

ITAMA PROJECT



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 **Interreg**
Italia-Malta



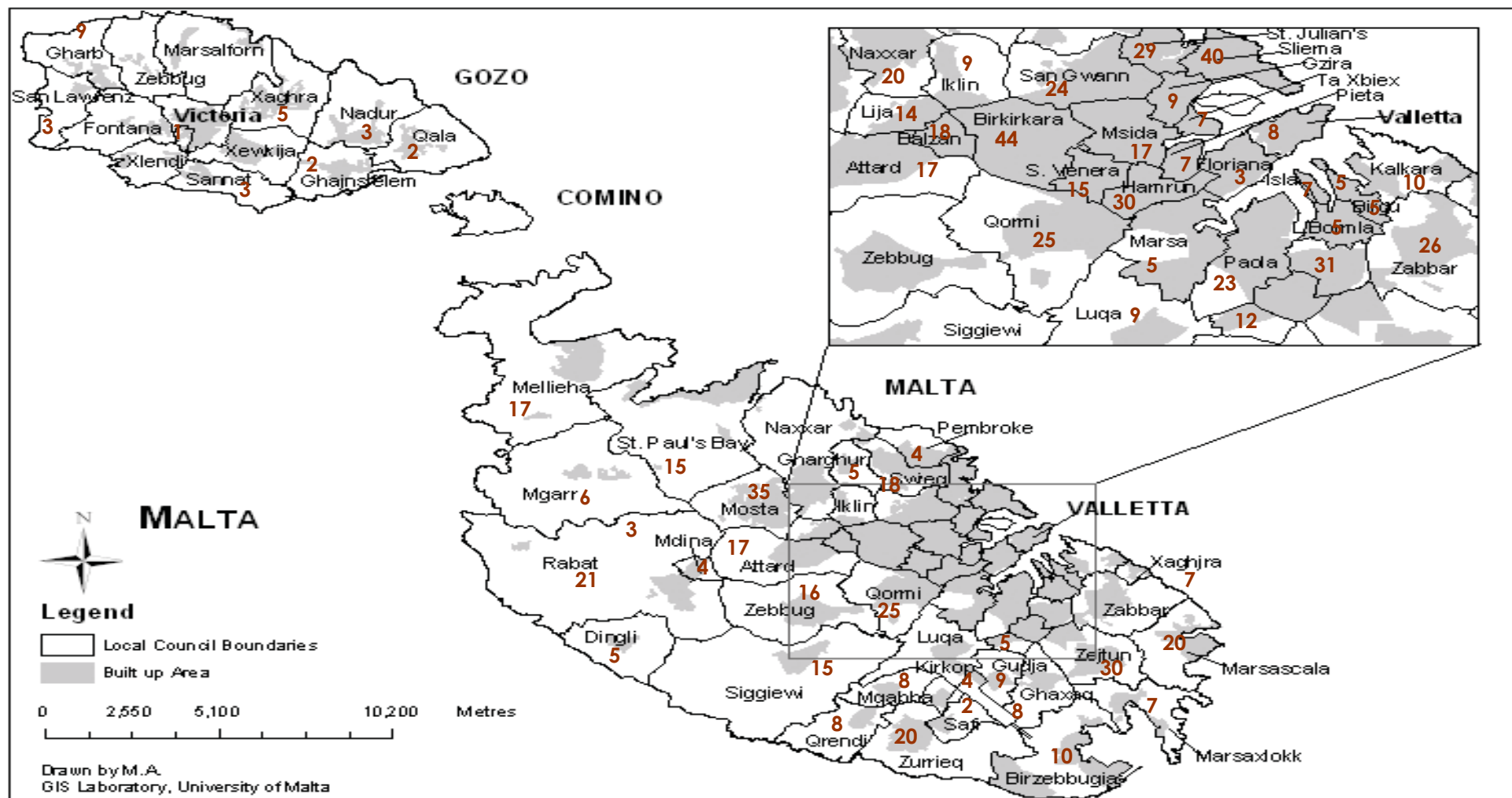
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- **Bellizzi, M.** (1992).The Maltese Food Revolution : An analysis of the eating habits in Malta.

