



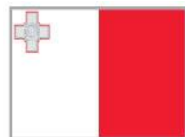
Update on Implementation

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
24th November 2022**



European Union
European Structural and Investment Funds



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
- Audit and control
- Disbursement Targets
- Concluding Remarks

Overview

Intervention Logic:

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

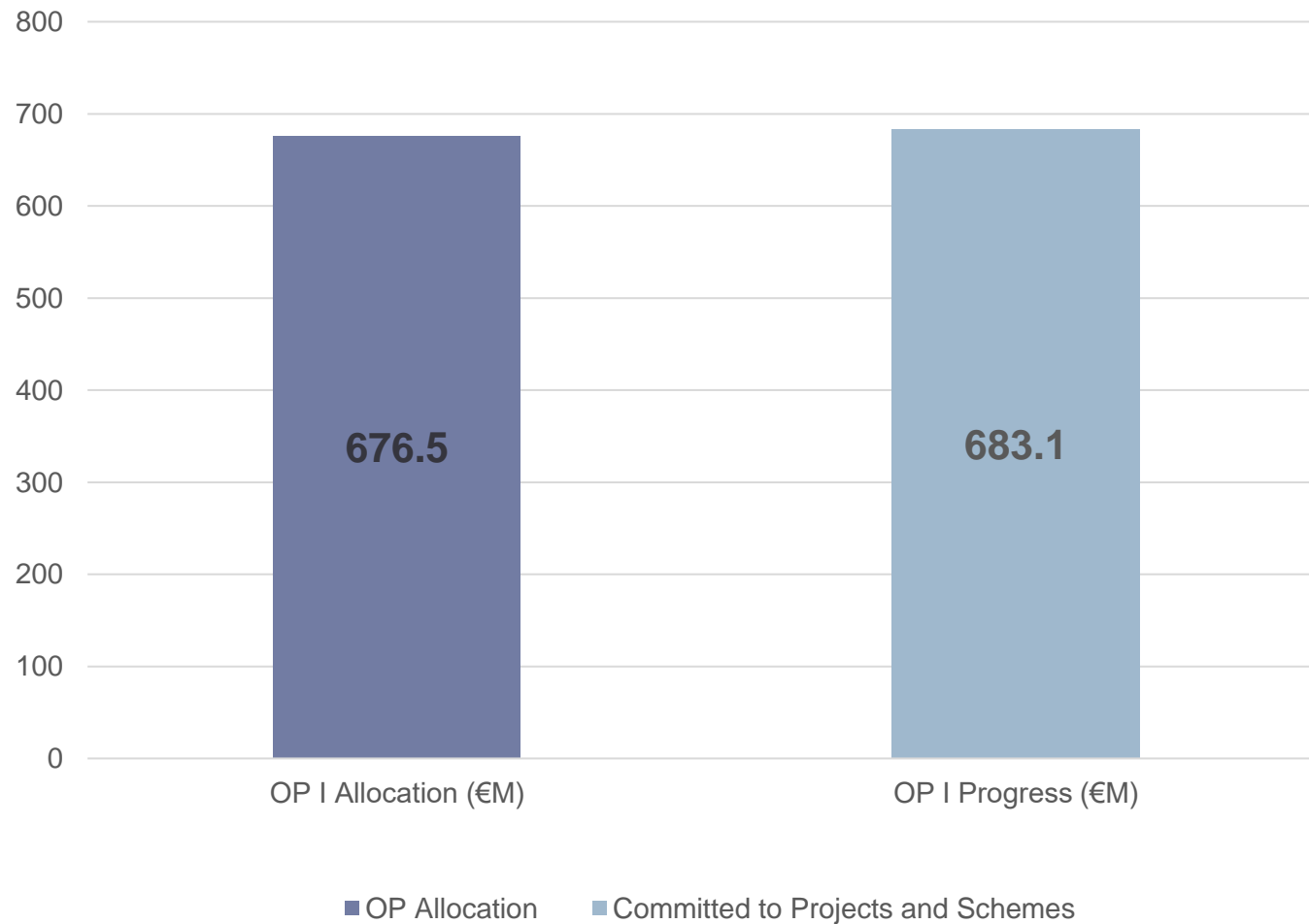
Implementation Timeframe:

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

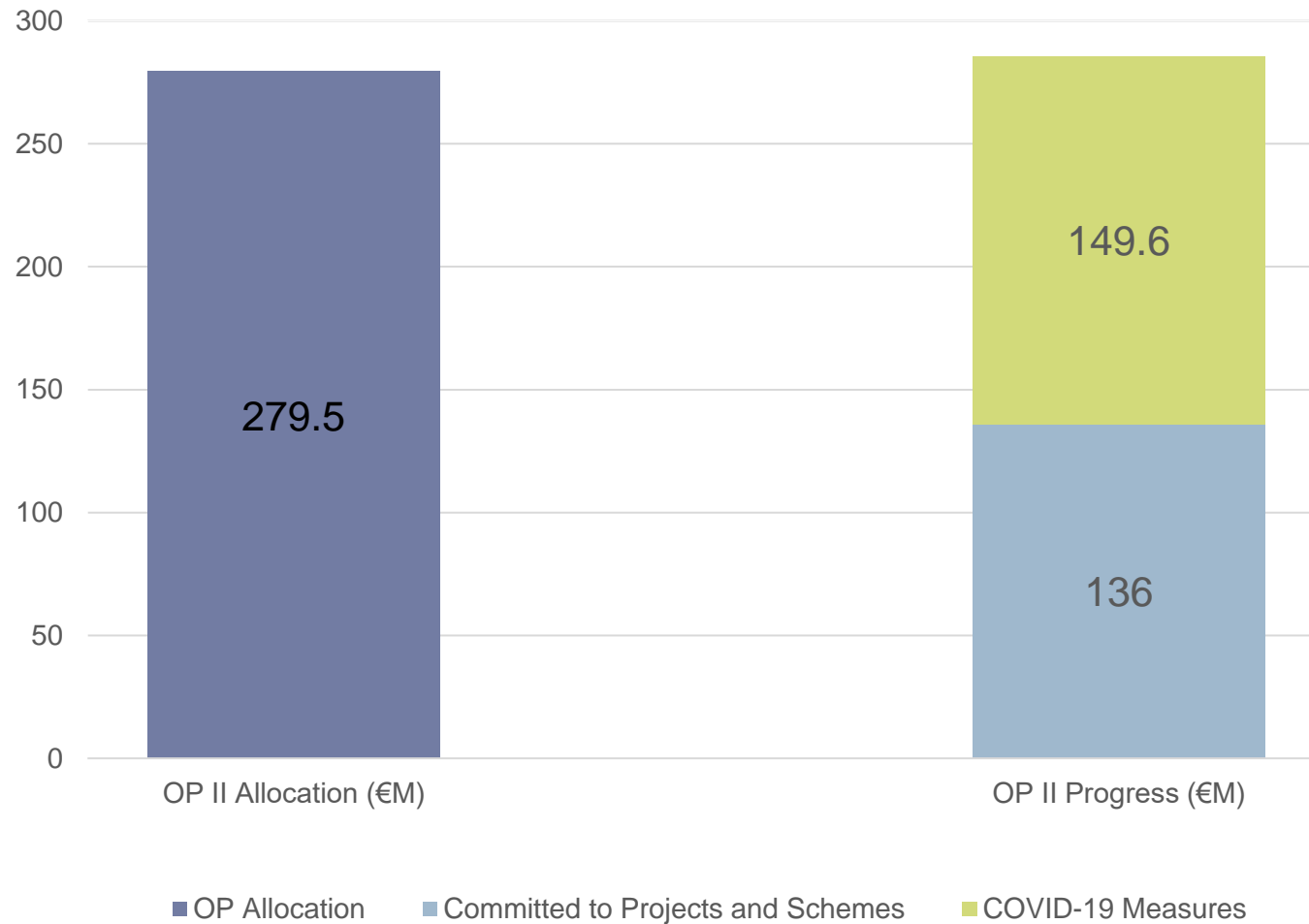
Financial Allocation:

- 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)
- ERDF REACT-EU – EU Share: €11.2M, **Total: €11.2M** (100% co-financing rate)
- ESF – EU Share: €134M, MT Share: €34M, **Total: €168M** (80% co-financing rate)
- ESF REACT-EU – EU Share: €111M, **Total: €111M** (100% co-financing rate)

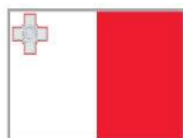
OPI Commitment Table



OPII Commitment Table



Progress in the Implementation of Operational Programme I

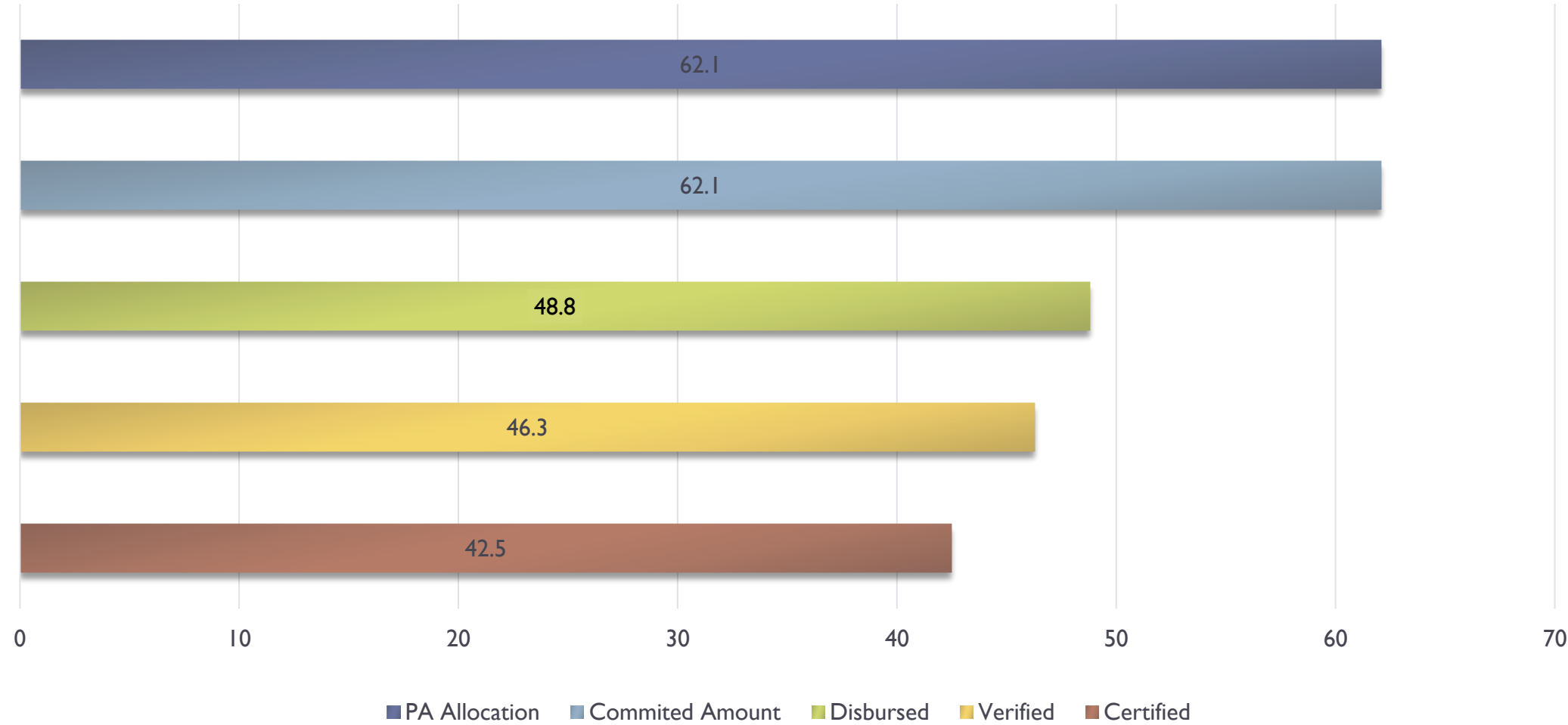


European Union
European Structural and Investment Funds



Implementation Progress to date – PA 1

Financial Progress (€M)



Key Achievements – PA1

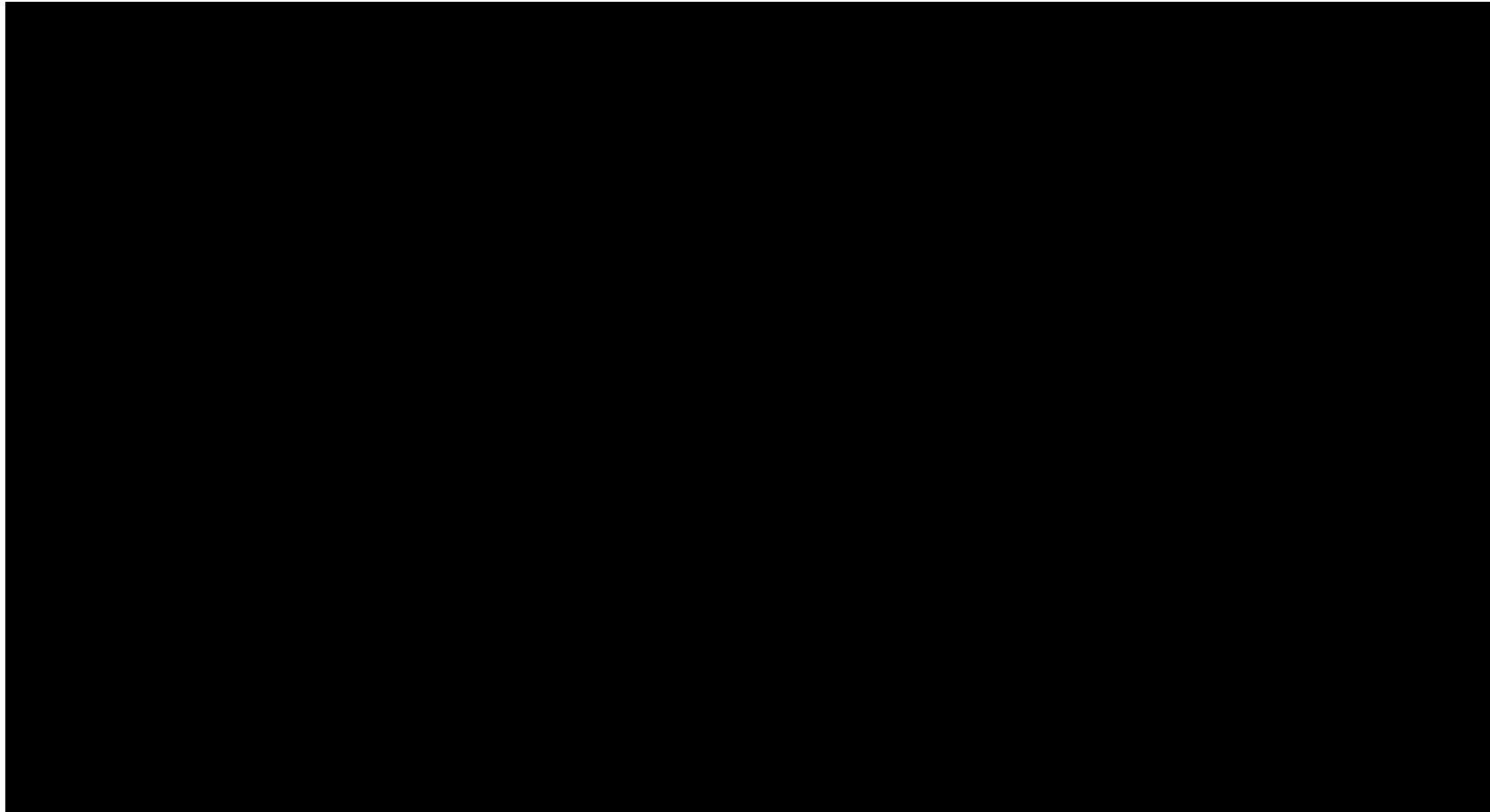
Two mainstream projects with a total public eligible value of €62M are being implemented. Major achievements to date include:

- All construction works at the **TRAKE's** main building which houses 30 labs are ready. **The Metallurgy & Materials Engineering Labs** have been completed and officially opened.
- The equipment procured under this project has already given the opportunity and the necessary boost to the UoM to embark on research projects in new areas.
- UoM and Mater Dei are also collaborating on research activities linked to the investment in the MRI located at Mater Dei.
- There are currently 69 Research Support Officers employed by University of Malta conducting research through the EU funded facilities, totalling 47.16 FTEs.
- Construction works and M&E and Finishing works are also ongoing on the **SLC**, a proto-type resource efficient low-carbon building, using a variety of experimental and innovative construction techniques and materials.



Construction works at SLC site at the University of Malta campus

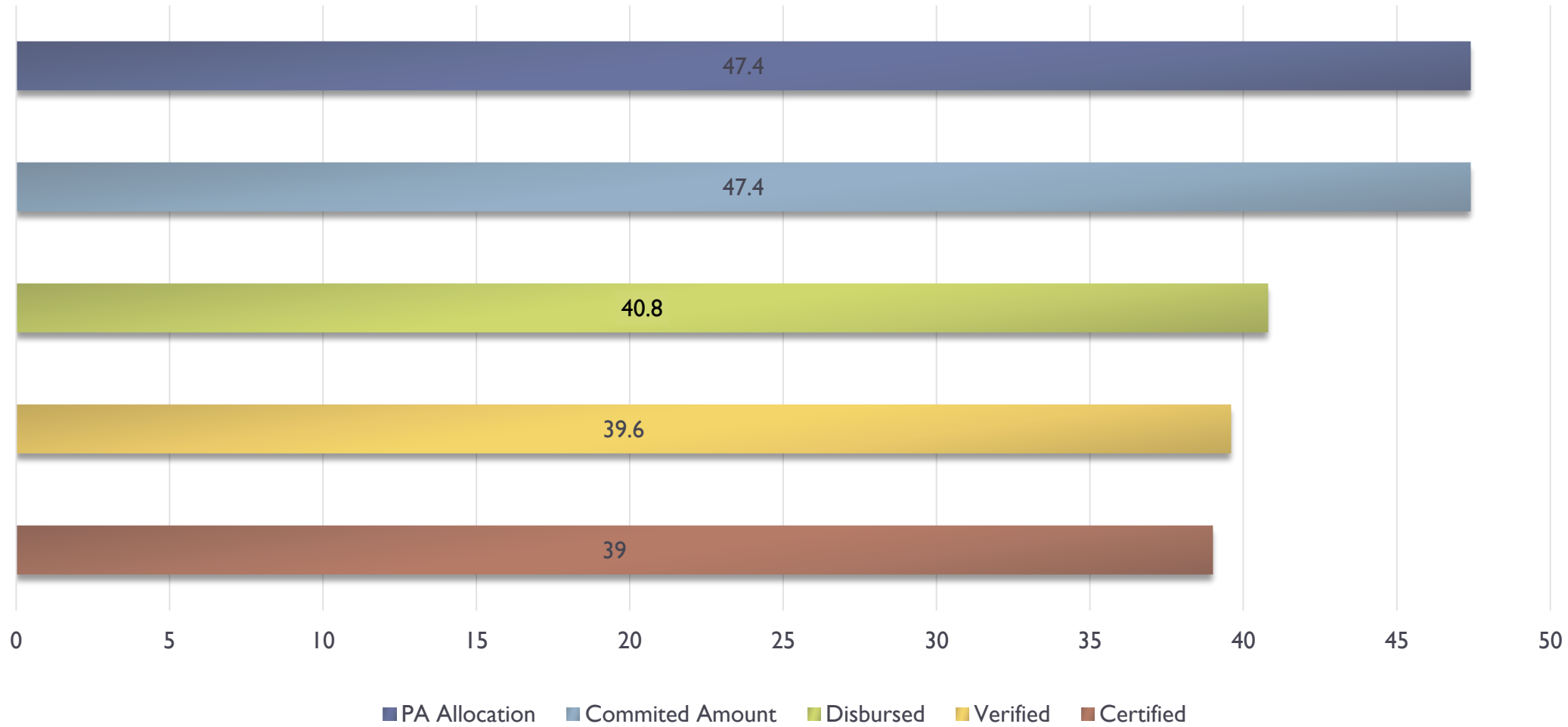
Key Achievements – PA1



TRAKE - Metallurgy & Materials Engineering Labs (MMEL)

Implementation Progress to date – PA 2

Financial Progress (€M)



Key Achievements – PA2

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

- During 2022, the **SIntegraM** project continued with investment to cover new applications, targeting thematic areas previously not available, such as infra-red & near infra-red, which complement the existing GI system and adds value to inputs and output capture and analysis.
- The Spatial Lab Enhancement equipment, one of the last actions being implemented under this project, has been commissioned. The Spatial Lab ensures that Malta has an updated base-map that is common to all entities. Data is converted into common formats, inter-linked and exchanged. The project is currently in its final stages of implementation.



Developing Spatial Data Integration for the Maltese Islands

Key Achievements – PA2

The other mainstream project **CONVERGE** is aimed at strengthening the public service through the development of ICT systems & consolidating digital capacity.

To date, **25 new e-services applications** have been made available, contributing to an overall increase of citizens' use of online services, strengthen digital systems for a more efficient public service and put into practice the Once-Only Principle, whereby a citizen using a government service submits personal information only once.

This enhances the investment of €55M under the RRP aimed at fast-tracking the digital transition, notably by strengthening the national policy framework, investing in the further digitalisation of the public service and of SMEs.



The screenshot shows the 'Search Civil Cases' interface of the Case Management System for e-Courts. The page has a blue header with navigation tabs: CIVIL CASES, JUDGEMENTS, INSOLVENCIES, JUDICIAL SALES, and HALL USAG. Below the header is a breadcrumb trail: Home / Search Civil Cases. The main title is 'Search Civil Cases'. The search criteria are organized into several sections:

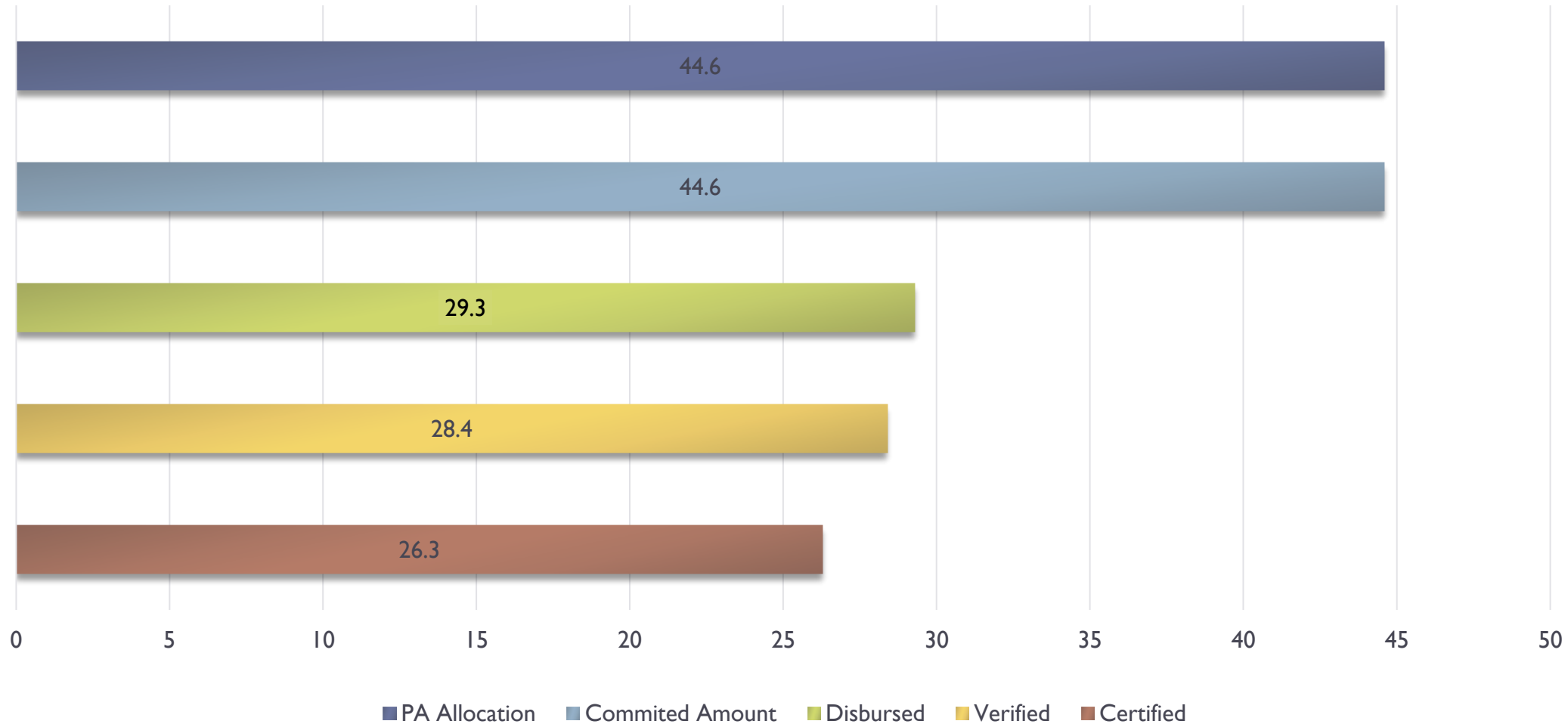
- Sitting Date:** Radio buttons for 'in the past 15 days only', 'in the next 30 days only', and 'any day'. A 'between' option includes date range pickers for 'Date From' and 'Date To'.
- Case Status:** Radio buttons for 'Pending', 'Terminated Last Year', and 'Both Pending and Terminated Last Year'. A 'Terminated BETWEEN' option includes date range pickers.
- Registration Date:** A 'between' option with date range pickers.
- Deferred Date:** A date picker.
- Case Reference:** Input fields for 'REF NO.', 'REF YEAR', and 'SEQUENCE NO.'.
- Court:** A dropdown menu labeled 'Choose an item'.
- Judiciary:** A dropdown menu labeled 'Choose an item'.
- Parties:** Input fields for '1ST LITIGANT'S SURNAME AND NAME' and '2ND LITIGANT'S SURNAME AND NAME' separated by 'vs'.
- Act Type:** A dropdown menu labeled 'Choose an item'.
- Case State:** A dropdown menu labeled 'Choose an item'.
- Case Locality:** Radio buttons for 'Malta', 'Gozo', and 'Malta and Gozo'.

