

NATIONAL PROGRAMME AMIF

IDENTIFICATION OF THE DESIGNATED AUTHORITIES

Competent authorities responsible for the management and control systems

Authority	Name of the authority	Name of the person responsible for the authority	Address	E-mail address	Date of designation	Activities delegated
Responsible authority	Funds and Programmes Division	Mr Raphael Scerri	Funds and Programmes Division, Triq il-Kukkanja Santa Venera	raphael.p.scerri@gov.mt	27-May-2014	
Audit authority	Internal Audit and Investigations Department	Ms Amanda Zammit	Internal Audit and Investigations Department, Valletta Buildings, South Street, Valletta	amanda.e.zammit@gov.mt		
Delegated authority	Treasury Department	MS Paulanne Mamo	The Mall Offices, The Mall, Floriana FRN1470	paulanne.mamo@gov.mt		Payments to Beneficiaries

Management and control system

The Management and Control System for the period 2014 to 2020 is based on the system currently adopted for the SOLID Funds. This decision was taken on the fact, that the current system has been tried and tested, and the audit authority has issued a clean systems audit. It has benefitted from a steep learning curve which takes into account best practices gathered, not only during the implementation of the SOLID funds, but also from other funds which fall under the same responsibility of the Funds and Programmes Division. The system will be made up of the Funds and Programmes Division as the Responsible Authority, the Treasury Department as the delegated authority for payments and the Internal Audit and Investigations Department as the Audit Authority. Each authority is a separate entity thus ensuring separation of duties, each authority having its own monitoring and or control tools.

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Malta has experienced heavy influxes of irregular migration over the years, the large majority departing from North Africa and applying for international protection. A large percentage of asylum-seekers are found eligible to international protection in view of the situation in their countries of origin. Also, a number of third-country nationals arrive in Malta through legal channels, be it for employment, study or other purposes.

Malta will continue to focus on meeting the basic needs of the migrants arriving in Malta in an irregular manner. Work will be undertaken to provide adequate accommodation facilities together with the provision of basic material aid such as food and health services. It is Malta's objective to continue to improve accommodation facilities throughout the programming period in order to continue to be able to accommodate the large influxes of migrants who arrive.

New buildings are envisaged to be constructed in order to increase the capacity to accommodate asylum seekers. Asylum seekers will be in open centres, unless detention [AB1] in line with the reception conditions Directive is necessary on the basis of an assessment of each case, and no other coercive alternative measures can be applied effectively. Medical care will be given immediately on arrival which will then be followed by continuous medical checks by doctors and nurses. Those suffering from infectious diseases will be treated in isolation units or a Unit within the general hospital and monitored through specialised equipment. Psychological support will be given to all those who will be found to be suffering from trauma following the voyage they would have undertaken.

Vulnerable individuals will continue to be given specific attention through services tailored for their needs. Unaccompanied minors will be placed under care orders and provided with the welfare assistance in order to be able to settle and integrate in Malta.

Irregular migrants will continue to be informed of their rights and obligations as well as their right to apply for asylum. Investment in the asylum determination process, in the form of training and human resources, will continue to be made where necessary in order to determine cases at first instance within 6 months or less. The Funds will assist the return of irregular migrants preferably by means of voluntary return. Cooperation with countries of origin to improve the return procedure as well as to attain the necessary documentation needed for the persons to travel back to their country will continue to be exercised.

The main goal is for a more tolerant and integrated society through the actions supported by this Fund. For the third-country nationals living in Malta various integration measures will be set up to improve their stay in Malta. An Integration Unit within the Ministry will coordinate the different sectors dealing with TCNs to provide them with a holistic service to their needs. Actions will be financed in the field of education to enhance the language capabilities of the TCNs, together with additional cultural orientation measures to better enhance their knowledge about Malta. In particular, minor asylum seekers and beneficiaries of international protection will be provided with preparatory classes in order to facilitate their entry into mainstream schooling. Communication plans will also be devised in order to help the native Maltese population better understand the TCNs living among them while helping them in adapting themselves to a more diverse society.

Capacity building will also continue to be provided to persons working with third country nationals to help them in their work and assist them with tools which facilitate the carrying out of their duties.

NGOs will continue to be assisted in their work with third country nationals in different spheres, their work ranges from the provision of accommodation facilities, to educational training, legal aid and social work assistance and measures to help migrants integrate in our society, amongst others.

The Maltese authorities consider that the most humane and efficient method to return irregularly staying TCNs is to use voluntary return. Malta will continue implementing Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration projects with the goal of increasing voluntary return. The possibility of voluntary return will continue to be made available to those irregular migrants wishing to avail themselves of it. In cases where the option of voluntary return is not taken, forced returns will remain necessary.

Excluding technical assistance, 65% of the Fund will be dedicated to asylum, 22% to integration, and 13% on return.

2. BASELINE SITUATION IN THE MEMBER STATE

Summary of the current state of play as of December 2013 in the Member State for the fields relevant to the Fund

Malta has experienced heavy influxes of irregular migration over the years the majority departing from North Africa and proceeding to apply for international protection. A number of third-country nationals (TCNs) also arrive in Malta through legal channels.

The large number of TCNs who reach Malta by boat in an irregular manner poses particular challenges. In order to appreciate the challenges, Malta's geographic and demographic characteristics must be kept in mind. Population density stands at almost 1,300 persons/km², making it the most densely populated EU MS. Ever since 2002, irregular migrant arrivals remained consistently high, reaching a record 2,775 in 2008 (except 2010 with 47 arrivals). The number of irregular migrants was 1730 in 2011; 2255 in 2012; and 2435 in 2013 (detained persons: 2011 – 1579; 2012 – 1890, 2013 – 2008 and 2014 up to September - 568).

