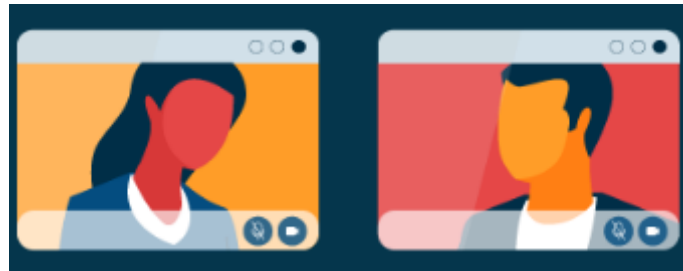


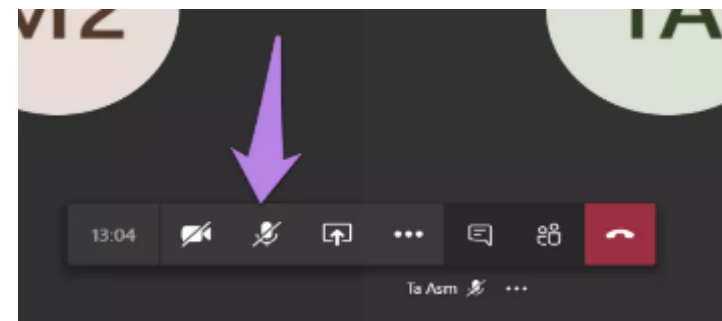
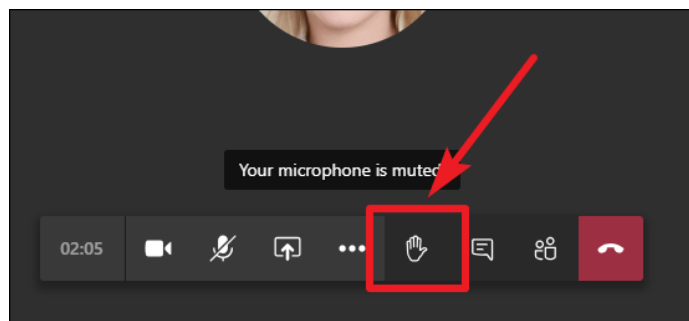
# Welcome to the Monitoring Committee Meeting!

Please find some House Rules to ensure the smooth running of the meeting:

1. Keep your microphone muted throughout the meeting unless you want to intervene in the discussion.



2. In that case, click on the raise hand option and await your turn. Once Chair gives you the floor, unmute your microphone and share your views!



## Update on Implementation

**Operational Programme I - *Fostering a competitive and sustainable economy to meet our challenges***

**SME Initiative Operational Programme – *Stimulating private sector investment for economic growth***

**Operational Programme II – *Investing in human capital to create more opportunities and promote the wellbeing of society***

**Monitoring Committee  
11<sup>th</sup> November 2021**



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# Presentation overview

- Overview of Operational Programmes I and II
- Programme Commitment Table
- Progress in the Implementation on the ground – Operational Programme I
- Progress in the Implementation on the ground – Operational Programme II
- Support to enterprises (Aid Schemes progress on the ground) – OPI and OPII
- Progress in the Implementation on the ground – SMEi Initiative
- Monitoring and Evaluation
- Communication Activities
- Capacity Building
- Disbursement Targets
- Concluding Remarks

# Overview

## Intervention Logic:

- 12 Priority Axes for Operational Programme I
- 7 Priority Axes for Operational Programme II

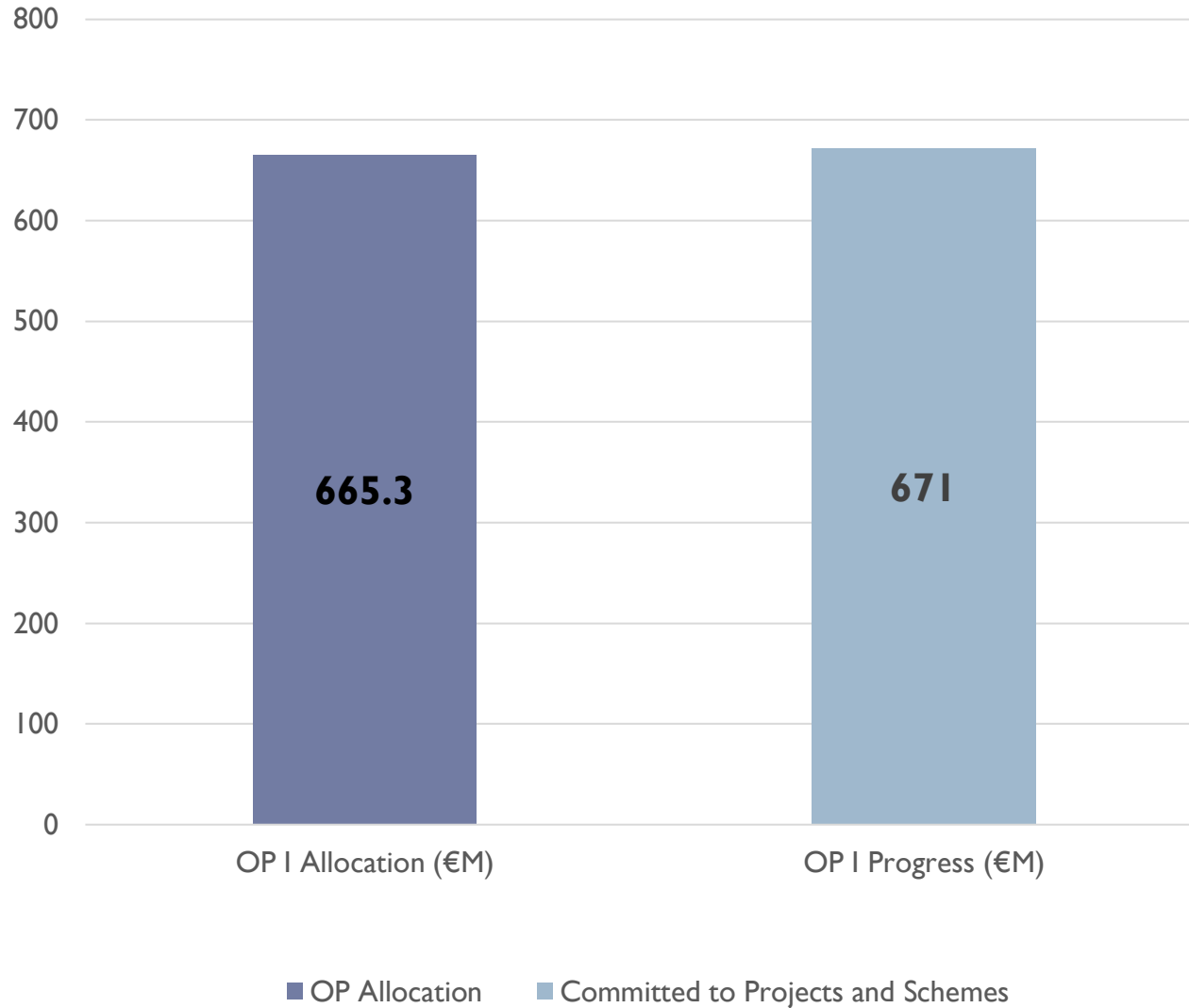
## Implementation Timeframe:

- Programme spans from 2014 to 2020
- Eligibility of costs until 2023

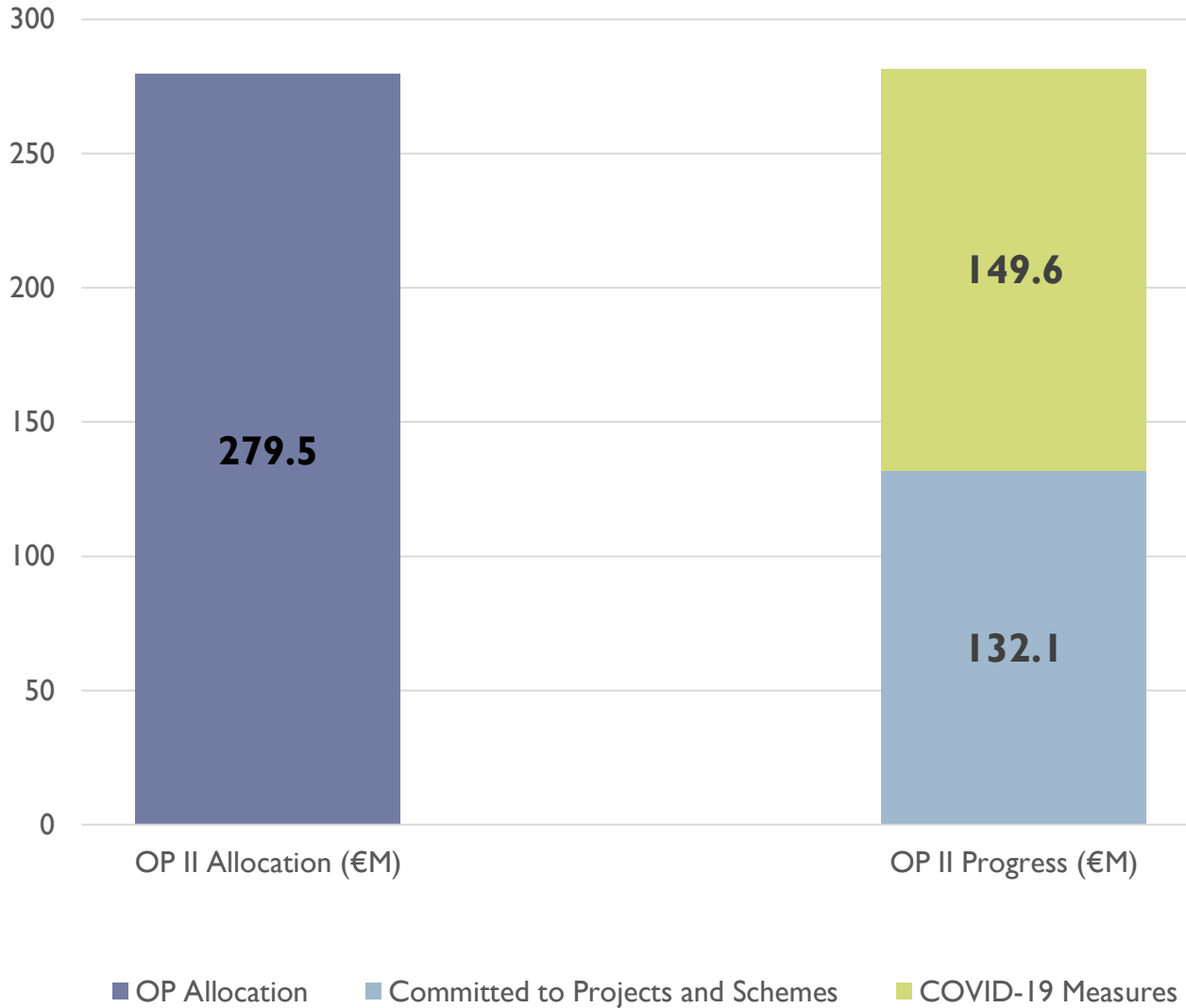
## Financial Allocation:

- ERDF – EU Share: €339M, MT Share: €85M, **Total: €424M** (80% co-financing rate)
- CF – EU Share: €205M, MT Share: €36M, **Total: €241M** (85% co-financing rate)
- ESF – EU Share: €134M, MT Share: €34M, **Total: €168M** (80% co-financing rate)
- REACT-EU – EU Share: €111M, **Total: €111M** (100% co-financing rate)

# OPI Commitment Table



# OPII Commitment Table



# Progress in the Implementation of Operational Programme I

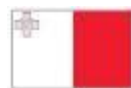


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# PA 1 - Investing in Research, Technological Development & Innovation

PA Allocation	Committed	Contracted	Disbursed	Verified	Certified
€62M	€62M	€75.4M	€40.3M	€37.9M	€37.7M



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# Key Achievements – PA1

Two mainstream projects and 1 Aid Scheme with a **total public eligible value of €62M** are currently being implemented.

Major achievements to date include:

Development of the **Sustainable Living Complex (SLC)** at the University of Malta campus aimed to provide a model resource-efficient building, a research facility for smart specialization areas and a high-quality environment for inter-disciplinary research.

- Construction work is ongoing and is expected to be finalized by Q3 2022.
- The contract for Mechanical & Electrical Services and for Finishes and Fixtures of the building was awarded.
- Project is expected to be completed in Q3 2023.



Ongoing construction works at SLC site at the University of Malta campus



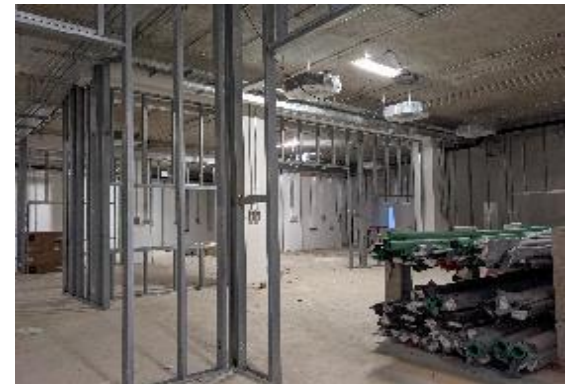
# Key Achievements – PA1

## TRAKE

- Construction works at the TRAKE's main building housing a total of 30 labs are ready. Majority of M&E works at Metallurgy & Materials Engineering Labs (MMEL) have been completed.
- Tendering processes for the purchase of additional equipment for the TRAKE main building and MMEL are still ongoing.
- This project has facilitated more than 90 FTEs of knowledge-intensive employment opportunities for academics and researchers.
- A new call for applications for post-doctoral researchers was launched in 2021; 6 researchers in the fields of Mechanical & Electrical engineering, and Science in Engineering have been engaged and the engagement of another 10 is in progress.
- A total of 94 researches have been undertaken in the fields of mechanical engineering, metallurgy and materials engineering as well as industrial and manufacturing engineering.



M&E and finishes at the TRAKE main building



## PA 2 - Consolidating Investment within the ICT Sector

PA Allocation	Committed	Contracted	Disbursed	Verified	Certified
€47.4M	€47.4M	€38M	€37.7M	€35M	€29.4M



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# Key Achievements – PA2

Two mainstream projects with a **public eligible value of €47.4M**

**SIntegraM:** this project is developing & implementing a national spatial data infrastructure.

Deliverables include:

Computer Assisted Virtual Environment (CAVE) – aimed to monitor green infrastructure and provide tools to spot and trace environmental infringements.

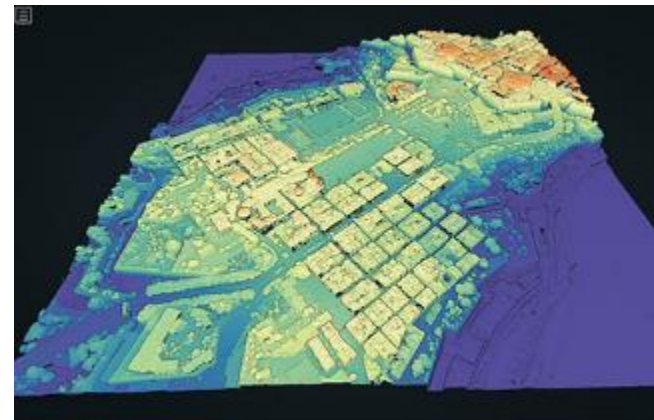
Software rendering real-time 3D maps – aimed to provide underlying aerial, terrestrial and bathymetric infrastructure.

A new base map using the latest aerial, terrestrial and marine technologies aimed, amongst others, for:

- accurate, in-depth analysis for planning purposes
- scenario building
- predictive modelling and
- controlling accidents.



The Maltese landscapes in Virtual Reality to monitor environmental infrastructure



Real-time 3D maps aimed to provide underlying aerial, terrestrial and underwater infrastructure



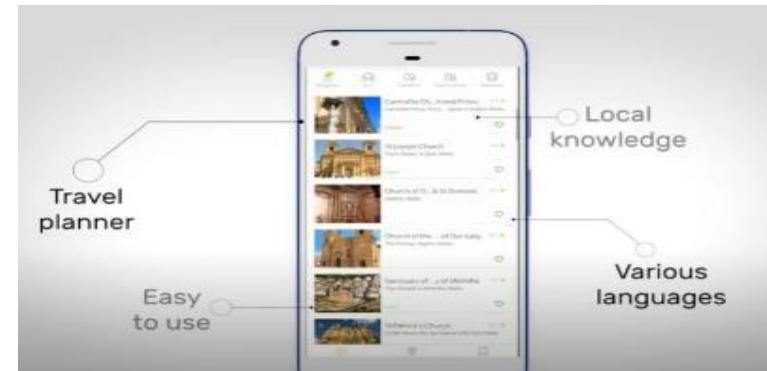
# Key Achievements – PA2

**CoNvErGE** aimed at strengthening the public service through development of ICT systems.

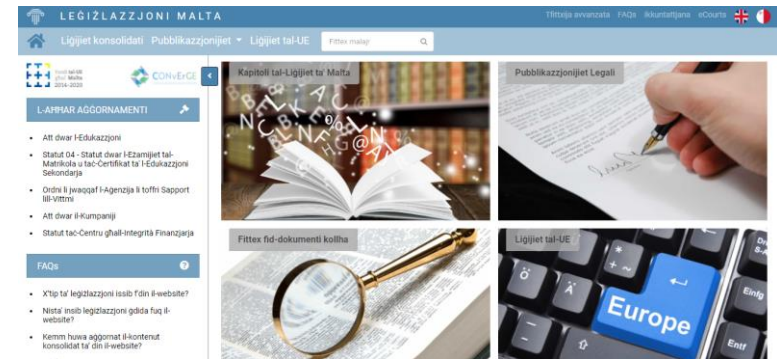
E-Services implemented and considered as success stories, include:

- European legislation identifier
- Court e-Services
- Notarial archives categorisation solution
- National eHealth services
- Digital tourism platform
- Online inspection solution

A hybrid cloud infrastructure has also been procured to provide a platform for these e-Services.



Digital Tourism Platform – allowing tourist guides and visitors to find the best attractions on the Maltese Islands.



European Legislation Identifier - <https://legislation.gov.mt/>

## PA 3 - Enhancing Malta's Competitiveness through Investments in SMEs

PA Allocation	Committed	Contracted	Disbursed	Verified	Certified
€44.6M	€44.6M	€47.3M	€26.7M	€26M	€26M



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# Key Achievements – PA3

Three mainstream projects and five Aid Schemes with a public eligible value of €44.6M are being implemented under this PA.

- The number of tenants at the **Xewkija Industrial Workshop Complex** increased to 10 while 4 tenants specialising in software development are operating from the **Innovation Hub**.
- Different artisans, producing and selling crafts and artefacts in ceramics, woodwork, glass-making, stonework and metals are operating from the **Ta' Qali Crafts Village**, with tenants investing in their individual units to complement EU funding of supporting infrastructure.
- 440 unique enterprises made use of services offered through the **Internationalisation Knowledge Platform**, available to entrepreneurs with an interest in going global to seek international opportunities.



