularly medical, self care and security expenses, which might be pertinent to this life stage.

Based on the minimum essential budgets computed and the local socio-economic context, the following policy recommendations are being put forward:

1. *Adopt the three minimum essential budgets as benchmarks to guide social security policies to determine adequacy of minimum income for specific households.*
2. *Give further consideration to the particular circumstances of those who legitimately cannot work. This may require strengthening the social security benefits for people who earn less than the minimum essential budget for their household type.*
3. *Uplift the statutory minimum wage slightly, but annually, for a period of 3 years. This increase would be in addition to the Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA).*
4. *Ensure that entitlement to free medication through the public health system under*

the Social Security Act (Cap 318 Article 23) and the Fifth Schedule of the same Act is reviewed regularly to reflect a just and accessible system within a sustainable health care system. Due to the expected increase in longevity, consider adding certain medications or supplements which may be required by the older elderly, such as supplements for osteoporosis.

5. *Address with urgency the financial situation of low-income earners who are renting private dwellings and not benefitting from any subsidies, particularly lone parent families.*
6. *Develop further assistance, structures and incentives for facilitating access to healthier, fresh food by low-income households, and accompany this by appropriate, practical nutrition education.*
7. *Extend free or subsidised provision for facilitating independent living, healthy ageing and lifelong learning for the different cohorts within the elderly population who have a low income or who face unexpected long-term financial burdens.*
8. *Strengthen core, long-term investment in community level education and participatory initiatives promoting more sustainable consumption patterns and lifestyles for Maltese and Gozitan families. Develop further awareness-raising and education for the elderly on prevention of health problems and on self care.*
9. *Ensure that entitlement to Education for Sustainable Development and related school subjects, such as Home Economics, are implemented comprehensively from the Early Years to nurture the right attitudes and skills from a young age towards becoming responsible citizens who make informed decisions and take action to promote and safeguard personal, family and community wellbeing.*
10. *Establish financial and other assistance, structures and incentives to support social innovation initiatives by individual entities or alliances which aim to reduce poverty and improve social inclusion.*

The following suggestions for further research are being presented:

1. *Conduct studies to establish a standard definition of 'adequacy' when it comes to determining the minimum level of income Maltese and Gozitan people need to live in dignity.*
2. *Compare and contrast the minimum essential budgets in their entirety with the actual consumption patterns of the three household types in Malta and Gozo.*
3. *Compare the weightings of each component of the MEBDL basket with weightings of categories based on a) an actual survey on consumption/expenditure among the target populations; b) the latest Household Budgetary Survey results for the low income quartiles; c) the latest Household Budgetary Survey results for all income quartiles.*
4. *Consider introducing a rolling Household Budgetary Survey to capture new products and services on the market, so that the weights of different components are adjusted.*
5. *Set up a National Research Institute on Poverty to further local research on poverty and conduct focused longitudinal and in-depth targeted studies.*

“

Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.

ARTICLE 25 – THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

”

What inspired us...

Chapter one • •

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This study serves to fulfil the mission of Caritas Malta to mitigate poverty and encourage human development together with social justice. It aims to bring to the forefront a significant matter which is pertinent to the wellbeing of the most vulnerable population groups in Maltese society. The study is thus building on a previous study which described and costed the minimum goods and services required for different low-income households in order to live decently in Malta. (McKay, Farrugia, Sammut & Piscopo, 2012)

For the first Minimum Budget for a Decent Living study (MBDL), the very basic essential items were identified through expert consultations, as well as feedback from citizen members of different population

groups. The goal was not to determine a minimum cost based on current consumption patterns, but a minimum cost based on what would be required in order to sustain fundamental physical and socio-emotional needs necessary for survival. In this update of the MBDL, the aim is to review and re-cost the basket contents. Through this exercise, one may safely say that the basket will ensure that contemporary healthy individuals will be able to sustain themselves on a rudimentary level; however, one cannot guarantee that all individuals will feel fully integrated in their regular social milieu, or in the prevalent lifestyle of the general Maltese community. The goal is to outline the minimum cost for an adequate yet prudent level of living.

1.2 THE RIGHT TO ADEQUATE LIVING

According to the United Nations (UN) Universal Declaration of Human Rights Article 25(1), "everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, water, clothing, and housing." (UN, 1948) More specifically, the Convention on the Rights of the Child (Article 27) obliges states to assist in securing "...the right of every child to a standard of living adequate for the child's physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development" and "in case of need provide material assistance and support programmes, particularly with regard to nutrition, clothing and housing" (UN, 1989). These fundamental rights are listed to safeguard a holistic wellbeing for all individuals irrespective of age, gender, ethnicity and physical ability. Some of these rights are discussed further below.

1.2.1 THE RIGHT TO ADEQUATE FOOD

"The right to adequate food is realized when every man, woman and child, alone or in community with others, has physical and economic access at all times to adequate food or means for its procurement."

(UNHR, THE RIGHT FOR ADEQUATE FOOD, P. 2)

.....

The FAO reports that the world has enough food to feed the entire population. (UNHR, The Right for Adequate Food, p. 4-6) What is required is that governments work in harmony with all interested parties to ensure that food is available, accessible and adequate through sustainable food systems. Sadly, poverty typically generates a lack of adequate food. This problem is found not only in developing countries, but also in economically developed countries where abundance food can be found. Adequate food refers to quantity, quality and appropriateness. Apart from providing the nutrients required based on physiological characteristics of the person such as gender, age and health status, socio-cultural aspects also need to be considered.

1.2.2 THE RIGHT TO ADEQUATE HEALTH

"The right to health can be understood as the right to an effective and integrated health system encompassing health care and the underlying determinants of health, which is responsive to national and local priorities, and accessible to all. Underpinned by the right to health, an effective health system is a core social institution, no less than a court system or a political system."

(THE UNITED NATIONS SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR ON THE RIGHT OF EVERYONE TO THE ENJOYMENT OF THE HIGHEST ATTAINABLE STANDARD OF PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH, 2006)

.....

The right to health is fundamental for an individual to live in dignity. (UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and WHO, online) Although we often associate the right to health with an efficient and comprehensive healthcare system, there are a number of other underlying determinants of health (apart from good nutrition), including but not limited to:

- Safe food & drinking water
- Adequate sanitation
- Adequate housing
- Healthy employment conditions
- Healthy physical, natural & social environmental conditions
- Health-related literacy -- education & information
- Gender equality

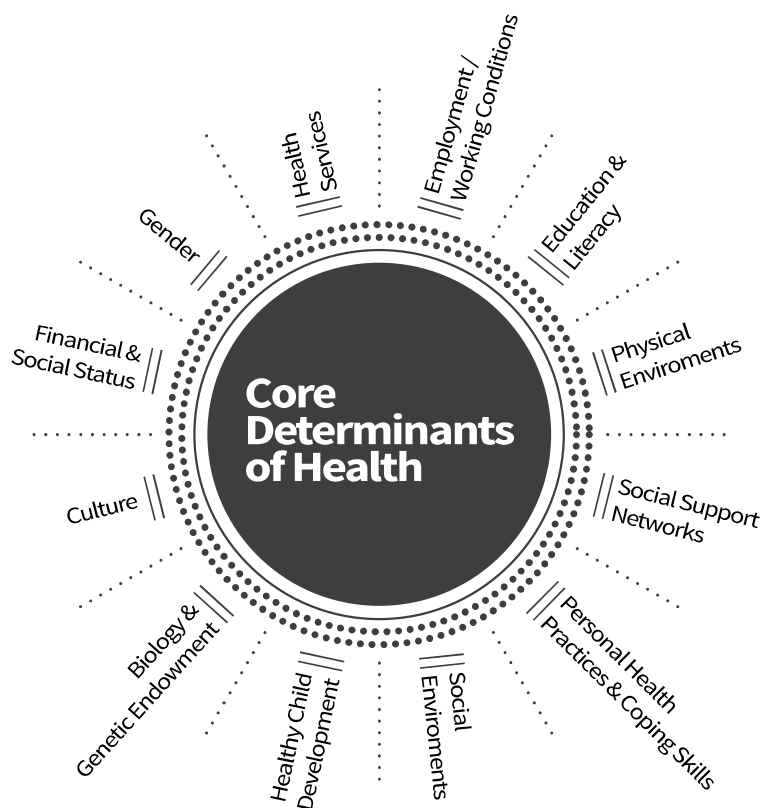


Figure 1.
Core determinants of health.
(Source: Government of Canada:
<http://www.forces.gc.ca/en/about-reports-pubs-health/surg-gen-men-tal-health-strategy-ch-2.page>)

Income is considered a key determinant of choice of lifestyle and access to health-enhancing goods and services. But is one's income level totally up to the individual? Is it the same as risk for hypertension or level of physical activity selected? What role does health literacy have in responsible use of personal income? Indeed, the discourse on health often centres around unavoidable health inequalities and unjust and preventable health inequalities. (Arcaya et al, 2015) The notion of “the highest attainable standard of health” in article 12.1 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights takes into account both the individual's biological and socio-economic preconditions and a State's available resources. (also see figure 1)

An individual's health will often impact on their families. Thus, fulfilling an individual's right to health, particularly that of a key decision-maker or income provider in the household, can have a much broader positive effect.

1.2.3 THE RIGHT TO ADEQUATE HOUSING

“The human right to adequate housing is more than just four walls and a roof. It is the right of every woman, man, youth and child to gain and sustain a safe and secure home and community in which to live in peace and dignity.”

(UNHR, THE RIGHT TO ADEQUATE HOUSING TOOLKIT, P. 2)

The right to adequate housing encompasses security and safety, as well as socio-cultural issues. One should have access to an appropriate physical structure with the required amenities to fulfil basic needs of the members of the household. If self-financing personal housing this should not jeopardise one's ability to satisfy other needs such as food and clothing. Moreover, housing should support personal growth and wellbeing through allowing for privacy and interaction, but also facilitating access to employment opportunities, health and child care services and expression and integration with respect to cultural norms (also see figure 2).

SEVEN CONDITIONS FOR ADEQUATE HOUSING

.....

LEGAL SECURITY OF TENURE

Regardless of the type of tenure, all persons should possess a degree of security of tenure which guarantees legal protection against forced eviction, harassment and other threats.

AFFORDABILITY

Personal or household financial costs associated with housing should not threaten or compromise the attainment and satisfaction of other basic needs (for example, food, education, access to health care).

HABITABILITY

Adequate housing should provide for elements such as adequate space, protection from cold, damp, heat, rain, wind or other threats to health, structural hazards, and disease vectors.

AVAILABILITY OF SERVICES, MATERIALS, FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Housing is not adequate if its occupants

do not have safe drinking water, adequate sanitation, energy for cooking, heating and lighting, sanitation and washing facilities, means of food storage, refuse disposal, etc.

ACCESSIBILITY

Housing is not adequate if the specific needs of disadvantaged and marginalized groups are not taken into account (such as the poor, people facing discrimination, persons with disabilities, victims of natural disasters).

LOCATION

Adequate housing must allow access to employment options, health-care services, schools, child-care centres and other social facilities and should not be built on polluted sites nor in immediate proximity to pollution sources.

CULTURAL ADEQUACY

Adequate housing should respect and take into account the expression of cultural identity and ways of life.

Figure 2. Seven conditions for Adequate housing.

(Source: Adapted from UNHR, *The Right to Adequate Housing, Fact Sheet 21 Rev 1*, p.4)

Of note is that access to adequate housing can determine the enjoyment of several other human rights, including the rights to work, health, social security, vote, privacy or education.

As evident from the above brief description of some of the universal human rights, often rights cannot be achieved by individuals and families who are financially insecure; that is, who are monetarily poor. And when these rights are not achieved, the wellbeing of individuals involved directly or indirectly will suffer on various counts. Indeed, according to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

(UN Division for Sustainable Development, online), “eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development”. One of the Sustainable Development Goals is focused specifically on poverty and aims, among others, to reduce at least by half the proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty, and to implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, so that by 2030 the plight of the poor and the vulnerable is substantially addressed.

1.3 THE MULTI-DIMENSIONALITY OF POVERTY

Poverty is a controversial concept and there is frequent disagreement on its definition, or how it should be measured. According to Scott and Marshall (2004), poverty could be defined as “a state where an individual or a group of people lack the sufficient resources to maintain a healthy lifestyle or even lack the necessary means to achieve a standard of living which can be considered as being suitable in a particular society.” (p. 276-77) At minimum, if a household’s resources are inadequate to provide the identified essential food, clothing, health, personal and household care, education and transport then one can say that such household or family is living in poverty.

Over the years, sociologists, statisticians, policymakers and researchers have categorised the concept of poverty as absolute or relative. Absolute poverty is when individuals or groups of people are lacking the basic needs to sustain a healthy existence. Anywhere in the world, where persons are lacking basic needs such as food, clothing and shelter and thus prevented from maintaining human life they are considered to be living in absolute poverty. This poverty is generally associated with less developed countries, but it can also be found in developed countries and communities. (United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2009) One can argue that absolute poverty is by far the more serious. One must also note that absolute poverty is not concerned with broader quality of life issues, or with the overall level of inequality in society. It clearly excludes important social and cultural needs of individuals.

Relative poverty recognises this lacuna in the vision of absolute poverty. It sees poverty as relative to the place and time one lives in. (Mack, 2016, online) As early as 1979, Townsend had explained that ‘relative poverty’ occurs when an individual’s “resources are so seriously below those commanded by the average individual or family that they are, in effect, excluded from ordinary living patterns and customs.” (p.31) Whereas absolute poverty can be measured fairly consistently all over the globe (you either have the means to maintain life or you do not), relative poverty is measured differently as the broader human necessities are not the same everywhere. These necessities are different for each nation and perhaps even community; things that are seen as basic for one society could be luxuries for another. (Giddens, 2001) In most countries, having clean running water, electricity and a few meals a day are considered basic needs; not having these essentials makes one ‘poor’. In contrast, in some developing countries, having these necessities puts one in a more prestigious social stratum. As societies develop, the standards of relative poverty change. For example, in Malta, some decades ago having an automatic washing machine or a colour television would have been considered a luxury item. Nowadays, not affording such items would label a person or household relatively poor.

The concept of social exclusion emerged largely as a reaction to these types of narrow definitions of poverty which focus mainly on economic measures. It has contributed significantly towards including multi-faceted indicators of ill-being into the conceptual understanding of poverty so that social, political and cultural dimensions are also considered. (UNESCO online)

1.3.1 OUTCOMES OF POVERTY

In the document ‘Zero Poverty, Act Now - Poverty Among Us’, Caritas Europa (2010) views poverty as a set of precarious circumstances characterised by a permanent lack of financial resources. The document highlights that poverty brings about other negative outcomes due to various restrictions and limitations to choices and behaviours. Economically deprived people often suffer from:

- Unhealthy lifestyles
- Long term unemployment
- Insecure jobs
- Insecure residence status
- Inadequate housing conditions
- Poor education and occupation training
- Dysfunctional family relationships

Research by the US Government Accountability Office (GAO) (Nilsen, 2007) has shown that individuals living in poverty face an increased risk of adverse outcomes, which are problems in themselves or can work synergistically for more magnified adverse outcomes. For example, poverty is linked to a poorer health status among lower income groups as a result of more frequent engagement in risky behaviours, such as tobacco and alcohol use, a sedentary lifestyle and a nutritionally-poor diet. Moreover, poor health and criminal activity may both lead to reduced participation in the labour market and thus further financial insecurity.

The GAO concludes that a number of empirical studies show that higher rates of poverty are

associated with lower rates of growth in a country or community’s economy as a whole.

At the EU level, discussions on how to better measure the progress of societies and how to sustain quality of life in the future, have led to several important initiatives, including the 8+1 framework for the measurement of well-being (Eurostat, 2013) which is based on the following indicators:

- Material living conditions (income, consumption and material conditions)
- Productive or main activity
- Health
- Education
- Leisure and social interactions
- Economic and physical safety
- Governance and basic rights
- Natural and living environment
- Overall experience of life

Measures for each of these dimensions differ, with some more objective than others. Nonetheless, these indicators present a more holistic picture of wellbeing, beyond one single measure such as the Gross Domestic Product. It is suggested that the indicators should be considered simultaneously, because of potential trade-offs between them. Such thinking is also in line with the OECD’s (2015) recent report on wellbeing, where it was proposed that metrics related to household income, housing, health, education, as well as work-life balance and civic engagement, amongst others, all need to be considered in order to truly assess the diversity of people’s lived experiences.

“The relationship between poverty and adverse outcomes for individuals is complex, in part because most variables, like health status, can be both a cause and a result of poverty. These adverse outcomes affect individuals in many ways, including limiting their development of the skills, abilities, knowledge, and habits necessary to fully participate in the labor force. ... The conditions associated with poverty can work against this human capital development by limiting individuals' ability to remain healthy and develop skills, in turn decreasing the potential to contribute talents, ideas, and even labor to the economy.”

(NILSEN, 2007, HIGHLIGHTS)

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1.4 POVERTY AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION IN THE EU

In 2010, the European Union (EU) adopted the Europe 2020 Strategy with the goal of guiding the EU toward a smart, sustainable and inclusive economy. (European Commission, 2010) One of the key headline targets of this strategy was to reduce by 20 million the 120 million people 'At Risk of Poverty or Social Exclusion' (AROPE) in the EU. In order to measure achievement, the standard indicator for AROPE was defined as the share of the national population in at least one of the following three conditions:

- *At risk-of-poverty (AROP), meaning below the relative monetary poverty threshold (60 percent of median equivalised household income);*
- *In a situation of severe material deprivation (SMD);*
- *Living in a household with very low work intensity.*

For a number of years now, the EU has been measuring relative monetary poverty by using relative-income poverty lines. This involves working out average or median equivalised household incomes in a country. A poverty line is then set, which commonly ranges from 40-70 percent of that household income. For AROP it is set at 60 percent.

In the EU, an individual is considered as severely materially deprived when s/he cannot afford at least 4 of 9 items deemed necessary or desirable. The list comprises the ability to pay rent or utility bills, to keep one's home adequately warm, to face unexpected expenses, to eat meat, fish or a protein equivalent every second day, to take a week's holiday away from home, and to run a car, a washing machine, a colour TV, or a telephone. It has been acknowledged that this indicator has some limitations due to the small number of items on the list and the low relevance of some of them for particular countries (The European Anti-Poverty Network, online). Of note is that in December 2015 the list of target primary variables used for collecting statistics on the income and living conditions of EU citizens (EU-SILC), was amended. New non-monetary household deprivation indicators were included, namely the ability to replace worn-out furniture, to replace worn-out clothes by new ones, to own two pairs of properly fitting shoes, to have internet connection for personal use at home, to get together with family or friends for a drink or meal at least once a month, to regularly participate in a leisure activity and to spend a small amount of money each week on oneself. (European Commission regulation (EU) 2015/2256)

The final AROPE indicator is living in a household with very low work intensity. This indicator strives to determine how many individuals are living in jobless or quasi-jobless households. The work intensity of a household is calculated as the ratio of the total number of months that all working-age (18-59 years) household members have worked during the income reference year and the total number of months the same household members theoretically could have worked in the same period. A household is considered to have a very low intensity when its work intensity falls below a threshold set at 0.20.

Since 2010, countries within the EU have been adopting different measures in order to reduce poverty and social exclusion by 2020 (European Commission, 2014). The emphasis has been on structural reforms to spur economic growth, promote high levels of employment (tackling in-work poverty), guarantee adequate social protection and access to quality services (such as healthcare, childcare and housing). (European Commission, 2013) Malta has been no exception to such measures.

1.5 THE MALTESE CONTEXT

In 2010, Malta set a target to reduce the number of individuals at risk of poverty or social exclusion by 6,560. Since then a number of financial benefits, as well as measures and reforms have been implemented in the childcare, education and employment sectors as enabling social policies. Initiatives were particularly focused on active inclusion, empowering vulnerable groups to become less welfare dependent and encouraging those who may be disadvantaged to enter/re-enter and remain in the labour market, or to take up education and training. It has to be acknowledged that the long-term benefits of some of these newer initiatives may have not been recorded yet, although recent provisional statistics show that the share of the total population who is severely materially deprived has decreased from 10.2 percent in 2014 to 8.1 percent in 2015. (Eurostat, 2016) Indeed, despite these and earlier launched initiatives, as well as the ongoing extensive in-kind benefits and services (e.g. health care, social housing and childcare) and general positive economic trends on a national level, the number of people at risk of poverty and social exclusion had been increasing prior to this recent downward shift in severe material deprivation. A February 2016 European Commission staff working document (Country report – Malta) states that:

“Malta is still away from its 2020 poverty reduction target. The risk of poverty and social exclusion increased from 2008 to 2013, most notably for children and the low skilled... New measures have been introduced in recent years to correct these trends.”

(EUROPEAN COMMISSION, WORKING DOCUMENT, P. 2)

Some key figures mentioned in this European Commission staff working document included that as at 2013 (reference year) the relative at-risk-of poverty rate:

- Stood at 15.9 percent for the total population;
- Was particularly high among children (younger than 18 years), at 24.1 percent;
- Increased by 2 percentage points for the elderly in 2014 and stood at 16.9 percent;
- Was considerably higher for households renting their accommodation (24.4 %) than those living in their own property (14.3 %).

Additional details from the 2014 Survey on Income and Living Conditions (SILC) (NSO, 2015e) show that 65,987 persons living in private households had an equivalised income below the monetary at-risk-of-poverty threshold of €7,672 annual income and were, therefore, considered to be at-risk-of-poverty. Individuals living in single parent households were found

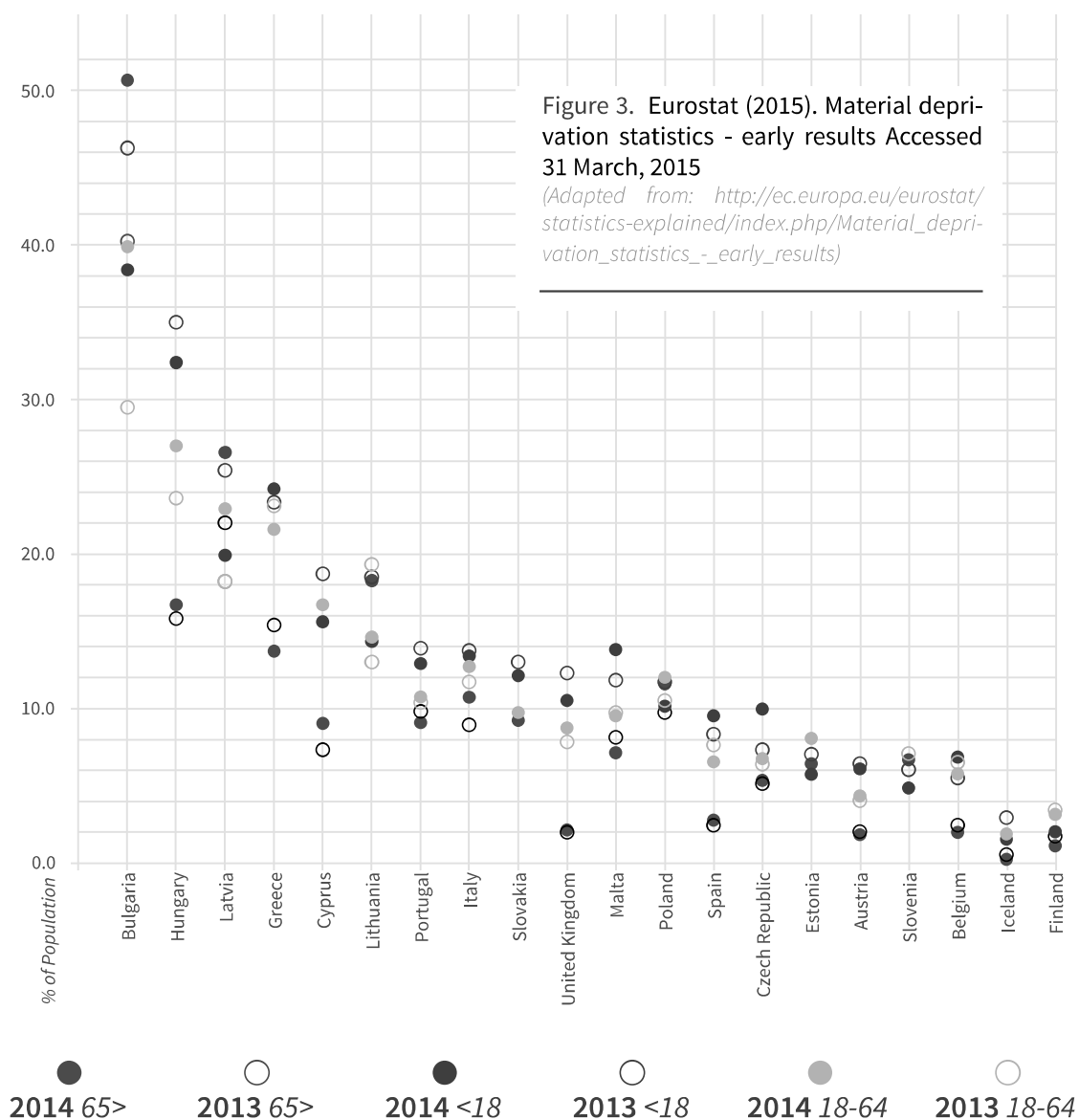
to be more susceptible to being at-risk-of-poverty. In fact, 46.3 percent of these persons had an equivalised income below the national at-risk-of poverty line. The at-risk-of-poverty rate was also higher in households with low work intensity, being 64.0 percent among persons living in households with very low work intensity.