National legislation transposes EU Directives and establishes the process to be undertaken when irregular immigrants arrive. Detention may be applied, subject to the circumstances of each case, to persons irregularly entering Malta or whose presence in Malta is otherwise irregular, without discrimination of any kind. Whenever an irregular migrant is detained with a view to return, the authorities pursue efforts to return the person as soon as possible. Irregular migrants who apply for international protection are detained only if the reasons set out in the recast Reception Conditions Directive apply, when it proves necessary on the basis of an individual assessment of each case and if other less coercive alternative measures cannot be applied effectively.

The length of detention therefore depends on the circumstances of each case. Asylum seekers may not be detained for more than 12 months, although in practice most are released within less than 2 months pursuant to individual assessments. In 2014, out of 353 cases, 54% were released within 15 days. Detention does not apply to vulnerable persons, including all unaccompanied minors, women with children, families and disabled persons.

Due to the size of the island, the main challenge is the provision of accommodation (capacity at end 2013: 1200 and 2000 for closed and open centres respectively). This is felt more as a result of the changes with respect to the persons who are now arriving in Malta. In the past, single men used to predominantly reach our shores whereas in recent years whole families with children are more prevalent. This creates challenges in terms of the type of accommodation provided to address their needs. Over the years a number of projects were undertaken to improve accommodation at reception centres. A considerable percentage of funds allocated through ERF, including Emergency Funds, was used to supplement the actions financed through national funds. The national budget votes for asylum seekers amounted to €12.68; €11.08 and €10.08 million respectively for 2011, 2012 and 2013 does do not include expenses incurred by mainstream services (e.g. health services, education).

Given the limited resources available and the constant flow of asylum seekers, a number of other ERF projects were aimed at providing food, medical and psycho-social support and other essential services.

The need was felt for specific measures for vulnerable persons and all unaccompanied minors. Under the legislation unaccompanied minors are placed under state custody in terms of the Children and Young Persons (Care Order) Act. This ensures the same treatment as a Maltese minor, including schooling. The centres provide extra-curricular activities.

Health concerns of those arriving are also subject to both national (mainstream) and EU funded initiatives (isolation units within the Centres). However, given that highly infectious diseases have become more prevalent, these initiatives need to be complemented by a specialised appropriately equipped Unit within the general hospital.

With respect to the asylum system, nearly all of those who reach Malta irregularly apply for asylum. Asylum applications amounted to 1890, 2080, 2245 and 1022 in 2011 to 2014 (latter up to Sept) respectively. This puts pressure on the resources for processing and deciding on these applications, and for hosting them.

This is complicated since a large proportion of those who apply for protection are entitled to receive it because they originate from conflict regions (e.g. Horn of Africa). In fact, Malta's asylum recognition rate hovers at 50-60%, reaching a record 90% in 2012 (EU average in 2012 was 28%). The asylum determination process is carried out by the Office of the Refugee Commissioner (RefCom). Between 2012 and 2014 (latter till Sept) the number of persons recognised as refugees amounted to 35, 59 and 100 persons respectively, whilst persons granted Subsidiary Protection were 1239, 1686 and 707 respectively. RefCom has taken measures to continue improving the quality of asylum determination, including training, information provision and research.

Beneficiaries of protection can also benefit from relocation. A pilot project for the intra-EU relocation of beneficiaries of international protection from Malta (EUREMA) began in January 2012, and 277 beneficiaries were relocated to other MS. An extension of this project (EUREMA II) was undertaken, through which there were 14 beneficiaries by December 2013.

With respect to those who wish to return to their country or whose asylum application is rejected, return activities become relevant. The return procedures in respect of those whose asylum application is outstanding, even if on appeal, are suspended.

The Police Immigration Section has reviewed its return procedures in line with the Return Directive, including the procedure for issuing removal orders. A return decision is served on the TCN, who is given the opportunity to apply for a period of voluntary departure. This period can only be refused for the reasons established in the Directive. Following this period if the migrant fails to comply or else if the granting of this period is refused in line with the Directive, it is only then that a removal order is issued and the migrant is detained for the purpose of enforcing the return decision. Between 2008 and 2013, 779 irregular migrants were returned back to their country of origin.

Detention for the purposes of removal is subject to review after 3 months and to review by the Immigration Appeals Board after a period of detention of 6 months, as per the 'Common Standards and Procedures for returning Illegally staying Third Country Nationals Regulations'.

During the interim evaluation of the European Return Fund, the consultants carried out an exercise whereby it was established that the EU funding (€1.37 million) at that stage only contributed 34% to the efforts in the field, which amounted to 3.99 million.

With respect to voluntary return, Malta has been involved in several programmes of this nature, with 360 migrants benefiting between 2008 and 2013. In this respect the European Return Fund has been used to finance most voluntary return operations. Such projects provided financial assistance to return and also re-integration assistance. Five voluntary return projects were undertaken between 2008 and 2013 (Restart 1, 2 3, and 4, and Dar 2) resulting in 289 migrants returned as at end 2013. The remaining 71 were financed through DAR 1 project under national funds.

One of the difficulties for return is that a large number of irregular migrants arrive undocumented and the difficulties encountered in relation to the procurement of travel documents for their return. In order to counter this, a number of projects using the Return Fund were undertaken. Two such projects were COMAM and COMAM II undertaken by IOM and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry

for Home Affairs, aimed at enhancing diplomatic and administrative relations. While the objectives of establishing dialogue were achieved, difficulties related to the procurement of travel documents from countries of origin persist, which require continued effort to ensure that such countries uphold their obligations.

In an attempt to further strengthen cooperation with countries of origin and reinforce return management, projects MAREMCA I and II were undertaken with the aim of addressing challenges related to the return of migrants. Targeted training and knowledge transfer from experts from the Netherlands and the UK was offered in 2012 by implementing the Enhancing the Capacities of Return Management project (ECOR).

Malta also receives a number of TCNs who enter legally and reside in Malta. The inward movement of TCNs is regulated by The Immigration Act, which exempts foreign spouses of citizens of Malta and their dependents under 21 years from the requirement of periodical permission from the Immigration Authorities, the granting of temporary residence permits and the granting of permission for TCNs to work.

