

2020



Foundation  
for Tomorrow's  
Schools

# ANNUAL REPORT



# Table of Contents

■ Message from the Minister	<b>4</b>
■ Message from the Chairperson	<b>6</b>
■ Message from the Chief Executive Officer	<b>8</b>
■ Our Projects	<b>11</b>
■ Our Human Assets	<b>29</b>
■ Our Financing and Purchasing	<b>33</b>

## Message from the **Minister for Education**

Dr Justyne Caruana



It is the responsibility of any government, to improve the education system and ensure that all children and youths are given the opportunity to attend schooling and acquire the knowledge and skills they need to lead healthy and productive lives. Key inputs to the education system, such as curricula, teachers, and education infrastructure, help to improve the quality of education.

The Sustainable Development Goals, as defined by the United Nations, require countries to “build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive, and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive, and effective learning environments for all.”

Recent studies have shown that students’ performance is enhanced in schools with better physical learning environments. New technologies and emerging pedagogical practices have created new requirements for educational buildings. As a result, new approaches to building learning environments must be developed that both create better spaces for children and increase the efficiency of investments in educational infrastructure, including digital infrastructure.

Upon being appointed Minister for Education, I insisted on the need of our educational infrastructure to be welcoming and inclusive for all, including for children and youth with different abilities. In this regards I reiterate my commitment for a truly accessible and inclusive education for all.

Our educational spaces must be modern, comfortable, practical and fully equipped with all the equipment needed for today’s teaching and learning standards. The heavy investment in labs for various vocational subjects within senior schools are a case in point where students are given the opportunity to learn and train in different vocational subjects. We must provide spaces for our children to identify their talents, such as drama, music, arts, and sports, and to develop such talents.

Over the past eight years Government has invested substantially in the modernisation of our educational infrastructure. We shifted from an ad hoc approach to investment to a more coordinated and studied approach: The ‘Holistic Project Plan for State Schools’ which is a practical vision of where we want to take our schools in the coming years.

I emphasised on the importance of investment being done equivocally all over the Maltese Islands. In this regard, in Gozo, I have launched a €35 million investment, to regenerate the educational infrastructure making it environmentally sustainable and to address the needs of Gozitan students.

As a Government, we are committed more than ever to support the Foundation for Tomorrow's Schools in administering the capital investment in our educational infrastructure. I thank all the FTS personnel for their commitment towards attaining this goal. Our efforts will result in increasing educator motivation and learning results.

Dr Justyne Caruana

## Message from the **Chairperson**

Dr Cory Greenland



The Foundation for Tomorrow's Schools (FTS) is part of the fabric of education in Malta. It is part of everyday life of those who work within the sector, of policy makers, educators and most importantly, of our young citizens. In itself this is a huge achievement. FTS is trusted by various stakeholders, not least educators, as an efficient and target-oriented public entity which delivers results.

This trust in the Foundation comes with its challenges. It has to respond to the needs of the education community which is more diverse than ever before. It has to adapt to different socio-educational backgrounds of pupils and students, to different abilities and different needs. It has to keep in touch with policy makers and educators about ongoing developments in the sector. It has to keep abreast with technological advancements.

The year 2020 was a challenging year for all, not least for the education sector. Schools and workplaces were forced closed because of the pandemic caused by the virus Covid-19. In one way it enabled us to deliver more work in schools which were previously still operational when we were carrying out refurbishment works in them. On the other hand, we experienced some problems with issues related to the supply of material from abroad, as well as a reduction in manpower. Another challenge was the fact that our employees had to be physically present on sites to carry out their duties at a time when everyone was afraid of the virus. Our people have my appreciation and deserve the admiration of all.

Thanks to the contribution of all employees, FTS has had some notable successes, such as the completion of a new primary school at Qawra; the progress of works at the secondary school at Żejtun, which remained operational throughout; the commencement of construction works at the secondary school at Santa Luċija, whereby we are constructing a community hall and a sports complex; the refurbishment and restoration of the Malta School of Art at Valletta; and the planning of various other projects. Another major achievement was the commencement of works on the 'Holistic Plan for State Schools' set out by the Ministry for Education, where the needs of every State school were identified and classified according to the type and urgency of the need, with works planned to be completed in the coming years. A more comprehensive report about our achievements during 2020 can be found in the subsequent pages.

During the year under review, the Foundation engaged a new Chief Executive Officer following a public call. Dr Neville Young, a warranted lawyer by profession, has years of experience in corporate governance and general strategic management. At FTS he is working on bringing about a culture change and is working to put in place sound management procedures to deliver projects effectively and efficiently in full compliance with good governance and accountability.

