

CITIZENS' SUMMARY – SME Initiative

Fund: ERDF

Programming period: 2014-2020

Budget available (Malta): €15 Million

Reporting Year: 2017

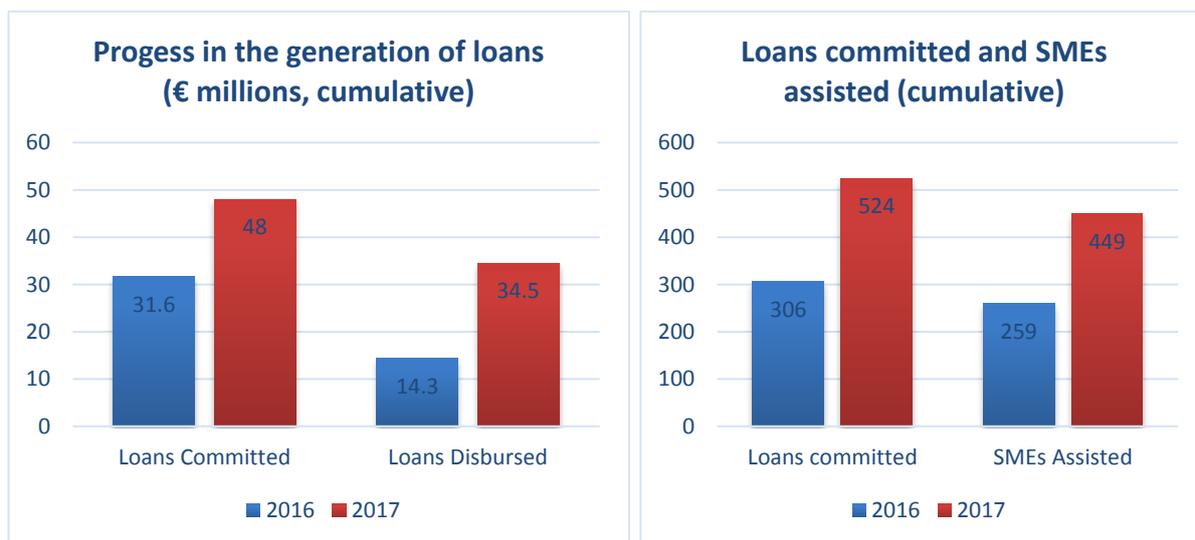
Facts and Figures:

- 449 SMEs assisted to date
 - 81% of SMEs which participated in this initiative employ less than 10 employees
 - 98% employ less than 50 employees
 - 47% were start-ups
 - 16 different economic sectors assisted
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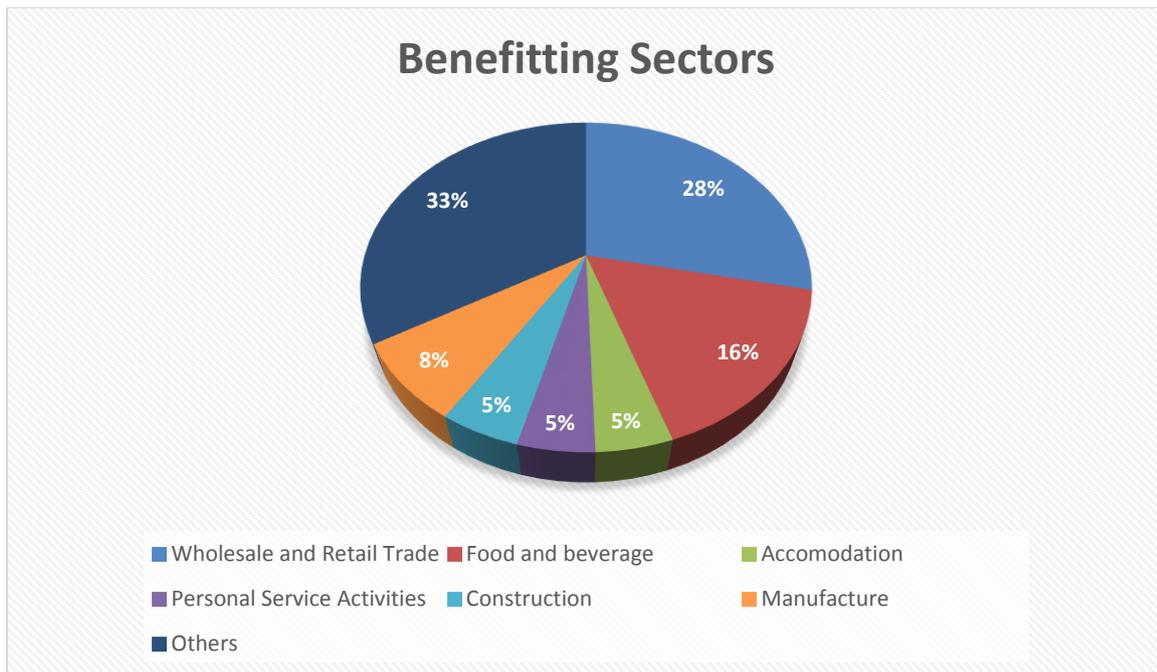
Launched in July 2015, the *SME Initiative (SMEi)* provides assistance to local SMEs to finance their business needs with the objective to make their business grow. Through this initiative, local SMEs benefit from easier access to bank loans since this facility will allow banks to provide loans at better terms and conditions than what they otherwise would be able to provide outside the SMEi framework.

In fact enterprises benefitting under SMEi benefit from lower interest rates and lower collateral, facilitating SMEs access to finance, be it for the purchase of plant and equipment, new products and services, expansion into new markets, amongst others.

During 2017, a total of €54.9M in loans were made available to Maltese SMEs thanks to this instrument, with €35.4M actually being disbursed through 542 loans. The progress registered from the previous reporting year is being presented in the graph below:



The sectors benefitting from the SMEi in 2017 can be summarised in percentage terms as per below:



The category “Others” includes circa 30 sectors, ranging from repairs and waste collection to transport and legal services.

What’s next...

The response by SMEs has to date been extremely encouraging, and considering the success achieved to date, in 2017 a decision was taken to increase the allocation to this instrument by an additional €7M in order to widen the scope of assistance and to create additional investment by SMEs. This top up is expected to take place in the second half of 2018 following the approval by the Commission of this modification to the Operational Programme.

For more information:

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