The total resident population of legally-residing TCNs amounted to 7380, 8128 and 9626 between 2011 and 2013.

With respect to the legislative framework for legal migration, the “Conditions of Entry and Residence of TCNs for the purpose of Highly Qualified Employment Regulations” (LN 433 of 2011) transposed the Blue Card Directive and the “Single Application Procedure for a Single Permit as regards Residence and Work and a Common Set of Rights for those Third-Country Workers legally residing in Malta Regulations” (LN 160 of 2014) transposed the Single Permit Directive.

Amendments were made to the national Status of Long term residents (TCNs) Regulations which transpose Directive 2003/109/EC, where integration measures were introduced in connection with the acquisition of such status. All relevant information on legal migration is made publicly accessible on the website of the Employment and Training Corporation (ETC - public entity responsible for employment) and at the Citizenship and Expatriate Affairs Department.

Malta has also embarked on various initiatives and implemented projects with the aim of facilitating integration. During the 2007-2013 programming period, projects were implemented to provide TCNs with courses in the English and Maltese languages and culture. In addition, training has been provided to front liners in the provision of services to TCNs such as the staff at the Visa Unit, the Citizenship and Expatriate Affairs Department, who are in charge of the issuance of residence permits and ETC which issues employment licences (circa 22 persons for each of 16 sessions). The Health Ministry also embarked on a number of measures aimed at promoting integration. The National Commission for the Promotion of Equality continued to raise awareness and to disseminate information on equality, diversity and non-discrimination issues including racism and xenophobia, and undertook research and training projects to ensure equal treatment and combat racism.

Moreover, through national funds TCNs are assisted through social welfare which provides them with the same services granted to Maltese nationals. ETC provides equal access to services it offers through job centres including information on the availability of jobs within the private sector.

The Foundation for Social Welfare Services which is made up of 3 Agencies offers a number of services to TCNs including safeguarding and promoting the well-being of children, families and the community through the development and provision of psycho-social welfare services, service in health promotion, prevention, treatment and rehabilitation to persons with drugs, alcohol and other addictive problems and innovative personalised support, expertise and advocacy to persons with disability.

A number of efforts undertaken in this field were aimed at improving the TCNs acceptance in the Maltese Community. These included a number of projects such as the presentation of the cuisine of migrants in various public events and a television programme on the different cultural and ethnic backgrounds of people living in Malta.

With respect to education, the number of TCNs in all schools in Malta increased significantly. In the majority of cases in State primary schools, the complementary education and the literacy support teachers are asked to support language acquisition of such learners whereas in the Secondary Sector, teaching of Maltese is either provided as a second/additional language or by the Core competences support classes. In order not to leave TCNs in the mainstream classroom without the adequate language provisions in Maltese, English or both, the Ministry for Education and Employment has embarked on a number of projects undertaken under the European Fund for the Integration of TCNs and the European Refugee Fund in order to provide training to all complementary education teachers and literacy support staff with regard to teaching English as a foreign language and to support TCNs in their literacy uptake (135 teachers trained). It is part of the Ministry for Education and Employment's strategy to strive towards the creation of an effective climate towards TCN learners and families.

Prior to 2013, integration actions formed part of various initiatives by different departments. Following a recent change in administration, the Ministry for Social Dialogue, Consumer Affairs and Civil Liberties was set up and given responsibility for the integration of TCNs, putting the integration of TCNs higher on government's agenda. MSDC has a total budget for 2014 of €4.7 million.

Efforts to integrate beneficiaries of international protection and asylum seekers will be sustained through integration-oriented courses. Such courses will include information about Maltese and European culture, employment-oriented training and language training. The Ministry responsible for integration shall ensure that mainstream integration services are accessible to beneficiaries of international protection living in the community.

3. PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES

Specific objective	1 - Asylum
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Malta's main long term objective is to develop an open reception facility specifically built to cater for all the needs of asylum seekers. This facility will also increase Malta's open reception conditions, as the full capacity will increase by 400 places, whilst envisaging that reception quality will also be improved.

The system for the reception of asylum seekers will be maintained, where accommodation will be provided via Open and Detention Centres. Detention will only be exercised when it proves necessary on the basis of an individual assessment of each case, where the reasons for detention set out in the recast Reception Conditions Directive apply and if other less coercive alternative measures cannot be applied effectively. Asylum seekers who are not detained or are released from detention will continue being accommodated at Open Centres.

Asylum seekers in closed centres will continue to be provided with food and clothing. With respect to families, they will be accommodated together at all times ensuring family unity. Malta will continue facilitating the family reunification of Convention Refugees in line with the pertinent acquis. Medical and related assistance will continue to be provided to asylum seekers in accordance with Reception Conditions Directive and transposing legislation, where use is made of mainstream services. Medical services will be complemented through a specialised unit to deal with infectious diseases in view of their recent emergence.

Those who are entitled to international protection will be offered accommodation at open centres. The centres will encourage the integration process and residents will be assisted to move out to independent accommodation within 12 months. It is emphasised that Open Centre accommodation is intended to be in conformity with relevant reception standards, but temporary.

It is Malta's goal to continue to ensure that the asylum determination process is as short as possible. Investment will be made in RefCom and the Refugee Appeals Board to ensure that the fulfilment of this objective is sustained.

Special provisions for vulnerable persons will be taken, including separate accommodation arrangements within the Open Centres, or within apposite Open Centres, further to provision of psycho-social assistance where necessary. The recruitment of full-time Social Workers should further facilitate the identification and referral process of vulnerable persons whose vulnerability is not manifest. Unaccompanied minors will continue to be provided with residential care services while children will continue to have access to schooling.

Irregular migrants detained pursuant to irregular entry have the right to apply for asylum. Vulnerable persons and families with children will not be subject to the detention requirement, as at present.

Target group provided with assistance will amount to 16,100, reception capacity will increase by 400, number of persons trained in asylum topics will amount to 140.