The Innovation Hub in Xewkija, Gozo



Showcasing products manufactured at the Ta' Qali Crafts Village

## PA 4 - Shifting Towards a Low-Carbon Economy

PA Allocation	Committed	Contracted	Disbursed	Verified	Certified
€32.7M	€37.9M	€35.5M	€33.7M	€20.3M	€20.2M



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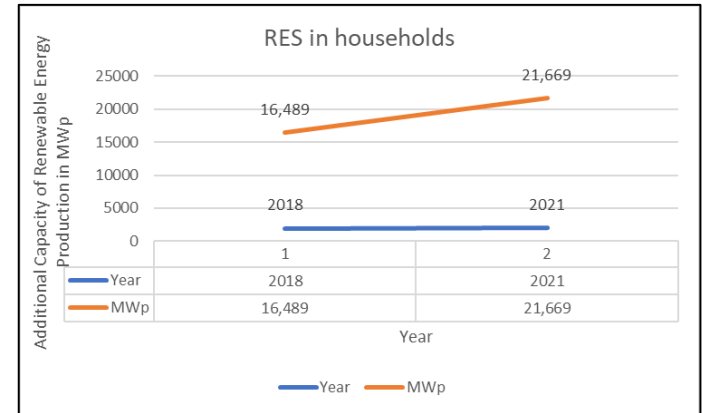


# Key Achievements – PA4

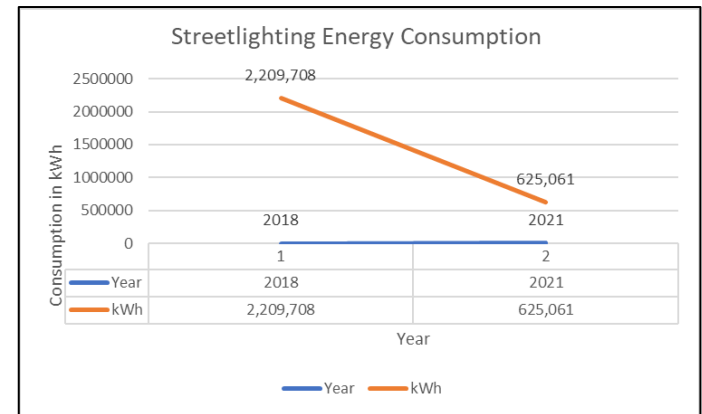
Apart from a Financial Instrument (FI) covering EE and RES, this PA also includes 5 projects covering RES and 3 covering EE measures. A call launched during 2021 has seen the approval of 4 projects focusing on EE measures.

Major achievements in mainstream projects:

- EE measures in 16 wards at **St. Vincent de Paul Residence** have been fully completed, whilst works in other wards are currently ongoing.
- **Gozo Administration Centre** has seen the implementation of EE measures, making it a pilot-project for the introduction of a carbon-neutral building in Gozo.
- Financing of **RES in households** contributed to the creation of an additional RES capacity of 21.7MW.
- The **street lighting project** gave rise to annual energy savings of c. 25% from the previous consumption in Malta's arterial and distributor roads.



Additional capacity of Renewable Energy Production in MWp between 2018 and 2021



Comparison in kWh between 2018 – using SON Lamps and 2021 – using LED retrofitting lighting

# Financial Instrument – PA4

- **€15M** have been allocated towards a Financial Instrument to generate a portfolio of guaranteed loans of c. €54M to €60M both to **households and enterprises** to carry out **RES and EE measures**.
- The **EERE FI** was launched on the market. It is being implemented by two local banks namely, **Bank of Valletta plc and APS Bank**.
- As at to date **9 private households** benefitted from the instrument with a total loan value of €181K with investments related to house refurbishments mainly roof insulation and change of apertures.

APS Green Finance



**Save by going green**  
with APS Green Finance

The two local banks implementing this Financial Instrument under PA 4

BOV Personal Energy Loan

The BOV Personal Energy Loan is a low-cost financing solution designed to assist you invest in lifestyle choices that will reduce your carbon footprint. You can enjoy advantageous interest rates and other great benefits including a 2.0% p.a. interest rate subsidy for the first 3 years of the loan.



## PA 5 - Protecting our Environment – Invest in Natural and Cultural Assets

PA Allocation	Committed	Contracted	Disbursed	Verified	Certified
€63.3M	€64.9M	€59.7M	€37.2M	€33.8M	€31.8M



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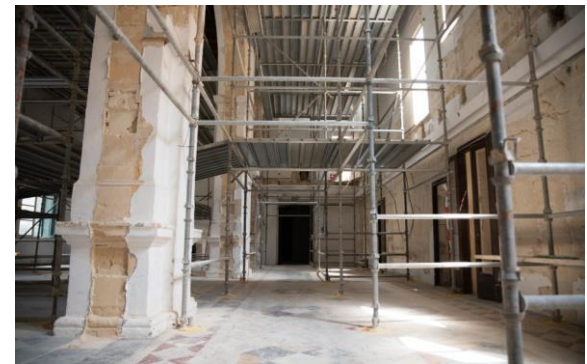


# Key Achievements – PA5

**Twenty-five cultural and natural heritage projects** with a public eligible value of **€64.9M** are being implemented under this PA.

Major achievements to date include:

- Extensive restoration works are currently ongoing at the **Grandmasters' Palace** in Valletta, which has served as the headquarters of the Grandmaster and later of the general commanding French troops in Malta, British governors and Presidents of Malta.
- Restoration of artworks in the Piano Nobile Corridor, including its walls and ceiling is at an advanced stage. The project will also include the setting up of a Visitors' Centre.



Restoration work at the Grandmasters' Palace



# Key Achievements – PA5

- The rehabilitation of the **Notarial Archives** is now in its final stages, with a project which has transformed these archives into a museum where more than 20,000 notarial volumes will be exhibited and digitised, bringing culture, history and legal heritage closer to the general public.
- The projects focusing on the **restoration of various historical churches, convents, sacred artifacts and paintings** spread all over Malta and Gozo has seen the completion of several initiatives including: the restoration of the Għarb church organ and the setting up of the Interpretation Centre at the St Dominic Priory in Rabat.



Restoration works, apart from the restoration & conservation of manuscripts housed at the Archives



Setting up the Interpretation Centre at St Dominic Priory in Rabat



Restoration of the Għarb church organ



## Key Achievements – PA5

- The restoration of **Mtarfa's historic clock tower** is at its final stages; this project includes the setting up of an Interpretation centre to showcase the historical and military history of the former barracks town.
- Restoration works on the **Red Tower in Mellieħa** and the **Santa Maria Battery** in Comino have been completed and are now open to the public. Other restoration works are ongoing at the **St Thomas Tower** in Marsaskala and at the **Xlendi Tower**, while works at **Dwejra Tower** will commence by end of year.



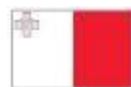
Ongoing restoration works at Mtarfa's historic clock tower



Ongoing restoration works at St Thomas Tower in Marsaskala

## PA 6 - Sustainable Urban Development

PA Allocation	Committed	Contracted	Disbursed	Verified	Certified
€24M	€24M	€19.6M	€12.7M	€10.6M	€8M



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# Key Achievements – PA6

**Regeneration works** at lower Valletta include:

- 45 housing units refurbished after extensive restoration works carried out on abandoned buildings; installation of news lifts at other housing blocks;
- ongoing restoration works of the historical fabric within Lower Valletta, including the Carmelite priory façade;

From a **social perspective**, the project includes several activities, such as:

- Community observations and neighbourhood walks engaging with c. 130 residents to date
- Community mapping research including 38 interviews with key community members and c. 300 questionnaires
- Geared for Work, Geared for Life Programme preparing participants for the mental, psychological challenges of the job-seeking journey and beyond
- Core Programme in housing and household stability, financial literacy and income stability.





# Key Achievements – PA6

- An old dilapidated building in Lower Valletta, of circa 3,500sqm, previously known as the 'Old Abattoir' has now become home to creatives and organisations working in the design and creative sector.
- The facilities at the **Valletta Design Cluster** help students, professionals, organisations in sectors related to design to reach their aspirations.
- Apart from studio areas, meeting rooms and multi-functional spaces, the building also includes a public roof garden spread over the entire building.
- This development is expected to leave a positive social impact in the community of Lower Valletta.

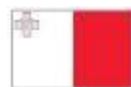


Studio spaces available at the Valletta Design Cluster



# PA 7 - Shifting Towards a More Low-Carbon Transport Sector

PA Allocation	Committed	Contracted	Disbursed	Verified	Certified
€35.5M	€35.5M	€23.8M	€14.8M	€13.7M	€11.3M



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# Key Achievements – PA7

Allocation for Priority Axis 7 - €35.5M with one mainstream project (**SMITHS**) being implemented.

Major achievements to date include:

- The provision of **130 charging infrastructure** points for electric vehicles aimed to encourage the further uptake of electro-mobility, to help reduce carbon emissions; installation is ongoing.
- 6 electric buses started their operation as a shuttle bus service from the Gozo heliport parking to the Mġarr port; the service is being offered from 05:00 till 21:00 and is free of charge
- Works tender for a new ferry landing site is currently under evaluation, apart from the other 2 landing sites at Bormla and Sliema, on which works are ongoing.



