



**European Territorial Cooperation 2007-2013
Cross-border Cooperation Program Italia-Malta 2007 - 2013**

CCI 2007 CB 163 PO 037

Decision C(2008) 7336 of the 27 November 2008

Decision C(2013) 1080 of the 27/2/2013 amending Decision C(2012) 7627 of the 31/10/2012

ANNUAL IMPLEMENTATION REPORT 2013

Approved by the MC on the 30/06/2014



1. IDENTIFICATION

Operational program	Objective concerned:	European Territorial Cooperation
	Eligible area concerned:	Italy - Malta
	Programming period:	2007-2013
	Program number:	CCI 2007 CB 163 PO 037
	Program title:	Operational Program Italia- Malta 2007-2013
Annual implementation report	Reference year:	2013
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CONTENT1. IDENTIFICATION	2
2. OVERVIEW OF THE OPERATIONAL PROGRAM	4
2.1 Results and progress analysis	4
2.1.1 Material progress of the Operational Program.....	4
2.1.2 Financial Information	12
2.1.3 Information on the distribution of the used Funds	13
* The amounts are indicated following the legally-binding amounts for the approval of the strategic projects and certified expenditure as at the 31/12/2013 relating to 16 ordinary projects. As things stand, the verification procedures are in process so as to settle the 16 ordinary projects and once this is completed, the MA will issue the appropriate administrative measure to disengage the amounts derived from planning activities.....	15
2.1.4 Progress achieved in the financing and implementation of financial engineering instruments ex art. 44	16
2.1.5 Support allocated for target groups	16
2.1.5.1 Information on the application of art. 21 of the Reg. (EC) 1080/2006.....	19
2.1.6 Returned or reused support	25
2.1.7 Qualitative analysis	25
2.2 Compliance with Community law	37
2.3 Significant problems encountered and measures to resolve them	39
2.4 Changes within the implementation	39
2.5 Significant changes.....	41
2.6 Complementarity with other tools	41
2.7 Monitoring and evaluation	43
2.7.1 Executive Committee	44
3. IMPLEMENTATION OF PRIORITY AXIS.....	46
3.1 Axis I - Competitiveness: innovation and research; sustainable development.....	46
3.1.1 Achievement of the objectives and analysis of the progress.....	46
3.1.1.1 Financial and material progress.....	46
3.1.2 Significant problems encountered and measures to resolve them.....	55
3.1.3 Result indicators of Axis I.....	55
3.1.4 Additional information about the programme results and effects.....	58
3.2 Axis II - Environment, Energy and risk prevention	61
3.2.1 Achievement of objectives and progress analysis.....	61
3.2.1.1 Financial and material progress.....	61
3.2.2 Significant problems encountered and measures to resolve them.....	72
3.2.3 Result indicators of Axis II.....	72
3.2.4 Additional information about the programme results and effects.....	75
AXIS II – The Environment Energy and Risk Prevention	75
3.3 Axis III - Technical Assistance, public awareness, advertising and communication	77
3.3.1.1 Financial and material progress.....	77
3.1.2 Significant problems encountered and measures for solving them.....	78
3.3.3 Result indicators of Axis III	78
4. LARGE PROJECTS	80
The OP Italia-Malta 2007-2013 does not provide for the realization of large projects.....	80
5. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE	81
6. INFORMATION AND ADVERTISING.....	86
6.1 Implementation of the communication plan.....	86
7. OP Results.....	111

2. OVERVIEW OF THE OPERATIONAL PROGRAM

2.1 Results and progress analysis

2.1.1 Material progress of the Operational Program

The programme indicators as envisaged by the OP that highlight the achieved objectives in comparison to the significant achievements of the Operational Programme are shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1.A Degree of projects cooperation within the programme context

LEVEL OF COOPERATION OF PROJECTS AT PROGRAMME LEVEL								
Programme Indicators	Unit of measure*	Baseline	Obiettivo	Progress				2013 Progress SFC 2007
				2010	2011	2012	2013	
Projects that respect at least two of the following criteria: joint development, joint implementation, joint personnel, joint financing. Cod 42 SFC2007	Percentage (%) of total projects	0	20%	0	6%	5%	4%	n. 1
Projects that respect at least two of the following criteria: joint development, joint implementation, joint personnel, joint financing. Cod 43 SFC2007	Percentage (%) of total projects	0	55%	0	12%	14%	16%	n. 4
Projects that respect all of the following criteria: joint development, joint implementation, joint staff, joint financing. Cod 44 SFC2007	Percentage (%) of total projects	0	25%	0	82%	82%	80%	n. 20

The table highlights the percentage of approved operations (17 ordinary projects and 8 strategic projects) as at the 31/12/2013 with respect to the cooperation modes provided as from art. 19 of Reg. 1083/2006, activated by each project to be managed.

In detail, based on the data entered by the lead partner in the Section A.4 of the Application Form of the ordinary project proposals and in the Section C (point 27) of the Application Form of the strategic project proposals, the cooperation mode for each approved operation guaranteed during the project implementation, is being recorded (joint development, joint implementation, joint staff, joint financing).

In column 2013 the aggregate data was updated with the additional 3 strategic operations (PIM ENERGETHICA SIMIT and IMAGENX) admitted to financing during 2013. In detail, it should be noted that out of these strategic projects, 2 with the Italian lead partner (the first two) have ensured the compliance of all four cooperation modes and 1 with the Maltese lead partner (IMAGENX) which has fulfilled 3 cooperation modes. Furthermore, in order to better clarify, in the column "2013 Progress SFC 2007" the data expressed in "number of projects" was reported; as inserted in the SFC 2007 system under the indicators n° 42,43 and 44.

Taking into consideration the data collected in 2013 related to the 17 operations approved under the ordinary projects call and the 8 operations financed under the strategic call the disbursement targets set at a programme level can be respected.

In fact, the percentage ratio of 80% of the operations (14 ordinary projects and 6 strategic projects) have ensured the compliance with all four cooperation modes defined by the Regulation confirming a great vivacity and purposeful initiative on the part of the beneficiaries of the cooperation area that, based on institutional networks already consolidated with the previous Italia-Malta 2004-2006 cooperation program, have ensured solid and concrete design proposals capable of achieving the OP objectives.

It should be noted that some of the percentages recorded in 2013 are lower than the previous year following the increase in the number of funded projects. During 2013, in fact, the total operations eligible to funding was 25, three more than in 2012.

Below is the list of all the progress as of the 31/12/2013, relative to the degree of cooperation at Program level, that were recorded through the examination and investigation of the 16 requests for reimbursement from the balance submitted by the Lead Partner of the ordinary projects and the second, third and fourth reimbursement application submitted by the Lead Partner for the 8 strategic projects. In order to better understand the data in the table, it is pointed out that the percentages for the 2013 were calculated on the basis of 25 projects (ordinary and strategic) unlike for the 2012 when the calculation was made on the basis of 17 projects..

Table 1.B Degree of projects' cooperation within the programme context

NATURE OF COOPERATION AT PROGRAMME LEVEL							
Programme Indicators	Unit of Measure*	Baseline	Target	Progress			
				2010	2011	2012	2013
Projects that promote the use of common infrastructure	Percentage (%) of total projects	0	10%	0	12%	35%	32%
Projects that develop partnerships in the public services sector	Percentage (%) of total projects	0	15%	0	6%	24%	44%
Projects that reduce insularity through better transport accessibility, ICT networks and services	Percentage (%) of total projects	0	15%	0	0%	12%	20%
Projects that encourage and improve the protection and common management of the environment	Percentage (%) of total projects	0	20%	0	12%	41%	52%
Projects that contribute to the management of natural and anthropic risks	Percentage (%) of total projects	0	10%	0	6%	24%	32%
Projects that promote R & ST and innovative networks	Percentage (%) of total projects	0	10%	0	0%	24%	36%
Projects that jointly promote tourism in the cross-border area	Percentage (%) of total projects	0	20%	0	0%	18%	28%
Public institutions (regional, local) that cooperate on a cross-border level	Number	0	100	0	11	66	256%

The first indicator shows a percentage of 32% corresponding to 8 operations that promote the common use of infrastructures. In particular, the following projects should be highlighted:

- THE HUB Axis I – specific target 1.1 – which through the provision of a public space for the project's needs by the City of Syracuse partner has allowed the implementation of the Sicily-Malta HUB, which 700 people a year take advantage of.
- T-CHEESIMAL Axis I - specific objective 1.1 - that enabled 10 individuals (farmers, students, and visitors) the common use of the computing infrastructure in order to improve the web portal and share the project output on the facebook page to disseminate the results.
- ARCHAEOEUR Axis I - specific objective 1.3 - that carried out the recovery and accessibility of certain unaccessible sites: in Sicily (Mezzagnone, Pirrera, Mirio, Cisternazzi and Celone) and Malta (Ta' Bistra)
- OBIMED Axis I - specific objective 1.3 - that created 5 info point in Wi-Fi areas in Malta and Sicily for the online booking system through the use of new technologies that facilitated the integration of Sicilian and Maltese territories as well as the offer of accommodation and the fruition of the sites.
- SIBIT Axis I - specific objective 1.3 - that realised 11 cycling cross-border packages through the modernisation of existing infrastructure and the adaptation of accommodation facilities with facilities for bike tourists, for a total of 24 routes divided into main and secondary.
- PANACEA Axis II - specific target 2.2 which, within the context of the structures of a number of project partners - Province of Syracuse, Province of Palermo, Municipality of Lampedusa and Council of St. Lawrence - identified the creation of 4 CEA "Environmental educational centres" for the initiation of the pilot project related to raising awareness and contextual presentation of the characteristic elements of protected marine areas.
- CALYPSO Axis II - specific objective 2.3 - that led to the acquisition and installation of three HF antennas, 2 on the Maltese coast and 1 on the Sicilian coast of Pozzallo (Ragusa), for the monitoring of surface currents and sea-waves in the Sicilian Channel, in order to optimize the interventions in the event of accidental or deliberate oil spills
- WATER FRONT Axis II - specific objective 2.4 - that saw the involvement of 5 Entities in the harmonization activity of territory planning techniques of the cross border area.

The second indicator shows a percentage equal to 44% corresponding to 11 operations that develop the partnership within the public services. In particular, the following projects should be highlighted:

- THE HUB Axle I - specific objective 1.1 –which started the networking activities of The Hub with the international networks during 2013.
- T-CHEESIMAL Axis I - specific objective 1.1 - that saw the involvement of 10 livestock breeders in training days on the use and methods of consultation for portals in the local Reference Entities, in order to be constantly updated on the rules regarding the production of cheese
- OBIMED Axis I – specific target 1.3 – whose partners realized n° 3 public services as: the implementation of the technological platform, the online booking system and the setting up of 4 WI FI free areas in order to favour the use of the contents and to offer a guided service to the tourists.
- SIBIT Axis I - specific objective 1.3 - that has obtained 45 permits from the relevant authorities and local authorities in the towns crossed by the Medin Bike cycling network in order to install the road signs for tourists.

- SIMBIOTIC Axis II - specific objective 2.1 - which saw the involvement of 9 Entities, Authorities and Institutions specialised in environmental matters, in ecological recovery activities and optimisation of the management of the Natura 2000 sites affected by the project.
- PORT PVEV Axis II - specific objective 2.1 - that in activities aimed at improving energy efficiency in the ports and the reduction of CO₂ emissions in the cooperation areas has involved 4 Entities.
- BIODIVALUE Axis II - specific objective 2.1 - which involved 40 Entities in the creation of operational tools to support local administrators and operators of the maritime traffic, useful to limit the harmful effects generated by operational pollution from shipping, industrial, commercial, fishing and recreational traffic in the straits of Sicily.
- RESI Axis II – specific objective 2.2 – that, with the realization of the Energy Tours in Malta and in Sicily, involved 4 bodies having energy expertise in the presentation of the best practices realized within the renewable energies.
- RESPIRA Axis II - specific objective 2.3 - which, in the embodiment of the analysis for respiratory diseases of the Maltese and Sicilian territories linked to the exposure of population to pollutants, involved 3 Entities with expertise in the health area.
- CALYPSO Axis II - specific objective 2.3 - that, within the definition activities of the technical specifications of HF antennas installed on the both the Sicilian and Maltese coasts, ensured the involvement of 6 Public Entities.
- WATER FRONT Axis II - specific objective 2.4 - to promote the exchange of experiences and the dissemination of good practices, has involved 5 Entities.

The third indicator shows a percentage equal to 20% corresponding to 5 operations that reduce the isolation through better access to transport, ICT networks and services. In particular, the following projects should be highlighted:

- THE HUB Axis I - specific objective 1.1 - that enabled 700 people a year to take advantage of networks and services created within the implementation of the Sicilia-Malta HUB.
- ARCHAEOEUR Axis I - specific objective 1.3 - that encouraged the promotion of "heritage trails" of archaeological sites through the activation of 4 digital totems.
- OBIMED Axis I - specific objective 1.3 - that achieved 2 Web Applications 2.0, one for the IOS operating system and the other for Android system, aimed at spreading the tourist itineraries and the involvement of younger members of the Sicilian and Maltese population for the promotion package of exchanges between young people, based on both the English language and the Mediterranean identity.
- SIBIT Axis I - specific objective 1.3 - that detected 8,318 visits to the website made in the context of the project through the promotions of the created routes.
- WATER FRONT Axis II - specific objective 2.4 - that in the activity of enhancing *water fronts*, seen as the catalyst for development and innovation of territorial systems in a logic of sustainable development, has involved 5 Entities.

The fourth indicator shows a percentage of 52% that corresponds to 13 operations that encourage and enhance the joint protection and management of the environment. In particular, the following projects should be highlighted:

- THE HUB Axle I - specific objective 1.1 - which involved 64 subjects amongst including entities, companies and associations sensitized by the HUB ethics on the respect and management of the environment.
- GARDMED Axis I - specific objective 1.3 - in dissemination the green culture, while preserving the natural and cultural heritage through the promotion of sustainable tourism, involved a total area of 31 Ha.
- OBIMED Axis I - specific objective 1.3 - that provided for the subscription of two protocols, one for private entities and the other for public entities bodies, for the opening of the technological platform even during low/mid season periods.
- SIBIT Axis I – specific target 1.3 – which by the means of cross border biketouristic itineraries registered 50 accommodation facilities on the basis of an estimated target of 30 structures.
- MORISO Axis II- specific objective 2.1 - that carried out the monitoring of groundwater through 4 environmental surveys having a depth of about 30 meters.
- PANACEA Axis II - specific target 2.2 – which realized n° 6 studies concerning the environment and the biodiversity of the protected marine areas which provided for the processing of ecological models.
- SIMBIOTIC Axis II - specific objective 2.1 - that, in the embodiment of ecological recovery activities, covers an area of 63700 square meters.
- BIODIVALUE Axis II - specific objective 2.1 - that achieved the collection and organization of information data useful for cataloguing and recording maritime traffic in the Maltese and Sicilian waters.
- RESI Axis II - specific target 2.2 – which realized n° 3 Local Action Plans for the territories involved in the project, by means of workshops and laboratories activated on the basis of EASW methodology. The workshops registered a very good success of attendance of the stakeholders.
- RESPIRA Axis II - specific objective 2.3 - that realised 2 guidelines, one in Italian the other in English, for the prevention of health effects in people who live in high-risk environments due to the presence of pollutants.
- CALYPSO Axis II - specific target 2.3 – involved 1 x 1010 square metres surface area in the activity of developing of a permanent operational system of monitoring of marine currents in the Maltese Channel by means of a HF (High Frequency) radar observing system.
- VIENERGY Axis II - specific objective 2.3 - that involved a surface of 80,000 sqm in the mapping activities of Trapani and Palermo, carried out through the use of territory drones.
- WATER FRONT Axis II - specific objective 2.4 - that, in the perspective of sustainable development, involved 5 Entities in the exploitation of the cross-border area resources from the cultural, economic and social point of view.

The fifth indicator shows a percentage of 32% which corresponds to 8 operations that contribute to the management of natural and anthropogenic hazards. In particular, the following projects should be highlighted:

- GARDMED Axis I - specific objective 1.3 - that identified a practical model for the sustainable management for 6 gardens, both regarding cultural-structural and socio-economic aspects. Through the application of this model two pilot projects were created that allowed the improvement of two green areas, Villa Reiman and Sir Luigi Preziosi, for a total area of 6 ha.

- PROMED Axis I - specific target 1.1 – which involved a 60.000 square metres area in the realization of activities aimed to the promoting the planting of vineyards in risk areas of the territories and to the correct use of the different varieties in accordance with the local characteristics.
- MORISO Axis II- specific objective 2.1 - that, within the activities of assessment of anthropogenic pressures on groundwater resources, submitted 2 reports, one on Maltese territory and the other on Sicilian territory, by focusing the attention on the impact caused by sewage, predominantly of urban type, on water resources.
- CALYPSO Axis II - specific target 2.3 - involved 1 x 1010 square metres surface area in relation to the monitoring of the Maltese Channel.
- RESPIRA Axis II - specific objective 2.3 - that produced 2 guidelines on the prevention of health effects in people who live in high-risk environments due to pollutants.
- VAMOS SEGURO Axis II - specific target 2.3 – which affected a 37.500 square kilometres area within the realization of an automatic system for the monitoring and forecasting of volcanic ash dispersal.
- IMAGENX Axis II - specific objective 2.3 - that in order to monitor any environmental and genetic factors involved in the spread of malignant tumours in the Mediterranean, produced a software that makes it possible to measure the level of existing risk.
- WATER FRONT Axis II - specific objective 2.4 - that, in strengthening the capacity for the implementation of environmental policies and programs for the prevention of risks involving 5 Entities.

The sixth indicator shows a percentage of 36% which corresponds to 9 operations that promote R&I and innovative networks. In particular, the following projects should be highlighted:

- THE HUB Axis I – specific target 1.1 – which started 31 innovative networks as follows: the setting up of The Hub Siracusa and the realization of events; the establishment of the antenna The Hub in Lampedusa, the developing of the computer platform and the connection of the Euro South HUB system with the international network.
- LITHOS Axis I - specific objective 1.1 - that in promoting scientific and dissemination activities through the International Research Centre on stereotomy, created a computer network with other research centres in Europe and the Mediterranean together with private and public subjects.
- PROMED Axis I - specific target 1.1 – which, as innovative actions, defined n° 7 oenological protocols able to obtain a viable system and the realisation of an experimental center in Malta so as to be able to continue the applied research activities.
- GARDMED Axis I - specific objective 1.3 - that accounted 5000 connections per year to the gardens network catalogued and connected by tourist itineraries made within the project.
- OBIMED Axis I – specific target 1.3 – which favoured the developing of networks by means of the realization and the implementation of a technological platform in order to improve the integration between Sicilian and Maltese operators, their visibility and availability.
- BIODIVALUE Axis II - specific objective 2.1 - which, through the signing of an agreement by 5 Entities, established an innovative network to monitor and control the pressures and maritime traffic across borders on the Italian-Maltese coastal marine environment

- RESI Axis II - specific target 2.3 – which favoured the technological transfer by the means of the collection and the exchange of 30 RES good practices.
- RESPIRA Axis II - specific objective 2.3 - that, in the activity of analysing the main environmental risk factors, created a network between 3 Research centres involved in the study of the conditions that may influence the relationship between exposure to pollutants and health conditions.
- WATER FRONT Axis II - specific objective 2.4 - that, saw the involvement of 5 Entities in harmonizing the territory planning techniques aimed at ecological, production, urban and integrated tourism development.