The past year was a year of achievements in terms of our human assets as well. The number of new employees recruited during 2020 represents a quarter of the whole workforce as at the end of the year. During the year under review, active discussions have been taking place between FTS, the Industrial Relations Unit within the People and Standards Division and the General Workers' Union with the aim of introducing the first Collective Agreement covering our employees. Throughout the year, FTS continued to invest in the skills and abilities of its employees by supporting them in training opportunities, including financial support to those undergoing academic training.

Looking ahead, we continue to face a number of significant challenges, which cause the constant need to re-engineer our image, systems, structures and work organisation.

My appointment as Chairperson occurred after the end of year in review. Therefore, I would like to thank all members of the Board of the year 2020 along with the CEO, Dr Neville Young, and the management team that he leads, as well as the employees of the Foundation for their dedication and for ensuring that project targets were satisfactorily met. I also thank the current Board and Dr Young for their assistance in fast-tracking my familiarisation process subsequent to my recent appointment.

It has been an honour to be appointed Chairperson of the FTS by the Minister for Education, the Hon. Dr Justyne Caruana. Education infrastructure in Malta and in Gozo is a major priority for Government and education policy makers. FTS shall keep its commitment to continue designing and implementing high-quality, inclusive and accessible learning spaces for our young citizens and future generations, ensuring that our projects are also of value-added to their respective communities. We shall keep supporting Government, education policy makers, and educators in their efforts to strengthen student achievement.

Dr Cory Greenland

## Message from the **Chief Executive Officer**

Dr Neville Young



The past year has seen unprecedented challenges to the delivery of infrastructure as a result of the sudden onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. We found ourselves suddenly shifting to working in a virtual environment and rethinking the way we operate to address the new realities brought about. Delays and disruptions to completion of major projects were inevitable as supply chains, material and manpower were adversely impacted. This notwithstanding, we still managed to close major projects successfully, in particular the new state-of-the-art Qawra primary school in time for student intake, the construction of a footbridge and footpath connecting the two wings of the Liceo at Hamrun Secondary School and the completion of the first three blocks at the Żejtun Secondary School which include labs and workshops for vocational subjects. In this respect, 2020 highlighted the importance of being able to react, adapt and set up alternative mechanisms. As we respond to the challenges facing us, we are pursuing alternative resilient strategies. The project disciplines of expert planning and delivery, assurance, and sound governance have never been more important.

While the key focus for 2020 was to keep momentum on ongoing projects, as we enter a new decade we have more opportunities to magnify our core operations. New technologies and emerging pedagogical practices create new requirements for educational buildings. In parallel, our commitment to sustainability is important and enduring. Hence, as we set out the priority work-streams that FTS will be conducting during 2021, we are realigning our projects with innovation in construction towards a carbon neutral impact environment.

To this effect we have secured €100 million in loan facilities to fund our educational projects in line with the Government's commitment. However, as we continue to deliver a portfolio of projects, we still face challenges of delays and cost increases or quality commitments for an array of reasons. We still need to fill the gaps in our project control environment. In particular, we need to invest our energy in the pre-tendering stage to have the assurance of proper commitment throughout every project initiation and build period. We need to set clear standards for every project delivery, whatever its nature and value, and to drive for continuous improvement. We should endeavour to create a consistent culture of world-class project delivery. We need to address the systematic challenges which impact on major project delivery confidence. There are so many opportunities that we will pursue.



Late in 2020 we were faced with the findings of an NAO report. The report identified several shortfalls which could be felt across the modus operandi of the Foundation. These lessons highlight a basic theme – accountability must be unambiguous. We took swift and comprehensive action to rectify shortfalls. Most of the recommendations made by the Auditor General were taken on board and are being implemented. Yet the report reinforced our view that a consistent focus on the fundamentals of project delivery is key to improving project management and successful outcomes and confirms the need for strategic changes aimed at improving its relevance to the evolving priorities and demands in line with statutory obligations and operational exigencies. We have thus kick started the process to have in place a dedicated, strong and professional project management team committed towards a transformational approach in delivering projects effectively and efficiently with full respect to good governance and accountability.

Going forward we must be relentless in our focus on meeting statutory obligations, promote best practice by setting standards, and be strong advocates for good governance. While we are sharpening our focus on improving governance structures and foster transparency in project performance, my driving principle is to invest in our workforce and reinforce it to become more focused on operating to high standards. In this respect we are undergoing negotiations to have in place the first collective agreement for FTS employees.

