

ANNUAL PROGRAMME 2013 [FINAL]

- Initial version**
- Revised version (No.2, date 11/04/2013) following dialogue with the Commission**
- Version revised for other reasons**

MEMBER STATE:	Republic of Malta
FUND:	European Return Fund (RF)
RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY:	Funds and Programmes Division, Office of the Prime Minister
YEAR COVERED:	2013



General Programme Solidarity & Management of Migration Flows
European Return Fund (RF)

Co-financing rate: 75% EU Funds; 25% Beneficiary's Funds

Sustainable Management of Migration Flows



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Acronyms

AA	Audit Authority
AP	Annual Programme
AVR	Assisted Voluntary Return
AVRR	Assisted Voluntary Return & Reintegration
CA	Certifying Authority
CFP	Call for Proposals
CoMAM	Co-operation between Malta & African countries to enhance migration, dialogue & development
EBF	External Borders Fund
ECOR	Enhancing the capacities of return management in Malta
ERF	European Refugee Fund
EU	European Union
ICT	Information, Communication & Technology
ICMPD	International Centre for Migration Policy Development
IF	European Fund for the Integration of Third-Country Nationals
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
MAP	Multi-Annual Programme
MAREMCA	Strengthening Malta's long-term return management capacities
MCS	Management & Control Systems
MFA	Ministry for Foreign Affairs
MHA	Ministry for Home Affairs
MHPA	Ministry for Justice, Social Dialogue and the Family
MS	Member State
MTM	Mediterranean Transit Migration
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
PSC	Projects Selection Committee

RA	Responsible Authority
RF	European Return Fund
TA	Technical Assistance
TCNs	Third-Country Nationals
ToR	Terms of Reference

1. GENERAL RULES FOR SELECTION OF PROJECTS TO BE FINANCED UNDER THE PROGRAMME

1.1 Introduction

The **European Return Fund (RF)** has been used by Malta to support its efforts in improving its return management through the provision of voluntary return were assistance is granted prior to the return and upon settlement in the country of origin, as well as through forced return, through a more secure and humane approach to the return procedure. RF assisted Malta also in the setting up of communication networks between Malta and the country of origin as well as through the provision of analysis of the return management for its further improvement. These actions are the basis of the RF Annual Programme (AP) for 2013. The programme will be also contributing to the priorities identified in the strategic guidelines laid down in the Commission Decision C(2007)837/EC. Besides this the programme will be targeting further the priorities listed in the Multi Annual Programme (MAP).

The Annual Programme 2013 for Malta is being proposed by the Funds and Programmes Division within the Office of the Prime Minister, which is the Responsible Authority (RA) of this Fund. The Programme has been allocated a total of €818,203 (75% EU share). The RA has carried out a consultative meeting with the Ministry for Home Affairs (MHA) on the 30th of August 2012 regarding the activities of forced return which falls under the de jure monopoly of the Malta Police Force. In addition a public consultation session was held on the 3rd of September 2012, whereby the general public and the present beneficiaries of the Programme were given the floor to discuss the needs that can be tackled through the Fund. To be able to reach as many participants as possible for the public consultation session, three adverts were issued on Sunday in the local newspapers, while details of the event were also made available on the Responsible Authority's webpages, on the MEUSAC's¹ website and newsletter (Funding 360) as well as on the Department of Information press release webpage². In addition all current beneficiaries were invited to attend the session, and an agenda was issued upon registration³. The session gave the floor for discussion on the needs that are present in the field of migration as well as provided information on the different actions that can be undertaken according to the Multi-Annual Programme were all laid down. The RA also consulted the OPM Strategic Policy Secretariat within the Office of the Prime Minister. As a result of these consultations it was agreed that only Priorities 1 and 3 of the Multi-Annual Programme will be targeted by the Annual Programme. Priority 1 provides support for the development of a strategic approach to return management by member states, while priority 3 gives support for specific innovative (inter)national tools for return.

