



GOVERNMENT  
OF MALTA



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# ITAMA\_CAP Project in the schools of Malta



 **Interreg**  
**Italia-Malta**  
**ITAMA\_CAP**



Fondo Europeo di Sviluppo Regionale  
European Regional Development Fund



# WHO ARE WE?

- A group of doctors working at Mater Dei Hospital within the Department of Pathology and Paediatrics.
- Working in tandem with other doctors in Sicily – University of Palermo.
- Kore University of Enna – management of databases and software tools and analysis of data collected.

## Project ITAMA\_CAP - EU funded project between Sicily and Malta

- 9 month period to investigate coeliac disease in Sicily and Malta
- Better indication of population with coeliac disease and incidence amongst adults/children
- Potentially avoiding invasive procedures in adults as well as children



# WHAT IS COELIAC DISEASE?

- Sensitivity of the intestines to gluten – a protein found in wheat, rye, barley.
- Multiple ways of presentation – growth delay, weakness, anaemia, recurrent abdominal pain, diarrhoea, food aversion.
- Mostly undiagnosed – long term risk of bowel cancer.
- Complications can be avoided by following a diet free from gluten.



# THE PROBLEM

- A population with an uncertain incidence/prevalence.
- Current practice – case referral and investigation. Large number of individuals investigated unnecessarily - expensive.
- Proposed system of screening- using an inexpensive test and validated questionnaire. More targeted approach for testing of selected cases.



# ACTION PLAN – TWO STAGES

Identification of potential cases.

- Online registration with GDPR 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 students – estimated 10,000  
Testing done by appropriately trained personnel.

- Information document + Online Registration including GDPR Consent form and Questionnaire
- Point Of Care Test



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## **WE NEED YOUR HELP**

Appoint a Liaison officer for each school.

Role:

- Send out information letters via email to parents/guardians
- Co-ordinate testing



# OUTCOMES

- Data generation
- Cost-effectiveness of a screening programme
- Early diagnosis of celiac disease to allow a better quality of life
- Propose Sicily and Malta as pilot regions for applications of procedures/instruments on a large scale







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Thank you  
for your attention!

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