As it enters its 20th year anniversary, the Foundation must keep evolving and improve on its performance. There is no room for complacency and we must push for exceptional performance. Our ambition is to deliver a revolution in the way our infrastructural projects are delivered. In order to improve future delivery, we need to make sure we are identifying the right lessons from projects that have gone before and we are applying them to projects that come next. Ensuring lessons from previous issues with project delivery are embedded in current and future project delivery practice. Every employee has a part to play in making this happen, and the management has a key role in enabling the transformation.

We're committed to providing the best learning environments at public schools across Malta and Gozo. Uplifting pedagogical loci have today become a basic necessity for contemporary cognitive learning. In this regard FTS intends to refurbish and modernize the school infrastructure by adopting novel approaches in both pedagogical methodologies and the design of scholastic spaces aimed towards creating friendly inspirational spaces and palliative buildings that respect the environment and impart positive atmospheres which prepare, without discrimination, the younger generation for the fast evolving future world. Hence, the renovation of these schools will create learning spaces which are therefore not only eco-friendly in terms of carbon-neutrality, but will also be inspirational and uplifting learning loci to ensure interactive teaching and learning that elevate the students' mind-set.

As we emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic, we cannot afford to waste the opportunity to do things smarter, faster and ultimately more productively whilst recognising the complex environment that we operate in. In 2021 we will strive for better and still better results. We are forerunners in terms of keeping environmental concerns at the core of our work. In October last year we laid the foundation stones for the construction of new primary schools at Msida and Victoria, Gozo, and works soon begun on site. The schools will be a showcase of green initiatives with added proponents such as insulation, energy and water saving and green areas. This will be followed next year with the likes of Nadur and Għaxaq primary schools both of which will be given a complete facelift.

Dr Neville Young

# OUR PROJECTS



Our projects vary in nature. The Ministry for Education, through the Education Logistics and Administration Unit within the Department for Strategy and Support, has developed a holistic plan where the needs of each and every state school for the coming years were identified and classified according to the type and urgency of the need. Following this classification exercise, the Ministry split the needs of state schools in three different categories – major projects, large scale projects and small-scale projects.

Major projects include projects for new schools, schools that require extensions and full refurbishment projects. Under large scale projects are those of a substantial scale but which do not necessarily classify as major as they include only extensive parts of the school. The small-scale projects include state schools' projects in specific areas such as new school furniture, new sanitary facilities, maintenance of the external envelope of the building, landscaping works, outside play areas refurbishment, and new internal apertures.

FTS is responsible for the complete cycle of these projects, that is, the design, planning application process, procurement and the actual implementation and commissioning thereof. Some projects, such as the construction of the new Maria Regina College Qawra Primary School, have been completed, while others, such as the restoration and refurbishment of the Mikiel Anton Vassalli College Malta School of Art and the St. Thomas More Żejtun Secondary School, are at a very advanced stage.

The year under review was challenging for FTS, yet it was a year of achievements. The pandemic caused by the Covid-19 virus brought with it new sudden challenges for many sectors, including education, with online learning replacing the physical attendance in our school facilities. In some instances this gave us space to carry out works and progress faster on our projects. Otherwise, delays and disruptions to completion of major projects were inevitable across all sectors, including ours, as supply chains, material and manpower were adversely impacted.

The following is an update on our capital projects throughout 2020.

## Completion of the New **Maria Regina College Qawra Primary School**

In October 2020, we saw the inauguration of the new state-of-the-art Maria Regina College Qawra Primary School by the Hon. Prime Minister Dr Robert Abela, in the presence of the then Minister for Education and Employment, the Hon. Dr Owen Bonnici. Plans to build the school came about to relieve overcrowding at the Maria Regina College St. Paul's Bay Primary School, which had been built before the locality experienced a population boom, becoming one of Malta's most densely inhabited localities in the process.

The school is spread over four floors, and includes 39 air-conditioned classrooms equipped with interactive screens, vocational learning labs, a childcare centre and a kindergarten. Most classrooms are equipped with respective sanitary facilities, which is a first for local state schools. The new school also includes other facilities, such as a multi-purpose hall, large outdoor sports facilities and an underlying two-storey car park for 400 vehicles. These facilities all have separate entrances and are intended for use by the community after school hours.

The new school, which has a capacity to host 650 students was built with a capital outlay of €13 million in full respect to the environment. Green-friendly materials were used during the construction phase, rainwater is harvested in reservoirs and recycled for landscape irrigation amongst others, double-glazed windows were installed and adequate shading structures overlooking the south-east side were affixed to the façade. Other environmental measures adopted relate to the energy systems performance.