- wheat products (bread and pasta), and rice are the major source of energy in the Maltese diet contributing a third to the total energy
- The staple cereal in Malta is wheat, mainly as bread (78%) and then, mainly as local white bread (99%).
- Pasta contributes 11% to the total purchase of cereal products .

Regional distribution of Coeliac Disease in the Maltese Islands*



* Crude prevalence individuals receiving benefits for GFD

Clinical Case recognition in the Maltese Islands

- Prevalence of CD based on clinical diagnosis & GFD: 1.9 / 1,000 (1 in 526 gen. Popⁿ)

Older age at diagnosis of paediatric cases

C. Vella, V Grech *Ind. J Peds* 2004

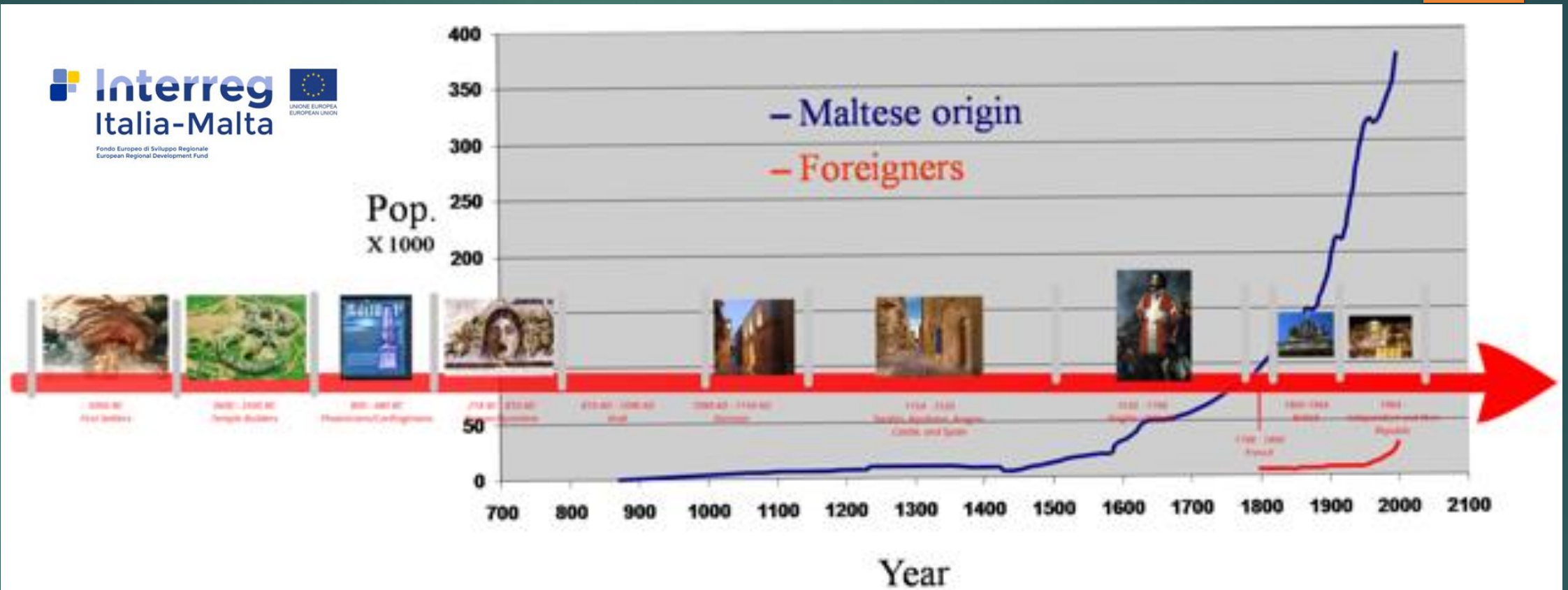
- *cf* Analogous population based study (clinical presentation / GFD) from Sicily - prevalence 1.65/1,000; adjusted actual standardized rate 3 /1,000 .