In the course of 2013, the RA shall award the Funds through either the awarding body method whereby a call for applications is issued or the executing body method where a restricted call is made due to the de jure monopoly of the actions undertaken. In all cases evaluation of projects will be carried out. Each project shall be evaluated by the RA to

¹ <http://www.funding360.eu/home?l=1>

² <http://gov.mt/en/Government/Press%20Releases/Pages/2012/August/08/pr1760.aspx>

³ <http://www.di-ve.com/news/public-consultation-session-organised-funds-and-programmes-division>

ensure that the project complies with the objectives of the Fund and the criteria established for the call in question. The general rules for selecting the projects to be financed under the Annual Programme 2013 of the Fund follow the minimum standards set out in Council Decision No. 575/2007/EC. The potential beneficiaries will be informed about the selection criteria and timetables of the selection process.

1.2 Target Groups

As per Article 7 of Council Decision 575/2007/EC, the target groups of the actions are:

- (a) all third-country nationals who have not yet received a final negative decision in relation to their request for international protection in a Member State and who may choose to make use of voluntary return, provided they have not acquired a new nationality and have not left the territory of that Member State;
- (b) all third-country nationals enjoying a form of international protection within the meaning of Directive 2004/83/EC, or temporary protection within the meaning of Directive 2001/55/EC in a Member State, and who choose to make use of voluntary return, provided they have not acquired a new nationality and have not left the territory of that Member State;
- (c) all third-country nationals who do not or no longer fulfil the conditions for entry and/or stay in a Member State and who, in accordance with the obligation to leave the territory of that Member State, make use of voluntary return;
- (d) all other third-country nationals who do not or no longer fulfil the conditions for entry and/or stay in a Member State;

2. Third-country national means any person who is not a citizen of the Union within the meaning of Article 17(1) of the Treaty.

1.3 Project Selection Process

The selection of projects to be co-financed from the European Return Fund (RF) within the Annual Programme 2013 shall be carried out through the awarding body method, however the executing method will also be used for Action 2.

The selection of projects to be co-financed from the European Return Fund shall be carried out in compliance with section 3.5 of the revised Management and Control Systems for the four Funds (MCS) established by the RA. For the purpose of this Programme, the selection of projects under Action 1 and 3 will follow the awarding body method⁴. As outlined in the Manual of Procedures⁵ as well as in the Management and Control System⁶, the RA shall issue an open call for proposals. Where possible the RA shall issue a pre-announcement before the call in order to allow sufficient time for stakeholders to mobilise resources. Both the pre-announcement as well as the call itself

⁴ Article 7 of Commission Decision 2008/458/EC (RF)

⁵ Section 4.2 of the Manual of Procedures

⁶ Section 3.5 of the Description of the Management and Control Systems

shall be published through a Press Release, on the media as well as on the RA's website. The open call shall be accompanied with Guidance Notes and an application form and the RA shall also hold information sessions for potential applicants. The applications received shall be assessed in line with the relevant criteria.

In the case of those projects falling under Action 2 which will be implemented through the executing body method, the RA shall invite the relevant organisation through a restricted call for applications to submit a proposal (also within a stipulated time-frame). The proposal will still undergo evaluation by the Project Selection Committee (PSC) to ensure that it complies with the relevant eligibility criteria and will still need to obtain at least 50% of the marks in order to be funded. This approach will ensure that even under the executing method, only good quality projects are accepted for funding.

The general rules for selecting the projects to be financed under the RF Annual Programme 2013 will follow the minimum standards set out in Council Decision No. 575/2007/EC. The selection of projects will be undertaken for both the awarding body method and the executing body method. The Responsible Authority (RA) shall steer the project selection process. A Project Selection Committee (PSC) shall be set up to support the RA in this task. The PSC shall be chaired by a member of the RA and shall include also external (to RA) experts. The RA shall also provide the secretariat to the PSC. All members of the PSC shall have voting rights (apart from the secretariat) and the PSC shall draw up its own terms of reference (ToRs). The main function of the PSC shall be the evaluation of project proposals. The PSC shall, in the first instance, confirm the eligibility of the proposals received (according to the eligibility criteria) and then proceed to evaluate the eligible proposals according to the selection criteria and rank the projects according to the marks obtained. Projects must obtain at least 50% of the marks in order to be considered for funding. The PSC will then submit its recommendations to the Head of the RA and upon approval the RA shall then proceed to sign the Grant Agreements with the selected applicants. In cases where the proposals exceed the budget available, the RA shall co-finance the highest ranking projects with the rest remaining on a reserve list which may be activated should funding become available.