The seventh indicator shows a percentage of 28% which corresponds to 7 operations jointly promoting tourism in the cross border area. In particular, the following projects should be highlighted:

- THE HUB Axle I - specific objective 1.1 – identified 7 projects that as a result of the use of the services provided by HUB will revive the joint touristic and cultural promotion of the cross-border area.
- ARCHAEOEUR Axis I - specific target 1.3 – which realized n° 5 different “heritage trails” of the archeological sites in Sicily (province of Ragusa) and in Malta for touristic and educational aims. These sights have also undergone restoration and significant works have been carried out so as to make them accessible for tourists and persons with different abilities as well as children.
- GARDMED Axis I - specific objective 1.3 - that recorded a 30% increase in visitors of the gardens networked and connected through the developed tourist itineraries.
- OBIMED Axis I – specific target 1.3 – which defined n° 3 integrated itineraries in order to increase the attraction capacity of the territories by means of the use of the most innovative communication technologies with 1766 contacts reached by the joint Italian and Maltese promotion.
- SIBIT Axis I - specific objective 1.3 - that contributed to the increase in relational tourism flows by 10%, during 2013
- RESI Axis II - specific objective 2.2 - that encouraged the promotion of tourism in the cross-border region through the promotion of the Energy Tour program distributed to 7547 young people from secondary schools.
- WATER FRONT Axis II - specific objective 2.4 - that, in the definition of an atlas of trend scenarios useful for the development of integrated tourism, has involved 5 Entities.

The eighth indicator refers to the number of public institutions (regional, local) that cooperate at cross-border level. During 2013, 256 institutions were involved in the context of the activities carried out by the 16 finalised transactions. In particular, the following projects should be highlighted:

Tab. 1.C - Public Institutions (regional, local) that cooperate at cross-border level

Axis	Specific Ob.	Project	Institutions involved
AXIS I	1.1	THE HUB	9
	1.1	LITHOS	20
	1.1	PROMED	14
	1.3	ARCHAEOEUR	11
	1.3	GARDMED	12
	1.3	OBIMED	4

	1.3	SIBIT	10
AXIS II	2.1	MORISO	6
	2.1	BIODIVALUE	40
	2.1	PORT PVEV	4
	2.2	PANACEA	15
	2.1	SIMBIOTIC	4
	2.2	RESI	95
	2.3	CALYPSO	6
	2.3	VIENERGY	1
	2.4	WATER FRONT	5
			TOTAL

2.1.2 Financial Information

Table 2 Financial data

PRIORITY	OP TOTAL FUNDS (EU AND NATIONAL) € A	EU CONTRIBUTION CALCULATION BASIS (PUBLIC OR TOTAL COST) B	TOTAL AMOUNT OF CERTIFIED ELIGIBLE EXPENDITURE INCURRED BY RECIPIENTS € C	CORRESPONDING PUBLIC CONTRIBUTION € D	IMPLEMENTATION RATE (%) E= D/A
Axis I - Competitiveness: innovation and research, sustainable development	10,319,146	P	7,694,501.06	7,694,501.06	75%
Axis II - Environment, energy and risk prevention	23,021,014	P	7,431,617.34	7,431,617.34	32%
Axis III - Technical assistance, awareness, communication and advertising	2,128,095	P	1,171,555.29	1,171,555.29	55%
TOTAL	35,468,255.00		16,297,673.69	16,297,673.69	46%

2.1.3 Information on the distribution of the used Funds

Table 3: Classification Sheet

Ob.	Priority issue	Funding methods	Territory	Economic Activity	Location	Planned Community contribution	Allocated Community contribution*
CTE	1 - R & TD activities in research centres	04 - Other types of financing	08 - Areas of cross-border cooperation	00 - Not applicable	CTE	2,585,825	2,575,473
CTE	2 - R & TD infrastructures (including physical installations, equipment and high-speed computer networks linking research centres) and competence centres related to a specific technology	04 - Other types of financing	08 - Areas of cross-border cooperation	00 - Not applicable	CTE	1,222,674	1,327,964
CTE	3 - Technology transfers and improvement of cooperation networks between small businesses (SMEs), between the said small businesses (SMEs) and other businesses and universities, post-secondary education institutions of all kinds, regional authorities, research centres and scientific and technological entities (science and technology parks, technopolis, etc..)	04 - Other types of financing	08 - Areas of cross-border cooperation	00 - Not applicable	CTE	1,009,356	1,152,205
CTE	11 - Information and communication technologies (access, security, interoperability, risk prevention, research, innovation, digital content, etc.)	04 - Other types of financing	08 - Areas of cross-border cooperation	00 - Not applicable	CTE	904,441	0
CTE	13 - Services and applications for citizens (online health services, e-government, e-learning, e-Inclusion, etc.)	04 - Other types of financing	08 - Areas of cross-border cooperation	00 - Not applicable	CTE	624,344	581,176
CTE	14 - Services and applications for SMEs (e-commerce, education and training, networking, etc.)	04 - Other types of financing	08 - Areas of cross-border cooperation	00 - Not applicable	CTE	904,441	0
CTE	26 - Multimodal Transport	04 - Other types of financing	08 - Areas of cross-border cooperation	00 - Not applicable	CTE	2,211,219	2,125,000
CTE	30 - Ports	04 - Other types of financing	08 - Areas of cross-border cooperation	00 - Not applicable	CTE	753,700	0
CTE	40 - Renewable energy: solar	04 - Other types of financing	08 - Areas of cross-border cooperation	00 - Not applicable	CTE	4,220,722	0
CTE	43 - Energy efficiency, cogeneration, energy management	04 - Other types of financing	08 - Areas of cross-border cooperation	00 - Not applicable	CTE	364,201	426,713

Ob.	Priority issue	Funding methods	Territory	Economic Activity	Location	Planned Community contribution	Allocated Community contribution*
CTE	44 - Management of household and industrial waste	04 - Other types of financing	08 - Areas of cross-border cooperation	00 - Not applicable	CTE	4,162,294	2,890,128
CTE	45 - Water management and distribution (<i>drinking water</i>)	04 - Other types of financing	08 - Areas of cross-border cooperation	00 - Not applicable	CTE	904,441	0
CTE	46 - Water treatment (<i>waste water</i>)	04 - Other types of financing	08 - Areas of cross-border cooperation	00 - Not applicable	CTE	728,401	659,062
CTE	48 - Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control	04 - Other types of financing	08 - Areas of cross-border cooperation	00 - Not applicable	CTE	1,821,004	1,859,856
CTE	51 - Promotion of biodiversity and nature protection (<i>including Natura 2000</i>)	04 - Other types of financing	08 - Areas of cross-border cooperation	00 - Not applicable	CTE	1,847,018	1,686,197
CTE	52 - Promotion of clean urban transport	04 - Other types of financing	08 - Areas of cross-border cooperation	00 - Not applicable	CTE	2,315,276	2,125,000
CTE	53 - Prevention of risks (<i>including development and implementation of plans and measures for the prevention and management of natural and technological hazards</i>)	04 - Other types of financing	08 - Areas of cross-border cooperation	00 - Not applicable	CTE	1,951,075	1,618,745
CTE	54 - Other measures for the preservation of the environment and the prevention of risks	04 - Other types of financing	08 - Areas of cross-border cooperation	00 - Not applicable	CTE	4,422,438	4,698,356
CTE	55 - Promotion of natural resources	04 - Other types of financing	08 - Areas of cross-border cooperation	00 - Not applicable	CTE	988,545	822,300
CTE	56 - Protection and enhancement of natural heritage	04 - Other types of financing	08 - Areas of cross-border cooperation	00 - Not applicable	CTE	676,373	618,978
CTE	58 - Protection and enhancement of cultural heritage	04 - Other types of financing	08 - Areas of cross-border cooperation	00 - Not applicable	CTE	1,170,645	995,740
CTE	63 - Development and dissemination of more innovative and productive work organization methods	04 - Other types of financing	08 - Areas of cross-border cooperation	00 - Not applicable	CTE	452,220	0

Ob.	Priority issue	Funding methods	Territory	Economic Activity	Location	Planned Community contribution	Allocated Community contribution*
CTE	74 – Development of human potential in research and innovation, notably through post-graduate studies and training of researchers, together with networking activities between universities, research centres and enterprises	04 - Other types of financing	08 - Areas of cross-border cooperation	00 - Not applicable	CTE	753,700	0
CTE	80 - Promotion of partnerships, agreements and initiatives through the shareholders' networking	04 - Other types of financing	08 - Areas of cross-border cooperation	00 - Not applicable	CTE	234,129	200,208
CTE	81 - Mechanisms aimed at improving the planning of effective policies and programmes, and for the monitoring and evaluation of local capacity building and implementation of policies and programmes on the national, regional and local levels	04 - Other types of financing	08 - Areas of cross-border cooperation	00 - Not applicable	CTE	602,960	0
CTE	85 - Preparation, implementation, monitoring and inspection	04 - Other types of financing	08 - Areas of cross-border cooperation	00 - Not applicable	CTE	1,204,464	712,596
CTE	86 - Evaluation and studies; information and communication	04 - Other types of financing	08 - Areas of cross-border cooperation	00 - Not applicable	CTE	608,736	283,226

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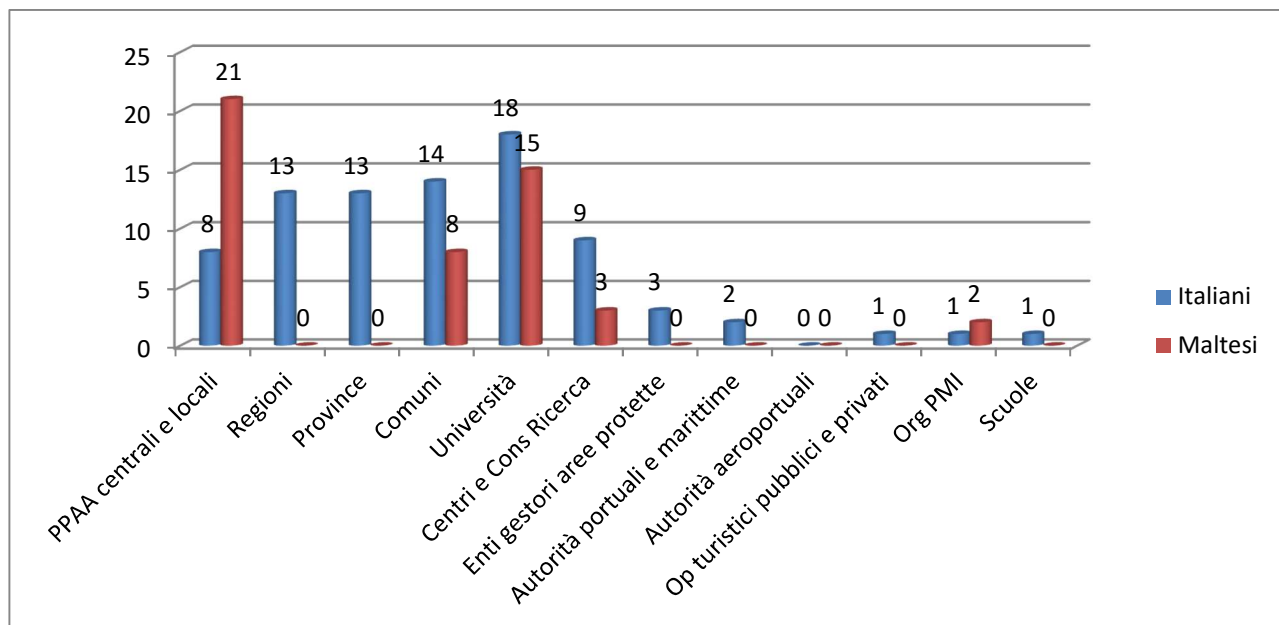
2.1.4 Progress achieved in the financing and implementation of financial engineering instruments ex art. 44

The Italy-Malta Cooperation Programme 2007-2013 has not activated any type of financial engineering instrument.

2.1.5 Support allocated for target groups

On 31 December 2013 a total of 25 operations were financed which included the involvement of 136 beneficiaries from the territories of the eligible area, of which 85 Italian and 51 Maltese. On the basis of the information contained in the manual for the implementation of the OP, the call for ordinary and strategic projects has guaranteed the participation of potential beneficiaries who have their head and/or secondary office, including their administrative office, in the eligible area of the programme. The call also guaranteed the participation in the programme of the following groups of beneficiaries. In particular, regarding Priority Axis 1 “Competitiveness: Innovation and Research, Sustainable Development” the call involved the participation of central and local public administrations, universities, research centres and consortia, entities managing protected marine areas, maritime and port authorities, airport authorities, public and private tourism operators and SME organizations. Regarding Priority Axis 2 “Environment, Energy and Risk Prevention”, the call involved the participation of central and local public administrations, universities, research centres and consortia, entities managing protected areas, maritime and port authorities, consortia and local development agencies. The chart shown below illustrates the stratification of beneficiaries who received financial support under the first call for strategic projects.

Chart no. 1 - Stratification of beneficiaries



The chart brings together, as groups of recipients, the beneficiaries who received funding under Axes I and II of the Programme, limited to strategic projects, analysed in respect of three main factors:

- Stratification according to category;
- Level of participation;
- Degree of private involvement.

Regarding **stratification by category** of beneficiary, the chart reveals the utmost participation by the Sicilian regional, provincial and local authorities and Maltese central government. The latter are relevant since there are a large number for the Maltese territory that, without having its own administrative apparatus any regional and provincial structure, has participated in the calls for application with a strong presence of its central government. In addition, the calls for the application for strategic projects expressly stipulated amongst their selection criteria that the lead partners should have been Entities/State administrations or Departments/Regional agencies. A significant contribution was also provided from the scientific and research fields with a significant participation of Sicilian and Maltese universities.

Regarding the **level of participation**, attention is directed towards what emerges from the chart in relation to the lack of participation in projects funded under the first call for strategic projects by Sicilian and Maltese maritime and aviation authorities. In fact, in response to the presence within the OP of the Objective 1.2 “Improving cross-border accessibility and strengthening transport systems with low environmental impact” in which the above-mentioned authorities would have been able to participate fully in the selection procedures, it should be noted that no project was placed usefully in a favourable position for funding under the first call for strategic projects.

Finally, in relation to the **extent of involvement by private individuals**, in line with the Italia-Malta 2007-2013 Operational Program, private individuals participated in the implementation of operations as justified design partners, with adequate motivation and information and the added value of their participation. Within the first call for ordinary projects, a total number of 6 private individuals, 4 Italian (Centro Studi di Economia applicata all’Ingegneria in Catania, Legambiente Comitato Regionale Siciliano onlus, Conf cooperative Siracusa and GiriTravel srl) and 2 Maltese (Maltese Italian Chamber of Commerce, producers organizations Gheneb Ghall-Imbid Malta), participated in the financed operations. The presence of private-sector partners can be attributed to 6 different ordinary projects over a total of 17 financed operations. On the first call for strategic projects a total of 7 individuals, 6 being Italian (Green Life soc. coop. a r.l., Med.O.R.O., Collegio Universitario ARCES, Centro Studi di Economia applicata all’Ingegneria in Catania, Abe s.r.l., GAL Val D’Anapo) and 2 Maltese (GAL XLOKK and WASTE SERVICE - public equivalent bodies), participated in the financed operations. The presence of private-sector partners led to 5 different ordinary projects on a total of 8 financed operations. The important presence of private participants certainly seems due to an interest of the territory towards initiatives intended to affect the development of the territories involved and in respect of the active components of economic development which are universally agreed elements for growth of the local development opportunities.

The tables below show the categories of beneficiaries, with reference to the axis, the objectives and the projects funded under the tender of regular and strategic projects.