At the bottom, there are 'Search' and 'Clear' buttons. The footer contains logos for the Operational Programme I – European Structural and Investment Funds 2014-2020, the European Union flag, and the CONvErGE logo with the tagline 'connected government'. Text in the footer reads: 'Fostering a competitive and sustainable economy to meet our challenges', 'Project part-financed by the European Regional Development Fund', and 'Co-financing rate: 80% European Union; 20% National Funds'.

Case Management System for e-Courts

Implementation Progress to date – PA 3

Financial Progress (€M)



Key Achievements – PA3

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

- There are currently 9 tenants at the **Xewkija Industrial Workshop Complex** while the number of tenants specialising in software development operating from the **Innovation Hub** increased to 5.
- A total of 24 local artisan enterprises, that produce and sell crafts and artefacts in ceramics, woodwork, glass-making, stonework and metals are currently operating from the **Ta' Qali Crafts Village**, with tenants investing in their individual units to complement EU funding of supporting infrastructure. Through this project, tourists and visiting locals are provided with an element of authenticity through the production of local artefacts.
- Through the **Internationalisation Knowledge Platform**, 440 SMEs and entrepreneurs in Malta with an interest in going global were able to utilise a new online platform to seek advice and hunt down international opportunities. This one-stop portal enables online visitors to apply for export assistance, discover international opportunities, learn about exporting, research potential markets, and build export capabilities.
- All mainstream projects under this PA have contributed significantly to provide an economic boost to SMEs and entrepreneurs, encouraging innovative ideas that create more and better jobs.



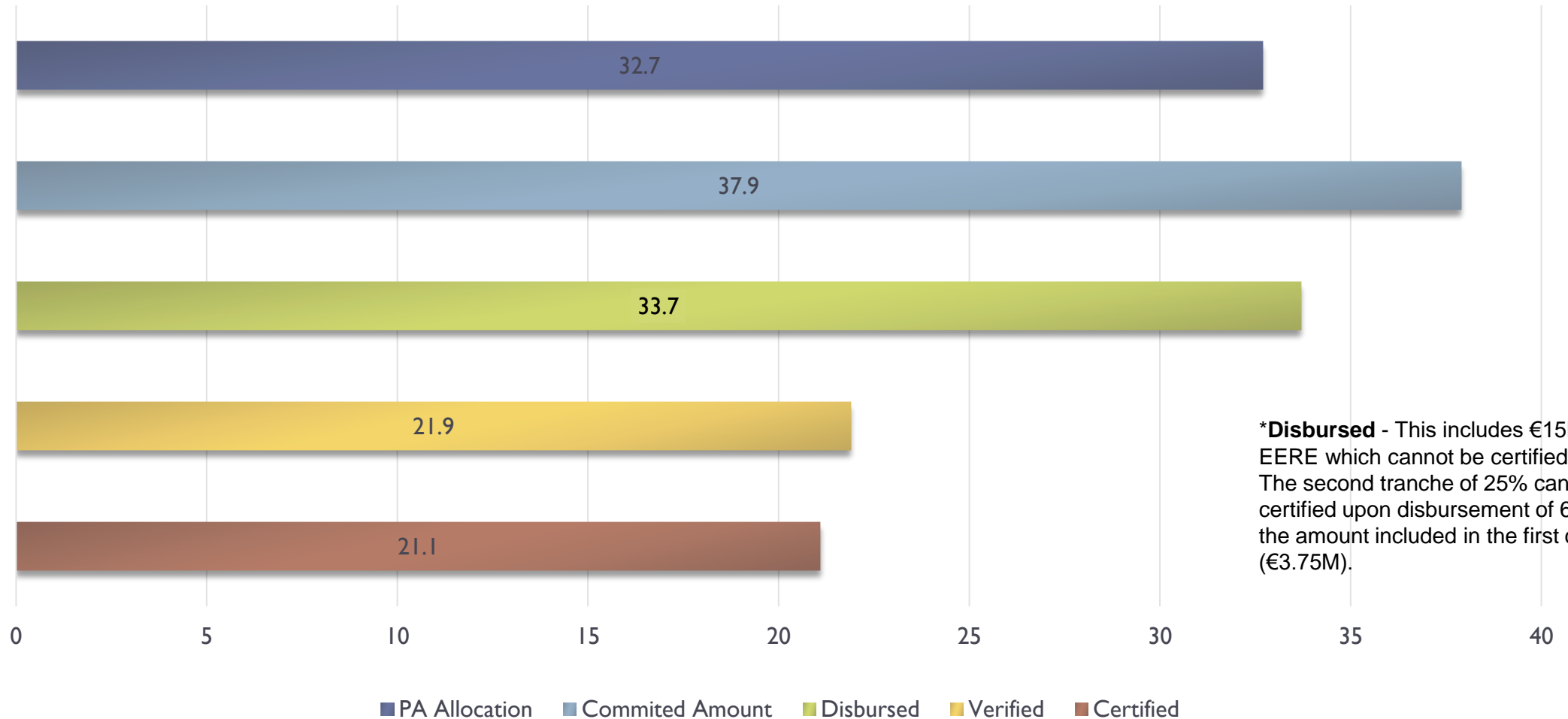
Xewkija Industrial Workshop Complex



Ta' Qali Crafts Village

Implementation Progress to date – PA 4

Financial Progress (€M)



***Disbursed** - This includes €15M under EERE which cannot be certified in total. The second tranche of 25% can only be certified upon disbursement of 60% of the amount included in the first claim (€3.75M).

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.

Major achievements in mainstream projects:

- Works at the **Saint Vincent Elderly People's Home** involving retrofitting actions progressed well with 23 out of 24 completed wards.
- Other ongoing projects focusing on EE and RES measures in public buildings, schools and other **NGO led buildings**, are expected to be completed by Q3 2023.
- These complement investments that were completed under the programme such as the **RES scheme for private households** whereby the project successfully contributed 0.55% towards the achievements of Malta's national target of 10% gross final consumption of energy generated from RES which contributes to 15,276T reduction in gas emissions.



Energy efficient measures at St. Vincent's De Paul Residence (Elderly Home)



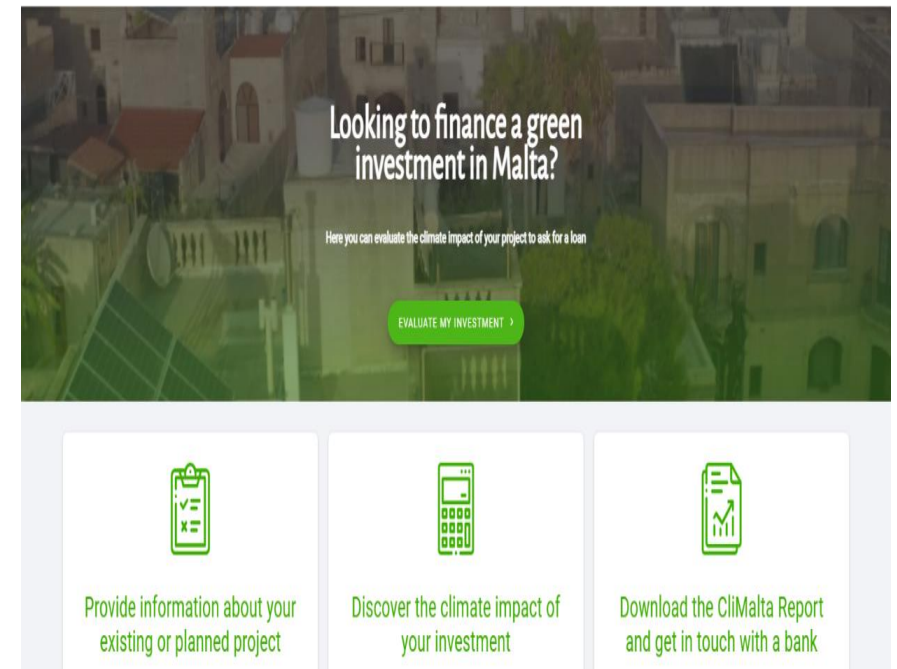
Installation of PV panels - St. Monica School, Gzira

Financial Instrument – PA4

- The **EERE Malta** has an ERDF contribution of €15M creating a portfolio value of loans of €45M, targeting households & enterprises wishing to invest in RES and EE measures in buildings and energy management systems.
- By June 2022, 88 loans (86 private households, 1 corporate and 1 constituted body) were concluded with a committed amount of €2.3M.
- To encourage more uptake, a proposed amendment to the OP is being proposed to widen the eligibility criteria to include the purchase of green means of transport such as electric vehicles, pedelecs, and e-scooters. This initiative is open for commercial and industrial use and for individuals and entities who do not carry out an economic activity.
- Moreover, the MA together with the EIB Advisory are planning a new Marketing Campaign to further promote the FI. All publicity measures implemented will then be reposted in a website, to locate in one place all information and promotion carried out via the various channels and platforms.

ClimMalta - Climate impact calculator

Eurofin
Investment
Advisory Hub
Empowering investment support



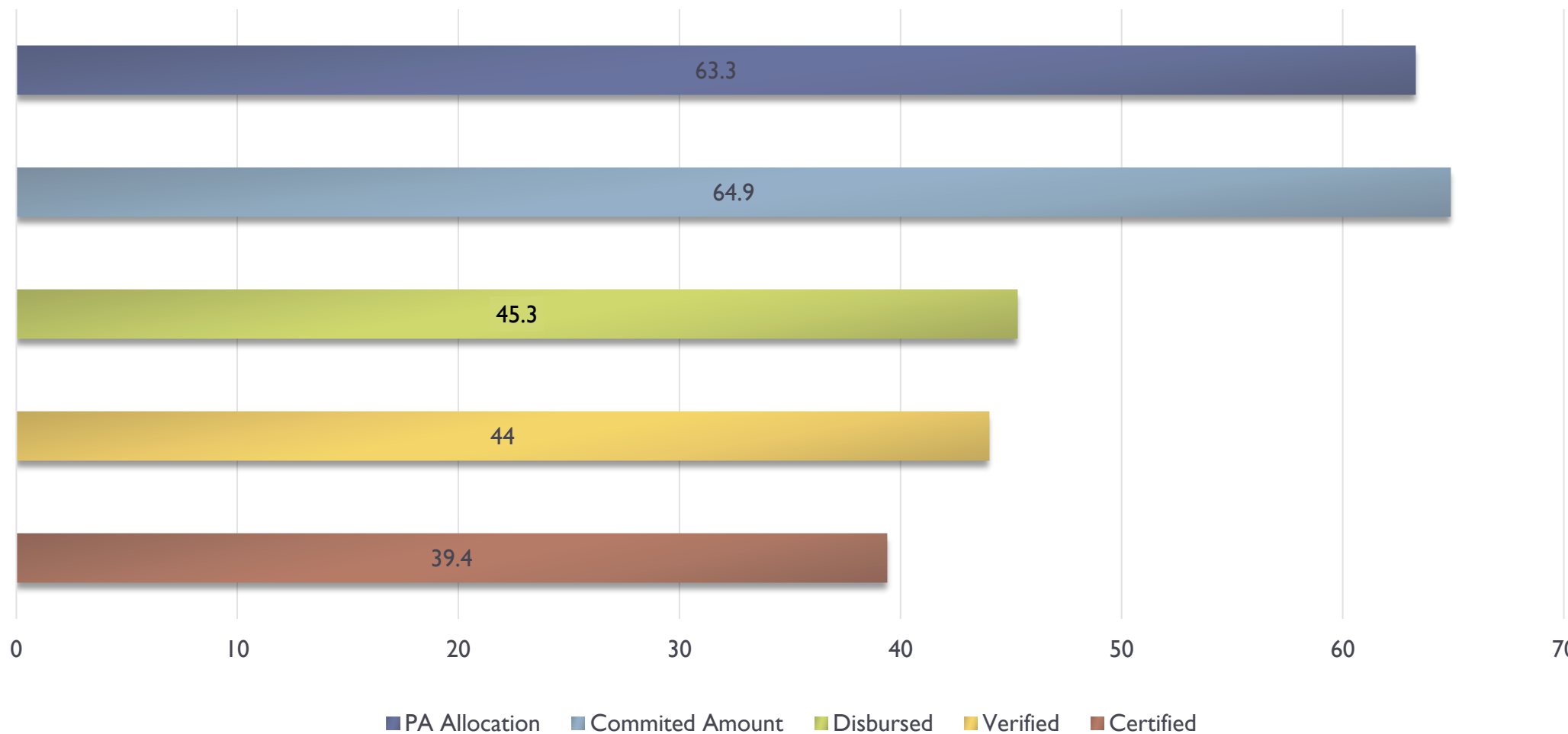
The screenshot shows the main interface of the ClimMalta website. At the top, it asks "Looking to finance a green investment in Malta?" and provides a sub-header: "Here you can evaluate the climate impact of your project to ask for a loan". Below this is a prominent green button labeled "EVALUATE MY INVESTMENT". The interface is divided into three main sections, each with an icon and a description:

- Provide information about your existing or planned project**: Represented by a clipboard icon with a checklist.
- Discover the climate impact of your investment**: Represented by a calculator icon.
- Download the ClimMalta Report and get in touch with a bank**: Represented by a document icon with a bar chart.

ClimMalta: A web-tool supporting EERE Financial Intermediaries and/or their clients in the assessment of standardized EERE measures and providing EERE impact reporting data.

Implementation Progress to date – PA 5

Financial Progress (€M)



Key Achievements – PA 5

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

- The restoration of the **Grandmasters' Palace in Valletta** is at a very advanced stage. The restoration of the artworks in the Piano Nobile Corridors and Ucceleria is complete. The turnkey works in the Casa Del Monte and Orangerie are entering their final phases and so is the Armoury setup.
- The roof of **MICAS Galleries** which will house a contemporary art museum is currently under construction and will be an iconic structure in itself.
- Works are currently being concluded in the second part of the **Caravaggio Wing** where visitors will encounter Caravaggio's paintings 'face-to-face' via state-of-the-art projections.



Restoration works on the Piano Nobile corridors at the Grandmasters' Palace.



Render of the projection-based AV installation for the Caravaggio Wing - 'Face to Face with Caravaggio Experience'

Key Achievements – PA5

- Other projects of **restoration of various historical churches, convents, sacred artifacts and paintings** are being carried out throughout Malta and Gozo.
- The project at **St Dominic's Priory** in Rabat has been completed, with visitors being offered an immersive historical experience.
- The restoration works at **St Augustine's Priory in Valletta** are in their final phase.
- Works on the spire of the **St Paul's Anglican Cathedral (Valletta skyline)** are currently being undertaken, by meticulous restoration and replacement, where needed, of the fragile original structure.
- **The Porto Salvo and St. Dominic Basilica** in Valletta is also undergoing extensive restoration of the exterior and interior including the cracked marble flooring.



The Interpretation Centre at St Dominic Priory in Rabat



Intricate restoration works on the spire of the St Paul's Anglican Cathedral

Key Achievements – PA5

- The **Tunnara Musuem in Mellieħa** was inaugurated in May 2022 and is now open for the general public, following restoration and embellishment works.
- Interior and exterior restoration works on the **Mtarfa Clock Tower** have been completed. These consisted of the façade and adjacent sides as well as the inside. The demolition, excavation, construction and structural works of the Interpretation (Visitors) Centre have been carried out.
- ▶ Rehabilitation works at the **Attard Embankment** and the **Birkirkara Railway station**, both showcasing the railway era in Malta have been completed.
- ▶ Works are also being carried out at the **Culture Mill in Naxxar**, to restore this windmill to its original state.



Tunnara Museum opened for the public



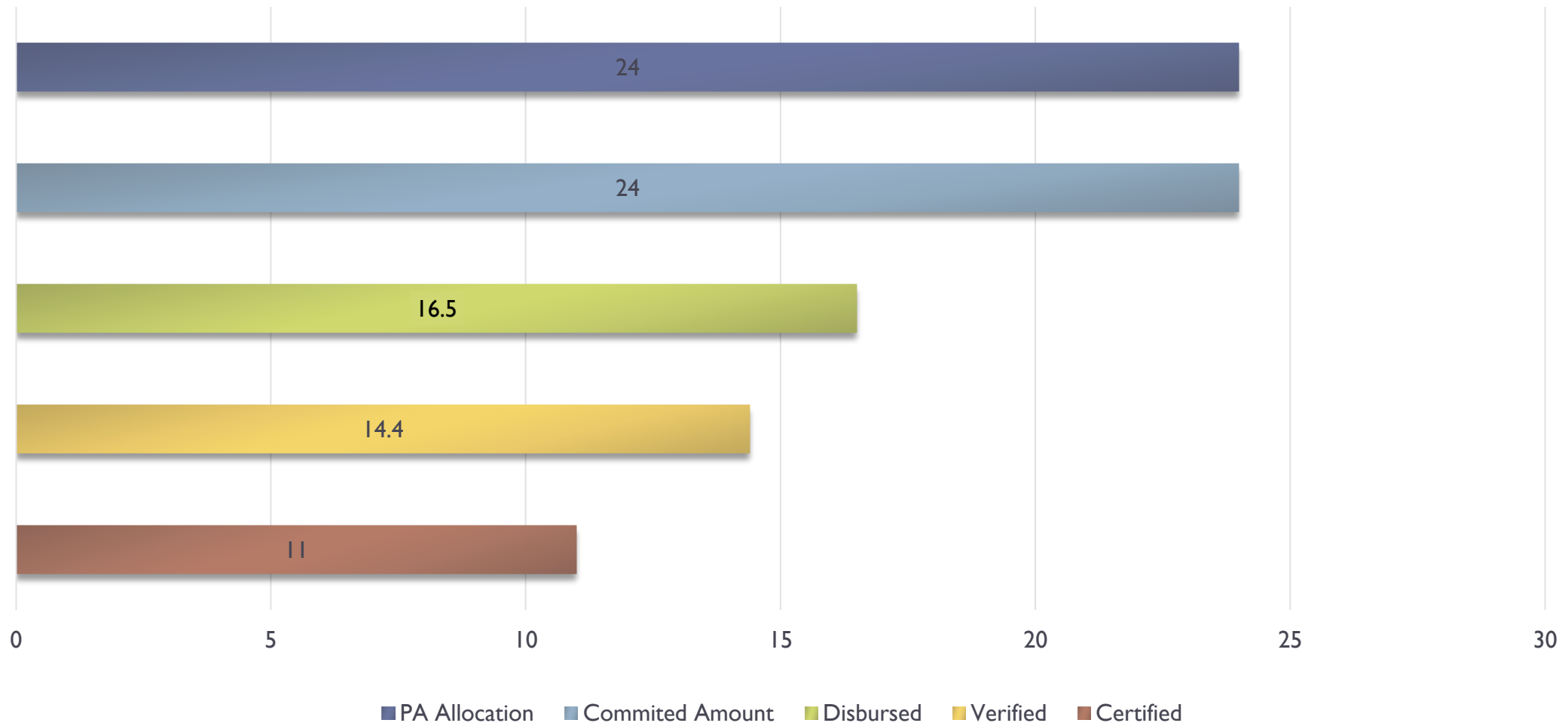
Restoration works at Mtarfa's historic clock tower



Ongoing restoration works at Culture Mill

Implementation Progress to date – PA 6

Financial Progress (€M)



Key Achievements – PA6

The regeneration of Lower Valletta mainly focuses on the Urban Development of the Lower Valletta area, to enhance the quality of services to the local community. This is achieved through:

- Infrastructural works including the refurbishing of 45 housing units after extensive restoration works carried out on abandoned buildings.
- Installation of new lifts at other Government-owned buildings improving physical accessibility to circa 70 individuals and the restoration of 4 apartment façades improving the lifestyle of 160 families.
- The rehabilitation of a dilapidated Government-owned building into an independent living accommodation for 6 elderly persons.
- Restoration works of historical buildings such as the English and French Curtain fortifications, restoration of auberges and their surrounding piazzas as well as several religious buildings and street shrines to attract tourists towards lower Valletta.



Restoration of one apartment façade at Mattia Preti square.



Restoration of religious shrines

Key Achievements – PA6

From a dilapidated unused building, the **Valletta Design Cluster** which opened its doors in March 2021, is now providing studios for start-ups and micro-economic operators addressing social, cultural and environmental issues. It also provides a makerspace for crafts, technology and practitioners in the creative sector, as well as a food space for start-ups and operators teaching and practicing culinary skills.

59 households have benefitted from the **Marsamxett Balconies Scheme** which aimed at preserving the typical Maltese balconies as well as other elements such as doors, windows, wrought iron elements and stone works related to the bases of the balconies.



Entrance of the Valletta Design Cluster



Restoration works under the Marsamxett Balconies Scheme

Key Achievements – PA6

From a **social perspective**, the project **Hiliet il-Komunità** includes several activities to support the community in order to benefit from the urban generation. These include:

- Community Skills Audit to capture the existing talents and skills within the community and encourage further use of such talents in gainful employment.
- Several community-based projects such as ‘l-Għeruq tal-Komunità’ to involve the residents from the grassroots, ‘Il-Belt mill-Lenti ta’ Żgħir’ to involve the younger generation, ‘Tikka Żebgħa ma’ Paul’ offering art lessons free of charge.
- ‘Ktieb u Tazza Te’ to promote life long learning opportunities, making reading more accessible.