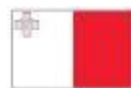
Installation of charging Pillars for electric vehicles



Shuttle bus service being provided between the Gozo heliport parking and the Mġarr port

## PA 8 - Investing Towards a More Socially-Inclusive Society

PA Allocation	Committed	Contracted	Disbursed	Verified	Certified
€65M	€65.2M	€54M	€34.7M	€31.8M	€30.8M



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# Key Achievements – PA8

Under this PA, Malta opted to use the CRII and CRII+ flexibilities introduced by the Commission to tackle the crisis brought about by the **COVID-19 pandemic**.

A commitment of **€18M** of available ERDF resources was undertaken to cover expenditure related to:

- **vaccines,**
- **personal protective equipment**
- **other medical equipment and supplies,** amongst others

for the protection of the community and the professionals on the frontline fighting the pandemic.



Covid-19 vaccines administered to the population in Malta aged from 12 and over.





# Key Achievements – PA8

Major achievements under the mainstream projects to date include:

In the area of **social housing**, 33 completed blocks which include 189 leased housing units, with more than 240 residents. Works include the retrofitting of energy-efficient lifts to increase vertical mobility and the refurbishment and embellishment of the common parts to ensure a safer environment and an improved standard of living.

**In the health sector, the Paola Regional Hub** is aimed to provide cohesive primary health care facilities all under one roof to the inhabitants of the Southern Region and alleviate the pressure from secondary care facilities.

- Construction works are ongoing; completion of the Design and Built contract is expected in Q3 2022.



Construction works at Paola Regional Hub  
Primary Health Care Centre



# Key Achievements – PA8

Two projects implemented by NGOs are progressing well.

- **The Palliative Care** project led by Hospice Malta has completed most of the works in the Day therapy area, the Outpatients' clinic, and in the Loan equipment area.
  - The project provides palliative care for persons with cancer, motor neuron disease, end of life respiratory, cardiac, renal and liver disease
  - On a yearly basis, Hospice Malta provides palliative care to 1,300 families.
- Construction and finishing works at the **Caritas Community Centre** have been completed and all equipment has been delivered on site.
  - Through this project, Caritas Malta will further support the integration of vulnerable people in society by establishing a community-based centre centralised in one place



Hospice Malta Complex which will offer palliative care including facilities such as physiotherapy and occupational therapy rooms



Caritas Community Centre set up to help the integration of vulnerable persons

# PA 9 - Developing our Future through Education, Training and Lifelong Learning

PA Allocation	Committed	Contracted	Disbursed	Verified	Certified
€33.6M	€33.9M	€34M	€25.6M	€23M	€22M



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# Key Achievements – PA9

**Two** mainstream projects with a total public eligible value of **€33.9M** are currently being implemented.

Major achievements to date include:

Following the complete return of secondary students physically in classrooms in September 2021 after the COVID-19 pandemic, the 78 labs in 14 different schools implemented under the **INVEST project** have started being used again.

The quality of the lab environment, coupled with the opportunities for hands-on experience, is contributing to sustain the educational interest of students to whom vocational subjects hold more appeal. Figures of VET/APP subject choices by year 9 students per scholastic year have tripled between 2018 and 2021.



The hospitality lab at St Ignatius College  
Ħandaq Middle School



The Engineering Techno Lab at St Ignatius  
College Ħandaq Middle School

# Key Achievements – PA9

## MCAST Campus Master Plan (Phase II):

- The **Resource Centre's (MRC)** building works have been completed and work on the mechanical and electrical installations and finishes is currently in progress. This building will house the Centre for Research & Innovation, the Learning Resources Centre and the new library and will be used by the whole school population of over 6000 students.
- Construction and structural works are ongoing at **IICT site**, which will house students following courses in Information Technology such as Multimedia Software Development, Computer Systems & Networks, and Business Analytics.



Ongoing finishing works at MRC - MCAST



MCAST construction works at IICT site

## PA 10 - Investing in a More Environmentally-Friendly Society

PA Allocation	Committed	Contracted	Disbursed	Verified	Certified
€141.5M	€141.6M	€144.5M	€103.1M	€93.4M	€93.4M



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# Key Achievements – PA10

Seven mainstream projects including a Major Project with a **total public eligible value of €141M** are being implemented under this PA.

In the **waste sector**, major achievements to date include:

- Rehabilitation works of the former landfill at **Wied Fulija** have now been completed, with the planting of 43,000 trees and shrubs, increasing the biodiversity within the area, now offering an open space that can be enjoyed by the general public.
- Works at the **Multi-Material Recovery Facility (MMRF)** in Hal Far are currently ongoing on the basement and first floor of the building. The ultimate aim of this project is to reduce the amount of waste going to landfill by re-utilisation and exportation of waste; project expected to be concluded by Q1 2022.



Rehabilitated public area on former Wied Fulija landfill site



Ongoing construction works at the MMRF site



# Key Achievements – PA10

Two information campaigns in the areas of waste and water are being funded this PA.

- Under the **waste campaign**, a new ECOHIVE Educational Centre for students to increase awareness and recycling is being funded; tender currently under evaluation.
- As part of the **water campaign**, and to support the sustainability of water resources, hydrological and hydro-geological works are currently ongoing at different monitoring network sites.
- TV and radio spots, mass media and social media marketing activities are ongoing in the **water campaign** aimed to raise awareness on the need for conservation and efficient use of water resources.



Proposed interactive game for the Ecohive Educational Centre



A monitoring network site under the water campaign

# Key Achievements – PA10

- Under the **Water Major project**, the drilling of the Pembroke – Ta' Qali underground tunnel is now completed.
- Retrofitting of Reverse Osmosis trains with high energy efficiency and energy recovery devices, including pumps and new trains, were installed in Ċirkewwa, Pembroke and Lapsi. Reverse Osmosis plant in Gozo is expected to be inaugurated in the coming days.
- Tenders on the **distribution network** for new water in the North and in Gozo are currently at evaluation stage.
- The retrofitting of **Sant'Antnin Wastewater treatment plant**, which will result in increased availability of wastewater treatment capacity, is in final stages & currently in testing phase.
- Under the **RainWiiN project**, cleaning of 7 basins has taken place in Wied il-Għasel and 6 dams were restored. Invasive alien species have been removed from the valley sides. Indigenous trees and shrubs will be planted in the coming months.



'Moving Bed Biological Reactor' installed at Sant'Antnin wastewater treatment plant



Conservation water at Wied il-Għasel - RainWiiN pilot project

# PA 11 - Investing in TEN-T Infrastructure

PA Allocation	Committed	Contracted	Disbursed	Verified	Certified
€99.7M	€99.7M	€60.3M	€59.4M	€47.8M	€47.8M



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# Key Achievements – PA11

**Three** projects with a **total public eligible value of €99.7M** are being funded under this PA aimed to upgrade major arterial junctions with the scope to remove existing traffic bottlenecks as well as enhancing the capacity of the Port of Valletta by the setting of a new cargo facility.

## TEN-T Roads:

- Works on the **Mrieħel – Ta' Srina** junction are nearing completion with this component contributing towards an additional 5.3 km of reconstructed and upgraded Ten-T roads.

## TEN-T Ports:

- Dredging works within the **Grand Harbour** started in Q2 2021.
- Tender for main civil works for the **new cargo facility** which will be located between Laboratory and Fuel Wharves is currently under evaluation.



TEN-T Road Infrastructure: Works on Mrieħel – Ta' Srina



Site of new cargo facility



# Progress in the Implementation of Operational Programme II



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# PA 1 - Investing in the employability and adaptability of human capital

PA Allocation	Committed	Contracted	Disbursed	Verified	Certified
€26M	€27.4M	€23M	€17.5M	€13.1M	€13.1M



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# Key Achievements – PA 1

**Two** projects and **one** Aid Scheme are being implemented under this PA with a **total public eligible value allocation of €27.4M.**

Major achievements in 2021:

## Training for Employment

- Developing skills scheme remained popular with over 500 persons receiving support.
- Work Exposure Scheme provided a work placement for over 400 persons.
- The TFE supported 3,343 participation instances, of which 3,158 are unique participants. 3,084 (98%) of these individuals exited the project and out of these, 27% were in employment.



# Key Achievements – PA 1

## Youth Guarantee

- In the first half of 2021, **175 NEETS**, (49% were women), were successfully profiled.
  - 75% achieved a certification.
  - COVID 19 response – a bespoke digital platform was developed to provide access to all learning material.
- SEC and MCAST Prevention classes were offered to **circa 700 students** (49% were women).



## PA 2 - Towards a more inclusive society

PA Allocation	Committed	Contracted	Disbursed	Verified	Certified
€40M	€42.3M	€35.6M	€27.5M	€20.8M	€19.05M



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# Key Achievement – PA 2

**Eleven** mainstream projects with a **total public eligible value of €42.3M** currently being implemented.

## Social Inclusion

**Addressing typical various to learning:** In 2021, a number of papers tied to gamification were published as part of the MCAST project as a Systematic Review of Experimental Studies and Students' Preferences and Expectations.

Specified **training on gambling problems/addictions** to different cohorts and stakeholders carried out training circa 500 persons (incl. RGF, FSWS, professionals, gaming companies).

**Financial literacy:** A total of 5 mini-campaigns addressing particular vulnerable groups such as single parents and widows were carried out.

**Inmates and Correctional facilities staff:** Policies and guidelines for resettlement and training of both inmates and staff have been concluded. Linked training is ongoing.