Table 4 - Categories of Italian and Maltese beneficiaries accessing the tender for regular projects

	ASSE I									ASSE II								TOTALE
	Ob. Sp. 1.1				Ob. Sp. 1.3					Ob. Sp. 2.1				Ob. Sp. 2.3			Ob. Sp. 2.4	
	The hub	T Cheesimal	PROMED	LITHOS	ARCHAEOTUR	GARDMED	OBIMED	SIBIT	MORISO	PANACEA	REMASI	SIMBIOTIC	RESI	CALYPSO	RESPIRA	VAMOS SEGURO	WATER FRONT	
PPAA centrali			1	1	2		1	1	2		1	1	1	3	2	2		18
Regioni		1	1	1	1				2					1				7
Province				1				5	2				2				2	12
Comuni	1		2		4	2	3	1	2	1	1					1	1	19
Università	2	2	1	1		2		1	1	1	1	2	1	3	1	1	2	22
Centri e Cons Ricerca			1						1					1	1			4
Enti gestori aree protette											1							1
Autorità portuali e marittime																		0
Autorità aeroportuali																		0
Op turistici pubblici e privati					1													1
Org PMI	1		1					1										3
Scuole	1																	1

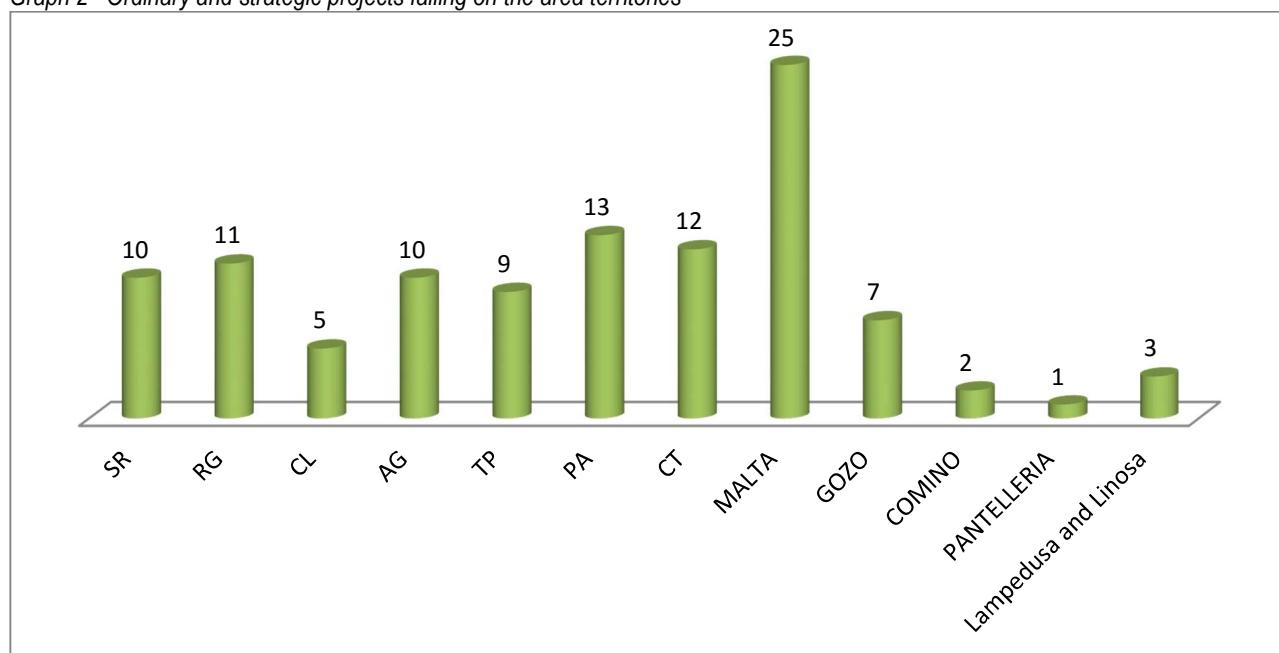
Graph no. 5 - Categories of Italian and Maltese beneficiaries in respect of the call for strategic projects

	Asse I			Asse II					TOT
	Ob. Sp. 1.2	Ob. Sp. 2.1	Ob. Sp. 2.2	Ob. Sp. 2.3					
	STREETS	BIODIVALUE	PORT PVEV	CRIM SAFRI	IMAGENX	PIM ENERGETHICA	SIMIT	VIENERGY	
PPAA centrali e locali	1	1	2	2	3		1	1	11
Regioni	1	1		1		1	1	1	6
Province			1						1
Comuni	1					2			3
Università	1	2		2	2		3	1	11
Centri e Cons Ricerca	1	1		2	1			3	8
Enti gestori aree protette		2							2
Autorità portuali e marittime	1		1						2
Autorità aeroportuali									0
Op turistici pubblici e privati									0
Organizzazioni di PMI									0
Consorzi e agenzie di sviluppo		1		1		2			4

As regards the areas affected by the actions of the operational programme, it would be appropriate to point out that in the call for strategic projects all funded projects included the acceptance of entities belonging to all OP eligible areas. In particular, the Italian beneficiaries from the NUTS III neighbouring border areas, eligible for funding under Art. 7(1) of Reg. 1083/2006 were the provinces of Agrigento, Caltanissetta, Ragusa, Siracusa and Trapani. The Maltese beneficiary was the only island of Malta. The beneficiaries from the adjacent NUTS III areas eligible for funding pursuant to Art. 21(1) of Reg. 1080/2006, were the provinces of Catania and Palermo.

The graph below shows the number of ordinary and strategic projects falling within the territories of the cooperation area.

Graph 2 – Ordinary and strategic projects falling on the area territories



With reference to the territorial origin of the beneficiaries, it would be appropriate to highlight two important aspects:

- The territorial coverage of the entire programme area;
- The consistent presence of territories belonging to neighbouring NUTS III cross-border areas.

As regards the **territorial coverage**, the above chart shows the participation of all eligible Sicilian provinces, the ultra-peripheral territory of the Sicilian islands of Lampedusa and Linosa and the corresponding sister islands of Gozo and Comino for Malta territory.

Regarding the **NUTS III adjacent areas**, a significant representation of entities belonging to the territories of Palermo and Catania should be noted. Such a presence has to be appropriately considered in the future programming period 2014-2020.

2.1.5.1 Information on the application of art. 21 of the Reg. (EC) 1080/2006

The eligible area of the Italy-Malta 2007-2013 OP on the Italian side is formed not only by NUTS III border areas of the Sicily Region (the Regional Provinces of Ragusa, Siracusa, Agrigento, Caltanissetta and Trapani), but also by the NUTS III adjacent areas through the Regional Provinces of Catania and Palermo, to the extent permitted by Community legislation which provides for the opportunity of allocating up to 20% of OP ERDF resources.

The **call for the selection of ordinary projects** approved by the OP Executive Committee has, in accordance with Art. 21(1) of Reg. (EC) 1080/2006, provided for the *principle of territorial affiliation* for the beneficiaries of the adjacent NUTS III areas (Catania and Palermo). According to this principle such beneficiaries participate in the implementation of the project with a financial allocation that must remain below the 20% threshold of the ERDF funding required by the operation. However, so as to ensure the involvement of the main institutional entities falling within the NUTS III areas of Catania and Palermo performing their institutional activities for the

benefit of the entire region (universities, state institutions and regional bodies), the same call has provided for the principle of *localization of activities*.

The principle provides, for beneficiaries belonging to adjacent areas that wish to avail themselves of it, the ability to incur expenses in the areas bordering the area of cooperation without any limitations on the use of the ERDF. While remaining closely tied to the effective utilization of the ERDF in favour of neighbouring areas, this possibility has requested an analysis and evaluation of the types of costs eligible for operations funding in order to verify their compatibility with respect to the aforementioned principle of *localization of activities*.

Based on the findings of the evaluation process, the Executive Committee has accepted to finance 8 proposed projects, out of the approved 17, which have an impact in the NUTS III adjacent areas of Catania and Palermo.

Based on the findings of the assessment process, the Steering Committee accepted to finance 7 design proposals, from the 8 approved proposals, that have an impact in the NUTS III area adjacent to Catania and Palermo. The table below, in relation to the ordinary projects section, shows that the financial data of the certified expenditure in the adjacent areas of Catania and Palermo are to be considered as final since the operations (16 ordinary projects) were concluded on the 31/12/2013.

So as to ensure that the financial data related to the planned ERDF in the adjacent Zone IIIs is respected during the implementation of the operations, the MA has provided, with the support of the JTS, a system that allows the possibility to, among other things, associate to each item of documentary evidence of expenditure and payment the reference to the NUTS III area to which the expenditure relates in the supporting documentation for OP beneficiaries for the reporting and monitoring of expenditure. Therefore, in the claim for reimbursement templates Sheet III - Table 2, it is possible to consolidate the details relating to an operation with the expenditure reported by each beneficiary of an operation, divided according to "expense item" in relation to the Work Packages of the project and the adjacent NUTS III Areas of Catania and Palermo. This verification methodology allows the first level control office of the Italian side, which carries out the verification of expenditure pursuant to Art. 16 of Reg. 1080/2006, to detect the exact amount of verified expenditure used for the adjacent OP territories in relation to the ERDF percentage used for NUTS III areas approved by the Steering Committee for each operation.

Such financial information is also recorded in the "request for reimbursement" (Annex II, table 1) that the lead partner submits to the MA to request reimbursement of expenses that have been verified and validated by the MA pursuant to Art. 20(b) of Reg. 1083/2006.

The table below shows the ERDF percentage approved by the Executive Committee in adjacent NUTS III areas in comparison to the percentage which was already verified and validated on 31/12/2013:

Tab 6 -List of approved projects (ordinary and strategic) in the NUTS III areas adjacent the OP

Priority	Specific Obj.	Operation	Beneficiary	Nuts III area Palermo	Nuts III area Catania	ERDF % approved in the adjacent areas	% of certified eligible expenditure supported by the beneficiaries as at the 31/12/2011	% of certified eligible expenditure supported by the beneficiaries as at the 31/12/2012	% of certified eligible expenditure supported by the beneficiaries as at the 31/12/2013	Total as at the 31/12/2013
ORDINARY PROJECTS										
1	1.3	GARDMED A1.1.3 -02	LP - Università di Catania – Dipartimento di Scienze Biologiche Geologiche e Ambientali		X	17.58 %	6.35 %	12.27 %	18.62 %	18.62 %
1	1.1	LITHOS A1.1.1 -10	PP 2 - Università degli Studi di Palermo - Dipartimento Storia e Progetto nell'Architettura	X		7.55 %	0.00 %	0.00 %	5.44 %	9.16 %
			PP 3 - Assessorato regionale Beni Culturali - Centro Regionale per la Progettazione e il Restauro e per le Scienze Naturali ed Applicate ai Beni Culturali	X			0.00 %	0.00 %	3.72 %	
1	1.1	T-CHEESIMAL A1.1.1 -35	PP3 - Università di Catania		X	8%	0.00 %	0.00 %	4.21 %	4.21 %
2	2.1	MORISO A1.2.1 -73	LP - Regione Siciliana – Dipartimento Interventi Infrastrutturali in Agricoltura	X		16.23 %	0.00 %	0.00 %	7.19 %	13.12 %
			PP 2 - Università di Catania - Dipartimento di Gestione dei Sistemi Agroalimentari e Ambientali		X		0.08 %	0.83 %	0.97 %	
			PP 3 - Centro Studi di Economia applicata all'Ingegneria - CSEI		X		0.00 %	2.59 %	4.96 %	
2	2.1	PANACEA A1.2.1 -57	PP 2 - Provincia regionale di Palermo	X		20%	0.00 %	0.00 %	13.65 %	14%
1	1.1	ProMed A1.1.1 -42	LP - Istituto Regionale della Vite e del Vino	X		20%	0.43 %	17.64 %	15.70 %	17.51 %
			PP 2 - Centro Studi di Economia applicata all'Ingegneria - CSEI		X		0.00 %	1.22 %	1.81 %	

2	2.1	REMASI A1.2.1 -16	PP 2 - Legambiente Comitato Regionale Siciliano onlus	X		15.33 %	0.00 %	0.00 %	3.30 %	16.48 %
			PP 3 - Università degli Studi di Palermo	X			0.00 %	0.00 %	13.18 %	
2	2.1	SIMBIOTIC A1.2.1 -17	PP8 - Università di Catania - CUTGANA		X	14.62 %	0.00 %	0.00 %	6.89 %	6.89 %
2	2.3	CALYPSO A1.2.3 -31	PP5 - ARPA Sicilia	X		5.15 %	0.00 %	0.00 %	0.42 %	5.38 %
			PP8 - Università di Catania - CUTGANA		X		0.00 %	0.00 %	4.96 %	
2	2.3	RESPIRA A1.2.3 -72	PP3 - Università degli Studi di Palermo	X		20%	0.00 %	0.00 %	8.99 %	19.69 %
			PP4 - Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche IBIM-Palermo	X			0.00 %	0.00 %	10.70 %	
2	2.3	VAMOS SEGURO A1.2.3 -62	LP - Istituto Nazionale di Geofisica e Vulcanologia, sezione di Catania		X	20%	0.00 %	2.31 %	3.75 %	15.85 %
			PP2 - Istituto Nazionale di Astrofisica		X		0.04 %	13.85 %	12.10 %	
2	2.4	WATER FRONT A1.2.4 -67	PP 2 - Provincia regionale di Palermo	X		12.84 %	0.00 %	0.00 %	5.19 %	18.36 %
			PP 3 - Comune di Palermo	X			0.00 %	0.00 %	4.58 %	
			PP 4 - Università degli Studi di Palermo	X			0.00 %	0.00 %	8.59 %	

Priority	Specific Obj.	Operation	Beneficiary	NUTS III area Palermo	NUTS III area Catania	ERDFpercentage approved on the adjacent areas	Percentage of certified eligible expenditure supported by the beneficiaries as at the 31/12/2011	Percentage of certified eligible expenditure supported by the beneficiaries as at the 31/12/2012	of certified eligible expenditure supported by the beneficiaries as at the 31/12/2013	Total as at the 31/12/2013
STRATEGIC PROJECTS										
1	1.2	STREETS B1-1.17/3	LP - Dipartimento delle Infrastrutture delle mobilità e dei trasporti	X		19.66 %	0.00 %	0.00 %	0.00 %	0.00 %
			PP2- Collegio Universitario ARCES	X			0.00 %	0.00 %	2.65 %	2.65 %
2	2.1	BIODIVALUE B1-2.8/1	PP4- ISPRA	X		15%	0.00 %	0.00 %	0.32 %	2.08 %
			PP8 - Università di Catania		X		0.00 %	0.00 %	1.76 %	
2	2.1	PORT PVEV B1-2.29/17	PP2-Autorità portuale di Catania		X	20%	0.00 %	0.00 %	1.62 %	1.62 %
2	2.2	CRIM SAFRI B1-2.14/8	LP - Regione Sicilia - Dipartimento Urbanistica	X		19%	0.00 %	0.00 %	1.01 %	2.01 %
			PP2- Università degli Studi di Palermo - Dipartimento dell'Energia	X			0.00 %	0.00 %	0.77 %	
			PP3- Istituto di Biomedicina ed Immunologia Molecolare "Alberto Monroy" Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche	X			0.00 %	0.00 %	0.23 %	
			PP4- Regione Sicilia - Dipartimento dei Beni Culturali e dell'Identità Siciliana	X			0.00 %	0.00 %	0.00 %	
			PP7- Med O.R.O		X		0.00 %	0.00 %	0.00 %	
2	2.3	IMaGenX B1-2.25/15	PP5 - Azienda Ospedaliera Univeritaria di Palermo "Paolo Giaccone"(AOUPP)	X		9.89 %	0.00 %	0.00 %	0.50 %	0.50 %
2	2.3	PIM ENERGETHICA B1-2.3/2	LP - Regione Siciliana – Dipartimento Interventi Infrastrutturali in Agricoltura	X		10%	0.00 %	0.00 %	0.21 %	0.21 %
2	2.3	SIMIT B1-2.19/11	LP - Regione Sicilia Presidenza Dipartimento Protezione Civile	X		13.08 %	0.00 %	0.00 %	0.00 %	6.20 %

			PP2-Università degli Studi di Palermo	X			0.00 %	0.00 %	0.00 %	
			PP3-Università degli Studi di Catania		X		0.00 %	0.00 %	6.20 %	
2	2.3	VIENERGY B1-2.9/6	LP - IRVO	X		20%	0.00 %	0.00 %	3.95 %	4.88 %
			PP2- CO.RI.S.SI.A	X			0.00 %	0.00 %	0.50 %	
			PP3- CSEI		X		0.00 %	0.00 %	0.43 %	

The table analysis indicates that the beneficiaries of approved projects within the two ordinary and strategic notices of selection absorb a percentage of the ERDF, for the benefit of their respective territories (Palermo and Catania), which is still under the 20% ERDF threshold approved at the operation level. In addition, the ERDF percentage certified, as at the 31/12/2013, in their respective territories of Palermo and Catania, stood under 8.2 % .

2.1.6 Returned or reused support

During the reference year, the Certifying Authority did not affect any reduction in payments pursuant to Art. 57 and 98.2 of Reg. (EC) 1083/2006.

2.1.7 Qualitative analysis

Axis I and II

On the 31/12/2013 the Operational Program saw the conclusion of 16 out of 17 operations in relation to the notice for ordinary projects, the implementation of the 5 strategic projects whose evaluation procedures were concluded in 2012, and the completion of the procedures to generate 3 additional strategic projects together with their launch.

With reference to the conclusion **of the ordinary projects**, within October 2013, the partnerships of the 16 ordinary projects concluded their activities and the respective project lead partners forwarded the request for final reimbursement, within December 2013.

During the first 10 months of 2013 almost all the ordinary projects that concluded their activities during the year, expressed the need for a final budget adjustment and a postponement of the closing date on the said projects (13 out of 16 completed projects) due to causes arising from external and unpredictable events, which were beyond the recipients' control.

Six written procedures were started by the Steering Committee which were concluded with the reprogramming and the postponement of the closing date for the following projects: GARDMED, ARCHAETUR, OBIMED, CALYPSO, LITHOS, T-CHEESIMAL, SIMBIOTIC, THE HUB, PANACEA, WATERFRONT, SIBIT, PROMED, RESPIRA (prot. notes 3202 dated 19/02/2013, prot. no. 6963 dated 12/04/2013, prot. no. 6964 dated 12/04/2013, prot. no. 3840 dated 14/05/2013, prot. no. 12036 dated 2/7/2013 and prot.no.15932 dated 5/9/2013).

Regarding the budget allocation provided for in the notice for ordinary projects and corresponding to € 14,534,496.80 (the figure does not take into account the budget of the single and not yet concluded ordinary project, REMASI), the projects completed the activity reaching a certified expenditure target of € 13,344,321.77 and reaching an overall cost savings of € 1,187,537.87. On drafting this AIR, quality controls were being performed on first level audit activities and therefore the final data relating to certified expenditure and cost savings could entail variations, during 2014.

The final adjustments made to the projects and the timing verification occurred during 2013 in relation to the output produced by the them made it possible to check that all the projects had successfully concluded their activities in 2013 and also achieved the intended target for the achievement indicators, result and program level.

For a discussion of the main findings and progress in relation to the physical objectives of each project, please refer to sections 3.1.1.2 and 3.2.1.2 .

With reference to the **implementation of strategic projects**, during 2013, each partnership, implemented the main project activities aimed at reaching the physical targets of their project. During January-February 2013 the MA and the JTS started and completed a new assessment of the CRIM SAFRI project following the withdrawal of the partner "Ministry for Resources and Rural Affairs" and the subsequent replacement by the partner "Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology" and "Malta Intelligent Energy Management Agency". The evaluation grid of the project was then subjected to the Steering Committee which at the end of the written procedure concluded on the 5 February 2013 (prot. note. 2516) was approved.

For a discussion of the main findings and progress in relation to the physical objectives for each project, please refer to sections 3.1.1.2 and 3.2.1.2 .

With reference to the **completion of the procedures for generating an additional 3 strategic projects and subsequent start of the operations**, during January 2013 the Managing Authority and the Joint Technical Secretariat launched the verifications of the Application Forms for projects IMAGENX, PIM ENERGETHICA and SIMIT whose total expenses were required in November 2012, pending the receipt of the decision to change the financial plan of the programme by the European Commission.

In particular, as a result of the e-mail dated 14/01/2013 with which the Representative of the European Commission informally attached the text of the Decision C(2012) 7627 dated 31/10/2012 to change the financial plan of the OP, the MA and the JTS prepare the above Application Forms despite the presence of an error in the text of the above mentioned Decision. This was done in order to ensure the acceleration of procedures for the drawing of grant contracts and partnership agreements, pending the receipt of the official text of the correct Decision. This correct text was informally transmitted by the Representative of the European Commission through the e-mail dated 27/02/2013 which forwarded the Decision C(2013) 1080 dated 27/2/2013 amending Decision C(2012) 7627 dated 31/10/2012. The preliminary inquiry on the reprogrammed Application Forms carried out during January-February 2013 has allowed the MA, already in the aftermath of the receipt of the correct Decision and, more precisely, on the 01/03/2013, to notify the above three reprogrammed projects a note confirming the immediate start of the expenditure eligibility as well as indicating the delivery time of the duly signed Grant Agreement and Partnership agreement to the MA.