Children and the elderly were particularly vulnerable. The at-risk-of-poverty rate of children who lived in a) households with a very low work Intensity was 72.6 percent, b) households with five or more persons was 28.5 percent, and c) single-parent households was 45.9 percent (NSO, 2015e). With regard to persons aged 65 and over a gender gap is evident. (European Commission, 2016) Women are at a higher risk of poverty given that they are more likely to live longer, are less likely to receive their own pensions, and the level of their pension benefits is generally lower than it is for men. The gender pension gap (for people aged 65-79) stands at 25.6; however, the gender gap in the non-coverage rate is significantly higher at 36.5. This is because, despite recent progress in increasing female employment, Maltese women continue to have fewer years in employment (also as compared to the EU average; 25 years vs. 32.5). Consequently, as a result of insufficient contribution periods, women are often not entitled to their own contributory old-age benefits, and are more likely to depend on their spouses' pensions or survivors' benefits, or receive a non-contributory (means-tested) old-age pension.

As already indicated, the latest statistics show that the proportion of individuals who were severely materially deprived decreased to 8.1 percent of the total population in 2015. (Eurostat, 2016) In its 2016 Country report for Malta the European Commission had stated that the figure for material deprivation was mostly driven by a few vulnerable groups, namely single-parent households and households with low work intensity, or where there was unemployment. It also reported that 11.8 percent of children and youth aged under 18 and 7.1 percent of individuals aged 65 and over were living in severely materially deprived households. In both cases the proportions had increased from 2013 (see Figure 3). Whilst acknowledging that these figures may have improved in 2015 (details not yet available), the Commission's observation regarding these vulnerable groups is worth noting.

“ This highlights the increased financial difficulties among those with fragile labour market situations, especially at the presence of dependent children. Incomes of households, for which social transfers is an important source, did not increase at the same pace as those of other household types. Neither did they increase in line with changes in living costs, such as housing costs. ”

.....



Taking a closer look at some of the material deprivation indicators from SILC 2014 (NSO, 2015e), based on data reported by households, 16.7 percent of children 18 years and younger and 10.7 percent for the elderly aged 65 and over were living in households that could not afford to eat a meal with meat, chicken, fish, or a vegetarian equivalent every other day. Additionally, 26.4 percent of children and 21.3 percent of elderly were living in households that could not afford unexpected financial expenses, and 22.9 percent of children and 23.5 percent of elderly persons were living in households that could not keep their home adequately warm in winter.

As explained earlier, the at risk of poverty or social exclusion indicator takes into account the at-risk-of-poverty rate, the severe material deprivation rate and the share of persons living in households with very low work intensity. In Malta, this indicator stood at 23.8 percent in 2014 (NSO, 2015e), with children and the elderly being more susceptible. Close to one third (32.0%) of all children and one fifth (20.8 percent) of all elderly aged 65 and over were considered to be at risk of poverty or social exclusion.

One item worth noting is the impact of housing costs. Based on Eurostat 2015 (EU 2015) the national average of owner-occupied dwellings in Malta was 60.4 percent versus 19.9 percent for rented dwellings. However, despite the fact that more than half of owner-occupied

dwellings did not have a mortgage, the Malta SILC 2012 (NSO, 2014c) reported that 56 percent of respondents perceived housing costs as a heavy burden, compared to the 8 percent which considered this expense as immaterial. The average monthly housing cost recorded in 2012 was €173. Recalling what was reported in the more recent European Commission 2016 working document, the at-risk-of-poverty rate was considerably higher for households renting their accommodation (24.4 %) as opposed to those living in their own property (14.3%). At the same time, the waiting list for social housing is still significantly long, with approximately 3210 pending requests as at May 2016. (Housing Authority, personal communication, May 2016)

A recent study on sustaining relationships conducted among close to 2500 adults residing in Malta (Abela, Calleja, Piscopo, Vella & Zammit Said, 2016) uncovered how income adequacy also has a clear association with life satisfaction and the quality of a couple's relationship: "Income adequacy emerged as one major predictor for life satisfaction, both for couples and singles... Having insufficient financial resources tended to be reported more by women, single or formerly married persons, parents, and those from the southern harbour region." (p.v) A number of additional insights were provided by this study including that:

- 16.5 percent of respondents reported minor or serious financial difficulty (p.20);
- 25.8 percent of all couples where both partners were unemployed and on benefits reported being dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with their life (p.25);
- 8.4 percent of those couples with serious financial difficulties rated their relationship as negative or very negative, compared to 3.4 percent for those with minor financial difficulties (p.28).

The study concluded that "...relationships need to be nurtured, and the threats posed by work-life imbalance and financial hardship are substantial challenges that may require addressing". (p.vii) It referred to the National Strategic Policy for Poverty Reduction and for Social Inclusion 2014-2024 as "a step in the right direction" (p.36) and also encouraged the provision of personal finance education within the formal and informal education sectors and as part of community development initiatives.

1.6 AIMS AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Over the past three decades, various European Union entities have underscored "the importance of active inclusion policies and adequate minimum income support for ensuring a decent life to all citizens." (Goedemé, Storms, Penne & Van den Bosch, 2015, p. 19) Active inclusion, or prevention of exclusion, as well as adequate minimum income, or prevention of monetary poverty are key elements in this statement of intent. Within the local setting, the 'National Strategic Policy for Poverty Reduction and for Social Inclusion 2014-2024' published by the Ministry for Family and Social Solidarity (MFSS) (2015b), offered the following working definition of poverty and social exclusion for the Maltese context: "People are living in poverty if their financial, material, social and personal resources preclude them from having a standard of living that is generally regarded as the average norm by Maltese society." (p.17) This definition can be classified as referring to relative poverty as it incorporates the tangible, objective factors required for living within a context of perhaps more subjective, perceived social norms. It does not refer solely to absolute poverty as defined earlier.

Looking beyond our shores and at historical research, having a low and/or irregular income are often cited as the major causes of poverty (Scott & Marshall, 2004), though being elderly or unemployed, the death of the breadwinner causing single parent families, and health

situations such as long term sickness and disability are also indicated. (Townsend (1979) In addition, according to the World Economic Forum (Mohammed, 2015), the divide between the ‘haves’ and the ‘havenots’ has deepened and will continue to deepen both globally and in Europe, with increasing inequality between the poorest and richest people and countries in the world. A multi-level, multi-partner solution is required based on a package of interventions that promote equitable access to resources and services, as well as inclusive growth with decent jobs and livelihoods for all people within society.

Such thinking is very much in line with that of Caritas. Within its vision, Caritas sees every human being as having the right to a sufficient means for a decent life with access to:

- *Healthy food*
- *Adequate clothing*
- *Warm shelter*
- *Good health care*
- *Physical and mental tranquillity, and*
- *The necessary social services to act as a safety net.*

Caritas believes that every person has the right to be looked after by the State or the community, especially if that person is in circumstances of involuntary situations of deprivation. Caritas strongly urges the right for adequate social security to be upheld in order to guarantee human dignity for all persons, most of all when they are unjustly exempted of their capacity to realise their rights.

1.6.1 FOCUS OF THE STUDY

The aim of this study is to make available up-to-date detailed information on the actual cost of a minimum essential standard of living for three household types in Malta. This is in line with the Vincentian Partnership for Social Justice’s definition of a minimum set of goods and services which everybody should be able to afford to meet their physical, psychological, social and spiritual needs. (VPSJ, online) The study purposefully focuses on needs and not wants, in order to inform what should be an adequate benchmark for an acceptable and decent standard of living which is frugal yet goes beyond the level of survival.

The two key overarching objectives of the MEBDL study are:

- *To revise the minimum essential components of a basket of basic goods and services to achieve a decent standard of living in Malta as laid out in the 2012 MBDL study;*

- *To calculate the minimum essential budget for three different low-income household categories in Malta based on this basket*

Congruent to the MBDL, this research study focused on three different household types in Malta and Gozo, namely:

- *Two adults and two dependent children*
- *Lone parent and two dependent children*
- *An elderly couple (65+)*

Based on the literature and other local statistics and research, whilst household type one is the most prevalent in Malta according to the SILC 2013 (NSO, 2014) when it comes to families with dependent children, the latter two households were yet again identified as the most likely to be vulnerable in relation to income adequacy, despite being eligible to social assistance in different forms. (MFSS, 2015b)

It is important to highlight that this study

is not intended to replace existing poverty indices. On the contrary, its aim is to provide a minimum benchmark in order to guide upcoming policy discussions and decisions that could affect the incomes of those who are deprived. Caritas' belief is that accessibility to a minimum essential budget could be a strong contribution in the country's fight against poverty. Therefore, it aims to provide a dynamic index against which relative income and other minimum income schemes can be measured so that no individual in Malta has an income less than the estimated minimum budget.

1.6.2 STUDY APPROACH

A multi-disciplinary team was involved in identifying a list of goods and services deemed essential for a particular household type to achieve a decent standard of living. The 'minimum' agreed benchmark is the result of a consensus approach between the members of the research team and the professionals consulted. The aim was to identify what a minimum decent standard of living comprised. Thus, various discussions ensued among the research team and in consultation with relevant others to recognise which items are of need in the Maltese context. Some of the most debated questions included, but were not limited to:

- *Is having your own means of transport a necessity?*
- *Is subscribing to a communications package which incorporates mobile telephony and internet access advisable?*
- *Should a basic basket include occasional eating out?*

From the outset it was recognised that the basket might not necessarily match the actual consumption patterns of the Maltese target population groups, but would reflect the professional opinions and conclusions of the research team whose remit was to delineate the basic necessities for a decent living in Maltese society. Instead of looking

at the current general consumption patterns, the methodological approach sought to be indicative of how a basic minimum standard of living 'should be'; that is, in preference to 'what is'. This methodology is referred to as the Budget Standard Approach and is accepted as a valid route for poverty measurement. (The European Anti-Poverty Network, online)

“*To design economic policy that promotes welfare and reduces poverty, we must first understand individual consumption choices.*”

(ANGUS DEATON (NOBEL PRIZE WINNER), THE ROYAL SWEDISH ACADEMY OF SCIENCES, 2015, ONLINE)

.....

Consultation with members of the target population groups, informally or more formally via focus groups, can enhance reflection of realities with regards to consumption of goods and services; but may not suggest behaviours with wellbeing in mind. Such informal consultations were carried out with a few individuals from different age groups and socio-economic circumstances in order to obtain feedback on the minimum consumption behaviour thresholds being suggested.

1.6.3 THE USE OF REFERENCE BUDGETS

According to Bradshaw (1993), Reference Budgets can be defined as “... illustrative priced baskets of goods and services that represent a given living standard.” (p.1) A review of different Reference Budgets (Storms et al, 2014) has shown that they typically have the following features:

- *Must involve the definition of the targeted living standard;*
- *Must be costed in terms of private household out-of-pocket payments;*
- *Must have multiple versions of baskets of goods and services to reflect the targeted standard of living.*

The review further indicated that Reference

Budgets are considered as useful for potentially assisting the EU Member States to establish an adequate minimum income for effective social inclusion, or to give financial and debt advice to consumers. However, their basic purpose is often to measure the cost of a list of essential goods *that an individual regularly consumes* for an adequate standard of living. Indeed, the Vincentian Partnership for Social Justice have cautioned that “while a minimum income standard in itself cannot guarantee a minimum essential standard of living, an individual or a household with an income which falls below the minimum income standard is unlikely to achieve this standard of living”. (online)

Whilst as seen in Table 1, Reference Budgets are frequently used for establishing extent of social assistance or the measurement of poverty, it is also believed that Reference Budgets should be used as a tool to help consumers analyse individual spending patterns. They contain a priced list of goods and services that a family of a specific size and composition requires to be able to live at a designated level of well-being. Consequently, **Reference Budgets** are used as a counselling tool for low-income households to plan their daily budget and address over-indebtedness. They are often used as guidelines for households’ spending patterns.

Table 1. Examples of use of Reference Budgets.

Country	Sweden	Australia	The Netherlands
Use	As a guide for local authorities to set social assistance levels. Social allowances are determined by the Social Ministry on the basis of the reference budget ¹	To assist Social Ministry to set minimum wage rates and housing benefits ²	To calculate the at-risk-of-poverty threshold To calculate credit scores; that is, loan-to-income ratios to set the amount that a particular household could borrow or the mortgage they can afford ³

Source: ¹ Vranken, 2010. ² Bradshaw et al., 2008. ³ Waaranar and Luten, 2009.

Malta recently participated in a European Union-wide pilot project aimed at developing a common methodology for Reference Budgets in Europe. One of its main objectives was to develop comparable food baskets for all 28 Member States and complete Reference Budgets for a selection of countries. (Goedemé, Storms, and Van den Bosch, 2015) The Malta study focused on food baskets only and determined the cost of a socio-culturally acceptable, nutritious basket for single adults, couples, a lone adult with two children aged 10 and 14 years, two adults with two children aged 10 and 14 years. (Piscopo & Mc Kay, 2015) A 7-day menu which was a slightly reviewed version of the MBDL menu was costed. The basket also included

kitchen equipment, eating out or bring-in dining occasions and physical activity. Both of the latter added somewhat to the cost of the basket:

“The monthly cost of the Maltese Healthy Food Basket ranged from 154.65 Euro to 597.55 Euro for the basic healthy food basket with no extras, and from 231.53 Euro to 791.22 Euro for the full healthy food basket including additional out-of-home sourced or consumed food and meals, kitchen equipment and physical activity.”

(PISCOPO & MC KAY, 2015, P. 33)

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Of note is that focus groups were used to help refine the food basket contents in order to ensure as far as possible that it was in keeping with current lifestyles of different households and also with socio-cultural norms. This is in line with the Consensual approach of developing Reference Budgets. (The European Anti-Poverty Network, online) Based on this exercise, amendments to the MBDL basket mainly comprised addition of a few traditional food items and desserts, reduction in wholegrain items and augmentation of soups with other items to create a meal. Quantities of food items were generally considered acceptable, with only a few focus group participants feeling that the menu was rather frugal in some aspects, “perhaps reflecting the Maltese trend of consuming large portion sizes or requiring

value for money.” (Piscopo and McKay, 2015, p.35) Reference Budgets can offer insights as to possible opportunities for increasing the quality of life of low income families. At the same time, one challenge of Reference Budgets is that they can put a heavy demand on human, financial and even temporal resources as multiple sources of data are required for a valid and reliable study which has widespread use. Keeping all this in mind, the MEBDL study adopted the same methodology as used in the MBDL, relying primarily on professionals and other relevant individuals or groups to construct an updated minimum basket of essential goods and services, after consideration of certain socio-cultural changes in the lifestyle of the Maltese and their families.

“

Human rights are not only violated by terrorism, repression or assassination, but also by unfair economic structures that create huge inequalities.

POPE FRANCIS

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How we did it...

Chapter two^{••}

2.1 METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in three broad phase, the research team carried out a review of relevant local and foreign literature and analysed this with respect to the Maltese socio-economic background. In the second phase, the construction, design and costing of the minimum essential basket of goods and services were carried out. In the last phase, the findings were reviewed by critical friends coming from different disciplinary sectors including economics, family studies and wellbeing.

This study aims to update the findings from the MBDL study published in 2012. A similar methodology was adopted since this had proven to lead to appropriate data required to define and cost a minimum essential basic basket of goods and services to ensure living simply yet with dignity in Malta.

It was well acknowledged by the research team that both ‘living simply’ and ‘with dignity’ are relative to the context in which individuals function in their everyday life. They are concepts informed by one's culture, values and expectations. In this context, adequacy of the basket is a subjective concept as one cannot define what is ‘acceptable’ or ‘normal’ in any strictly objective way. Indeed, this difficulty in ascertaining the income required to secure an acceptable level of living relative to the society and community in which children and adults live has long been recognised:

“Where the conception of adequacy is accepted as a relative notion, the critical decision becomes the determination of those social conventions which are to be incorporated in the notion of adequacy. This decision is invariably subjective and a failure to embrace this subjectivity will frustrate attempts to establish benchmarks of income adequacy.”

(MITCHELL 1988:4-5, QUOTED IN DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SECURITY, 1995, P.3)

Nonetheless, based on the literature review, recent local Reference Basket research results and various consultations, it was felt that a minimum basket of goods and services, meeting the very basic needs of the target groups without additional items which could differ widely according to household routines, interests and lifestyles, could be developed.

2.2 WHY THE THREE HOUSEHOLD TYPES?

At the end of 2014, the total population of Malta stood at 429,344 (NSO, 2015ga). Persons under 18 years of age made up 17.6 percent and persons aged 65 and over accounted for 18.5 percent of the total population.

The SILC 2013 survey revealed that the number of private households in Malta was estimated at 156,147. (NSO, 2014) Just over 12 percent (12.1%) of households with dependent children were composed of two adults and two dependent children, making this the largest household group. Of note is that according to SILC 2014 (NSO, 2015e) the at-risk-of-poverty rate for persons living in households with dependent children tended to be higher than that for persons living in households without dependent children (19.4% vs. 12.1%, respectively). Furthermore, among those households with dependent children, the highest at-risk-of-poverty rates were registered among persons living in single-parent households (46.3%) and households with two adults and three or more dependent children (44.4%).

Focusing on age groups, based on the SILC 2014 survey, the at-risk-of-poverty rate among persons aged below 18 years of age stood at 24.1 percent compared to 16.9 percent for persons aged 65 and over. (NSO, 2015) The 2013 SILC survey had also indicated that persons over 65 years of age had an at risk of poverty or social exclusion rate of 20.8 percent. (NSO, 2014b) Survey results also revealed that 52.2 percent of the elderly aged 65 and over could not afford to pay for a one-week annual holiday away from home, while 21.3 percent could not afford to face unexpected financial expenses of at least €450. Furthermore, 23.5 percent said that they were not able to keep their home adequately warm in winter. Indeed, the National Strategic Policy for Active Ageing: Malta 2014-2020 (Formosa, 2013) had highlighted a concern re financial insecurity for older citizens.

“Despite Malta boasting a comprehensive pension system, it is still unable to ensure that all older persons experience financial safety. Poverty is a persistent problem among a minority, although this varies substantially by group, with significant inequalities arising on the basis of age and gender.”

(FORMOSA, 2013, P.17)

Taking into account the above prevalence contexts, the researchers felt justified in retaining the following three household types as the focus of this study:

- *Two adults and two dependent children*
- *Lone parent and two dependent children*
- *An Elderly couple (65+)*

For the purpose of this study, adults are assumed to be within the 30-45 age cohorts, whilst children are of senior primary or secondary school age (10-15 years of age).

2.3 DETERMINING THE BASKET

In identifying the components of the Basket, this study considered health, social and economic perspectives, with particular reference to ecologically-sensitive consumption patterns for rudimentary well-being. It relied heavily on the advice of local professionals, experts or group leaders in fields related to specific topics addressed in the study, or who regularly interacted with particular population groups. It also relied on informal contacts of the researchers, many of whom were low-income earners. These various consultations helped the research team to select the contents of the Basket.

An informal one-month expenditure diary exercise was also carried out, during October 2015, by three families typical of the target groups (see Appendix N). Diaries were completed for four weeks by each household referring to receipts, bills and other expenditure records. It is acknowledged that the period recorded may not be reflective of year-round expenditure, but it served as another good indicator of quality and quantity of expenditure of goods and services 'required' by different households.

Based on the above, the original MBDL basket of essential items was reviewed and augmented slightly to reflect changing societal lifestyle and consumption practices. For example, consultations revealed that ownership of a mobile phone and additional involvement in extracurricular school activities were necessary items in the Basket.

The basic components of the Basket are Food, Clothing, Personal Care, Health, Household Goods, Laundry and Care, and Services, Education and Leisure, Transport and Housing. (Further information on each of these items is specified in Chapter 3.) The prices of each item reflect the market price for the reference month of November 2015 (using lower-priced supermarkets, open markets and mobile vendors), with the exception of elements of Clothing and of Household Goods, Laundry and Care and Services. The cost for these latter components has been based on the average consumer expenditure of the lowest income quartile (earning less than €10,585), according to the Household Budgetary Survey (2008), provided by the National Statistics Office (NSO) and making an allowance for inflation between 2011 and 2015.

It is important to note that apart from the general free health service available to all, Maltese low-income earners are entitled for financial or in-kind assistance on a number of items including the following:

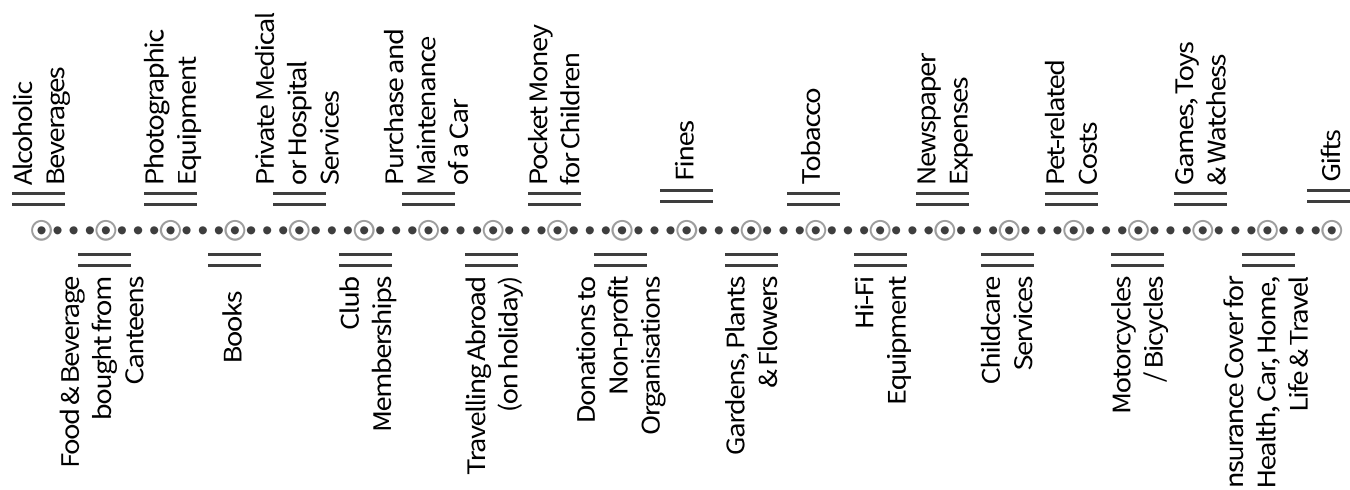


Figure 4. Items not included in the basic basket of essential items

- Food
- Medicines (Schedule 5 - Pink Card holders)
- Housing (Housing Authority schemes)

Assumptions being made for the purpose of this research are that the household members reside in a Housing Authority subsidised dwelling, receive free food and energy and water benefits, and that at least one individual in the household is eligible for free medicines (see Appendix O). It is also assumed that the children attend state schools and use school transport if applicable, and that family members are all in good health and free from any disability and attend free leisure and cultural activities. All this has been factored in when costing the MEBDL.

Figure 4 shows items which were not included in the basic basket of essential items. As already indicated, the decision to omit these items was based on lengthy discussions and always keeping in mind the ‘minimum’ nature of the intended basket.

The computed cost of the basket of essential items refers only to the chosen three specific household types. It is acknowledged, however, that not everybody’s needs are identical: certain circumstances may create additional needs. For example, the extra expenses for persons with specific dietary requirements, physical disability, mental health conditions, chronic illnesses, or those living in sub-standard housing have not been taken into consideration in the compilation of the basket. Such conditions typically require significant additional expenses besides those in this estimated minimum essential budget. Moreover, this study does not claim to be sensitive to the particular needs of minority ethnic groups, or to the extra daily or extraordinary expenses which inhabitants of Gozo might incur.

In the next chapter the key findings of the research study are presented.

“

We cannot wait any longer to deal with the structural causes of poverty, in order to heal our society from an illness that can only lead to new crises.

POPE FRANCIS

”

What we found out...

Chapter three ••

3.1 THE BASIC BASKET

This chapter presents the key components and cost of the basic basket of essential items for a decent living. The essential items have been classified into eight broad categories (see Figure 5). Some categories are made up of multiple components. Details regarding choice, description and costing of items follow.



Figure 5. Basic Basket of Essential Items.

3.2 FOOD

A set of seven-day menus was developed based on the guidelines recommended by the *World Health Organisation* and the local *Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Directorate* and comprising a variety of dishes and snacks. Appendix A part 1 presents a specimen 7-day food menu for each household type targeted in the study. It is assumed that all foods have been prepared at home.

Three daily meals and two in-between meal snacks have been included in this minimum essential food intake. The menus utilise a foods approach and not a calories and/or nutrient approach to ensure nutritional adequacy for the different individuals targeted. No special dietary requirements are catered for, apart from those related to the life stage of the different household members.

Undoubtedly, different lifestyle patterns and daily routines will call for different food intake schedules or types of meals and snacks. The menus presented are specimen one-week menus which would offer a balanced diet suitable for the nutritional needs of healthy growing children, adults or the elderly. A mix of traditional and more ‘modern’ dishes have been included with an emphasis on reduction of health risks, seasonality and socio-cultural norms. Since the menus cover a whole week’s snacks and meals, no other expenses for buying food from school tuckshops, worksite canteens or the like have been taken into account within the final minimum essential budget for food.

Low-income households are currently entitled for free foodstuffs through the EU ‘Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived’ (FEAD) scheme. This latter food aid scheme is coordinated by the Ministry for Family and Social Solidarity and distributed by the Foundation for Social Welfare Services (FSWS). It aims to provide financially vulnerable households in Malta and Gozo with periodic distribution of food packages to alleviate the risk of poverty and material deprivation prevalent amongst these households, while also helping to improve the living standards of people residing in these households (MFSS, 2015b). Eligible households include those receiving non-contributory means-tested benefits and having two or more children below the age of 16, as well as those with two or more children below the age of 16 and with an income not exceeding the National Minimum Wage (NMW). Non-single households eligible for non-contributory means-tested age pensions also qualify for the food aid. (For more detailed information refer to Appendix O under Food Aid Scheme.)

