

MED PROGRAMME 2007-2013

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FINAL REPORT - MALTA

ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT AT NATIONAL LEVEL SUPPORTING PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

Designation of Staff

Up until 2011, the National Contact Point (NCP) in Malta for the MED Programme 2007-2013 fell under the Planning and Priorities Coordination Division within the Office of the Prime Minister. In July 2011, the Funds and Programmes Division, then also within the remit of the Office of the Prime Minister, was set up to handle the management of EU and other Funds (with the exception of Cohesion Policy Funds), including the Territorial Cooperation Programmes of which the MED Programme 2007-2013 formed part. In 2013, a new Ministry was set up – the Ministry for European Affairs and Implementation of the Electoral Manifesto - taking the Funds and Programmes Division under its remit.

Despite these changes within the 2007-2013 programming period, the set up of the Malta NCP for the MED Programme remained unchanged with one Projects Manager responsible for the implementation and management of the Programme in Malta, a Senior Manager responsible for the Territorial Cooperation Programmes' Unit, a Director for the Programmes and Projects Directorate, and a Director General responsible for the whole division (the Funds and Programmes Division). All four designated staff members represented the NCP and the Monitoring Committee for the MED Programme on behalf of Malta, and currently serve the same roles for the Interreg MED Programme 2014-2020.

In addition, in view of the First Level Control system adopted by Malta under the 2007-2013 programming period, which entailed a centralized system, a First Level Control Unit was set up, comprising of 3 members of staff, to verify the expenditure incurred under such Programmes.

Main events organised to support programme implementation / other relevant activities carried out at national level

Malta was actively involved in the drafting of the 2007-2013 Med Programme since 2006, hosting also two task force meetings which involved the delegations participating in the Programme as well as the Programme Authorities. Malta participated in the programme launch event held on the 21st of November 2007 in Marseille, where Malta formed part of a round panel dealing with the environment, which was one of the priorities addressed under the Programme.

Further to the launch of the Programme (2007) and the first call of project proposal in 2008, the Maltese NCP coordinated this call amongst potential beneficiaries. Similarly, in 2009, the Maltese NCP held several meetings with officials and representatives of prospective partner entities to promote participation in the second call for project proposals.

The events carried out by the Maltese NCP in this regard include the following:

Two open days, on 23rd and 24th February 2009, at its premises for all interested partners.

On 13th February 2009, an information session was held for local councils.

On 2nd March 2009, the NCP organised an information seminar highlighting the application process for the second call for project proposals. This event was held in collaboration with the Programme's JTS.

On 21st August 2009, the NCP held an info seminar specifically for potential applicants from the Island of Gozo. Gozitan entities were provided with information and assistance in view of current and future calls for project proposals under the 2007-2013 Territorial Cooperation Programmes, including the Med Programme.

Besides the above-mentioned promotional activities, the Maltese NCP also held meetings with Maltese partners whose projects progressed from the 1st to the 2nd phase of the application process.

The Maltese NCP also drafted manuals on eligibility of expenditure and publicity obligations in respect of national requirements.

The year 2010's focus was more on promotion of the first call for strategic projects aimed at the improvement of energy efficiency and the promotion of renewable energies, as well as on maritime risks prevention and maritime safety. Bilateral meetings with potential applicants were held on 25th and 26th March 2010.

In 2011, the Maltese NCP coordinated the re-launch of the first call for strategic projects that focused on maritime safety. Project proposals that had passed the first stage were disseminated to relevant potential applicants, liaising also with entities that were project partners in proposals submitted when this call was first launched.

The NCP also promoted the second call for strategic projects by:

- › disseminating project proposals to potential partners;
- › uploading information on its national website;
- › liaising directly with relevant potential partners, mostly public entities;
- › holding meetings with partners that participated in projects through the first phase of the call.

From a project monitoring perspective, twelve meetings with entities participating in projects selected for funding under the Med Programme were convened in 2011.

In the first quarter of 2012, the Maltese NCP liaised with the Authority for Transport in Malta, as the most relevant entity to participate in projects 'MEDNET' and 'FutureMed', and as a result this entity participated successfully in both projects.

On 1st October 2012, the Maltese NCP promoted the MED Programme on the national radio. Information was given about the MED Programme, including examples of some projects programmed until that period that involved Malta's participation, particularly 'BIOLMED' and 'MEDPAN NORTH', whose activities generated particular interest among the general public.

In view of its role as the entity responsible for First Level Control, a training session was organised in collaboration with 'Interact' 24th October 2012 with a view to better understand programme obligations, as well as learning about financial management at both programme and project levels.