1.4 Selection (Award) Criteria

Projects that meet the eligibility criteria shall proceed to the selection/award phase and will be assessed and ranked on the basis of predefined selection/award criteria listed below. Proposals must obtain at least 50% of the total available points in order to qualify for funding. Funding will be awarded to proposals with the highest scores in order of merit to the extent of available budget. Projects that obtain the pass-mark but for which there is no budget available, will be placed on a reserve list which will be activated should additional budget become available throughout the life-time of the Annual Programme.

As per Article 15 (5) of the legal basis establishing the European Return Fund (575/2007/EC), the selection of projects under this Annual Programme will address the

minimum criteria namely: (a) the situation of the country and its requirements. In this regard, the PSC will be assessing the relevance and justification of the proposed action; (b) the cost-effectiveness of the expenditure. In this regard, the PSC will be assessing the added value of the project and whether the proposed expenditure in relation to the proposed activities is justified and addresses the objectives proposed; (c) the experience, expertise, reliability and financial contribution of both the organisation applying for funding and where applicable that of the partner organisation. In this regard, the PSC will be evaluating the readiness of the potential beneficiary, including whether the actors involved are properly trained and have the necessary knowledge on the objectives of the fund to allow an adequate implementation of the proposed project as well as the quality of the proposed actions; (d) the extent to which the project complements other actions funded by the general budget of the European Union or as part of national programmes. In this regard the PSC will be assessing the complementarity with other actions including national EU funded or other resources.

Indicative Timeframe	Tasks	Proposed Timescales/ Completion dates
Stage 1: Programme Launch and Application Process	Call for applications	Q2 2013*
	Information Sessions & Information Campaigns	Q2 2013
	Deadline for applications	Q2 2013
	Appraisal of applications	Q2 2013
	Approval of projects by RA	Q3 2013
	Grant Agreements signed	Q3 2013
Stage 2: Project Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of activities • Monitoring by RA • Submission of request for payment forms • Management verifications including on the spot checks • Submission of interim/progress reports 	Q3 2013 till end Q2 2015
Stage 3: Project Completion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final reporting on all implementation and financial aspects of the project • Submission of final report to RA 	Q3 2015
End of Eligibility period for selected projects		30 th June, 2015

**This is a proposed timeframe. The open call for project proposals is subject to formal approval of the Annual Programme 2013 by the European Commission.*

B State of play on the three strategic objectives 2012-2013

On a national level Malta has already been implementing the strategic objectives envisaged by the Commission for the period 2012-2013. A description of the current state of play with regards to the strategic objectives, as outlined in document SOLID/2011/25, at the national level is found below:

1. Further development and improvement of voluntary return activities

The Ministry of Home Affairs has since 2009 implemented an Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration programme (AVRR) called RESTART. As from January 2012 new, enhanced AVRR packages based on the beneficiaries' needs, capabilities, and experiences, as well as the potential for development in the countries of origin are available to migrants under the RESTART III project funded by the Return Fund 2011 Annual Programme. New information material for distribution has also been produced in order to raise awareness of the service being offered. The project will cater for a maximum of 100 returns and will run up to June 2013. A follow-up to the project, RESTART IV, is at application stage. Its content was developed and improved from the experience gained from the implementation of the previous RESTART projects.