The Prime Minister, the Hon. Dr Robert Abela, with the then Minister for Education and Employment, the Hon. Dr Owen Bonnici, following the official inauguration of the new Maria Regina College Qawra Primary School in October 2020.



Upper image: Classroom at the new Maria Regina College Qawra Primary School.  
Bottom image: Aerial shot of the same school.

## Two Blocks Bridged at the **St. George Preca College Hamrun Secondary School**

The St. George Preca College Hamrun Secondary School, formerly known as 'The Lyceum' or 'Il-Liċeo', was originally made up of two main buildings. It has been decided that a footpath and a footbridge be constructed on the first and second floor levels respectively so as to facilitate the educators' and students' moves from one wing of the school to the other. Works were completed on time with an investment exceeding half a million euro.

The first phase of the project included the dismantling and carting away of part of the outer facade walls, as well as reinforced concrete top and bottom slabs, which served as ceiling and floorings respectively. The second phase of the project consisted in the construction of the first-floor covered walkway. From an implementation point of view, this project involved the coordination of a number of trades, such as earth works, concrete works, structural reinforcement works, superstructure works, masonry works, waterproofing works, rendering and painting works, electrical works, paving works and storm water works.

This bridging at every level of the school, made a considerable improvement in the quality of life of those using the school and prevents the inconvenience and time wasting in transferring from one wing to the other.

## Restoration and Major Refurbishment of the **Mikiel Anton Vassalli College Malta School of Art at Valletta**

We are very fond of this €5 million project comprising of the full restoration and refurbishment of the Mikiel Anton Vassalli College Malta School of Art at Valletta which will see the school turned into a specialized state-of-the-art modern teaching-learning space.

The Malta School of Art was founded in the early 20th Century at Casa Tessi, also known as Casa Brunet, in the lower part of Old Bakery Street, Valletta. Since its establishment, it exerted a significant influence on the progress and artistic research of visual arts in Malta. It also acted as one of the prime sources of artistic education. Among the most renowned artists who had their formal education at the Malta School of Art are Antoine Camilleri, Victor Diacono, Harry Alden, Vincent Apap, Willie Apap, Esprit Barthes, Anton Inglott and Carmelo Mangion.

This elegant and elaborate 18th century palace, once owned by a French knight at the time of the Order, has been restored and refurbished to very high standards and once complete will include accessibility measures, appropriate workshops, studios and hardware to meet the demands of good quality teaching and learning of the creative and fine arts in an environment that respects the building's and the city's prestigious historical heritage.



Artistic rendering of how the Mikiel Anton Vassalli College Malta School of Art will look like following its restoration and refurbishment.





Works in progress at the Mikiel Anton Vassalli College Malta School of Art.

## Construction of the New **St. Theresa College Msida Primary School**

Demolition of the building housing the old St. Theresa College Msida Primary School and excavation of site were completed in 2020. Part of the old school façade has been retained and will be incorporated in the new building in accordance with the requirements set out by the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage. This paved the way for the commencement of construction works of a completely new school on the same site in a €10 million project with an overall area of 10,000 square meters and having 40 classes, outdoor recreational facilities, a childcare centre, a public library and a hall that will accommodate about 300 people. The public library, the hall and even an amount of recreational space will be able to be used by the local community after school hours. A part of this project will also include a new complex for the Msida Sea Scouts. Plans comprise also of two levels of underground parking.

Construction works commenced in the last quarter of the year which were characterized with the laying of the foundation stone in October by the then Minister for Education and Employment, the Hon. Dr Owen Bonnici and the Parliamentary Secretary for Youth, Sport and Voluntary Organisations, the Hon. Dr Clifton Grima.

Once ready, the new primary school will feature two innovative concepts, namely the introduction of an outdoor classroom environment and the creation of a vertical green wall on one of the school's facades which will extend to the school's playgrounds. Moreover, in line with environmentally friendly measures, rain water will be collected in specifically constructed wells to be recycled and used for landscape irrigation and flushing of sanitary facilities. Technical studies were also conducted on the proposed plans in collaboration with the University of Malta, aimed at arriving to appropriate and cost-optimal measures to bring the designs of the school to nearly zero-energy status. Several energy efficiency measures were adopted and included in the design. These include the use of improved low emissivity double-glazed windows, ample shading through vertical fins on the South-East side, and roof insulation to improve the U-value. Other measures related to the energy systems performance include the use of heat pump water heaters with COP of 3 or more, high efficiency air-conditioners with COP of 4 and EER of 3.8 and high efficiency T5 luminaires. Rooftop solar photovoltaics of 220kWp system will also be installed. These measures will bring the new St. Theresa College Msida Primary School to a Class A school rating.