There are two Food packages which are distributed based on certain household profiles. Those households with two or more children below the age of 16 and with an income not exceeding 80 percent of the NMW, and those in the other categories where there are 3 or more children are eligible for both A and B packages. The packages typically comprise breakfast cereal (some wholegrain), pasta, rice, dried pulses, nuts, as well as canned tuna, meats, vegetables and fruit meeting certain nutrition profiles (see Appendix A part 3). The intent is to distribute packages 3 to 4 times a year.

The two FEAD packages were costed and the amounts were deducted from the cost of the 7-day weekly menus according to household profile. An Elderly couple would be eligible for Package A; the other two households would be eligible for both Packages A and B since they include two dependent children and the assumption is they are the lowest income households.

The minimum cost for **Food** for each of the three household types is estimated as in Table 2 below:

Table 2. Estimated Cost For Food

	Weekly in €	Monthly in €	Yearly in €
2 Adults & 2 Children	119.44	517.56	6,210.76
Lone Parent & 2 Children	88.54	383.66	4,603.96
Elderly Couple (65+)	56.63	245.38	2,944.52
.....			

3.3 CLOTHING

The main elements of the Clothing item are garments and footwear. Basic summer and winter clothing were taken into account, incorporating outdoor wear, indoor wear and underwear. Sandals, trainers, boots, elegant shoes, work/school shoes, flip flops and bedroom slippers were included for the adults and children. Flip flops and work shoes were excluded from the elderly basket (Appendix B). It was assumed that the shoes and footwear have an average lifespan of two years.

In terms of garments, the cost has been calculated from the latest available Household Budgetary Survey (HBS) 2008 data with an allowance for inflation from 2011-2015. The basic mean cost per annum for the lowest national income quartile (those earning less than €10,585) has been used. Footwear was costed using current local prices, looking at keeping expense to a minimum without forsaking quality.

The minimum cost for **Clothing** for each of the three household types is estimated as in Table 3 below:

Table 3. Estimated Cost For Clothing

	Weekly in €	Monthly in €	Yearly in €
2 Adults & 2 Children	14.93	64.69	776.32
Lone Parent & 2 Children	12.32	53.40	640.84
Elderly Couple (65+)	9.19	39.82	477.88
.....			

3.4 PERSONAL CARE

This component includes personal hygiene, grooming products, articles and equipment including electric appliances as indicated in the NSO 2008 Household Budgetary Survey data with an allowance for inflation from 2011-2015. A basic monthly salon visit (including haircut or blow dry) for female adults and a monthly salon visit for male adults and children have also

been included.

The research assumes that there are no specific skin care conditions which require special treatment. Spa, beautician, nail enhancement and special hairdressing services, as well as cosmetic surgery expenses are excluded.

The minimum cost for **Personal Care** for each of the three household types is estimated as in Table 4 below:

Table 4. Estimated Cost For Personal Care

	Weekly in €	Monthly in €	Yearly in €
2 Adults & 2 Children	14.62	63.33	760.00
Lone Parent & 2 Children	13.33	57.75	693.04
Elderly Couple (65+)	11.85	51.34	616.03

.....

3.5 HEALTH

The health component takes into consideration different health-related costs. The calculation of costs has also taken into account the entitlement to free medical services and medication through the national public healthcare services (PHS). Low-income earners whose income does not exceed an established threshold are generally entitled to the benefits under Schedule II (Pink Card) of the Social Security Act. More specifically, it entitles them to the free provision of pharmaceuticals within the Government Out-patient Formulary List compiled by the Directorate for Pharmaceutical Affairs within the Ministry of Health, as well as other ancillary services (e.g. dental services, ophthalmic services, hearing aids, telecare and telephone rebate and handyman service). Latest local social security statistics show that as at March 2016 there are 8,762 Heads of Households who are Pink Card holders for a total number of 21,363 beneficiaries. (Ministry for Family & Social Solidarity, personal communication, March 2016)

The basic MEBDL therefore includes only medicinal expenses which are not provided for free. These comprise products related to bruises, colds, other common skin conditions and protection from solar radiation, with some additional items based on composition of the household (Appendix C). For example, for households with younger members allergy-related and menstruation pain products were also included. All these items and the amounts were determined after consultation with experts in the field and a local managing pharmacist.

Of note is that for the elderly cohort the researchers included costs related to foot care (e.g. corn plasters), inflammation and oral health and functioning (e.g. denture maintenance). All other medicinal items are assumed to be provided for free by the State under Schedule II. If needed, vitamins are available for free through the PHS. However, here it is being assumed that the elderly persons are healthy, are consuming a well-balanced diet to satisfy their nutritional needs and are physically active, and should therefore not require any supplements. Should such supplementation become necessary, for example for diagnosed osteoporosis, the specific

supplements would increase medicinal costs by about €243.00 per year.

Dentistry related costs have been excluded since the PHS provides free diagnostic, preventive and emergency care including radiographs and scalings and polishing to all. Dental extractions and minor oral surgery under both local and general anaesthesia is also provided free of charge to all patients. Some services, such as restorative dentistry (fillings) and prosthetics (mainly acrylic dentures) are provided only to patients in low-income brackets (means-tested). The PHS also offers comprehensive free treatment to all children below the age of 16. Orthodontic treatment, which includes any form of removable braces, is provided for free to all children. Fixed braces are provided for free to those children who are considered as high priority, such as cleft lip and palate patients, patients with hypodontia (a condition where the patient has up to 5 permanent teeth missing as a result of the failure of those teeth to develop), and those patients about to undergo orthognathic surgery (corrections to conditions of the jaw).

Although the research team has assumed that all households avail themselves of free health care services, such as those provided by Community Health Centres, it is aware that very often the services of the family doctor (General Practitioner [GP]), specialists or dentists and certain medicines are paid for from personal funds. Vulnerable persons who suffer from common health conditions are automatically risking further medical problems if the condition is left untreated. In this case, a GP visit at the onset of symptoms is often necessary. Also, one could strongly argue that due to the natural ageing process and greater risk for health problems, the older elderly in particular may need to avail themselves of a specialist consultation at least once a year. Due to the fairly extensive PHS coverage, these costs were not included in the basket of essential goods. Should such a consultation be required and timely access not be feasible within the PHS, the cost for this service would typically be around €40-55 per visit.

Given the above context, in its workings the research team has assumed that:

- *The three household categories include members who are Pink Card holders*
- *The elderly are living independently in their own home*
- *No family members have particular serious or chronic health and/or disability conditions*
- *There are no infants and toddlers in the household who may require extraordinary Specialist visits*
- *State-funded medicine is regularly in stock and supplied in a timely manner*
- *Free GP and dentistry services are provided in a timely manner to the patients according to their individual needs*

As a result, the minimum cost for **Health** for each of the three household types is estimated as in Table 5 below.

Table 5. Estimated Cost For Health

	Weekly in €	Monthly in €	Yearly in €
2 Adults & 2 Children	4.53	19.65	235.75
Lone Parent & 2 Children	3.15	13.67	164.01
Elderly Couple (65+)	3.56	15.42	185.08
.....			

3.6 HOUSEHOLD GOODS, LAUNDRY AND CARE, AND SERVICES

This component is divided into three broad categories: Household goods (including maintenance and repair), Household laundry and care, and Household services.

3.6.1 HOUSEHOLD GOODS

Devising a list of durable goods and their corresponding maintenance based on the various household profiles and possible member lifestyles was beyond the available resources for this research. The size of the house and activities of household members may have a direct bearing on the quantity of the items therein included. Furthermore, there are large differences in the lifespan of commodities within this category.

In view of this, the cost of furniture and furnishings, household textiles, major and small electric/non-electric household appliances and material and services for maintenance and repair of household types has been taken from the yearly mean expenditure of the lowest national income quartile (earning less than €10,585) according to the NSO Household Budgetary Survey 2008 (see Appendix D). The total yearly cost for **Household Goods** can be seen in Table 6 below.

Table 6. Estimated Cost For Household Goods And Maintenance

	Furniture and Furnishings and Textiles in € p/a	Appliances in € p/a	Maintenance and Repair -Material in € p/a	Maintenance and Repair -Services in € p/a	Total in € p/a
2 Adults & 2 Children	186.17	157.36	159.82	275.72	779.07
Lone Parent & 2 Children	183.93	157.36	152.50	275.72	769.50
Elderly Couple (65+)	183.93	157.36	152.50	275.72	769.50

3.6.2 HOUSEHOLD LAUNDRY AND CARE

It is assumed that households will carry out basic home care and cleaning on a weekly basis. In addition, a minimum of six, five and four loads of laundry per week (at 40 degrees Celsius) was estimated for the two adults and two children, lone parent and two children and elderly couple respectively. Laundry and household detergents, cleaning materials

and other non-durable household goods for dishwashing and cleaning of floors and other surfaces (e.g. bathrooms and wall tiles), such as dusters, sponges, floor clothes and a cleaning set, have also been listed in this Household Laundry and Care component (see Appendix D). The total yearly cost for **Household Laundry and Care** can be seen in Table 7 below.

Table 7. Estimated Cost For Household Laundry And Care

HOUSEHOLD LAUNDRY AND CARE

	Laundry in € p/a	Non-Durable Goods in € p/a	Total in € p/a
2 Adults & 2 Children	93.00	145.08	238.08
Lone Parent & 2 Children	78.00	145.08	223.08
Elderly Couple (65+)	62.00	72.54	134.54

3.6.3 HOUSEHOLD SERVICES

This category includes:

- *Television Set*
- *Radio*
- *Personal Computer*

- a) Electricity and water consumption
- b) Liquid Petroleum Gas (LPG) for cooking and space heating
- c) Basic communication services, such as TV, landline telephony and internet, plus a mobile phone (the latter being a new addition to the Basket).

a) **Electricity and Water Consumption**

A daily 8.4 kWh (units) electricity consumption has been estimated for a household comprising two adults and two children. The lone parent and two dependent children household is estimated to consume a minimum 7.6 kWh (units) daily and the elderly couple household 7.1 kWh (units) daily. A detailed set of workings is found in Appendix E.

Using the Malta Census 2011 report on availability of household amenities and appliances as a basis (NSO, 2014a), and adding on to this, the following have been taken into account for the minimum essential basket:

- *Lighting*
- *Kettle*
- *Toaster*
- *Microwave Oven*
- *Fridge Freezer*
- *Water Heater*
- *Washing Machine*
- *Iron*
- *Fan (for Summer months only)*

The use of an air-conditioner, electric heater, electric blanket, dehumidifier, jacuzzi, liquidiser, food mixer and dishwasher has not been included.

It is estimated that 236 litres of water per day is the minimum required for a two adult and two children household, whereas 185 litres are estimated for a lone parent and two child family, and 136 litres for an elderly couple. This incorporates the use of water in the shower, wash hand basin, toilet flushing, kitchen sink, washing machine and for house cleaning. More details are outlined in Appendix F. It is assumed that tap water is also used for both cooking and drinking at home and that these households take showers and not baths. Moreover, the use of dish-washers, domestic reverse osmosis units, pumps (also to use rainwater) and water for gardening has not been included.

The costs of each household reflect the residential tariffs as regulated by the Malta Resources Authority at November 2015, with applicable subsidies based on the MFSS Energy Benefit for low-income households (see Appendix O). As at 2015, families who are in receipt of social security benefits and/or whose net income does not exceed €8,886 per annum, are entitled to an Energy Benefit. This benefit provides for a reduction on the cost of electricity consumption and on electricity and water meters rental. The electricity and water rebates are deducted directly from the utilities bill. It is assumed that the three households

are benefitting from the full Energy Benefit as applicable.

The estimated cost for electricity and water costs for the three household types (also see Appendix G) is as in Table 8 below.

Table 8. Estimated Cost For Electricity And Water

	Electricity Units p/a	Water Units p/a	Electricity in € p/a	Water in € p/a	Total in € p/a
2 Adults & 2 Children	3,064.79	86,192.14	156.43	120.09	276.52
Lone Parent & 2 Children	2,791.61	67,759.64	140.48	94.96	235.44
Elderly Couple (65+)	2,589.87	49,692.14	136.35	69.82	206.17

In the above costings, a family of two adults and two children receives €210.91 per annum in water and electricity rebates for electricity consumption and electricity and water meter rental. A lone-parent and two children household receives a €202.05 rebate, whilst an elderly couple (65+) receives €187.83 per annum in water and electricity rebate.

b) Liquid Petroleum Gas (LPG) for Cooking and Space Heating

LPG has been assumed to be used for both cooking and heating. Twelve 12kg cylinders per year are estimated to be consumed by the households comprising elderly couples, whereas ten 12kg cylinders are consumed by their younger counterparts. The difference is because core body temperature decreases with age and has greater variability in older populations; thus they may require more

periods/days of the year of indoor heating. They may also spend more time at home and require longer daily hours of indoor heating.

The price of LPG cylinders used for the minimum essential budget calculations reflects the Malta Resource Authority tariffs as at the reference month of November 2015 (see Appendix H), with applicable subsidies based on the MFSS Energy Benefit for low-income households (see Appendix O). The LPG rebate is €30 per household per year where the head of household is 60 or younger and increases to €40 where the head of household is older than 60. The rebate is therefore automatically higher for the elderly couple. LPG rebates are affected on presentation of invoices. The estimated cost for LPG for the three household types is as in Table 9.

Table 9. Estimated Cost For Liquid Petroleum Gas

	LPG 12kg cylinder in € p/a
2 Adults & 2 Children	120.00
Lone Parent & 2 Children	120.00
Elderly Couple (65+)	140.00

c) **Basic Communication Services**

A basic household communications package, comprising TV, landline phone and internet, has been included. One digital TV set-top box has been included. This was based on the fact that results of a survey by the Digital Switchover Committee, released in 2011, estimated that only 4,760 households still relied on free-to-air transmissions

received via conventional rooftop aerials to watch Maltese TV, which is equivalent to less than 5 percent. Thus, the majority of households subscribed to a digital TV provider. More recent statistics confirm that digital subscriptions continue to dominate the market. (NSO, 2016e) The same package has been included for the three household types as in Table 10.

Table 10. Estimated Cost For Tv, Landline Phone And Internet

	Weekly in €	Monthly in €	Yearly in €
2 Adults & 2 Children	7.62	33.00	396.00
Lone Parent & 2 Children	7.62	33.00	396.00
Elderly Couple (65+)	7.62	33.00	396.00

As indicated earlier, ownership and usage of a mobile phone for each adult individual has also been considered as an essential communications item. Expenses involved in owning a mobile phone and using it

for essential calls has been calculated separately with reference to a basic mobile set and a fixed top-up Euro amount per month and can be seen in Table 11. (Further detail is available in Appendix I.)

Table 11. Estimated Cost For Mobile Phone

	Weekly in €	Monthly in €	Yearly in €
2 Adults & 2 Children	5.15	22.33	268.00
Lone Parent & 2 Children	2.58	11.17	134.00
Elderly Couple (65+)	5.15	22.33	268.00

Expenses for utilities and communications were added up to calculate one Household Services Euro amount (see Appendix J).

The Household Goods, Laundry and Care,

and Services expenses were totalled for one yearly combined cost (see Appendix K). Based on this exercise, the minimum cost for each of the three household types is estimated as in Table 12 below.

Table 12. Estimated Cost For Household Goods, Laundry & Care, & Services

	Weekly in €	Monthly in €	Yearly in €
2 Adults & 2 Children	39.96	173.14	2,077.66
Lone Parent & 2 Children	36.12	156.50	1,878.02
Elderly Couple (65+)	36.81	159.52	1,914.21

3.7 EDUCATION

This section focuses on education expenses related to schoolchildren; though expenses for lifelong learning by adults are not excluded entirely.

The research assumes that the children are of Secondary school age and attend a State school. It also assumes that books and transport to and from school are provided for free by the State. Therefore, the two main items in the Education component are Miscellaneous Printing and Stationery Materials and Extra Curricular Activities and School Uniforms.

A one-time stationery bill (e.g. beginning of scholastic year), as well as cost of photocopies, workbooks, a magazine subscription, special school days (e.g. Pizza Day), photos and DVDs, registration for extracurricular activities and transport for seven school outings a year have been listed for each of the children (see Appendix L).

School uniforms are assumed to last up to two consecutive years. According to the Final Report on the Supply of School Uniforms by the Malta Competition and Consumer Affairs Authority (MCCAA, 2012), as well as specimen lists issued by schools in preparation for the next scholastic year, the typical items for school uniforms include daily winter and summer garments, PE attire and lab wear. In the MCCAA report, a Secondary school girl's uniform minus lab wear would cost on average €212.05 and a boy's uniform minus lab wear would cost on average €207.31.

No other educational costs have been included. First of all, it is assumed that families will seek additional educational activities for the children which are provided for free by the State, Local Councils or by NGOs. Moreover, during the course of data collection, the research team discovered that students who are experiencing financial difficulties are often being assisted and provided with the necessary resources by their school, on a case-by-case basis and at the respective School Management Team's discretion.

Whilst no educational expenses for the elderly has been included in this section, this is not to mean that the elderly are not expected to further their education if they so choose. It is assumed that interested elderly will seek personal development activities which are provided for free by the State, Local Councils, NGOs or other entities.

The minimum cost for **Education** for each of the two household types having schoolchildren is estimated as in Table13 below.

Table 13. Estimated Cost For Education

	Weekly in €	Monthly in €	Yearly in €
2 Adults & 2 Children	8.55	37.04	444.50
Lone Parent & 2 Children	8.55	37.04	444.50
.....			

No expense has been allocated for leisure activities. It is assumed that the members of the various households attend leisure and entertainment activities which are available for free, including making use of local playing grounds and open air gyms and amenities at national parks, as well as attending village *festas* and special theme events, public concerts, other Local Council sport and cultural activities, in addition to activities and outings organised by government entities and NGOs (e.g. youth or elderly clubs). It must be noted that although no specific expenses have been dedicated for sports-

related activities (both for adults and children) this does not imply a lack of valuation of sports or outdoor exercise. On the contrary, the researchers have kept in mind a holistic approach to health in their inclusion/exclusion criteria and calculations. It is recognised, however, that some activities require no additional cost (e.g. home-based stretching and strengthening exercises or doing aerobics to online videos, regular walking with homemade weights, or swimming at the public beaches).

No expenses for paid cultural activities, holidays abroad, gift giving and/or ownership of pets are taken into account. Whilst appreciating that all these give additional value to one's quality of life, given the frugality of this proposed minimum basket these items were omitted. Moreover, it was considered that people can be very creative in creating gifts by reusing and repurposing items and materials already available.

3.8 TRANSPORT

As indicated by the Household Budgetary Survey (2008), Figure 6 shows that transport costs recorded the second largest proportion of household consumption expenditure among Maltese households in 2008. The survey revealed that the highest share of expenditure on transport (38.0%) was attributed to fuels and lubricants for personal transport equipment with an average of €1,023 per annum (p.xv).

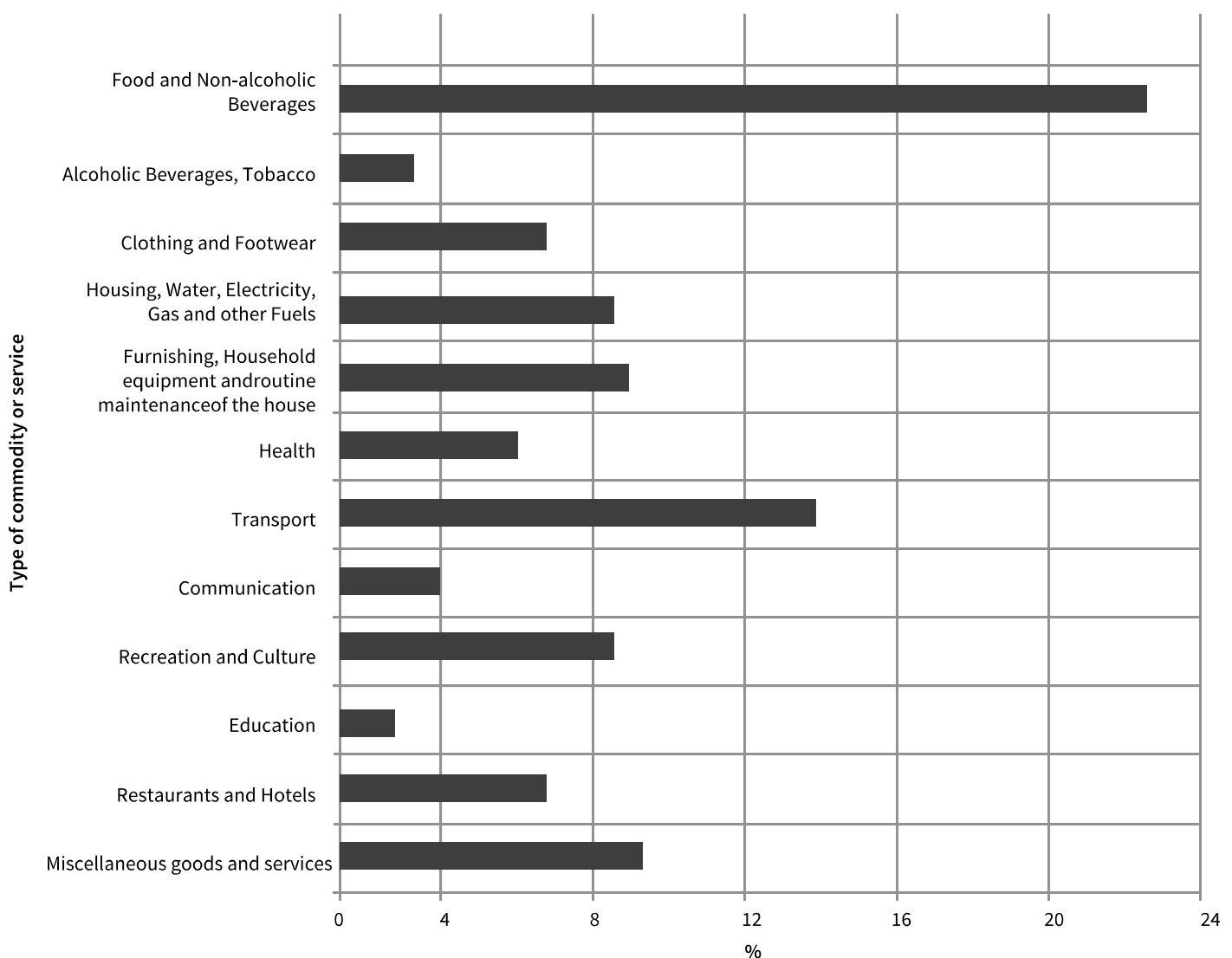


Figure 6. Percentage Distribution of Household Consumption Expenditure for 2008

(Source: Household Budgetary Survey 2008 p.xiv)

The inclusion of a car as part of the essential basket was once again debated. After consideration of a number of factors, including the current national move towards sustainability in transportation, public transport options available, and the ‘minimum’ remit of this basket, the research team decided to once again exclude a car from the basic basket. The assumption is that children attending State school will use the free school transport provided, and that all other minimum transport requirements for family members are met through use of the public transport system, provided that it operates efficiently and that the households are situated in areas where public transport is available.

A *Tallinja* public transport card has been included for each of the elderly at Concession (*Kartanzjan*) rates (i.e. maximum payable €2 a week). For the other two household types, a *Tallinja* saver card for the adults (i.e. maximum payable €26 a month) and four return journeys per month for the children (i.e. 4 X €3 [€1.50X2] per child) have been incorporated in the transport expenses (see Appendix M). Fares are according to prices listed in the Malta Public Transport web portal for the month of March 2016. The minimum cost for **Transport** for each of the three household types is estimated as in Table 16 below.

Table 14. Estimated Cost For Transport

	Weekly in €	Monthly in €	Yearly in €
2 Adults & 2 Children	14.31	62.00	744.00
Lone Parent & 2 Children	11.08	48.00	576.00
Elderly Couple (65+)	4.00	16.00	192.00
.....			

3.9 HOUSING

The calculation of housing expenses is a complex issue, since there are many different alternative forms of accommodation and of prices.

Based on Eurostat 2015 (EU 2015), the national average of owner-occupied dwellings in Malta was 60.4 percent, whilst for rented dwellings it was 19.9 percent. As shown in Figure 7, similar percentages of the population lived in owner-occupied dwellings with an outstanding mortgage, or lived in a rented dwelling but paying reduced rent tariffs. The lowest percentage was for those residing in rented dwellings paying market prices.