In order to initiate or promote better cooperation with Countries of Origin on voluntary returns MHA, in partnership with IOM has implemented another EU funded project under the European Return Fund of 2010 entitled, '*Cooperation between Malta and African countries to enhance migration dialogue and development*' (CoMAM). The project sought to enhance diplomatic and administrative relations between Maltese authorities and their counterparts in Countries of Origin from the Sub Saharan African region. The project activities included a three day visit by embassy and consular representatives from Sudan, Mali, Gambia, and Burkina Faso, that was organised in Malta in November 2011. Meetings were held with MHPA, MFA, Immigration Police and other stakeholders in order for the representatives to better acquaint with the situation in Malta, establish contacts, and identify ways in which to enhance cooperation. Following these discussions feedback from Burkina Faso and Sudan on what actions could be taken to enhance relations between these countries and Malta was received in 2012 and will serve as reference for future discussions. A follow up action, titled CoMAM 2 has been planned for 2013 and is at application stage.

2. Promotion of a more strategic focus on EU standards through implementation of actions linked to the requirements of the Return Directive

The Return Directive 2008/115/EC has been fully transposed into Maltese legislation in March 2011. This has been done by means of regulations made under the Immigration Act and published by means of Legal Notice 81 of 2011.

The Police Immigration Section has reviewed its return procedures to comply with the provisions of the Return Directive. Among them is the procedure for issuing removal orders. This document is now issued only after a process is carried out. A return decision is served on the third country national, 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 same Directive. Following the lapse of this period if the migrant fails to comply or else if the granting of this period is refused in line with the same Directive, it is only then that a removal order is issued. It is at this time that the migrant is detained for the purpose of enforcing the return decision.

MHA has implemented this year the ECOR project funded under the Annual Programme of 2011. The project ran from April to September 2012. The project aims to provide targeted training and knowledge transfer from Member States experts to Maltese staff involved in migration, asylum and return management in the areas of Return Management, and the implementation of the EU Return Directive. The consisted of three seminars, with the last focusing exclusively on the implementation of the Return Directive. In September 2012 a number of Maltese officials were invited to participate in study missions in the NL and the UK. The study missions included visits to detention and removal centres, discussions of investigation techniques for establishing identity of undocumented migrants; and the organization of return travel documents and internal/external communication to facilitate release and return.

3. Improvement of the national capabilities through co-operation with other Member States.

The main action targeting this objective in 2012 was through bilateral meetings with a number of ministries from different Member States responsible for immigration. The three partners assisted the Maltese Authorities through their network of diplomatic representations in building up working relations with countries of origin for the procurement of documents for forced returns. Furthermore best practices in the area of return management were discussed during the missions. This action forms part of the MAREMCA II project financed by the RF 2011 AP. This project aims at strengthening the relationship with countries of origin in view of building a strategy to return management. In this regard, an initial meeting in the end of January 2012 was organized between different stakeholders including Detention Services, AWAS, Office of the Refugee Commissioner, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Home and Parliamentary Affairs as well as the Armed Forces of Malta. Three meetings in UK,

Switzerland and the Netherlands were also held in these respective countries between February and March 2012. Furthermore on 27 April, a Maltese delegation visited Ghana with the aim of building a closer cooperation with this country of origin. Two more visits took place to Sudan on 26-29th June and Burkina Faso on 10-12th July. Further missions will take place in Q4 2012 and Q1 2013 to Nigeria and Gambia. The visits will be reciprocated by representatives from these countries who will be invited to further talks in Malta.

In order to strengthen its AVRR programme, particularly the reintegration phase, MHA is participating as a partner in a project titled Reintegr-Action funded through the Return Fund Community Actions 2010. The partners of the project are Germany and the Netherlands. IOM is leading the project through its office in Malta and with support from its offices in Germany, the Netherlands, and Ghana. The project aims to enhance cooperation between participating MS and Ghana by setting up joint mechanisms at both ends to allow for developing and testing common reintegration strategies and tools aimed at sustainable reintegration of voluntary returnees to Ghana. A study on business demand in various regions of Ghana is being concluded and will serve as a basis for enhanced assistance to returnees. A sustainable monitoring mechanism for returns in Ghana is to be established through the actions of the project in order to be able to monitor the implementation of the reintegration phase in the long term. This project will link return preparatory actions in the EU Member States with direct support provided at destination in Ghana by the relevant local institutions, such as: Research and Counselling Foundation for African Migrants (RECFAM), Scholars in-Transit (SiT), and Alliance Against Irregular Migration (AAIM) - through a coordinated management facilitated by IOM that is present at both ends. The project will run till April 2013.