During March 2013, as a result of the verification by the JTS of the proper drafting of grant contracts and partnership agreements, the SIMIT and IMAGENX projects started their activities. The PIM ENERGETHICA project expressed the need for the Application Form to be further reviewed in consideration of a different distribution of partnership budget within the project WP. Following the above, the JTS, having received the new Application Form, processed the said Form and prepared a new assessment grid. As a result of such processing, the MA launched the written procedure at the Steering Committee, which was concluded on the 14 May 2013 (prot.note.: 8840) with the approval of the above grid and a cut in the originally approved project resources amounting to € 784,000. As a result of the notification to the lead partner on the outcome of the Steering Committee's decision and the acceptance of the reduction in the budget, the partnership undersigned the partnership agreement and the subsidy contract, by starting the activities in July 2013.

For a discussion of the main findings and progress in relation to the physical objectives of each strategic project, please refer to sections 3.1.1.2 and 3.2.1.2 .

A qualitative analysis of the overall results on the progress made in relation to the physical objectives defined in the Operational Programme is shown below.

Starting from the examination of the outcome of the first evaluation procedure - relating to ordinary projects - the first emerging aspect is that, in the light of a financial allocation on all the specific objectives included in the

OP, the actual admitted proposals for funding are only partly disrupted in the initial forecast for the allocation of resources amongst the objectives "activated" in the Notice.

More specifically, for two of the objectives of Axis I, i.e. for objective 1.2, relating to the improvement of cross-border accessibility and the reduction of environmental impact related to mobility, and for objective 1.4, aimed at strengthening the cross-border institutional partnership, it was not possible to identify interventions for admission to funding, while for Axis II, the only identified intervention within objective 2.2 absorbed only part of the available resources.

This lack of proposals did not result from a low quality level, but from a clear lack of participation and interest by the beneficiaries regarding such investment priorities. The attention of beneficiaries was indeed biased in particular towards certain areas of intervention of the Program.

With regard to Axis I, a concentration of creativity and resources was recorded, for example, around two objectives: objective 1.1 aimed at supporting research and innovation in the context of sustainable development, and objective 1.3 related to the joint development of potential tourism and the improvement of integrated tourist offer for which 4 interventions were eligible for funding for each of the two objectives.

On the other hand, for Axis II, the design proposals focused mainly on objective 2.1, concerning the protection of the environment and the exploitation of natural resources, and on objective 2.3, which aimed at the promotion of joint actions for the prevention of both natural and anthropogenic risks.

By performing the same analysis on the notice for **strategic projects** it also emerged that this case in line with the partial absorption of resources within the priority theme for which the same were previously allocated. This applies in particular to Axis I, for which the selected priority subject area was for the accessibility and sustainable transport for which there was a weak response in terms of demand from the territory, with just 50% of the funds allocated on the single project submitted and funded.

Instead the situation with regard to Axis II, is completely opposite since the volume of total requested funding exceeded by about three times that of the available resources, and it was necessary to change the financial plan of the program and to deduct the resources corresponding to 20% of the total resources of the OP, from Axis I to Axis II. With this change, notified by the Commission with Decisions C(2012) no. 7627 and C(2013) no.1080 all the strategic projects eligible for funding could be financed as well as those initially eligible but that could not be founded due to lack of resources. Currently the financed projects are 8 strategic projects that regularly started their activity between 2012 and the first half of 2013, albeit with a few initial delays, regularly implementing their activities. In the case of Axis II, the priority issues related to renewable energies and waste treatment were the sectors that benefited from the greater volume of resources, followed by the prevention of risks specifically linked to the coastal areas and the sea.

Table 4 below shows the design proposals submitted, financed, in progress and concluded within the two calls for ordinary regular and strategic projects:

Table 7 - Distribution of projects by ordinary notice and strategic notice

Axis/Specific Objective	Indicator	Projects							%
		Ordinary Presented	Strategic Presented	Ordinary Funded	Strategic Funded	Running	Revoked /Abandoned	Concluded	
		A		B		C	D	E	

Axis I: Competitiveness, innovation and research; sustainable development	N. Projects	54	2	8	1	1	-	8	16.07 %
1.1) Support research and innovation to promote sustainable development paths		19	0	4	0	0	-	4	21.05 %
1.2) Improve cross-border accessibility and strengthen transport systems with low environmental impact		2	2	0	1	1	-	-	25.00 %
1.3) Jointly develop the potential of tourism contributing to the improvement of the integrated tourist offer		32	0	4	0	0	-	4	12.50 %
1.4) Contribute to the strengthening of the institutional partnership in cross-border matters of the axis		1	0	0	0	0	-	-	0.00 %
Axis II: Environment, energy and risk prevention		26	15	9	7	8	-	8	39.02 %
2.1) Contribute to the protection of the environment through the protection, enhancement and monitoring of natural resources		12	4	4	2	3	-	3	37.50 %
2.2) Contribute to the development of renewable energy and energy efficiency		3	6	1	1	1	-	3	22.22 %
2.3) Promote joint actions for the prevention of risks, both natural and anthropogenic		10	5	3	4	4	-	3	46.67 %
2.4) Contribute to the strengthening of the institutional partnership in cross-border matters of Axis II		1	0	1	0	1	-	1	100.00 %
Axis III: technical assistance, advocacy, communication and publicity						-	-	-	
3.1) Ensure support actions for the implementation of the program, by improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the management system and P.O. monitoring						-	-	-	
Total		80	17	17	8	9		16	25.77 %

Specifically, maintaining a balance between the results of the first call and the second, based on the evidence gathered, the areas that would seem to be less "covered" are those of the improvement of cross-border mobility in the area and that relating to the strengthening of the institutional partnership of 'area of cooperation. On the other hand, projects aimed at supporting research and innovation aimed at fostering sustainable development paths as well as those aimed at jointly developing the potential of tourism as an improvement of the integrated tourist offer and those aimed at the prevention and mitigation of risks in cross-border appear to be those that have received greater interest at the local level.

It should thus be pointed out that the specific goal of "promoting joint actions for the prevention of both natural and anthropogenic risks" has been greatly enhanced by the recipients of the area of cooperation by recording the presence of 7 projects out of a total of 25 ordinary and strategic financed projects. The specific objective "contributing to the protection of the environment through the protection, enhancement, monitoring of natural resources" follows, with the presence of 6 projects and the objectives "supporting research and innovation to promote sustainable development paths" and "jointly developing the potential of tourism contributing to the improvement of the integrated tourist offer" with the financing of 4 projects, respectively for each of them.

These considerations are useful in grading the overall implementation process, but restrict the analysis only to the verification of the consistency between the financial allocations and projects approved for financing, and such an analysis would be partial and not fully comprehensive, more so in the presence of projects with often

a multi-dimensional nature and the positive impact which may have relevance in more than a strategic sector for the cooperation area as a whole.

In this regard, a deeper qualitative study allowed us to identify the different thematic areas of the programme that were more strongly and more weakly met by the implementation of the OP. A qualitative analysis was carried out as well which, although not formally supported by a strong methodological background, surpassing the one-dimensional approach to the classification project linked to specific objectives, has been able to bring out the potential effects of each project with respect to the various fields intercepted the PO.

Based on the results of this exercise, the table n. 5 below highlights the interdisciplinary nature of most of the selected projects. Deducting the type of effects that each initiative is potentially able to exercise with respect to the priority areas of the Programme in a direct and indirect manner¹, it is possible to observe how virtually all the projects are linked, both to the priority area, in an indirect manner, to one or more priorities of the OP, in some cases they are linked in a direct manner to several priority areas.

The results of this analysis therefore confirm the overall assessment of the capacity of the selected interventions to "cover" the thematic priorities identified at the Programme level. In other words, we can see how, even in the areas where there has been a limited capacity allocation of resources available, such as accessibility and transport, and strengthening the institutional capacity of the cross-border partnership, there are several initiatives which seem capable to positively affect and contribute to the achievement of the targets.

¹ There is talk of direct effect when the outcome from an intervention is directly linked to the prevailing road and in its implementation; indirect effect when it comes to a result obtained from a secondary intervention is the outcome of its implementation with respect to another result more directly related to the same

Table 8 Overview of correlation between projects and Program priority areas

Project Acronym	Object	Type	Ob. P.O.	PRIORITY AREAS								
				R&I	Accessibility & sustainable transport	Tourism	Institutional Strengthening (Axis I)	Safeguard and enhancing of natural resources	Renewable energy	Risk prevention	Institutional strengthening (Axis II)	
Euro South Hub	Research centre, aggregation, services and incubator for projects and social companies aimed at the cultural, social and entrepreneurship of the human patrimony.	O	1.1	■		□	□					
Promed	Protection of the environment in the Mediterranean islands through the improvement of an arboreal cultural system.	O	1.1	■				■		□	□	
T-Cheesimal	Study and qualification of traditional dairy products by utilising new creations and technologies through a network of producers, consumers, research and public education	O	1.1	■		□	□					
Lithos	The establishment of an international research centre on <i>stereotemia</i> , aimed at studying, renovating and constructive sustainable testing	O	1.1	■			■					
Garmed	Creation of a gardens' network in Malta and Sicily to promote an economic and environmental sustainability through the creation and promotion of tourist circuits	O	1.3				■	■				
Sibit	Support local development aimed at safeguarding the natural and cultural environment through bike tourism as a sustainable model to exploit and valorise the territory	O	1.3		□	■	■	□				
Obimed	Development of the integrated tourism potential through the widening and consolidation of the operational collaboration and relations between companies, educational institutions and other socio-economic stakeholders which are active in the tourism sector.	O	1.3		□	■	□					
Archeaotour	Formulation of a management approach which integrates interventions related to promotion, conservation and accessibility in the archaeological sites	O	1.3			■	■					
Moriso	Monitoring water resources together with interventions for the control of marine intrusion and for the reduction in pollution from agricultural activities	O	2.1	■				■			□	
Remasi	Integrated actions aimed at increasing and disseminating the knowledge related to natural resources, SIC and geo-sites in	O	2.1			□		■			□	

Project Acronym	Object	Type	Ob. P.O.	PRIORITY AREAS							
				R&I	Accessibility & sustainable transport	Tourism	Institutional Strengthening (Axis I)	Safeguard and enhancing of natural resources	Renewable energy	Risk prevention	Institutional strengthening (Axis II)
	Sicily and Malta for the promotion of awareness actions to safeguard biodiversity in the local communities and to create interventions for the development and sustainable fruition of the sites										
Panacea	Promotion, development and monitoring of the Sicilian and Maltese SMEs aimed at an improved management, integration and promotion of the environmental and scientific value	O	2.1	□		□		■			□
Simbiotic	Strengthening of the planning, management and renovation of some Sicilian south easterly coastal areas and the reactivation of stepping stones in the Mediterranean area of the agricultural landscape in Gozo to increase the ecological connectivity in cross border areas	O	2.1	□		□		■			
Resi	Definition of common strategies aimed at specifically increasing the availability of solar and renewable energy	O	2.2						■		
Calypso	Finalisation of a monitoring system for currents, wind and waves in the Maltese channel aimed at the monitoring and support in the eventuality of accidents and/or emergencies (e.g. oil pollution)	O	2.3	■						■	
Vamos Seguro	Creation of an automatic system for the monitoring and forecast of volcanic ash dispersion in cross border areas also aimed at the identification of those areas which should be declared as no-fly zones	O	2.3	■	■					■	
Respira	Population sample testing in Malta and Gela aimed at determining the relationship between health and the exposure to pollution through an analysis of the main risk factors.	O	2.3	■						■	□
Water front	Promotion for the exchange of experiences and dissemination of good practices for territorial planning by improving the area's	O	2.4								■

Project Acronym	Object	Type	Ob. P.O.	PRIORITY AREAS							
				R&I	Accessibility & sustainable transport	Tourism	Institutional Strengthening (Axis I)	Safeguard and enhancing of natural resources	Renewable energy	Risk prevention	Institutional strengthening (Axis II)
	environmental conditions										
Streets	Actions aimed at the improvement of the transport chain and the strengthening in the integration of the different transport systems in the 2 islands to support the TEN-T corridor 5	S	1.2		■						
CrimSafri	Creation of an Italian-Maltese research centre for environmental sustainability and renewable sources	S	2.2						■		□
Biodivalue	Utilisation of the operational tools in support of the local administrators and operators of maritime navigation, which are useful in limiting the harmful effects generated by operational pollution arising from industrial, commercial fishing and recreational activities in the Sicilian channel	S	2.1		□				■	□	
PortPvev	Installation of photovoltaic panels on public buildings port areas in Malta and Catania with the produced energy serving to power electric vehicles for the loading and unloading in port areas	S	2.2		□				■		
ImagenX	Creation of a cross-border network of users, health professionals, administrators, and Sicilians and Maltese researchers created to promote prevention and surveillance actions on breast cancer.	S	2.3	■						■	□
PIM Energethica	Adoption, dissemination and capitalization of innovative systems for the management of waste processing aimed at the transformation of "cost refusal" in "integrative economic income" for the operators on the Territory	S	2.3						□	■	□
Simit	Construction of an integrated system of civil protection between Sicilian and Maltese subjects for the activities of prediction, prevention and mitigation of risks, planning, and management of emergencies to extend to cross-border countries.	S	2.3							■	□
Vienergy	Reduction in the dependency on traditional energy sources and development of technologies related to the generation of energy from renewable sources, as well as specific objectives from the reduction of polluting emissions and sustainable waste disposal in the wine producing sector	S	2.3						□	■	

Legend: (O) ordinary project, (S) strategic project; (▪) direct effect, (◻) indirect effect;

With regard to the consistency of the actions of the OP with respect to the renewed Lisbon Strategy it is emphasised that the 17 selected operations in the first call - ordinary projects - and the first call - strategic projects - help to promote the competitiveness of the border directly through actions that foster research and innovation for sustainable development of the territory and its resources.

The maturity level of project proposals approved, provides real added value to the project base of the cross-border area with concrete actions to fully achieve the objectives set, in line with the main local assets (tourism, cultural heritage, natural and environmental resources). As will be described in sections 3.1.1.2 and 3.2.1.2 of "qualitative analysis" respectively for Axis I and Axis II, the 17 ordinary projects and the 8 approved strategic projects contribute directly to the creation of scientific and technological networks, the enhancement of research capacity, development and innovation, promoting, among other things, institutional partnerships among government agencies, universities and business organizations.

With regard to the consistency of the actions of the OP with respect to the principle of equal opportunities, it should be noted that on the basis of the selection criteria approved by the Monitoring Committee in 2008, the competence to identify specific criteria awards for enhancing the project proposals with a clear contribution to the following themes was transferred to the Executive Committee:

- Specific actions to remove barriers to participation, ensuring that all project activities are actually accessible and made accessible to all groups at risk of discrimination (age, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability, religion);
- Programming of information campaigns free from prejudice, which increase the awareness of the issues of the promotion of equal opportunities and social inclusion.

Based on the completed projects and those at implementation stage, there are various operations that promote actions whose impact is in line with the above-mentioned reward requirements. As an example the following regular projects can be recalled:

ARCHAEOTUR: has realised at the site of Ta 'Bistra a center for visitors using innovative promotion (3D video, educational programs, use of, ICT equipment such as touch screens and kiosks to provide information and multimedia images) giving particular attention to the appearance of use by the most fragile groups (children and the disabled).

OBIMED: has increased, among other things, the attractiveness of the Programme territories and promote employment especially among women, utilising the most innovative communication technologies.

T-CHEESIMAL: has realised, as part of the census of dairy farms, a specific industry study on "the role of women in the chain of production and marketing of the dairy industry."

THE HUB: has realised among others, laboratories linked to businesses, social innovation and eco-sustainable economy and organized initiatives primarily aimed at young people and women that enter the labour market.

As an example, the following strategic project should also be recalled:

Axis III

With reference to the levels of advancement Axis III, in 2012, the Managing Authority and the National Coordination Authority Maltese, supported by the Joint Technical Secretariat and the National Contact Point in Malta, have constantly monitored the implementation of activities as well as procedural and financial progress

of the ordinary projects and strategic plan in line with the Technical Assistance approved by the Monitoring Committee.

For a discussion of the main findings and progress in relation to the physical objectives of each project, please refer to sections 3.1.1.2 and 3.2.1.2.

With reference to the ordinary projects funded through Notice 01/2009, during 2013, the Management Authority supported by the Joint Technical Secretariat made a timely reconnaissance and collection of outputs and products made in the context of each project, in line with the achievement indicators provided by the approved Application Form.

In particular, the lead partners forwarded, to the Managing Authority, the material produced and made within each project work package in original copies and electronic copy from the beginning of the project until the 31/12/2012 in order to allow the Joint Technical Secretariat to proceed, during the first half of 2013, with the verification of the physical progress and the implementation status of achievement and result indicators achieved from the beginning of each project up to 31/12/2012.

The methodology used to achieve the above work was the analysis of the content of Annex A - Administrative-technical reports of the intermediate validated applications for reimbursement in regard to which the following have been verified:

- the consistency between the activities carried out from the beginning of the project to the 31/12/2012, as described in the respective sections 5 "Activities carried out during the reference period" of the intermediate requests for reimbursement, and those in the Application Form as indicated in sections 4 of the same documents;
- the consistency between the values of implementation and communication indicators and the outputs required by the MA with prot. note.1902 of the 30/01/2013 and transmitted by the Lead Partner with notes officially recorded within the protocol of the Planning Department. The outputs achieved were presented through hard and digital supports, photographic documentation, copies of materials made and informative and promotional literature.
- the progress of targets provided in the Application Form for the following types of indicators: implementation, result, and program. With regard to the communication indicators, not provided for in the AF, the produced outputs derive from the implementation of the Communication plan for each project approved by the Steering Committee based on independent consistency assessments.

The documentation subject of the verification was regularly filed at the Dipartimento della Programmazione – Piazza Sturzo 36, Palermo – Servizio V - 1° Piano – stanza n. 2. For each project a dedicated file has been created, dedicated to the collection of outputs that during 2014 will be further implemented as a consequence of the verification of the outputs produced in the period 01/01/2013 –end of the project.

With reference to the strategic projects, during 2013, the MA and the MNCA, constantly supported by JTS, by ensuring the successful launch of the funded projects as a consequence of the change in the financial plan of the program and the correct implementation of those undertaken during 2012.

Regarding the projects undertaken during 2013, the activity developed in support to the start of the projects has enabled the achievement of the following results: proper drawing up and signing of partnership contracts and subsidy contracts; constitution of steering committees and approval of their respective regulations; kick-off of design meetings; and creation of direct meetings and plenary sessions regarding both the correct physical, financial and procedural monitoring method and the correct reporting and compilation mode for reimbursement requests.