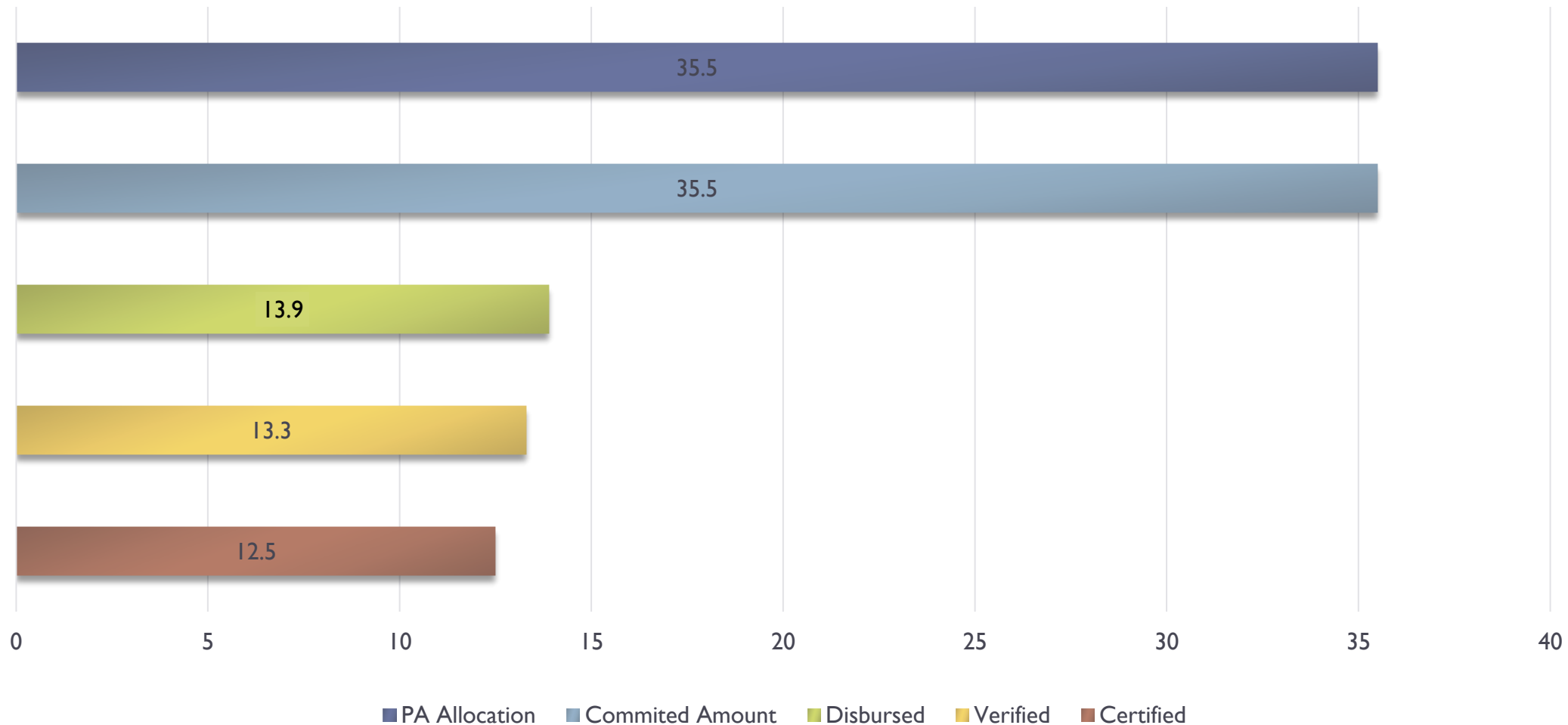
Tikka Żebgħa ma’ Paul (art lessons)



Punt Hġata għal Dar Ahjar (sewing lessons)

Implementation Progress to date – PA 7

Financial Progress (€M)



Key Achievements – PA7

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

Major achievements to date include:

- Works on Sliema and Bormla Ferry Landing are ongoing and expected to be concluded by Q2 2023.
- The contract for works on the Buġibba Ferry Landing site was signed on 23rd August. Works on the pre-cast elements are currently being prepared at the Contractor's plant for eventual in situ installation.
- Tenders in relation to the ITS system with the aim to integrate one platform to provide close to real time traffic data and travel information are currently on the market and expected to be awarded Q1 of 2023.



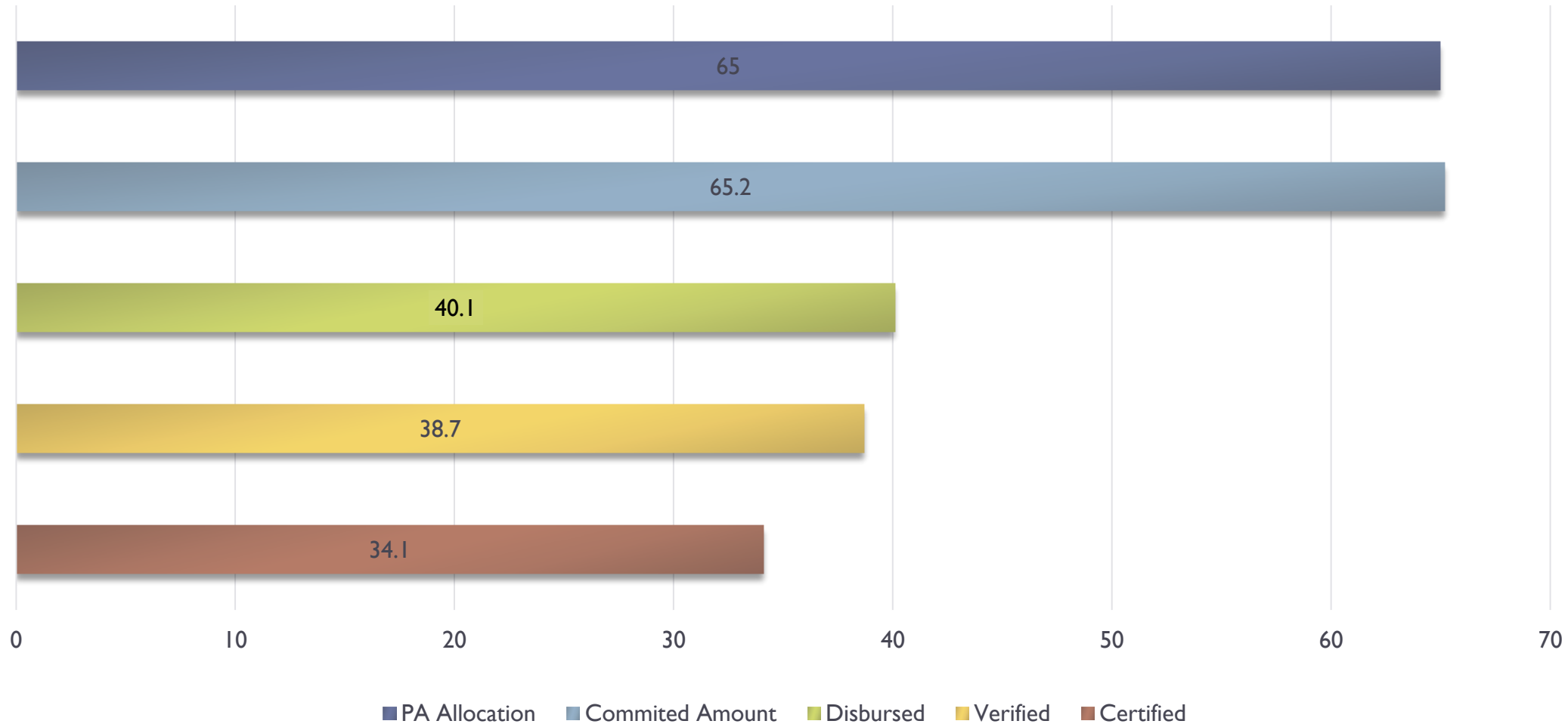
Ongoing works at Sliema Ferry Landing



Rendering of Buġibba Ferry Landing

Implementation Progress to date – PA 8

Financial Progress (€M)



Key Achievements – PA8

- Following a decision taken by the Maltese authorities to use flexibilities introduced by the Commission to tackle the economic crisis as a result of the pandemic, ERDF programme resources were mobilised to cover **COVID-related measures** including the procurement of vaccines, PPEs, testing kits, medical equipment and medication.
- An expenditure of €13.8M for the procurement of vaccines was claimed from the Commission resulting in c. 440,000 of the population in the Maltese islands (85%) being vaccinated.
- A further expenditure of €2.1M for the reimbursement of procurement of various PPEs, such as Rapid Qualitative Tests, Gowns, Alcohol Surface Wipes, and Surgical Masks is expected to be claimed from the Commission shortly.



85% of the Maltese population are vaccinated.

Key Achievements – PA8

The flagship health infrastructure project (**Paola Primary Health Care Centre**) saw construction reaching completion up to the top floor at level 16 and level 17 (roof). Works related to M&Es & architectural finishes are expected to be completed by Q2 2023.

The project, once completed, will provide cohesive primary health facilities all under one roof providing a one-stop-shop primary health care provision for the Southern region. A total of 25 healthcare services shall be provided to the population within the catchment area of the project.

In the area of **social housing**, investment continued in 317 units in a total of 59 blocks, with c. 1,030 residents benefitting from improved accessibility. Such works are being carried out to modernise social housing and improve accessibility.



Construction works at Paola Regional Hub Primary Health Care Centre



Installation of new lifts at San Ġwann Social Housing Estate

Key Achievements – PA8

Two projects implemented by NGOs are progressing well.

- An important milestone was reached by the project managed by the NGO **Caritas Malta** aiming at supporting the integration of vulnerable people in society, with over 1000 clients welcomed at the new premises during year 2022.
- The other project managed by NGO **Hospice Malta** aiming to set up a new Palliative Care complex is also progressing well with the completion of civil works for the Day Therapy, Outpatient & Loan Equipment areas. Project is expected to be completed by Q1 2023.



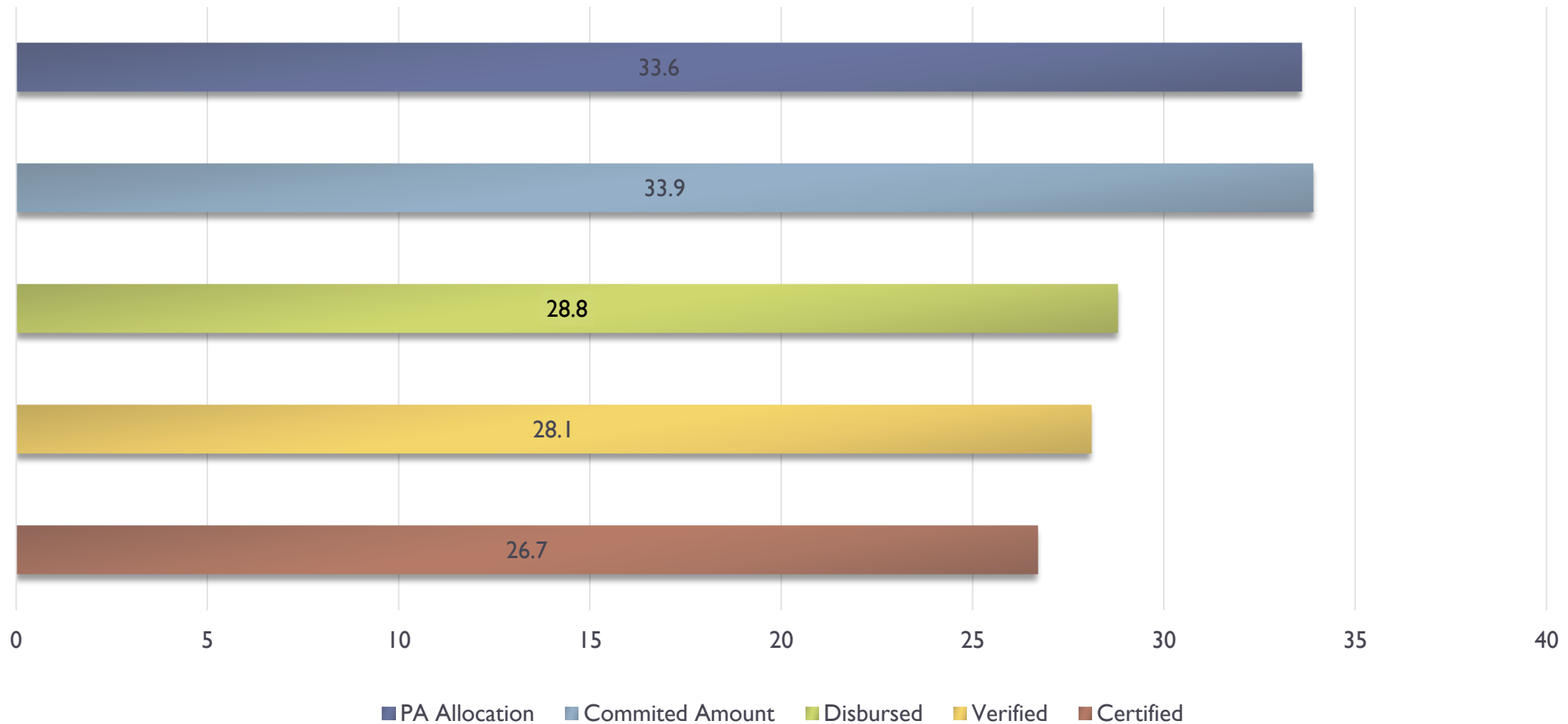
Caritas Malta offering centralized non-residential community services



M&E works at the Hospice Malta Complex which will offer palliative care

Implementation Progress to date – PA 9

Financial Progress (€M)



Key Achievements – PA 9

Two mainstream projects dedicated to investments in the education sector with a total public eligible value of €33.6M are currently being implemented.

- Under the **INVEST** project, a total of 78 VET labs in 14 different schools including 1 Learning Support Centre, were completed. Areas covered range from hospitality, engineering, IT, health and social care, fashion and textiles, agribusiness, media, retail and hairdressing and beauty.
- This investment motivates students to opt for vocational home-grown subjects at Level 3 of the Malta Qualifications Framework (MQF) in line with the Government's policy to ensure that vocational subjects find their way back into compulsory education within standard secondary schools rather than in specialised vocational schools.
- **The Maria Regina College Mosta Secondary School**, with a population of c. 550 students aged between 13 and 15 years in a co-educational setting, has benefitted from a total of 7 VET labs. As a result of this project, the number of students opting for a VET subject has increased over the years and to date, 76% of this school population takes VET subject and make use of one or more labs.



Maria Regina College Secondary School – Żokrija Mosta



Media & Communications Lab

Key Achievements – PA9

- The new **MCAST Resource Centre (MRC)** encompassing the Library and Learning Resource Centre, the Learning Support Unit, the Innovation and Entrepreneurship Department and the Apprenticeship and Work-based Learning Department is complete and welcomed its first students in Jan 2022.
- The **Institute of Engineering and Transport (IET)** is fully complete and welcomed its first students in 2020.
- Construction and structural works on the **Institute of Information and Communication Technology (IICT)** are progressing well and are expected to be completed in Q1 2023.
- A data management framework **College Management Information System (CMIS)** is fully operational and is being put to good use by students and staff alike, optimising MCAST's procedures and processes.
- As at October 2022, the student population at the MCAST campus making use of the facilities financed by ERDF was c. 8000 (FT and PT).



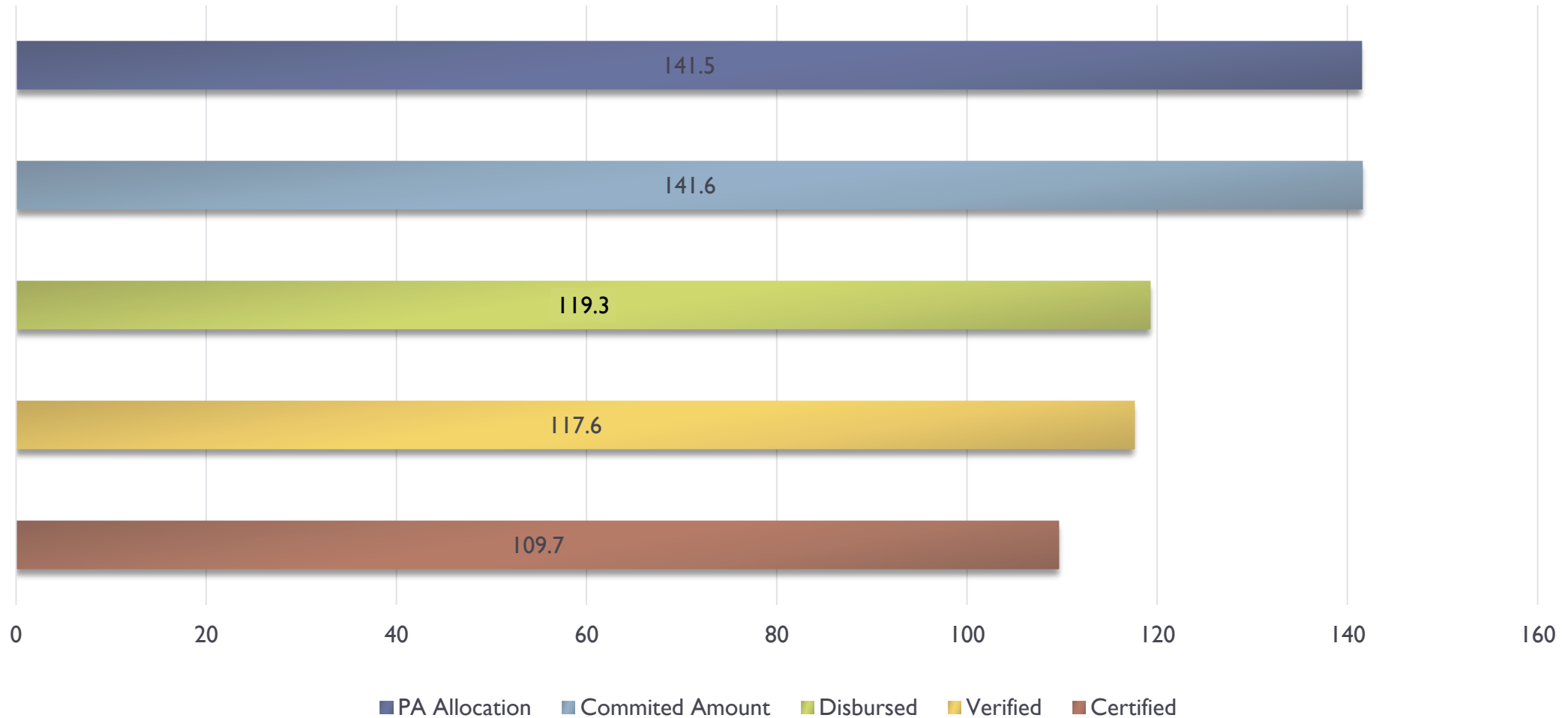
The new MCAST Resource Centre



The Institute of Engineering and Transport

Implementation Progress to date – PA 10

Financial Progress (€M)



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 at the **Wied Fulija landfill** were completed in May 2021, with the site now made accessible to the general public.
- Works on the **Multi-Material Recovery Facility (MMRF)** in Ħal Far are in the final stages of implementation with the site expected to be operational during the Q1 of 2023. Once completed, it would enable the gathering of different waste streams for preparation and storage for eventual reutilisation and export where necessary, thus reducing the amount of waste that is channelled towards landfilling.



Aerial view of the Rehabilitated public area on former Wied Fulija landfill site



Tyre processing equipment installed at the MMRF site



Ongoing civil works at the MMRF site

Key Achievements – PA10

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

- Under the **waste campaign**, the **Reuse Centres** aimed to further promote the concepts of 'reuse' and 'recycling' as well as the **Material recovery equipment** for the improvement of the recyclable rate, were inaugurated.
- Works on a new **ECOHIVE Educational Centre** started in Q4.
- The **Water campaign** project's information component has progressed steadily with the installation and commissioning of an unsaturated zone monitoring network. Monthly water samples are being drawn, providing an accurate assessment of the quantity and quality of groundwater recharge.
- Another action under this project is the drilling of 22 deep boreholes with core recovery. Following the drilling process, the recovered cores are processed, photographed and logged by geologists at a core store location. This will then be used to determine the primary hydrogeological and geological properties of the main geological formations found in Malta



Hal Far Reuse Centre



Material Recovery Equipment



Commissioned monitoring station (Ghammieri) – Forming part of the unsaturated zone monitoring network

Key Achievements – PA10

- A separate drilling exercise, in relation to the development of a **Freshwater-Saltwater Interface Monitoring Network**, commenced in April 2022 and is currently ongoing.
- The **publicity campaign** continued with the town tours in which more than 90,000 gift packs and 67,000 kits were distributed.
- Household visits by technical officers at the selected **demonstration sites** as part of the **'Water Champion' activity** continued in 2022, with water audits and water efficient interventions being carried out on site.
- A **conference** was held on the 7th October targeting various stakeholders for a consultation session in preparation for the development of the **3rd River Basin Management Plan**.



Mobile Public Information Stand under the Water Campaign as part of the public engagement activities



Water Conservation Kit

Key Achievements – PA10

- Under the **Water Major project**, the drilling and shotcreting of the tunnel from Pembroke to Ta' Qali reservoirs has now been completed, whilst the laying of pipes and backfilling reaching an advanced stage. Once completed, this intervention will result in better quality drinking water for the Maltese population.
- With regards ROs, the **Gozo RO** plant was completed in 2021, providing Gozo with a secure supply of improved quality water, whilst contributing to the sustainability of the water table due to less reliance on extracted ground water. Interventions on the **Lapsi RO** were carried out to increase both the energy efficiency as well as the water production capacity by 3400m³ daily.
- The new potable water distribution for the Western Area of the island of Malta has been completed and residents are now being supplied with blended water from the Qrendi Reservoir.



Pembroke to Ta' Qali tunnel



Part of the equipment installed at Gozo RO

Key Achievements – PA 10

- With regards the **wastewater network** in areas which are served by cesspits, works are ongoing and in an advanced stage.
- With regards to **tertiary treated highly polished water** for agricultural use, around 62 kms of distribution network are being laid out to maximise water re-use and ensure protection of groundwater bodies. Interventions cover areas in Mellieħa, areas around Popeye Village, Miżieb, Manikata, L-Aħrax tal-Mellieħa and Gozo.
- Progress was also registered on the **Rainwiin project** focusing on valley management & rainwater storage infrastructure with the excavation and removal of accumulated material of the 8th basin. In 2022, a desktop study and field surveys of dams and reservoirs in five catchment areas in Malta and Gozo were ongoing.



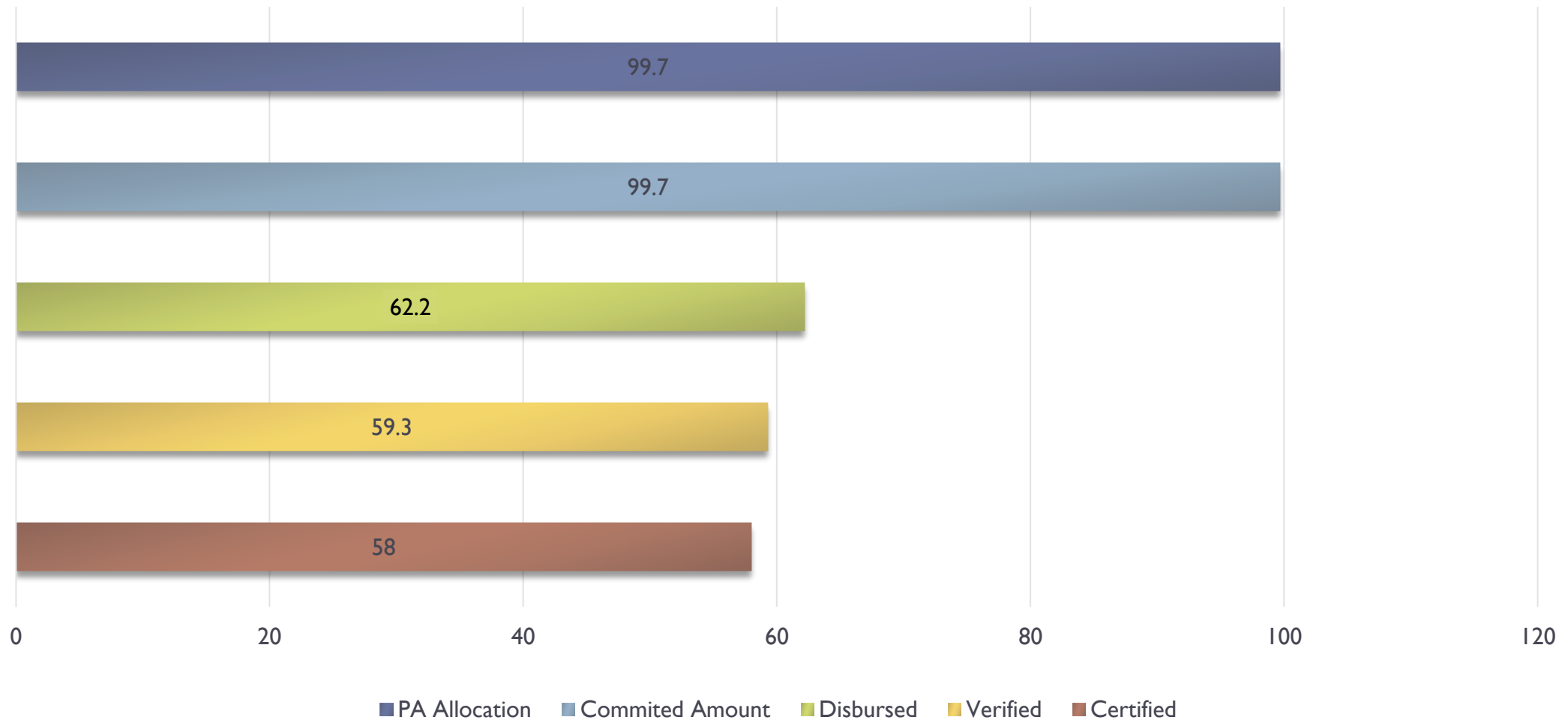
New Water Ground Network



Conservation water at Wied il-Għasel - RainWiiN pilot project

Implementation Progress to date – PA 11

Financial Progress (€M)



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 were completed in Q1 2022, resulting in the component contributing towards an additional 5.3 km of reconstructed and upgraded Ten-T roads.