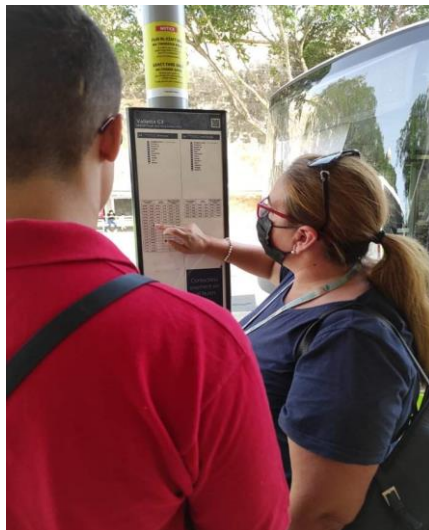


# Key Achievement – PA 2

**Circa 2000 persons** were supported through VASTE and INK programmes (31% women, 63% persons with disability)

Areas of training include in **digital literacy and job coaching**

Capacity building training was also carried out addressing various target groups, ranging from job coaches, employers and parents.



# Key Achievement – PA 2

## Health

- To date circa 2,000 sessions were held, providing nearly 400 (one-to-one) coaching hours, with **more than 2,900 (unique) persons receiving training on non-technical skills for healthcare professionals.**
- An awareness campaign was launched with the aim to raise awareness on the **main factors of social determinants of health and how to improve our lifestyle.**
- Information sessions continue to be organised during 2022 directed at the general public.



# Small projects

- Disadvantaged children and youths are being supported through various interventions, with the aim to break the cycle tied to poor life opportunities.
- Upskilling training educators and professionals was offered in literacy and numeracy as part of the Matthew project.
- Young vulnerable adolescents in residential care receiving training targeting intrapersonal and life skills.





## PA 3 - Investing in people through Education, Training and Life Long Learning

PA Allocation	Committed	Contracted	Disbursed	Verified	Certified
€40.9M	€37.4M	€33.9M	€29.5M	€22.3M	€19.7M



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# Key Achievement – PA 3

**Five** mainstream projects, **one** Aid Scheme and **one** Financial Instrument with a **total public eligible value of €37.4M** currently being implemented.

Major achievements in 2021:

## Introduction of Catch-up learning classes

*(for children and youths from year 1 to year 10)*

- Over 500 students benefitted, targeting learning loss effected in view of COVID-19 pandemic.
- Now also extended throughout the scholastic year 2021/2022. Both physical and virtual classes will be held on Saturdays till June 2022.

## Provision of a Masters fellowship for educators

A number of Educators in the field related to the prevention of early school leaving were awarded a fellowship. These educators will assist in drafting an ESL educational strategy that targets educational inequalities.



# Key Achievement – PA 3

- Endeavour Call 6 was issued in 2020. Following the selection process of this call, **101 scholars** (54% women) studying an MQF 7 course were awarded a grant.
- Up to end 2020: **1,045 scholars** (50% women) received between them grants amounting to above €10 Million. With 28% of Scholars following a course in STEM subjects.
- Call 7 under the Endeavour Scholarship Scheme was launched in June 2021, with the selection process to be finalised by end of year 2021.



## Key Achievement – PA 3

- The FSMA FI continued to provide support to individuals who want to pursue an accredited study programme at MQF levels 5, 6, 7 & 8 as well as other internationally recognized courses.
- The portfolio volume was increased from €8.25M to €9.45M.
- As at end of September 2021, €8.9M out of €9.45M of the portfolio has been committed supporting 265 students (36% women) with their studies.
- Almost €66K in interest generated were covered by the subsidy till June 2021.
- As at end of September 2021, €4.3M have been disbursed by the bank which is equivalent to 48% of the loans committed.
- The Level 7 and the internationally recognized courses are the most popular taking 87% of the loans provided, followed by Level 6 courses which is 11%.

# PA 4 - Building the Institutional Administrative Capacity

PA Allocation	Committed	Contracted	Disbursed	Verified	Certified
€13.5M	€15.5M	€10.8M	€7.8M	€4.3M	€3.9M



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# Key Achievement – PA 4

**Fifteen** mainstream projects with a total public eligible value of €15.5M currently being implemented.

Major achievements in 2021:

## Capacity building in the Public Administration

- Training and scholarships targeting various sectors of public administration continued to be provided ranging from areas of statistics, health, mobile services, culture, amongst others.
- The feasibility study for the setting up of a National Spatial Intelligence Institute (NaSpl) concluded that it should be set up as part of a Geomatics Agency. This was carried out as part of the Spatial Training Scholarships project, implemented by the Planning Authority.



# Key Achievement – PA 4

## Mystery Shopper

- The implementation of **Mystery Shopping exercises** continued throughout January to June 2021. Visits were carried out at Public Administration service sites related to education, social welfare both in Malta and in Gozo.
- 26 reports were completed during Jan-Jun 2021 for which 22% of the recommendations issued were successfully completed. These are targeting the areas of General Customer Care Management, issues regarding Directive 4-1, Once Only Principle (First Point of Contact), Training for Customer contact individuals and Tangibles.



# Key Achievement – PA 4

## Social partners

- 7 projects in implementation contributing to the strengthening of social dialogue process in Malta.
- Various training activities identified according to the needs of the respective beneficiary continued to be organised.
- Projects included awareness campaigns to support in the dissemination of information objectives linked to this priority.
- In addition research activities are also being supported with the intention to strengthen the evidence-based contributions to the social dialogue process.

## **PA 6 - Enabling job maintenance in the context of the COVID pandemic crisis**

**And**

## **PA 7 - REACT- EU Additional support for job maintenance in the context of the COVID pandemic crisis**



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# Status update as at September 2021

- The Wage Supplement Scheme as launched through government notice 389 of 2020 and subsequent amendments is being supported through ESF and REACTeu for the period October 2020 to March 2021.
- On the ground, Malta Enterprise has processed and paid all related claims to employers and self-employed. The linked reimbursement claims are being processed through the Structural Funds Database.
- Verifications are currently underway by the Managing Authority, with the assistance of key stakeholders including Jobsplus and Commissioner for Revenue.



# Support to Enterprises

**Operational Programme I:**  
*Business Enhance ERDF Grant Schemes*

**Operational Programme II:**  
*A2E and Investing in skills*



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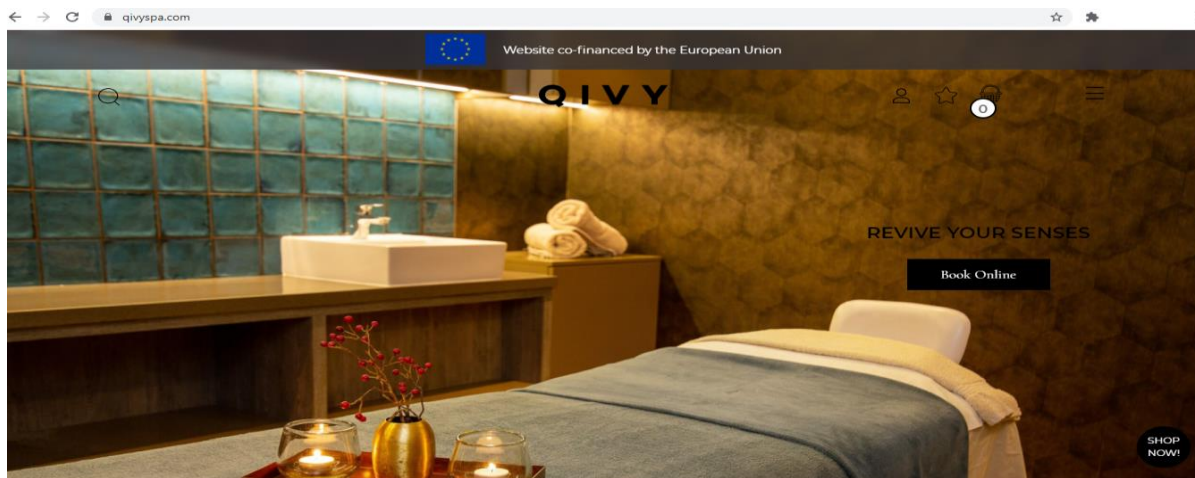


# ERDF Grant Schemes Progress

Under the Business Enhance ERDF Grant Schemes, **7 Schemes** are being funded with a total amount of **€32M**, being implemented through open rolling calls with different cut-off dates. This gives the private sector the opportunity to submit proposals on a regular basis.

**In 2021 only**, 80 cut-off dates were issued under 6 schemes being implemented under ERDF, resulting in 233 applications received, out of which **134 applications** were approved for funding amounting to **€6.1M**. 70% of the approved grants were submitted by micro enterprises.

To date, a total of **514 grants with a value of €23.7M** have been signed, out of which 343 are micro enterprises, 127 are small enterprises and 127 are medium enterprises.



