

Malta

Introduction

According to the analysis in St Aubyn et al. (2009), the tertiary education system in Malta is below the efficiency frontier, on an average inefficiency level. When inputs are financially measured (DEA2 analysis), the efficiency coefficients are relatively larger. The system seems relatively more efficient in teaching than research activities.

Indicators

Malta has two public Universities and some private institutions where about 3% of students are enrolled. The tertiary education system performs well in the production of graduates: graduates per academic staff are above-average and the number of graduates per student is the 3rd largest. The ratio of students per academic staff is relatively small which suggests quality of the learning experience for students. There is a culture of graduation within the prescribed time and students spend on average 3 years to obtain a BA degree and 2 years to obtain an MA degree.

Malta has a relatively small academic staff as a percentage of the population. The number of publications per academic staff is relatively small and their average quality as measured by the citations index is below average. In order to stimulate research activities, the last collective agreement includes research and publication activities to progress in the academic career.

There are no efficiency indicators available for Malta.

The Government has direct control on Universities in terms of governance and regulations. The Universities have freedom to devise quality assurance arrangements, to determine their research programme and to start new degree programmes. They have autonomy to hire and dismiss staff, to decide on the nature of the employment contracts and their duration, subject to prior government authorisation.

As regards funding rules, there are two block grants: one for capital and the other for recurrent expenditure (such as staff wages). The Ministry of Education prepares estimates of income and expenditure for the next financial year and discusses them with the Ministry of Finance. The determination of the amount of annual expenditure is mostly input-driven (remuneration of staff, the collective agreements in force and the number of staff). Institutions consider student enrolment data when formulating their estimates.

Table - Indicators in St. Aubyn et al. (2009)

Scores of efficiency indicators						
	Average ISI citation		Recruiter review		Peer review	
	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank
MT	2,45	13	:	:	:	:
best performer	NL - 5,51	1	IE - 2	1	FI - 2	1
worst performer	RO - 1,63	26	CZ -1.06	16	GR - 1.02	16

Descriptive indicators							
	Academic staff	Students	Graduates <i>per capita</i>	Publications	Students <i>per academic staff</i>	Graduates	Graduates <i>per student</i>
EU27	1,9	33,7	7,1	0,6	17,8	3,7	19,8

PISA		
	Score 2000*	Rank
MT	:	:
best performer	FI - 540	1
worst performer	RO - 410	18

Funding for advanced research in specialised fields is allocated on a competitive basis.

There are official regulations concerning the distribution of public funds inside higher education institutions (among faculties and other units), which vary across institutions.

Industry funding is limited and there are currently no public incentives in place to stimulate it.

Policy developments

There is a policy objective to attract more young students (there is a larger number of early school leavers in Malta) and adults to tertiary education. Higher participation is expected to require additional expenditure.

An Agency for Quality Assurance is to be established in 2010.