TEN-T Ports:

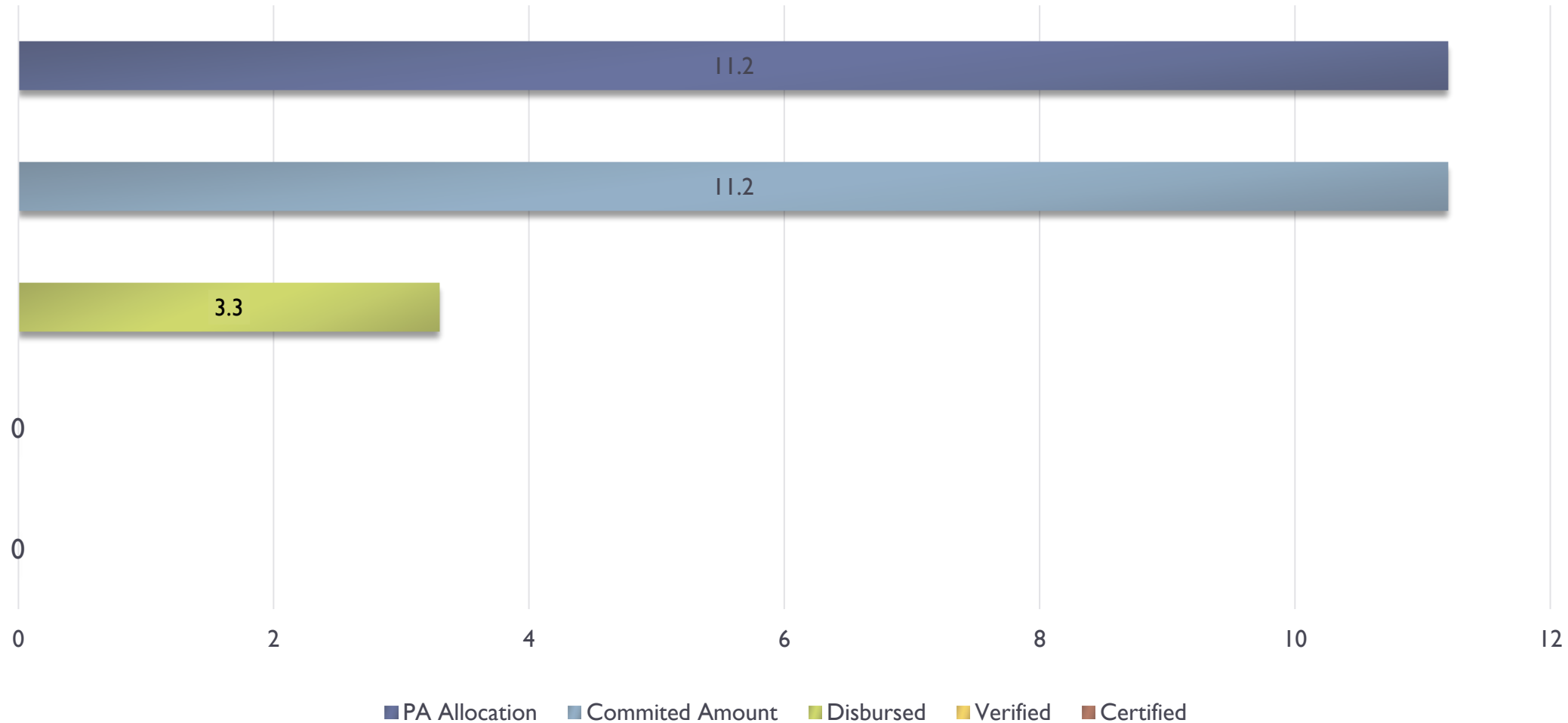
- Dredging works within the **Grand Harbour** were completed in Q4 2022.
- The contract for the **new cargo facility** which will be located between Laboratory and Fuel Wharves was signed in November 2022, with works expected to commence in Q1 2023.



Dredging works in the Grand Harbour

Implementation Progress to date – PA 13 REACT-EU

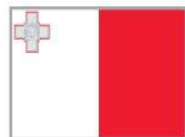
Financial Progress (€M)



Key Achievements – PA13

- The project '**Supply of high technology equipment for Mater Dei Hospital**' was approved in October 2022, with a total public eligible value of €11.2M which is being funded under the REACT-EU.
- This project aims at improving investment in health infrastructure, equipment, technologies, and services which will aim to foster improved resilience of the health sector whilst ensuring universal access, high quality of care and sustainable services.
- The following are amongst the several new state-of the art hospital equipment and services which are being funded though REACT-EU: new and improved X-Ray machines and technologies, electric vehicles to reach patients in their homes, Rapid Response Vehicles for faster access to patients, new automated machinery and higher quality equipment in Operating Theatres.
- Procurement on several actions has already been concluded and equipment delivered, with payments claims to the Commission expected to be sent in the coming months.

Progress in the Implementation of Operational Programme II

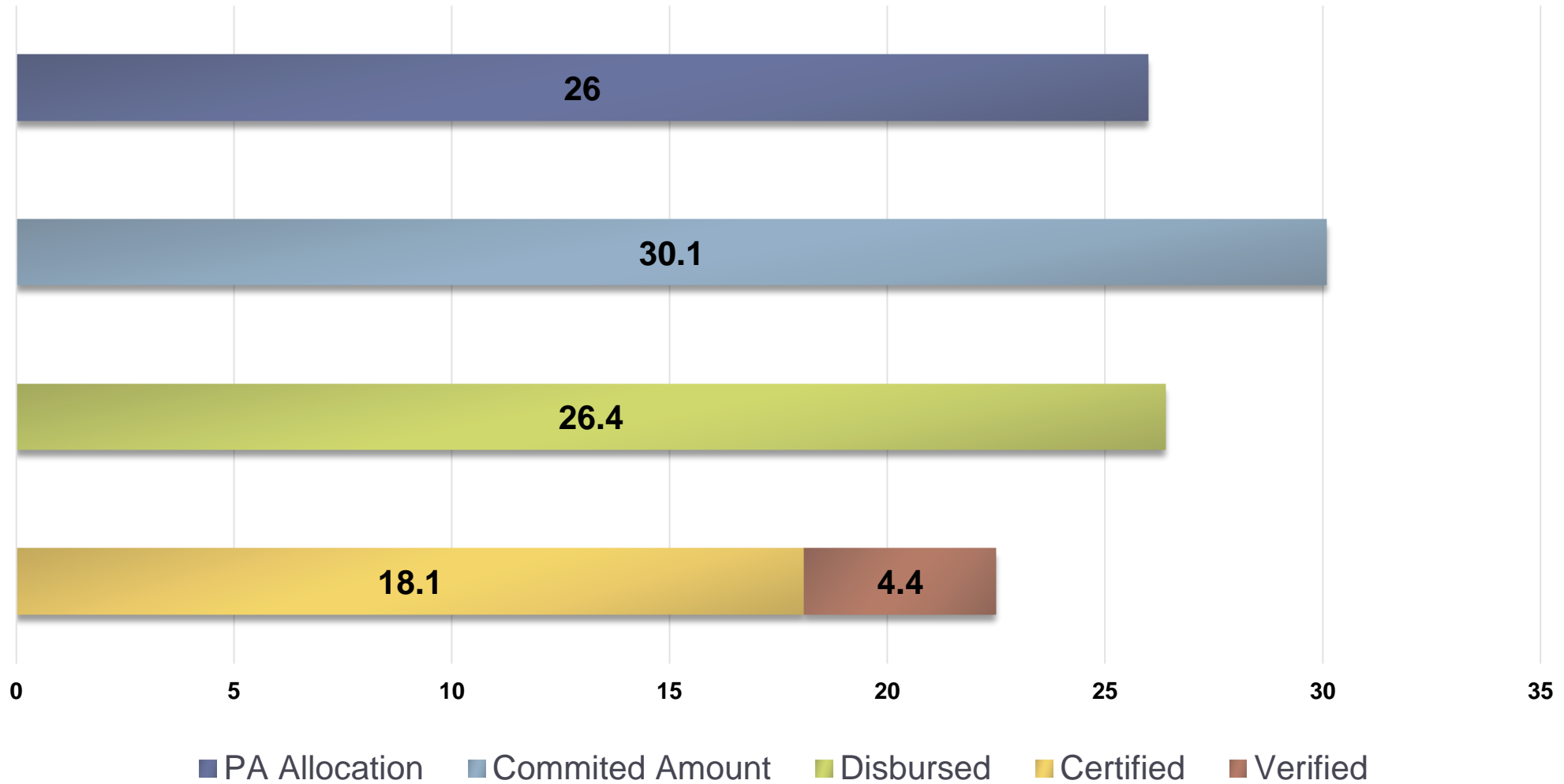


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Implementation Progress to date – PA 1

Financial Progress (€M)



Key Achievements – PA1 Training for Employment

What does a Work Exposure Scheme involve?

An opportunity to get **pre-employment training** at a **place of work**

A **20 hour weekly** commitment for **12 weeks**

Entitles the **trainee** for a **training allowance** payable by Jobsplus

Who is eligible to apply?

Unemployed and Persons who are **not in Education or Training**

Need more information?

Call us on
t: 22201635/6/7/8



The Training for Employment project reached 6,380 participants (52% women).

Out of 4,208 participants who were unemployed participants, 28% were in employment within 4 weeks after receiving specialised training, while 48% were in employment within 6 months.

In 2022, 1,945 participants started training.



Key Achievements – PA1 Youth Guarantee 2.0



Reached 5,797 participants
(48% women)



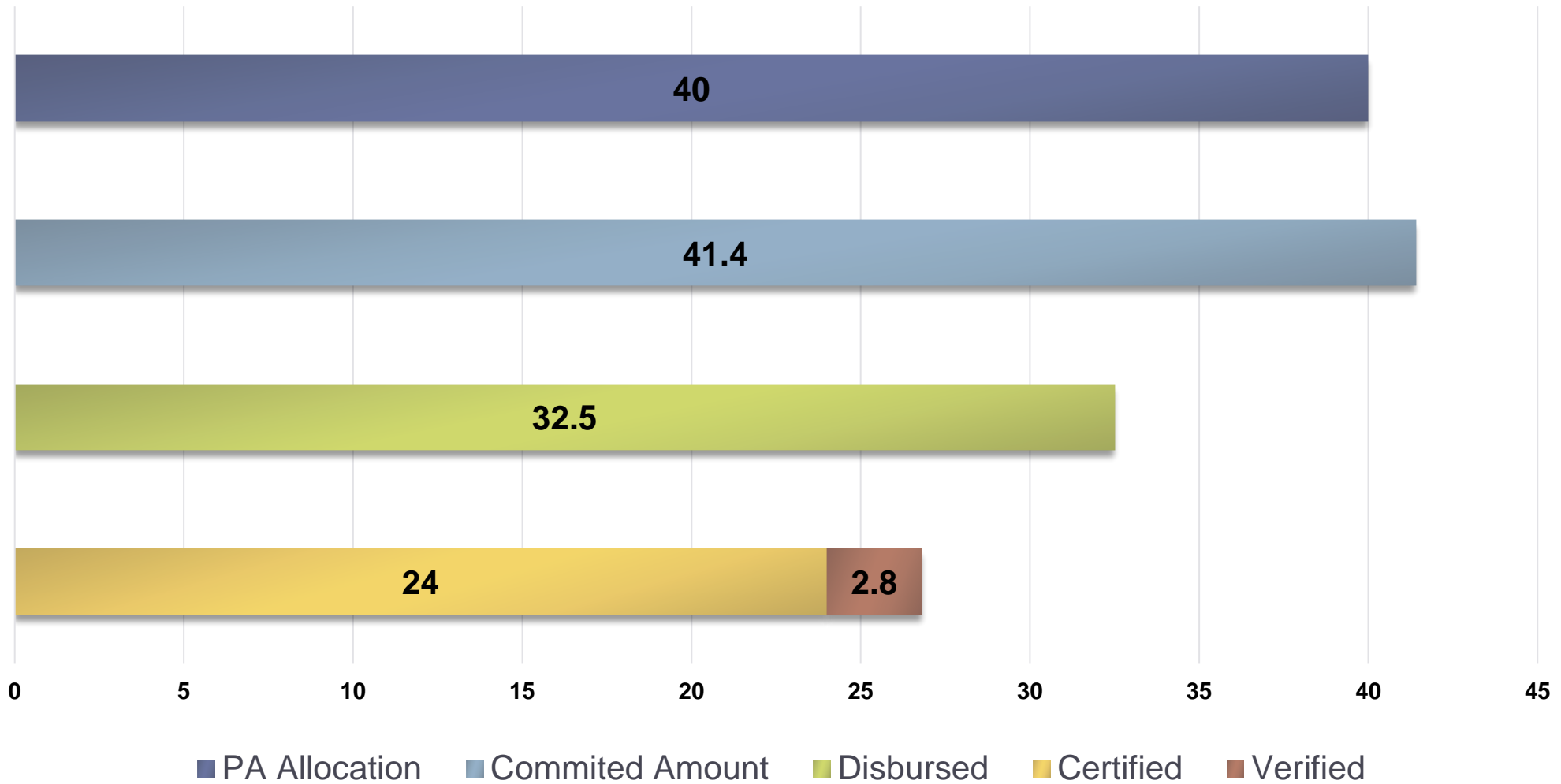
With a 75% success rate
(50% women)



In 2022, the project reached **847 participants** (45% women) that participated in the SEC and MCAST prevention classes, the NEET activation scheme and the ICT Courses at MQF Level 2 and Level 3.

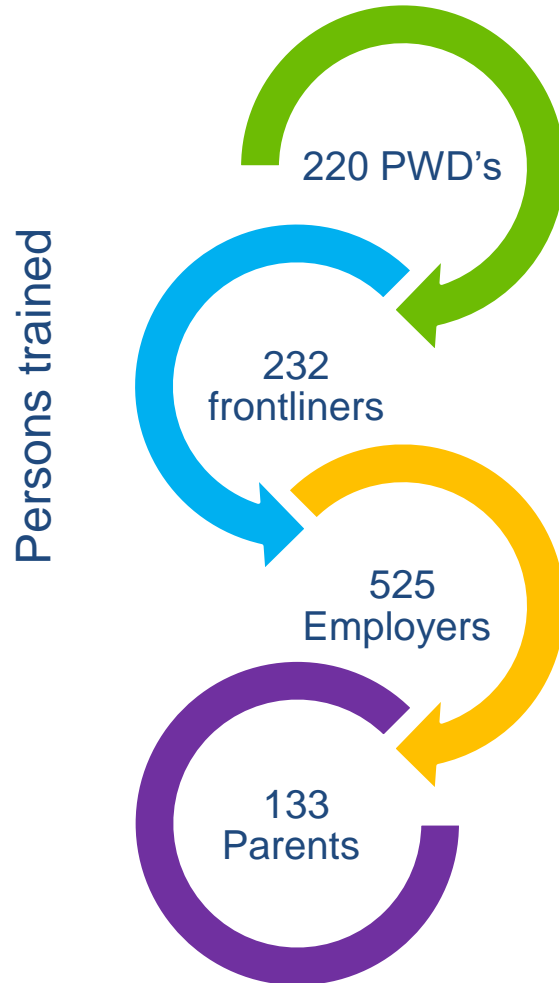
Implementation Progress to date – PA 2

Financial Progress (€M)



Key Achievements – PA 2

INK project comes to a close



- The project has implemented its final activities as the project closed its implementation at the end of June 2022.
- The INK Journey provided training to PWD's, frontliners, employers and parents.
- 114 PWD's have successfully completed a period of work placement.



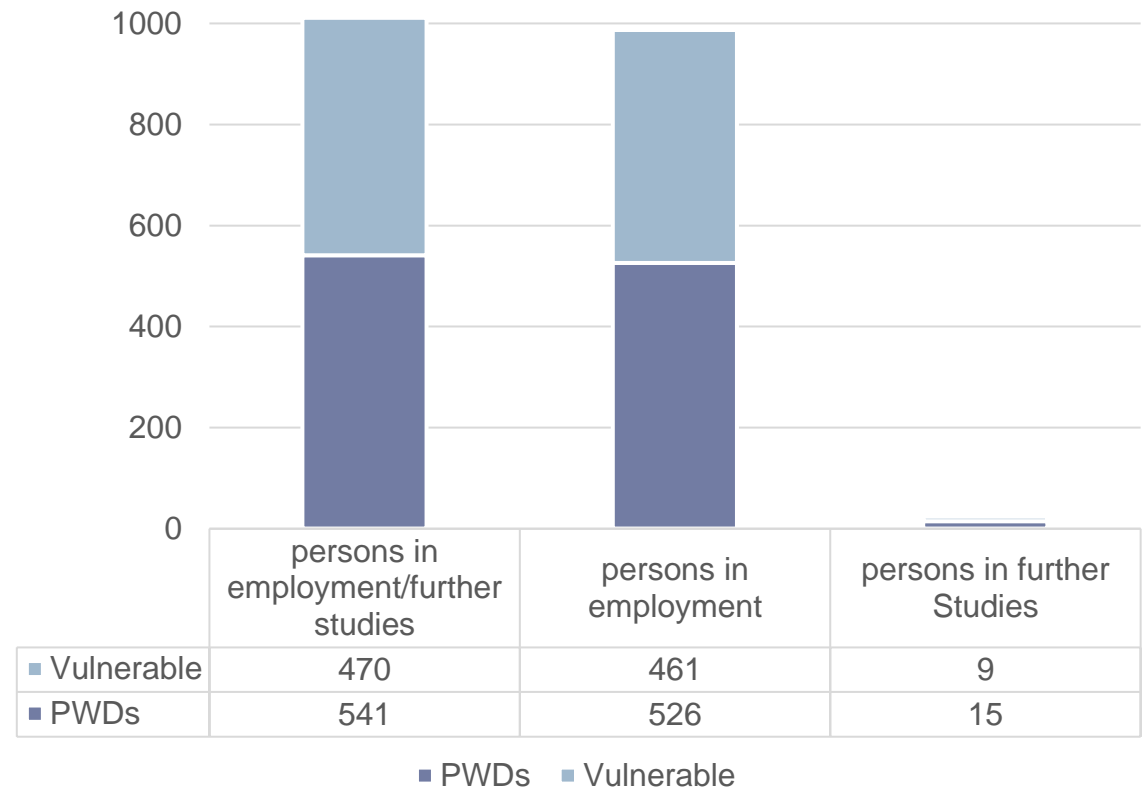
Key Achievements – PA 2 VASTE programme

Through the **VASTE** programme, 2,081 individuals were supported (29% women, 60% persons with disability, 40% vulnerable persons).

721 persons with disabilities followed training preparing them for the work environment. They were provided opportunities to maximise their abilities through **work placements in the open labour market**.

1,634 participants exited the programme with 1,011 (62%) being in employment or further studies 6 months after leaving.

- 526 persons with a disability found employment and 15 continued furthering their studies
- 461 vulnerable persons found employment and 9 continued furthering their studies.



Key Achievements – PA 2

ESF.02.058 Adding Value: Nurturing Learning Journeys in IVET at MCAST

- During the year 2022, new research was presented in a Research Symposium at the new MCAST Resource Centre in April.
- MCAST launched the Special Issue of the MCAST Journal of Applied Research & Practice focusing on research within the Project.
- Two main studies that have been carried out, related to drop-outs and student mentoring.



Key Achievements – PA 2

ESF.02.058 Adding Value: Nurturing Learning Journeys in IVET at MCAST

Mentoring Support Services - The main points derived from the research performed related to the students' experience of the mentoring services under the project are the below:

Mentoring helped them develop and mature

Students felt sure about the course but unsure about how to navigate MCAST life

Students praised mentors for improving their emotional well-being

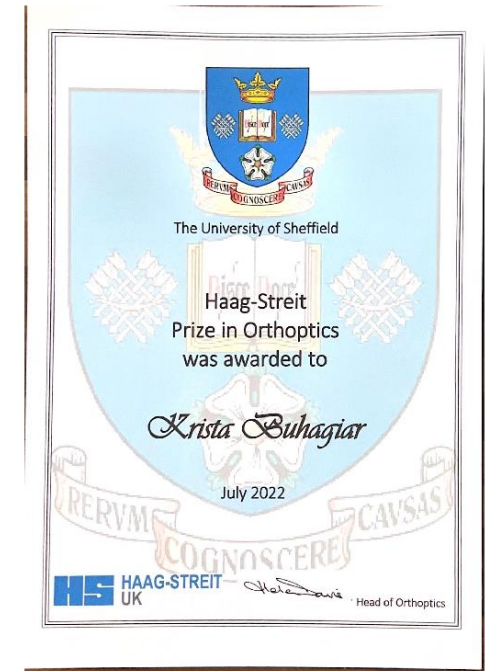
Preferred modes of communication are one-to-one or online

Mutual trust has been built

Key Achievements – PA 2

ESF.02.053 - Developing Allied Health Capacity to Sustain Health Care Needs

Through the project, Malta now has 14 highly skilled allied health workers in specialised areas namely, orthoptics (6), optometry (3) and genetic counselling (5).



Krista Buhagiar was given a special award for placing first amongst all Orthoptics students at the University of Sheffield.

Key Achievements – PA 2

ESF.02.061 - National Awareness Campaign on Responsible Gambling

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2020



Awareness campaign objectives :

- For the general public to become more conscious and aware of responsible gambling,
- Raise awareness of the range of help and treatment available to gamblers and help prevent problem gambling.

(Status – ongoing until February 2023)

Key Achievements – PA 2

Small Projects

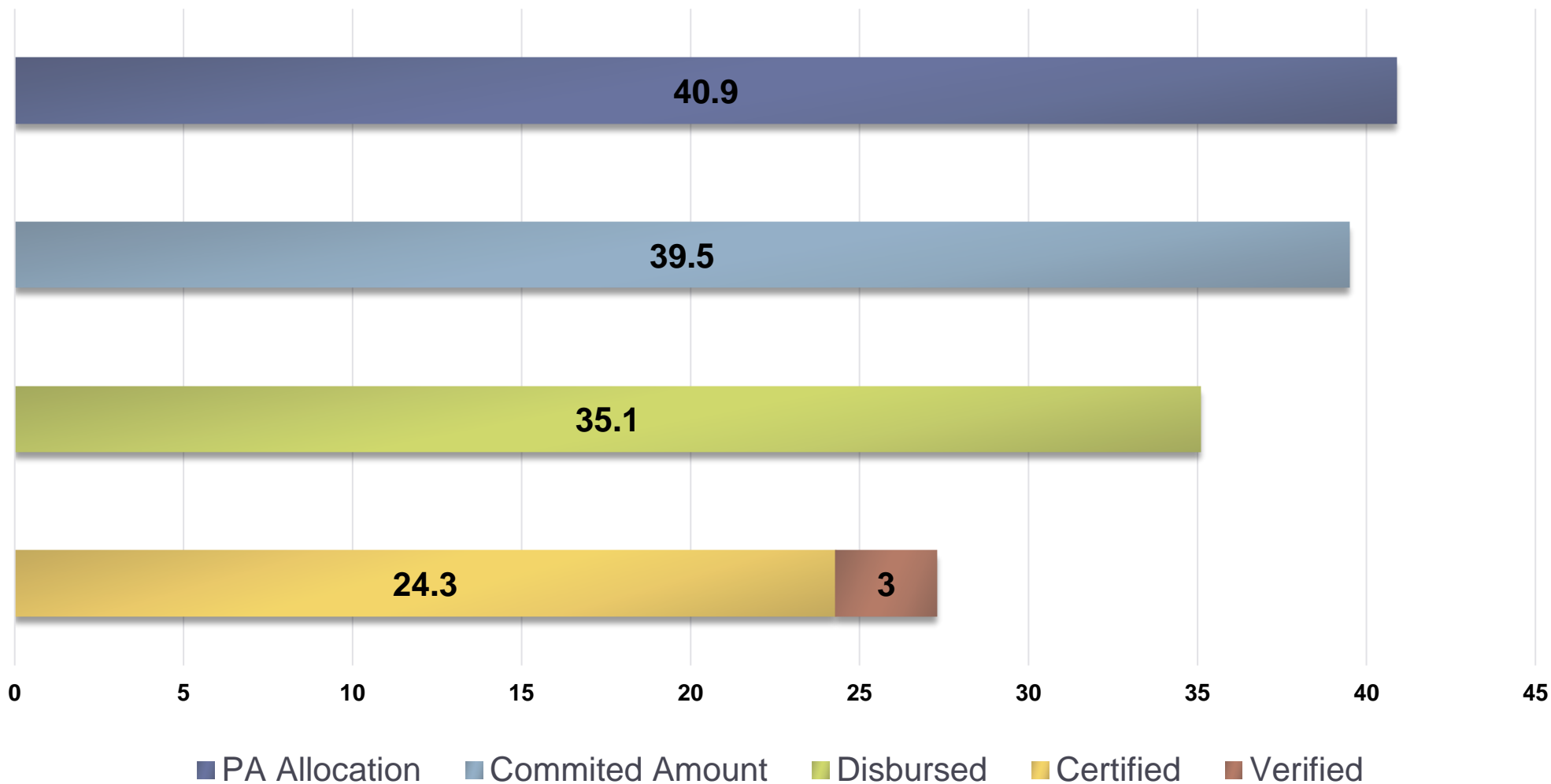
16 small-scale projects are run by NGOs and Social Partners with an investment of €1.4M.

