

CITIZEN SUMMARY

Fund: European Social Fund (ESF)

Programming period: 2014-2020

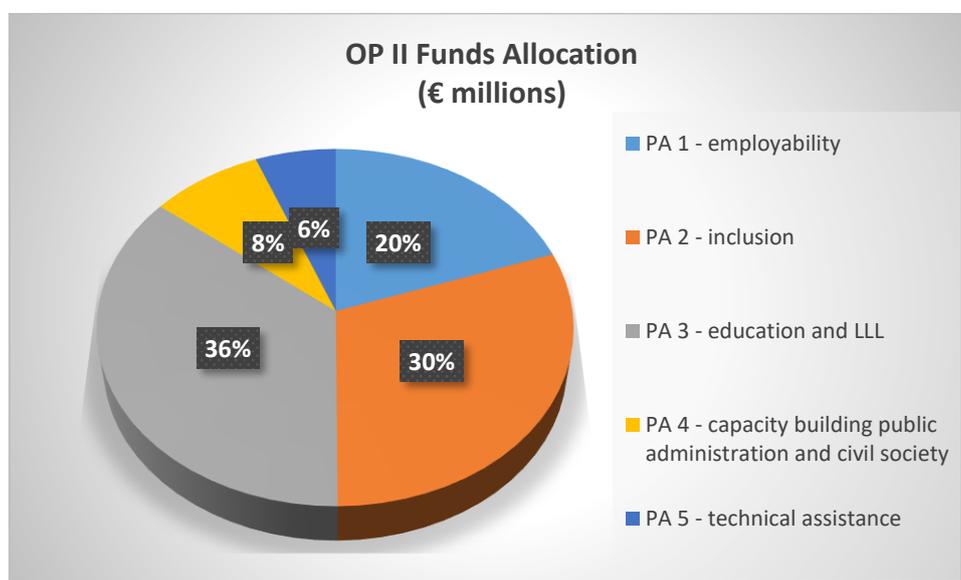
Budget available (Malta): €132 Million (10% for Gozo)

Reporting Year: 2017

What is ESF (MALTA) all about?

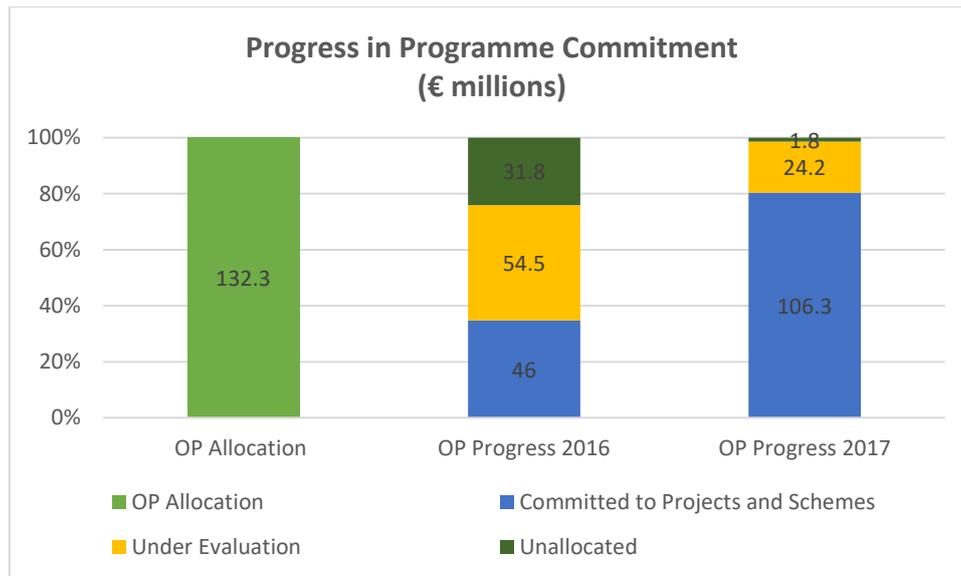
The European Social Fund, ESF, finances projects that aim at improving peoples' lives through programmes intended to teach people new skills or strengthen existing ones and to supporting them in finding better jobs. ESF Malta provides funding in four main areas that aim to support people increasing their employability; supporting inclusion, particularly for those at a higher risk of exclusion; improving educational attainment; and improving the delivery of the public service while supporting social partners to engage in dialogue with government.