Magazzú G, et al. *Acta Paediatr.* 1994;83(10):1065-9.

- *cf* worldwide average 1:3345, on clinical, 1:266 on screening data †

† Fasano & Catassi, *Gastroenterology* 2001; 120:636-651.

Origin of the Maltese Population



- The islands were inhabited from around 5000 B.C. till 800 A.D.
- Became uninhabited for a short period between the year 800-1000 A.D.
- Slow immigration from Sicily starting from 1000 A.D with a high immigration flow from Sicily and South Italy from 1530 A.D. onwards.



Joseph Borg
Angela A. Xuereb Christopher Vidal
Christian A. Scerri

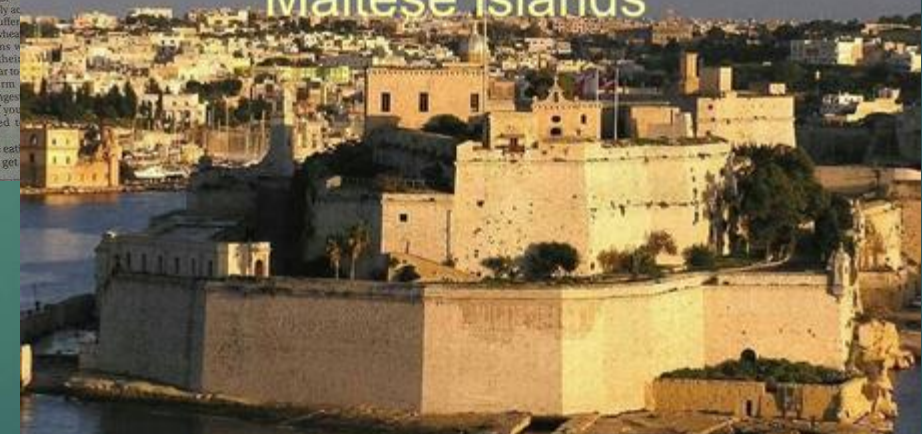
The Genetics of Coeliac Disease in Malta

The role of Cytotoxic T-Lymphocyte Associated Antigen 4 in Coeliac Disease Predisposition



“Gluten has been proven to have many negative effects, but only in a small percentage of the population who suffer from certain gluten-related medical conditions”

Coeliac Disease in the Maltese Islands



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ACTION PLAN – TWO STAGES

Identification of potential cases.

- ▶ Information leaflet with consent and validated questionnaire
- ▶ Point of care tests - human resources

Confirmation of cases.

- ▶ Criteria for further testing
- ▶ Investigation and free access to treatment

DATA COLLECTION

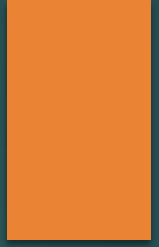
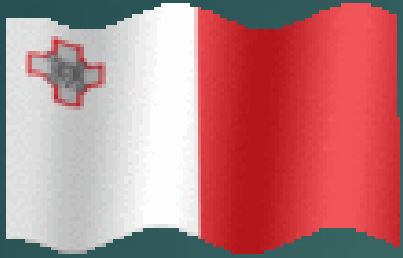
STAGE 1 - Large number of children – estimated 20,000
Testing done by appropriately trained personnel.

- ▶ Information Booklet + Questionnaire + Consent form
- ▶ Point Of Care Test



OUTCOMES

- ▶ Data generation
- ▶ Application of the research to build the computer programme
- ▶ Cost-effectiveness of a screening programme
- ▶ Inter-regional co-operation and connections
- ▶ Possible application of a similar strategy for other autoimmune diseases



Thank You For Your
Attention



Coeliac Disease research carried out in Malta.

- [Letter: identifying coeliac disease among patients with bloating.](#)
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Aliment Pharmacol Ther. 2018 Oct;48(8):882-883. doi: 10.1111/apt.14918. No abstract available.
PMID: 30281838
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PMID: 29099090 [Free PMC Article](#)
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PMID: 27836013 [Free PMC Article](#)
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 6. Ellul P, Schembri J, Torpiano P, Borg J, Azzopardi N.
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