Upper image: The then Minister for Education and Employment, the Hon. Dr Owen Bonnici, and the then Parliamentary Secretary for Youth, Sport and Voluntary Organisations, the Hon. Dr Clifton Grima, during the foundation stone laying ceremony on the site of the new St. Theresa College Msida Primary School.

Bottom image: Artistic rendering of how one of the internal playgrounds will look like at the new St. Theresa College Msida Primary School.

## Construction of a New **Gozo College Victoria Primary School**

## and Major Refurbishment of the **Gozo College Victoria Middle School**

At Victoria, Gozo, we started two major projects with a capital investment of more than €14 million. These are the construction of an extension and the full refurbishment of the existing middle school and the construction of the new primary school within the present educational campus.

The need for a larger and more adequate primary school for today's demands in Victoria has been felt for a number of years given also the fact that the present school building is approximately 160 years old. The new primary school will have 16 classrooms for primary education and 10 classrooms for kindergarten. The school will also have classrooms for specific subjects, such as science, information technology and the arts. Together, the primary school and the kindergarten will be able to take approximately 650 pupils. Apart of builing a new school, the adjacent middle shool is being extended and fully refurbished and modernised.

Both projects are being done concurrently and once completed, the educational campus at Victoria will include a childcare centre, a kindergarten, a primary school, a middle school, a senior school, a sixth form college and various sports facilities including outdoor facilities having a footprint of circa 3,000 sq.m. Construction of the whole project will take up to December 2021 with mechanical, electrical and finishes works earmarked to be completed by end 2022. Obviously these time-lines much depend on external factors which can have delaying effects on the overall progress of the project. Vast archeological findings were found on-site which will be integrated within the design of the school albeit shifting the execution period. Otherwise excavation is carried out cautiously under the supervision of the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage, while heavy machinery is not being used during school hours so as not to disrupt its operations.



Artistic rendering of how the Gozo College Primary and Middle Schools will look like once completed.

## Modernisation of the

# St. Thomas More College Żejtun Secondary School

The St. Thomas More College Żejtun Secondary School is currently undergoing a €5 million modernization project which includes the constitution of an additional floor on each block within the school and the total refurbishment of the whole school. This project is being done in phases since the school is remaining operational during the scholastic year. For the duration of most works, some students were moved to temporary classrooms which were installed by FTS on site. These temporary classrooms are fully insulated and equipped with air-conditioning systems, as well as sanitary facilities and other equipment, including the interactive boards.

In the beginning of 2020 the first two renovated blocks within this school opened their doors to students and educators. One of these blocks is being used for vocational education training. It includes labs and workshops for the teaching of vocational subjects such as those directly related to the catering and hospitality industry, hairdressing and beauty care, textiles, media literacy, wood working and engineering. The block also includes new science, chemistry and biology labs. These teaching-learning spaces are designed by FTS architects, based on the brief by education policymakers, with the aim of creating an environment that is very close to the world of work. The scope is to facilitate the students' transition from education to the labour market.

In the autumn of 2020, the third block was inaugurated and opened its doors to students and educators. During excavation works as part of this phase, workers discovered archaeological remains which archaeologists consider to be an old quarry, possibly dating to Roman times. The remains were restored under the supervision of the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage and the space was integrated in the design of the new school library. Upon completion of this phase, FTS started works on the fourth and final lecture block, with works were nearing completion by the end of the year. The next phases of works within this school include the construction of an additional floor on the administration building and its full refurbishment, the full refurbishment of the school hall, and the landscaping of the green areas and sports facilities of the school. The latter phase will also include the demolition of the present school boundary wall and the construction of a new modern one, which will integrate green features.



Upper image: The Hospitality lab at St. Thomas More College Żejtun Secondary School.  
Bottom image: The Hair and Beauty Care lab at St. Thomas More College Żejtun Secondary School.

## Construction of a Multipurpose Hall and Sports Complex at **St. Thomas More College Santa Lucija Secondary School**

St. Thomas More College Santa Lucija Secondary School opened its doors in 1997 but lacked a number of important facilities, namely a gymnasium and a hall. Different school administrations asked the education authorities to construct a new hall adjacent to the school as they were forced to seek alternative premises from where to organise their social events.

During 2020 works were underway on the construction of a multipurpose hall and a sports complex within the existing school perimeter, which is being carried out with an investment of €4 million. Once completed, the school will have a modern multipurpose hall which can take over 450 seated persons. The sports complex is intended for various sports disciplines namely basketball, futsal, badminton and volleyball. Both the hall and the sports complex will be made available for use by the local community after school hours.