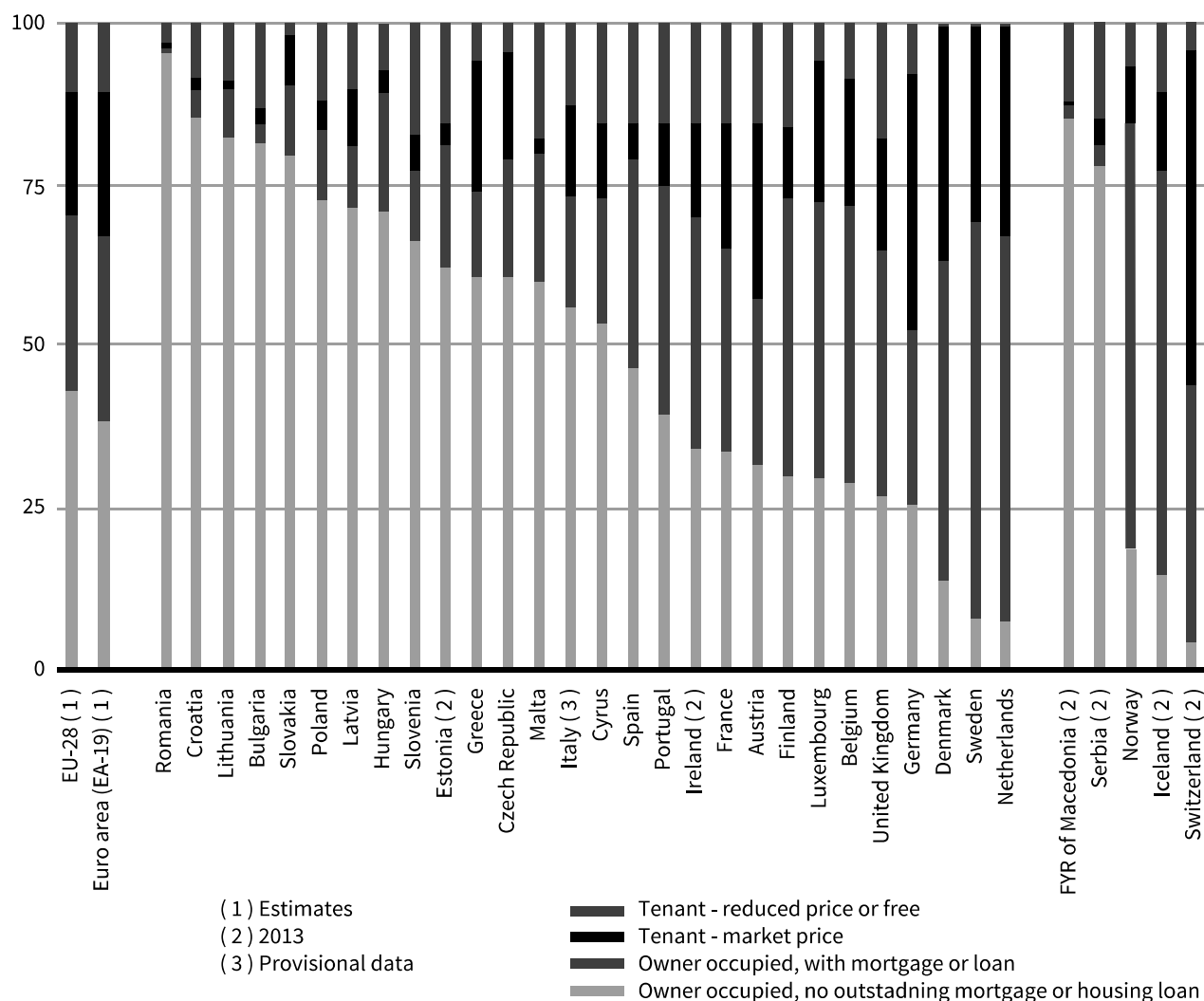


Figure 7. Distribution of population by country and tenure status

(Source: Eurostat 2015b)

Using the latest data on housing as per the 2013 Statistics of Income and Living Conditions (SILC) (NSO, 2015d), 59.5 per cent of the 156,147 Maltese households are outright homeowners (see Table 15). 17.0 per cent are paying a mortgage on their home, whilst 4.9 per cent have been given their accommodation for free. The remaining 18.6 per cent are tenants in rented dwellings, paying rent.

Table 15. Households By Tenure Status

	Number of Households	%
Outright owner	92,967	59.5
Owner paying mortgage	26,589	17.0
Tenant or subtenant paying rent at prevailing or market rate, or accommodation rented at reduced rate	29,007	18.6
Accommodation provided for free	7,583	4.9
Total	156,147	100

The SILC 2013 (NSO, 2015) also confirms that while 23.2 percent of tenants living in rented dwellings and 23.7 percent of tenants in free (non-personally owned) accommodation were at-risk-of poverty, the rate for home owners who were at-risk-of poverty was estimated much lower at 13.9 percent. In other words, those who live in rented accommodation have a higher probability of being at-risk-of-poverty.

SILC 2012 data (NSO, 2014c) showed that the average monthly rental value of property varied according to the size of the property and household type. The highest rental expense was incurred by single parent households with one or more dependent children, at an average monthly rent of €134 (see Figure 8). This figure may be misleading however, given that it includes those living in state-subsidised social housing. A cursory study of the published local private rental monthly tariffs suggests these would unlikely be lower than €300 per month, even for very small and basic dwellings.

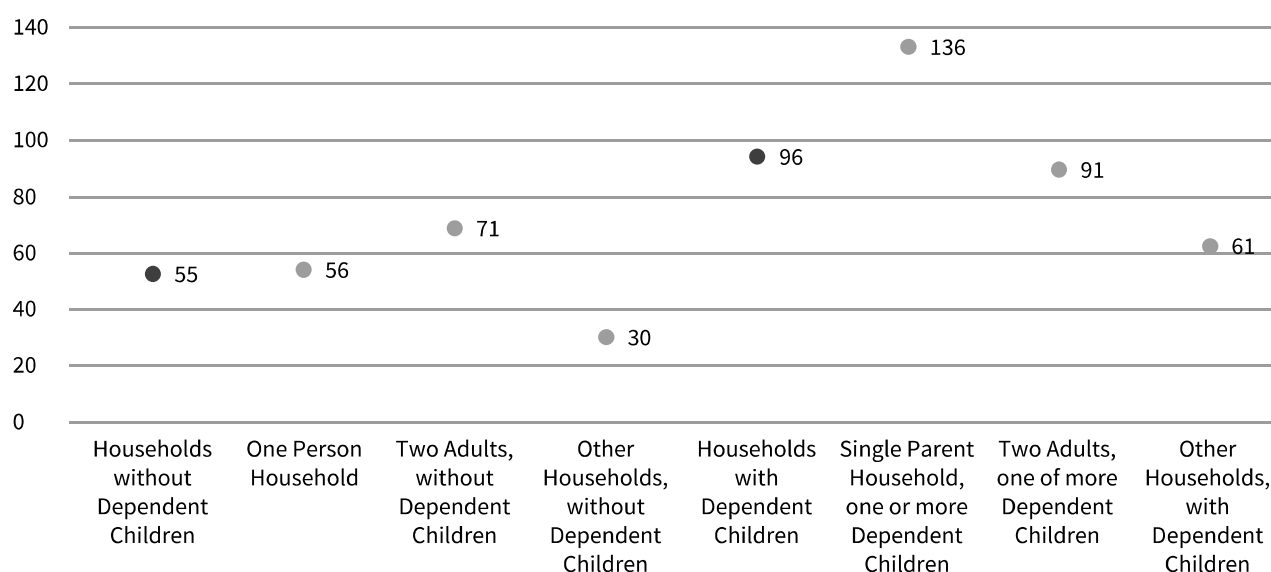


Figure 8. Average monthly rent by household type
(Source: Source NSO, 2014c)

The picture is somewhat different for those residing in social housing, or benefitting from subsidy on private rented residences (see Appendix O). Those families who have an income below €8,000 per annum are eligible for a subsidy on the commercial rent. No means testing is carried out on applicants in receipt of Social Assistance, Social Assistance for Single Parents, Unemployment Assistance, Age Pension and National Minimum Invalidity Pension. For households paying commercial rents of €197 or lower, the maximum annual subsidy is €120 and for those paying commercial rents above €197 the maximum annual subsidy is €1,000.

This research assumes that the targeted households do not own their home, but that they are renting a dwelling and are paying a subsidised rent. As such they are beneficiaries of some Social housing scheme. The minimum cost for **Housing** for each of the three household types is estimated at €197 per annum, reflecting the present legal possible minimum commercial rent. This works out to a €16.42 monthly rent as shown in Table 16.

Table 16. Estimated Cost For Housing

	Weekly in €	Monthly in €	Yearly in €
2 Adults & 2 Children	3.79	16.42	197.00
Lone Parent & 2 Children	3.79	16.42	197.00
Elderly Couple (65+)	3.79	16.42	197.00

3.10 AN AUGMENTED BASKET

Based on research conducted recently at a European level on Reference Baskets (Goedemé et al, 2015), as well as on conversations with critical friends, a number of other items were costed to be added to what could be labelled an ‘augmented’ Minimum Essential Basket for a Decent Living – aMEBDL. The rationale behind considering these additions stemmed from the social realities and consequent needs which the various contributors to the conversations described. Factors such as changes in residence patterns and the rental market, ease of mobility for the elderly, or social inclusion manifested in participation in shared out-of-home eating experiences were discussed. With all this in mind, three additional items have been costed: running costs of a private car, commercial unsubsidised rent and eating out. All of these were costed based on current typical market prices. One must note that not all these costs may be incurred by all the household types targeted in this study. For certain households, all three may be considered as essential; for others only one or two may be pertinent.

3.10.1 RUNNING A PRIVATE CAR

The cost of running a private car would increase the cost of the minimum essential basket quite significantly. Basic expenses such as annual road licence and third party insurance premium, vehicle road-worthiness testing (every 2 years), fuel and simple maintenance service would amount to close to € 1000 Euro annually (see Appendix M for details). It is assumed that there are no major repairs to

be done, no fines to pay and a full ‘no claim bonus’ is applied and that travel is exclusively by the household’s private car. The minimum cost for **private car based transport** for each of the three household types is estimated as in Table 17 below. The percentage increase for transport would range from 32 percent for the household of two adults and two children, to 512 percent for the elderly couple. For the lone adult and two children household the increase would be 71 percent.

Table 17. Estimated Cost For Transport Based On Private Car Usage

	Weekly in €	Monthly in €	Yearly in €
2 Adults & 2 Children	18.92	82.00	984.00
Lone Parent & 2 Children	18.92	82.00	984.00
Elderly Couple (65+)	18.92	82.00	984.00

3.10.2 COMMERCIAL RENT

The size of the commercial rental market has increased dramatically over recent years in Malta due to different demographic circumstances (such as more foreigners renting property whilst working in Malta) and changes in rent regulations. According to the 2011 Census (NSO, 2014a), of all those household members in 56,296 dwellings who paid some form of rent or emphyteusis to a landlord, 71.2 percent paid private landlords.

The rental prices of private dwellings differ not only based on size and quality of amenities and services, but also locality. The 2011

Census report (NSO, 204 a) indicated €3,537 as the median annual rent paid for those residing in rented furnished dwellings. This translates to €294.75 a month. At present, the rent for a one-bedroom apartment in localities such as Bugibba, Qawra or Gżira hovers around €300-350 per month, and these are considered lower-end prices. Thus, it is not unreasonable to consider that for those households who may somehow not benefit from social housing allocation or housing subsidies on commercial rent, an approximate additional €284 monthly **housing rental cost** (above the €16.42) would be required for residing in a commercially rented dwelling (see Table 18). This amounts to a significant increase.

Table 18. Estimated Cost For Commercial Rent

	Weekly in €	Monthly in €	Yearly in €
2 Adults & 2 Children	69.23	300.00	3600.00
Lone Parent & 2 Children	69.23	300.00	3600.00
Elderly Couple (65+)	69.23	300.00	3600.00

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Eurostat figures on housing affordability (2015) indicated that in 2014, 1.6 percent of Maltese lived in households that spent 40 percent or more of their equivalised disposable income on housing. The proportion of the population whose housing costs exceeded 40 percent of their equivalised disposable income was highest for tenants with market

price rents (26.6%) and lowest for persons in owner-occupied dwellings without a loan or mortgage (0.6 %), or who had subsidised rents (0.7%). Of those living in households paying a mortgage or loan, 2.8 percent spent 40 percent or more of their equivalised disposable income on housing.

3.10.3 EATING OUT

If one includes eating out as a regular necessity, the cost of the food-related item increases. The eating out prices cover a monthly one-dish basic pasta or pizza meal, or a beverage plus simple sweet/savoury item at a café a few times a month at a cost of € 10 per person per month. One might consider substituting one of the weekday home-

based meals with an eating out meal. Taking the most expensive day of the 7-day costed menu (Tuesday) and dividing by 3 for each household, it is clear that eating one meal outside the home every week will increase the price of the basic basket by 2 to 3 percent. The minimum cost for food including eating out for each of the three household types is estimated as in Table 19.

Table 19. Estimated Cost For In-Home And Out-Of Home Meals

	Weekly in €	Monthly in €	Yearly in €
2 Adults & 2 Children	122.57	531.14	6,373.64
Lone Parent & 2 Children	90.6	392.60	4,711.20
Elderly Couple (65+)	58.4	253.07	3,036.80

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If one has to consider the eating out sessions as visits to cafes or snack places, typically these eating sessions would be an addition to the regular meals. Thus, the full cost of these would need to be added to the full cost of the 7-day menus. The augmented cost for **food**

including café or snack place visits for each of the three household types is estimated as in Table 20 below. These additional out-of-home food intake experiences would add around 8 percent to the cost of the food basket.

Table 20. Estimated Cost For In-Home Meals & Additional Café Or Snack Place Visits

	Weekly in €	Monthly in €	Yearly in €
2 Adults & 2 Children	129.44	560.90	6,730.76
Lone Parent & 2 Children	96.04	416.16	4,993.96
Elderly Couple (65+)	61.63	267.04	3,204.52

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It may be argued that the aMEBDL would be considered as reflective of normal living practices for many on our islands. Therefore, adding these items to the basic MEBDL is acknowledging prevalent living circumstances. With a growing proportion of the population falling in the older age brackets and the promotion of active aging via increased labour and social participation (Formosa, 2013), personal vehicle transport will acquire greater value once physical mobility starts to decline. As for rental costs, one cannot ignore that this is becoming a

common monthly cost for households who find themselves in unusual circumstances, especially lone parents who for some reason or other do not obtain access to social housing. And finally, eating out is undeniably an integral component of Maltese food culture. For many this is not only a means for entertainment and socialisation, but also a marker of one's identity and kinship with a group. Thus, a monthly meal or occasional outing to a café could be seen as an ordinary rather than an extraordinary expense. (Piscopo & McKay, 2015)

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The promise was that when the glass was full, it would overflow, benefiting the poor. What happens instead is that when the glass is full, it magically gets bigger, but nothing ever comes out for the poor.

POPE FRANCIS

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Why we think it's important...

Chapter four • •

This research gives a snapshot of the cost of a basic basket of goods and services which are considered essential by a multi-disciplinary team of professionals and other interested stakeholders for a minimum decent standard of living. The study seeks to provide a minimum benchmark to guide further debates and policy decisions affecting the incomes of those who are ‘worse off’.

4.1 SALIENT FINDINGS

Table 21 presents the total monthly and yearly cost for the minimum basket of goods and services considered essential for a decent living for three low-income household types. The yearly totals are €11,445.99 for a household comprising two adults and two children, €9,197.37 for a household comprising a lone parent and two children and €6,526.72 for a household comprising an elderly couple (65+). It is assumed that members of the three household types reside in a state-owned subsidised rented property, are in receipt of energy and water benefits and of some free food under the FEAD scheme, and include members who are Pink Card holders. It is also assumed that these households make use of free public health services, that the children attend free State schools, and that the families attend free leisure and cultural activities. All this has been factored into the calculations.

Table 21. Monthly And Yearly Minimum Essential Budget For A Decent Living For Three Household Types

	Monthly in €	Yearly in €
2 Adults & 2 Children	953.83	11,445.99
Lone Parent & 2 Children	766.45	9,197.37
Elderly Couple (65+)	543.90	6,526.72

More specifically, given that these are low income households, these three family types would benefit as follows (also see Appendix O):

- *Each household type would receive a 30 percent reduction for electricity consumption (before eco-reduction) and a rebate on electricity and water meter rental (not more than €65 and €59 per year, respectively). An additional LPG rebate would also be available at €30 per household per year where the head of household is 60 or younger and €40 per household per year where the head of household is over 60.*
- *Based on the current FEAD scheme, the households with two dependent children would be given foodstuff worth approximately €24.02 monthly (market value) and the households with two elderly adults would be given foodstuff worth approximately €15.49 per month (market value). (The reference month is March 2016). These amounts have been considered when costing the 7-day menus in the Basket.*
- *They would incur significantly lower health care costs compared to those who are not Pink Card holders (as seen in Appendix C). Families with two adults and two children and families with a lone parent and two children who do not include a member who is a Pink Card holder would pay approximately €588.03 and €443.35 per annum respectively to cover medicinal costs. This is well over two times as much as those who are eligible for free medicines and services in line with the Pink Card provisions. For an elderly couple where neither one is eligible for a Pink Card, health care costs would increase to around €719.20 annually, the increase being three times as much or close to €535 Euro more per year than an elderly couple who can avail themselves of Pink Card provisions.*

Table 22 presents the minimum budget required for the various items selected as essential within the main categories for the three household types. In actual costs, these totals would differ depending on household size; though one must also point out that since the children targeted are of teenage years, in a number of cases their expenses are the same as those of an adult (a case in point being food, given that the amounts consumed are very similar to adults).

Table 22. Minimum Monthly And Yearly Costs For MEBDL For Three Household Types

	Item	2 Adults & 2 Children		Lone Parent & 2 Children		Elderly Couple (65+)	
		Monthly €	Yearly €	Monthly €	Yearly €	Monthly €	Yearly €
Food	7-Day Menu ¹	517.56	6210.76	383.66	4603.96	245.38	2944.52
Clothing	Garments ²	37.86	454.32	33.65	403.84	25.24	302.88
	Shoes & Footwear ³	26.83	322.00	19.75	237.00	14.58	175.00
Personal Care	Personal Care ²	63.33	760.00	57.75	693.04	51.34	616.03
Health	Pharmaceutical Products ⁴	19.65	235.75	13.67	164.01	15.42	185.08
Household Goods, Laundry & Care, and Services	Furniture & Furnishings (and Textiles) ²	15.51	186.17	15.33	183.93	15.33	183.93
	Appliances ²	13.11	157.36	13.11	157.36	13.11	157.36
	Maintenance & Repair: Material ²	13.32	159.82	12.71	152.50	12.71	152.50
	Maintenance & Repair: Services ²	22.98	275.72	22.98	275.72	22.98	275.72
	Laundry Detergents	7.75	93.00	6.50	78.00	5.17	62.00
	Non-durable Goods ²	12.09	145.08	12.09	145.08	6.05	72.54
	Telephone/TV/Internet	33.00	396.00	33.00	396.00	33.00	396.00
	Mobile Phone	22.33	268.00	11.17	134.00	22.33	268.00
	Electricity ⁵	13.04	156.43	11.71	140.48	11.36	136.35
	Gas ⁵	10.00	120.00	10.00	120.00	11.67	140.00
	Water ⁵	10.01	120.09	7.91	94.96	5.82	69.82
Education	Printing & Stationery	21.00	252.00	21.00	252.00	0.00	0.00
	Uniforms	16.04	192.50	16.04	192.50	0.00	0.00
Transport	Public Transport	62.00	744.00	48.00	576.00	16.00	192.00
Housing	Rent ⁶	16.42	197.00	16.42	197.00	16.42	197.00
		953.83	11,445.99	766.45	9,197.37	543.90	6,526.72

¹ Benefitting from the FEAD Scheme. ² Prices according to the Average Consumer Expenditure of the Lowest Income Quartile earning less than €10,585 according to HBS 2008 with an addition for inflation from 2011 to 2015. ³ This is the annual cost divided by two assuming footwear has a 2-year lifespan. ⁴ Benefitting from free medicines and health services as per Public Health Scheme – Schedule 5. ⁵ Benefitting from electricity, water and LPG reductions/rebates. ⁶ Assuming residence is Housing Authority-owned subsidised dwelling.

Table 23 presents the proportion of the total cost of the Basket for the top five most costly categories, once again referring to the different household types. (More details are available in Appendix Q.) The results indicate that the highest proportion of the total cost of the MEBDL goes to Food, ranging from 45 to 54 percent for the three household types. The next highest cost is for the combined Household Goods, Laundry and Care, and Services, which ranges from 18 to 29 percent. Finally, at much lower proportions, one finds the cost of Clothing, Transport and Personal Care at around 7 to 8 percent for the household types with children, but slightly higher for Personal Care and significantly lower for Transport for the households comprising two elderly individuals.

Table 23. Proportion Of Total MEBDL Basket Cost Of Most Costly Five Categories

Item	2 Adults & 2 Children Yearly €	% of TOTAL basket cost	Lone Parent & 2 Children Yearly €	% of TOTAL basket cost	Elderly Couple (65+) Yearly €	% of TOTAL basket cost
Food	6,210.76	54.26	4,603.96	50.06	2,944.52	45.11
Household Goods, Laundry and Care, and Services	2,077.66	18.15	1,878.02	20.42	1,914.21	29.33
Clothing	776.32	6.78	640.84	6.97	477.88	7.32
Personal Care	760.00	6.64	693.04	7.54	616.03	9.44
Transport	744.00	6.50	576.00	6.26	192.00	2.94

In 2015, Malta's overall private food consumption expenditure was estimated at 10.8% of the total final consumption expenditure in the domestic market. (NSO, 2015e) Based on the results of the MEBDL basket costing, Food worked out to be the largest share of total expenditure for each type of household at around half of the total expenditure. When one looks at real costs, there has been an increase in the Food category compared to the original MBDL, however the proportion of cost of the total basket is somewhat similar. The research team considers this phenomenon as evidence of their judicious choices for frugal baskets across item categories within an economic climate where the standard of living has increased overall. The concern is whether the increase in standard of living is also achievable by those who are less financially secure.

Since 2011, when the original MBDL was costed, an inflation of 15.9 percent over 4 years has been recorded for food (September 2011 to September 2015) with sharp increases also in particular items. (NSO, personal communication, March 2016) Some items of food which increased in cost when comparing the previous and current basket include fresh vegetables and fruit, fish and nuts. In fact, given that the 7-day menus comprise substantial amounts of vegetables and fruits, fresh or processed, the increase in the cost of these foods has significantly impacted on the cost of the 7-day menu. The FEAD packages distributed to low income households would help to alleviate some of this increased cost, also in relation to other food products on the menus such as canned fish, cereals and pasta.

Looking at all the MEBDL categories, some significant differences did emerge across the different households for the different Basket items. As would be expected, the proportion of the Food cost in relation to total cost was highest for the household with two adults and two children, given that four individuals are involved and the proportion of food cost is typically the highest proportion in low income scenarios, increasing with the number of members in the household. (MacMahon & Weld, 2015; Drewnowski & Eichelsdoerfer, 2010; McDermott & Stephens, 2010; Robinson, 2010) For the Elderly couple, the proportion of the total cost for Household Goods, Laundry and Care, and Services; Personal Care and also Clothing was higher than for the other household types. This difference was strikingly evident for the Household Goods, Laundry and Care, and Services, being about 10 percentage points more than that of the household of two adults and two children. Closer scrutiny of the specific components indicates that the major contributor to the cost are Furniture & Furnishings (and Textiles), Appliances and Materials and Services related to Maintenance & Repair. The cost of these is fairly fixed irrespective of the number of people in the household. For example, repairing an appliance would cost the same for any household type, as would be the cost of buying a new set of curtains. Hence, this cost translates to a higher proportion of the total in the lower total scenario. In contrast, the cost of transport for the elderly couple is significantly less than the other groups. This is due to the heavily subsidised public transport cards where the cost per trip works out to be very low compared to single tickets bought for occasional trips as might be the case for the teenagers in the households with two children.

When one compares the current MEBDL to the 2012 study one can see that an increase in cost has occurred in most of the categories for the three household types, specifically Food, Personal Care, Household Goods, Laundry and Care, and Services, Education and Housing (see Appendix P). In contrast, there have been decreases in cost of Electricity, Gas and Water and in Footwear for all the categories, as well as decreases for Transport for the elderly and Uniforms for the households with children. The Mobile Phone is a new addition to the Basket for all household types.

In trying to analyse these changes, one can reason that some are likely due to shifts in range of products on the market, market prices and market competition (e.g. footwear at a broader range of prices; certain basic health care items becoming more expensive); others due to incentives and regulation (e.g. the low cost of a *tallinja* card for the elderly; a reduction in the price for utilities and gas as a national budgetary measure). In contrast, there seems to have been some changes in requirements for compliance or general social norms which necessitated an increase in costs (e.g. with respect to stationery and printing, schoolchildren may possibly be having more requests at the beginning of the scholastic year, such as for folders and workbooks; and printing of past papers is also becoming a frequent request, so this was added as a new item under the minimum Education cost). The reduction in Health Care costs for the Elderly couple is partly an artificial one and arises from the fact that certain costly vitamin/mineral supplements were removed from the basket of essential items assuming that the elderly are in good health and following a healthy lifestyle. As for the increased cost for Transport in households with children, this could be due to the fact that single trip tickets for teenagers work out as quite costly.

4.2 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE FINDINGS

This report has been studiously computed by a multi-disciplinary team of professionals in order to serve as a guide towards guaranteeing a minimum decent living for low-income households. Keeping the vulnerable as its focus, it aims to serve as a contribution towards reaching the Europe 2020 poverty reduction target (European Commission, 2010) and reaching Malta's target of lifting around 6,560 people by 2020 out of the risk of poverty and social exclusion. (Ministry for Family and Social Solidarity, 2015) The Malta Poverty strategy laid recommendations focused on four key target groups:

- *children and young people*
- *elderly people*
- *the unemployed*
- *the working poor*

It also recognised, however, that additional population groups may be at greater risk of poverty or social exclusion, namely:

- *persons with physical and/or mental health challenges*
- *persons experiencing violence and other forms of abuse*
- *asylum seekers and immigrants*
- *persons with addictive behaviour*
- *persons who lack life skills*
- *persons experiencing discrimination*

In line with the above four key target groups, the MEBDL focused on three household types involving children, parents, lone parents and the elderly. The other potentially vulnerable groups were not the focus of this MEBDL study, yet the researchers acknowledge the additional financial burden which may be incurred as a result of these groups' health, social and educational challenges.