The aforesaid activity guaranteed the correct projects start-up and the simultaneous implementation of initial expenditure regularly reported, checked, verified and subsequently inserted within the expenses certification submitted to the European Commission.

A similar support activity toward the strategic projects undertaken during 2012 was carried out by the MA, MNCA and JTS in order to overcome the physiological implementation difficulties that arose during the natural implementation of the projects.

Through the participation in the projects steering committees, regular direct meetings and monthly bilateral meetings amongst the projects partners and the program authorities, it was possible to ensure both the continuation of the activities of each project and the drawing up of the administrative and accounting documentation for the submission of monitoring and reporting of reimbursement applications.

2.2 Compliance with Community law

During the implementation of the OP no problems were encountered relating to compliance with Community law.

With regard to the application of Community legislation on public procurement it should be noted that all public procedures activated under Axis I II and III were carried out in full compliance with Community legislation and, in particular, the specific rules of the EC Treaty and Directives 2004/17/EC and 2004/18/EC of the European Parliament and the Council, the Commission Interpretative Communication on the Community law applicable to public procurement C (2006) 3158 of 24 July 2006, and the relevant legislation implementing national and regional level.

In particular, with regards to the Axis I and II of the OP, the public tender for the selection of strategic projects - the second phase was initiated by a notice published in the Official Gazette of the Region of Sicily on July 1, 2011 and in the mainstream media and Official web sites in Sicily and Malta. Such a public selection procedure took account of compliance with Community legislation in the sector and in particular the provision on the communication and information to potential beneficiaries as provided for in Regulation 1828/2006. With regard to national and regional legislation it should be noted that the Managing Authority has taken account of the various provisions regarding "administrative proceedings" pursuant to Law 241/90 and subsequent amendments and L: r n.10/2012.

With reference to Axis III of OP – with the Beneficiary being Sicilian Region (MA), it should be noted that, all procedures activated were performed in compliance with the Legislative Decree of 12 April 2006, no. 163 "Code of public contracts for works, services and supplies in implementation of Directives 2004/17/EC and 2004/18/EC" published in the Official Gazette of the Italian Republic no. 100 of 2 May 2006. Below is a list of the public procedures undertaken during 2013 by the MA:

SUBJECT OF THE PROCEDURE	AWARDED AMOUNT	REFERENCE LEGISLATION
Acquisition of goods and services related to the activities of maintenance and evolution of the information system for the monitoring of cooperation programs to support the Italia-Malta PPOO and Italia-Tunisia OP 2007-2013	89,325.00	Legislative Decree 12 April 2006, 163
Services for the design and implementation of communication, information and advertising measures and the typographical promotional products within the Italia-Malta PO 2007 2013	136,150.00	Legislative Decree 12 April2006, 163
Acquisition managed directly through piecework on trust, for the award of service for the participation in the second edition of the Day of European Cooperation 2013 of the CBC program ENPI CBC ITALIA- MALTA; ITALIA- UNISIA 2007 - 2013	9,859.85	Legislative Decree 12 April2006, 163

With reference to Axis III of the OP - beneficiary national Maltese Coordinating authority it should be noted that all activated procedures were carried out in compliance with the national reference legislation.

SUBJECT OF THE PROCEDURE	AWARDED AMOUNT	REFERENCE LEGISLATION
Staff and contact point	€ 70,516.80	National legislation in the field of labour relations
Acquisition of goods and services related to the activities of organization of a Task Force Meeting in January 2013, a seminar in February 2013 and another info-session in April 2013	€ 1,090.35	Legal Notice no. 296/2010
Travel costs from November 2012 to November 2013 including the participation in the Monitoring Committees and other meetings organized	€ 3,624.38	Legal Notice no. 296/2010 and national tariffs relating to the daily allowance
Acquisition of services for the official translation of the documents of the Italia Malta OP 2007-2013	€ 1,921.09	Legal Notice no. 296/2010

2.3 Significant problems encountered and measures to resolve them

During the implementation of the OP no significant problems were encountered, as reported by the same Annual Verification Report.

2.4 Changes within the implementation

During the implementation of the OP no significant changes intervened regarding the legislative framework. It is useful to remember that due to the effect of the entry into force of Law no. dated 27 March 2013, "Transitional rules for the establishment of free municipal Consortia" published in GURS no 16, dated 29 March 2013, the nine regional Provinces were abolished in Sicily. This situation inevitably produced operational and organizational difficulties for the ordinary projects: PANACEA, SIBIT, WATERFRONT, LITHOS and RESI respectively coordinated by the lead partners of the Provincia Regionale di Siracusa, Provincia Regionale di Agrigento, Provincia Regionale di Trapani and Provincia Regionale di Ragusa.

In relation to the socio-economic system of the cooperation area, it is necessary to emphasize that in 2013 a highly negative peak was registered linked to the scenario of the Sicilian and Maltese economy already characterized by serious structural problems. In fact, based on the analysis of the socio-economic context conducted by the MA for the requirements of the 2014-2020 planning activities, it was possible to highlight that the entire territory of the area, with particular reference to the Sicilian economy, was afflicted with a drop in domestic demand, both as regards household consumption, and in terms of investment. Moreover, the adverse effects of the economic recession occurred through a worsening of the labour market with very low employment rates for the Sicilian territory. The impact of the fall of employment on the incomes of families generated as a result the increase in values of poverty indicators and social inequality. The available indicators show a deterioration of the Sicilian economic situation higher than the average national figures, both regarding the economic activity and that of employment. The regional GDP of Sicily, with a growth of 0.3 % which stopped in 2010 with a downturn occurring in 2008-2009 (-6.0 %), ending 2013 with a decline of -1.3 %.

In addition to the macroeconomic situation described above, the MA was able to verify with constant monitoring actions carried out on the approved operations, a hardship situation for various public Italian beneficiaries. In fact, these types of beneficiaries were not able, during 2013, to provide consistency in the payment of various supplies of goods and services acquired within the project activities for the following reasons:

- constraints of the "stability pact" imposed by the national legislation system;
- negative outcome of the "single contribution payment certificate" DURC required by Italian beneficiaries to the INPS telematics system in order to settle the invoices for the delivery of services and/or goods purchased with funds from the Italia-Malta OP 2007-2013.

The situation described above caused significant delays both with reference to the advancement of the expenditure and in relation to the progress of tasks.

Here are the various summarized actions undertaken by the MA to cope with issues related to 'force majeure' former Art. 96(c) of the Reg. (EC) 1083/2006.

Through e-mail dated 14/01/2013, the representative of the European Commission informally attached the text of Decision C(2012) 7627 dated 31/10/2012, the MA continued to provide informal guarantees on the acceleration of the compilation procedures for Subsidy Contracts and Partnership Agreements, in a more timely and accurate manner than before, pending the receipt of the official text of the Decision. Finally, as a result of the e-mail dated 27/02/2013, sent by the European Commission's representative, to which the Decision C(2013) 1080 dated 27/2/2013 was informally attached, as an amendment to Decision C(2012) 7627 dated 31/10/2012, the MA on the 01/03/2013 diligently attached a document to the three strategic projects (Attachment 2) to confirm the launch of the expense eligibility process on the 01/03/2013, as well as indicating the delivery deadline for the Subsidy Contracts and Partnership Agreement, to be duly submitted. The change in the financial plan of the OP, regarded a deduction of public funds for an amount of €7,060,299, corresponding to 20% of the total resources of the OP, from Axis I to Axis II, in order to enable the funding of 3 Strategic projects (SIMIT, IMAGENX, PIM ENERGETHICA) included in the list of "eligible projects and not eligible for financing" due to lack of resources.

Due to the time gap of four months occurring between the Decision bearing the text error (31 October 2012) and the correct Decision of approval of the amendment to the financial plan of the OP (27 February 2013), in May 2013, the MA forwarded to the European Commission a request of restatement of the 2013 spending target. This request became necessary because of the block in internal administrative procedures that did not enable the MA to formalise the grant contracts with the lead partners of strategic projects eligible for funding and to forward them to the Court of Auditors for the necessary legality. Therefore, the MA sent to the Court of Auditors the decrees, which approved the subsidy contracts drawn up with the lead partners of SIMIT, IMAGENX and PIM ENERGETHICA projects, only in May 2013.

In September 2013, the MA did not receive any response from the EC and it transmitted a further note to restate the 2013 spending target by invoking the '*force majeure*' former Art. 96 (C) of Reg. (EC) 1083/2006 which caused direct consequences on the implementation of part of the program. It was also argued, in the request, that within the meaning of L. 32/2000 and Deliberation 92/2009/PREV of the Court of Auditors - control section for the Region of Sicily in the Chamber of Council on the 26 October 2009 - it is necessary for the administration to proceed with the transmission of documents to the Court of Auditors for the legality of general and special acts required by the MA for interventions with the contribution of Community funds.

The recourse to Art. 96(c) of Reg. (EC) 1083/2006 was the subject of clarification and additional information by the Managing Authority that, in November 2013, in response to a request from the European Commission, clarified all the circumstances to substantiate the cumulative existence of the three requirements clarified by the Court of Justice relating to appeal to force majeure or: (a) beyond the control of the person invoking force majeure; (b) unpredictable and beyond normal events; (c) that could not have been avoided in spite of the behaviour of the “due care” of the reasonable and prudent man adopted by the person invoking cases of force majeure.

On the same occasion, the Management Authority forwarded instruments to prove the serious repercussions generated by the failure to notify the Decision in relation to the sound management of the OP. In this regard the impossibility of the MA was further reaffirmed, in line with the regional and national legislation, to undertake legally binding commitments that could ensure the approval of the contracts with the lead partners of the strategic projects.

During December 2013, the Italia Malta Programme registered a decommitment of resources for € 2,998,685 (ERDF) that stood well below the initial request for restatement of the 2013 target of € 5,549,337 (ERDF). This demonstrates the fact that the MA and the MNCA during the months between March 2013 and December 2013 ensured the acceleration of all the procedures able to mitigate the risk of decommitment.

2.5 Significant changes

During the implementation of the OP, no substantial changes in accordance with Art. 57 of Reg. (EC) 1083/2006 took place.

2.6 Complementarity with other tools

During 2013, the implementation process of the Italy-Malta OP came into full effect with the 17 approved operations and 5 strategic projects, and this has necessarily required a joint and coordination activity with other financial instruments in use in the cross-border territory. This activity has been ensured by the Managing Authority for the Italian side, and by the Maltese National Coordination Authority for the Maltese side.

With regard to the activities carried out by the MA, it should be noted that the latter performs the same functions within the context of the ERDF Sicily 2007-2013 OP and the CBC ENPI Italy-Tunisia OP. The activity of demarcation of the operations funded by the Italy-Malta OP with the other two programmes co-financed by the ERDF and by the ENPI fund is ensured by the Department of Regional Planning through the action of Service V.

Compared to the coordination and joint action with other programs (ESF Sicily 2007-2013 OP, FEP 2007-2013 OP, PSR Sicily 2007-2013 and PAR FAS 2007-2013, it is reported that the Programming Department participated in the Monitoring Committee meetings of the above mentioned programmes through its own representative and ensures, among other things, a specific action on the preparation, updating and implementation of the Single Programming Document SPD Sicily and of other planning tools. The Single Programming Document (SPD) 2007-2013, prepared in accordance with the community's Cohesion Policy reform, has provided for the joining of the Regional Community planning policy (funded through the Structural Funds) with the regional National planning policy (funded by the national co-financing structural funds and the Fund for Underused Areas - FUA).

The Maltese National Coordination Authority forms part of the Funds and Programmes Division (FPD) within the Ministry for European Affairs and Implementation of the Political Manifesto. The FPD performs the same

functions with regards to the CBC MED, INTERREG IVC and ENPI programmes. In addition to this a separate Division called the Planning and Priorities Coordination Division and also falling under the same Ministry acts as Managing Authority for the mainstream ERDF and Cohesion Fund (Operation Programme I) and ESF (Operational Programme II) programmes. The demarcation activity of the operations funded by the Italy-Malta OP with the other programmes co-financed by the Cohesion Fund, by the ERDF and by the ESF is ensured through participation in the Inter-ministerial Coordination Committee on EU Infrastructure and Productive Funding that discusses the projects selected as part of the various Programmes, including the Italy-Malta 2007-2013 OP.

During the implementation phase of the Programme, no overlapping action between programmes and projects was observed during the selection process for strategic projects whose selection procedures were initiated during 2013.

2.7 Monitoring and evaluation

During 2013 the MA implemented all the necessary activities to ensure an adequate monitoring system of approved operations (ordinary and strategic projects).

During 2013 the public procurement procedure was completed to entrust of adaptation, maintenance and evolution services of the application "Sea Monitoring System 2007-2013" for implementation, monitoring, reporting, monitoring and certification activities of the operations of Italia Malta OP 2007-2013. The service was awarded to the company Artensys s.r.l. with headquarters in Naples. The contract was signed on the 26/09/2013, therefore the start-up of the system will occur during the second half of 2014.

Consistent with the recommendations of the European Commission, with reference to the compliance opinion on the description of the System of Management and Control of the OP, with n. 6015 of 12 July 2010, the Managing Authority, with the support of the JTS has taken steps to use the monitoring system called SRTP, in line with the provisions of the CIPE. 36 of 15/06/2011.

During 2013, **the monitoring system** was regularly performed using the SRTP system made available by MEF-IGRUE with appropriate license for use by the MA in 2009. The system allows the carrying out of the collection and transmission of certified expenditure within the OP (Axis I, II and III) to the Unitary database of IGRUE - Ministry of Economy and Finance and also allows to:

- Record the implementation data;
- Interrogate the central system and receive the context data
- Manage the application users
- Determine and forward the advance data (delta)
- Check and monitor the forwarding of advance data
- Receive the transmission results (aggregated and detail, also to be exported in excel)"

During 2013, **the management and implementation system** was performed with the same system already used in 2012. In particular, through the realization of an excel file - with a locking and password system - in bilingual mode with automatic release of Pivot tables and the possibility to record the following information:

1. Section 1 Generation operation / extreme commitment
2. Section 2 General references
3. Section 3 Document Expense
4. Section 4 Payment Document
5. Section 5 Monitoring
6. Section 6 Reporting
7. Section 7 First Control Level
8. Section 8 only for partners Maltese First Level Control of FPD
9. Section 9 Check leader
10. Section 10 Application for reimbursement
11. Section 11 Certification

12. Section 12 Control II level

13. Section 13 Data transmission BDU-IGRUE

Through the application of Pivot tables, the system, which is accessed through a password issued by the MA is able to track all the movements of expenditure made in the Programme and follow the same compared to all the stages outlined above.

In relation to the **works of the Monitoring Committee**, during 2013 the said program governance body met on 18 October in Palermo, at the headquarters of the Dipartimento regionale della Programmazione. During this meeting the MA proceeded to:

- acknowledge the progress status of the OP as at the 30/09/2013, according to the update presented by JTS regarding the implementation of regular projects and the presentation of recently funded strategic projects;
- acknowledge the progress of the OP communication plan, based on the report carried out by the JTS relating also to the events of more relevant communications made during 2013 in Sicily and Malta, namely the participation in the EC Day 2013;
- approve the procedures for the financing of additional and consistent actions for the ordinary projects, drawing from the possible savings in the projects and alternatively to the achievement of 2013 spending targets on the entire OP;
- acknowledge the progress of the request for the revaluation of the 2013 spending target made by the Managing Authority, as illustrated by the representative of the European Commission;
- approve the restructuring of the 2013 Technical Assistance Plan;
- acknowledge the programming path of the Italia Malta OP 2014-2020, based on the report of the Joint Technical Secretariat on the results of the task forces carried out so far together with the information provided by the MA about the status of the negotiations on the eligible areas identified as core and additional areas;
- acknowledge the information notice from AA about the ACR 2013, as a result of the synthesis of content made by the AA representative on the content of the information regarding the annual control report 2012, the activities linked to the report 2013 and the start of the 2014 activities.

During 2013, moreover, 2 written procedures were started and concluded.

The first was launched on the 14/02/2013 and ended on the 19/04/2013 with the approval of the *on-going* assessment document *on the Italia Malta 2007-2013 program*, drawn up on the basis of the mid-term evaluation carried out by the *Nucleo di Valutazione e Verifica degli Investimenti Pubblici Sicilia*, analysing financial data as at the 31/12/2011 and on the procedural advance data as at the 31/05/2012, according to the methodology indicated in section 2.7 of AIR 2012.

The second was started on the 18/06/2013 for the approval of AIR 2012 and ended on the 27/06/2013 .

2.7.1 Executive Committee

The Executive Committee of the OP worked in close cooperation with the Monitoring Committee, which submitted 8 written procedures, during 2013, namely:

- with the procedure started on the 3/01/2013 and ended on the 17/01/2013 for the reprogramming of the ordinary regular projects MORISO, RESI and SIBIT which was approved;
- with the procedure started on the 25/01/2013 and ended on the 5/02/2013 for the evaluation grid of the CRIM SAFRI project which was approved, subjected to a new approval from JTS following the surrender of the partner "Ministry for Resources and Rural Affairs" and the subsequent replacement of the same with the partner "Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology" and "Malta Intelligent Energy Management Agency";
- with the procedure started on the 5/02/2013 ended on the 19/02/2013 for the reprogramming with extension of the GARDMED project which was approved;
- with the procedure started on the 3/04/2013 ended on the 12/04/2013 for the reprogramming with extension of the RESPIRA project which was approved;
- with the procedure started on the 5/04/2013 ended on the 12/04/2013 for the reprogramming with extension of the ARCHEOTUR, OBIMED, PROMED, CALYPSO and LITHOS projects which was approved;
- with the procedure started on the 30/04/2013 and ended on the 14/05/2013 for the evaluation grid of the strategic project ENERGETHICA PIM, subjected to new approval by the JTS, and the reprogramming of the regular projects T-CHEESIMAL, SIMBIOTIC, THE HUB and PANACEA which were approved;
- with the procedure started on the 17/06/2013 and ended on the 2/07/2013 for the reprogramming with extension of the projects WATERFRONT, SIBIT and PROMED which was approved;
- with the procedure started on the 8/08/2013 and ended on the 5/09/2013 for the reprogramming with further extension of the RESPIRA project which was approved.