Progress of works and artistic rendering of the St. Thomas More College Santa Lucija Secondary School multipurpose hall and sports complex.





Upper image: Minister for Education, the Hon. Dr Justyne Caruana, with FTS CEO, Dr Neville Young, inspecting works related to the multipurpose hall and sports complex project at St. Thomas More College Santa Luċija Secondary School.  
Bottom image: Works in progress at the multipurpose hall at St. Thomas More College Santa Luċija Secondary School.

## Small Scale Projects at Various Schools

In line with the Holistic Project Plan for State Schools, during the year under review, FTS was engaged on a number of other projects, some of which are still at design stage. Albeit considered as small scale projects, these projects are extensive, time consuming and require substantial capital investment.

Small scale projects vary in nature, namely civil works, mechanical and electrical works, and finishes. Works include the installation of new furniture, the refurbishment of sanitary facilities, improvements on the external facades of schools, landscaping, the refurbishment of outdoor play areas and installation of sports equipment, the maintenance and installation of existing and new synthetic turf surfaces, the replacement of gymnasium timber floors, the installation of apertures and blinds, the installation of passenger lifts, waterproofing works, new lighting systems for sports facilities, and the installation of new air-conditioning systems, water pumps and CCTV systems. These works are considered as highly important by both the education authorities and the FTS as they contribute to a significant improvement in the quality of life for both our children and educators.

Such works include the upgrading of sanitary facilities at St. George Preca College Hamrun Primary and Secondary Schools respectively, Maria Regina College Young Adults Education Resource Centre at Wardija, St. Nicholas College Rabat Primary School and St. Ignatius College Qormi (San Ġorġ) Primary School; the refurbishment of school facades at St. Theresa College Santa Venera Primary School, St. Thomas More College Fgura Primary School and St. Nicholas College Had-Dingli Primary School; the restructuring of the car park at Maria Regina College Mosta Secondary School and the laying of new artificial turf on the sports ground above; the replacements of ceilings at St. Ignatius College Qormi (San Bastjan) Primary School; the restoration of an old timber lantern at St. Margaret College Verdala Secondary School at Cospicua; the refurbishment at the Examinations Department offices at Floriana; and the funding of a new childcare centre within the Ministry for Education complex at Floriana. At various schools we are replacing old apertures, installing new sports furniture and equipment and replacing of soft flooring at sports grounds.

The projects mentioned above and which we refer to as “small scale projects”, involve an investment of approximately €6 million.

## Upcoming Capital Projects

In the year under review consultations on other various major projects were concluded. Designs were agreed upon and submitted to the Planning Authority for approval.

These projects include: the construction of an extension and the full refurbishment of the St. Ignatius College Hal Qormi (San Ġorġ) Primary School, St. Benedict College Hal Għaxaq Primary School, Maria Regina College Naxxar Primary School and Maria Regina College Mellieħa Primary School; the full refurbishment of the Gozo College Nadur Primary School; the construction of the new St. Nicholas College Rabat Primary School; the construction of a football ground and facilities at Giovanni Curmi Higher Secondary School at Naxxar; the construction of St. Claire College San Miguel Primary Education Resource Centre for children with disability at Żejtun, and the new Aġenzija Żgħażaġħ Youth Mobility Centre at Santa Venera.

As a result of our work, our schools are providing a better environment and educational experience.



Upper image: Artistic rendering of how the St. Claire College San Miguel Primary Education Resource Centre will look like.  
Bottom image: Artistic rendering of how the internal playground of the Gozo College Nadur Primary School will look like following extensive refurbishment of the school.

# OUR HUMAN ASSETS

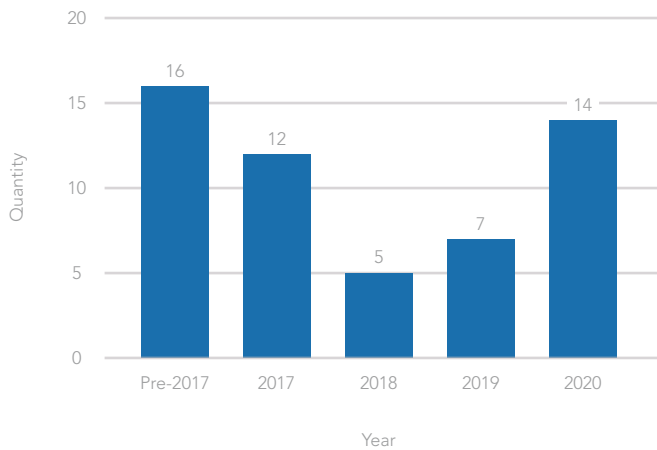


We believe that our human resources are the Foundation’s most vital asset. A highly skilled professional and technical workforce is essential if we are to meet all our organisational requirements. We can only achieve our goals through the positive contribution of our people.