ERDF.02.S1.Call1.0134 - Wellbeing Services Limited (e-Commerce)

# ERDF Grant Schemes Progress

(Grants approved in 2021 up till October)



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Aid Schemes	Applications Received	Applications under evaluation	Grants Contracted	Grants Contracted (€)
Business Enhance RD&I (PA 1)	0	0	0	0
E-Commerce Grant Scheme (PA 2)	33	3	12	c. 45,000
Start-up Investment (PA 3)	17	2	12	c. 1,800,000
SME Diversification and Innovation (PA 3)	24	6	15	c. 1,550,000
SME Internationalisation (PA 3)	0	0	0	0
SME Consultancy (PA 3)	122	8	77	c. 300,000
SME Growth (PA 3)	37	9	18	c. 2,300,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>233</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>c. 6,000,000</b>

# ERDF Grant Schemes Progress



*“Our enterprise invested in equipment to diversify the business offering and produce healthy and convenient fresh soups using no preservatives.”*

***Vernon’s Food Manufacturing and Trading Limited***  
(SME Diversification and Innovation Grant Scheme)

*“We invested in an automation system which leads its operations towards a more technology based approach”*

***S.A.W Ltd (Furniture manufacture specialising in custom-built furniture)***  
(SME Growth Grant Scheme)



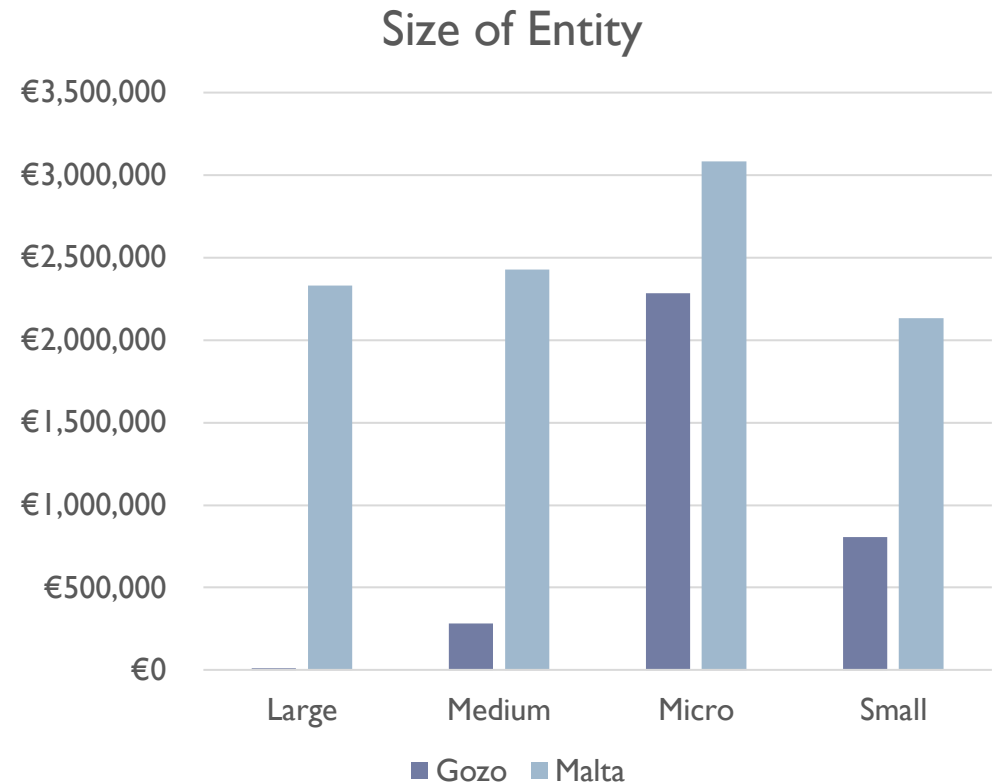
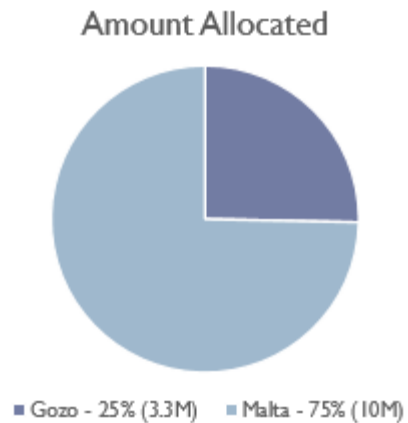
# ESF Aid Schemes Progress

**Access to Employment** (€12 million) - provides employment aid to enterprises in Malta and Gozo to promote the recruitment of the more challenged amongst jobseekers and inactive persons.

- Over €13.3M are committed, of which €8.16M were paid resulting in 2,162 employed persons of which 19% were participants with disabilities.
- Following numerous simplification measures the number of applications submitted increased exponentially from 580 applications in 2020 up to **791 applications in Q1 and Q2 2021**.
- SCO rates are now also being revised on an annual basis to reflect the increase in cost of living.



# A2E Scheme - *Beneficiaries*





# ESF Aid Schemes Progress

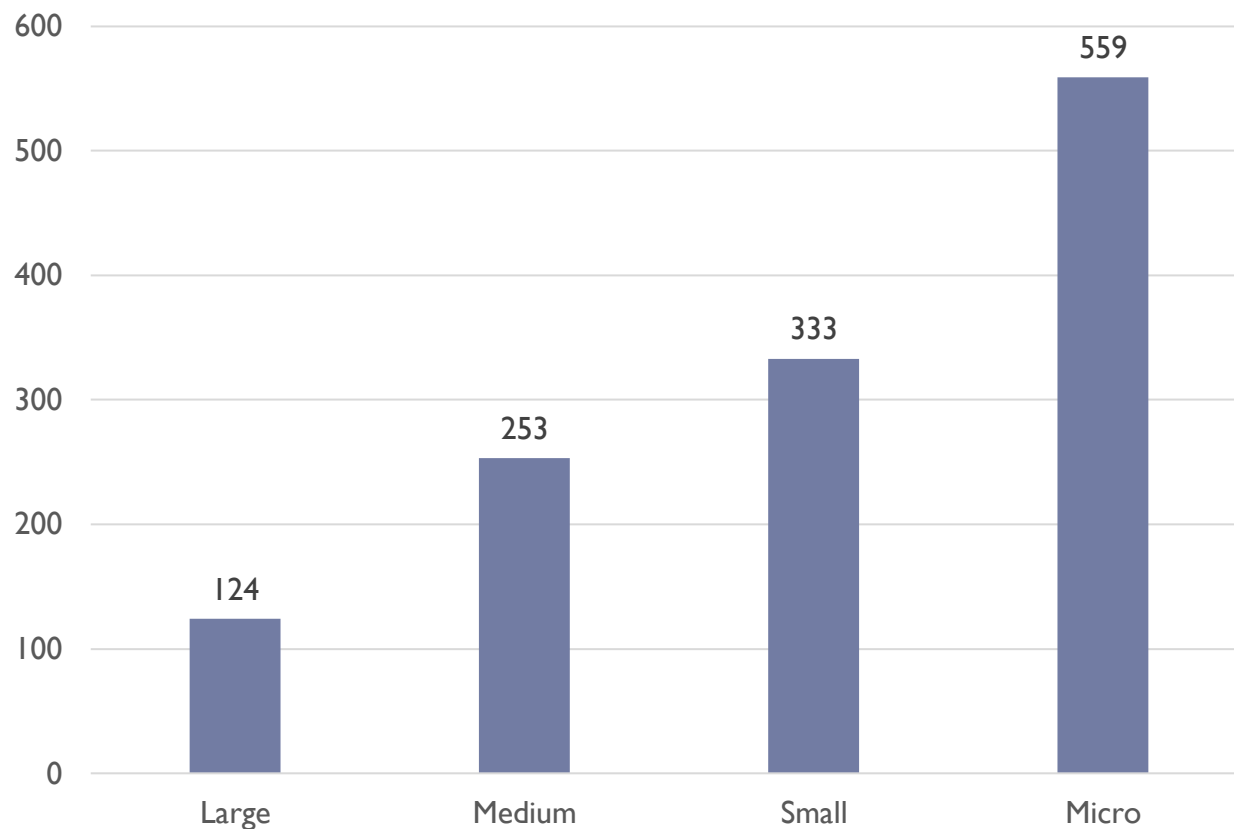
**Investing in Skills** (€5 million) - intended to promote access to the training of persons actively participating in the Maltese labour market, with a view to increasing productivity and enhancing adaptability by improving the knowledge and skills of employed persons.

- Eligible training can be either Classroom style, one-to-one training or on-the job training, online live training sessions, or accredited distance learning or accredited online self-led training. During Q1 and Q2 2021 most of the training was held online.
- €3.7M have been committed, of which €2.5M were paid. These resulted in over 14,800 participants trained, 49% of which were women.





# IIS Scheme - *Beneficiaries*



*From the start of the scheme, a total of 4,032 applications were received till the end of June 2021. These were submitted by 1,269 unique applicants.*

# Progress in the Implementation of SMEi Initiative Operational Programme



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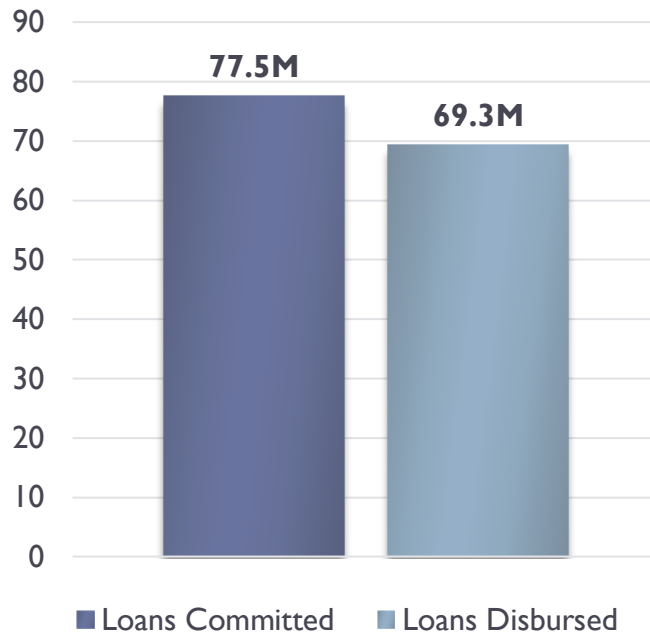
# Overview

- The SME Initiative aims at improving competitiveness of SMEs by facilitating SMEs access to finance by providing an uncapped guarantee for a portfolio of new loans to SMEs.
- The implementation period has now been extended until 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023.
- In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, and as mitigation measure, the SMEI Malta legal documentation was amended for the second time, in order to:
  - implement the *ERDF Contribution to this instrument up to €29M* and;
  - *introduce the COVID-19 measures* with respect to SME transactions *supporting working capital*.
- With the second increase, the Maximum Portfolio Volume (MPV) has been increased to **€118M** from €89M.
- In July 2021, the COVID-19 measures were extended until 30<sup>th</sup> September 2022.
- To date, **€77.5M** have been committed to **785 SMEs** through **934 transactions**. Average size of loans stands at €83k.