4.2.1 SOCIAL BENEFITS RECIPIENTS

The key question which formed the basis for this study was *"What minimum budget is required to achieve an acceptable, decent standard of living in Malta for different types of households?"* Given that the minimum essential budgets established would be particularly relevant to low-income households an exercise was conducted to identify the income of households who were either receiving a National Minimum Wage (NMW), Guaranteed Minimum Pension or Widow's Pension plus relevant allowances/benefits, or households receiving Unemployment or Social Assistance and allowances/benefits based on their circumstances and lifestage of their

members. Scenarios where a household may be benefitting from the new In-Work Benefit or Tapering schemes were also considered (see Appendix R).

Table 24 shows that in households with two adults and two dependent children, where the income consists of one NMW and the In-Work Benefit or Unemployment/Social Assistance, as well as applicable allowances /benefits, the minimum essential budget per annum is not reached. For lone parent and two dependent children households, the minimum essential budget is also not reached when the household is a recipient of Unemployment/Social Assistance and applicable allowances /benefits.

Table 24. Minimum Essential Budget For A Decent Living And Households With Dependent Children Receiving The National Minimum Wage Or Social/Unemployment Assistance

	MEBDL Yearly Budget €	Family receiving one National Minimum Wage, In-Work Benefit and other Allowances/ Benefits €	Family receiving one National Minimum Wage, Tapering of Benefits and other Allowances/ Benefits €	Family receiving Social/ Unemployment Assistance and other Allowances/ Benefits €	Family receiving Widow's Pension and other Allowances/ Benefits €
2 Adults & 2 Children	11,445.99	9,353.24	13,524.68	7,462.52	/
Lone Parent & 2 Children	9,197.37	11,649.56	13,249.08	6,965.40	10,403.64

For households comprising elderly couples over 65 years old who receive a Guaranteed Minimum Pension, Table 25 shows that the minimum essential budget for a decent living is achieved. However, it may be argued that the described minimum basket does not allow for adequate social participation, such as through private transport for greater mobility, a budget for participation in paid cultural activities, social outings or even weekend breaks or trips, and possibility for buying of gifts for relatives or grandchildren. It also does not consider additional expenses which might be pertinent to this lifestage,

such as warmer clothing (e.g. thermal underwear with long sleeves and legs), an additional portable heater if the elderly couple are using separate rooms for a while, walking aids, upgrading of home security and ordinary and extraordinary medical specialist consultations (e.g. podologist for nail cutting, dermatologist for recurring skin problems, treatment for fractures), and subscriptions to magazines and newspapers considering the elderly often have more time on their hands to make good use of these sources of lifelong learning.

Table 25. Minimum Essential Budget For A Decent Living And Households Comprising Individuals Receiving The Guaranteed Minimum Pension

	MEBDL Yearly	Couple receiving one Guaranteed Minimum Pension and other Allowances/ Benefits €	Couple receiving two Guaranteed Minimum Pensions and other Allowances/ Benefits €
Elderly Couple (65+)	6,526.72	8,807.24	16,221.92

4.2.2 GROUPS AT-RISK-OF-POVERTY

Based on the SILC 2014 (NSO, 2015c) the current Median National Equivalised Income (NEI) stands at €12,787. The 60% median NEI stands at €7,672 and the 40% median NEI stands at €5,155. The at-risk-of-poverty line is set at 60% median NEI. According to the ONPES 2014-15 report (ONPES, 2015), nobody should be expected to live on a budget below the 40% median NEI. Table 26 compares the estimated minimum budgets for the three household types with the 60% median NEI. The calculated MEBDL is lower than this 60% threshold for all the targeted household types, once again underlining the ‘minimum’ orientation of the basket.

Table 26. Minimum Essential Budget For A Decent Living Compared To The At-Risk-Of-Poverty Thresholds For Different Household Types

	MEBDL Yearly Budget €	60% median NEI (SILC 2014) €
2 Adults & 2 Children	11,445.99	19,531.00
Lone Parent & 2 Children	9,197.37	(Not Available)
Elderly Couple (65+)	6,526.72	11,508.36

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The research team concludes that the difference in this study’s and the SILC-derived at-risk-of-poverty benchmarks is very likely related to the social transfers granted to low-income earners which have been factored into the minimum essential budgets, as well as due to the frugality of approach adopted when selecting the essential components for a decent living. Caritas strongly believes that such social transfers are key to combatting poverty and ensuring life with dignity.

4.3 CONCLUSIONS

The MEBDL does not purport to show how much a family should earn, but rather it seeks to describe a basic minimum standard of living, below which it should be unacceptable for anyone to have to live. The cost of eight categories of essential items was estimated for three different household types.

The research has shown that households with dependent children subsisting on one NMW, or on Unemployment/Social Assistance and applicable benefits/allowances do not have an adequate income in relation to the established researched minimum essential baskets.

The minimum orientation should be kept in mind when these results are being interpreted; as should the fact that several other goods and services may have been specified as essential if a

broader definition of social participation had been applied. One must also not forget that the various types of available social financial assistance have been considered when calculating the costs and this must be factored in when interpreting the meaning behind the minimum essential budgets.

Special attention needs to be given to housing costs. Although the basket includes the cost of rental for social housing, one cannot ignore the fact that several households may be residing in commercially rented dwellings where the monthly rent expense is considerably higher. When the augmented MEBDL was computed, a very conservative rental rate of €300 per month was considered. In reality, the commercial rents are constantly increasing fairly unchecked. Some families may also be paying back a house loan on a monthly basis, whilst others may own their home but pay an annual insurance for house buildings and contents. The latter was expressed as a need by elderly people consulted.

In reaching conclusions and making recommendations, the research team never lost sight of the undisputed fact that, without economic sustainability, efforts to enhance social conditions would not be effective; but rather might even turn out counter-productive in the longer term. With a take-home pay (inclusive of statutory bonuses and after deducting social security contributions) of a full-time employee on a minimum wage amounting to €8,375.44 per annum in 2016, there already exists a disincentive to seek employment as things now stand. Maximum social assistance for the unemployed is lower than the minimum wage level, but not substantially so.

Incentives to encourage people to seek employment whilst still retaining some form of financial assistance, such as the In-Work Benefit and the Tapering Scheme, are a step in the right direction. Incentives such as the free childcare scheme for parents/guardians in employment or education are equally beneficial and should increase the number of females who join the labour market.

As concluded for the MBDL, based on the MEBDL minimum essential budgets and the above considerations, there appears to be yet again an economic case for a gradual slight increase in the statutory minimum wage (in addition to Cost of Living Adjustment [COLA]). This will result in a higher income for the more deserving, whilst also enhancing spending power in the local economy (as purchasing by low income earners is generally of local goods and services). It should also decrease reliance on imported labour which in itself is positive for social and economic development. Another outcome would be to reduce the gap between the MBDL and the NMW. In the long run, increasing the NMW is more economically efficient than increasing income via social financial assistance. The ultimate goal of the upping of the NMW would be to lower the number of those in-work who are at-risk-of-poverty. According to SILC 2014 (NSO 2015e), Malta's in-work-at-risk-of-poverty rate was at 5.9 percent in 2013 and 5.7 percent in 2014.

The current concept of a statutory minimum wage still reflects the social concept of decency prevailing in 1971. Over the years, it has only been augmented by the COLA. In other words, the various lifestyle components which translated to a decent living in 1971 have never been revised in order to take into account what these lifestyle components would be in the second decade of the 21st Century – over 45 years later.

The research team does not believe that if a reasonable increase in the NMW is legislated this would cause any appreciable escalation to Malta's overall level of wages, especially if the government decrees illegal any wage increase demands based solely on relativity with the statutory minimum wage. This prohibition, which should exclude claims from pensioners, could persist for, say, a period of 3 years, unless eventually extended.

Increasing the NMW as recommended should not interfere with the currently-used formula for calculating the adjustment for cost of living. More importantly, it should not encounter objections from those advocating linking COLA with productivity, since no productivity-sensitive employer pays any wages at near-minimum levels.

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Money has to serve, not to rule.

POPE FRANCIS

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Where we suggest this should go...

Chapter five • •

This Minimum Essential Budget for a Decent Living (MEBDL) is being presented to stimulate further national discussion with the goal of encouraging policy makers to establish an adequate minimum income which will ensure a decent standard of living for ALL citizens. The report is not an end in itself, but a spur for action; also to help identify further research required on potential social, economic, employment and educational strategies for reducing poverty. (European Commission, 2013)

5.1 POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

The following policy recommendations are being put forward:

- 1. Adopt the three Minimum Essential Budgets as benchmarks to define an adequate minimum income for households whose income is below the minimum essential budget. The Minimum Essential Budgets should guide social security policies to determine adequacy of minimum income.*
- 2. Give further consideration to the particular circumstances of those who legitimately cannot work. Whilst acknowledging the value of the various incentives to encourage individuals to seek employment, the reality is that some individuals will not be able to participate in the labour market, not because of a lack of desire to do so, but because they are faced with several issues that genuinely put them in this challenging position. These individuals deserve to have an adequate level of income that would at least enable them to afford to buy the goods and services for a decent living. This may require strengthening the social security*

benefits for people who earn less than the Minimum Essential Budget for their household type.

3. *Uplift the statutory minimum wage slightly, but annually, for a period of three years. This increase would be in addition to the COLA. The importance of avoiding disempowering social assistance is key to this recommendation. As such, this measure requires further exploration of the difference between the income of households receiving the NMW plus relevant allowances/benefits and that of households receiving Social or Unemployment Assistance and allowances/benefits based on their circumstances and lifestage of their members. Different household types beyond the three targeted in the MEBDL study need to be considered.*
4. *Ensure that entitlement to free medication through the public health system under the Social Security Act Cap 318 Article 23 and the Fifth Schedule of the same Act is reviewed regularly to reflect a just and accessible system within a sustainable health care system. Due to the expected increase in longevity, consider adding certain medications or supplements which may be required by the older elderly, such as supplements for osteoporosis.*
5. *Address with urgency the financial situation of low-income households who are renting private dwellings and not benefitting from any subsidies, particularly lone parent families.*
6. *Develop further assistance, structures and incentives for facilitating access to healthier, fresh food by low-income households, and accompany this by appropriate, practical nutrition education. One can consider:*
 - *Extending the FEAD scheme to include a complementary scheme incorporating regular provision of fresh vegetables and fruit;*
 - *Providing smart cards which can only be used to purchase vegetables and fruit;*
 - *Setting up subsidised vegetable and fruit weekly delivery schemes for the elderly (similar to the Meals on Wheels);*
 - *Organising community urban agriculture schemes where families are supported to grow their own food for personal consumption or for sale to local farmers.*

This is also in line with the Food and Nutrition Policy and Action Plan for Malta 2015–2020 (Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Department, 2014) which recommends that feasibility studies are carried out on fiscal/price policies in order to create a framework of incentives to ensure affordability and accessibility of healthy food for all the Maltese population.

7. *Extend free or subsidised provision for facilitating independent living, healthy ageing and lifelong learning for the different cohorts within the elderly population who have a low income or who face unexpected long-term financial burdens. Given the national priority for the promotion of active ageing, one could consider fiscal, in kind or other measures for:*
 - *Facilitating holistic health of the elderly of different age groups, including assistance for home improvements for mobility, safety and security, as well as for house and home insurance policies and management of different health conditions;*
 - *Facilitating participation in society through enhanced access to lifelong learning and cultural opportunities, and transport schemes such as car pooling;*
 - *Fostering a culture of an enterprising spirit: the elderly can be nurtured to develop their creative ideas into concrete business proposals and so be encouraged and assisted to continue to be financially productive beyond retirement age.*

Due to the projected increase in longevity, which brings with it multiple additional expenses for health care and other goods or services related to wellbeing, it is essential that the elderly have an adequate income to cover these lifestage related costs.

8. *Strengthen long-term investment in community level education and participatory initiatives promoting more sustainable consumption patterns and lifestyles for the Maltese and Gozitan families, including a focus on practising responsible use of income, food, water, energy as well as waste reduction, reusing and recycling. In addition, develop further awareness-raising and education for the elderly on prevention of health problems and on self care.*
9. *Ensure that entitlement to Education for Sustainable Development and related school subjects, such as Home Economics, are implemented comprehensively from the Early Years, to nurture the right attitudes and skills from a young age towards becoming responsible citizens who make informed decisions and take action to promote and safeguard personal, family and community wellbeing.*
10. *Establish financial and other assistance, structures and incentives to support social innovation initiatives which aim to reduce poverty and improve social inclusion. Assist and promote good practice initiatives by individual entities or alliances which focus on social innovation that contributes directly or indirectly to improvement of wellbeing, exercise of human rights and life in dignity. (EAPN, 2016b)*

5.2 RESEARCH RECOMMENDATIONS

The following suggestions for further research are being presented:

1. *Conduct studies to build a stronger consensus on understanding of adequacy when it comes to determining the minimum level of income Maltese and Gozitan people need to live in dignity. Ideally, individuals from different economic strata of society participate in the process of defining adequacy and the income level set must enable people to participate fully in society in order to realise their own goals..*
2. *Compare and contrast the Minimum Essential Budgets in their entirety with the actual consumption patterns of the three household types in Malta and Gozo. This research will offer further evidence on the sustainability or otherwise of current family expenditure and areas for improvement or intervention.*
3. *Compare the weightings of each component of the MEBDL basket with one or more of the following:*
 - *Weightings of categories based on an actual survey on consumption/expenditure among the target populations;*
 - *Weightings of categories based on the latest Household Budgetary Survey results for the low income quartiles;*
 - *Weightings of categories based on the latest Household Budgetary Survey results for all income quartiles.*

4. *Consider introducing a rolling Household Budgetary Survey to capture new products and services on the market, so that the weights of different components are adjusted.*
5. *Set up a National Research Institute on Poverty to further focused local research on poverty and:*
 - *Carry out longitudinal studies on the socio-economic profile of each census enumerated area;*
 - *Monitor regularly the relationship between welfare beneficiaries and poverty;*
 - *Identify the extent of the relationship between the cluster of poverty, crime and social indicators.*

In conclusion, establishing the minimum standards necessary to ensure the needs for living a decent life poses some challenges. Understandably, there may be misalignment between objectivity as seen by experts and researchers and the reality of real-life experiences of different households. In general, however, the exercise to establish the minimum essential baskets and budgets should be seen as a positive one. A budget standard which is used alongside the current convention for measuring the risk of poverty and social exclusion threshold is potentially a very powerful tool, offering opportunities to compare, improve, and deepen analysis of poverty, and to help further pave the way to ensure sustainable lifestyles and human dignity for all.

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Appendices ••

APPENDIX A PART 1 – SPECIMEN 7-DAY FOOD COST & MENUS

COST OF SPECIMEN 7-DAY FOOD MENUS¹

	2 Adults & 2 Children	Lone Parent & 2 Children	Elderly Couple (65+)
	€	€	€
Monday	18.63	13.86	7.79
Tuesday	22.33	17.48	10.83
Wednesday	16.28	12.57	6.45
Thursday	17.73	13.18	9.53
Friday	15.59	11.83	8.94
Saturday	16.02	12.28	8.55
Sunday	18.40	12.89	8.10
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Total for a Week²	€ 124.98	€ 94.08	€ 60.20

Prices as at November 2015

¹ As per recommended guidelines by the World Health Organisation and the Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Directorate.

² This is the total per week without the FEAD deduction.

2 Adults & 2 Children

	Breakfast	Mid-Morning Snack	Lunch	Mid-Afternoon Snack	Evening Meal
Monday - Adult	2 x 40g wholegrain cereal with 2 x 125ml skimmed milk, 2 x 1 banana, 2 x cup of tea/coffee with 35ml skimmed milk	2 x 4 small wholegrain galletti, 1/4 gbejna niexfa, 2 x 1 apple, 2 x cup of tea/coffee with 35ml skimmed milk	2 x 2 large slices maltese bread with 2 x 1 tomato, 2 x 1 small tin tuna in oil, 2 x 2 lettuce leaves, 2 x 6 cucumber sticks (approx 1/2 med. cucumber or 80g), 2 x 1 light yoghurt, 2 x 1/2 small bottle water	2 x 1 qaghqa tal-hmira, 2 x cup of tea/coffee with 35ml skimmed milk	2 x 4 home-made chicken nuggets (2 x 80g chicken breasts, 2 x 50g home-made breadcrumbs, 2 x 1/2 egg), 2 x 1 cup (80g) broccoli, 2 x 1 cup (80g) carrots, 2 x med. baked potato, 2 x 2 tsp olive oil, 2 x 1 slice wholemeal bread, 2 x fruit in season, 2 x filtered tap water with 2 x 1/2 lemon sliced
Monday - Children	2 x 40g wholegrain cereal with 2 x 125ml skimmed milk, 2 x 1/2 banana, 2 x 1 freshly squeezed orange	2 x 1 large slice maltese bread with 2 x 1/2 tomato, 2 x 1/2 small tin tuna in oil, 2 x 1 lettuce leaf, 2 x 1 apple, 2 x 1/2 small bottle water	2 x 1 large slice maltese bread with 2 x 1/2 tomato, 2 x 1/2 small tin tuna in oil, 2 x 1 lettuce leaf, 2 x 3 cucumber sticks (approx 1/4 med. cucumber or 40g), 2 x 1 small tub yoghurt, 2 x 1/2 small bottle water	2 x 1 med. slice pizza with mushroom, tomato and cheese (1/4 dinner plate size bought or home-made thick pizza base with 1/2 tomato, 40g mushroom, 20g skimmed mozzarella cheese), 2 x 250ml milk	2 x 4 home-made chicken nuggets (2 x 80g chicken breasts, 2 x 50g home-made breadcrumbs, 2 x 1/2 egg), 2 x 1/2 cup (40g) broccoli, 2 x 1/2 cup (40g) carrots, 2 x 1/2 med. baked potato, 2 x 2 tsp olive oil, 2 x fruit in season, 2 x filtered tap water with 2 x 1/2 lemon sliced
Tuesday - Adult	2 x 1 slice toasted wholemeal bread with 2 x 50g low fat cheese spread, 2 x 250 ml 100% grapefruit juice, 2 x cup tea/coffee with 35ml skimmed milk	2 x 1 banana, 2 x 2 tbsp almonds, 2 x cup tea/coffee with 35ml skimmed milk	2 x 2 wholemeal buns, 2 x 2 slices lean ham, 2 x 1/2 cup (40g) beans, 2 x 1 cup coleslaw (1/2 small carrot grated plus 1tbsp chopped cabbage), 2 x pkt 100% orange juice	2 x 2 biscuttelli, 2 x cup tea/coffee with 35ml skimmed milk	2 x 100g tortellini, 2 x 1 cup (80g) tomato sauce, 2 x 1 cup (80g) mushrooms, 2 x 1 cup (80g) diced seasonal vegetables, 2 x 2 tbsp grated gbejna niexfa, 2 x 2 tsp olive oil, 2 x filtered tap water with 2 x 1/2 lemon sliced

Tuesday - Children

Breakfast	Mid-Morning Snack	Lunch	Mid-Afternoon Snack	Evening Meal
2 x 2 weetabix with 2 x 125ml skimmed milk, 2 x 1 freshly squeezed orange	2 x 1 wholemeal bun, 2 x 1 slice lean ham, 2 x 2 cherry tomatoes, 2 x 125ml 100% apple juice diluted with filtered tap water	2 x 1 wholemeal bun, 2 x 1 slice lean ham, 2 x 1 cup coleslaw (1/2 small carrot grated plus 1tbsp chopped cabbage), 2 x 1tbsp almonds, 2 x 1 small tub yoghurt, 2 x 1/2 small bottle water	2 x 1 med. tuna and spinach pasty (80g pastry, 80g tinned tuna, 40g spinach), 2 x 1 lettuce leaf, 2 x filtered tap water	2 x 75g tortellini, 2 x 1 cup (80g) tomato sauce, 2 x 1 cup (80g) mushrooms, 2 x 1 cup (80g) diced seasonal vegetables, 2 x 2 tbsp grated gbejna niexfa, 2 x 2 tsp olive oil, 2 x filtered tap water with 2 x 1/2 lemon sliced

Wednesday - Adult

2 x 40g wholegrain cereal with 2 x 125ml skimmed milk, 2 x 1 banana, 2 x cup tea/coffee with 35ml skimmed milk	2 x 8 small wholegrain galletti, 2 x 2 tbsp bigilla, 2 x 2 cherry tomatoes, 2 x 1/2 small bottle water	2 x pasta salad (2 x 100g wholegrain pasta, 2 x 100g chopped chicken, 2 x 4 cherry tomatoes, 2 x 2 tablespoons chopped yellow and green peppers, 2 tablespoons low fat mayonnaise), 2 x 1/2 small bottle water	2 x 1 qaghqa tal-hmira, 2 x cup tea/coffee with 35ml skimmed milk	2 x 1 med. slice (1/4 dinner plate) ricotta and pea pie (incl 80-100g shortcrust pastry, 80g ricotta, 40g frozen peas, 1/2 egg) with 2 x 1 cup (80g) green leafy salad and 2 x 1 cup (80g) steamed carrots, 2 x fruit in season, 2 x filtered tap water with 2 x 1/2 lemon sliced
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Wednesday - Children

2 x 40g wholegrain cereal with 2 x 125ml skimmed milk, 2 x 1/2 banana, 2 x 1 freshly squeezed orange	2 x 4 small wholegrain galletti, 2 x 1 tbsp bigilla, 2 x 2 cherry tomatoes, 2 x 1/2 small bottle water	2 x pasta salad (2 x 50g wholegrain pasta, 2 x 50g chopped chicken, 2 x 4 cherry tomatoes, 2 x 2 tablespoons chopped yellow and green peppers, 2 tablespoons low fat mayonnaise), 2 x 1/2 small bottle water	2 x toasted egg sandwich (2 x 1/2 hard-boiled egg, 2 x 1 slice toasted wholemeal bread), 2 x cup drinking chocolate with 35ml skimmed milk	2 x 1 med. slice (1/4 dinner plate) ricotta and pea pie (incl 80-100g shortcrust pastry, 80g ricotta, 40g frozen peas, 1/2 egg) with 2 x 1 cup (80g) green leafy salad and 2 x 1/2 cup (40g) steamed carrots, 2 x fruit in season, 2 x filtered tap water with 2 x 1/2 lemon sliced
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Thursday - Adult

Breakfast	Mid-Morning Snack	Lunch	Mid-Afternoon Snack	Evening Meal
2 x 40g wholegrain cereal with 2 x 1 tablespoon dried fruit and 2 x 125ml skimmed milk, 2 x cup tea/coffee with 35ml skimmed milk	2 x 2 tbsp dried chick peas, 2 x 1 apple, 2 x cup tea/coffee with 35ml skimmed milk	2 x 2 wholemeal buns, 2 x 2 slices lean turkey, 2 x 1/2 cup (40g) broad beans, 2 x 3 (40g) carrot sticks and 2 x 3 (40g) cucumber sticks, 2 x 2 tbsps mixed almonds and raisins, 2 x pkt 100% orange juice	2 x 1 tub fruit yoghurt, 2 x 1 qaghqa tal-hmira, 2 x cup tea/coffee with 35ml skimmed milk	2 x med. bowl minestra (1 small potato, 1 tbsp pumpkin, 1/2 tbsp onion, 1 small tomato, 1 tbsp turnip, stalk celery, pasta), 2 x 1 slice toasted wholemeal bread with 2 x 25g peppered gbejna or cheese, 2 x fruit in season, 2 x filtered tap water with 2 x 1/2 lemon sliced

Thursday - Children

2 x 40g wholegrain cereal with 2 x 1 tablespoon dried fruit & 2 x 125ml skimmed milk, 2 x 1/2 banana, 2 x 1 freshly squeezed orange	2 x 1 wholemeal bun, 2 x 1 slice lean turkey, 2 x 2 cherry tomatoes, 2 x 1 tbsp dried chick peas, 2 x 1/2 small bottle water	2 x 1 wholemeal bun, 2 x 1 slice lean turkey, 2 x 1/2 cup broad beans, 2 x 1 cup carrot and cucumber sticks, 2 x 2 tbsps mixed almonds and raisins, 2 x 125ml 100% apple juice diluted with filtered tap water	2 x 1 toasted qaghqa tal-hmira with 2 x 1 tbsp mashed ricotta, 2 x 1 tub fruit yoghurt, 2 x filtered tap water	2 x med. bowl minestra (1 small potato, 1 tbsp pumpkin, 1/2 tbsp onion, 1 small tomato, 1 tbsp turnip, stalk celery, pasta), 2 x 250ml glass skimmed milk
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Friday - Adult

2 x 2 slices toasted wholegrain bread with 2 x 1 tsp low fat spread, 2 x 250ml 100% grapefruit juice, 2 x cup tea/coffee with 35ml skimmed milk	2 x 1/2 fira with 2 x 1 tomato and 2 x 2 tbsps ricotta and 2 x 1 lettuce leaf, 2 x 1/2 small bottle water	2 x 1/2 fira with 2 x 1 tomato and 2 x 2 tbsps ricotta and 2 x 1 lettuce leaf and 2 x 1 tablespoon butter beans, 2 x cup (80g) mixed fruit salad (fruit in season - melon, peach, grapes), 2 x 1/2 small bottle water	2 x 2 biskuttini with nuts, 2 x cup tea/coffee with 35ml skimmed milk	2 x 2 (75g) fillets fresh or frozen fish, 2 x 2 small (80g) grilled zucchini, 2 x 2 slices (80g) grilled eggplant, 2 x 2 tablespoons (80g) mashed potatoes, 2 x 1 slice wholemeal bread, 2 x 1 apple, 2 x filtered tap water with 2 x 1/2 lemon sliced
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Friday - Children

