



Press Release

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PROGRAMME AGREEMENTS FOR THE EEA AND NORWEGIAN FINANCIAL MECHANISMS 2009-14

The Memorandum of Understanding between Malta and Norway for the implementation of the Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2009-2014 was signed on 27 September 2011 while the Memorandum of Understanding between Malta and Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway for the implementation of the EEA Financial Mechanism 2009-2014 was signed on 10 October 2011.

Following signature of the two MoU, Malta submitted two programme proposals, one under each Financial Mechanism. Following a period of negotiation, the Donor States (Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway) approved both programmes on 5 December 2012. Further to this approval, two Programme Agreements enabling project implementation to start will be signed in the coming weeks.

The combined contribution to Malta from the two Financial Mechanisms amounts to €4.5 million. This is split €2.9 million under the EEA Financial Mechanism and €1.6 million under the Norwegian Financial Mechanism.

The programmes address areas of national interest such as climate change and renewable energy, civil society, protection of cultural heritage, decent work and tripartite dialogue, capacity building in the area of local government and correctional services. Seven projects will receive funding under these Programmes.

THE EEA FINANCIAL MECHANISM 2009-2014

The EEA Financial Mechanism programme will address the areas of climate change, renewable energy, civil society and protection of cultural heritage.

WasteServ Malta Ltd will be implementing a project to produce 20 tonnes of bio-fuel annually through the cultivation of micro algae from carbon dioxide that is emitted from the Maghtab landfill.

Meanwhile, two projects that received funding from the previous Financial Mechanisms period will enter their second phase.

Transport Malta will be stepping up its capacity to safeguard Malta's territorial waters in the eventuality of an Oil and Hazardous and Noxious Substances (HNS) spill by enhancing its levels of

Attachments: None

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preparedness and response. A study will also be conducted about the risks associated with offshore drilling. This project will be carried out in partnership with the Norwegian Coastal Administration (Kystverket).

The EEA Grants will also again support Heritage Malta in its efforts to protect the Hal Saflieni Hypogeum from wall surface deterioration through the installation of an environmental control system.

In terms of support to civil society, SOS Malta has been selected (through a public call) to operate the Fund for Non-governmental Organisations under the EEA Financial Mechanism. The fund shall focus on the specific needs of migrants, gender-related issues and combating domestic violence.

THE NORWEGIAN FINANCIAL MECHANISM 2009-2014

The Norwegian Financial Mechanism programme will address plans to strengthen the internal structure of local government and correctional services. A third project using funds being operated by an entity designated by Norway will promote decent work and tripartite dialogue.

A project led by the Local Government Department and involving the Local Councils Association, Norwegian partners and the Council of Europe will empower local councillors and administrative staff to provide the general public with enhanced quality services.

On the other hand, the Ministry for Home Affairs will be implementing a project to move the Young Offenders' Unit of Rehabilitation Services (YOURS) out of the Corradino Correctional Facility to dedicated premises and to establish new programmes designed to foster new correctional practices that aim to help young offenders from possible relapse and properly re-integrate them into society.

Separately, the proposal by the Department for Industrial and Employment Relations has been selected by Innovation Norway, the entity designated by Norway to operate the Global Fund for Decent Work and Tripartite Dialogue. The objective of the proposal is to improve the cooperation between employer's organisations, trade unions and public authorities in supporting equitable and sustainable economic and social development.

BILATERAL RELATIONS

The two programmes will also aim to strengthen bilateral relations between Malta and the Donor States. Two of the projects will be forming partnerships with Donor State entities to share good practices for eventual mutual benefit.

NOTE:

The EEA and the Norwegian Financial Mechanisms 2009-2014 were established following an agreement between Iceland, the Principality of Liechtenstein, the Kingdom of Norway and the European Union to contribute towards a reduction in economic and social disparities within the European Economic Area and to strengthen relations between the Donor States and the Beneficiary

States, including Malta, for the benefit of their citizens. The Financial Mechanisms also aim to enhance cooperation between the Donor States and the Beneficiary States for a more stable, peaceful and prosperous Europe that is based on good governance, democratic institutions, the rule of law, respect for human rights and sustainable development.

The National Focal Point (NFP) for these Financial Mechanisms in Malta is the Funds and Programmes Division within the Office of the Prime Minister. Further information on these Grants can be obtained by visiting <http://eeagrants.org/> and <https://secure2.gov.mt/fpd/home>