2. CHANGES IN THE MANAGEMENT & CONTROL SYSTEMS (if appropriate)

Not applicable

3. ACTIONS TO BE SUPPORTED BY THE PROGRAMME UNDER THE PRIORITIES CHOSEN

3.1 Actions implementing Priority 1: Support for the Development of a Strategic Approach to Return Management by Member States

Action 1: Continuing the implementation of assisted voluntary return (AVR) programmes

a. Purpose and scope of the action

As was specified in the Multi-Annual Programme, Malta will continue to develop the option of voluntary return. In this regard, 25 individuals benefitted from voluntary return under the 2008 RF Annual Programme, another 100 benefitted from voluntary return under the 2009 Annual Programme, while under the 2010 Annual Programme, Malta has succeeded in providing voluntary return to approximately 65 people. A further 34 persons have benefitted from the Voluntary Return Programme under the 2011 Annual Programme till mid October 2012. This demonstrates that Malta is managing to implement AVRR in a more determined and systematic manner amongst migrants and plans to continue to do so under this Annual Programme.

This action aims to offer the possibility to those migrants requesting the option of being assisted to return voluntarily to their country of origin and restart their lives through the reintegration assistance (AVRR).

Malta, plans to continue offering this option to migrants under the 2013 Annual Programme. The proposed action offers prospective returnees the possibility to choose amongst a number of return packages providing a *dignified* return for the returnee as well as an increased degree of sustainability of the reintegration dimension. This will be based on the increased coordination and co-operation between and with the countries of origin in order to ensure that the activities supported (in terms of start-up actions by the returnee upon return) are in demand by the market. Increased potential with regard to sustainability will also be based on an enhanced preparatory phase prior to the returnees' departure, particularly through various training offers. Malta plans to continue strengthening its capacity in this area and will also continue to promote and provide AVRR and estimates that around 75 returnees will benefit from this action over the Programme's implementation period.

The action will not only pay for flight tickets and start-up grants but will also provide information and supporting measures which will serve to inform and encourage interested migrants to avail themselves of the AVRR option. It is also foreseen that the 2013 Programme will monitor reports issued on the status of reintegration plans in order to ameliorate the return programme being implemented.

b. Expected grant recipients

Expected grant recipients are public bodies charged with the welfare of the target group, other public or private bodies (including local authorities), NGOs, and any other organisation with the capacity and mandate to undertake this action.

c. Where appropriate, justification regarding project(s) implemented directly by the responsible authority acting as an executing body

Not applicable. The Responsible Authority shall issue an open call for applications to implement this Action.

d. Expected quantified results and indicators to be used

- Around 75 migrants availing themselves of the options offered under the Programme.
- Approximate 4 countries of origin profiled in order to provide relevant and updated information to returnees and stakeholders,
- Increased awareness of the possibilities of AVRR.

e. Visibility of EC Funding

In accordance with Article 35 of Commission Decision 2008/458/EC, all projects will ensure the visibility of EU funding in project documentation and presentations. The RA shall include the relevant obligations in the Grant Agreements and shall provide advice and guidance as necessary, as well as supervise visibility during its monitoring and management verification activities. Guidelines on the obligatory visibility requirements are already provided for in both the Manual of Procedures as well as in the Visual Identity Guidelines. Both documents will be disseminated amongst beneficiaries upon approval of their project proposals and can already be easily downloadable from the RA's webpage⁷.