National objective	1 - Reception/asylum
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Asylum seekers will only be accommodated in Closed Centres when it proves necessary on the basis of an individual assessment of each case and if other less coercive alternative measures cannot be applied effectively. Vulnerable asylum seekers, minors, and those not detained will continue being accommodated at Open Centres. Asylum seekers released from detention and beneficiaries of international protection will be offered accommodation at open centres until they can move on to independent accommodation.

The following funding priorities will be met with national funds, with the help of Union funds.

The renovation, upgrading and furnishing of currently existing structures and the setting up of new Open Centre to increase capacity by 400, bringing the total to 2400, providing separate accommodation to different categories, including minors and other vulnerable persons.

Material aid will continue to be provided especially health and other essential services (including services by NGOs).

The need to treat asylum seekers with highly infectious diseases will be met through the part financing of a specialised unit with the general hospital.

Training will be provided to Immigration Police, reception centres staff on the rights of the target group, in particular those emanating from the recast Reception Conditions Directive.

A protection system for unaccompanied minors will continue to be provided. The system consists of legal guardianship, schooling and support services (medical and other specialised services) as needed. Action will continue to be taken with respect to family tracing.

Specific measures will be undertaken for vulnerable persons in order to promote, safeguard (and provide for) their psychosocial welfare, including accommodation in Open Centres in separate sections.

For asylum applications, investment will be made in training, including training provided by the EASO and human resources at RefCom, to continue delivering first instance decisions within 6 months and to ensure the proper application of Dublin III procedures. In case of an unusually large influx of asylum seekers use will be made of existing sites to address such a situation in order to ensure adequate reception conditions. Other measures (e.g. EASO additional support) will be utilised in such a case.

Interpreters will continue to be made available by RefCom for asylum determination. Video conferencing will be used for interpreters in other MS where the service is not available locally. Free legal assistance for asylum procedure (on appeal) will continue to be made available.

Integration programmes will be provided in detention and Open Centres. The target group living in the community shall have access to ‘mainstream’ services.

National objective	2 - Evaluation
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It is the Government’s aim to continue to strengthen the role of the Office of the Refugee Commissioner (RefCom) to enable the more efficient fulfilment of its duties in providing a decision at first instance in 6 months or less.

The following funding priority will be met with national funds, with the help of Union funds.

The RefCom will continue their actions to assess the asylum process, follow-up cases, in particular in relation to Dublin III and compile statistical data, or COI-related actions in cooperation with EASO.

National objective	3 - Resettlement
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No actions will be carried out under this national objective.

Specific objective	2 - Integration/legal migration
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Malta agrees that integration is an important aspect and hence will continue with its efforts to improve the practices it has already adopted. The main goal is for a more tolerant and integrated society through the actions supported by this Fund. Since March 2013, integration falls within the portfolio of the Ministry for Social Dialogue, Consumer Affairs and Civil Liberties (MSDC).

MSDC will be setting up an Integration Unit to consolidate a strategy on integration which will include a focus on vulnerable groups, the improvement of integration measures, complementing services offered by other Ministries, Departments and NGOs and information campaigns to be addressed to the receiving society.

Malta considers that legally residing TCNs need to be given good working knowledge of Maltese and English, and be provided with cultural orientation classes to equip them with

information on Maltese and European values, whilst helping them enter the labour market and access goods and services.

Malta aims at attracting TCNs in areas where labour market shortages exist. Efforts are hence directed at establishing the type and the extent of skills required in the labour market and the shortages being experienced in particular occupational sectors.

Integration will be treated as a two-way process: where it requires adaptation on the part of the newcomer but also by the native population. Measures will be undertaken to inform the Maltese population in this respect. Integration in a democracy also presupposes civic participation by the TCNs in society.

In order to achieve these aims MSDC plans to set up an Integration Unit aimed at managing and harmonising all the Public Services that TCNs have the right to access to in accordance with EU and national legislation (e.g. in the areas of healthcare, social security provisions, employment, education and residence).

With respect to education, it is the Ministry for Education and Employment's intention to continue to support TCNs in schools in Malta. Actions are envisaged to continue to focus on the services and options that the education department and schools can supply. Actions to recognise diversity with other integration measures will be enhanced in schools while staff training and psycho-social support programmes will also be supported.

EU funds will also be used to finance training for public bodies dealing with integration issues.

Integration actions will be provided to refugees in open centres and those target groups living in the community shall have access to mainstream integration services.

It is envisaged that 2000 TCNs per year will be targeted, whilst 10 national policy frameworks/tools for integration will be in place.

A project supported under this fund will help develop, monitor and evaluate integration policies in Malta.

National objective	1 - Legal migration
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No actions will be carried out under this national objective.

National objective	2 - Integration
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One of the main issues which hampers integration of TCNs is their linguistic ability to communicate with the local population and which restrains their participation in the labour market. Since the majority lack knowledge of their host country's language, history, culture and politics, it is envisaged that for those already in Malta at an early age, training courses will be provided by the state to all compulsory school aged TCN learners to prepare them for mainstream education in Malta. This system should ensure that the proper infrastructure is in place to assist minors prior to their access to schooling. These initiatives will build upon measures that have already been undertaken in this field and financed through the European Fund for the Integration of TCNs, whereby teachers were trained and software procured to analyse and assess the knowledge of TCNSs.

Language training, cultural orientation classes and skills enhancing training to make them more employable will continue to be provided to all TCNs living in Malta. The needs of the TCNs will be continuously assessed and all stakeholders will be involved in identifying the best measures needed to target their needs.

The following funding priorities will be met with national funds, with the help of Union funds.

Effort will be focused on schools where third country national minors will be participating in classes together with other children. This will be done in order to have integration made possible in the early years, to guarantee successful integration during adulthood. In turn, it will also instil in the new generation of local youngsters a sense of acceptance and normality to live with third country nationals. Attention will also be given to the parents of the minors who will also be granted the possibility to follow their children and be given all the necessary education to support themselves and their children.