Breakfast	Mid-Morning Snack	Lunch	Mid-Afternoon Snack	Evening Meal
2 x 2 weetabix with 2 x 125ml skimmed milk, 2 x 1 freshly squeezed orange	2 x 1/2 ftira with 2 x 1 tomato and 2 x 2 tbsps ricotta and 2 x 1 lettuce leaf, 2 x 1/2 small bottle water	2 x 1/2 ftira with 2 x 1 tomato and 2 x 2 tbsps ricotta and 2 x 1 lettuce leaf and 2 x 1 tablespoon butter beans, 2 x cup (80g) mixed fruit salad (fruit in season - melon, peach, grapes), 2 x 1/2 small bottle water	2 x 1 med. slice pizza with mushroom, corn, cheese (1/4 dinner plate size bought or home-made thick pizza base with 40g mushroom, 40g frozen corn, 20g skimmed mozzarella cheese), 2 x filtered tap water	2 x 2 (75g) fillets fresh or frozen fish, 2 x 1 small (40g) grilled zucchini, 2 x 1 slice (40g) grilled eggplant, 2 x 1 tabelspoon (40g) mashed potatoes, 2 x 1/2 apple, 2 x filtered tap water with 2 x 1/2 lemon sliced

Saturday - Adult

2 x 2 slices toasted wholemeal bread, 2 x 1 tbsp jam, 2 x 1 freshly squeezed orange, 2 x cup tea/coffee with 35ml skimmed milk	2 x 2 wholegrain biscuits, 2 x cup tea/coffee with 35ml skimmed milk	2 x 1 omelette (2 x 2 eggs, 2 x 1 slice lean ham, 2 x 1 tbsp onion, 2 x 1 tbsp red pepper, 2 x 50g ricotta), 2 x lettuce leaves, 2 x filtered tap water	2 x glass fruit smoothie (2 x 1 banana, or 2 x 5 large strawberries, or 2 x 1 peach, plus 125ml milk and ice cubes)	2 x large (size of dinner plate) home-made pizza with 2 x 1/2 large tin tuna, 2 x 1 tomato, 2 x 1 tbsp peas, 2 x 1/2 tin mushrooms, 2 x 1/2 onion, 2 x 1 tbsp grated low fat mozzarella, basil; 2 x 1 scoop low fat ice-cream with 2 x 2 tbsp fruit, 2 x filtered tap water with 2 x 1/2 lemon sliced, 2 x 1 glass wine
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Saturday - Children

2 x 1 slice toasted wholemeal bread, 2 x 1 tbsp jam, 1 freshly squeezed orange	2 x 2 wholegrain biscuits, 2 x 250 ml glasses skimmed milk	2 x 1 omelette (2 x 2 eggs, 2 x 1 slice lean ham, 2 x 1 tbsp onion, 2 x 1 tbsp red pepper, 2 x 50g ricotta), 2 x leaves lettuce, 2 x filtered tap water	2 x glass fruit smoothie (2 x 1 banana, or 2 x 5 large strawberries, or 2 x 1 peach, plus 150ml milk and ice cubes)	2 x med. (size of side plate) home-made pizza with 2 x 1/4 large tin tuna, 2 x 1 tomato, 2 x 1 tbsp peas, 2 x 1/4 tin mushrooms, 2 x 1/4 onion, 2 x 1/2 tbsp low fat mozzarella, basil; 2 x 1 scoop low fat ice-cream with 2 x 1 tbsp fruit, 2 x filtered tap water with 2 x 1/2 lemon sliced
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	Breakfast	Mid-Morning Snack	Lunch	Mid-Afternoon Snack	Evening Meal
Sunday - Adult	2 x 40g wholegrain cereal with 2 x 1/2 banana and 2 x 125ml skimmed milk, 2 x cup tea/coffee with 35ml skimmed milk	2 x 1 wholegrain sponge, 2 x cup tea/coffee with 35ml skimmed milk	2 x patata l-form (2 x 100g beef, 2 x 1 large potato, 2 x 1 large onion, 2 x 1 tomato, 2 x 1 tbsp wine, 2 x 1 tsp buzbiez), 2 x 1 large slice maltese bread, 2 x fruit in season, 2 x filtered tap water, 2 x 1 glass red wine	2 x 1 kannol tal-irkotta (with chopped nuts), 2 x cup tea/coffee with 35ml skimmed milk	2 x lentil soup (2 x 80g lentils, 2 x 1/2 small onion, 2 x 1 tomato, 2 x 1/2 carrot, 2 x 1 tsp garlic, 2 x 1 tsp olive oil, 2 x 1/2 carton plain yoghurt, 2 x 1/4 tsp basil, 2 x 1/4 tsp oregano), 2 x 2 slices toasted wholemeal bread, 2 x fruit in season, 2 x filtered tap water, 2 x 1 glass wine
Sunday - Children	2 x 40g wholegrain cereal with 2 x 1/2 banana and 2 x 125ml skimmed milk, 2 x 1 freshly squeezed orange	2 x 1 wholegrain sponge, 2 x 250ml glasses skimmed milk	2 x patata l-form (2 x 80g beef, 2 x 1/2 large potato, 2 x 1/4 large onion, 2 x 1 tomato, 2 x 1 tbsp wine, 2 x 1 tsp buzbiez), 2 x 1 small slice maltese bread, 2 x fruit in season, 2 x filtered tap water	2 x 1 kannol tal-irkotta (with chopped nuts), 2 x cup tea with 35ml skimmed milk	2 x lentil soup (2 x 80g lentils, 2 x 1/2 small onion, 2 x 1 tomato, 2 x 1/2 carrot, 2 x 1 tsp garlic, 2 x 1 tsp olive oil, 2 x 1/2 carton plain yoghurt, 2 x 1/4 tsp basil, 2 x 1/4 tsp oregano), 2 x 1 slice toasted wholemeal bread, 2 x fruit in season, 2 x filtered tap water with 2 x 1/2 lemon sliced

NB: It is assumed that children will also avail themselves of free school milk on weekdays.

Lone Parent & 2 children

	Breakfast	Mid-Morning Snack	Lunch	Mid-Afternoon Snack	Evening Meal
Monday - Adult	1 x 40g wholegrain cereal with 125ml skimmed milk, 1 banana, 1 cup tea/coffee with 35ml skimmed milk	4 small wholegrain galletti, 1/4 gbejna niexfa, 1 apple, 1 cup tea/coffee with 35ml skimmed milk	2 large slices maltese bread with 1 tomato, 1 small tin tuna in oil, 2 lettuce leaves, 6 cucumber sticks (approx 1/2 med. cucumber or 80g), 1 light yoghurt, 1/2 small bottle water	1 qaghqa tal-hmira, 1 cup tea/coffee with 35ml skimmed milk	4 home-made chicken nuggets (80g chicken breasts, 50g home-made bread-crumbs, 1/2 egg), 1 cup (80g) broccoli, 1 cup (80g) carrots, baked med. potato, 2 tsp olive oil, 1 slice wholemeal bread, fruit in season, filtered tap water with 2 x 1/2 lemon sliced
Monday - Children	2 x 40g wholegrain cereal with 2 x 125ml skimmed milk, 2 x 1/2 banana, 2 x 1 freshly squeezed orange	2 x 1 large slice maltese bread with 2 x 1/2 tomato, 2 x 1/2 small tin tuna in oil, 2 x 1 lettuce leaf, 2 x 1 apple, 2 x 1/2 small bottle water	2 x 1 large slice maltese bread with 2 x 1/2 tomato, 2 x 1/2 small tin tuna in oil, 2 x 1 lettuce leaf, 2 x 3 cucumber sticks (approx 1/4 med. cucumber or 40g), 2 x 1 small tub yoghurt, 2 x 1/2 small bottle water	2 x 1 med. slice pizza with mushroom, tomato and cheese (1/4 dinner plate size bought or home-made thick pizza base with 1/2 tomato, 40g mushroom, 20g skimmed mozzarella cheese), 2 x 250ml milk	2 x 4 home-made chicken nuggets (2 x 80g chicken breasts, 2 x 50g home-made breadcrumbs, 2 x 1/2 egg), 2 x 1/2 cup (40g) broccoli, 2 x 1/2 cup (40g) carrots, 2 x 1/2 med. baked potato, 2 x 2 tsp olive oil, 2 x fruit in season, 2 x filtered tap water with 2 x 1/2 lemon sliced
Tuesday - Adult	1 slice toasted wholemeal bread with 50g low fat cheese spread, 250 ml 100% grapefruit juice, 1 cup tea/coffee with 35ml skimmed milk	1 banana, 2 tbsp almonds, 1 cup tea/coffee with 35ml skimmed milk	2 med. wholemeal buns, 2 slices lean ham, 1/2 cup beans, 1 cup coleslaw (1/2 small carrot grated plus 1tbsp chopped cabbage), 1 pkt 100% orange juice	2 biskuttelli, 1 cup tea/coffee with 35ml skimmed milk	2 x 100g tortellini, 2 x 1 cup (80g) tomato sauce, 2 x 1 cup (80g) mushrooms, 2 x 1 cup (80g) diced seasonal vegetables, 2 x 2 tbsp grated gbejna niexfa, 2 x 2 tsp olive oil, 2 x filtered tap water with 2 x 1/2 lemon sliced

Tuesday - Children

Breakfast	Mid-Morning Snack	Lunch	Mid-Afternoon Snack	Evening Meal
2 x 2 weetabix with 2 x 125ml skimmed milk, 2 x 1 freshly squeezed orange	2 x 1 wholemeal bun, 2 x 1 slice lean ham, 2 x 2 cherry tomatoes, 2 x 125ml 100% apple juice diluted with filtered tap water	2 x 1 wholemeal bun, 2 x 1 slice lean ham, 2 x 1 cup coleslaw (1/2 small carrot grated plus 1tbsp chopped cabbage), 2 x 1tbsp almonds, 2 x 1 small tub yoghurt, 2 x 1/2 small bottle water	2 x 1 med. tuna and spinach pasty (80g pastry, 80g tinned tuna, 40g spinach), 2 x 1 lettuce leaf, 2 x filtered tap water	2 x 75g tortellini, 2 x 1 cup (80g) tomato sauce, 2 x 1 cup (80g) mushrooms, 2 x 1 cup (80g) diced seasonal vegetables, 2 x 2 tbsp grated gbejna niexfa, 2 x 2 tsp olive oil, 2 x filtered tap water with 2 x 1/2 lemon sliced

Wednesday - Adult

40g wholegrain cereal with 125ml skimmed milk, 1 banana, 1 cup tea/coffee with 35ml skimmed milk	8 small wholegrain galletti, 2 tbsp bigilla, 2 cherry tomatoes, 1/2 small bottle water	Pasta salad (100g wholegrain pasta, 100g chopped chicken, 4 cherry tomatoes, 2 tablespoons chopped yellow and green peppers, 2 tablespoons low fat mayonnaise), 1/2 small bottle water	1 qaghqa tal-hmira, 1 cup tea/coffee with 35ml skimmed milk	1 med. slice (1/4 dinner plate) ricotta and pea pie (incl 80-100g shortcrust pastry, 80g ricotta, 40g frozen peas, 1/2 egg) with 1 cup (80g) green leafy salad and 1 cup (80g) steamed carrots, fruit in season, filtered tap water with 1/2 lemon sliced
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Wednesday - Children

2x40g wholegrain cereal with 2 x 125ml skimmed milk, 2 x 1/2 banana, 2 x 1 freshly squeezed orange	2 x 4 small wholegrain galletti, 2 x 1 tbsp bigilla, 2 x 2 cherry tomatoes, 2 x 1/2 small bottle water	2 x pasta salad (2 x 50g wholegrain pasta, 2 x 50g chopped chicken, 2 x 4 cherry tomatoes, 2 x 2 tablespoons chopped yellow and green peppers, 2 tablespoons low fat mayonnaise), 2 x 1/2 small bottle water	2 x toasted egg sandwich (2 x 1/2 hard-boiled egg, 2 x 1 slice toasted wholemeal bread), 2 x cup drinking chocolate with 35ml skimmed milk	2 x 1 med. slice (1/4 dinner plate) ricotta and pea pie (incl 80-100g shortcrust pastry, 80g ricotta, 40g frozen peas, 1/2 egg) with 2 x 1 cup (80g) green leafy salad and 2 x 1/2 cup (40g) steamed carrots, 2 x fruit in season, 2 x filtered tap water with 2 x 1/2 lemon sliced
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	Breakfast	Mid-Morning Snack	Lunch	Mid-Afternoon Snack	Evening Meal
Thursday - Adult	40g wholegrain cereal with 1 tablespoon dried fruit and 125ml skimmed milk, 1 cup tea/coffee with 35ml skimmed milk	2 tbsp dried chick peas, 1 apple, 1 cup tea/coffee with 35ml skimmed milk	2 wholemeal buns, 2 slices lean turkey, 1/2 cup (40g) broad beans, 3 (40g) carrot sticks and 3 (40g) cucumber sticks, 2 tbsps mixed almonds and raisins, 1 pkt 100% orange juice	1 tub fruit yoghurt, 1 qagha tal-hmira, 1 cup tea/coffee with 35ml skimmed milk	1 med. bowl minestra (1 small potato, 1 tbsp pumpkin, 1/2 tbsp onion, 1 small tomato, 1 tbsp turnip, stalk celery, pasta), 1 slice toasted wholemeal bread with 25g peppered gbejna or cheese, 1 fruit in season, filtered tap water with 1/2 lemon sliced
Thursday - Children	2 x 40g wholegrain cereal with 2 x 1 tablespoon dried fruit & 2 x 125ml skimmed milk, 2 x 1/2 banana, 2 x 1 freshly squeezed orange	2 x 1 wholemeal bun, 2 x 1 slice lean turkey, 2 x 2 cherry tomatoes, 2 x 1 tbsp dried chick peas, 2 x 1/2 small bottle water	2 x 1 wholemeal bun, 2 x 1 slice lean turkey, 2 x 1/2 cup broad beans, 2 x 1 cup carrot and cucumber sticks, 2 x 2 tbsps mixed almonds and raisins, 2 x 125ml 100% apple juice diluted with filtered tap water	2 x 1 toasted qagha tal-hmira with 2 x 1 tbsp mashed ricotta, 2 x 1 tub fruit yoghurt, 2 x filtered tap water	2 x med. bowl minestra (1 small potato, 1 tbsp pumpkin, 1/2 tbsp onion, 1 small tomato, 1 tbsp turnip, stalk celery, pasta), 2 x 250ml glass skimmed milk
Friday - Adult	2 slices toasted wholegrain bread with 1 tsp low fat spread, 250 ml 100% grapefruit juice, 1 cup tea/coffee with 35ml skimmed milk	1/2 ftira with 1 tomato and 2 tbsps ricotta and 1 lettuce leaf, 1/2 small bottle water	1/2 ftira with 1 tomato and 2 tbsps ricotta and 1 lettuce leaf and 1 tablespoon butter beans, 1 cup (80g) mixed fruit salad (fruit in season - melon, peach, grapes), 1/2 small bottle water	2 biskuttini with nuts, 1 cup of tea/coffee with 35ml skimmed milk	2 (75g) fillets fresh or frozen fish, 2 small (80g) grilled zucchini, 2 slices (80g) grilled eggplant, 2 tablespoons (80g) mashed potatoes, 1 slice wholemeal bread, 1 apple, filtered tap water with 1/2 lemon sliced

Friday - Children

Breakfast	Mid-Morning Snack	Lunch	Mid-Afternoon Snack	Evening Meal
2 x 2 weetabix with 2 x 125ml skimmed milk, 2 x 1 freshly squeezed orange	2 x 1/2 ftira with 2 x 1 tomato and 2 x 2 tbsps ricotta and 2 x 1 lettuce leaf, 2 x 1/2 small bottle water	2 x 1/2 ftira with 2 x 1 tomato and 2 x 2 tbsps ricotta and 2 x 1 lettuce leaf and 2 x 1 tablespoon butter beans, 2 x cup (80g) mixed fruit salad (fruit in season - melon, peach, grapes), 2 x 1/2 small bottle water	2 x 1 med. slice pizza with mushroom, corn, cheese (1/4 dinner plate size bought or home-made thick pizza base with 40g mushroom, 40g frozen corn, 20g skimmed mozzarella cheese), 2 x filtered tap water	2 x 2 (75g) fillets fresh or frozen fish, 2 x 1 small (40g) grilled zucchini, 2 x 1 slice (40g) grilled eggplant, 2 x 1 tablespoon (40g) mashed potatoes, 2 x 1/2 apple, 2 x filtered tap water with 2 x 1/2 lemon sliced

Saturday - Adult

2 slices toasted wholemeal bread, 1 tbsp jam, 1 freshly squeezed orange, 1 cup tea/coffee with 35ml skimmed milk	2 wholegrain biscuits, 1 cup tea/coffee with 35ml skimmed milk	1 omelette (2 eggs, 1 slice lean ham, 1 tbsp onion, 1 tbsp red pepper, 50g ricotta), 2 lettuce leaves, filtered tap water	1 glass fruit smoothie (1 banana, or 5 large strawberries, or 1 peach, plus 125ml milk and ice cubes)	1 large (size of dinner plate) home-made pizza with 1/2 large tin tuna, 1 tomato, 1 tbsp peas, 1/2 tin mushrooms, 1/2 onion, 1 tbsp grated low fat mozzarella, basil; 1 scoop low fat ice-cream with 2 tbsp fruit, filtered tap water with 1/2 lemon sliced, 1 glass wine
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Saturday - Children

2 x 1 slice toasted wholemeal bread, 2 x 1 tbsp jam, 1 freshly squeezed orange	2 x 2 wholegrain biscuits, 2 x 250 ml glasses skimmed milk	2 x 1 omelette (2 x 2 eggs, 2 x 1 slice lean ham, 2 x 1 tbsp onion, 2 x 1 tbsp red pepper, 2 x 50g ricotta), 2 x 2 leaves lettuce, 2 x filtered tap water	2 x glass fruit smoothie (2 x 1 banana, or 2 x 5 large strawberries, or 2 x 1 peach, plus 150ml milk and ice cubes)	2 x med. (size of side plate) home-made pizza with 2 x 1/4 large tin tuna, 2 x 1 tomato, 2 x 1 tbsp peas, 2 x 1/4 tin mushrooms, 2 x 1/4 onion, 2 x 1/2 tbsp low fat mozzarella, basil; 2 x 1 scoop low fat ice-cream with 2 x 1 tbsp fruit, 2 x filtered tap water with 2 x 1/2 lemon sliced
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	Breakfast	Mid-Morning Snack	Lunch	Mid-Afternoon Snack	Evening Meal
Sunday - Adult	40g wholegrain cereal with 1/2 banana and 125ml skimmed milk, 1 cup of tea/coffee with 35ml skimmed milk	1 wholegrain sponge, 1 cup of tea/coffee with 35ml skimmed milk	Patata l-form (100g beef, 1 large potato, 1 large onion, 1 tomato, 1 tbsp wine, 1 tsp buzbiez), 1 large slice maltese bread, 1 fruit in season, filtered tap water, 1 glass red wine	1 kannol tal-irkotta (with chopped nuts), 1 cup tea/coffee with 35ml skimmed milk	lentil soup (80g lentils, 1/2 small onion, 1 tomato, 1/2 carrot, 1 tsp garlic, 1 tsp olive oil, 1/2 carton plain yoghurt, 1/4 tsp basil, 1/4 tsp oregano), 2 slices toasted wholemeal bread, 1 fruit in season, filtered tap water, 1 glass wine
Sunday - Children	2 x 40g wholegrain cereal with 2 x 1/2 banana and 2 x 125ml skimmed milk, 2 x 1 freshly squeezed orange	2 x 1 wholegrain sponge, 2 x 250ml glasses skimmed milk	2 x patata l-form (2 x 80g beef, 2 x 1/2 large potato, 2 x 1/4 large onion, 2 x 1 tomato, 2 x 1 tbsp wine, 2 x 1 tsp buzbiez), 2 x 1 small slice maltese bread, 2 x fruit in season, 2 x filtered tap water	2 x 1 kannol tal-irkotta (with chopped nuts), 2 x cup of tea with 35ml skimmed milk	2 x lentil soup (2 x 80g lentils, 2 x 1/2 small onion, 2 x 1 tomato, 2 x 1/2 carrot, 2 x 1 tsp garlic, 2 x 1 tsp olive oil, 2 x 1/2 carton plain yoghurt, 2 x 1/4 tsp basil, 2 x 1/4 tsp oregano), 2 x 1 slice toasted wholemeal bread, 2 x fruit in season, 2 x filtered tap water with 2 x 1/2 lemon sliced

NB: It is assumed that children will also avail themselves of free school milk on weekdays.

Elderly Couple (65+)

	Breakfast	Mid-Morning Snack	Lunch	Mid-Afternoon Snack	Evening Meal
Monday	2 x 40g wholegrain cereal with 125ml skimmed milk, 2 x 1 banana, 2 x cup tea/coffee with 35ml skimmed milk	2 x apple, 2 x cup tea/coffee with 35ml skimmed milk	2 x 100g chicken breast, 2 x 1/2 cup broccoli, 2 x 1/2 cup carrots, 2 x 1 baked potato, 2 x 2 tsp olive oil, 2 x filtered tap water	2 x qaghqa tal-hmira, 2 x cup tea/coffee with 35ml skimmed milk	2 x 2 large slices maltese bread with 2 x 1 tomato, 2 x 1/2 large tin tuna in oil, 2 x 3 cucumber sticks, 2 x 1 light yoghurt, 2 x filtered tap water with 1/2 lemon sliced
Tuesday	2 x slice toasted wholegrain bread with 2 x 50g low fat cheese spread, 2 x 250 ml 100% grapefruit juice, 2 x cup tea/coffee with 35ml skimmed milk	2 x 2 biskuttelli, 2 x cup tea/coffee with 35ml skimmed milk	2 x 100g tortellini, 2 x 1 cup tomato sauce, 2 x 1 cup diced seasonal vegetables, 2 x 2 tbsp grated gbejna niexfa, 2 x 2 tsp olive oil, 2 x filtered tap water	2 x 1 banana, 2 x 2 tbsp almonds, 2 x cup tea/coffee with 35ml skimmed milk	2 x 2 open sandwiches (2 x 1 medium wholemeal bun, 2 x 2 slices lean ham), 2 x 1/2 cup beans, 2 x 1 cup coleslaw, 2 x filtered tap water with 1/2 lemon sliced
Wednesday	2 x 40g wholegrain cereal with 125ml skimmed milk, 2 x 4 prunes, 2 x cup tea/coffee with 35ml skimmed milk	2 x 4 small wholegrain galletti, 1 tbsp bigilla, filtered tap water	2 x baked rice (2 x 100g wholegrain rice, 2 x 80g minced chicken breast or lean pork/beef, 2 x 1 large tomato, 2 x 2 tbsps chopped aubergine or yellow/green/red peppers, 2 x 1 tbsp chopped onion, 2 x 1/2 egg), 2 x filtered tap water	2 x qaghqa tal-hmira, 2 x cup tea/coffee with 35ml skimmed milk	2 x 1 med. slice (1/4 dinner plate) ricotta and pea pie (incl. 2 x 1/2 egg), 2 x 1 fruit in season, 2 x filtered tap water with 1/2 lemon sliced

	Breakfast	Mid-Morning Snack	Lunch	Mid-Afternoon Snack	Evening Meal
Thursday	2 x 40g wholegrain cereal with 1 tablespoon dried fruit and 125ml skimmed milk, 2 x cup tea/coffee with 35ml skimmed milk	2 x 2 tbsp dried chick peas, 2 x 1 apple, 2 x cup tea/coffee with 35ml skimmed milk	2 x medium bowl minestrone (potatoes, pumpkin, onions, tomatoes, turnip, celery, pasta), 2 x 1 slice toasted wholemeal bread with 25g peppered gbejna or cheese, 2 x 1 fruit in season, 2 x filtered tap water	2 x 1 qaghqa tal-hmira, 1 cup tea/coffee with 35ml skimmed milk	2 x 2 open sandwiches (2 x 1 wholemeal bun, 2 x 2 slices lean turkey), 2 x 1/2 cup broad beans, 2 x 1 cup carrot and cucumber sticks, 2 x 2 tbsps mixed almonds, 2 x 1 tub fruit yoghurt, 2 x filtered tap water with 1/2 lemon sliced
Friday	2 x 1 slice toasted wholegrain bread with 1 tsp low fat spread, 2 x 250 ml 100% grapefruit juice, 2 x cup tea/coffee with 35ml skimmed milk	2 x 4 wholegrain galletti, 2 x 2 tbsp ricotta, filtered tap water	2 x 2 (75g) slices fresh or frozen fish, 2 x 2 small boiled zucchini, 2 x 1 tomato, 2 x 1 slice wholemeal bread, 2 x 1 apple, 2 x filtered tap water	2 x 2 biskuttini with nuts, 2 x cup of tea/coffee with 35ml skimmed milk	2 x small bowls aljotta (tomatoes, onions, carrots, potatoes, celery, rice), 2 x 2 galletti with cube of peppered cheese, 2 x 1 cup mixed fruit salad (fruit in season - melon, peach, grapes), 2 x filtered tap water with 1/2 lemon sliced
Saturday	2 x 40g wholegrain cereal with 125ml skimmed milk, 2 x 4 prunes, 2 x cup tea/coffee with 35ml skimmed milk	2 x 1 orange, 2 x filtered tap water	2 x 1 omelette (2 x 2 eggs, 2 x 1 slice lean ham, 2 x 1 tbsp onion, 2 x 1 tbsp red pepper, 2 x 50g ricotta), 2 x 1 lettuce leaf, 2 x 1 slice wholemeal bread, 2 x filtered tap water	2 x 1 wholegrain biscuit, 2 x cup tea/coffee with 35ml skimmed milk	2 x medium (size of side plate) home-made pizza with 2 x 1/4 large tin tuna, 2 x 1 tomato, 2 x 1/4 tin mushrooms, 2 x 1/4 onion, 2 x 1/2 tbsp low fat mozzarella, 2 x basil; 2 x 1 scoop low fat ice-cream with 1 tbsp fruit, 2 x filtered tap water, 2 x 1 glass wine

	Breakfast	Mid-Morning Snack	Lunch	Mid-Afternoon Snack	Evening Meal
Sunday	2 x 1 wholegrain sponge with 1 tsp jam, 2 x cup of tea/coffee with 35ml skimmed milk	2 x 1 banana, 2 x cup of tea/ coffee with 35ml skimmed milk	2 x patata l-form (2 x 100g beef, 2 x 1 large potato, 2 x 1/2 large onion, 2 x 1 toma- to, 2 x 1 tbsp wine, 2 x 1 tsp buzbiez), 2 x 1 large slice maltese bread, 2 x 1 fruit in season, 2 x filtered tap water, 2 x 1 glass red wine	2 x 1 kannol tal-irkotta (with chopped nuts), 2 x cup tea/coffee with 35ml skimmed milk	2 x lentil soup (2 x 80g len- tils, 2 x 1/2 small onion, 2 x 1/2 carrot, 2 x 1/2 celery, 2 x 1 tsp garlic, 2 x 1 tsp olive oil, 2 x 1/4 tsp basil, 2 x 1/4 tsp oregano), 2 x 1 slice wholemeal bread, 2 x 1 cube peppered cheese, 2 x filtered tap water, 2 x 1 glass wine
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APPENDIX A PART 2 – ADDITIONAL EATING OUT EXPENSES

COST OF EATING OUT OR CAFÉ VISITS PER MONTH

	2 Adults & 2 Children	Lone Parent & 2 Children	Elderly Couple (65+)
	€	€	€
Eating Out once or few Café visits	40.00	30.00	20.00
.....			
Total for a Week	€ 40.00	€ 30.00	€ 20.00

APPENDIX A PART 3 – FEAD FOOD PACKAGE INFO AND APPROXIMATE WORTH IN EURO

There are two Food packages – **A** and **B** (see next page) – which are distributed based on certain household profiles.