- supporting de-institutionalisation;
- addressing bullying at the place of work;
- capacity building activities tied to addressing suicide, mental health, disadvantaged children;
- Training/supporting youth victims of substance abuse, persons with disability and asylum seekers.

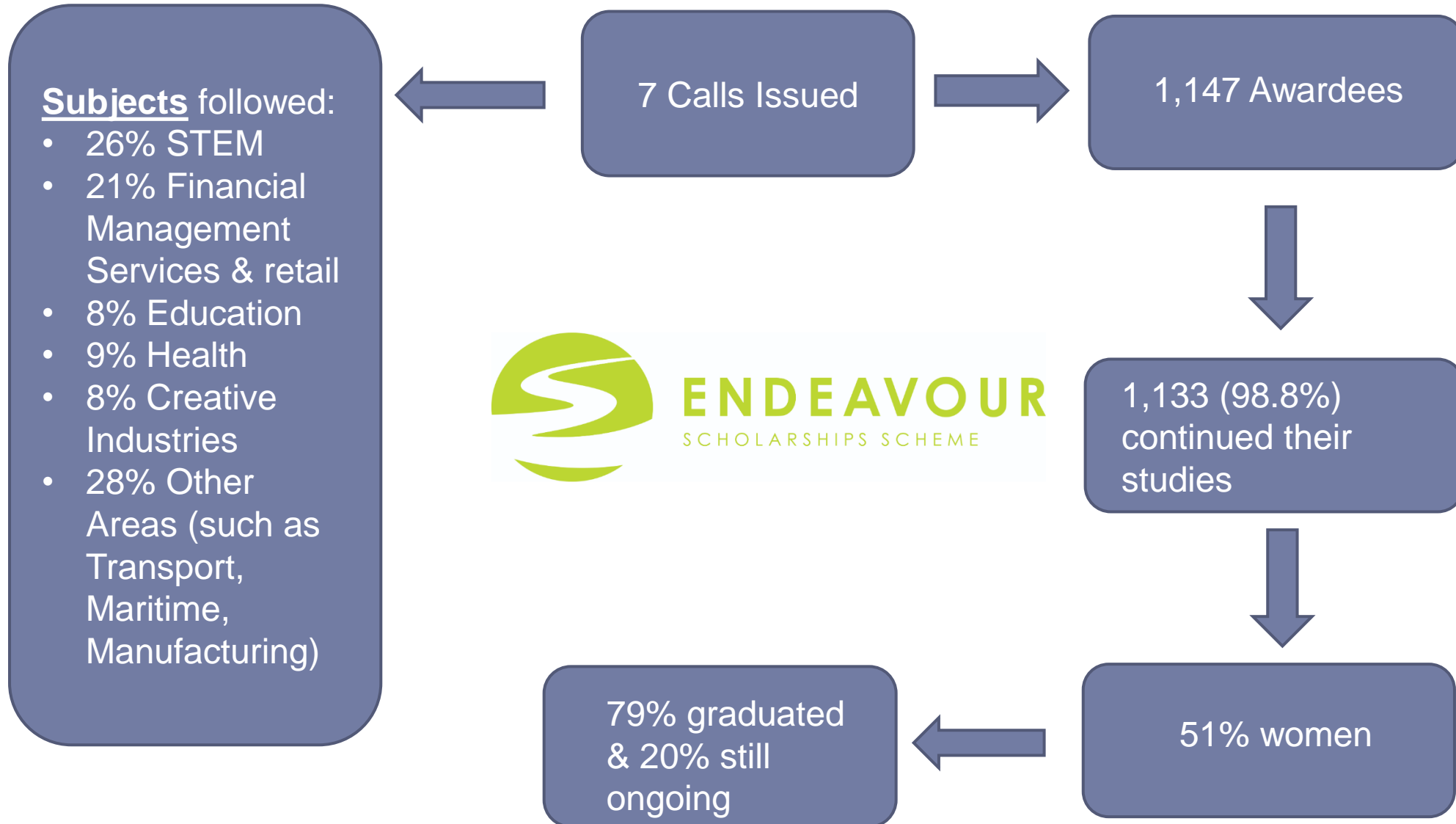


Implementation Progress to date – PA 3

Financial Progress (€M)



Key Achievements – PA 3 Endeavour Scholarships Scheme



Key Achievements – PA 3

One Tablet Per Child



**“ If a child can’t learn
the way we teach,
maybe we should teach
the way they learn. ”**

Ignacio Estrada

- In 2022, VR sets were introduced to students and educators. Moreover, VR sets specifically designed for Special Education Needs (SEN) students were also introduced.
- Train-the-trainer training provided to educators, and DDLTS staff.
- Students given exposure to new experiences using VR sets within the classroom.
- Experience found to be interesting, useful, and beneficial.
- Students were able to encounter things they would have never met in their life.

Key Achievements – PA 3 One Tablet Per Child

One year of catch-up classes – a snapshot

- First Catch-Up Learning Classes held in Summer 2021
- Contribution towards the prevention of **early school leaving**
- Over **700 students** participating in the **Summer** (2021) and **Winter** Catch-Up Classes (2021-2022)
- Over **500 students** during the **Summer** Classes (2022) including the participation of National Literacy Agency
- Students have the option to attend a **Physical Centre** or a **Virtual School**
- **Improving performance of students-at-risk – 65%**



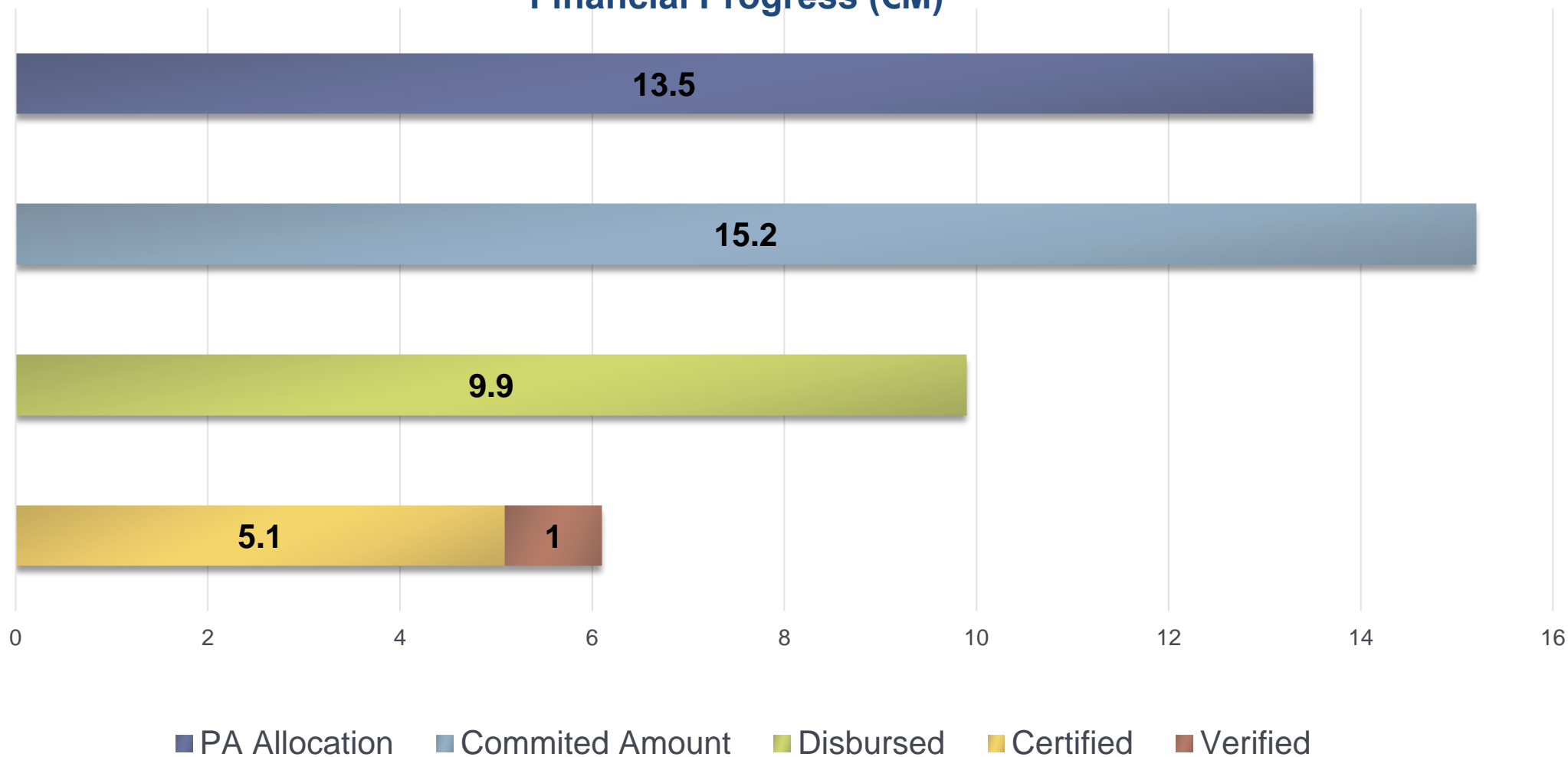
Key Achievements – PA 3

FI – Further Studies Made Affordable

- The FSMA and the FSMA+ cater for students pursuing a study programme which is an accredited course in MQF levels 5, 6, 7 and 8 as well as internationally recognised certificates. The loans are available for full-time & part-time studies.
- Under the FSMA Scheme, 277 students have been supported, of which 102 are women.
- The total loans sanctioned under FSMA amount to €9.2M with the average loan amounting to c. €33K.
- The most popular courses undertaken by the FSMA beneficiaries were for MQF 7 courses followed by beneficiaries opting for internationally recognized courses.
- Following the launch of the FSMA+ in January, it is to be noted that the approved loans under this FI has already reached the amount of €3.4M covering 86 student loan facilities.

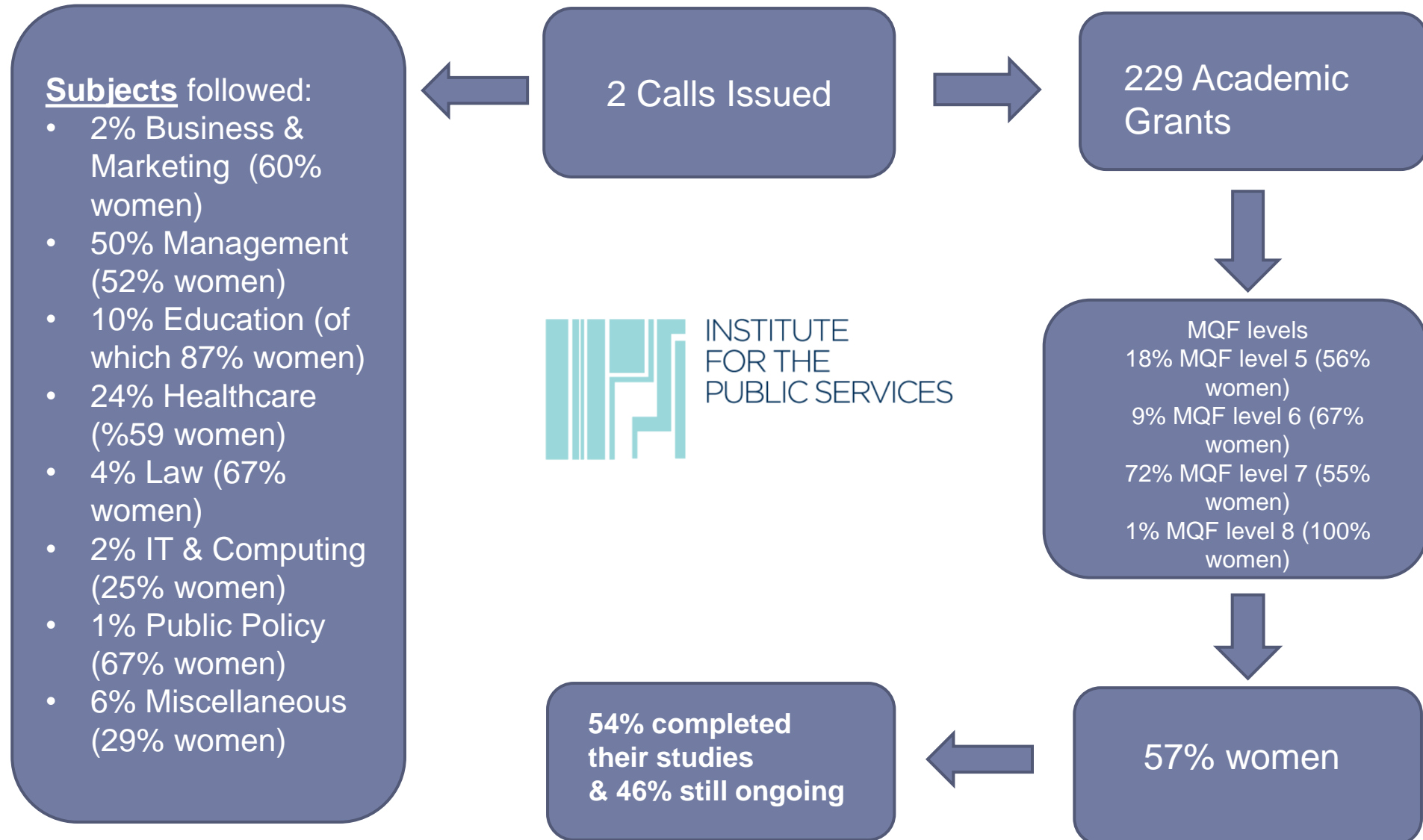
Implementation Progress to date – PA 4

Financial Progress (€M)



Key Achievements – PA 4

ESF.04.085 - Towards a More Professional Workforce in the Public Administration



Key Achievements – PA 4

ESF.04.085 – Towards a More Professional Workforce in the Public Administration

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A call for Specialised Training addressing Allied Health Professionals and another for Medical Doctors were launched in 2022.

Training areas in these calls include Hepatobiliary Surgery, Medical Imaging and Rehabilitation Medicine.

Key Achievements – PA 4

ESF.04.078: Mystery Shopper - Enhanced performance in the Public Administration leading to Service of Excellence

- Mystery Shopping exercises continued in 2022 including Identity Malta, ARMS, servizz.gov, Customs Department and Examinations Department.
- Between January and October 2022, 420 recommendations were made, and 235 recommendations were implemented.

ESF.04.084: Reform in the public health system to maximize efficiency gains and enhance governance.

- Capacity building and training in commissioning is on-going where a commissioning function is being established within the Ministry for Health.
- The Malta-DRG grouper and catalogue has been adapted from the German DRG system and the software hosting the new system is being installed locally.
- A gap analysis and recommendations on the way forward for medicines assessment and evaluation is finalised and training on the new processes is on-going.

Key Achievements – PA 4

ESF.04.148 – A Carrying Capacity Study of Tourism in the Maltese Islands



In September 2022, the research derived from this project, has been concluded.

Contacted stakeholders included relevant Ministries and public authorities, agencies, local councils, as well as sectoral representative bodies and operators.

Following the finalizing of the research study related to Tourism in the Maltese Islands, a number of workshops with relevant stakeholders have been delivered.



Key Achievements – PA 4

ESF.04.159 – Leading & Delivering Dialogue Effectively, Representatively (LADDER)

The Malta Chamber of SMEs improved their communication and working tools through the completion of the mass communications system, with the introduction of modern technology for:

- improved outreach and
- communication with members and partners.



Key Achievements – PA 4

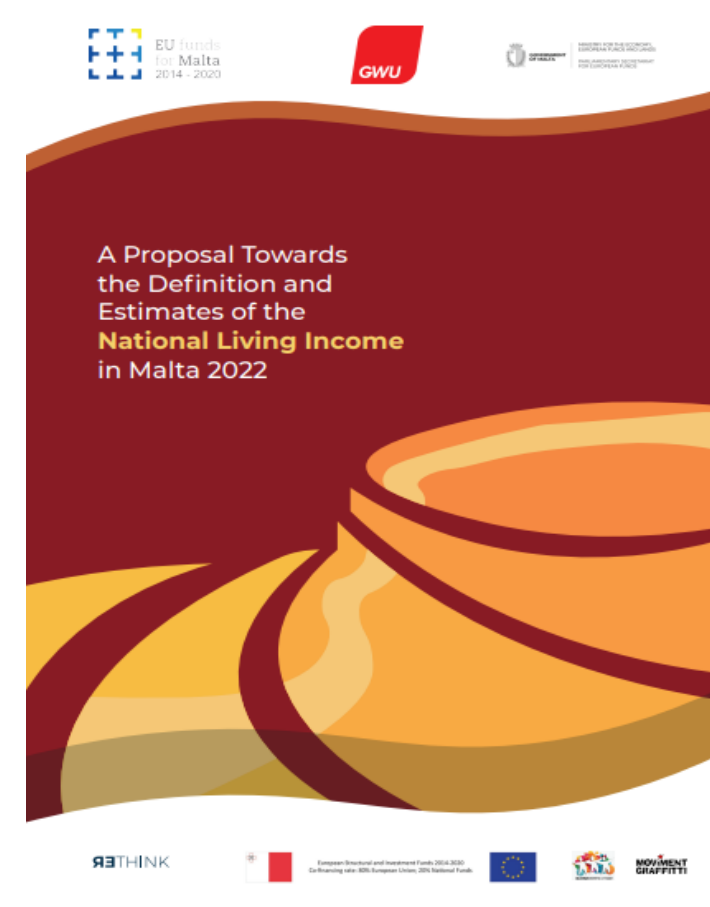
ESF.04.160 – The Maltese Living Income

The General Workers Union carried a study on the **Maltese Living Income**.

The study set out to inquire into what is currently the threshold of a **decent standard of living** in Malta, which could be guaranteed by a **National Living Income (NLI)**. This research is planned to add value through evidence supported social dialogue process, aimed to support persons in employment to escape the poverty-trap.

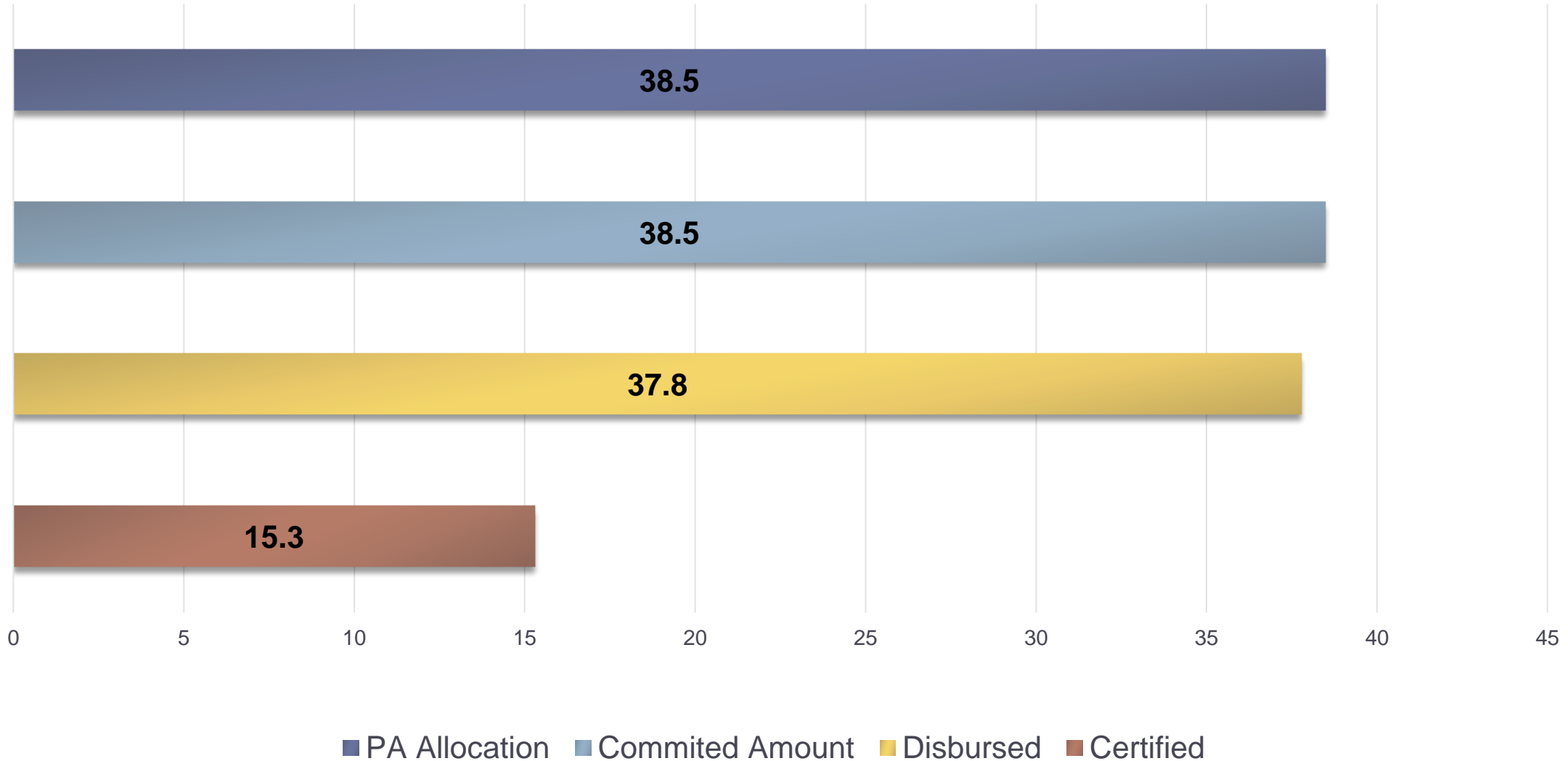
Objective of the study:

- Quantification of Maltese households' current annual expenditure.
- Quantification of the level of income that would be required for a household in Malta to afford a decent standard of living.
- Quantification of the number of households that have an actual level of income that is less than the NLI estimate.