Training and education will also be extended to all third country nationals who wish to enhance their linguistic skills and would like to follow a cultural integration programme. Assessments will be carried out amongst TCNs to act on the difficulties they will be encountering to ameliorate their situation.

Measures will also be undertaken to implement the Action Plan on the integration of third country nationals. Actions carried out by civil society organisations and regional and local authorities in the context of comprehensive integration strategies would notably promote an integrated approach to the integration of third country nationals, including through enhancing the cooperation between relevant actors.

National objective	3 - Capacity
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Although integration has always been a priority for Malta, in previous years this was tackled differently by different entities according to their field of work. In order to have a common

front with respect to integration, the Ministry for Social Dialogue, Consumer Affairs and Civil Liberties will be setting up a comprehensive structure which holistically provides for the needs of Third Country Nationals residing in Malta. An Integration Unit will therefore be set up with the aim of introducing an integration perspective in all policies, at all levels and at all stages, by all the actors involved in decision-making. This better coordination between Ministries, particularly of Home and Security, Education, Health, Social Services and Social Dialogue, is planned to be achieved through the setting up of an Inter-ministerial Committee for integration between the Ministries.

Besides the contributions of all Ministries, the NGOs working in the field of migration and integration will be incorporated, with a view of reducing duplication of activities. In addition to a reform in policies with respect to integration, the Integration Unit within MSDC will ensure the introduction of actions targeted at the Maltese community in order to understand and accept the TCNs who live beside them.

The following funding priorities will be met with national funds, with the help of Union funds.

The main objective is to found an Integration Unit with a task to act as an umbrella organisation to coordinate and harmonise all the services vis-a-vis immigration, residence and employment of Third Country Nationals. The Unit will be responsible for the establishment of a National Integration Policy for Malta and its continuous assessment and review through the involvement of all stakeholders.

Activities linked to the assessment of the needs of the Third Country Nationals and the setting up of a cultural awareness programme will also be coordinated through this Unit. Training is also envisaged to be provided to all those involved to help them in their work. In addition the Integration Unit will be tasked to devise a Communications Plan to help raise awareness within the Maltese community on diversity and minority issues and how a community can experience economic and social growth through greater integration.

Specific objective	3 - Return
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The Maltese authorities consider that the most humane and efficient method to return irregularly staying TCNs is to use voluntary return. Therefore the main target for Malta is to continue to promote voluntary return through the relevant projects. The possibility of voluntary return will continue to be made available to those irregular migrants wishing to avail themselves of it. The opportunities will be made available in a determined and systematic manner amongst irregular migrants, offering them the option of being assisted to return voluntarily to their country of origin and restart their lives through reintegration assistance. The said reintegration assistance will be granted in the country of origin and will be monitored to ascertain that a correct use of the assistance given will be made. In addition the returnee will also be given a lump sum to cover any expenses he/she may incur on settling back in their country of origin. Information on voluntary return will also continue to be

provided to asylum-seekers who have not yet received a final negative decision in relation to their request for international protection.

In cases where the option of voluntary return is not taken, forced returns will remain necessary to repatriate such TCNs who have no right to stay. In order for these returns to be effected, cooperation efforts with countries of origin will continue to be pursued in order to obtain the necessary documentation to be able to return back to their countries of origin. In addition the relevant authorities shall continue implementing forced return monitoring procedures in accordance with the Return Directive. The role of monitor is being fulfilled by the Board of Visitors for Detained Persons.

In setting the targets for this programme, consideration was taken of the funding possibilities under the European Return Fund (up to June 2015), and the composition of the irregular migrants reaching Malta, in particular recent changing trends.

It is a well-known fact that engaging countries of origin in the attainment of the necessary documentation in both voluntary return and forced return is a long and difficult process. Malta will hence continue to look at methods to facilitate further engagement of this nature with these countries and to consolidate agreements reached. This should provide opportunities for exchange of best practice and training opportunities by Maltese officials.

Hence in terms of return management, the overall strategy is to concurrently implement voluntary and forced return operations which are strongly interlinked and have a mutually reinforcing effect and maintain credibility in enforcing the law, a prerequisite for creating an area of freedom, security and justice.

25 will be trained on return-related topics while 5,400 will receive pre- or post-return re-integration assistance. 400 will be returned voluntarily and another 400 will be returned under forced return, while 10 monitored removal operations will be financed.

National objective	1 - Accompanying measures
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Actions under this objective will be financed through national funds.

Malta will invest in the detention centres with a view to providing adequate accommodation to those who enter irregularly and apply for asylum and need to be detained, and to those who are being detained pending their deportation.

Other actions will continue to be provided such as provision of social assistance, health and education services, etc.

As part of the transposition of the recast reception conditions directive, alternative measures to detention (e.g. regular reporting) will be introduced.

National objective	2 - Return measures
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Emphasis will continue to be on the possibility of voluntary return should a migrant decide to return to the country of origin. In fact various voluntary return programmes have been implemented by Malta in recent years and the aim is to continue to do so. Through voluntary return logistical support is granted to the returnee, who can avail him/herself of the possibility of being given a lump sum to utilise on his/her return to the country of origin to be able to settle in as well as reintegration assistance to set up a business.

In cases where the right of stay of the migrant is no longer present and the migrant does not opt for voluntary return, activities of forced return will have to be implemented as per the laws of Malta. This will entail the attainment of travel documentation, the identification of the necessary escorts and the flights to be utilised.

In all instances the migrants are informed of their options and possibilities and are made aware of their right or obligation (as the case may be) to leave the country.

The main Union funding priorities envisaged focus primarily on voluntary return without excluding forced return actions. As part of voluntary return, outreach and information dissemination will be conducted amongst all migrants. This will be followed by direct counselling to potential and confirmed returnees. Logistical support, including legal and language aid, medical escorts to provide assistance during the trip, together with the provision of lump sums and re-integration assistance if they wish to set up their own business will be given. In addition for those who wish to further their skills before they leave training can also be provided prior to their return. Monitoring and internal evaluation will be undertaken in order to constantly improve the standard operational procedures.