During the year under review, FTS engaged 14 new employees. The total staff complement now stands at 54. Therefore, the new employees engaged during 2020 represents 26% of the total employees as at end of December 2020. Out of these new employees, 13 were selected through public calls, while one was loaned from the Resource Support and Services Limited (RSSL). The new employees were mostly engaged in professional and technical grades.

The average age of FTS employees stood at just 42 years.

New entrants at FTS (data includes employees detailed and/or loaned from the Public Administration):



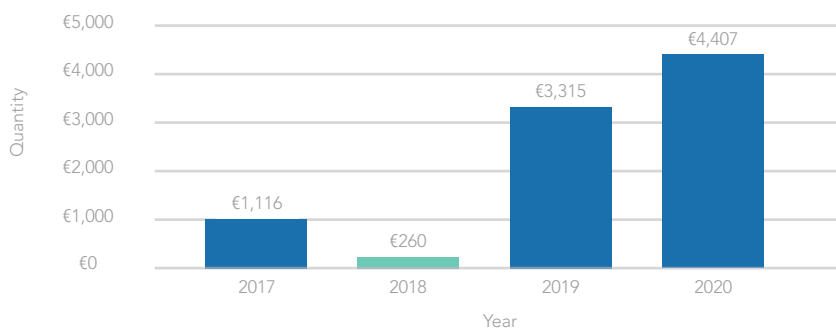
# Training and Development

FTS seeks to provide a stimulating work environment and offers its employees opportunities for learning and career development. During 2020, five employees undertook short training programmes in their area and between them received a total of 160 hours of training. Although training opportunities were halted in the Spring when the country was hit by the pandemic, the amount of training hours received by FTS employees compared well to previous years. Four other employees were undergoing academic training at Bachelors and Masters level in Engineering, Architecture, Project Management, and Health and Safety. These were sponsored by the FTS. This investment in our human assets totals nearly €25,000.

During the year under review FTS continued to offer a sponsorship in the form of an apprenticeship to an MCAST student who is currently reading for the Advanced Diploma in Construction Engineering at MQF Level 4.

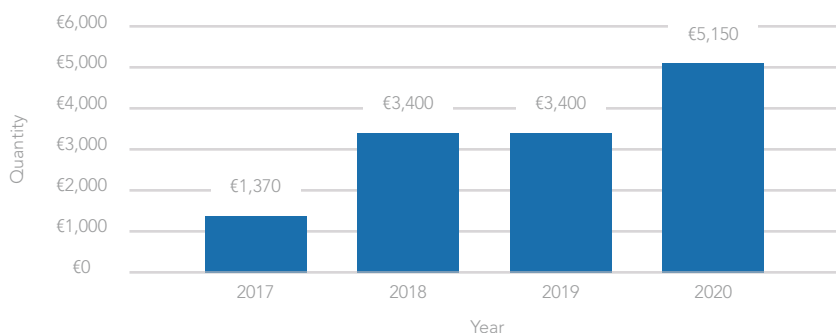
Current data as at end December 2020 shows that 30 employees hold a tertiary level of education (a Bachelor's Degree or higher). This represents 56% of the total workforce. Two employees are in possession of a Doctorate Degree.

Investment in sponsorships of training programmes undertaken by FTS employees over the years (excluding sponsorships for academic training):



- *During 2018, FTS provided in-house training on health and safety on the workplace to 21 employees whose duties required them to work from construction sites. The costs related to this training does not feature in this data, however training consisted of 189 man-hours.*

Investment in sponsorships of an academic level (from Bachelor's Degree at MQF Level 6 or higher) over the years:



## Work-Life Balance Measures

During 2020 we continued to implement a number of family-friendly measures such as flexible working hours for all staff members, as well as reduced working hours' schedules and telework arrangements to help employees establish a better balance between their family and work responsibilities. Between March and June, as well as from November onwards, FTS employees were allowed to work remotely due to the pandemic. We have to point out however, that between March and June, when most people in Malta were working from the comfort of their own home, our project managers and project supervisors, as well as other employees whose duties require them to be on sites, continued with their normal work routine on different sites. We thank them for their hard work during this very challenging time.

## Employee Wellbeing

The wellbeing of our employees remained our top priority. During 2020 we engaged a new Health and Safety Officer. The Health and Safety team is now composed of two officials who regularly visit FTS sites to ensure that all works strictly adhere to statutory health and safety standards. These are also responsible for the in-house training of our employees.