As at Spring 2016 there are 4 categories of eligible households:

I. Households in receipt of non-contributory means tested benefits and having two or more children below the age of 16 (families with three or more children receiving two packages);

II. Households with two or more children below the age of 16 and with an income not exceeding 80% of the National Minimum Wage (NMW) are entitled to two food packages;

III. Households having two or more children below the age of 16 with an income not exceeding the NMW (families with three or more children receive two packages);

IV. Non-single households eligible for non-contributory means tested age pension (families with three or more children receive two packages).

Those in Category II and those in the other categories where there were 3 or more children are eligible for both A and B packages. The remainder are eligible for Package A only.

FOOD PACKAGES – A

Quantity	Food Item	Capacity	Specifications	Expiry / Best before / Use by Date	Packaging
4	Long-life Milk	1 Litre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low fat (less than 20g) 	At least half the shelf-life from day of delivery	Any
4 tins	Baked Beans	Between 400-450 grams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In sauce • Containing less than 10g sugar per 100g • Containing less than 1.5g salt per 100g 	At least half the shelf-life from day of delivery	Tinned
4 tins	Tomatoes	Between 400-450 grams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chopped/Polpa • Containing less than 16g sugar per 100g • Containing less than 1.5g salt per 10g 	At least half the shelf-life from day of delivery	Tinned
4 tins	Tuna	Between 160-190 grams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chunks • In vegetable oil 	At least half the shelf-life from day of delivery	Tinned
2 tins	Hot Dog Sausages - in brine	Between 400-450 grams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In brine • Containing between 6 - 8 pieces 	At least half the shelf-life from day of delivery	Tinned
2 tins	Fruit - mixed - in juice or in light syrup	Between 400-450 grams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In juice or in light syrup 	At least half the shelf-life from day of delivery	Tinned
4 tins	Vegetables in Tin	Between 380-450 grams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Containing less than 1.5g salt per 100g • Four different types of vegetable tins, which have to be the same for every delivery, from the following variety; carrots, artichoke hearts, sliced mushrooms, sweet corn, baby carrots, peas and chick peas. 	At least half the shelf-life from day of delivery	Tinned
2 pkts	Whole-wheat cereal	Between 400-550 grams		At least half the shelf-life from day of delivery	Any

1 pkt	Corn Flakes	1000 grams		At least half the shelf-life from day of delivery	Any
2 pkts	Dried Nuts	Between 120-150 grams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mixed • Roasted • Unsalted 	At least half the shelf-life from day of delivery	Any
4 pkts	Pulses (legume)	Between 180-200 grams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dry form • Mixed 	At least half the shelf-life from day of delivery	Any
2 pkts	Pasta	1000 grams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dry • White Pasta: one kind of pasta, which has to be the same for every delivery. from the following variety: Spaghetti, fusilli, penne, macaroni, vermicelli and farfalle 	At least half the shelf-life from day of delivery	Any
2 pkts	Rice	1000 grams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • White long grain • Easy cook / par boiled 	At least half the shelf-life from day of delivery	Any

FOOD PACKAGES – B

Quantity	Food Item	Capacity	Specifications	Expiry / Best before / Use by Date	Packaging
2	Long-Life Milk	1 Litre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low fat (less than 20g) 	At least half the shelf-life from day of delivery	Any
2 tins	Baked Beans	Between 400-450 grams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In sauce • Containing less than 10g sugar per 100g • Containing less than 1.5g salt per 100g 	At least half the shelf-life from day of delivery	Tinned
2 tins	Tomatoes	Between 400-450 grams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chopped/Polpa • Containing less than 16g sugar per 100g • Containing less than 1.5g salt per 100g 	At least half the shelf-life from day of delivery	Tinned
2 tins	Tuna	Between 160-190 grams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chunks • In vegetable oil 	At least half the shelf-life from day of delivery	Tinned
2 tins	Hot Dog Sausages - in brine	Between 400-450 grams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In brine • Containing between 6 - 8 pieces 	At least half the shelf-life from day of delivery	Tinned

1 tins	Fruit - mixed - in juice or in light syrup	Between 400-450 grams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In juice or in light syrup 	At least half the shelf- life from day of delivery	Tinned
2 tins	Vegetables in Tin	Between 380-450 grams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Containing less than 1.5g salt per 100g • Four different types of vegetable tins, which have to be the same for every delivery, from the following varety; carrots, artichoke hearts, sliced mushrooms, sweet corn, baby carrots, peas and chick peas. 	At least half the shelf- life from day of delivery	Tinned
1 pkt	Whole-wheat cereal	Between 400-450 grams		At least half the shelf- life from day of delivery	Any
1 pkt	Corn Flakes	1000 grams		At least half the shelf- life from day of delivery	Any
1 pkt	Dried Nuts	Between 120-150 grams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mixed • Roasted • Unsalted 	At least half the shelf- life from day of delivery	Any
2 pkts	Pulses (le- gume)	Between 180-200 grams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dry form • Mixed 	At least half the shelf- life from day of delivery	Any
1 pkt	Pasta	1000 grams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dry • White Pasta: one kind pf pasta, which has to be the same for every delivry. from the following variety: Spaghetti, fussilli, penne, macaroni, vernicelli and farfalle 	At least half the shelf- life from day of delivery	Any
1 pkt	Rice	1000 grams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • White • Long grain • Easy cook / par boiled 	At least half the shelf- life from day of delivery	Any

Packaging and labelling should be in accordance to legislation (please refer to L.N. 317 of 2009 The Nutrition Labelling for Foodstuffs Regulations, 2009, and L.N. 483 of 2004 Labelling, Presentation and Advertising of Foodstuffs Regulations, 2004)

Food items are to be properly packaged (shopping outlet shelf standard - no torn labels or dented tins)

FEAD Food Packages	Approx. worth per package	Approx. worth of 4 packages per year
	€	€
FEAD Food Package A	46.47	185.88
FEAD Food Package B	25.58	102.32
FEAD Food Package A and B	72.05	288.20

FEAD Food Packages	Eligible for	Weekly in	Weekly in	Weekly in
	€	€	€	€
2 Adults & 2 Children	Package A & B	5.54	24.02	288.20
Lone Parent & 2 Children	Package A & B	5.54	24.02	288.20
Elderly Couple (65+)	Package A	3.57	15.49	185.88

APPENDIX B – SHOES AND FOOTWEAR³

2 ADULTS & 2 CHILDREN

Items	Adult 1	Adult 2	Child 1	Child 2	Totals
	€	€	€	€	€
Sandals	25	25	15	15	80
Trainers	40	40	30	30	140
Boots	30	30	30	30	120
Elegant shoes	25	25	25	25	100
Work/School shoes	30	30	30	30	120
Flip flops	10	10	12	12	44
Slippers	10	10	10	10	40
Totals	170	170	152	152	644

LONE PARENT & 2 CHILDREN

Items	Adult 1	Child 1	Child 2	Totals
	€	€	€	€
Sandals	25	15	15	55
Trainers	40	30	30	100
Boots	30	30	30	90
Elegant shoes	25	25	25	75
Work/School shoes	30	30	30	90
Flip flops	10	12	12	34
Slippers	10	10	10	30
Totals	170	152	152	474

ELDERLY COUPLE (+65)

Items	Adult 1	Adult 2	Totals
	€	€	€
Sandals	30	30	60
Trainers	40	40	80
Boots	35	35	70
Elegant shoes	40	40	80
Slippers	30	30	60
Totals	175	175	350

³ This is the annual cost. It is assumed that the use of these items has an average lifespan of two years.

APPENDIX C – MEDICINES

2 ADULTS & 2 CHILDREN

Condition	Medicine	Notes	Average Price €	Total €	Alternative medicine provided for free for Pink Card Holders	Total for Pink Card Holders €
Paracetamol	Paracetamol * 500mg	6 packets per year	1.67	10.02	x	
Pain	Voltaren tabs	7 courses per year	9.00	63.00	x	
Pain	Fastum Gel	3 tubes per year	5.50	16.50	x	
Bruising	Liaton Gel	2 per year	5.10	10.20		10.20
Allergies	Zyrtec	2 courses	8.40	16.80	x	
Nasal Sprays	Hysan	4 per year	3.95	15.80	x	
Eye Infections	Eye preparations	4 packets each year	6.00	24.00	x	
Cold	Pandol Cold and Flu	6 packets per year	6.00	36.00		36.00
Sore Throats	Beechams	6 packets per year	3.84	23.04		23.04
Coughs	Mucobroxol	6 packets per year	5.75	34.05		34.05
Diarrhoea	Imodium	6 preparations	2.96	17.76	x	
Suntan creams	Malibu	4 bottles per year	13.99	55.96		55.96
Antibiotics	Augmentin	4 courses per year	8.88	35.52	x	
Skin Conditions	Aqueous Cream	4 tubes a year	2.49	9.96		9.96
Period Pains	Feminax	6 boxes per year	5.38	32.28		32.28
Mosquito bite creams	Systral	2 tubes		3.27		6.54
Scratches	Fucidin	2 tubes		6.36		12.72
Plasters	Elastoplast	4 boxes	3.75	15.00		15
Anti-asthmatic	Ventolin	2 inhalers	6.37	152.88	x	
Grand Total				588.03		235.75

LONE PARENT & 2 CHILDREN

Condition	Medicine	Notes	Average Price €	Total €	Alternative medicine provided for free for Pink Card Holders	Total for Pink Card Holders €
Paracetamol	Paracetamol * 500mg	4 packets per year	1.67	6.68	x	
Pain	Voltaren tabs	4 courses per year	9.00	36.00	x	
Pain	Fastum Gel	2 tubes per year	5.50	11.00	x	
Bruising	Liaton Gel	1 per year	5.10	5.10		5.10
Allergies	Zyrtec	1 courses	8.40	8.40	x	
Nasal Sprays	Hysan	2 per year	3.95	7.90	x	
Eye Infections	Eye preparations	3 packets each year	6.00	18.00	x	
Cold	Pandol Cold and Flu	3 packets per year	6.00	18.00		18.00
Sore Throats	Beechams	3 packets per year	3.84	11.52		11.52
Coughs	Mucobroxol	3 packets per year	5.75	17.16		17.16
Diarrhoea	Imodium	4 preparations	2.96	11.84	x	
Suntan creams	Malibu	3 bottles per year	13.99	41.97		41.97
Antibiotics	Augmentin	3 courses per year	8.88	26.64	x	
Skin Conditions	Aqueous Cream	3 tubes a year	2.49	7.47		7.47
Period Pains	Feminax	6 boxes per year	5.38	32.28		32.28
Mosquito bite creams	Systral	2 tubes	3.27	6.54		6.54
Scratches	Fucidin	2 tubes	6.36	12.72		12.72
Plasters	Elastoplast	3 box	3.75	11.25		11.25
Anti-asthmatic	Ventolin	2 inhalers	6.37	152.88	x	
Grand Total				443.35		164.01

ELDERLY COUPLE (+65)

Condition	Medicine	Notes	Average Price €	Total €	Alternative medicine provided for free for Pink Card Holders	Total for Pink Card Holders €
Paracetamol	Paracetamol * 500mg	6 packets per year	1.67	10.02	x	
Constipation	Duphalac	50 bottles per year	6.47	323.50	x	
Pain	Catflam 50	6 packets per year	11.00	66.00	x	
Bruising	Liaton Gel	2 per year	5.10	10.20		10.20
Inflammation	Catfast	2 courses	10.90			
Antibiotics	Augmentin	2 courses per year	8.88	17.76	x	
Eye Infections	Eye preparations	2 episode each year	6.00	12.00	x	
Cold	Pandol Cold and Flu	3 packets per year	6.00	18.00		18.00
Sore Throats	Beechams	3 packets per year	3.84	11.52		11.52
Coughs	Mucobroxol	3 packets per year	5.75	17.16		17.16
Diarrhoea	Imodium	4 preparations	2.96	11.84	x	
Vitamins	Multibionta	14 boxes per year	5.36	75.04	x	
Suntan creams	Malibu	2 bottles per year	13.99	27.98		27.98
Skin Conditions	Aqueous Cream	3 tubes a year	2.49	7.47		7.47
Mosquito bite creams	Systral	2 tubes	3.27	6.54		6.54
Scratches	Fucidin	2 tubes	6.36	12.72		12.72
Corns	Carnation	1 packet	2.45	2.45		2.45
Denture	Corega	12 per year	3.80	45.60		45.60
Dizziness	Stematil	6 packets per year	2.96	17.76	x	
Mouth Ulcers	Bonjela	6 bottles per year	2.99	17.94		17.94
Plasters	Elastoplast	2 boxes	3.75	7.50		7.50
Grand Total				719.20		185.08

APPENDIX D – HOUSEHOLD GOODS, MAINTENANCE, LAUNDRY AND CARE⁴

Household Goods and Maintenance	Furniture and Furnishings and Textiles	Appliances	Maintenance and Repair -Material	Maintenance and Repair -Services
	€	€	€	€
2 Adults & 2 Children	186.17	157.36	159.82	275.72
Lone Parent & 2 Children	183.93	157.36	152.50	275.72
Elderly Couple (65+)	183.93	157.36	152.50	275.72
.....				
Household Laundry and Care		Laundry		Non-Durable Goods
		€		€
2 Adults & 2 Children		93.00		145.08
Lone Parent & 2 Children		78.00		145.08
Elderly Couple (65+)		62.00		72.54

⁴ Based on the lowest quartile - 2008 Household Budgetary Survey

APPENDIX E PART 1 – ELECTRICITY USAGE

2 ADULTS & 2 CHILDREN

	Use	Unit	Assumed w	Assumed kWh/day	Assumed kWh/30 days
TV	3	hrs/day	100	0.3	9
Kettle	2	litres/day	1 kWh for 7 litres	0.29	8.57
Washing Machine	6	washes per week	0.8kWh per wash	0.69	20.57
Water Heater (geezzer)	4	showers a day	0.5 kWh for 3 minute shower	2	60
Radio	1	hour a day, 6 times weekly	33.3	0.03	0.85
Light	10	hours a day, 2 units	60	1.2	36
Iron	2	hours per week	1000	0.29	8.57
Fridge Freezer	2	kWh/day	83.33	2	60
Fan-summer	8	hours a day, 4 months a year	50	0.4	4
Hair Dryer	30	minutes per week	1.5	0.5	15
Personal Computer	2	hours a day	0.3 kWh	0.6	18
Toaster	6	slices of toast a day; 1 kWh for 60 slices		0.06	1.8
Microwave	10	minutes per day	666.66	0.07	2.22
Total				8.43	244.58
Total Annual kWh					3064.793

LONE PARENT & 2 CHILDREN

	Use	Unit	Assumed w	Assumed kWh/day	Assumed kWh/30 days
TV	3	hrs/day	100	0.3	9
Kettle	2	litres/day litres	1 kWh for 7	0.21	6.43
Washing Machine	5	washes per week	0.8 kWh per wash	0.57	17.14
Water Heater (geezzer)	3	showers a day	0.5 kWh for 3 minute shower	1.5	45
Radio	1	hour a day, 6 times weekly	33.3	0.03	0.86
Light	10	hours a day, 2 units	60	1.2	36
Iron	1.5	hours per week	1000	0.21	6.43
Fridge Freezer	2	kWh/day	83.33	2	60
Fan-summer	8	hours a day, 4 months a year	50	0.4	4
Hair Dryer	30	minutes per week	1.5	0.5	15
Personal Computer	2	hours a day	0.3 kWh	0.6	18
Toaster	4	slices of toast a day; 1 kWh for 60 slices		0.07	6
Microwave	10	minutes per day	666.66	0.08	2.22
Total				7.67	226.08
			Total Annual kWh		2791.61

ELDERLY COUPLE (+65)

	Use	Unit	Assumed w	Assumed kWh/day	Assumed kWh/30 days
TV	8	hrs/day	100	0.8	24
Kettle	1.5	litres/day	1 kWh for 7 litres	0.29	8.57
Washing Machine	4	washes per week	0.8 kWh per wash	0.46	13.71
Water Heater (geezzer)	2	showers a day	0.5 kWh for 3 minute shower	1	30
Radio	8	hour a day, 6 times weekly	33.3	0.16	4.8
Light	10	hours a day, 2 units	60	1.2	36
Iron	0.5	hours per week	1000	0.07	2.14
Fridge Freezer	2	kWh/day	83.33	2	60
Fan-summer	8	hours a day, 4 months a year	50	0.4	4
Personal Computer	2	hours a day	0.3 kWh	0.6	18
Toaster	4	slices of toast a day; 1 kWh for 60 slices		0.07	6
Microwave	10	minutes per day	666.66	0.074	2.22
Microwave	10	minutes per day	666.66	0.08	2.22
Total				7.12	209.44
Total Annual kWh					2589.87

APPENDIX E PART 2 – PRICE OF ELECTRICITY WITHOUT ENERGY BENEFIT REDUCTION

2 ADULTS & 2 CHILDREN

Electricity	€
Service Charge	64.99
Consumption	347.64
Less Eco-Reduction	(86.91)
Total	325.73

LONE PARENT & 2 CHILDREN

Electricity	€
Service Charge	64.99
Consumption	312.20
Less Eco-Reduction	(78.05)
Total	299.14

ELDERLY COUPLE (+65)

Electricity	€
Service Charge	64.99
Consumption	285.98
Less Eco-Reduction	(63.83)
Total	287.15

.....

APPENDIX F – WATER USAGE

2 ADULTS & 2 CHILDREN

	Litres per Day €	
.....		
Toilet		
3 flushings a day per person at 7 litres each	84	
.....		
Shower		
One 3-minute shower per person daily, assuming a water flow pressure of 0.075 litre/second for 3 minutes	54	
.....		
Wash hand basin		
A 10 seconds per hands' wash four times per person daily, assuming a 0.1 litre/second flow pressure	16	
.....		
Washing machine		
6 loads per week at 70 litres per wash	60	
.....		
Kitchen sink		
10 litres kitchen bowl/sink	10	
.....		
Cooking and drinking		
Cooking	3	
2 litres for each adult and 1.5 litres for each child	7	
.....		
House Cleaning (washing)		
15 litres per week	2.142857	
.....		
Total in litres per Day/Annum	236.1429	86,192.14
.....		
		21,548.04

1 ADULTS & 2 CHILDREN

	Litres per Day €	
.....		
Toilet		
3 flushings a day per person at 7litres each	63	
.....		
Shower		
One 3-minute shower per person daily, assuming a water flow pressure of 0.075 litre/second for 3 minutes	40.5	
.....		
Wash hand basin		
A 10 seconds per hands' wash four times per person daily, assuming a 0.1 litre/second flow pressure	12	
.....		
Washing machine		
5 Loads per week at 70 litres per wash	50	
.....		
Kitchen sink		
10 litres kitchen bowl/sink	10	
.....		
Cooking and drinking		
Cooking	3	
2 litres for adult and 1.5 litres for each child daily	5	
.....		
House Cleaning (washing)		
15 litres per week	2.142857	
.....		
Total in litres per Day/Annum	185.6429	67,759.64
.....		
		22,586.55

ELDERLY COUPLE (+65)

	Litres per Day €	
.....		
Toilet		
3 flushings a day per person at 7litres each	42	
.....		
Shower		
One 3-minute shower per person daily, assuming a water flow pressure of 0.075 litre/second for 3 minutes	27	
.....		
Wash hand basin		
A 10 seconds per hands' wash four times per person daily, assuming a 0.1 litre/second flow pressure	8	
.....		
Washing machine		
5 Loads per week at 70 litres per wash	40	
.....		
Kitchen sink		
10 litres kitchen bowl/sink	10	
.....		
Cooking and drinking		
Cooking	3	
2 litres for adult and 1.5 litres for each child daily	4	
.....		
House Cleaning (washing)		
15 litres per week	2.142857	
.....		
Total in litres per Day/Annum	136.1429	49,692.14
.....		
		24,846.07

APPENDIX G – PRICE OF ELECTRICITY AND WATER WITHOUT ENERGY BENEFIT REDUCTION 2 ADULTS & 2 CHILDREN

Electricity	€	Water	€
Service Charge	64.99	Service Charge	59.00
Consumption	347.64	Consumption	120.10
Less Eco-Reduction	(86.91)		
Total Electricity	325.73	Total Water	179.09
		Total Bill	504.82

LONE PARENT & 2 CHILDREN

Electricity	€	Water	€
Service Charge	64.99	Service Charge	59.00
Consumption	312.20	Consumption	94.96
Less Eco-Reduction	(78.05)		
Total Electricity	299.14	Total Water	153.96
		Total Bill	453.10

ELDERLY COUPLE (+65)

Electricity	€	Water	€
Service Charge	64.99	Service Charge	59.00
Consumption	285.98	Consumption	69.82
Less Eco-Reduction	(63.83)		
Total Electricity	287.15	Total Water	128.82
		Total Bill	415.97

APPENDIX H – PRICE OF GAS WITHOUT ENERGY BENEFIT REDUCTION⁵

	No. of 12kg Gas cylinders p.a.	Cost (€) p.a.
2 Adults & 2 Children	10 cylinders	150
Lone Parent & 2 Children	10 cylinders	150
Elderly Couple (65+)	12 cylinders	180

PRICES FOR LIQUEFIED PETROLEUM GAS (LPG)⁶

Type	LPG Mix
10kg cylinders	€ 12.50
12kg cylinders	€ 15
15kg cylinders	€ 18.75
25kg cylinders	€ 31.25
Loose/kg	€ 1.50

⁵ LPG (Gas) taken into consideration for both cooking and space heating.

⁶ The prices for LPG as at November 2015.

APPENDIX I – MOBILE PHONE

2 ADULTS & 2 CHILDREN

Description		€
2 phones at €35 each (<i>not a smart phone</i>)	Phone per adult on a 5 year life span	28
€10 top-up card each month per person	2 adults	240
Total per year		268

LONE PARENT & 2 CHILDREN

Description		€
1 phone at €35 each (<i>not a smart phone</i>)	Phone per adult on a 5 year life span	14
€10 top-up card each month	1 adults	120
Total per year		134

ELDERLY COUPLE (+65)

Description		€
2 phones at €35 each (<i>not a smart phone</i>)	Phone per adult on a 5 year life span	28
€10 top-up card each month per person	2 adults	240
Total per year		268

APPENDIX J – HOUSEHOLD SERVICES

Utilities, TV, Internet and Phone	Gas	Electricity and Water	TV, Landline Phone, Internet Package	Mobile Phone	Yearly in €
2 Adults & 2 Children	120.00	276.52	396.00	268.00	1,060.52
Lone Parent & 2 Children	120.00	235.44	396.00	134.00	885.44
Elderly Couple (65+)	140.00	206.17	396.00	268.00	1,010.17

APPENDIX K – COMBINED HOUSEHOLD COSTS PER ANNUM (before adjustment before inflation)

Household Costs	Household Goods	Laundry and Care	Services	Total Yearly in €
2 Adults & 2 Children	664.00	223.00	1060.52	1,947.52
Lone Parent & 2 Children	656.00	208.00	885.44	1,749.44
Elderly Couple (65+)	656.00	127.00	1010.17	1,793.17

APPENDIX L – EDUCATIONAL COSTS⁷

MISCELLANEOUS PRINTING AND STATIONARY MATERIAL⁸

Items	Cost €
One time stationery	30.00
Photocopies	8.00
Past papers photocopies	6.00
Workbooks	18.00
Magazine subscription	8.00
DVD & Photos	10.00
Special school days	6.00
Fundraising day	4.00
Book fair	4.00
Registration for extra-curricular activities	15.00
Transport for 7 outings at €2 each	14.00
Entrance costs for at least 2 outings	3.00
Total per child per annum	€ 126.00

⁷ Children are assumed to attend a state school

⁸ This varies according to the year group. These expenses may vary from one school to another and from one year group to another. For example, some schools are more distant than others from certain activities. Older children are asked for more display files rather than copybooks.