3. IMPLEMENTATION OF PRIORITY AXIS

3.1 Axis I - Competitiveness: innovation and research; sustainable development

3.1.1 Achievement of the objectives and analysis of the progress

3.1.1.1 Financial and material progress

Table 9.a - allocated and disbursed amounts

Axis I	Total contribution (A)	Financial implementation			
		Allocated amounts (b)	Payments (c)	Allocated amounts (b/a) %	Allocated amounts (b)
COMPETITIVENESS: INNOVATION AND RESEARCH, SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT	10,319,146	10,314,520	7,694,501	99.96%	74.57%

Table 10.a Priority Axis I Objectives

INDICATORS AT PRIORITY AXIS LEVEL	UNIT OF MEASURE	TARGET	SOURCE	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
R&ST projects that involve public entities, research institutions, Universities and enterprise organisations	Number	5	Annual monitoring and end of programme	0	0	5	3	14
Projects that promote actions of awareness even to SME's for the utilisation of eco-compatible models in the tourism sector, management and supply of natural resources	Number	2	Annual monitoring and end of programme	0	0	7	7	12
Projects of territorial marketing and joint promotion of tourism and cultural potential of the cross-border area	Number	2	Annual monitoring and end of programme	0	0	5	4	6
Projects aimed at the improvement of the coordination and accessibility of transportation systems in the programme area	Number	3	Annual monitoring and end of programme	0	0	2	1	3
Projects of promotion in favour of the reconversion of the transport system respecting environmental sustainability and with particular reference to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions	Number	1	Annual monitoring and end of programme	0	0	0	0	2

Projects aimed at the realisation and promotion of a brand of environmental sustainability even for the minor islands of the programme area	Number	1	Annual monitoring and end of programme	0	0	1	1	3
Projects that promote the strengthening of the institutional partnership in the cross-border area	Number	2	Annual monitoring and end of programme	0	0	6	4	6

Table 9.a above shows the financial progress of Axis I and highlights the total resources committed, resulting from binding deeds in relation to payments made for certified expenses as at the 31/12/2013. The data shows a significant progress on the commitments amounting to 99.96% of the balances issued for the Axis at OP level that correspond to € 10,314,520. Consequently, on the 31/12/2013 expenses for an amount of € 7,694,501, which correspond to 74.57%, were certified.

The indicators show that the implementation can be split in two phases.

The first consisted in the processing of claims for reimbursement n. 02, 03 and 04 duly verified and validated by the Management Authority as at 31/12/2013. In particular, in the context of this activity, consideration was given to the physical progress of each individual project and the progress of expenditure declared. This was possible through the analysis of groups of indicators that have enabled the verification of the quality of the actions completed or in progress compared to planned activities.

The second phase of the survey was dedicated to the thorough examination of the coherence between the implementation indicators and results provided by the Lead Partners of the ordinary projects in the applications for reimbursement, and the output of the products developed under each project as at 31/12/2012 and accepted by the Managing Authority following a formal request addressed to all the Leaders of the ordinary projects that took place with note prot. 1902 dated 30/01/2013.

Based on the methodology described above, steps were taken to develop tables 5.a, 5.a1, 5.a2 and 5.a3 where the following data has been reported:

- **Tabella 10.a:** number of operations that registered progress with respect to the implementation indicators of the OP;
- **Tabella 10.a1:** actual progress achieved by the operations listed in Table 5.a within the framework of the programmed indicators at project level;
- **Tabella 10.a2:** actual progress achieved by the operations funded under Axis II within the framework of the indicators at project level;
- **Tabella 10.a3:** actual progress achieved by the operations listed in Table 5.a within the framework of the communication indicators.

Hereunder, it is reported the main progress achieved by each operations within Axis I of the OP

THE HUB – The project has created a research, aggregation, services hub and an incubator for projects and social enterprise active between Malta, Syracuse and Lampedusa, through the creation of both physical and virtual hub spaces, on the model already experienced in about 40 cities around the world. Within the spaces of Ortigia (Syracuse) and Lampedusa, the hubber manage laboratories linked to business, social innovation and sustainable economy and organise initiatives primarily aimed at entrepreneurs, young people, who face for the first time the working world, and women. The 2.0 technological component has enabled the project to network and share the main results of the project with the hubbers' virtual community thanks to the support of a specifically created platform. The technology developed within the project has allowed users the transition from two-dimensional (like for example Facebook) to the more immersive three-dimensional world (similar to Second Life), capable of reproducing the actions of a physical hub. At this stage, some experiments of "augmented reality" were pre-designed with the purpose to use the ITC to strengthen the connectivity between hubs and users. By mixing digital interactions, virtual and physical, the project THE HUB therefore contributes to growth of its own social network and the attraction of new members and users. The networking activities of THE HUB through the international network also led to the joint organization of activities with The Hub centres in London, Barcelona, Madrid, Brussels and Stockholm.

T-CHEESIMAL – The exploitation of peasants' traditions, the technological innovations and the transfer of skills are the outlines that characterized the activities of the T-CHEESIMAL project and that have allowed the qualification of Sicilian and Maltese milk products, having a high content of biodiversity. Starting from the characterization of the Maltese territorial context and production companies operating in the dairy sector, the analysis carried out by the project partnership has defined the physical-chemical, aromatic-sensory and microbiological parameters of samples of milk and cheese that distinguish productions in different geographical areas of Malta. In particular, through a study for the traceability of the product, which was carried out by CoRFILaC with the contribution of the University of Malta, the characterization and evaluation of important nutritional components present in forages, transferred to milk and then in the sampled cheese was reached. Simultaneously, the territorial analysis has allowed us to identify and catalogue the forage plants within the Maltese territory that have effects on the organoleptic characteristics of milk and cheese, allowing the construction of a herbarium and a photographic archive containing a copy of each vegetable type identified, classified and dried. These results have been achieved thanks to the analysis conducted at the CoRFILaC Sicilian laboratories, equipped with advanced technological instruments, which have allowed the study of the origin and traceability of the aromatic and olfactory components demonstrating the significant influence of the territory on the quality of the final product. The skills gained over the design research stage were subsequently submitted and shared with consumers, operators in the sector, restaurateurs and the Maltese people retailing through the organization of information sessions aimed at the transfer of the technological, quality, sensory and nutritional know-how linked to Sicilian and Maltese traditional cheeses. This activity was accompanied by a marketing study, conducted by DI.S.P.A., on the labelling of dairy products and the creation of a packaging prototype for the typical Maltese and Sicilian cheeses, both jointly and individually.

LITHOS – The LITHOS project has created an International Research Centre on stereotomy and stone materials headquartered in the territory of the Province of Ragusa and a branch in Malta, with complimentary roles. The seat of the Sicilian centre is within *Palazzo La Rocca*, one of the eighteen sites included in the UNESCO world heritage of the province of Ragusa. The Centre is currently equipped with a specialized library with different manuscript sources and prints on stereotomy (as an original copy or as a copy for the rare texts). An area of the centre has been reserved for the Museum of stereotomy, the first in Sicily, where drawings, projections, three-dimensional models, fragments, and iconographical findings of exemplary architectures for the use of stone are exhibited. The project has also created a Research Laboratory specializing in the

knowledge of physical-mechanical characteristics of stones and in the diagnostics of the degradation it is subjected to. The staff's competences in the laboratory and instrumentation acquired have allowed the exchange and transfer of skills with Maltese artisans and apprentices engaged in the restoration of one of the facades of the Inquisitor's Palace in Birgu, where stereotomic techniques studied within the LITHOS project were adopted. The Centre, attracts scholars and professionals in the stone industry, and will serve as a collector of the investigations carried out directly on the field and as a promoter of scientific and informative activities, even through a computer network with other research centres in Europe and in the Mediterranean.

PROMED – The activity of the PROMED project has experienced the cultivation of vine and the exploitation of its derivatives as remuneration system for the protection of territories, of the smaller islands of Sicily and Malta, from erosion. Following the identification of the areas undergoing the risk of erosion through the detection of data regarding the use of soil, the acquisition of the climatological cartography of territories and local surveys, the project partnership has identified the Sicilian and Maltese areas where the vines were planted, and differentiated according to the best cultivation conditions. These surveys were made on the entire territory of the islands of Linosa and Pantelleria and a good part of the island of Malta. Following the onsite surveying activity, the oenological experimentation followed at the Cantina Dalmasso of Marsala (TP), as well as directly at the selected companies, which has allowed the winemaking and bottling of PROMED wines. These wines were also presented during numerous international events including the 2012 and 2013 editions of Vinitaly - International Wine and Spirits Exhibition, one of the most important trade fairs in Europe, within this sector. The results arising from the implementation of a Geographical Information System on the islands of Linosa, Pantelleria and Malta, and the experimental wines made, have led to the definition of oenological protocols, one of which has already been recognized in Italy by MIPAAF - Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forestry Policies, able to ensure the system's profitability. The project has also provided a Maltese Experimental Centre in Malta, at Buskett, whose staff has been trained in the use of technical protocols for vine cultivation and processing of the grapes according to the methods tested within the project.

OBIMED – The project activities have contributed to the improvement of the integrated tourist offer through innovative promotion tools and the widening of field-specific paths integrated between Sicily and Malta. After a spatial analysis and after having defined the common routes between the islands, the project partnership produced some video guides and set up free WI-FI areas within the territories of Sciacca (Agrigento), Castelvetro (Trapani), Malta and Gozo to ease the use of the itineraries and offer a guided service to the tourist. The project has devoted special attention to the web 2.0 applications linked to the diffusion of tourist itineraries and the involvement of younger members of the Sicilian and Maltese population for the promotion of the exchange package between young people based on the English language and the Mediterranean identity. In particular, a selected group of young Italians and Maltese were involved in a cultural exchange and have been trained in the usage and dissemination of apps for iPhone and Android, developed by the project, as well as the paths similarly developed following their peers' target. These also include the international social clubs like Lyons, Rotary and Inner Wheels, which promoted the OBIMED offer and were invited to follow the routes of the Knights of Malta and trace, through the historical routes - specifically created by the project - the costumes, rites and traditions of the place. Moreover, through the support of the project's web portal tourist operators, catering colleges and technical colleges for the tourism of the two territorial realities were networked, ready to offer internships to young people, both in Sicily and Malta.

SIBIT – The project has improved the cycling offer in Sicily and Malta through the creation of cross-border routes, the modernization of already existing infrastructure, the adaptation of accommodation facilities with services for the bike tourist. In particular, through the project activities the cycling routes plan was developed for five Sicilian provinces (Agrigento, Ragusa, Syracuse, Trapani, Caltanissetta) and Malta, for a total of 24

paths, between main and secondary itineraries, and for a total of over 1000 km. Signs were installed along the paths in Sicily, Malta and Gozo the signs, taking into account certain features useful to cyclists such as, for example the distance, altitude, difficulty, coordinates (longitude and latitude) of each path. Along the cycle paths and the deviations developed by the project, accommodation facilities suitable to offer targeted services to cyclists have been also identified and the kits for the bike hotels were entrusted and delivered in all Sicilian provinces involved in the project as well as in Malta. Finally, the project has made an important activity for the promotion of the created itineraries by participating in the most important European trade fairs within the sector like the London Bikeshow, Expobici in Padua and BTS (Borsa Internazionale del Turismo Sportivo) in Montecatini, where meetings were also held with operators within the sector, tour operators and specialist press.

GARDMED –A project to spread the green culture, to protect the natural and cultural heritage and to promote sustainable tourism through the transformation of the Mediterranean gardens from isolated, expensive and not very appreciated complexes into valid centres of social, environmental and tourist development. To do this, the project has followed two directives: has identified connections between similar gardens in Sicily and Malta; has developed new management models for the exploitation of cultural heritage and the integrated tourism. In particular, as a result of the preliminary mapping of the gardens listed in the Sicilians and Maltese territories, the project partnership has ordered the data under the historical, stylistic and landscape profile, by also carrying out the botanical survey and acknowledgement of their naturalistic and architectural merits. The collected information was then catalogued, so as to highlight the peculiarities of each garden and their common features. This activity was followed by the networking of catalogued gardens, the definition of tourist itineraries that binding them and the organization of a road show with tour operators who visited the gardens in Malta and Sicily. The identification of a practical model of sustainable management of the gardens followed the study and networking stage, both for the cultural and structural aspects as well as those for socio-economic aspects.

ARCHAEOTUR – The project activities have ensured a better management, enhancement and promotion of tourism of archaeological sites within the area of Iblei and Malta, subject to protection and preservation interventions within the project itself. Thanks to the actions of the project, it was possible to make these sites potential attractions for cultural tourism of the two areas by generating opportunities for socio-economic development in terms of increase in tourism and of deseasonalization in addition to the rediscovery of roots and cultural common identities. The sites involved by the ARCHAEOTUR initiatives were the subject of recovery and accessibility interventions such as the recovery of drywalls and access paths, the implementation of walkways and wooden fences as well as the preparation of a visitors welcome area with the virtual reconstruction of the archaeological environment. The usability of retrieved sites has allowed the planning and realisation of heritage trails that are common between the sites of Ragusa, Santa Croce Camerina, Rabat and Mosta – divided by themes - and containing maps and types of paths. The project has placed great emphasis on aspects related to the fruition of the heritage trails by children and the most disadvantaged people by providing educational programs through ICT and media supports.

STREETS – The project is aimed at the improvement of the transport chain and the strengthening in the integration of the different transport systems in the 2 islands to support the TEN-T corridor 5. In particular the project aims at sustaining a web-GIS system with the aim of harmonizing the administrative-political system between the two islands. The platform will collect data in relation to the transport system thereby simplifying the dialogue between the administrations of both countries. This will help in the monitoring and increasing of safety in transport as well as further dialogue with citizens and stakeholders. During 2013 the project activity

generated the following main results: 1) analysis of stakeholders concerning the four types of transport (goods, people, collective and air); 2) mapping of the traffic linked to collective transport, aimed at the embodiment of both discussion issues on collective transport and goods transport; 3) data capture activities

The table below illustrates where effective progress has been achieved by the operations listed in Table 5.b within the context of the programmed indicators at project level.

Tab. 10.a1 - Result objectives for each operation in Axis I

Implementation indicators Axis I	Unit of Measure	Operations Axis I									
		Acknowledgement of request for reimbursement as at the 31/12/2013									
		The Hub	Lithos	ProMed	T-Cheesimal	Archaeotur	Gardmed	Obimed	Sibit	Streets	Total 2013
Projects in R&I that involve public entities, research institutes, universities and other enterprises.	No. Of Entities Involved	31	9	14	55					-	109
Project aimed at increasing awareness in the business sector (SME's in particular) towards the use of eco-efficient models in the sectors of tourism and protection and management of natural resources.	No. Of Organisations affected (including SMEs)	15	31	23		299	1050	29208	70	-	30696
Project aimed at marketing the cross border natural and cultural heritage.	No. Of Counties/ Tour operators contacted	15				50	5	10	6	-	86
Projects that improve the coordination and accessibility of transport in the cross border area.	N. of Actions							1	1	-	2
Projects aimed at promoting the environmental sustainability of transport systems particularly towards reducing green house gasses.	N. of publicity interventions									-	0
Projects for the realisation and promotion of environmental sustainability across the cross border area.	N. of entities exposed to the promotion in this regards							100		-	100
Projects that improve the institutional partnership in the cross border area.	N. of entities involved	6	4		30	16	17	30		-	103

In line with table 8 "Synopsis of correlation between projects and priority areas of the Program", which highlights the interdisciplinary approach of a considerable part of the projects, the following is a list of the operations that, although selected within Axis II, also affect more priority themes pertinent to Axis I of the OP.

Tab. 10.a2 - Result objectives for each operation in Axis II

Implementation indicators Axis II	Unit of Measure	Operations Axis II											
		Acknowledgement of request for reimbursement as of 31/12/2013											
		MORISO	REMASI	RESI	RESPIRA	SIMBIOTIC	CALYPSO	WATER FRONT	BIODIVALUE	IMAGENX	PORT PVEV	VIENERGY	Total 2013
Projects in R&I that involve public entities, research institutes, universities and other enterprises.	No. Of Entities Involved	6	4	95	5	4	4	17	40	1		1	177
Project aimed at increasing awareness in the business sector (SME's in particular) towards the use of eco-efficient models in the sectors of tourism and protection and management of natural resources.	No. Of Organisations affected (including SMEs)	23	80	-	-	90	-	254	-	-	1	-	448
Project aimed at marketing the cross border natural and cultural heritage.	No. Of Counties/ Tour operators contacted	-	-	3	-	-	-	0	-	-	-	-	3
Projects that improve the coordination and accessibility of transport in the cross border area.	N. of Actions	-	-		-	-	-	6	-	-			6
Projects aimed at promoting the environmental sustainability of transport systems particularly towards reducing green house gasses.	N. of publicity interventions	-	-		-	-	-	6	-	-	1	-	7
Projects for the realisation and promotion of environmental sustainability across the cross border area.	N. of entities exposed to the promotion in this regards	-	10		-	21	-	-	-	-	-	-	31
Projects that improve the institutional partnership in the cross border area.	N. of entities involved	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Table 10.a3 provides the communication indicators concerning the activities undertaken by individual projects selected under Axis II aimed at the achievement of the Programme's objectives in the field of communication.

Tab. 10.a3 - Communication indicators at the level of each Axis II operation

Communication Indicators	Unit of Measure	Operations Axis I									
		The Hub	Lithos	ProMed	T-cheesimal	Archaeotur	Gardmed	Obimed	Sibit	Streets	Total 2013
Events in the public interest (seminars, meetings and workshops, information conferences);	Number	44	6	28	11	14	40	8	20	-	171
Participants at events, registered on an attendance sheet;	Number	1634	320	628	407	421	84	1209	695	-	5398
Contacts and mailing list of groups of identified beneficiaries;	Number	623	15	2	200	320	150	2346	0	-	3656
Coverage on local and national media of the activities carried out;	Number	249	57	46	-	35	46	31	88	-	433
Newsletter of the project;	Number	46	1000	0	3	0	0	0	0	-	1049
Printed material (brochures, posters, invitation cards, etc..) and multimedia material (CD-ROMs, DVD);	Number	14	2532	12	4437	53820	5000	5000	10000	-	75815
Gadgets and promotional material;	Number	0	1010	4	5751	2800	3600	0	35000	-	48165
Exchange of experience with other projects;	Number	0	-	1	9	6	5	0	1	-	22
Networks and partnerships with other institutions;	Number	7	-	-	8	11	1	2	-	-	29
Publications related to the project and the results achieved;	Number	1	-	14	4	4	5	3	-	-	31
Implementation project website (additional)	Number	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	-	8
Articles in magazines and newspapers	Number	-	-	14	-	-	-	-	-	-	0

The collection of data shows that within Axis I, 171 events were carried out, with a total of 5,398 participating people. During the organization of the various events, seminars and shows 3,656 contacts were gathered and inserted in a mailing list. The produced material is of relevance for the purposes of dissemination of information on the activities of the projects concerned. There are in fact 75,815 pieces of paper and multimedia material such as brochures, flyers, business cards, CD-ROMs, DVDs. The information channels also include the local and national media for a total of 433 broadcasters and newspapers. Various items were also produced for promotional purposes (48,165) and distributed during the public interest events. In addition, in order to promote and enhance collaboration and cooperation, 22 experience exchanges were activated with other projects and 29 networks and partnerships with other institutions.