When the migrants' stay in Malta becomes illegal due to a change in status, action will be taken to remove the said TCNs from Malta by utilising activities of forced return. The said activities will involve the attainment of the necessary travel documentation, logistical support in relation to their travel back to their country of origin as well as the imposition of all the necessary security measures.

Measures will also be undertaken to implement the EU Action Plan on return and possible follow-ups on return measures aiming at enhancing the effectiveness of the EU system to return irregular migrants, which may include adequate detention capacity and possible alternatives for UAMs and other vulnerable groups.

National objective	3 - Cooperation
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One of the vital necessities required for any repatriation to be successful is an identification document that can be used for travel. The majority of migrants arriving in Malta by boat carry no identification documents and they claim to come from countries where no local representation is present in Malta. Hence cooperation with consular officers from the nearest embassies of the countries of origin, situated close to Malta is sought in order to interview migrants desiring to return back to their countries. In addition in order to make sure that readmission and reintegration assistance is well exercised in the country of origin, Malta's cooperation with the countries of origin need to be strengthened and reinforced. Moreover as part of Malta's evaluation of its return management systems, cooperation with third countries and Member States is needed to provide the right fora to have an exchange of best practices and procedures. Training and assistance will also be provided to the persons who will be entrusted to carry out the return activities be it either voluntary or forced.

The following funding priorities will be met with national funds, with the help of Union funds.

Malta will continue to enhance its return management activities through cooperation with countries of origin and Member States for the sharing of best practices. Cooperation with countries of origin will also be exercised in relation to the determination of the nationality of the returnees for the attainment of the necessary travel documentation of their nationals. Discussions will also take place to evaluate the re-admission and reintegration of the returnees in their countries in order to attain the full benefit for the returnees.

Training will be given to officials in charge of returns in order to provide all the necessary assistance they would need to give to the returnees or in return management.

Specific objective	4 - Solidarity
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No actions will be carried out under this specific action.

INDICATIVE TIMETABLE

Specific Objective	NO/SA	Main action	Name of action	Start of planning phase	Start of implementation phase	Start of closing phase
SO1 - Asylum	NO1 - Reception/asylum	1	Three Actions: (1) Reception Centre (2) Material Aid (3) Services to unaccompanied minors	2014	2014	2022
SO1 - Asylum	NO1 - Reception/asylum	2	Works and equipment for the highly infectious disease unit	2015	2015	2022
SO1 - Asylum	NO1 - Reception/asylum	3	Services provided by NGOs	2014	2014	2022
SO1 - Asylum	NO2 - Evaluation	1	Improving the asylum determination procedure	2014	2015	2022
SO1 - Asylum	NO2 - Evaluation	2	Interpretation	2014	2014	2022
SO2 - Integration/legal migration	NO2 - Integration	1	Education projects	2015	2015	2022
SO2 - Integration/legal migration	NO2 - Integration	2	Study integration on integration efforts	2015	2016	2022
SO2 - Integration/legal migration	NO2 - Integration	3	Language - cultural integration programme	2014	2014	2022
SO2 - Integration/legal migration	NO3 - Capacity	1	Setting up of integration coordinating unit	2014	2014	2022
SO3 - Return	NO2 - Return measures	1	AVRR	2014	2015	2022
SO3 - Return	NO2 - Return measures	2	Forced Return	2014	2015	2022
SO3 - Return	NO3 - Cooperation	1	Strengthening Return Management Capacity	2014	2014	2022

4. SPECIAL CASES

4.1 Resettlement

Justification of the number of persons to be resettled

Pledging for 2016-17, see Conclusions of 20 July 2015 of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council on resettling through multilateral or national schemes 20,000 persons in clear need of international protection and Commission Recommendation of 8 June 2015 on a European resettlement scheme.

Pledging plan

Vulnerable groups and Common Union resettlement priorities (Lump Sum 10 000€ per person resettled)	2014-2015	2016-2017	2018-2020
Regional Protection Programme in North Africa (Egypt, Libya, Tunisia)			20
Syrian refugees in the region	0	14	
Total union priorities	0	14	20
Grand total	0	14	20

4.2 Transfer & relocation

	From	To	2014-2015	2016-2017	2018-2020
Transfer		Malta	0		
Relocation (2015/1523)	Greece	Malta	0	24	
Relocation (2015/1523)	Italy	Malta	0	36	
Relocation (2015/1601)	Greece	Malta	0	97	
Relocation (2015/1601)	Italy	Malta	0	31	

4.3 Admission from Turkey (2016/1754)

Pledging plan: Number of persons to be admitted from Turkey per pledging period

	2014-2015	2016-2017	2018-2020
Admission			

5. COMMON INDICATORS AND PROGRAMME SPECIFIC INDICATORS

Specific objective	1 - Asylum			
Indicator	Unit of measure	Baseline value	Target value	Source of data
C1 - Number of target group persons provided with assistance through projects in the field of reception and asylum systems supported under this Fund	Number	0.00	16,100.00	Project reporting
C2.1 - Capacity (i.e. number of places) of new reception accommodation infrastructure set up in line with the minimum requirements for reception conditions set out in the EU acquis and of existing reception accommodation infrastructure improved in line with the same requirements as a result of the projects supported under this Fund	Number	0.00	400.00	Project reporting
C2.2 - The percentage in the total reception accommodation capacity	%	0.00	11.00	Project reporting
C3.1 - Number of persons trained in asylum-related topics with the assistance of the Fund	Number	0.00	140.00	Project reporting
C3.2 - That number as a percentage of the total number of staff trained in those topics	%	0.00	90.00	Project reporting
C4 - Number of country of origin information products and fact-finding missions conducted with the assistance of the Fund	Number	0.00	1.00	Project reporting
C5 - Number of projects supported under this Fund to develop, monitor and evaluate asylum policies in Member States	Number	0.00	1.00	Project reporting
C6 - Number of persons resettled with support of this Fund	Number	0.00	0.00	Authority in charge of transferring the persons