As defined in Article 34 of Commission Decision 2008/458/EC, the RA shall ensure that all projects receiving over €100,000 shall display a permanent plaque detailing the name of the project and the pertinent Annual Programme. Appropriate provisions with regard to the visibility of the EU logo will be included in the Grant Agreements.

f. Complementarity with similar actions financed by other EC instruments, if appropriate

Similar actions and projects are being or were implemented over the previous years, including:

⁷ <http://www.ppcd.gov.mt/publicity>

- 2 Voluntary return and sustainable reintegration in the country of origin – RESTART I (Annual Programme 2008)
- 3 Voluntary return and sustainable reintegration in the country of origin – RESTART II (Annual Programme 2010)
- 4 Voluntary return and sustainable reintegration in the country of origin – RESTART III (Annual Programme 2011)
- 5 Voluntary return and sustainable reintegration in the country of origin – RESTART IV (Annual Programme 2012)
- 6 DAR implemented under the Return Preparatory Actions (JLS/2006/Return/013); and
- 7 DAR 2 (Annual Programme 2009).
- 8 ‘Reintegr-ations’ funded by the EC under the Return Community Actions 2010.

g. Financial information

The total cost of the action is planned to amount to €440,000. The Community share is expected to amount to €330,000 (75% of the total amount) whilst the public/private share is expected to amount to € 110,000 (25% of the total amount).

h. Categorization of the action according to the typology for the Fund

LAYER 1 ASSISTED VOLUNTARY RETURN OR FORCED RETURN	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	TYOLOGY A – Assisted Voluntary Return Share (only in case both A and B have been selected): NA
<input type="checkbox"/>	TYOLOGY B – Forced Return Share (only in case both A and B have been selected):%
LAYER 2 – (THE TEN TYPOLOGIES)	
2. AVR	100%

Action 2: Activities of forced return

(Falling under Priority 1 of the Multi-Annual Programme)

a. Purpose and scope of the action

Despite the fact that Malta will seek to focus its efforts and promote further AVRR, the complementary action focusing on *forced* return of Third Country Nationals (TCNs) is also being re-proposed in order to provide a comprehensive approach to the problem and tackle also the issue of third-country nationals who do not or no longer fulfil the conditions for entry and/or stay in a Member State and who do not accept AVRR, i.e the scope of this activity is to carry out the forced return of illegal TCNs to their country of origin. This type of action is carried out solely by the Immigration Police.

Thus in view of the role and the de jure monopoly existing in the case of the Malta Police Force Immigration Section, this activity will be implemented through the use of the executing method. The RA shall invite the Police Authorities to submit a proposal which will be assessed against the same criteria as those projects being selected under the awarding method. This is to ensure a consistency in the quality of projects funded. The only step such projects will by-pass is the competitive selection, given that such actions are implemented only by the Police Authorities and therefore subjecting the applicants to a competitive procedure would merely result in additional administrative burden for all parties concerned.

The Fund shall continue to alleviate some of the financial burden which if not supported is carried by the Maltese authorities. Apart from the legal obligation to actually carry out forced return, forced return is important also to encourage more voluntary return since the latter gives rejected asylum seekers the opportunity to return to their home country with a set of skills as well as a grant which makes it possible for them to start their own business rather than being forced to return empty handed.

It should be pointed out that the success of such actions depends on the ability to obtain documentation in order to be able to return illegally staying TCNs, which in itself is not an easy process and may require a long period of time. One other difficulty on the ground relates to the location of the immigrants in a timely manner. Documenting such returnees depends a lot on the working relations with the authorities of the countries of origin and the networks available that could provide assistance in the process. Nevertheless, the Maltese authorities feel that this project is useful and should be supported as complementary projects fostering more co-ordination and co-operation with countries of origin are rendering some good results which are then translated into actions supporting also forced return. As at end September 2012, the Immigration Police have repatriated 272 people under the Annual Programme 2008, 70 under the Annual Programme 2009, 298 people under the Annual Programme of 2010.

b. Expected grant recipients

The project will be implemented by the Immigration Section of the Police Force which can be said to be the final recipient of the assistance received from the Fund.

c. Where appropriate, justification regarding project(s) implemented directly by the responsible authority acting as an executing body

The RA will use the executing method and directly (through the Ministry of Home Affairs) invite the Police Authorities of Malta to submit a proposal. No open call will be issued. This method will be utilized in view of the de jure monopoly role held by the Police Authorities with regards to forced return of illegal migrants. The RA will nevertheless assess the proposal against the evaluation criteria of the Programme to ensure that the project is of the desired standard and quality, despite not being subject to a competitive process.