## First FTS-Employees Collective Agreement

In the year under review talks continued with the employees' officially recognised representatives, namely the General Workers' Union, and with the Industrial Relations Unit of the People and Standards Division within the Office of the Prime Minister, aimed to deliver the first collective agreement for FTS employees. At the end of the year, talks were at a very advanced stage and the agreement is expected to be concluded during 2021.



# OUR FINANCING AND PURCHASING



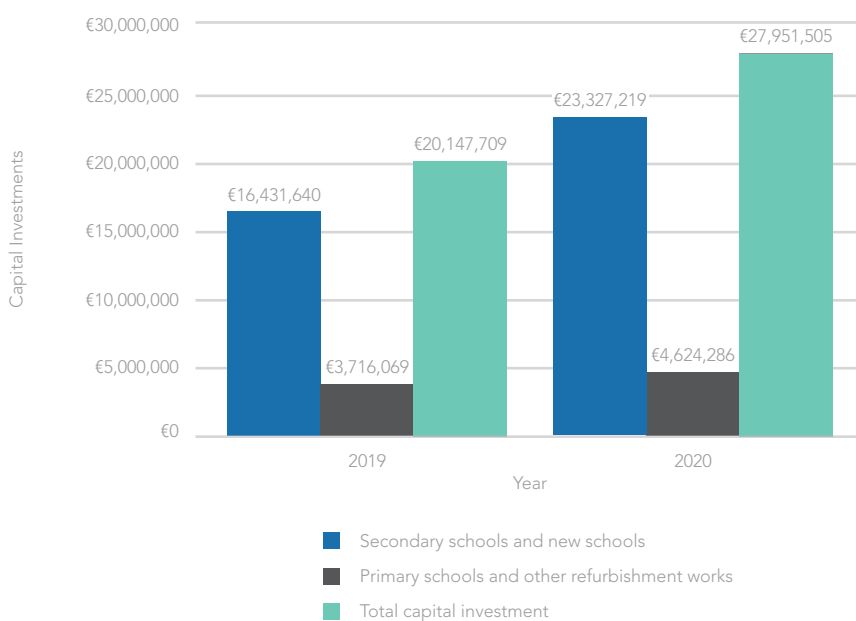
# Financing

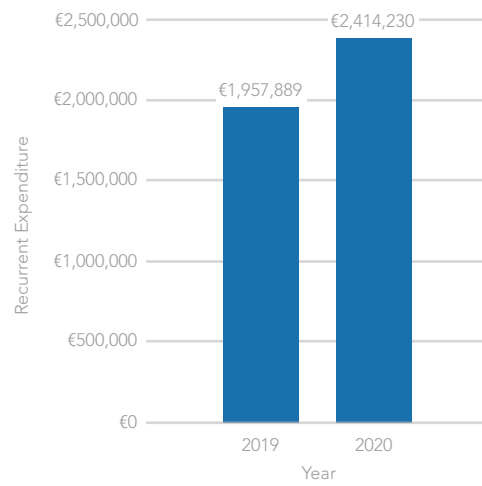
In recent years, FTS funding shifted from the traditional funding system under the annual government capital budget to loans issued by HSBC Bank Malta plc that are underpinned by guarantees by the Government of Malta.

During 2020, FTS sought adequate financial resources to successfully implement the ambitious extensive works programme of the Ministry for Education.

To this effect, discussions and negotiations were held with local banks in a bid to sanction additional loan facilities. It was decided that two separate loans of €50 million each are introduced so as to enable FTS to continue with its mission for the next four years. Following consultations with the Ministry of Finance, FTS successfully concluded its negotiations and a sanction letter was issued in November 2020 which included the newly added loan facilities. Amongst other favourable conditions, it is to be noted that the two newly added loan facilities are enjoying lower interest rates. Moreover, the interest rate of an existing loan has also been revised downwards to be in line with the newly added loans.

The following are some financial statistics:





FTS closed the financial year 2020 in a break-even position – in fact, this year’s administrative expenses (recurrent expenditure) was below the 10% maximum threshold.

## Public Procurement

During the year under review FTS issued an estimated €41 million (excluding VAT) worth of calls through tenders, quotations and direct orders. This represents a 44% increase over the previous year. Of these 31 tenders were issued through the Department of Contracts with a value of €37,545,077 (excluding VAT). Another 51 tenders were published through the Ministerial Procurement Unit within the Ministry for Education and Employment. The latter had a value of €2,927,061 (excluding VAT).



**Foundation  
for Tomorrow's  
Schools**