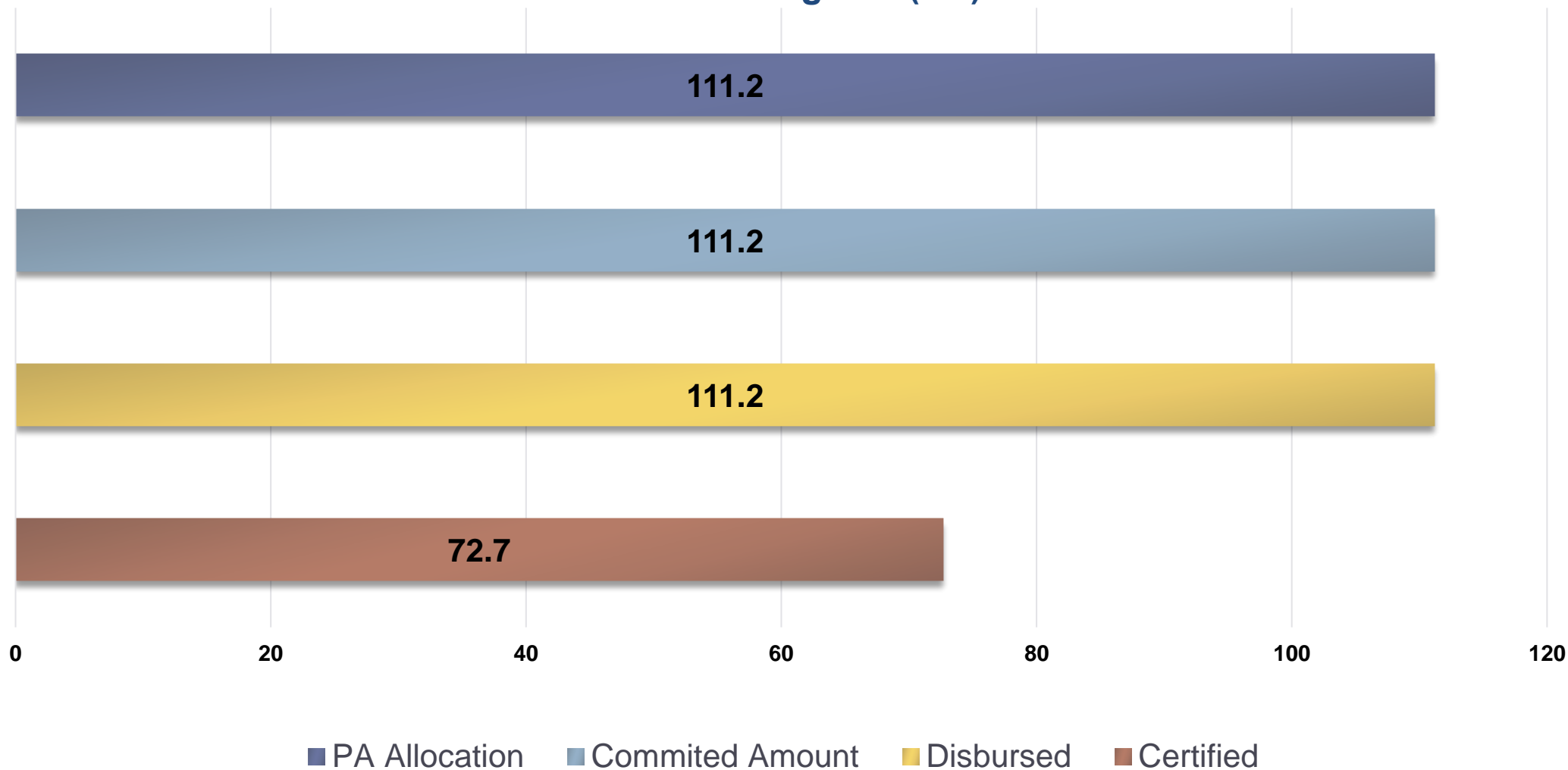
Implementation Progress to date – PA 6

Financial Progress (€M)



Implementation Progress to date – PA 7

Financial Progress (€M)



Implementation Progress – PA 6 and 7

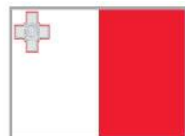
- The Wage Supplement Scheme as launched through government notice 389 of 2020 and subsequent amendments is being supported through ESF and REACT-EU for the period October 2020 to March 2021.
- The wage subsidy reimbursement claims have all been processed through the Structural Funds Database.
- To date a total of €149.5M has been disbursed.



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**, 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 2022 only, 76 cut-off dates were issued under 6 schemes, resulting in 150 applications received, out of which **96 applications** were approved for funding amounting to **€2.7M**. 74% of the approved grants were submitted by micro enterprises.

To date, a total of **622 grants with a value of €27M** have been signed, out of which 423 are micro enterprises, 149 are small enterprises and 50 are medium enterprises.

ERDF Grant Schemes Progress

(Grants approved in 2022 up till October)

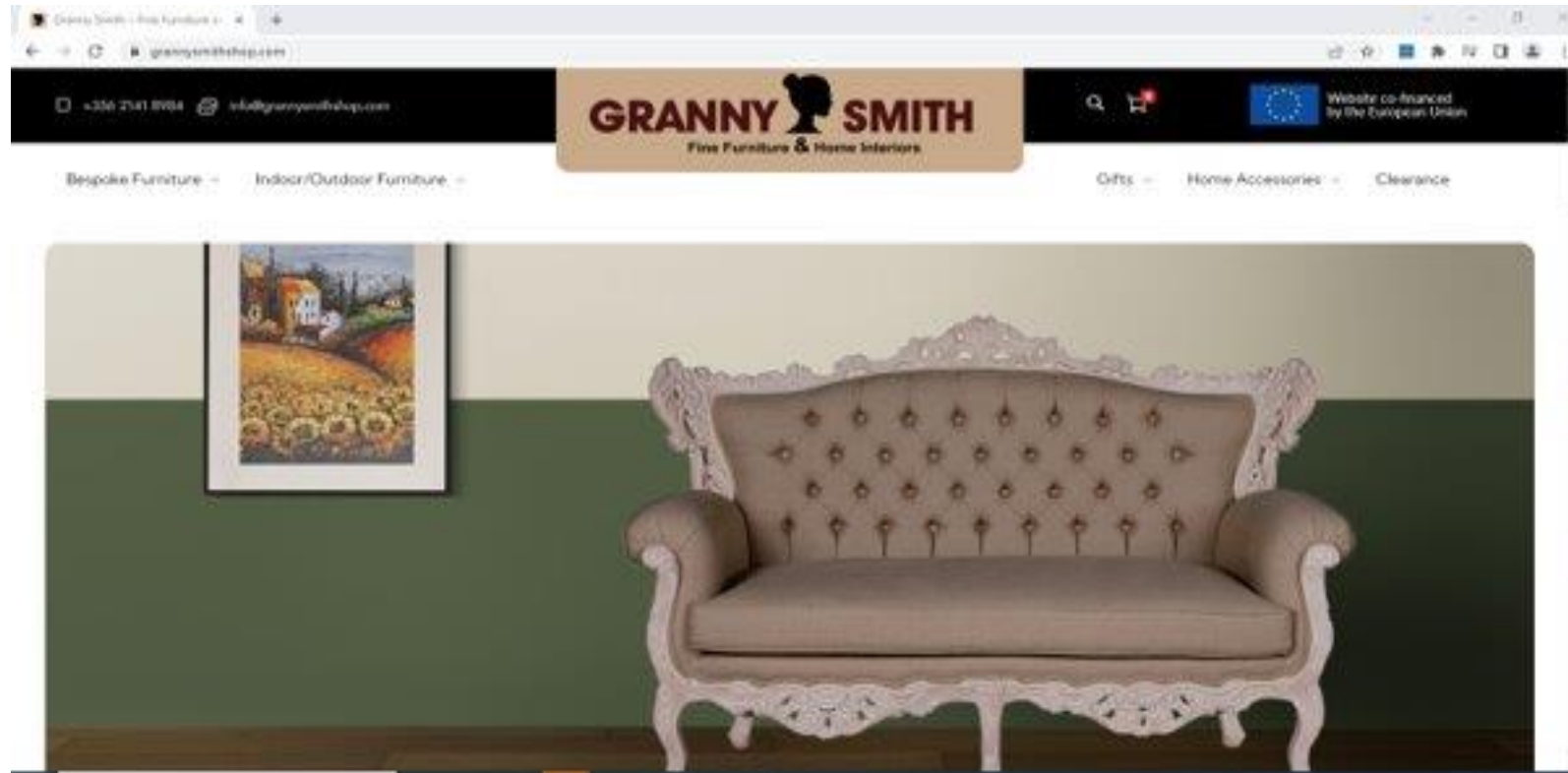


EU funds
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2014
2020

| 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) | 50 | 6 | 27 | c. €127,000 |
| Start-up Investment (PA 3) | 10 | 0 | 7 | c. €1,270,000 |
| SME Diversification and Innovation (PA 3) | 10 | 2 | 11 | c. €1,022,000 |
| SME Internationalisation (PA 3) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| SME Consultancy (PA 3) | 77 | 5 | 50 | c. €200,000 |
| SME Growth (PA 3) | 3 | 0 | 1 | c. €74,000 |
| Total | 150 | 13 | 96 | c. €2,693,000 |

ERDF Grant Schemes Progress



ERDF.02.S1.Call1.0194 – Edward Smiths (e-Commerce)

The Beneficiary had been operating a physical shop specializing in furniture and home accessories for the last 18 years. Through this grant, the Beneficiary now has an online presence enabling him to shift his business online to respond to the new market realities and challenges.

ERDF Grant Schemes Progress

Mon Lung Ltd. is a Malta-based company, which focuses on manufacturing of woodwork furniture such as arches, balconies, and other furniture. The project involved the purchase of state-of-the-art equipment and machinery to enhance the manufacturing furniture of all types aiming to increase productivity and efficiency

Mon Lung Ltd (SME Diversification and Innovation Grant Scheme)



Machinery purchased enabling the production of a traditional balcony.

ESF Aid Schemes

A2E Scheme–Implementation Progress

Access to Employment (A2E) - provides employment aid to enterprises in Malta and Gozo to promote the recruitment of the more challenged amongst jobseekers and inactive persons.

- €14.6M were committed, of which €13.7M were paid resulting in 3,125 employed persons of which 16% were participants with disabilities, and 51% women.
- 676 women returned to work with the assistance of the scheme; 78% of which were unemployed/inactive for at least two years and 22% were unemployed/inactive for one year.



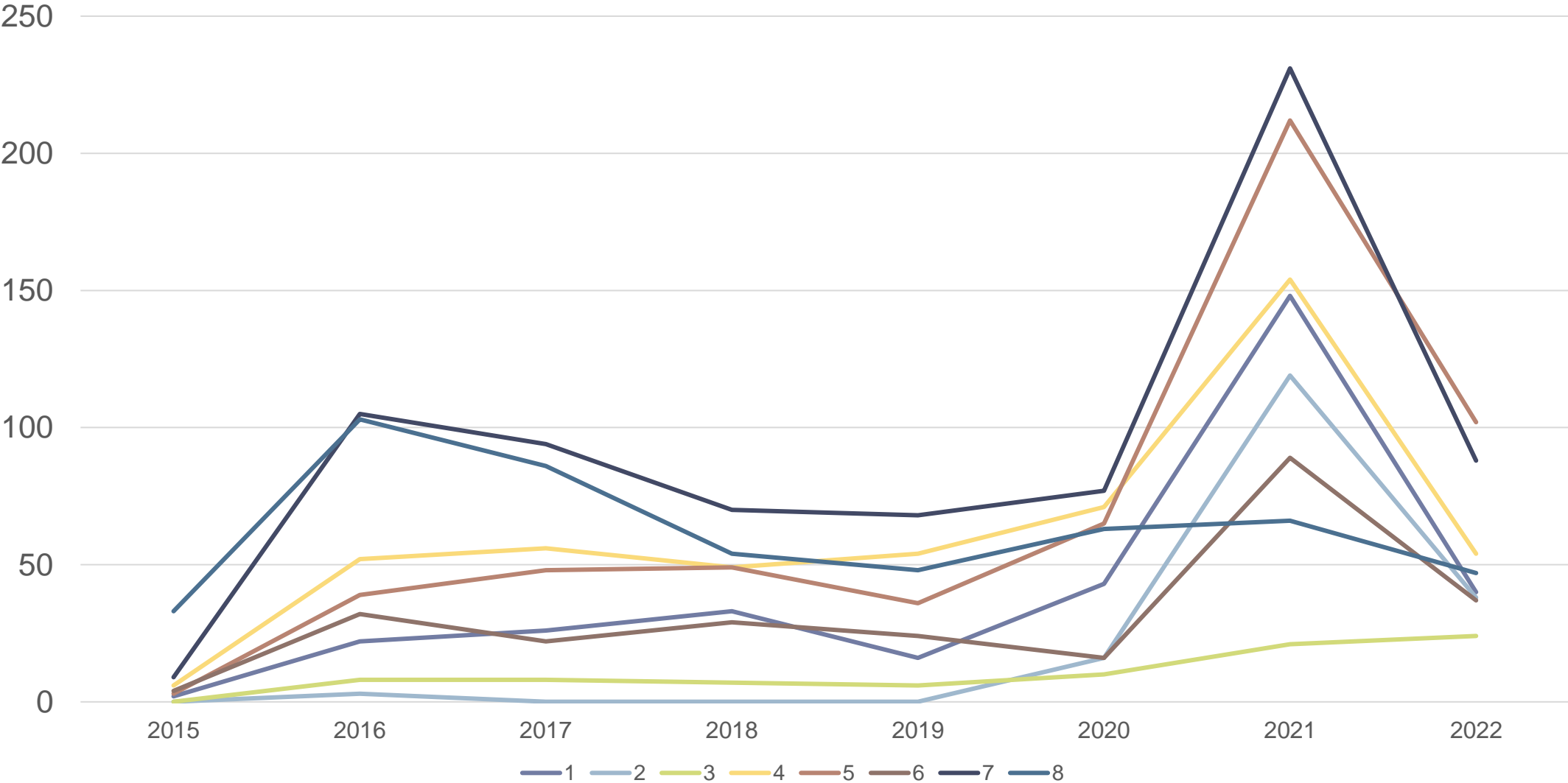
A2E Application status

| | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | Till Oct 2022 | Total |
|--|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|---------------|-------|
| Application (i.e. Participants) Received | 175 | 512 | 478 | 459 | 405 | 580 | 1759 | 919 | 5287 |
| Cancelled by Employers | 41 | 59 | 65 | 99 | 88 | 101 | 292 | 118 | 863 |
| De-Committed by Jobsplus due to an infringement | 1 | 3 | 6 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 5 | 3 | 21 |
| GA Cancelled | 3 | 17 | 12 | 19 | 18 | 19 | 60 | 21 | 169 |
| Ineligible | 22 | 85 | 72 | 42 | 47 | 84 | 631 | 267 | 1250 |
| Total | 108 | 348 | 323 | 298 | 251 | 375 | 771 | 510 | 2984 |
| GA Issued | 57 | 364 | 340 | 291 | 252 | 361 | 1040 | 420 | 3125 |

Implementation Progress

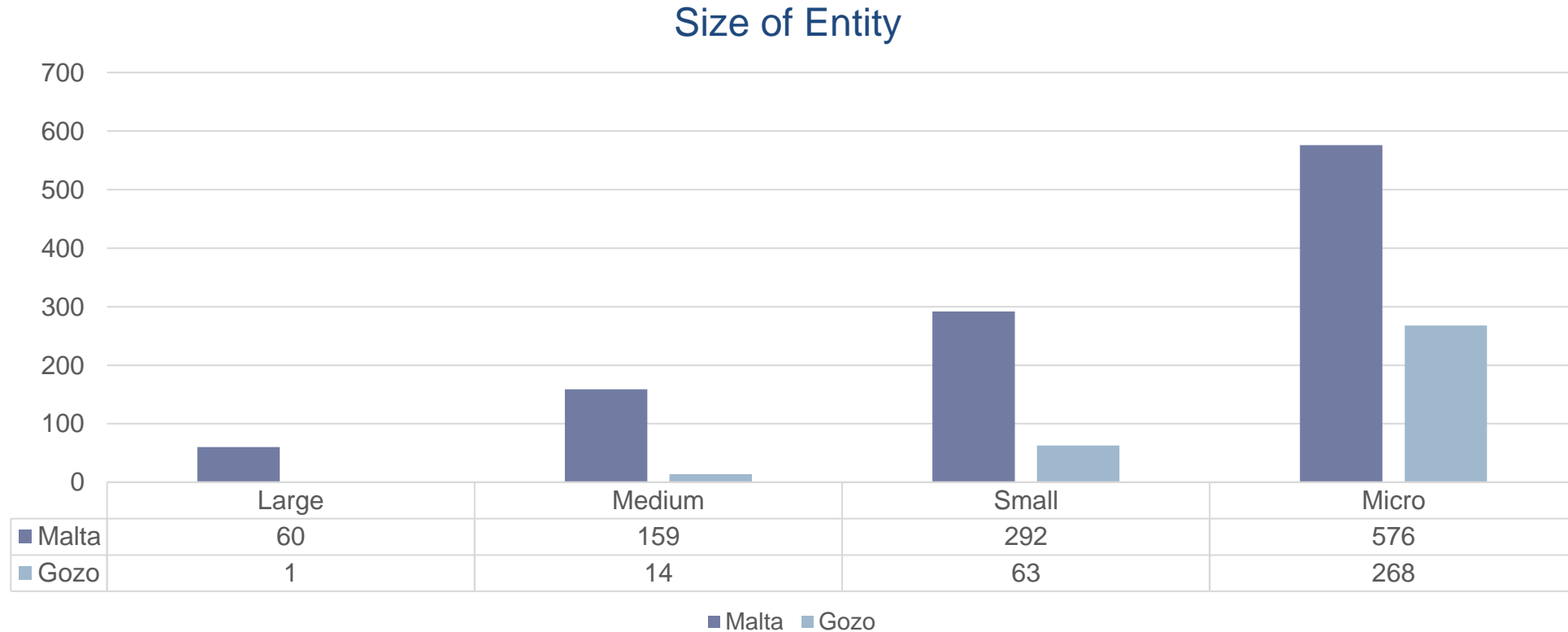
Grants awarded by Target Group

EU funds
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2020



Implementation Progress

Beneficiaries



As at end October 2022, 2,309 grants were signed in Malta and another 816 grants in Gozo.

In 2022 alone there were 356 signed grants in Malta and 64 in Gozo.

Implementation Progress

Investing in Skills

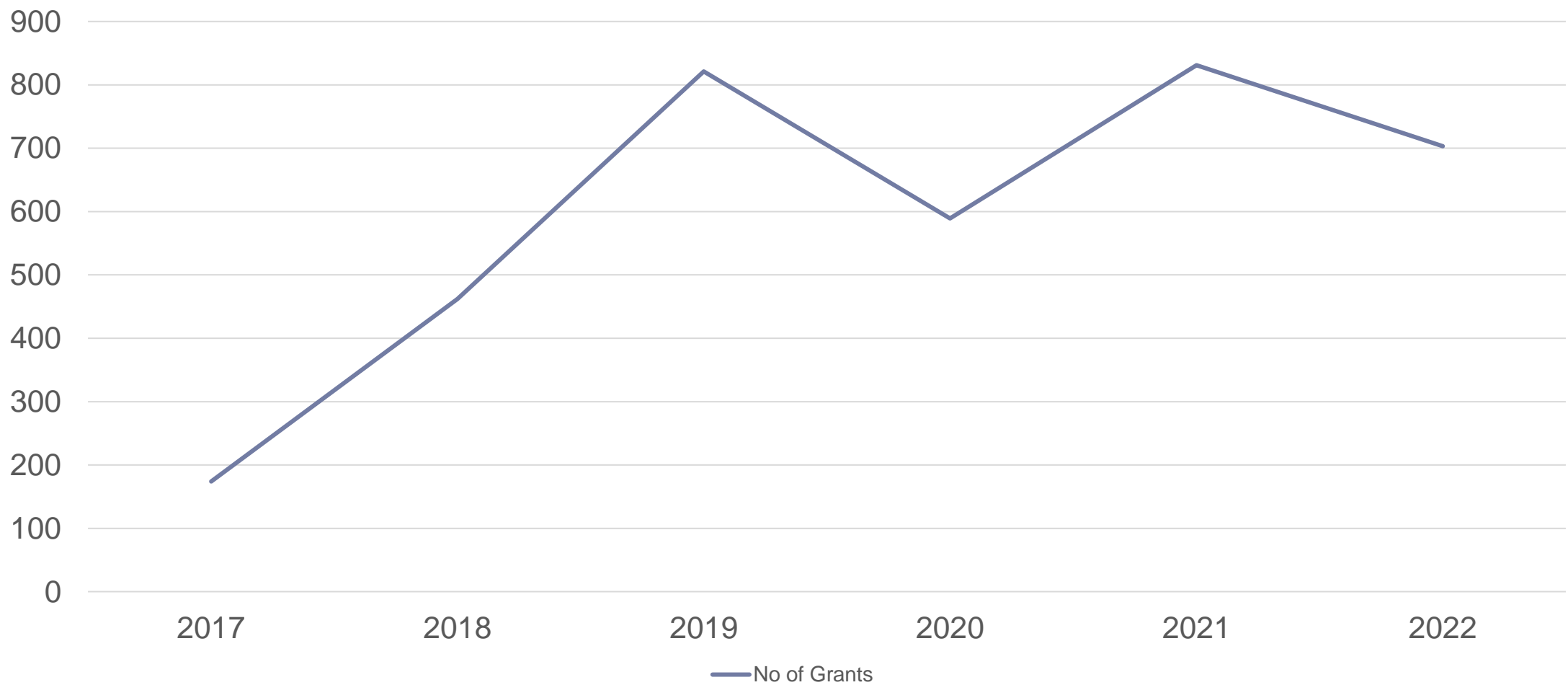
Investing in Skills (IIS) - intended to promote access to the training of persons actively participating in the Maltese labour market, with a view to increasing productivity and enhancing adaptability by improving the knowledge and skills of employed persons.

- Eligible training can be either classroom style, one-to-one training or on-the job training, online live training sessions, accredited distance learning or accredited online self-led training.
- **Between January and October 2022 most of the training was classroom style. Out of the 1,071 applications that were received in 2022, 631 resulted in valid grants. 394 (62%) were for training held classroom style, 214 (34%) were online, and 23 (4%) were blended. 440 were either rejected or withdrawn.**
- Over €5.9M have been committed, of which more than €4.67M were paid through 3,036 grants. **These resulted in over 23,800 participants trained, over 49% of which were women.**

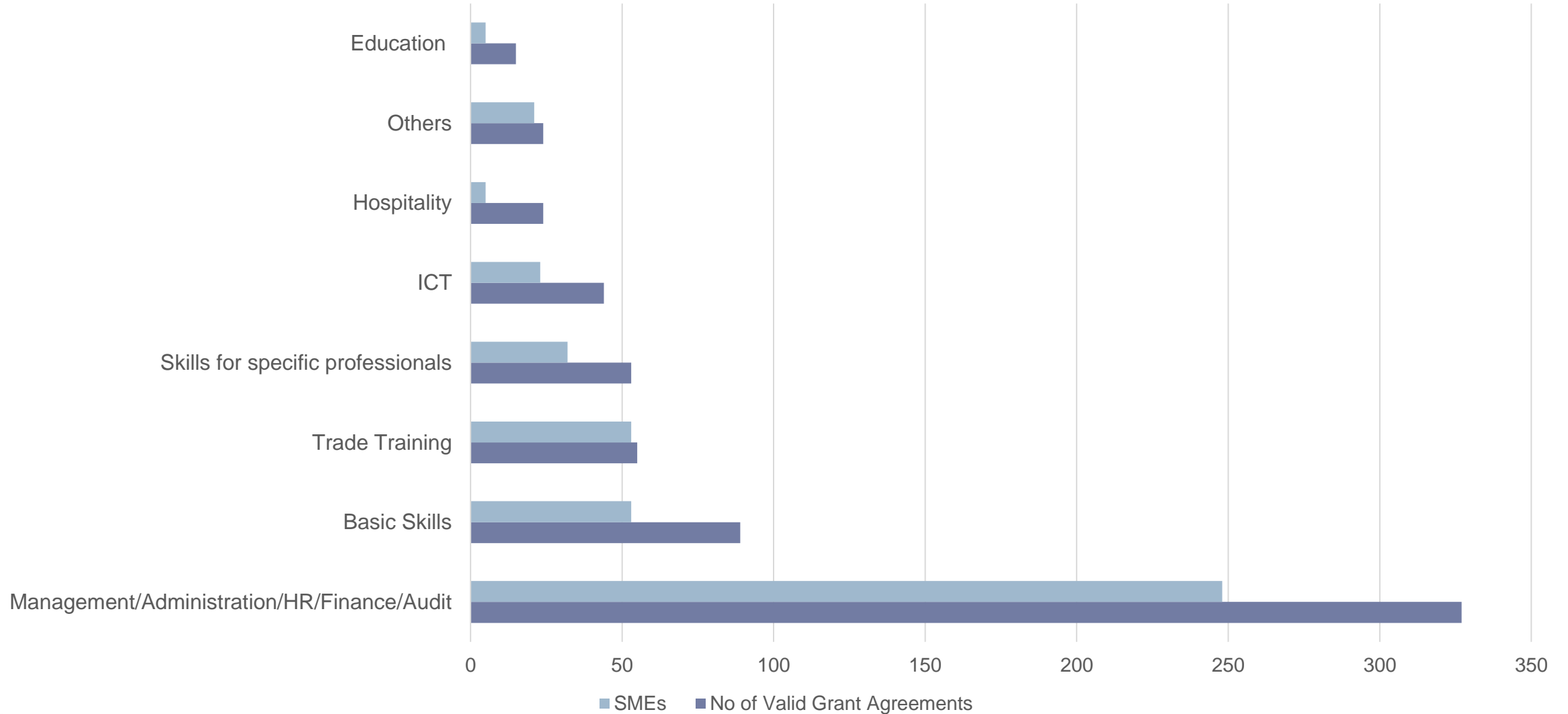


Implementation Progress

Number of Grants:



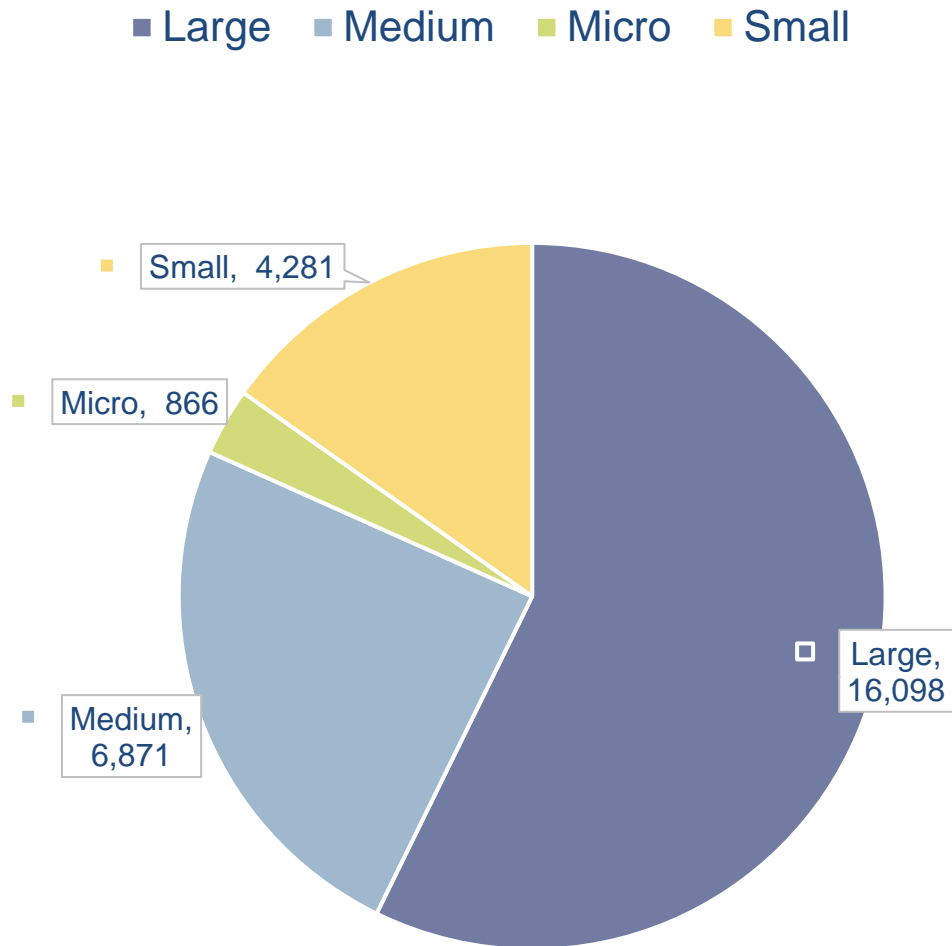
Implementation Progress Areas of Training in 2022



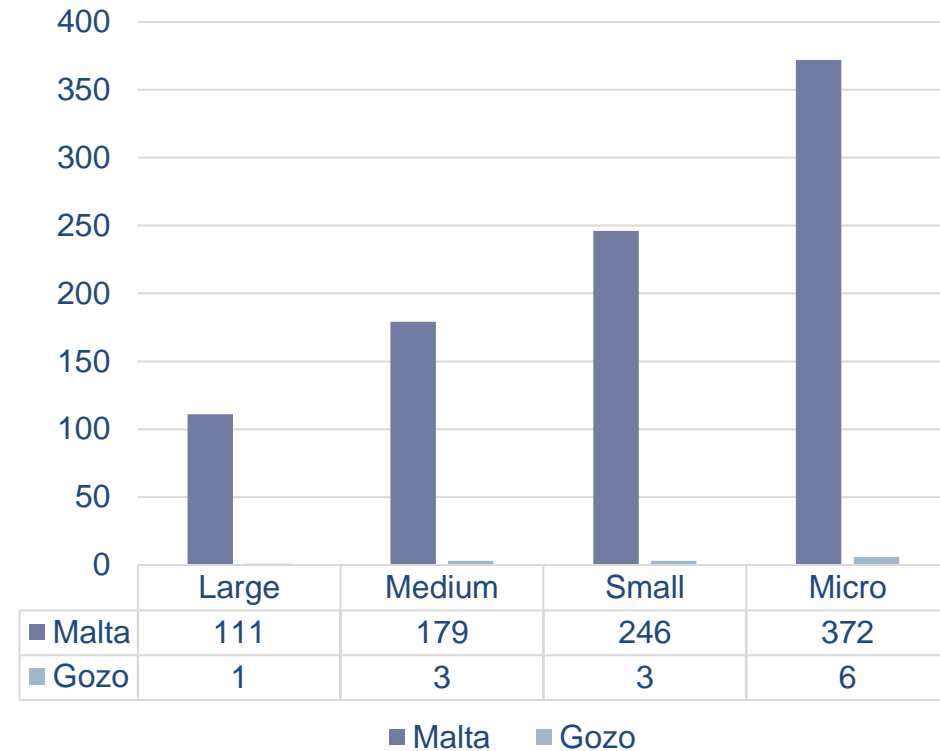
Implementation Progress

Beneficiaries

Trainees supported

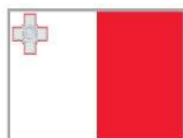


Size of Entity



From the start of the scheme, a total of 5,782 applications were received till the end of October 2022. These resulted in 921 unique beneficiaries who benefitted from the scheme, out of which 809 are SMEs.

Progress in the Implementation of SMEi Initiative Operational Programme



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Overview

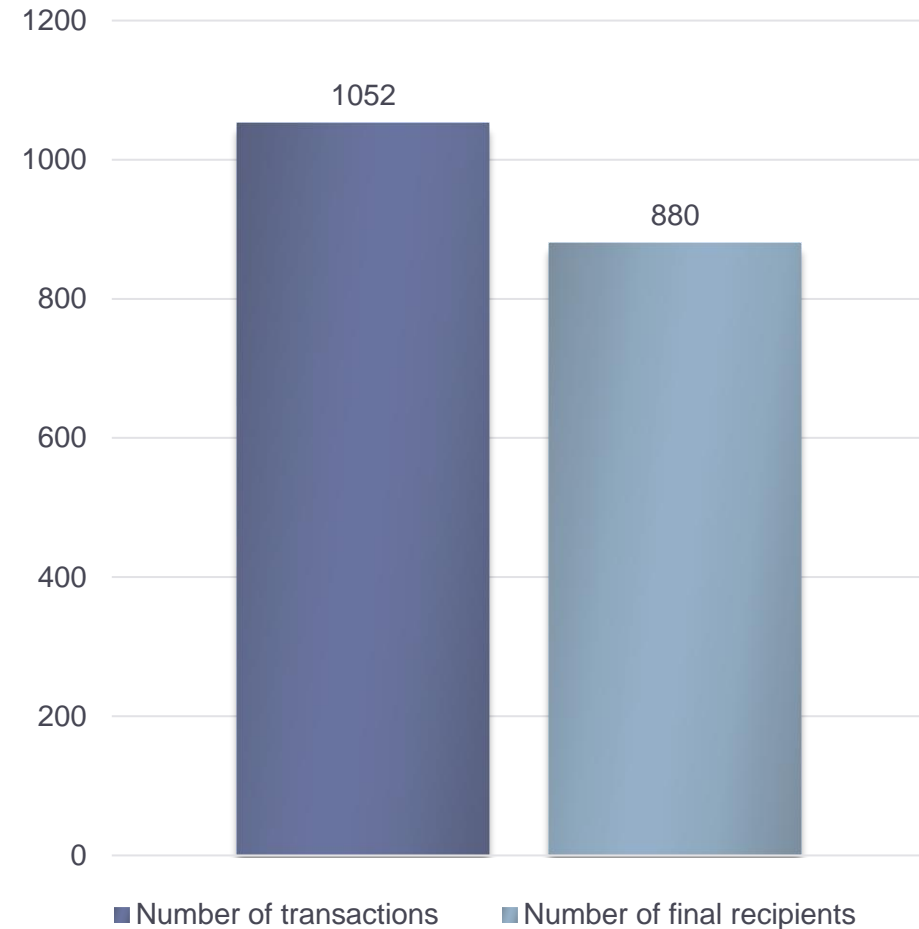
- The implementation of the SME Initiative continued in 2022, showcasing the ongoing success of this instrument, and its ability to adapt to the economic realities of the Maltese islands, even when facing unprecedented scenarios such as a global pandemic.
- ▶ As at 30 September 2022, a total of **€94.1M** in new loans have been committed to SMEs in Malta and Gozo, which represents **80.3%** of absorption with respect to target of post-increase budget (€118M).
- ▶ Banks are confident to reach the target portfolio by 31 December 2023. BoV is expected to meet portfolio objectives by June 2023 and BNF by December 2023
- ▶ As at 30 June 2022, **1,052 guaranteed loans** had been disbursed by the two selected Financial Intermediaries to a total of 880 SMEs.
- ▶ c. 80% of the SMEs which benefitted from this instrument employed less than 10 employees and 99% less than 50; 18.1% of the SMEs assisted were start-ups.

Progress as at June 2022

Loans committed and disbursed (millions)

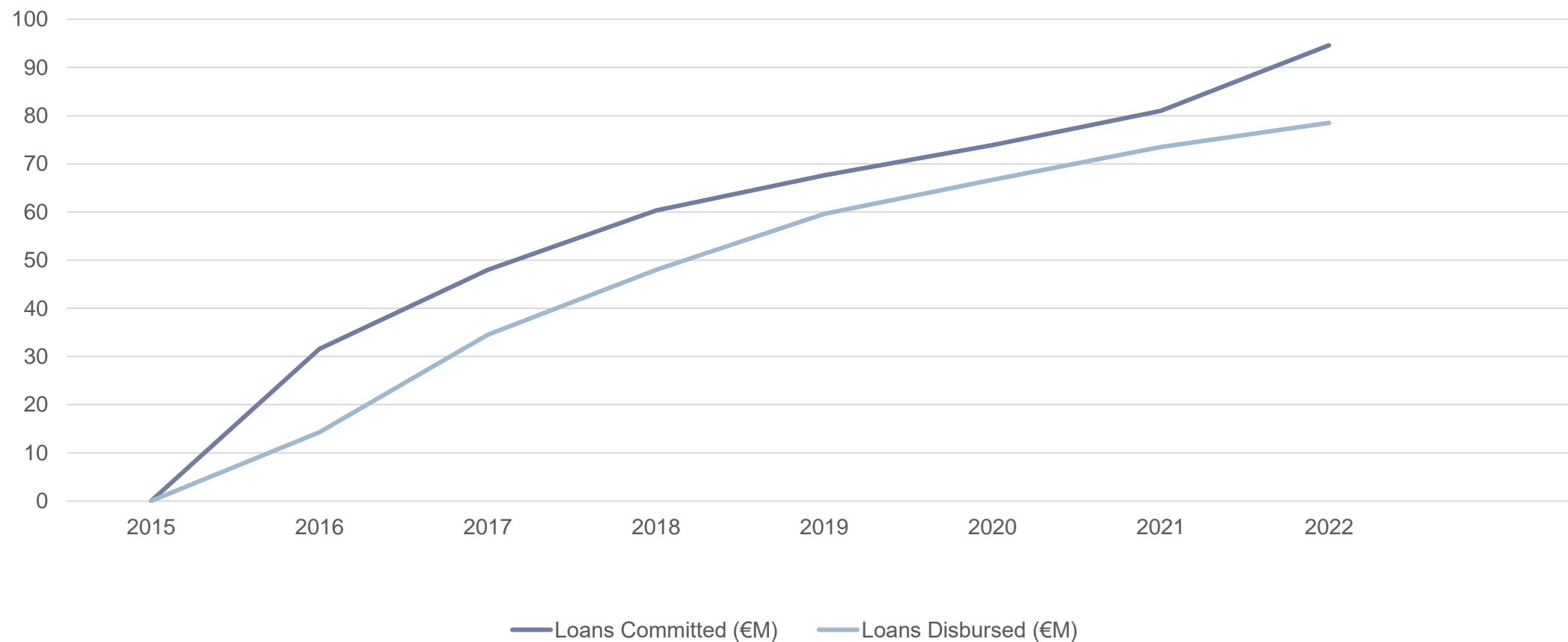


Number of transactions and final recipients



Build up of Portfolio – Loans Committed and Disbursed

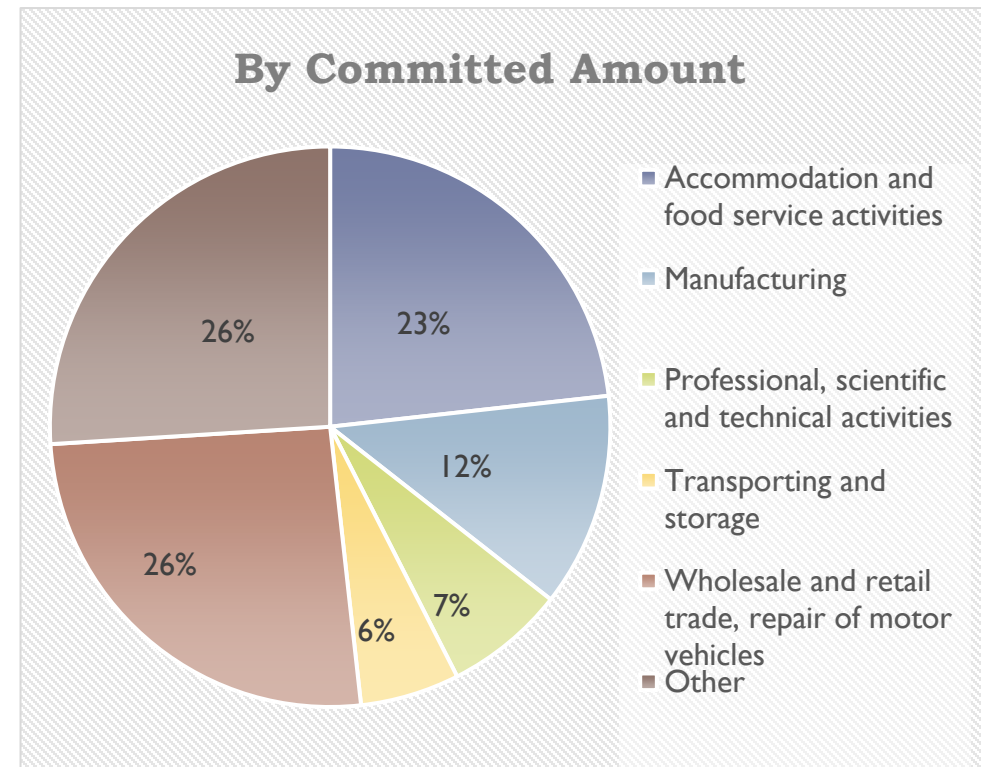
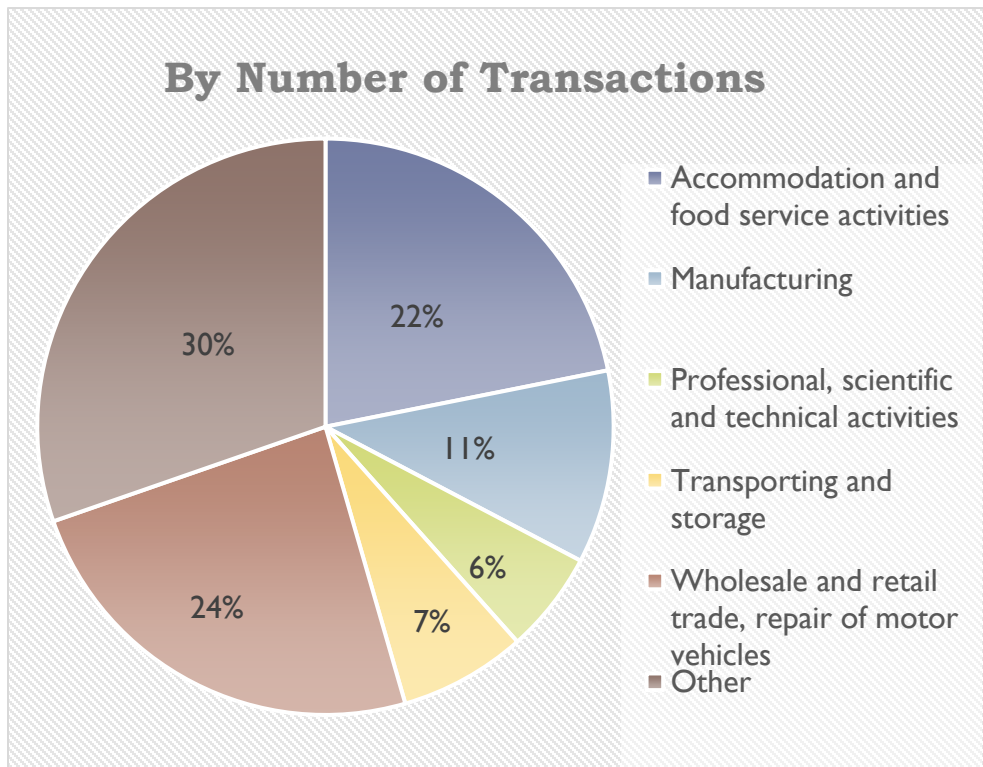
Loans Committed and Disbursed (cumulatively)



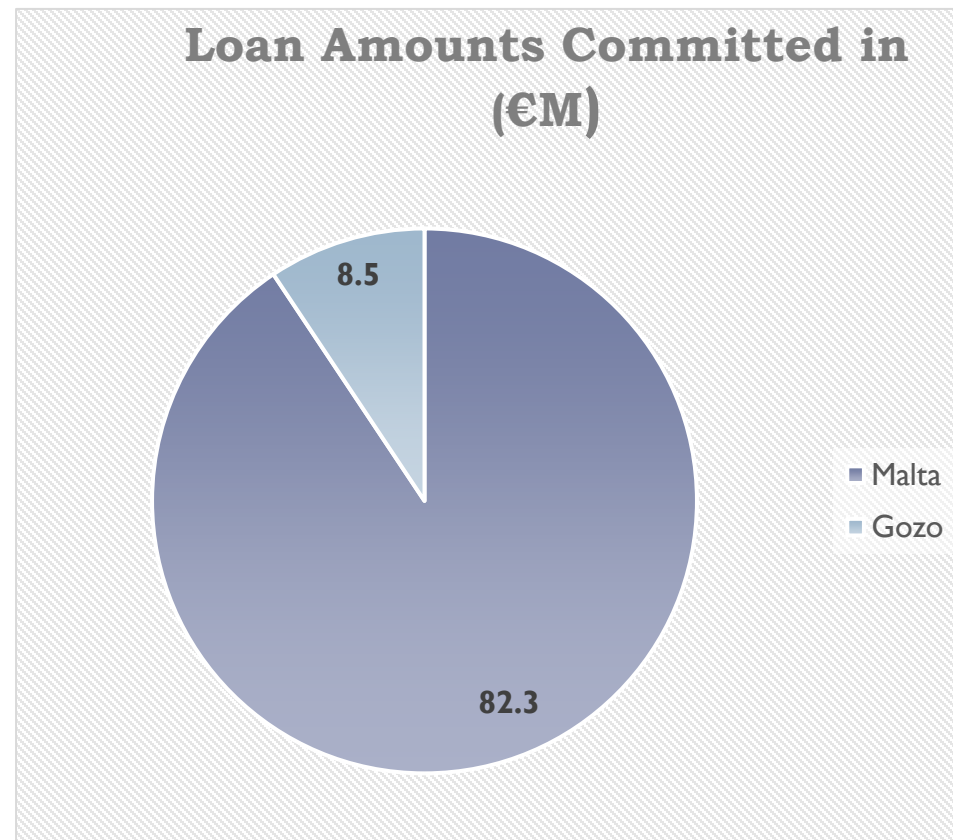
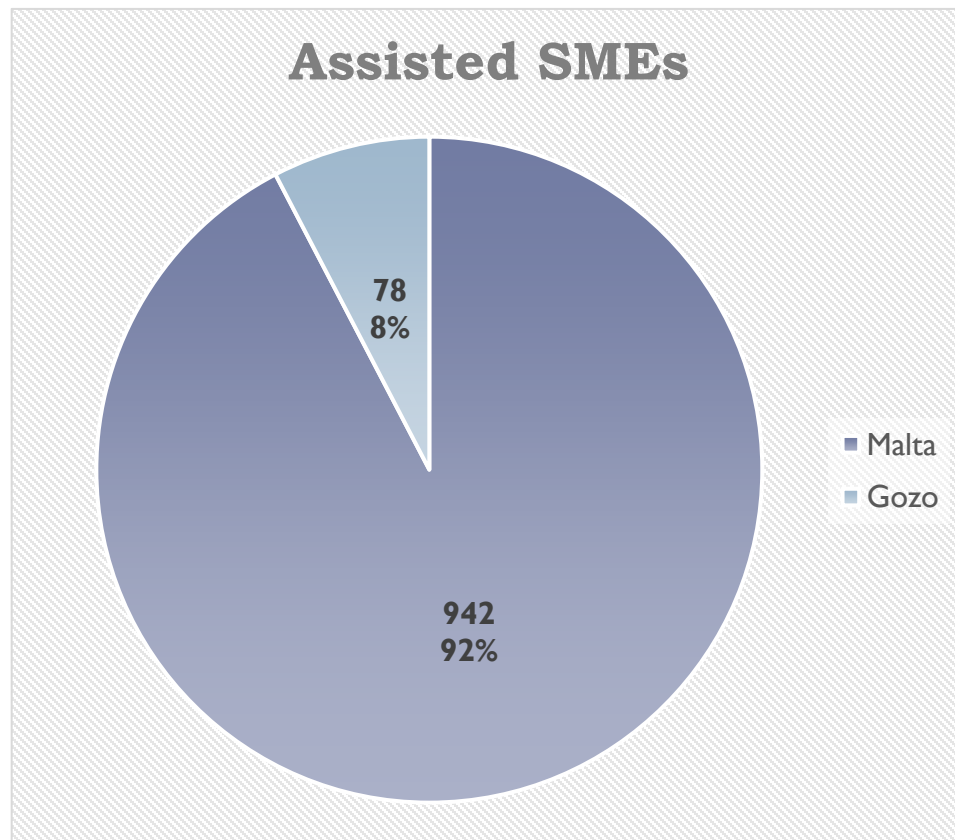
Profile of Final Recipients

Diversification by Sector

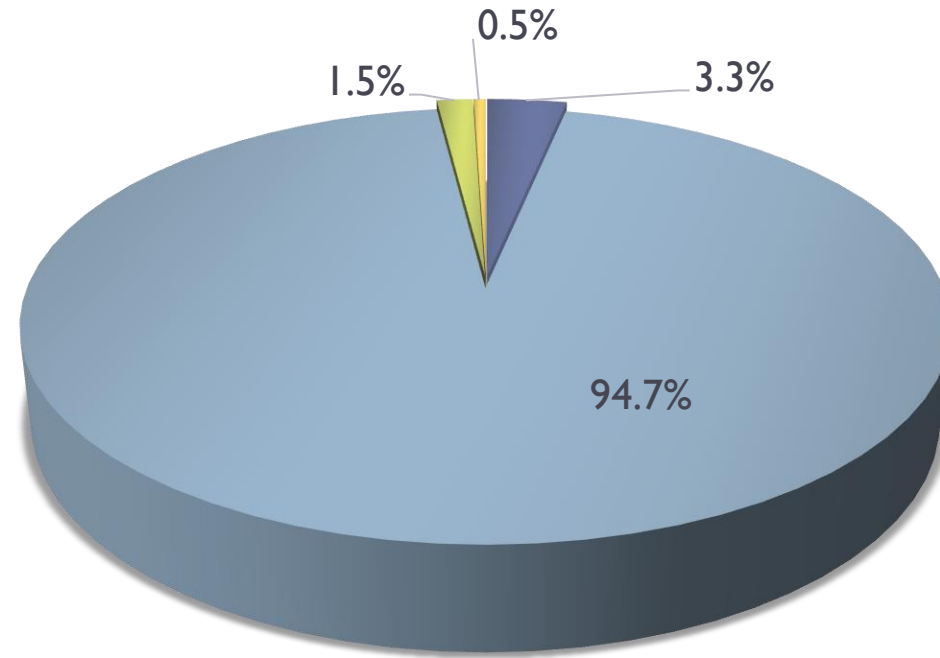
- ▶ 65 sectors received financing (NACE code level 2)
- ▶ 5 sectors account for approx. 59% of SMEs receiving financing



Assistance by Territory (June 2022)

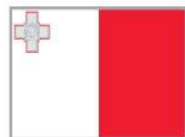


Loan Purpose



■ Working capital ■ Tangible investment ■ Intangible 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 Beneficiaries bi-annually in September and February.
- This is facilitating the reporting by the Beneficiaries 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.
- Particular attention is being given to the monitoring of the Performance Framework Indicators in view of the upcoming Closure of the 14-20 Programme.
- Under OPI, out of a total of 18 Performance Framework Indicators, 10 are already registered as being achieved. The other indicators are expected to be achieved by 2023.
- Under OPII, out of a total of 7 Performance Framework Indicators, 5 are already registered as being achieved.