3.1.2 Significant problems encountered and measures to resolve them

During 2013 there were no difficulties in the implementation of Priority I of the OP.

3.1.3 Result indicators of Axis I

Table 11 below represents the result indicators provided by the Operational Program for Axis I.

Tab. 11.a - Result indicators at Program level - Axis I

Result Indicators Axis I	Units of Measurement	Objective	Base Line	Progress as at 31/12/2013
Development of cross-border projects based on R&ST by public entities, research institutes, universities and business organizations	No. participating organizations	15	4	15
Public entities and private individuals involved in projects for the use of eco-efficient models in the fields of tourism and the procurement of natural resources	Number	10	1	32
Countries/tour operators reached by the joint promotion action	Number	5	1	14
Area trade marks	Number	1	-	1
Public entities involved in the exchange of experience	ΔN	15	10	26
Networks created in the tourism sector	Number	3	1	4

Based on the OP, in relation to the frequency of detection of achieved results at Program level, it should be noted that this should be carried out at the end of the program. However, the year 2013 allowed the MA to be able to make a first assessment of the consequent results at OP level taking into account only 8 ordinary projects concluded in December 2013, that fully reach the targets.

The **first indicator** shows that the number of organizations that contributed to the development of cross-border projects based on R&ST appear to be 15. In particular the projects that contribute to the achievement of the objective are four: The Hub, Lithos and Promed each having 4 participating entities within the processes of R&D and T-Cheesimal having 3 entities, including a research consortium.

Regarding the **second indicator**, it was found that 32 public and private entities were involved in projects for the use of eco-efficient models in the fields of tourism, procurement and management of natural resources. In this case, the projects that contribute to the achievement of this indicator are 8: Sibit and Archaeotur within which all 8 project partners were involved, The Hub and Obimed with 5 entities involved, Promed with 4 project partners involved, Gardmed with 2 partners, the University of Catania and the University of Malta.

In relation to the **third indicator**, 10 Countries² were reached by the action of joint promotion made within the projects. In particular, the projects concerned were:

- **Archaeotur** which participated in the “Borsa Mediterranea del Turismo Archeologico” held in Paestum in November 2012;
- **Obimed** which participated in the 2013 Rotary International Congress held in Lisbon in 2013 and the 2013 International Convention of Lions Clubs held in Hamburg. During the convention the itineraries made on the territories of Sicily and Malta were promoted. The promotion activities had, moreover, indirect international evidence reaching, on these occasions, the representatives of different nationalities;
- **Gardmed** which involved 5 tour operator specialized in the organization of Garden tours including 1 French, 2 British, 1 Swedish and 1 Italian;
- **The Hub** which participated:
 - ✓ At the Global Ecoforum held in Barcelona in 2012, where a specific meeting space was provided for the representatives of the Hubs of various countries of the Euro-Mediterranean area that exchanged info on topics relating to social innovation.
 - ✓ at the international meeting of all the hubs focused on network strategies held in London during 2013.
 - ✓ At the Smart city Exhibition 2012 during which a specific meeting space was made, dedicated to social innovation and Smart city, which represented an important opportunity for the dissemination of the results of the project and the opening of the Hub in Syracuse as an example of innovative experience of growth and development;
- **SIBIT** that promoted the "SIBIT - Med in bike" tour cycling product:
 - ✓ At the relevant Borsa del Turismo Sportivo “BTS Montecatini 2012”, with its own exhibition space;
 - ✓ At the exhibition “Expo Bici Padova 2012”, an important exhibition space in the field of bicycle and cycling;
 - ✓ At the exhibition “The outdoors show excel London 2013”, an important European exhibition on sports tourism and outdoors.

Maximum dissemination was also given through some national and international magazines within the sector, in particular in Austria, Switzerland, UK, Holland and Germany.

- **PROMED** which participated at the 36th World Congress of OIV “La vigna e il vino tra tradizione e modernità” which took place in Bucharest during June 2013.

²The countries affected by the indicator are represented by all the territories not included in the area of cooperation and reached by the diffusion and promotion actions of the projects.

Regarding the **fourth indicator**, it is noted that the unit of measurement “number” refers to the number of realized area brands. In particular, at the 31/12/2013 Sibit project built an area brand related to a network of uniform, coordinated and complementary services targeted to cyclists in five Sicilian provinces (Agrigento, Ragusa, Syracuse, Trapani, Caltanissetta) and Malta, also, in order not to disperse the achieved results and to ensure economic development. In addition, from the point of view of bike tourism in the territories concerned, a public demonstration was launched for the granting of the "SIBIT" and "Med in bike" brands, for the management and use of the services of the portal "www.medinbike.com". Among the objectives of the partnership it was planned to provide for the possibility to autonomously popularize, the related cycling product within the cross-border region, in accordance with the regulations currently in force.

From the data processing regarding the **fifth indicator**, 26 public entities are detected, involved in the exchange of experience with other projects. In particular the projects that contribute to the achievement of this indicator are:

- **PROMED** with 5 Public entities involved in the exchange with the T-Cheesimal project funded under the OP Italia-Malta 2007/2013.
- **T-CHEESIMAL** with 2 Public entities involved in the exchange with the Promed project.
- **ARCHAEOTUR** which has seen the involvement of 7 public entities in exchanges with:
 - LITHOS and SIBIT projects funded under the OP Italia-Malta 2007/2013;
 - CARARE, best practices network funded within the framework of the ICT Policy Support Programme of the European Commission;
 - EAFRD – “Rehabilitation of Roman Baths and Christian Catacombs (REBACA) in Mgarr and Mosta” and ERDF 032 – “Archaeological Heritage Conservation Project” being Heritage Malta projects aimed at the preservation and safeguard of archaeological sites, including the paleo-christian catacombs;
- **GARDMED** with 4 entities involved in exchanges with:
 - The Hub project funded under the OP Italia-Malta 2007/2013;
 - Med-o-Med – network of botanical gardens in the Mediterranean and the Middle East;
 - the Botanic Gardens Conservation International, an international organization that aims to ensure the conservation of plants that are in danger of extinction;
 - “Verso la Favorita” initiative dedicated to recapture the Parco della Favorita in Palermo;
 - The urban park Uditore in Palermo.
- **SIBIT** with 8 public entities involved in the exchange with the project Archaeotur funded under the OP Italia-Malta 2007/2013.

In relation to the **sixth indicator**, there are four projects that have created networks within the tourism sector:

- **ARCHAEOTUR** where common *heritage trails* were created among the sites of Ragusa, Santa Croce Camerina, Rabat and Mosta;

- **GARDMED** where all the gardens of interest for the area of cooperation were placed on the network and were defined, including the common tourist routes for which a *road show* was organized with tour operators specialized in the green tourism sector.
- **OBIMED** through the creation of the web portal tourist operators, catering colleges and technical institutes for tourism of the two territorial realities, willing to offer internships to the young people in both Sicily and Malta, which were put on the network.
- **SIBIT** with the implementation of a plan for 24 routes in the Sicilian and Maltese territories.

3.1.4 Additional information about the programme results and effects

The results of the projects financed by the Operational Programme Italia-Malta 2007-2013 produced significant cross-border effects in terms of increase of the cooperation area competitiveness through research and innovation.

As highlighted by the close examination related to the full achievement of the result indicators (tables 10.a1 and 10.a2), the programme reached such a level of maturity that the true changes and benefits, caused by the programme to the involved population and authorities, are recognizable under each specific objectives of the priority axes.

AXIS I - Competitiveness: Innovation and Research, Sustainable Development

With reference to specific objective 1.1 - Supporting research and innovation and encourage sustainable development, the OP Italia-Malta 2007-2013 invested in innovation of products and processes as well as in forms of social innovations that generate economic and environmental benefits for the whole cooperation area.

In reference to innovation of products and processes applied to viticulture sector, the testing of innovative wine-making protocols (PROMED project) allows nowadays to the farmers a gain in fresh grape must from 60 to 70%, with no loss in quality of the final product, as well as the reduction of the exploitation of their cultivation system and the consequent depletion of the soil.

The validity of this innovation has been recognized by entrepreneurs showing interest in investing in viticulture on Linosa and by the Food, Agriculture, and Forestry Ministry that has accepted the Pantelleria protocol within the DOC rules and regulations. The part of research applied to the dairy sector, concerning Sicilian and Maltese products having a high content of biodiversity (T-CHEESIMAL project), allowed the transfer to Maltese producers of the competences necessary to draft the first regulation in Malta for the production of Ġbejna PDO cheese. This specification has been adopted by the competent Maltese ministerial entities and is in the process of being approved by the Community bodies. An economic advantage both for the producers, nowadays able to present on the market a product having a high added value, and for the consumers, thanks to the certification issued after the supervision carried out on the production chain.

Research and innovation in the OP Italia-Malta 2007-2013 implementation involved also restoration and sustainable architectural experimentation (LITHOS project). In particular, the revalue of the architectural styles of the historical Sicilian and Maltese buildings conducted to the restoration of one of the façades of the Inquisitor's Palace in Birgu. Thanks to the project, the transfer of skills among Maltese and Sicilian masons and apprentices led to the rediscover of ancient trades and the creation of new opportunity for local population and for the young people approaching the world of work.

About the aspect of social innovation, the physical and virtual hub spaces in Ortigia (Siracusa), Lampedusa and Malta, created thanks to the OP Italia-Malta 2007-2013 (THE HUB project) on a model already tested in about 40 cities the world over, represent a datum point for the microcredit politics. In particular, through the managing of three funding fonts (one of Jeremie Fund lines of intervention - ESF, the “Fondo di Garanzia per il Microcredito Siciliano” and the “PerMicro” fund), entrepreneurs, young people entering the world of work, and women who want to invest in sustainable development, may find nowadays inside the hubs both expert and economic support to start or consolidate their entrepreneurial activities.

Concerning the specific objective 1.3 – “Jointly develop tourism potential and contribute to improving integrated travel proposals through territorial marketing action”, the financed projects increased the chances of the market in terms of profits for the economic operators in the tourist field and also assured a better usability of the natural and cultural heritage.

The main benefits for the population, the tourist operators and the authorities involved in naturalistic, cultural and architectural tourism, are listed hereunder.

In particular, the adjustment of the bike tourism itineraries, already existing in Sicily and Malta, to the European qualitative standards, in terms of road signs, support and specialized assistance, together with the finalizing of a identifying brand for Maltese and Sicilian bike tourism (SIBIT project), allowed the creation of a new market niche in favour of the operators of the sector. Nowadays, the itineraries finalized by the Programme are part of tourist integrated package for the following beneficiaries: a) the tour operators, who have at their disposal a wider portfolio of services; b) a number of Sicilian and Maltese accommodation facilities able to extend their incoming services to cycle tourists thanks to little professional kits supplied by the Programme; c) local population who can enjoy nowadays wide territories restored for the bike mobility.

The realization of tourist itineraries promoting the cultural heritage and the traditions in common between Sicily and Malta (OBIMED project), had similar effects, both for the tourist operators and the population. In particular, aiming at the Sicilian and Maltese youth population to promote youth exchange programmes based on the English language and Mediterranean identity, and the involvement of international social clubs such as Lyons, Rotary, and Inner Wheels to follow the historical routes of the Knights of Malta, created new market niches and improved the integration among Sicilian and Maltese operators as well as their visibility through the use of common technological platforms.

The enhancement of Mediterranean gardens and the improvement of their management criteria, under a logic of economic profit for tourist aims (GARDMED project), produced numerous benefits for the involved administrations, the tourist operators and the population of the area. In particular, the management criteria studied and worked out by the Programme, allowed to the public and private manager of the 16 surveyed gardens to transform them from isolated, expensive, and little appreciated complexes into valid centres of social, environmental, and tourist development. Nowadays the Mediterranean gardens involved in the project, were opened to public and visitors and created new opportunities of tourist packages for the operators of the sector.

The actions of protection and conservation of “minor” archaeological sites in the Iblei area and Malta (project ARCHAEOEUR), assured their better management, enhancement and tourist promotion. Moreover, these sites represent nowadays potential cultural tourist attractions for the two areas thus generating the opportunity of socio-economic development in terms of increasing of the number of visitors, in lengthening the holiday season, apart from rediscovering the roots of a common cultural identity among the youngest population (active citizenship).

On occasion of Programme closure, the effects will be better described through the identification of adequate indicators of measurement.

3.2 Axis II - Environment, Energy and risk prevention

3.2.1 Achievement of objectives and progress analysis

3.2.1.1 Financial and material progress

Tab 9.b – allocated and paid amounts

AXIS II	TOTAL CONTRIBUTION (A)	FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION			
		COMMITMENTS (B)	PAYMENTS (C)	COMMITMENTS (B/A) %	PAYMENTS (C/A) %
Environment, energy and risk prevention	23,021,014	22,236,996	7,431,617	96.59%	32.28%

Tab. 10.b - Targets priority Axis II

INDICATORS AT PRIORITY AXIS LEVEL	UNIT OF MEASURE	OBJECTIVE	SOURCE	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Projects of management and prevention from natural and anthropic risks (including technological risks)	Number	2	Annual monitoring and end of programme	0	0	4	2	7
Projects aimed at promoting the safeguarding of the environment of the area (including the management of parks and protected areas)	Number	3	Annual monitoring and end of programme	0	0	6	3	10
Projects relating to the improvement of the energy efficiency and the utilisation of sources of renewable energy	Number	5	Annual monitoring and end of programme	0	0	1	1	1
Projects that promote the strengthening of the institutional partnership in the cross-border area	Number	2	Annual monitoring and end of programme	0	0	7	5	8

Table 9.b above shows the financial progress of Axis II and highlights the total committed resources, resulting from binding acts in relation to the payments carried out for the certified expenses as at the 31/12/2013. The data shows a significant progress on the commitments equal to 96.59% of the allocated amounts for the Axis at the OP level that correspond to € 22,236,996. On the 31/12/2013 expenditures amounting to € 7,431,617 were certified, corresponding to 32.28%.

The indicators shows that the implementation can be split in two phases.

The first consisted in the processing of claims for reimbursement n. 02, 03 and 04 duly verified and validated by the Management Authority as at 31/12/2013. In particular, in the context of this activity, consideration was given to the physical progress of each individual project and the progress of expenditure declared. This was

possible through the analysis of groups of indicators that have enabled the verification of the quality of the actions completed or in progress compared to planned activities.

The second phase of the survey was dedicated to the thorough examination of the coherence between the implementation indicators and results provided by the Project leaders in the applications for reimbursement, and the output of the products developed under each project as at 31/12/2013 and accepted by the Managing Authority following a formal request addressed to all the Leaders of the ordinary projects that took place with note prot. 1902 30/01/2013..

Based on the methodology described above, steps were taken to develop tables 10.b, 10.b1, 10.b2 and 10b3 where the following data has been reported:

- **Tabella 10.b:** number of operations that registered progress with respect to the implementation indicators of the OP;
- **Tabella 10.b1:** actual progress achieved by the operations listed in Table 5.b within the framework of the programmed indicators at project level;;
- **Tabella 10.b2:** actual progress achieved by the operations funded under Axis I within the framework of the indicators at project level;
- **Tabella 10.b3:** actual progress achieved by the operations listed in Table 5.b within the framework of the communication indicators.

MORISO – The project has reconstructed the hydro-geological structure of some aquifers and defined the quality-quantitative properties of groundwater resources falling within the cross-border region of Ragusa and Malta, allowing the identification of river basins, at risk of saline intrusion and/or pollution from agricultural activities. In fact, these areas, over the last decade, have been experiencing a worrying deterioration in water resources due to the use of fertilisers and agro-chemicals that, on penetrating into the soil, reach the aquifers thus causing contamination. This phenomenon has been compounded in recent years by the overexploitation of groundwater that causes the marine intrusion and salinization of water tables, making the coastal areas even more vulnerable. A regional survey was carried out in order to locate, both in Sicily and Malta, the coastal aquifers greatly exposed to the risk of marine intrusion and/or pollution caused by agricultural activities. The partnership began a phase of experimentation, in these river basins, through the monitoring of groundwater. In particular, the groundwater monitoring network of the province of Ragusa was integrated with another four continuously monitored environmental surveys, located in the area of Donnalucata, with samples taken on a monthly basis. A protocol was also signed between the Sicilian partners of the project, and the province of Ragusa for the joint management of the groundwater detection network in the Ragusa territory and a Gis of water resources was implemented in the province of Ragusa. The groundwater monitoring was carried out in the island of Malta with a density of 1 well/16 km². A model for the simulation of aquifers identified in the areas of study in the province of Ragusa and in Malta was also implemented. The work has also allowed the activation and definition of agronomic practices aimed at saving water and the protecting the water tables, the interventions to prevent the processes of salinization and pollution of water. The potential applications of small plants for desalination of brackish waters for irrigation purposes was then evaluated, also by implementing a prototype of a desalination plant in Malta. Within the initiatives carried out, the effects of micro-irrigation with brackish waters of small fruits was also evaluated; to involve the principal actors (recipients, and not) of the

planning activities (SOAT, provinces, professional associations, land reclamation consortia, schools), through the development of a web site, as well as seminars and public events; continuous and profitable cooperation activities and know-how exchanges were also carried out between the Maltese and Sicilian partners. At the end of the activity a report containing the main results obtained for the sustainable management of water resources and the growth of water saving culture, within the wider perspective of environmental protection, was also prepared.

PANACEA – The project activities monitored the Sicilian and Maltese Protected Marine Areas, to improve their management and to facilitate interaction. Through the partnership activities, the project promoted the scientific and environmental value of the area ecosystems through the construction of four (Environmental Education Centres (Centri di Educazione Ambientale) (CEA) at the marine protected areas of Palermo, Syracuse, Lampedusa and Linosa, Gozo. Each centre, open to the public, was equipped with equipment and scale models of animal and vegetable species that inhabit the ecosystems of the marine protected areas.

The centres were also provided with equipment suited to propose through documentaries, *edutainment* panels, dioramas, experiential workshops, a knowledge path of the areas and their biodiversity. The partnership promoted, through the centres, a great deal of activity to raise public awareness on environmental issues carried out at Sicilian and Maltese schools who adhered to the campaigns to promote and safeguard the environment. At European level, PANACEA received great appreciation by taking part in the "European maritime day", organized during 2013 in Valletta (Malta), where experts from all the maritime sectors across Europe discussed on how to promote the tourism industry as a key factor of contribution to the program of blue growth of the European Union.