Specific objective	2 - Integration/legal migration			
Indicator	Unit of measure	Baseline value	Target value	Source of data
C1 - Number of target group persons who participated in pre-departure measures supported under this Fund	Number	0.00	0.00	Project reporting
C2 - Number of target group persons assisted by this Fund through integration measures in the framework of national, local and regional strategies	Number	0.00	14,000.00	Project reporting
C3 - Number of local, regional and national policy frameworks/measures/tools in place for the integration of third country nationals and involving civil society, migrant communities	Number	0.00	10.00	Project reporting

Specific objective	2 - Integration/legal migration			
Indicator	Unit of measure	Baseline value	Target value	Source of data
as well as all other relevant stakeholders, as a result of the measures supported under this Fund				
C4 - Number of cooperation projects with other Member States on integration of third-country nationals supported under this Fund	Number	0.00	0.00	Project reporting
C5 - Number of projects supported under this Fund to develop, monitor and evaluate integration policies in Member States	Number	0.00	1.00	Project reporting

Specific objective	3 - Return			
Indicator	Unit of measure	Baseline value	Target value	Source of data
C1 - Number of persons trained on return-related topics with the assistance of the Fund	Number	0.00	25.00	Project reporting
C2 - Number of returnees who received pre or post return reintegration assistance co-financed by the Fund	Number	0.00	5,400.00	Project reporting
C3 - Number of returnees whose return was co-financed by the Fund, persons who returned voluntarily	Number	0.00	400.00	Project reporting
C4 - Number of returnees whose return was co-financed by the Fund, persons who were removed	Number	0.00	400.00	Project reporting
C5 - Number of monitored removal operations co-financed by the Fund	Number	0.00	10.00	Project reporting
C6 - Number of projects supported under the Fund to develop, monitor and evaluate return policies in Member States	Number	0.00	1.00	Project reporting

6. FRAMEWORK FOR PREPARATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME BY THE MEMBER STATE

6.1 Partnership involvement in the preparation of the programme

In preparation of the programme, a partnership approach was undertaken, which achieved a wide consultation and included Government Departments and Agencies, Voluntary Organisations, NGOs and International Organisations.

This was done by involving all stakeholders in the compilation of the Malta Key Policy Issues Paper. A number of entities were invited during the Policy Dialogue and were consulted in respect to the finalisation of the minutes of the said Dialogue.

In identifying the strategies and key requirements in the field of asylum and migration, all the relevant Government entities were approached in order to provide their planned strategies for the next 7 years and what actions/ areas would need to be undertaken to achieve these strategies. The methodology adopted in terms of Government entities was the nomination of a Key contact person for the relevant Ministries. A feedback template was disseminated, as well as guidelines for compilation of template and a worked example to facilitate compilation.

With respect to current NGO users of the SOLID fund, these were approached and also provided with a template. Support was provided, as necessary, in terms of articulating proposals and the establishment of key performance indicators. Such support included the facilitation of meetings and discussions.

To ensure that all NGOs were provided with the opportunity of providing feedback, a public consultation session with NGOs was held and an invitation was issued via email to all current beneficiaries as well as sent out to all registered NGOs with the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations. During this consultation session a presentation was given on the objectives of the fund as well as clear explanation of the logistics for submission of feedback and input.

In addition all the information on the public consultation session was uploaded on the Ministry website dedicated to the 2014-2020 programming period as well as on the Funds and Programmes Division website.

6.2 Monitoring Committee

A Monitoring Committee (MC) will be set up whereby stakeholders from all the relevant sectors would be members of the MC. The MC would be chaired by the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry responsible for European Affairs or his delegate, or the RA in his absence. Members from Government bodies representing the education sector, health sector, integration sector, employment sector and home affairs will be asked to sit on the MC. Representatives from stakeholders and or civil society will also be appointed to the MC. The members of the MC will meet to be kept abreast of all the developments that would be undertaken by the Programme in the field of asylum and migration.

Terms of reference were drafted by the RA and approved by the members of the MC. The MC will be expected to meet at least once a year, and presentations would be provided on the implementation, monitoring and evaluation aspects of the AMIF. The Chairperson would also be empowered to call for additional MCs if and when these are deemed relevant.

6.3 Common monitoring and evaluation framework

The RA will make use of various monitoring tools to evaluate the implementation of the programme. In cases of changes in national context and characteristics prevalent over its implementation, the RA will revise the Programme after consultation with the relevant stakeholders and the MC and submit the revised version to CION for approval.

The achievements of the programme will be monitored through the project indicators. A database will contain information on the indicators to be achieved and the achievements will be inputted by the Beneficiaries and monitored through the system.

On a day to day basis the projects will be assisted by the staff within the RA. Monthly bilateral meetings with beneficiaries may be carried out, based on the context and risk of the project, so to ensure that the RA is made aware of any issues hampering the implementation of the projects.

The Beneficiaries will document the monitoring of their project in reports which will have to be presented to the RA. These will in turn be verified by the RA through on the spot checks to assess the correct implementation of the projects, whilst also conducting physical checks where applicable.

All the information gathered will in turn be translated into annual reports and any other report requested by CION.

6.4 Partnership involvement in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the national programme

During implementation the RA will keep informed all the stakeholders in the various fields in which the Programme will be giving assistance that is the educational sector, the home affairs

and national security sector, the health sector as well as stakeholders involved in integration on the achievements or otherwise that will be made by the Programme. This will be achieved primarily through the Monitoring Committee whose membership is expected to ensure a broad coverage of stakeholders involved in the area. The MC will also discuss the implementation, monitoring and evaluation aspects of the AMIF ensuring a broad consultation process.

6.5 Information and Publicity

Malta will ensure that a website or a website portal is provided with information on and access to the national programme; inform potential beneficiaries about funding opportunities under the national programme; and publicise to Union citizens the role and achievements of the Specific Regulations through information and communication actions on the results and impact of the national programme.