No calls for new projects were issued in 2017 since ESF Malta focused on finalising the assessment of projects that had been received. Any upcoming call for projects will be advertised on all local newspapers and on eufunds.gov.mt (under OPEN CALLS Section).



What projects were funded in 2017?

From the beginning of the programme up to the end of 2017, three calls for projects were issued. As at the end of 2017, twenty-five projects and two aid schemes were approved for funding. This represents 80% of the total funds available. The list of projects can be found on www.eufunds.gov.mt.



The following are some of the projects and schemes through which over 8,000 persons are benefiting (48% women; 40% below 25; and 9% over 54).

a. Addressing employability:

- i. Access to Employment (A2E) – This scheme, which has helped 754 persons to date, is run by Jobsplus and aims to increase access to employment for those who may have difficulties finding work on their own, such as persons with disability and unemployed persons over 50. The budget of €12M supports companies by covering up to between €85 and €125 per week of salary costs.
- ii. Training for employment – This project provides training grants to the working age population in order to improve employability by increasing their knowledge and hands on experience in a real working environment. The project is run by Jobsplus and has a budget of €9.6M. By 2017, 1025 persons benefitted from this project.
- iii. Youth Guarantee 2.0 – This project aims to reduce the number of youths who are not in education, employment or training (NEETs) by providing training and personalised assistance to those at risk of becoming long-term unemployed and of being socially excluded. It includes SEC and MCAST prevention classes for those needing to re-sit exams. This is another project run by Jobsplus, with a budget of €5M and as of 2017 it assisted 1,803 persons under the age of 25.

b. Education and lifelong learning:

- i. Endeavour Scholarships Scheme – Continuing on the work implemented in the previous year, by the end of 2017 the Scholarships Unit within the Ministry for Education and Employment (MEDE) assisted 627 participants in pursuing their education at Level 7 and 8 (MA and PhD). The scheme has a budget of €8.1M of which €6M was committed by end of 2017 in terms of scholarships to students.
- ii. Reach High Scheme – Also implemented by the Scholarships Unit within MEDE, with a budget of €3.5M, provides newly graduated doctoral students the opportunity to conduct research projects with Higher Education Institutions in Europe, in various fields. 16 post-doctoral scholarships have been awarded since 2016, one of which concluded the research in 2017.

- iii. One Tablet per Child – The aim of this project is to improve the learning experience of students through the use of digital technologies. This will be delivered by providing year four students with a tablet each (15,750 tablets by 2019); moreover, project also includes training to educators to utilise tablets in the most effective way. With a budget of €10.3M, by 2017, 7,657 students and 1,055 educators have already benefitted through this project.
- iv. Investing in Skills (IIS) – This scheme aims to assist employers in training their staff to increase productivity and enhance adaptability in the Maltese labour market. Launched in 2017 with a budget of €8M, the scheme has approved 202 grants, through which 1,230 individual participants have benefitted.

c. Social Inclusion

- i. VASTE is an €11M project implemented by Jobsplus, aimed at increasing inclusivity of vulnerable persons into the labour market. This is done namely through suitable training and job coaching. To date, 569 individuals have been given training, and from those who have completed it, 45% are now in employment or further studies.
- ii. Work Programme Initiative is also implemented by Jobsplus, and aims to improve the chances of employment for the long-term unemployed by providing individual profiling, training and work placements. This project has helped 982 participants by 2017, 7% of which have entered employment or pursued further studies and 90% obtained a qualification/certification.

2018: Looking Forward

2018, will see significant progress in the social inclusion of people with disabilities and other vulnerable groups through a number of projects. Moreover, there will be training in mental health first aid for youths, as well as non-technical training for Healthcare Personnel, the development of a larger allied health capacity as well as work tied to establishing a national platform to address social determinants of health.

Finally projects related to the improvement of service delivery as well as capacity building for civil society and public administration will also start being implemented in 2018.

The Managing Authority will continue to provide the necessary support as well as ensure that the projects meet their intended targets and outcomes, in some cases also looking at ways of how processes and procedures can be simplified. Success stories will be given exposure and an evaluation exercise will commence.

For more information:

Info.eufunds@gov.mt – subject ESF Citizen Summary 2017

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