Early in 2013, the NCP delivered training on first level control. During this session, the manuals on eligibility of expenditure and publicity obligations were explained.

In September, the FPD coordinated Malta's participation in EC Day 2013. To this end, several events were held in Malta to commemorate this day, including two events in connection with the Med Programme:

- › The public was invited to join guided visits to the 'CypFire' project site. Art activities, tree planting, and guided tours were among the activities. [Photos attached]
- › The Maltese partner for project 'OSDDT-Med' i.e. the Pembroke Local Council, distributed tree seeds to the locality's residents [Photos attached]

On 4th October 2014, the NCP publicly promoted the MED Programme during the 'Notte Bianca' event, which is an annual arts and culture festival that lights up the capital city of Valletta. Hundreds visited the display stand dedicated to the MED Programme within the historic Auberge d'Aragon, which houses the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and the Ministry for European Affairs and Implementation of the Electoral Manifesto.

The year 2015 shall be remembered for promoting results of the 2007-2013 projects. On 19th May, 2015, the NCP promoted the MED Programme and project results with Malta's and Gozo's local councils, to attract future participation in the programme.

In addition, during the launch event of the Interreg MED Programme 2014-2020, that was opened by the Honourable Dr. Ian Borg, Parliamentary Secretary for EU funds and 2017 Presidency, on 17th June 2015, the NCP dedicated part of the agenda for the MED Programme 2007-2013. An overview of the projects that included Malta's participation was presented to the audience representing all sectors. The project leaders of 'CypFire', 'MEDPAN NORTH' and 'MEDIWAT' were invited to share their experiences in implementing these projects.

In December 2015, the Maltese NCP presented the MED Programme 2007-2013 again during a closure event entitled 'Celebrating the success achieved under the 2007-2013 Territorial Cooperation Programmes'. Various examples of the projects financed under this Programme were promoted by means of this event. A press release commemorating this event was launched.

During EC Day 2016, Malta's participation in the MED Programme 2007-2013 was celebrated again by planting 34 indigenous trees representing all 34 projects that were partly-implemented by Maltese partners. [Photos attached]

Spot-checks on partners carried out by the national authority

The Funds and Programmes Division carried out on-the-spot checks on the following projects on a sample basis: 'Philoxenia', 'LOSAMEDCHEM', 'MEDIWAT', 'MARIE' and 'MEDPAN NORTH'.

In 2011, project 'Philoxenia' whose Maltese partner was the Local Councils' Association (LCA), was subjected to a sample check of 58.31% on expenditure claims 1 - 4 (period 30th September 2009 - 31st March 2011, at the value of €107,999 ERDF).

In the same year, another project for the LCA, namely 'LOSAMEDCHEM', was checked. The sample check of 68.10% was carried out on expenditure claims 1 - 2 (period 2nd February 2010 - 28th February 2011, at the value of €21,360.55 ERDF).

Project 'MEDIWAT', whose Maltese partner was the Malta Resources Authority (MRA), was also checked in 2011 on a sample of 56.81% on expenditure claim 1 (period 1st September 2010 – 28th February 2011, at the value of € 14,534.59 ERDF).

In 2013, project 'MEDPAN NORTH', whose Maltese partner was the Malta Environment & Planning Authority, was subjected to a 100% check on expenditure claim 5 (period 1st March 2012 – 31st August 2012, at the value of €18,837.88 ERDF).

In 2014, project 'MARIE' under the partner, Union of Mediterranean Architects (UMAR), had 57% of expenditure claims 1 - 6 checked (period 1st October 2011 – 30th September 2014, at the value of €78,059.29 ERDF).

Physical checks were held throughout 2016 on all local MED partners and beneficiaries that procured equipment through the respective projects so as to ensure conformity with Article 57(1) of Council Regulation (EC) 1083/2006 ('Durability of operations').

The following is a list of projects and the Maltese partners checked:

- 'E2STORMED' – Local Councils' Association (LCA)
- 'MEDESS4MS' – University of Malta (UoM)
- 'MEDIWAT' – Sustainable Energy and Water Conservation Unit (SEWCU – ex MRA)
- MEDPAN NORTH – Malta Environment and Planning Authority (MEPA)
- 'SEATOLAND' – Fondazzjoni Temi Zammit (FTZ)
- 'Philoxenia' – Local Councils' Association (LCA)
- 'ELIH-Med' – Malta Intelligent Energy Management Agency (MIEMA)

Any follow up actions, that were required, have been addressed accordingly.