



Editorial

Ecological, environmental and healthcare challenges

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Dear readers and authors of Xjenza Online, as Editor in Chief, I am pleased to announce the release of the first regular issue of the 12th volume of Xjenza Online. I also take this opportunity to welcome on board Dr Karl Pelka who has taken over the responsibilities as Copy Editor for the journal.

As always, I am excited to share with you the journal's latest free open access publications.

The issue opens with the manuscript by Grech et al. which aims to delineate the current state of the art in non-contact red-green-blue (RGB) camera-based heart rate and rhythm monitoring in adult populations in the clinical setting while assessing the advantages and feasibility of the technology.

Next, Lynch et al. reports on conducting an online STEAM-themed treasure hunt event for 16-19-year-olds during the Covid-19 pandemic and assesses the impact of organising this event online on both the participants and organisers. Further suggestions for the improvement of the online intensive course and this event format are also discussed within the report.

Alexander and Attard's study presents then the current biological constraints and on-farm limitations affecting meat rabbit productivity in Malta through the means of questionnaires addressed to the various stakeholders and professionals working within the sector.

The following paper by Calleja et al. discusses the present situation in Gżira and describes the ways in which the Horizon 2020 project, VARCITIES, aims to co-create visionary solutions (VS) with the Gżira community and various stakeholders to address the ecological and environmental challenges faced by the town. The main challenges identified are linked to deprivation of green infrastructure, high levels of air and noise pollution, the Urban Heat Island effect and improper disposal of waste. The proposed VS included: the micro-greening of a bus stop area and pop-up activities in Rue d'Argens, air pollution

measurements conducted by residents and a green play-scape outdoor of St. Clare Gżira Primary School.

Then, Henwood, Lanfranco and Merritt review the *Vaucheria* species list of the Maltese Islands based on existent literature and collected material.

Schembri et al. investigates next the effects of the topical use of Capsaicin cream in conjunction with physiotherapy for low back pain.

The issue closes with a study by Borg, Camilleri and Attard of the challenges and opportunities that are experienced by young farmers in Malta in order to understand their condition and discover strategies to help and promote new recruits into the business. According to statistical research performed on data collected from 202 respondents, there are significant correlations between factors like gender, age, working hours per week, primary sectors, European Union (EU) financing, and organizational membership and job status, or whether young farmers are registered on a full- or part-time basis, or are unregistered. Additional information exposes the educational and training background, trading customs, and other aspects of young farmers.

To conclude, as today's research is a global endeavour, so remains our commitment to serve the local professional scientific community.

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