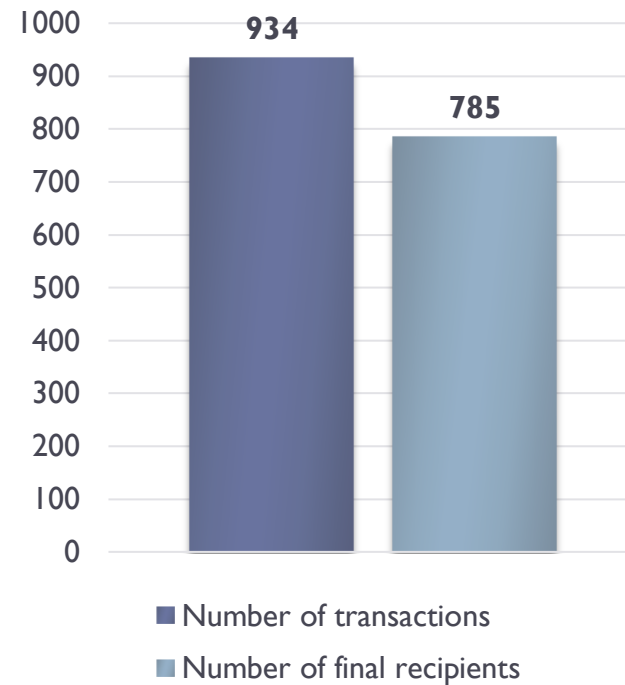
**The instrument will achieve a leverage of 4x of ERDF resources committed to the instrument.**

# Progress as at October 2021

### Loans committed and disbursed (millions)



### Number of transactions and final recipients

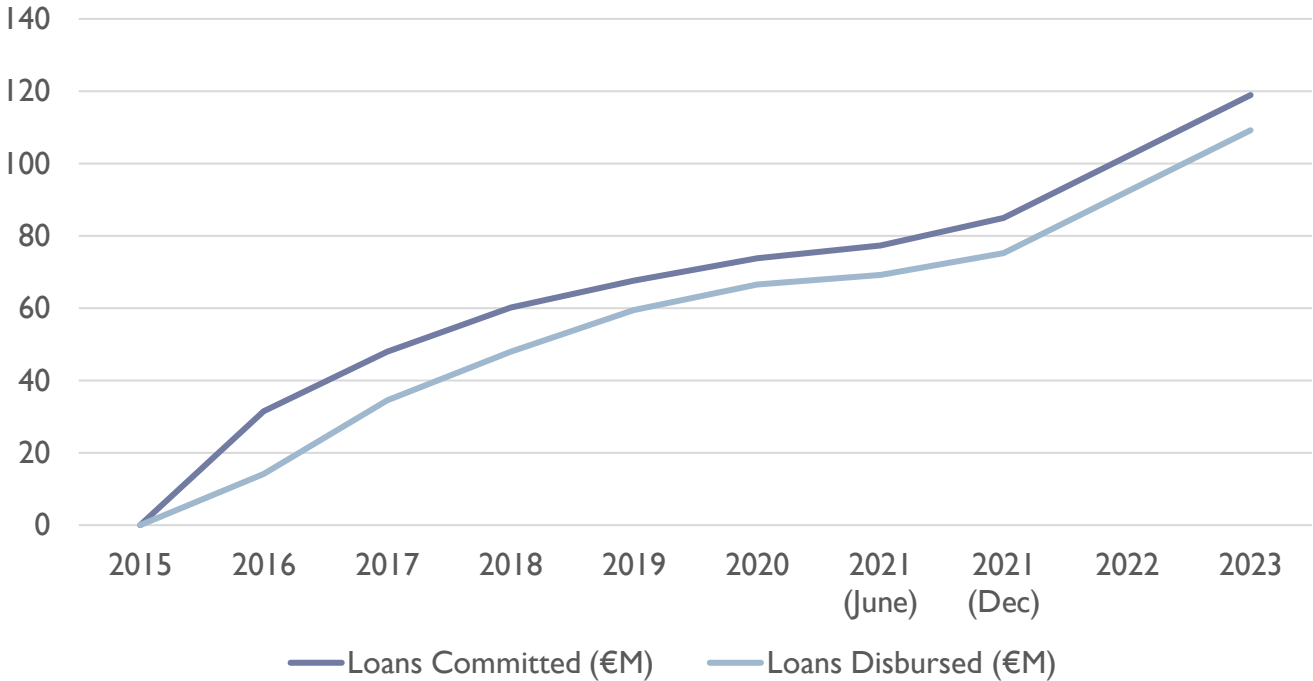


# Build up of Portfolio – Loans Committed and Disbursed

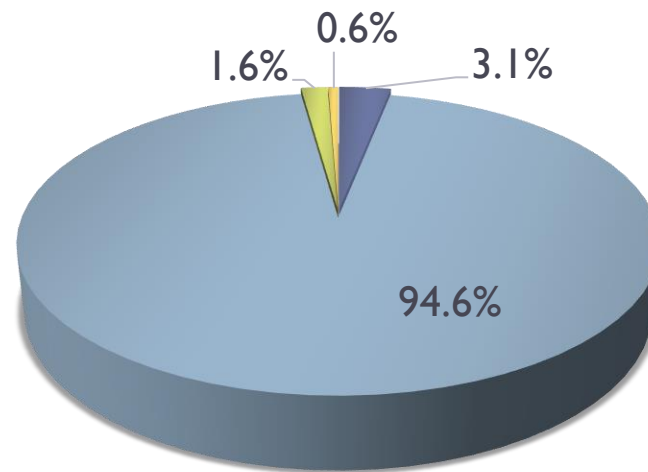


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Loans Committed and Disbursed (cumulatively)



# Loan Purpose



- Working capital
- Intangible investment
- Tangible investment
- Business Transfer



# Monitoring



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# Monitoring of Indicators

- In order to facilitate and standardise the collection of indicators, the MA developed an online module for an Implementation Progress Report which is to be submitted by BNs bi-annually in September and February.
- This is facilitating the reporting by the beneficiary and the checks by the MA on the reports as submitted.
- Eligibility checks for ESF projects were carried as part of the validation of indicators.
- As part of the Statement of Expenditure (SOE) process, the MA undertakes 100% procurement checks to ensure that the claimed expenditure is legal and correct and in line with the objectives of the Grant Agreement.
- Such checks are then followed by administrative verifications on the invoices included in the SOE to verify expenditure paid to be claimed from the European Commission.

# Assessment of the Performance Framework Indicators

The MA carried out an assessment of the state-of-play of the Performance Framework (PF) Indicators, for both OP I and OP II, based on 2020 reporting.

This was an important exercise to identify which PAs:

- are on track to reach the 2023 OP targets identified for the PF Indicators;
- have already reached and/or exceeded the 2023 OP targets;
- may be underperforming.

For those PAs where the assessment showed under-achievement of the PF indicators, the assessment also sought to uncover the underlying reasons for the said under-achievement, along with potential mitigation measures that can be taken at this stage.

# OP I Performance Framework Assessment

PA	Status	Comment
PA 1	50% achievement	Projects ongoing; PF indicators expected to be achieved
PA 2	60% achievement	Projects ongoing; PF indicators expected to be achieved
PA 3	85% achievement	Projects ongoing; PF indicators expected to be achieved
PA 4	Achieved	/
PA 5	Achieved	/
PA 6	CO39 89% achievement CO40 90% achievement	Projects ongoing; PF indicators expected to be achieved
PA 7	Achieved	/
PA 8	CO36 To be reported on completion of operations CO40 32% achievement	Projects ongoing; PF indicators expected to be achieved
PA 9	Achieved	/
PA 10	CO18 To be reported on completion of operations	Projects ongoing; PF indicators expected to be achieved KIS has been achieved
PA 11	Achieved	/

# OP II

## Performance Framework Assessment



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PA	Status	Comment
PA 1	Achieved	/
PA 2	Expected to exceed PF indicator	Several new projects were approved in 2021 and others remain ongoing.
PA 3	Achieved	/
PA 4	Achieved	/
PA 6	Assessment in progress	PF indicators expected to be achieved

# Evaluation

## TO3 Evaluation

- The objective of this evaluation is to assess the effectiveness, efficiency and impact of the assistance made available to SMEs during the past seven years
- Tender is divided into two lots: Lot 1 – SMEi, Lot 2 – five ERDF and one ESF state aid scheme
- Deliverables per lot include:
  - ▶ Thematic evaluation to assess their effectiveness, efficiency, and impact
  - ▶ Ex-ante assessment in preparation for the 2021-2027 Programming Period
- Status per task for each lot is as follows:

	Task 1	Inception Report	June 2021	Finalised & Accepted
	Task 2	Desk-based analysis	July 2021	Finalised & Accepted
	Task 3	Surveys and Interviews	October 2021	Ongoing
	Task 4	Data analysis	November 2021	Ongoing
	Task 5	Final Evaluation Reports	Not yet started	Starting December 2021



# Evaluation

## ESF.01.002 Youth Guarantee 2.0

### Objectives:

- Assessing the relevance effectiveness, efficiency and impact, of the 2 YG initiatives being evaluated – NEET Activation Scheme and the Preventive Classes.
- To provide an overview of the impact of the YG vis-à-vis a scenario where there was no YG intervention. This will be done by conducting a comparative analysis between eligible youth participating in the YG initiatives and eligible youth that applied for a YG intervention but did not participate therein.
- The provision of potential policy recommendations for the 2021-2027 Programming Period on the basis of the findings resulting from this study.