d. Expected quantified results and indicators to be used

Providing exact numbers is very difficult in this case, also for reasons cited above. It is difficult to know how fast countries of origin will be re-establishing diplomatic representation in the region which are deemed to be critical to obtain the necessary paperwork. Due also to the volatile nature of the sector, it is very difficult to estimate how many people will be reaching Malta's shores in the next 24-30 months. However, the Maltese Authorities will seek to repatriate an average of 120 persons under this particular project.

e. Visibility of EC Funding

Same as in Activity 1.e.

f. Complementarity with similar actions financed by other EC instruments, if appropriate

Similar actions and projects are being or were implemented over the previous years, including:

- Return Fund Annual Programme 2008 – Activities of forced return
- Return Fund Annual Programme 2009 – Activities of forced return
- Return Fund Annual Programme 2010 – Activities of forced return
- Return Fund Annual Programme 2012 – Activities of forced return

g. Financial information

The total cost of the action is planned to amount to €489,618.08. The Community share is expected to amount to €367,213.56 (75% of the total amount) whilst the public share is expected to amount to €122,404.52 (25% of the total amount).

h. Categorization of the action according to the typology for the Fund

LAYER 1 ASSISTED VOLUNTARY RETURN OR FORCED RETURN	
<input type="checkbox"/>	TYPOLOGY A – Assisted Voluntary Return Share (only in case both A and B have been selected):%
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	TYPOLOGY B – Forced Return Share (only in case both A and B have been selected): NA

LAYER 2 – (THE TEN TYPOLOGIES)	
3. Forced Return	100%

3.2 Priority 2: Support for the Cooperation between Member States in Return Management.

No actions are foreseen under this priority.

3.3 Priority 3: Support for Specific Innovative (Inter)national Tools for Return Management

Action 3: Improvement of cooperation with other countries of origin in conjunction with other Member States

a. Purpose and scope of the action

The limited presence of diplomatic and consular representations in Malta have been a challenge in identifying and obtaining travel documents for migrants willing to return back to their countries. Thus enhancement of diplomatic and administrative relations between Maltese authorities and their counterparts in Countries of Origin from the Sub-Saharan African region is considered to be a priority in order to be able to exercise AVRR measures.

In this context this action under this priority shall seek to focus on the improvement of co-operation with the countries of origin in conjunction with other MS and possibly with the support of international organizations. The action will also serve to see firsthand what previous AVRR projects have achieved and what possible improvements could be implemented in this area. Possibilities also exist to strengthen relationships with transit countries in order to facilitate such return programmes. Co-operation from all those involved is key on the effective functioning of any AVRR project.

b. Expected Grant Recipients

Expected grant recipients are public bodies charged with the welfare of the target group, other public or private bodies (including local authorities), NGOs, and any other organisation with the capacity and mandate to undertake this action.

c. Where appropriate, justification regarding project(s) implemented directly by the responsible authority acting as an executing body

Not applicable to this action. The RA shall implement this action using the award method.

d. Expected quantified results and indicators to be used

The action will serve to:

- Enhance relations in the area of return with EU Member States
- Improve cooperation with at least two countries of origin and
- Strengthen relationships with transit countries.

e. Visibility of EC funding

Same as in Action 1.e.

f. Complementarity with similar actions financed by other EC instruments, if appropriate

Return Annual Programme 2010 – Co-operation between Malta and African countries to enhance migration dialogue and development (CoMAM).

g. Financial information

The total cost of the action is planned to amount to €80,636. The Community share is expected to amount to €60,477 (75% of the total amount) whilst the public/private share is expected to amount to €20,159 (25% of the total amount).

h. Categorization of the action according to the typology for the Fund

LAYER 1 ASSISTED VOLUNTARY RETURN OR FORCED RETURN	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	TYPOLGY A – Assisted Voluntary Return Share (only in case both A and B have been selected): NA
<input type="checkbox"/>	TYPOLGY B – Forced Return Share (only in case both A and B have been selected):%
LAYER 2 – (THE TEN TYPOLOGIES)	
10. Cooperation with third countries	100%

3.4 Priority 4: Support for Community Standards and Best Practices on Return Management

No actions are foreseen under this priority.

4. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE (Action 4)

4.1 Purpose of the Technical Assistance

Technical Assistance (where applicable) will be shared between the four Funds as per Article 5 of Annex II of the Implementing Rules.

Technical Assistance (TA) is aimed at enhancing the implementation of the General Programme by providing the Responsible Authority, the Treasury Department, the Certifying Authority and the Audit Authority with appropriate support. In the course of the activities undertaken by the RA it has become clear that due to the increased amount of projects being implemented under the General Programme, there is a need to enhance capacity, particularly in the RA. As of October 2012, the RA had 3 full time EU Fund Officers, 1 full time Project Manager (assigned to projects), 1 full time Project Manager (assigned to financial control answerable directly to the Head of the Responsible Authority) and 1 full time EU Fund Manager (assigned to projects). A Senior Manager coordinates the whole team. It is clear that since the RA carries out 100% of the checks and processes in relation to all its projects which currently amount to 55⁸, while providing also direct payments on expenditure made, there is a need to enhance the financial control function as well as the project monitoring function to double check the checks made by the said Officers and Managers while providing additional support to them. In addition, it is foreseen that an IT system will be put in place in order to have all payments processed through this database system. In this regard, the RA has issued relevant calls and will be engaging the said additional personnel. The RA will also be undertaking relevant training actions which help in capitalising on the fact that within the Permanent Secretariat there are persons with experience in certain issues, including reporting, the management of an electronic system and management verifications.

Technical Assistance will be considered as one entire project consisting of small operations. This project will be managed by the Responsible Authority. The procedures for applying for technical assistance are outlined in the Manual of Procedures. The RA will also ensure adequate separation of function within the RA in this regard. The implementation of the Technical Assistance project will comply with the relevant rules and procedures, including public procurement regulations.

The amount of €62,820.44 has been earmarked to be used as Technical Assistance and accordingly the following activities are envisaged to be implemented:

- a) expenditure relating to the preparation, selection, appraisal, management and monitoring of actions;
- b) expenditure relating to audits and on-the-spot checks of actions or projects;
- c) expenditure relating to evaluations of actions or projects;
- d) expenditure relating to information, dissemination and transparency in relation to actions;

⁸ The Amount refers to all Four Funds and includes projects awarded under the 2010 AP and 2011 AP.

- e) expenditure on the acquisition, installation and maintenance of computerised systems for the management, monitoring and evaluation of the Funds;
- f) expenditure on meetings of monitoring committees and sub-committees relating to the implementation of actions. This expenditure may also include the costs of experts and other participants in these committees, including third-country participants, where their presence is essential to the effective implementation of actions;
- g) expenditure for the reinforcement of the administrative capacity for the implementation of the Fund.

4.2 Expected quantified results

The main result of the use of Technical Assistance is the successful implementation of the 2013 Annual Programmes. Expected results, depending on the actual activities carried out, will be as follows:

- Increase in capacity;
- Successful implementation of the General Programme;
- Effective announcement of Open Calls (in newspapers, websites, etc);
- The organisation of at least 6 bilateral monitoring meetings;
- The organization of at least one conference to be organized per year for beneficiaries and stakeholders;
- The setting up of an Annual Event aimed at the dissemination of information to the general public as per Art. 33 of the Commission Decision 2008/458;
- Gathering of Information in relation to the 2014 – 2020 Programmes.

4.3 Visibility of EC Funding

The EU logo will be applied to all materials prepared (instruction documents, application forms, advertising materials, etc) and also equipment which is purchased and/or leased (e.g. computers). When required, information activities (e.g. for launching of call, etc) will be carried out and media articles will be published in order to publicise any relevant development.

The RA also intends to publicise the results of the Annual Programme using different media.