OP I Performance Framework Assessment



EU funds
for Malta

2014
2020

| PA | Performance Framework Indicators | | Status | Comment |
|-----|----------------------------------|---|-----------------|---|
| PA1 | PS01 | Number of research facilities | 33% achievement | Projects ongoing; PF indicators expected to be achieved |
| | KIS1 | Number of research facilities being implemented (constructed) or completed | Achieved | / |
| PA2 | PSI2a | New e-services applications in the areas of health, environment, customs and interdepartmental services | Achieved | / |
| PA3 | CO01 | Productive investment: Number of enterprises receiving support | 92% achievement | Projects ongoing; PF indicators expected to be achieved |
| PA4 | CO30 | Renewables: Additional capacity of renewable energy production | 88% achieved | Projects ongoing |

OP I Performance Framework Assessment

| PA | Performance Framework Indicators | | Status | Comment |
|-----|----------------------------------|--|-----------------|--|
| PA5 | CO09 | Sustainable Tourism: Increase in expected number of visits to supported sites of cultural and natural heritage and attractions | 19% achievement | Majority of projects are ongoing, and indicators are expected to be achieved in 2023 or post 2023. |
| | PSR5a | Rehabilitated/Preserved land | Achieved | / |
| PA6 | CO39 | Urban development: public or commercial buildings built or renovated in urban areas | Achieved | / |
| | CO40 | Urban development: Rehabilitated housing in urban areas | 90% achievement | Projects ongoing; PF indicators expected to be achieved |
| PA7 | PSO7e | Projects and schemes promoting and/or exploring collective transport methods | Achieved | / |
| | KIS7e | Number of projects and/or schemes promoting and/or exploring cleaner transport methods being implements (constructed) or completed | Achieved | / |

OP I Performance Framework Assessment



EU funds
for Malta

2014
2020

| PA | Performance Framework Indicators | | Status | Comment |
|------|----------------------------------|---|---|---|
| PA 8 | CO36 | Health: population covered by improved health services | CO36 to be reported on completion of operations | Projects ongoing; PF indicators expected to be achieved |
| | CO40 | Urban development: Rehabilitated housing in urban areas | 41% achievement | |
| | KIS8j | Value of total public eligible cost contracted (health) | Achieved | / |
| PA9 | PSO9a | Capacity of VET and Tertiary education infrastructure | Achieved | / |
| PA10 | CO18 | Water supply: Additional population served by improved water supply | CO18 to be reported on completion of operations | Projects ongoing; PF indicators expected to be achieved |
| | KS10m | Value of total public eligible cost contracted (water) | Achieved | / |
| PA11 | CO14a | Roads: Total length of reconstructed or upgraded roads, of which: TEN-T | Achieved | / |

OP II Performance Framework Assessment

| Output indicator | Target Value 2023 | Total Committed to date | Achieved to date |
|--|-------------------|-------------------------|------------------|
| PA 1 (IP8i) – Persons supported (O1) | 2900 | 6157 | 8317 |
| PA 2 (IP9i) – Persons participating in training/support measures (O6) | 8500 | 8160 | 6708 |
| PA 3 (IP10i) – The provision of digital technologies to students (O11) | 12000 | 11400 | 11479 |
| PA 3 (IP10ii) – Persons participating in tertiary education (O13) | 700 | 1258 | 1204 |

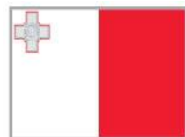
OP II

Performance Framework Assessment

| Output indicator | Target Value 2023 | Total Committed to date | Achieved to date |
|---|-------------------|-------------------------|------------------|
| PA 3 (IP10iii) – Persons participating in training/support measures (O6) | 6000 | 6200 | 24041 |
| PA 4 (IP11i) – Number of projects targeting public administrations or public services at national, regional or local level (CO22) | 9 | 11 | 11 |
| PA 6 (IP8v) – Participants benefitted from support in short-time work (CVST) | 37500 | 62000 | 62000* |

**data still being verified*

Evaluations



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Evaluation Plan

- The Evaluation and Communications Unit (ECU) has been set up within the Strategy & Implementation Division, under the responsibility of the Ministry responsible for EU funds
- In line with Chapter II of the CPR, the unit is responsible for the Evaluations of the EU funded programmes so to improve the quality of the design and implementation of programmes, as well as to assess their effectiveness, efficiency and impact.
- The Unit continued working on the Evaluation Plan set for Cohesion Policy 2014-2020.

Current Status:

- Evaluation on key processes in the implementation of ESIF 14-20 evaluation has been concluded.
- A number of thematic evaluations have been initiated.
- **NOTE:** due to COVID-19 pandemic, a number of thematic evaluations, such evaluation on Tourism, could not be launched

Evaluation TO 3 - Enhancing the competitiveness of small and medium-sized enterprises

- 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 and prepare the ex-ante assessment for 2021-2027 programming period.
- The focus is on:
 - An assessment of the financial instrument implemented within the context of SMEi.
 - Five ERDF and one ESF state aid scheme.
- **Status per deliverable for each lot is as follows:**



| | Thematic Evaluation | Ex-ante Assessment |
|-------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| SMEi | Concluded | Being finalized |
| State Aid Schemes | Concluded | Being finalized |

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.
- Providing an overview of the impact of the YG vis-à-vis a scenario where there was no YG intervention.
- Providing policy recommendations for the 2021-2027 Programming Period on the basis of the findings resulting from this study.

Current Status:

- The evaluation process is underway and is expected to be finalised by end of May 2023.



Evaluation TO 8 & TO10 - Employment and Education

TO8 - TO10 Evaluation (ESF)

- The objective of this evaluation is to assess the effectiveness, efficiency and impact of EU funding made available for ESF employment and education funding instruments.
- Tender was divided into two lots which were contracted in September 2022 with an implementation period of 15 months Employment
 - Investment Priority 8i: 1 state aid scheme and 1 large mainstream operation.
- 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.
- **Status Update:** Inception reports for both lots are currently being finalised. Scoping interviews are also being scheduled with the aim of obtaining further information and updating the Theory of Change for each funding intervention under evaluation



Evaluation TO 8 & TO10 - Employment and Education (*continued*)

- 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 and the relevant Operational Programme 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.



Planned Evaluation

Thematic Objective 9 - Promoting social inclusion and combating poverty and any discrimination

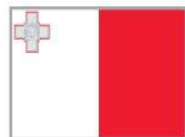
- Research required for the preparation of the TORs is underway.
- Expected to be launched in Q1 2023.

The use of Simplified Cost Options under ESF in Malta

- Currently considering the possibility of conducting an evaluation on SCOs.
- Intentions could be to focus on the change management process, their implementation, and the short-and-long term results experienced so far.



Communication Activities (2014-2020)



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Annual Event 2022

Celebrating the European Year of Youth

- *EU in my School campaign:* in coordination with the European Commission Representation (EC) with input from Servizzi Ewropej f'Malta (SEM).
- Children were taken to visit EU funded projects of a particular interest, including the SintegraM project, the Rehabilitated landfill at Wied Fulija and the Grand Master's Palace regeneration project.
- A competition for school students was held with the event culminating on Europe Day where the eight competition finalists were announced. The artistic submissions of the finalists of the 'My Europe, My Malta, My Future' competition were prominently displayed in Freedom square on 9 May 2022 for the Europe Day event.



INFORM EU Second Plenary Meeting

Malta hosted the community of EU Funds Communicators known as INFORM EU for its second plenary meeting, with around 300 communications delegates taking part between the 23 and 25 May 2022.

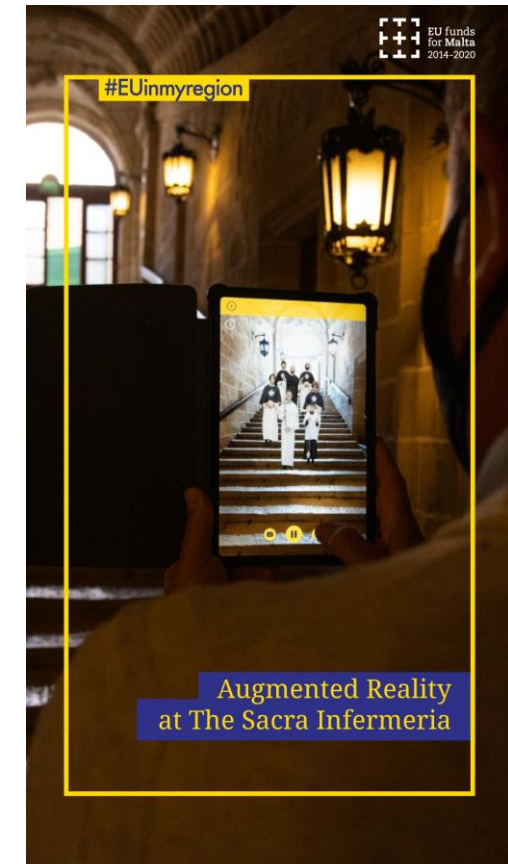
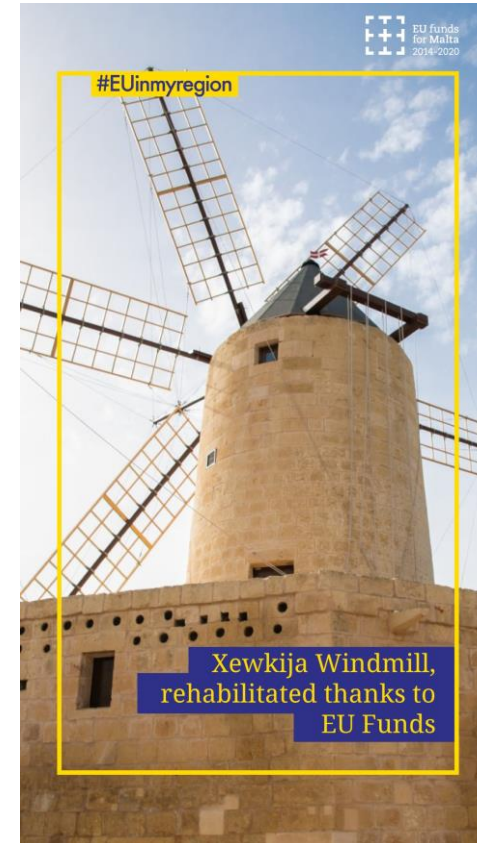
The awards ceremony for the EU in my School campaign took place on the first day of this plenary meeting, with finalists invited to speak and present their views about the Europe they want.



Mini digital campaigns

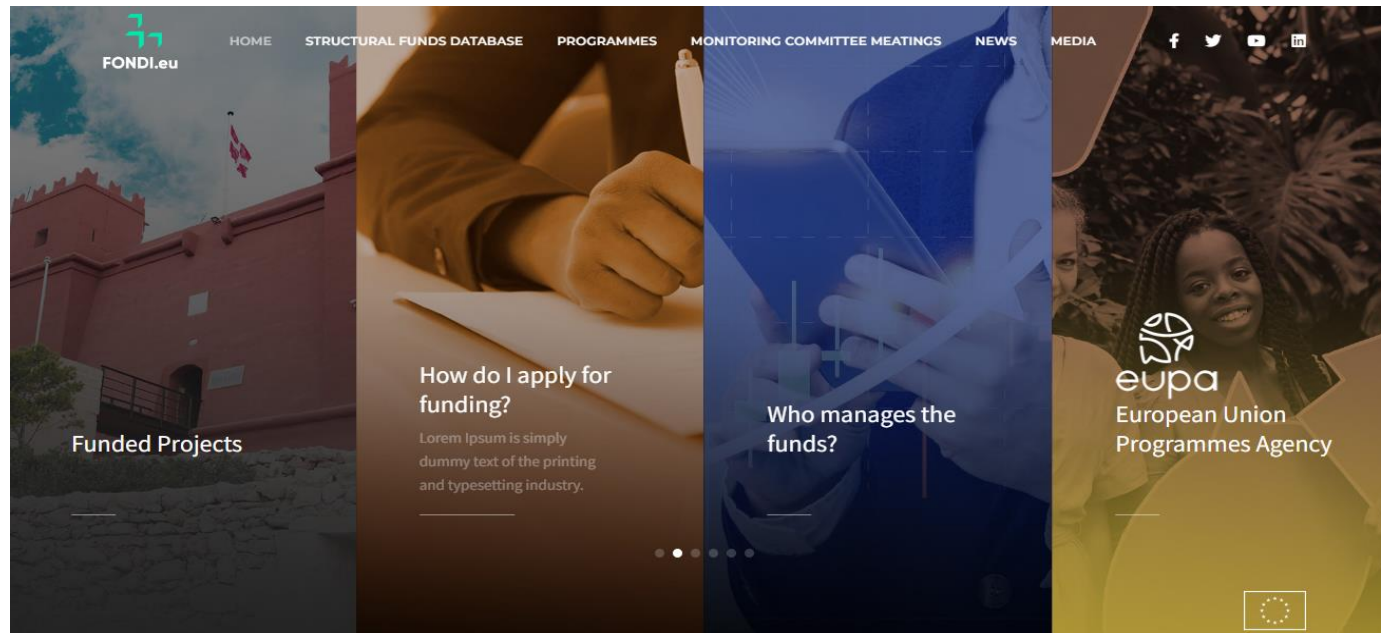
“Mini digital campaigns”

- As of last year, a new budget allocation system to boost social media activities has been made available to all Managing Authorities to support the promotion of co-funded projects under the umbrella of Europe in my region. This new service includes the possibility to **benefit from creative support to brand and edit pictures to provide you with best-suited social media assets.**
- Malta is making use of this to highlight EU-funded projects and initiatives. These campaigns are having a significant effect with two ads reaching more than 358,000 individuals and videos shared having a total amount of 76,969 video plays.
- One of the campaigns focused on Education, featuring the MCAST Resource Centre and INVEST, while the second one focused on Culture, with the Xewkija Windmill and Sacra Infermeria projects featuring amongst others.



New EU Funds Portal

- A new EU Funds portal will be launched early next year, hosting all EU funds related content in one online space.
- This is a modern, user-friendly portal and project centred with the ultimate aim of showcasing the benefits of these funds while making the processes easier to understand and access.
- Currently the new portal is at an advanced design stage. Phase 1, ie, the web design and development including the Content Management System is expected to be delivered by January 2023.

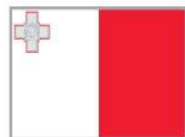


Cittadella in RegioStars 2022

- The Cittadella was amongst 15 outstanding projects, chosen from a pool of over 300 projects, to participate in the 15th Anniversary of RegioStars Awards, placing 1st in the special event.
- The project of the Rehabilitation and restoration of Cittadella Gozo – co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund - was a finalist for the RegioStars awards in 2018.
- A communications campaign reaching all the Maltese public, but focusing mostly on social media, was held to entice the public to vote for the Cittadella mini-documentary.



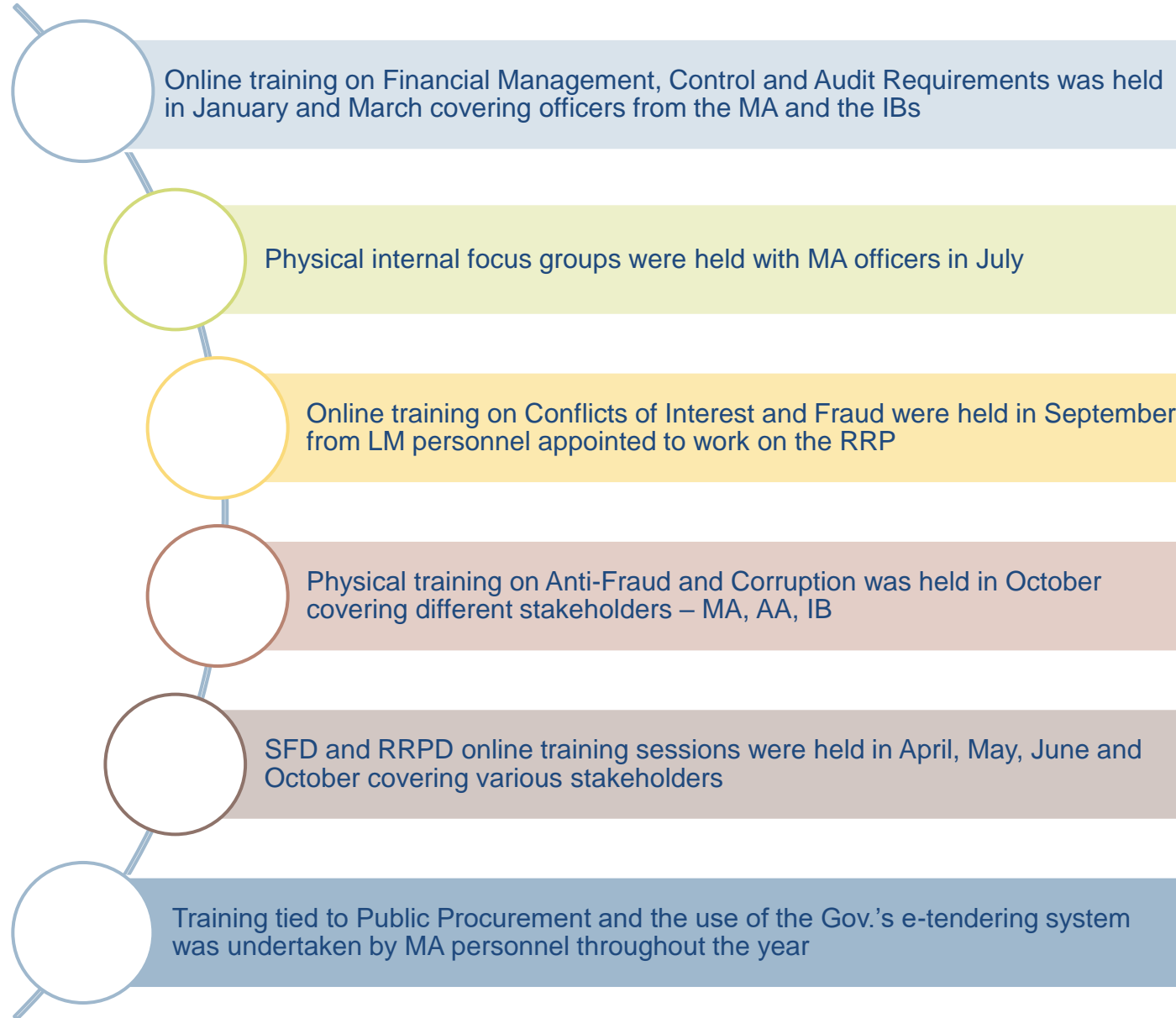
Capacity Building



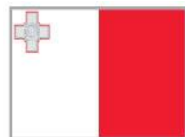
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Capacity Building



Audit and Control



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Status update - Audits on Operations

Reference Period: 1st July 2021 – 30th June 2022
Audit Period: 1st July 2022 – 14th February 2023

In 2022, the sample issued by the AA resulted in 13 mainstream projects and 35 beneficiaries under the 6 schemes to be audited. Audits under ERDF were split between Semester 1 and Semester 2, while those of ESF are all being carried out in Semester 2.

This sample was extracted out of a total population of c. 57 projects and 1468 beneficiaries under the 7 schemes for which expenditure was certified in the accounting year 2021/2022.

Results:

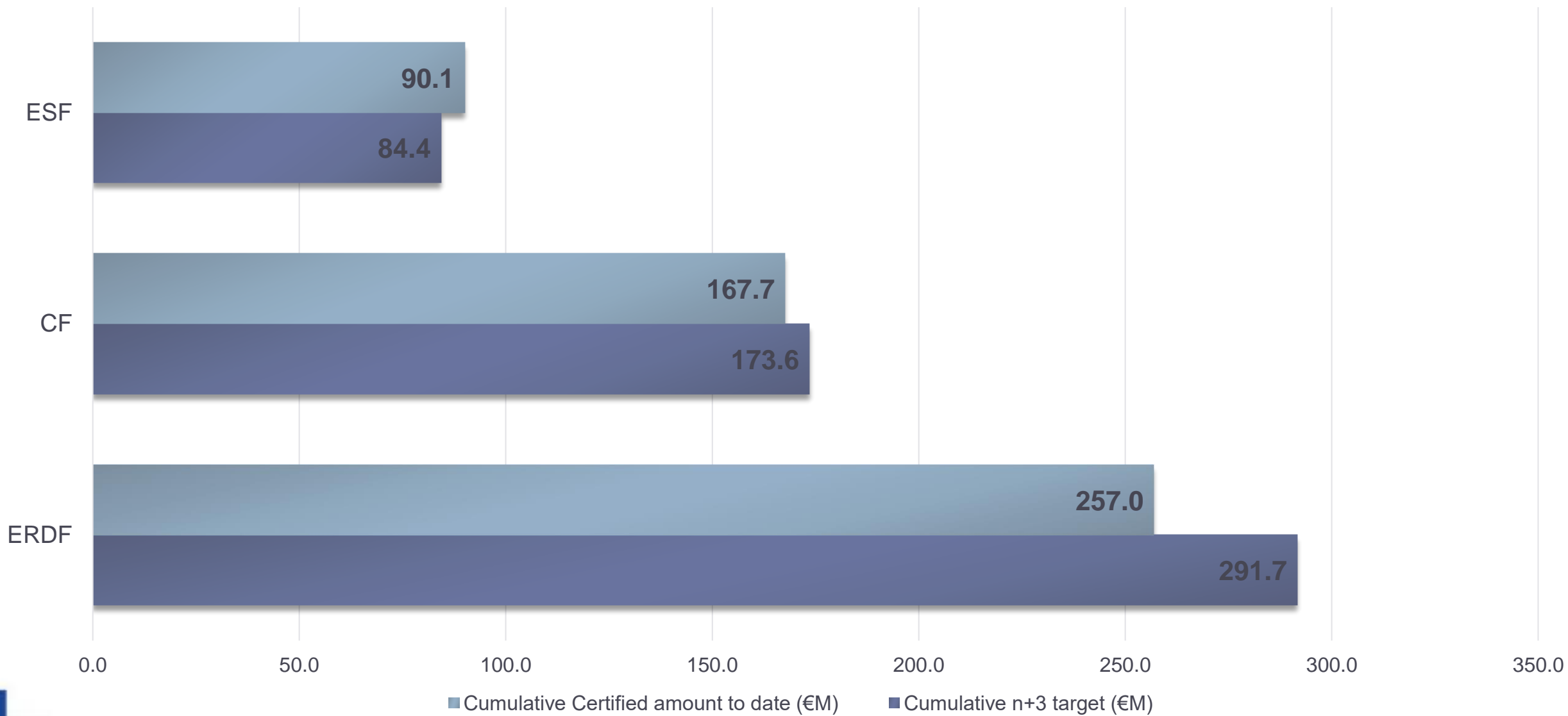
Audits are currently still ongoing. The MA drafted the contradictory procedures in relation to the ERDF Semester 1 projects being the first few projects selected in the sample issued by the AA. In the meantime, Audit work is still ongoing in relation to projects that are being audited in Semester 2.

Status update – Other Audit work

Other Audit work carried out through 2021/2022

- In May 2022, the EC visited Malta in relation to the EPM 'Thematic audits 2014 – 2020' with the aim of addressing a specific cross-cutting risk area and horizontal topics related to conflict of interests and obtaining reasonable assurance with regards to the management and control systems in place. The MA drafted the contradictory feedback report and had online follow-up meetings with the EC in this regard;
- An audit is ongoing by the European Court of Auditors concerning the ACR on the accounting year 2020 -2021 submitted by the AA to the EC in February 2022.

Update on Implementation: N+3 Disbursement 2022



Concluding Remarks

- In view of the progress in the implementation of the Programme, visible and actual progress of projects on the ground was recorded in 2022, resulting in further achievements of output and financial targets.
- Challenges arising from several externalities including the Ukraine war have had several effects on the implementation of the projects, including delays, withdrawal of contracts, increase in prices and non-availability of certain raw materials.
- All stakeholders need to closely monitor the implementation of the projects to ensure timely completion in view of the Programme closure.
- Stakeholders' timely input for the successful outcome of the ongoing audits by the Programme Audit Authority, as well as by the European Commission and the European Court of Auditors is critical.
- Actions related to the 2021-2027 Programmes are expected to be launched shortly but the MA will still remain focused to ensure the timely closure and full absorption of the 2014-2020 Programme together with all stakeholders involved in the implementation of EU funds.

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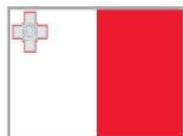
Website: www.eufunds.gov.mt



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