### Current Status:

- The tender is currently being evaluated. The Committee received a total of 6 bids. The evaluation procedure is expected to be finalised by end of November 2021.

# Evaluation

## TO8 - TO10 Evaluation

- The objective of this evaluation is to assess the effectiveness, efficiency and impact of EU funding made available for **employment** and **education**
- Tender will be launched by the end of the month and is divided into two lots: employment and education
- Once contracted it will have a 15-month implementation period for both lots
- Funding interventions included consist of:

### Lot 1 – Employment

- Investment Priority 8i: 1 state aid scheme and 1 large mainstream operation

### Lot 2 - Education

- Investment Priority 10i: 1 large mainstream operation
- Investment Priority 10ii: 1 large mainstream operation and 1 Financial Instrument
- Investment Priority 10iii: 1 large mainstream operation

# Evaluation

## TO8 - TO10 Evaluation

The expected results are as follows:

- An **ex-post, summative evaluation** focusing on the impact, effectiveness, and efficiency of the identified EU-funded measures in response to the proposed evaluation questions
- An **assessment** of whether the goals listed in the 2014-2020 Partnership Agreement tied to education and employment have been reached
- **Recommendations** on how to improve on similar interventions in the future
- Provide **infographics** representing the positive results emanating from the evaluation

## Communication Activities (2014-2020)



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# Communication Activities in 2021

- A Roaming Exhibition (RE) consisting of photos of and information about some of Malta's most impressive EU funded projects started touring various localities around Malta and Gozo at the end of August and will continue until end of December 2021.
- A social media campaign in collaboration with the Commission's *EU in my Region* team consisting of 2 posts per week: one at the beginning of the week focusing on a project featured in the RE and a weekend post announcing the new location the RE will be visiting.
- The campaign consists of a mix of photo and (professionally produced) video posts.





# Photographic social media posts re: Roaming Exhibition

 EU Funds Malta  
15 October at 07:38 · 🌐

...

The 🇪🇺 is in your region!

We totally enjoyed meeting you in Birgu Waterfront but now it's time for our [#roamingexhibition](#) to move to Paola (Main Square) where it will stay for 2 weeks!

Come meet us there and have a chat with our friendly animators who will give out merch from Friday to Sunday between 10am & 1pm 📄📄



Fo... See more

 EU Funds Malta  
4 October at 08:10 · 🌐

...

The 🇪🇺 is in your region! Have you visited our [#roamingexhibition](#) in Independence Square, Victoria?

16 of Malta's most impressive 🇪🇺 funded projects are under the spotlight through our outdoor photographic roadshow exhibition that is touring around Malta and Gozo.

This week the spotlight is on the Northern Coastal Watch Project, about which you can find out more in the exhibition.

Th... See more





# Video post on social media showing Roaming Exhibition



# Capacity Building

Online training on Evaluation of Structural and Investment Funds was held between May to July for MA officers;

Online training on cyber security awareness was held in June to July for MA officers;

Online training on Conflicts of Interest was held in July and November for all stakeholders involved in EU Funding ;

Online training to Intermediary Bodies was held in July for 38 officers;

SFD online training sessions for Beneficiaries were held in July - August;



# Audit and Control



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# Status update - Audits on Operations

Reference Period:	1 <sup>st</sup> July 2020 – 30 <sup>th</sup> June 2021
Audit Period:	1 <sup>st</sup> July 2021 – 14 <sup>th</sup> February 2022

In 2021, the sample issued by the AA resulted in 9 mainstream projects and 39 beneficiaries under the 5 schemes to be audited;

This sample was extracted out of a total population of c.70 projects and 1205 beneficiaries under the 8 schemes for which expenditure was certified in the accounting year 2020/2021. The audited sample amounted to circa 46% of the expenditure certified in the same reference period.

## Results:

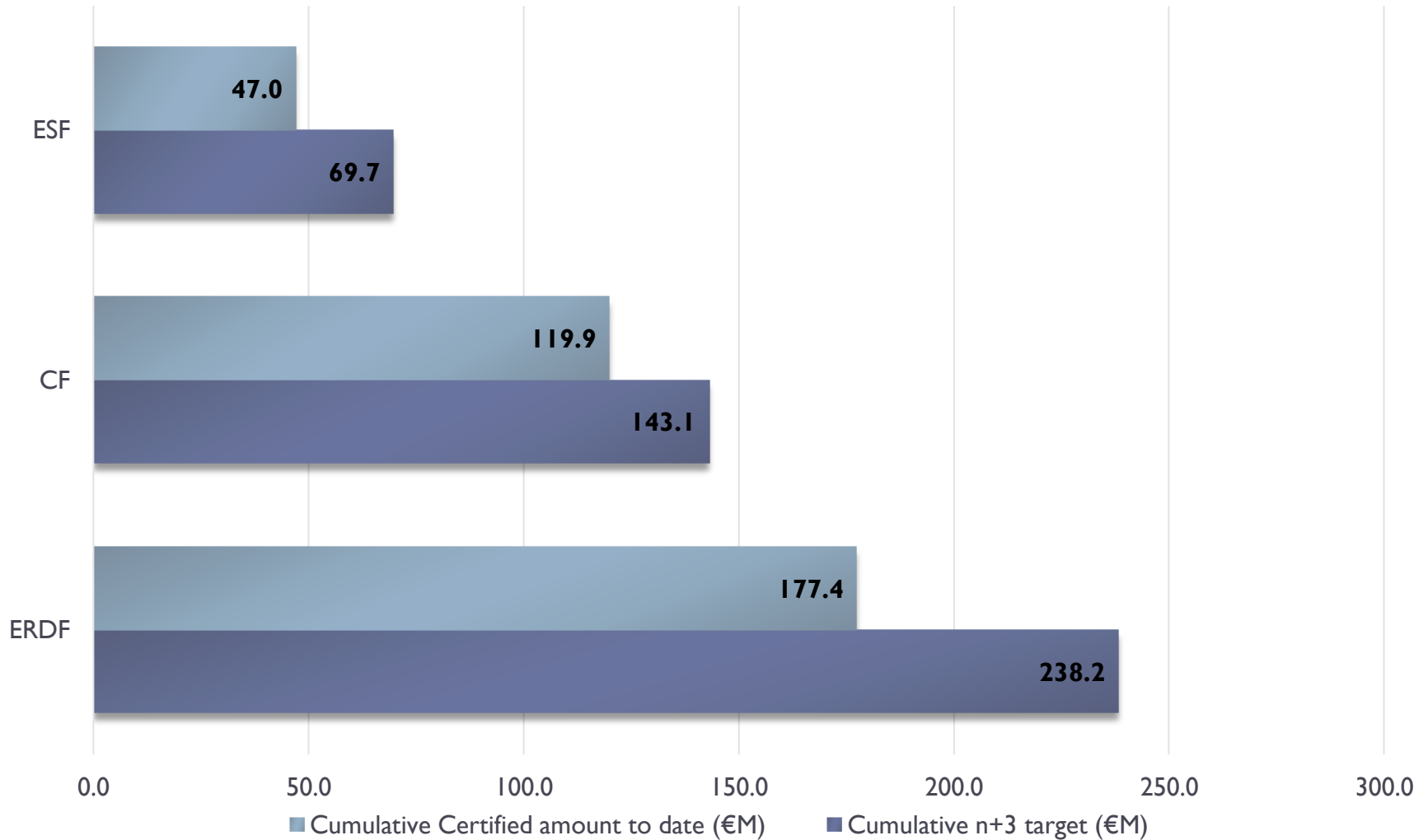
➤ This audit is currently ongoing. Auditors started sending the audit reports to the Managing Authority for the first few projects selected in the sample issued by the AA.

# Status update – Other Audit work

## Other Audit work carried out through 2020/2021

- In August 2021, EC communicated the draft audit report re Commission Audit on the ESF 2014 - 2020 programme whereby the EC auditors have obtained reasonable assurance that work carried out by audit authority is compliant with the requirements of Article 127 Regulation (EU)1303/2013;
- Commission Audit on SME Initiative 2014 – 2020 is currently ongoing;
- An audit is ongoing by the European Court of Auditors concerning the management of Conflict of Interest in Shared Management.

# Update on Implementation: N+3 Disbursement 2021





## Concluding Remarks

- In view of the progress in the implementation of the Programme, visible and actual progress of projects on the ground was recorded, resulting in further achievements of output and financial targets.
- Challenges arising from COVID-19 persisted in 2021 and had a delaying effect on the implementation of the projects. All efforts need to be put in place to ensure that Malta's N+3 disbursement targets are met.
- All stakeholders need to closely monitor the implementation of the projects and ensure timely completion within the Programme life-cycle.
- The coming weeks will be critical from an audit perspective, with 9 mainstream operations and 39 operations being implemented by IBs, will be subject to an audit by the Programme Audit Authority. All stakeholders' timely input for the successful outcome of this process is critical.
- Notwithstanding that the new Programming period has started, we should still remain focused on ensuring timely closure and full absorption of the 2014-2020 Programme.

# Contact Details

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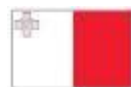
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