Malta will ensure transparency on the implementation of the national programme and maintain a list of actions supported by each national programme which will be accessible through the website or the website portal.

Further information and publicity actions may also be carried out during the course of the programme

6.6 Coordination and complementarity with other instruments

For the 2014-2020 programming period, coordination between the ESI Funds and other Union and National funding instruments will be ensured through the framework of the Inter Ministerial Coordination Committee (IMCC) already set up under the 2007-2013 period.

The aim of the IMCC is to maximise resources whilst reducing the risk of overlap and/or duplication of effort by providing direction on the demarcation between different funds and programmes, undertaking ad hoc consultation where potential overlaps are identified and exchanging information about any changes required to the individual programmes and that could have an impact, by way of overlap, on other programmes.

The IMCC is expected to meet on a bi-annual basis. Members on the IMCC include representatives from the managing authorities, the intermediate bodies, national contact points for the various funding programmes which are implemented in Malta. Other *ad hoc* technical experts may be asked to participate in meetings of the IMCC (or parts thereof) so as to give clarifications and presentations on particular issues which might be required. If the need arises, the IMCC may also appoint *ad hoc* subcommittees to deal with issues of a very specific nature.

With respect to mechanisms to assist beneficiaries use the funds in a complementary way, NGOs and Local Councils are assisted by Malta – EU steering & action Committee

(MEUSEC) which is the entity in charge of disseminating EU related information and assisting local councils and civil society organisations to secure EU funds., while the PPCD and the FPD within the Ministry for European Affairs, are always available to provide advice to potential applicants and beneficiaries on the opportunities of support available through the different funds and queries are referred between units according to their responsibilities.

In addition the FPD of which the Responsible Authority forms part is also the national contact point or the managing authority for a number of European Union Funding Instruments such as the EMFF, EAFRD, Territorial Cooperation, ENPI, Bilateral Funds.

Synergies and complementarity will be ensured with EU policies and financial instruments in third countries. This applies with regard to measures under the Home Funds involving third countries, and measures under the external instruments such as the Development Cooperation Instrument, European Development Fund and the European Neighbourhood Instrument. EU policies and initiatives, such as Mobility Partnerships, Common Agendas on Migration and Mobility, the Return Pilot, Regional Development and Protection Programmes, and the Dialogues building on the EU-Africa Strategy such as the Rabat and Khartoum Processes will also be taken into account in order to ensure that synergies are maximized and duplication avoided. This will be done through the involvement of the relevant Ministries and through coordination with the EU delegations in third countries.

6.7 Beneficiaries

6.7.1 List of five main types of beneficiaries of the programme

State/federal authorities, local public bodies, non-governmental organisations, international public organisations, national Red Cross, International Committee of the Red Cross, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, private and public law companies, education/research organisations, social partners.

6.7.2 Direct award (if applicable)

Direct award is planned when entities have the exclusive responsibility for undertaking certain actions.

The Refugee Commissioner is responsible to receive, process and determine asylum applications.

Activities of Forced Return are carried out by the Police in view of the de jure monopoly existing in return management.

The Detention Service enjoys a de jure monopoly in the management of closed reception centres.

The Agency for the Welfare of Asylum Seekers is solely responsible for the welfare of refugees, beneficiaries of protection and asylum seekers.

The Ministry for Education and Employment is responsible for compulsory education in schools and through Jobsplus is in charge of the issuance of work permits for migrants.

The Ministry for European Affairs and Equality is responsible for the policies of equality, anti-discrimination and integration.

The Ministry for Health is responsible for providing the mainstream national health services in Malta.

7. THE FINANCING PLAN OF THE PROGRAMME

Table 1: AMIF Financial plan

Specific objective / national objective / specific action	Total
SO1.NO1 Reception/asylum	8,557,739.00
SO1.NO2 Evaluation	1,260,500.00
SO1.NO3 Resettlement	
TOTAL SO1 Asylum	9,818,239.00
SO2.NO1 Legal migration	
SO2.NO2 Integration	3,160,414.52
SO2.NO3 Capacity	1,225,000.00
TOTAL SO2 Integration/legal migration	4,385,414.52
SO3.NO1 Accompanying measures	
SO3.NO2 Return measures	2,736,816.00
SO3.NO3 Cooperation	105,000.00
TOTAL SO3 Return	2,841,816.00
TOTAL SO4 Solidarity	0.00
Technical assistance	2,000,676.48
TOTAL Special Cases	1,468,000.00
TOTAL	20,514,146.00

Table 2: Special case pledges

Special case pledges	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Total
Resettlement total	0.00	0.00	70,000.00	70,000.00	66,667.00	66,667.00	66,666.00	340,000.00
Relocation (2015/1523) total	0.00	0.00	180,000.00	180,000.00				360,000.00
Relocation (2015/1601) total	0.00	0.00	384,000.00	384,000.00				768,000.00
Transfer total	0.00	0.00						0.00
Admission from Turkey(2016/1754) total								0.00
TOTAL	0.00	0.00	634,000.00	634,000.00	66,667.00	66,667.00	66,666.00	1,468,000.00

Table 3: Total Annual EU commitments (in €)

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	TOTAL
Asylum and solidarity	1,439,321.43	1,471,111.00	2,719,941.00	1,610,039.70	1,738,775.70	1,485,624.70	1,821,763.71	12,286,577.24
Integration and return	793,938.57	793,941.00	854,400.00	2,723,868.30	1,039,815.30	917,671.30	1,103,934.29	8,227,568.76
TOTAL	2,233,260.00	2,265,052.00	3,574,341.00	4,333,908.00	2,778,591.00	2,403,296.00	2,925,698.00	20,514,146.00

Justification for any deviation from the minimum shares set in the Specific Regulations

Documents

Document title	Document type	Document date	Local reference	Commission reference	Files	Sent date	Sent By
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