SCHOOL UNIFORM⁹

Stock Description	Boy attending Secondary school	Girl attending Secondary school	Total cost
	€	€	€
Tracksuit	24.00	24.00	48.00
P.E. Shorts	5.95	5.95	11.90
P.E T-Shirts	5.75	5.75	11.50
Cap	3.50	3.50	7.00
Bermuda shorts	11.75	-	11.75
Shirt	8.95	8.95	17.90
Trousers	14.75	14.75	29.50
Skirt	-	11.50	11.50
Polo shirt	8.95	8.95	17.90
Jersey	15.25	-	15.25
Vest	-	15.25	15.25
Blazer	40.00	40.00	40.00
Anorak/Windbreaker	22.85	22.85	45.70
Tie	4.50	-	4.50
Cross tie	--	4.50	4.50
Lab attire (apron, headgear)	15.00	15.00	30.00
Socksx2	4.50	4.50	9.00
Tights	-	4.95	4.95
Bands	-	5.95	5.95
Elastic hair bands	-	2.95	2.95
Total per annum	185.70	199.30	385.00

⁹ Uniforms are assumed to last up to two consecutive years

APPENDIX M – TRANSPORT

PUBLIC TRANSPORT¹⁰

2 ADULTS & 2 CHILDREN

			€
1 month	2 Adults	at €26 each (Adult card)	52.00
4 return journeys ¹¹	2 Children	at €3.00 per return journey (4X 2 single tickets of €1.50)/child	12.00
Monthly Total			62.00

LONE PARENT & 2 CHILDREN

			€
1 month	Adult	at €26 each (Adult card)	26.00
4 return journeys ¹²	2 Children	at €3.00 per return journey (4X 2 single tickets of €1.50)/child	12.00
Monthly Total			48.00

ELDERLY COUPLE (+65)

			€
1 month ¹³	2 Elderly	at €8 each (Concession card based on Kartanzjan card ownership)	16.00
Monthly Total			16.00

CAR¹⁴

Items	€	Remarks
Insurance Premium Third Party Only	130	Assuming a full non-claim bonus
Road Licence	120	Assuming no fines
Vehicle Road Testing	10	€ 20 VRT every 2 years
Fuel	624	€ 12 per week
Maintenance Service	100	Assuming no mechanical faults occur
Monthly Total	984	

¹⁰ Based on Malta Public Transport tariffs for Tallinja cards as at March 2016.

¹¹ Assuming children use free state school transport to get to school if necessary. The other journeys could be, for example public, library, culture, sport training or other leisure related trips.

¹² Assuming children use free state school transport to get to school if necessary. The other journeys could be, for example public, library, culture, sport training or other leisure related trips.

¹³ Based on four weeks – €2 maximum possible charge per week.

¹⁴ The purchase price of the car is not being taken into consideration.

APPENDIX N – EXPENDITURE DIARY

Rendikont tal-Flus Minfuqa

L-ewwel Xahar: minn _____ sa _____

L-ewwel Gimgħa: minn _____ sa _____

Oggetti mixtrija	Flus minfuqa (f'€) mill-Adulti	Flus minfuqa (f'€) mit-Tfal	Kummenti
Ikel			
Ikel frisk, <i>preserve</i> jew fil-pakketti			
Xorb ez. luminata, alkohol			
Ikel jew xorb <i>take-away</i>			
Ikel minn ristoranti			
Rwejjeg, żrabien u aċċessorji			
Tan-nisa			
Tal-irgiel			
Tat-tfal			
Igene			
Detergenti tal-hwejjeg/platti/art			
Materjal li jintuza għat-tindif			
Trasport			
Fuel/tal-karozza			
Manutenzjoni tal-karozza			
Licenzja			
Trasport Pubbliku			

Oggetti mixtrija	Flus minfuqa (f'€) mill-Adulti	Flus minfuqa (f'€) mit-Tfal	Kummenti
Kura Personali			
Igene Personali			
Kura tax-xagħar			
Kura tal-gilda			
Kozmetici u Trattamenti tas-sbuhija			
Saħħa			
Medicini			
Materjal tal-First Aid ez. Stick, faxex			
Servizzi tas-saħħa ez. tabib			
Servizzi għall-kura tas-sniien			
Kontijiet			
Dawl u Ilma			
Gas			
TV			
Telefon/Internet			
Mobajl			
Oħrajn	Nizzel xi oggetti oħra li xtrajt hawn taht.		
Child care			
Kera/ Loan tad-dar			
TOTAL			

APPENDIX O – ELIGIBILITY FOR SUBSIDIES AND OTHER WELFARE BENEFITS
FOOD AID SCHEME¹⁵

Excerpts from Food And/Or Basic Material Assistance Operational Programme

Material deprivation type: 1 - Food Deprivation

N.1. Description Items to be provided

This OP aims to provide the most deprived households with periodic distribution of food items to alleviate the risk of poverty prevalent amongst these persons and to help improve their living standards. Food packages will be distributed to deprived households, taking into account the financial situation of such households in accordance with pre-established selection criteria explained in Section 3.1. As an example, the following food items will be considered:

- Long life milk;
- Assorted dried nuts;
- Tinned fish chunks;
- Baked beans;
- Tinned tomatoes (Polpa);
- Whole wheat cereal;
- Corn flakes;
- Lentil/Pulses soup mix;
- Pasta (dry not fresh);
- Rice;
- Tinned vegetables;
- Tinned fruit;
- Tinned sausages.

¹⁵ https://eufunds.gov.mt/en/Operational%20Programmes/Programming%20Period%202014%20-%202020/FEAD/Documents/OP_FEAD%20_Adopted%20OP_2014MT05FMOP001_1_1_en.pdf retrieved on 6 March 2016

The above list is intended to provide an indication of what the food packages will contain. Changes may be considered in the course of the programme duration if the need arises.

N.2. Identification of most deprived persons in identifying the most deprived persons, a working group representing the relevant stakeholders (section 4) was set up. Discussions were held in order to identify the target group, where different vulnerable groups were considered so as to establish objective selection criteria. Households with two or more dependent children together with nonsingle elderly households were identified as being at greater risk of poverty and social exclusion. Therefore, aid will be directed towards households with the lowest income (who are eligible for certain non-contributory benefits) with 2 or more children or elderly persons. The IB will establish the eligible target group through the Social Security Department (SSD), whereby households that fit into any one of the following categories will be identified:

- i. Households in receipt of non-contributory means tested benefits and having 2 or more children below the age of 16;
- ii. Households having 2 or more children below the age of 16 with an income not exceeding 80% of National Minimum Wage (NMW);
- iii. Households having 2 or more children below the age of 16 with an income not exceeding the NMW;
- iv. Non-single households eligible for non-contributory means tested age pension.

Categories i, iii and iv will indicatively receive the same worth of food items per distribution, whilst Category ii and all categories having 3 or more children below the age of 16 in their household will receive a food package of greater value (indicatively of 50% more) given that they are most at risk of poverty.

MEDICINE

Pink/Yellow Card

Entitlement to free medication through the public health sector outside a Maltese government hospital setting is based on the principle of social solidarity and occurs through a system based on criteria linked to disease or means by virtue of the Social Security Act Cap 318 Article 23 and the Fifth Schedule of the same Act. Those patients suffering from chronic conditions usually fall under Schedule V (Yellow Card), whilst those with limited means generally pertain to the Schedule II (Pink Card). Other patients belonging to one of the following categories are also entitled to a Pink Card:

- *Members of certain religious orders*
- *Diabetics*
- *Members of the police force*
- *Members of the armed forces*
- *Patients suffering from tuberculosis, leprosy and poliomyelitis*

Pink card holders are only entitled to a limited number of medicinal products, which are specifically marked as pink card positive on the Government Formulary List.

Health care statistics show that in 2009 there were 7,249 Pink Card holders (NSO, 2011 Section 3.2). Yellow Form holders accounted to 46,405 in 2008 NSO, 2010). Pink forms are renewed on a yearly basis for persons over 60 years of age and on a 4-monthly basis for those below the age of 60.

Pink Card Beneficiaries

1. Unemployment on Welfare Benefits

Those on Social Assistance, Single Mothers, Unemployment cannot register for work, Age Pension (i.e. Non Contributory Pension) and Handicapped Pension, Single Persons Pensions does not exceed € 137.51 per week (this includes rent, pension and salary) Bonus Excluded, Couples Pension does not exceed € 163 (this includes rent, pension and salary) Bonus Excluded

2. Employed gross pay per week (Less National Insurance) Income does not exceed €134.82 per week + € 8.15 c for every other unemployed person

3. Specific Health Conditions Diabetics - Polio - TB - Leprosy - Children beneficiaries of Children's Disability Allowance irrelevant of their parents' Income

All Means Test include also a Capital Means Test - the applicants should not exceed € 9,320 for Single Persons, and € 16, 310 for couples - this includes Savings, Current Accounts Stocks, Shares and other investments. First Residence, Car, Garage and Used Summer Residence are excluded from this Capital Means Test.

Pink Card Beneficiaries

National Health Services provides the following dental care to ALL:

- Check-ups
- X-rays
- Oral hygiene (scalings)
- Emergency treatment (during normal Out-patient hours)
- Extractions under local & general anaesthesia
- Consultations
- Oral Surgery under local & general anaesthesia

Basic restorative treatment (i.e. fillings, root treatments & acrylic dentures) is provided to children under the age of 16 and to all individuals with the PINK form (not yellow).

Simple orthodontic treatment (braces) is provided to children under the age of 16.

ELECTRICITY & WATER & LPG ENERGY BENEFIT¹⁶

Energy Benefit

Energy Benefit is aimed to mitigate the effect of expenditure on water and electricity bills of low income families.

Eligibility

1. The following social security beneficiaries qualify for EB:

- Persons in receipt of Social Assistance (including Social Assistance, Single Unmarried Persons, or Unemployment Assistance.
- Persons in receipt of Special Unemployment Benefit
- Persons in receipt of an Age Pension
- Persons in receipt of a Carer's Pension

2. Persons in receipt of the following benefits qualify through a means test:

- *Children's Allowance*
- *Supplementary Allowance*
- *Such beneficiaries qualify if the total income is less than €8,886*

3. A person can qualify on 'humanitarian grounds' where:

- *a head of household proves that a member of the family suffers from a medical condition that requires excessive use of water and electricity, and*
- *such member is permanently residing in Malta, and*
- *the household income is less than €30,911 per annum.*

Payment

EB for those who are entitled either as a social case or through a Means Test will include:

- *an amount to offset 30% of the consumption of electricity prior to the eco reduction up to a maximum assistance of €75 per year per person in the household, and*
- *in the case where claimant is the account holder a subsidy of not more than €65 per year in respect of the rent of electricity meter, and a subsidy of not more than €59 per year in respect of the rent of water meter is also awarded.*
- *Lpg is also paid to claimants who are entitled either as a social case or as means tested cases. Head of households over 60 years are entitled to €40 annually and those under 60 years are entitled for €30 annually per household. Lpg is paid only with actual invoices.*
- *EB for these persons who qualify on humanitarian grounds will include:*
 - *an amount to offset 80% of the consumption of electricity before the eco contribution reduction, and*
 - *a subsidy in respect of the rent of an electricity meter of not more than €65 per year in the case of a single phase meter or not more than €195 per year in the case of a three phase meter, and.*
 - *a subsidy of not more than €59 per year in respect of the rent of water meter.*

Payment Method

The benefit is paid by means of direct deduction from ARMS bill

¹⁶ <https://socialpolicy.gov.mt/en/Short-Term-Benefits/Pages/Energy-Benefit.aspx> Retrieved on 19 March 2016

HOUSING

Rent Subsidy in Private Rented Residences

Aim:

To provide subsidy to tenants on rents paid for their ordinary residence leased from the private sector.

Criteria:

- The applicant is the recognised lessee or has a title of temporary emphyteusis not exceeding 21 years.
- The property is in a good state of repair and in a habitable condition.
- Applicants do not possess assets exceeding €10,000 from one year prior to the date of application.
- Applicants do not possess other property from a year prior to date of application.
- Subsidy is calculated on the income of applicants and the rent being paid, according to the table below.
- Additional subsidy of €125 is given to disabled applicants.
- Additional subsidy €125 is given to families consisting of 6 or more members.
- An additional €300 is given to families having fostered children living with them.
- Single people who lived in care; or were for a period of time fostered; or left CCF; or who have successfully completed a rehabilitation/therapeutic programme, can benefit from the subsidy amounting to a maximum of €1,600 until the age of twenty eight (28).
- The subsidy is revised every two years and is based on applicants' income and assets for the preceding year.
- The application is valid for a period of 6 years.
- Further information about the entitlement of subsidy and conditions can be accessed from the link below.
- No means testing is to be carried out on applicants in receipt of the following Non Contributory Benefits:
 - SA - Social Assistance
 - SUP - Social Assistance Single Parents
 - UA - Unemployment Assistance
 - AP - Age Pension
 - NMIP – National Minimum Invalidity Pension

For full details one can visit: <http://housingauthority.gov.mt/en/Documents/Schemes/Sussidju%20fuq%20il-Kera%20-%20En%202016.pdf>

Rent Subsidisation

The subsidy shall be based on the annual income according to the following schedules:

Table A. Maximum annual rent payable **€197.58:-**

Gross Annual Income for a basic Calendar Year 2015 €	Maximum Annual Subsidy €	Minimum Annual Rent Payable by Tenant €
Single person household		
0,000 - 6,514.80	80	105
Households with 2 member (adults)		
0,000 - 8,014.80	100	85
Households with 3 members and more (families with children)		
0,000 - 9,514.80	120	65

Rent Subsidisation

The subsidy shall be based on the annual income according to the following schedules:

Table B. Annual rent payable exceeding €198:-

Category	Gross Annual Income for a basic Calendar Year 2015 €	Maximum Annual Subsidy €	Minimum Annual Rent Payable by Tenant €
.....			
Single person household			
A	0,000 - 8,514.80	800	198
B	0,000 - 9,514.80	650	300
C	0,000 - 13,514.80	550	350
.....			
Households with 2 member (adults)			
A	0,000 - 6,514.80	950	198
B	0,000 - 6,514.80	850	250
C	0,000 - 6,514.80	750	300
.....			
Households with 3 members and more (families with children)			
A	0,000 - 6,514.80	1000	198
B	0,000 - 6,514.80	900	250
C	0,000 - 6,514.80	800	300
D	0,000 - 6,514.80	700	350
E	0,000 - 6,514.80	600	400
.....			

In case of Table "B" ONLY an additional €125 per annum will be granted to families having a disabled member, an additional €125 per annum will also be granted to families having more than 5 members, and an additional €300 per annum to have fostered children living with them.

Single people who:

Lived in care; or

were for a period of time fostered; or

left CCF; or

who have successfully completed a rehabilitation/therapeutic programme;

can benefit from the subsidy amounting to a maximum of €1,600 per annum until the age of twenty eight (28). This means that these applicants will be granted twice the amount of rent subsidy they are entitled to according to Table "B."

APPENDIX P – MINIMUM BUDGET FOR A DECENT LIVING 2012 BASKET

Item		2 Adults & 2 Children		Lone Parent & 2 Children		Elderly Couple (65+)	
		Monthly €	Yearly €	Monthly €	Yearly €	Monthly €	Yearly €
Food	7-Day Menu ¹	464.27	5,571.28	348.50	4,182.78	217.89	2,614.76
Clothing	Garments*	37.50	450	33.33	400	25	300
	Shoes & Footwear	28.67	344	20.54	246.50	15	180
Personal Care	Personal Care	56.75	681	51.75	621	46	552
Health	Pharmaceutical Products ²	17.23	206.78	12.27	147.28	30.58	367.01
Household Goods, Maintenance & Services	Furniture & Furnishings (and Textiles) *	13.84	166	13.67	164	13.67	164
	Appliances*	11.75	141	11.75	141	11.75	141
	Maintenance & Repair: Material*	10.92	131	10.42	125	10.42	125
	Maintenance & Repair: Services*	18.83	226	18.83	226	18.83	226
	Laundry detergents	7.80	93.60	6.50	78	5.20	62.40
	Non-durable Goods	10.83	130	10.83	130	5.42	65
	Telephone/TV/ internet	33	396	33	396	33	396
	Electricity [^]	36.95	443.39	34.10	409.25	32.77	393.26
	Gas [^]	14.17	170	14.17	170	17	204
	Water [^]	15.47	185.70	13.22	158.61	11	132.05
Education & Leisure	Printing & Stationery	15.33	184	15.33	184	0	0
	Uniforms	16.75	201	16.75	201	0	0
Transport	Public Transport	60.67	728.04	34.67	416.04	18.40	220.80
Housing	Rent ³	15.42	185	15.42	185	15.42	185
Grand Total		886.15	10,634	715	8,581	527.35	6,328

Refer to footnotes under Appendix Q.

APPENDIX Q – WEIGHTING OF CATEGORIES FOR MBDL AND MEBDL BASKETS

Category		Comparison of Weightings per Category According to MBDL (2012) & MEBDL (2016)					
		2 Adults & 2 Children		Lone Parent & 2 Children		Elderly Couple (65+)	
		% OF YEARLY TOTAL 2015	% OF YEARLY TOTAL 2011	% OF YEARLY TOTAL 2015	% OF YEARLY TOTAL 2011	% OF YEARLY TOTAL 2015	% OF YEARLY TOTAL 2011
	Item	%	%	%	%	%	%
Food	7-Day Menu ⁴	54.26	52.39	50.06	48.74	45.11	41.32
Clothing	Garments ⁵	6.78	7.47	6.97	7.53	7.32	7.59
	Shoes & Footwear ⁶						
Personal Care	Personal Care ⁵	6.64	6.40	7.54	7.24	9.44	8.72
Health	Pharmaceutical Products ⁷	2.06	1.94	1.78	1.72	2.84	5.80
Household Goods, Laundry and Care, & Services	Furniture & Furnishings (& Textiles) ⁵	18.15	19.59	20.42	23.28	29.33	30.16
	Appliances ⁵						
	Maintenance & Repair: Material ⁵						
	Maintenance & Repair: Services ⁵						
	Laundry detergents						
	Non-durable Goods ⁵						
	Telephone/TV/internet						
	Mobile phone						
	Electricity ⁸						
	Gas ⁸						
	Water ⁸						
Education	Printing & Stationery	3.88	3.62	4.83	4.49	0.00	0.00
	Uniforms						
Transport	Public Transport	6.50	6.85	6.26	4.85	2.94	3.49
Housing	Rent ⁹	1.72	1.74	2.14	2.16	3.02	2.92
		100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

- ¹ Food Aid Scheme – It has been calculated that a family of four persons is given foodstuff worth approx. €31 monthly (market value); family of three given approx. €23worth of food monthly (market value,); a family of two is given approx. € 15worth of food per month (market value); reference month September 2011 food provision. These amounts have been considered when costing the Food Menus.
- ² Pink Card Holders - Appendix C shows that 2 adults &2 children family who are not entitled to the Pink Card are paying an approx. €851 per annum (four times as much to cover health care costs). For those elderly who are not in receipt of state provided medicine via the pink card, health care costs increase up to around €949, three times as much
- ³ Subsidized Rented Housing: These figures are for Housing Authority government owned subsidised rented dwellings. Data obtained from the Housing Authority states that families with children are generally paying an average commercial rent of € 2,865 per year or €238.75 per month for private furnished apartments
- ⁴ Benefitting from the FEAD Scheme
- ⁵ Prices according to the Average Consumer Expenditure of the Lowest Income Quartile earning less than €10,585 according to HBS 2008 with an addition for inflation from 2011 to 2016
- ⁶ This is the annual cost divided by two assuming footwear has a 2-year lifespan
- ⁷ Benefitting from free medicines and health services as per Public Health Scheme – Schedule 5
- ⁸ Benefitting from electricity, water and LPG reductions/rebates
- ⁹ Assuming residence is Housing Authority-owned subsidized dwelling
- ^{*} Prices according to the Average Consumer Expenditure of the Lowest Income Quartile earning less than €10,585 according to HBS 2008
- [^] Energy Benefit a family of two adults & two children receives a €151.84 per annum in water & electricity rebate; a lone-parent & two children household receive a €137.64, whilst an elderly couple (65+) receives €127.16 per annum in water & electricity rebate LPG rebate is worked out as €15 per household per calendar year; if a single member is elderly, the amount becomes €25.

APPENDIX R – INCOME OF HOUSEHOLDS RECEIVING THE NATIONAL MINIMUM WAGE, PENSIONS AND/OR OTHER BENEFITS

HOUSEHOLD RECEIVING NATIONAL MINIMUM WAGE AND IN-WORK BENEFIT

	National Mini- mum Wage (NMW) €	Special Bonus (SPBO) €	6 Monthly Bonus (6MBO) €		Supple- mentary Allowance (SPA) €	Children Allowance (CA) €	Energy Benefit (EB) €	Inwork Benefit (iww) €	Annual Total €
Single Parent+1 Child	168.01	4.66	5.20	9249.24	0.00	22.23	0.00	23.08	10,449.40
Single Parent+2 Children	168.01	4.66	5.20	9249.24	0.00	44.46	0.00	46.16	11,649.56
Married Couple+ 1 Child*	168.01	4.66	5.20	9249.24	0.00	22.26	0.00	1.00	9,301.24
Married Couple+2 Children*	168.01	4.66	5.20	9249.24	0.00	44.46	0.00	2.00	9,353.24
Married Couple+2 Children**	336.02	9.32	10.40	18498.48	0.00	17.32	0.00	22.31	19,658.60

Dependent Child = < 16

* One parent on NMW

** Two parents on NMW

HOUSEHOLD RECEIVING NATIONAL MINIMUM WAGE AND IN THE TAPERING SCHEME

	National Mini- mum Wage (NMW) €	Special Bonus (SPBO) €	6 Monthly Bonus (6MBO) €	Supple- mentary Allowance (SPA) €	Children Allowance (CA) €	Energy Benefit (EB) €	Tapering of Benefit (iww) €	Annual Total €
Single Person	168.01	4.66	5.20	0.00	0.00	0.00	66.33	12,698.40
Single Parent + 1 Child	168.01	4.66	5.20	0.00	22.23	0.00	71.62	12,973.48
Single Parent + 2 Children	168.01	4.66	5.20	0.00	44.46	0.00	76.92	13,249.08
Married Couple + 1 Child*	168.01	4.66	5.20	0.00	22.26	0.00	76.92	13,249.08
Married Couple + 2 Children*	168.01	4.66	5.20	0.00	44.46	0.00	82.22	13,524.68

Assuming tapering for 1st year at 65%

Dependent Child = < 16

* One parent on NMW

** Two parents on NMW

HOUSEHOLD RECEIVING SOCIAL/UNEMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE

	Social/Un-employment Assistance (SA/UA) €	Special Bonus (SPBO) €	6 Monthly Bonus (6MBO) €	Supplementary Allowance (SPA) €	Children Allowance (CA) €	Energy Benefit (EB) €	Annual Total €
Single Person	102.04	3.12	5.20	3.72	0.00	4.40	6,160.96
Single Parent + 1 Child	110.19	3.12	5.20	0.00	22.23	5.85	6,466.72
Single Parent + 2 Children	118.34	3.12	5.20	0.00	44.46	7.29	6,965.40
Married Couple + 1 Child	118.34	3.12	5.20	0.00	22.26	6.04	6,900.40
Married Couple + 2 Children	126.49	3.12	5.20	0.00	44.46	8.70	7,462.52

Dependent Child = < 16

HOUSEHOLD RECEIVING NATIONAL MINIMUM WAGE AND IN THE TAPERING SCHEME

	Guaranteed Minimum Pension Level €	Cost of Living Bonus (CLBO) €	Special Bonus (SPBO) €	6 Monthly Bonus (6MBO) €	Supplementary Allowance (SPA) €	Children Allowance (CA) €	Energy Benefit (EB) €	Annual Total €
Single Person/ Widow	130.30	9.70	3.12	5.20	3.72	0.00	4.40	8,134.88
Widow + 1 Dependant Child	130.30	9.70	3.12	5.20	0.00	22.23	5.85	9,172.80
Widow + 2 Dependant Children	130.30	9.70	3.12	5.20	0.00	44.46	7.29	10,403.64
Married Couple 1 pension	141.83	5.83	3.12	5.20	7.35	0.00	6.04	8,807.24
Married Couple 2 pension	283.66	11.66	6.24	10.40	0.00	0.00	0.00	16,221.92

Dependent Child = < 16. Where pensioner and/or spouse are over 75 and still residing in their home a yearly grant of €300 is paid



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