REMASI – The project has enabled, with a multidisciplinary approach based on the philosophy of ecological networks, integrated actions and interventions to increase and disseminate knowledge on natural reserves, geosites and sites of Community importance present in Malta and Sicily, in order to promote awareness on the protection of biodiversity at the local community and provide enhancement and promotion interventions for the sustainable use of the sites. The project also achieved the study of some species of migratory birds of considerable cross-border interest and some pelagic species (greater shearwater, *Calonectris diomedea diomedea*, Mediterranean shearwater, *Puffinus yelkouan*, Mediterranean storm petrel, *Hydrobates pelagicus melitensis*) protected by the European Union and inserted into programs of international protection. In order to consolidate the results of the project activities, the local community was involved in specific actions to raise awareness and promote environmental education particularly addressed to schools and young people. The activities were performed at the nature reserves managed by Legambiente on the Island of Lampedusa, at the Macalube in Aragona and the cave of S. Angelo Muxaro.

SIMBIOTIC – a pilot project for environmental restoration that has improved the ecological connectivity of the cross-border area between the south-east of Sicily and Gozo, territories that represent one of the avifauna migratory routes between Europe and Africa. The project activities have allowed the ecological restoration of the impacted areas, their improved management, their policy and environment planning as well as the promotion of greater environmental awareness at the local level. On the south-east of Sicily the project involved the planning and management of some coastal wetland areas of great importance at national and Community level, with the restoration of the Pantano Ponterio, in the territory of Pachino, otherwise subjected to abandonment. On the Maltese side, SIMBIOTIC has allowed the recovery of the Mediterranean maquis within some areas of the Gozo island interested in recent years by anthropogenic activities, mostly agricultural, and then abandoned. The recovery interventions in the Sicilian and Maltese areas were designed on the basis of a preliminary joint work of mapping and identification of the local plants, animals and local habitat features,

analysis of landscape changes and identification of priority areas for connectivity. The project has finally produced guidelines on territorial management, to support the political planning interventions, for connectivity and the conservation of the cross-border landscape.

RESI - The project has defined common strategies to overcome the gap compared to the European average in the dissemination of renewable and solar energy in particular within the Sicilian and Maltese territories, facilitating the transfer of technology and best practices. In addition, measures aimed at comparing and evaluating energy strategies from an environmental and socio-economic point of view as well as to identify and implement an action plan for the dissemination of renewable energy, were activated. The project generated an environmental and socio-economic data bank linked to the spread of RES and developed a Renewable Energy Atlas, being the complete mapping of the RES systems and good practices within the territory of Malta and in the provinces of Agrigento and Ragusa. The activities of exchange and dissemination of good practices was carried out also through the construction of two informative Renewable Energy Tour, aimed at presenting the most significant renewable energy production facilities to students and university researchers. The project also launched a strategy for the RES implementation through the embodiment of an Energy Forum, a workshop organized in a plenary session and in 4 role groups (entrepreneurs, technicians, politicians and the public) whose findings were documented, aimed at the drafting of the territorial plan of action on renewable energy were arranged. Finally, an exchange network between cross-border Renewable Energy Point, points of information and awareness on RES, established in the partner territories were created.

CALYPSO – The project has developed a stable and operational system for the monitoring of surface marine currents and ocean waves in the Sicilian-Maltese channel by using a system of remote observation based on a HF (High Frequency) radar network able to provide maps with hourly time frequency. The partnership installed three HF radar: two in the northern part of the island of Malta and one in the southern part of the Sicilian coast. The data are combined in a processing station that also provides for distribution via the web of the maps provided by the system. The collected data, combined with numerical modelling methods, support the interventions of the authorities in case of leakage of hydrocarbons in the sea. In addition, the system developed by CALYPSO represents a useful tool for navigation support because it provides a better knowledge of marine currents, ensures their monitoring in critical areas supporting their surveillance. Thanks to an enlarged network of involved persons, the project ensures the maximum and complete exploitation of the HF radar network also through actions dedicated to the exchange of information and the development of protocols to improve the capacity for action and coordinated surveillance between the Maltese and Sicilian authorities in the case of any accidents and/or emergencies. The CALYPSO system, thanks to the advanced technological instrumentation acquired and the extensive network of involved and/or interested subjects, proposes the construction of a new combined capacity of control on the seas by the Sicilian and Maltese authorities, as a useful tool. A scheme, the data acquisition space-distributed data and with multi-disciplinary value will lead to a net improvement in the understanding of the physical dynamics of the Sicily-Malta channel; thus ensuring the database necessary for different applications.

VAMOS SEGURO - The volcanic clouds of Etna disperse a large amount of ash that represents a danger for the civil and military aviation in the area between Sicily and Malta. The meeting between the volcanic ash and the aircrafts can cause serious damage to the surfaces and windscreens, with consequent loss of visibility and malfunction of the instrument panel and - in severe cases - of the engines. The VAMOS SEGURO project prepared an automatic system for monitoring and predicting the dispersion of the volcanic ash of Mount Etna in the cross-border region thanks to the use of a complex instrumentation including a LIDAR system, purposely developed by the CNISM researchers. This system is capable of identifying the areas between Sicily and Malta, which, in the case of explosive activity, will be affected by harmful concentrations of ash and

volcanic gas and produce warning systems for the authorities in charge of air traffic. The new installed measuring equipment is able to gather important data on the volcanic activity and on the particles released into the air. Such monitoring runs in parallel with the use of models able to predict the dispersion of volcanic clouds. The value of the project was acknowledged at international level and its results were presented in numerous publications and international scientific conferences. The importance of the Vamos Seguro results was also recognized by the European Commission, the European Parliament and the Regions Committee, that have selected the project as European best practice for the mitigation and prevention of natural risks.

RESPIRA – Air pollution in both indoor and outdoor environments has a significant impact on human health and is an important risk factor. The project took into consideration a sample - for respiratory diseases - of the school population of Malta and the Sanitary District of Gela, using standardized scientific questionnaires and performing, within a sub-sample of the population, measurements on the conditions of the respiratory system and the level and type of allergies. The project extensively analyzed the conditions that may influence the relationship between exposure to pollutants and health through the analysis of the main environmental risk factors. In addition, guidelines were set for the prevention of the effects on the health in individuals living in environments at risk for the presence of pollutants. The results obtained during the project were: the evaluation of the prevalence of asthma and other respiratory allergic diseases in the identified areas and an assessment of the relations between pollutants and respiratory diseases.

WATER FRONT – The WATERFRONT project favoured the integration between the west coast of Sicily and Malta, to exploit from a cultural, economic and social point of view the resources of the cross-border area, in the context of sustainable development. The exchange of experiences and the dissemination of good practices amongst the involved administrations has made it possible to harmonize the regional planning techniques while favouring the evaluation at the national, regional and local level by strengthening the capacity for the implementation of environmental policies and programs for the risk prevention. The evaluation and re-interpretation of the risks and opportunities offered by the transformation of coastal areas, subject of the research, represented the starting element of the project that considered the exploitation of Water Fronts as a valid catalyst for development and innovation of territorial systems from the perspective of sustainable development. The knowledge of the current reference scenario, oriented to the evaluation of the risks and potential for transformation of connected cities and territories, came before the analysis of the transformations in act and a map of the parties involved in the territorial transformation processes. As a result the definition of an atlas of trend and contrast scenarios for the harmonization of territory planning techniques and ecological, production, urban and tourist integrated development was achieved.

BIODIVALUE – The project aims at creating the operating tools to support local administrators and operators of the maritime traffic, useful to limit the harmful effects generated by operational pollution from shipping, industrial, commercial, fishing and recreational traffic in the straits of Sicily. These tools offer a system for biophysical measuring aimed at the detection of the risk of loss of biodiversity in the straits of Sicily and an economic assessment of the impact caused to the coastal communities. The aim of the project is to have a more balanced and awareness management of the maritime traffic, in compliance with the international conventions, the Community directives and the respective Italian and Maltese national laws to reconcile the interests of a smooth operation of maritime transport with the protection of the environment. During 2013 the project activity produced the following main results: 1) the creation of a computerized database updated and detailed on the maritime traffic flows, the types of boats and the type of impact on the receptors of the reference area. In particular a detection antenna was installed in Malta and in Sicily with data retrieved through a "marine sighting device", in Syracuse, and manually implemented on the island of Lampedusa. 2) collection

of good practices to be published in a dedicated section of the project's web site, 3) first monitoring campaign from June to October 2013, where all the analysis on the samples taken from water, sediments and alien species were carried out.

PORT PVEV - The project contributes to the improvement of energy efficiency at the ports and the reduction of CO₂ emissions in the relevant areas. The project includes the installation of photovoltaic infrastructure at the ports of Valletta, Catania and Gela, as well as a series of actions to implement, test, evaluate and disseminate electro-mobility inside and in the vicinity of ports and their operating areas. During 2013 a joint action plan was approved, aimed at the reduction of CO₂ in port areas involved in the project. Within this context local plans will be drawn up on port sustainability to suggest the future policies to implement renewable energy in the ports involved, and to de-carbonize additional areas even after the conclusion of the project. The preparation of these plans will take into account the results to be obtained through pilot actions. As part of these plans, the project also provides for a study to determine the feasibility and sustainability of supply facilities to provide from the ground, to the ships moored in the harbours, green energy instead of heavy fuel oils. The project finally envisages the purchase of electric vehicles, which, through the installation of photovoltaic infrastructures, will supply the first zero emission transport services in port areas. In addition, the car parks connected to the ports involved recharging stations for electric vehicles, will be installed.

CRIM SAFRI – The project is geared towards creating Research centers dedicated towards environmental sustainability and renewable sources of energy for the Mediterranean area. This project will support local authorities, consortiums and SMEs in the implementation of a strategy towards sustainable growth and consumption. The activities of the project shall be as follows: encouraging stronger cooperation between enterprises and the transfer of knowledge in the areas of renewable energies; to provide technical and scientific support for new technologies in goods and services with a low carbon footprint; to provide local businesses with the necessary instruments towards achieving environmental sustainability; to create a Mediterranean partnership between the Ministries responsible for the Environment in Italy and Malta and to create a joint research center. During 2013 the Research Centre in Malta was created, and inaugurated through the simultaneous completion of the procedures for staff recruitment.

IMAGENX - Is a cross-border network of users, health providers, administrators, and researchers from Sicily and Malta tasked to promote Breast Cancer surveillance. By integrating interdisciplinary expertise in epidemiology and molecular genetics and through client empowerment it aims to strengthen the structured care and surveillance of women at risk from breast cancer. Risk assessment, stratification and allocation of appropriate surveillance programmes will be strictly evidence-based. Sophisticated risk evaluation undertaken by user-friendly computer-based e-assessments and algorithms, and community specialist counseling will complement existing Breast Screening. ImaGenX will create an infrastructure to scrutinize putative environmental and genetic factors involved in malignancies in the central Mediterranean. Health initiatives such as preventive educational campaigns, medical or biochemical interventions, and bespoke IT screening will be precisely targeted. Communities will take greater responsibility for their health. ImaGenX seeks to innovate by introducing state-of-the-art technologies and rationalize traditional resources from regional bodies. It will consolidate existing scientific potential from two prime Mediterranean regions into Research Institutes of Excellence. Acting synergistically as strategic platforms they will transform their life sciences and information technology resources into world class industries engaged in cancer risk-reduction. During 2013 the project activities included: 1) the identification of cases to be inserted in the database relating to DNA; 2) the administration of the questionnaire for the detection of genetic risks, linked to the lifestyle; 3) the implementation of the software, which is dedicated to the analysis of risks linked to the lifestyle.

PIM ENERGETHICA – The project aims to increase cooperation in the cross border area for the common adoption, distribution and capitalisation of innovative systems of waste management in order to enable the transformation of waste into energy or economic income for all the subjects of the cross border territory. This will be done through the adoption of a common programme aimed at creating specific structural and infrastructural interventions necessary for achieving the aims of the project and also the study of technical and operative solutions through the creation of a waste to energy pilot plant. The analysis of biomasses (grass and wood) on the Maltese territory that will allow the definition of the technical characteristics and supply conditions of the pilot plant to be produced in Malta.

SIMIT – the project consists of the creation of an integrated system of civil protection between Sicilian and Maltese stakeholders aimed at the prevention, detection and mitigation of risks. The project proposes to create an emergency plan between the two states. This plan would mitigate natural, seismic, volcanic and hydrologic risks and would target especially the particular vulnerabilities of the cross-border area. An increase in institutional cooperation is also an important factor in this project which will enable the transfer of knowledge from the various stakeholders in the area. Amongst other activities the project aims at testing a management strategy and an upgrade of the current technical and administrative support structure. During 2013 the risk scenarios for the territories of Lampedusa and Gozo were defined and the steps for data collection were started (base geology, structural analysis, seismic characteristics, etc.).

VIENERGY - The project aims at reducing the reliance on traditional energy sources and to develop technology linked to the production of energy from renewable sources. This is achieved through an evaluation of the energy potential of biomasses from the vinification at Sicilian and Maltese sites, the verification of an additive of agricultural origin for the production of e-diesel, the characterization of the mixture of ethanol diesel (fossil ethanol-diesel low-blend mixture), the reuse of vinification wastewater, the uptake of CO₂ for the fermentation of the wine industry to use in the food industry and/or in the energy sector and the utilization of solar energy for the supply of cooling systems used in cellars. During 2013 the project activity produced the following results: 1) mapping of the territories of Trapani and Palermo through the use of drones, 2) readings on a total 44,500 t of marc and 185,000 t of pruning shoots, 3) analysis of treatment and disposal systems of waste water on a previously selected sample of 8 wineries in the territories of Syracuse and Ragusa useful to the implementation of the phyto treatment pilot plant; 4) tests on 5 samples of ethanol-diesel and characterization of the fuel.

The table below shows the actual improvements achieved by part of the operations listed in table 10.b within the indicators scheduled at project level;

Tab. 10.b1 Result objectives for each operation Axis II

Implementation indicators Asse II	Unit of Measure	Operations Axis II																
		Detections of request for reimbursement as at 31/12/2013																
		Moriso	Panacea	Remasi	Simbiotic	Resi	Respira	Calypso	Vamos Seguro	Water Front	Biodivalve	PORT PVEV	Crim Safri	ImagenX	Pim Energethica	Simit	ViEnergy	TOTAL 2013
Projects of management and prevention from natural and anthropic risks (including technological risks)	Mq of the area involved in the activities						1,000,000,000	10,000	37,500,000,000	384,000,000	50,000							38.8 mln sq m
Projects aimed at promoting the safeguarding of the environment of the area (including the management of parks and protected areas)	Mq of the area involved in the activities	200,000,000			63,700		1,000,000,000	10,000	-	104,000,000	50,000						80,000	1.3 mln sq m
Projects aimed at promoting the safeguarding of the environment of the area (including the management of parks and protected areas)	Mq of the area involved in the activities		258,090,000		63,700		1,000,000,000			41,000,000	50,000							1.2 mln sq m
Projects relating to the improvement of the energy efficiency and the utilisation of sources of renewable energy	Kw of Energy produced by renewable sources					>5%			-	-								+5%
Projects that promote the strengthening of the institutional partnership in the cross-border area	N. of entities involved	6	15	8	13	4		6	-	17	40	2						111

In line with the table no. 5 "Synoptic framework of the correlation between projects and priority areas of the Programme", which highlights the interdisciplinary nature of a considerable amount of projects, it is hereunder reported the PROMED and GARDMED that, although selected under Axis I, also has an impact on priority themes which are relevant to Axis II of the OP

Tab. 10.b2 - Performance objectives at the level of each Axis I operation

Implementation Indicator Axis II	Unit of Measure	OperationsAxis I Detections of request for reimbursement as at 31/12/2013		
		ProMed	Gardmed	Total 2013
Projects of management and prevention from natural and anthropic risks (including technological risks)	Mq of the area involved in the activities	60,000	600,000	660,000
Projects aimed at promoting the safeguarding of the environment of the area	Mq of the area involved in the activities	60,000	600,000	660,000
Projects aimed at promoting the safeguarding of the environment of the area (including the management of parks and protected areas)	Mq of the area involved in the activities	-		-
Projects relating to the improvement of the energy efficiency and the utilisation of sources of renewable energy	Kw of Energy produced by renewable sources	-		-
Projects that promote the strengthening of the institutional partnership in the cross-border area	No of entities involved.			

Table 10.b3 provides the communication indicators concerning the activities undertaken by individual projects selected under Axis II aimed at the achievement of the Programme's objectives in the field of communication.

Tab. 10.b3 - Communication Indicators for each Axis II operation

Communication Indicators	Units of Measurement	Operations axis II																
		Detections of request for reimbursement as at 31/12/2013																
		Moriso	Panacea	Remasi	Simbiotic	Resi	Respira	Calypso	Vamos Seguro	Water Front	Vienergy	Port Pvev	Pim Energethica	Biodivalue	Crim-Safri	Simit	Imagenx	Total 2013
Events in the public interest (seminars, meetings and workshops, information conferences);	Number	5	10	-	5	11	10	6	6	7	1	2	-	-	-	-	1	64
Participants at events, registered on an attendance sheet;	Number	372	400	-	-	11	341	278	-	254	-	335	-	-	-	-	25	2,016
Contacts and mailing list of groups of identified beneficiaries;	Number	-	181	-	-	1699	0	1552	-	110	-	2	-	-	-	-	1	3,545
Coverage on local and national media of the activities carried out;	Number	60	10	-	18	17	6	150	10	18	-	4	-	-	-	-	3	296
Newsletter of the project;	Number	-	-	-	-	10	-	0	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	12
Printed material (brochures, posters, invitation cards, etc..) and multimedia material (CD-ROMs, DVD);	Number	3090	235000	-	12	4000	3	37000	14	16	-	1000	-	-	-	-	1	280,136
Gadgets and promotional material;	Number	1101	50000	-	-	700	2500	3	-	2	-	2	-	-	-	-	0	54,308
Exchange of experience with other projects;	Number	-	2	-	-	-	0	7	-	2	-	2	-	-	-	-	1	14
Networks and partnerships with other institutions;	Number	12	4	-	-	-	0	3	-	6	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	27
Publications related to the project and the results achieved;	Number	2	144000	-	-	1	3	3	16	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	144,029

Implementation project website (additional)	Number	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-		9
Articles in magazines and newspapers	Number	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		1

The data collection suggests that, within Axis II, 64 events were carried out, in total, with 2,016 participating people. During the organization of the various events and seminars 3,545 contacts were gathered, which were inserted within a mailing list. The produced material is of relevance for the purposes of dissemination of information on the activities of the projects concerned. There are in fact 280,136 pieces of paper and multimedia material such as brochures, flyers, business cards, CD-ROMs, DVDs. The information channels also include the local and national media for a total of 296 broadcasters and newspapers. Various items were also produced for promotional purposes (54,308) and distributed during the public interest events. In addition, in order to promote and enhance collaboration and cooperation, 14 exchange of experiences were activated with other projects and 27 networks and partnerships, with other institutions.

3.2.2 Significant problems encountered and measures to resolve them

During 2013 there were no difficulties in the implementation of Priority II of the OP.

3.2.3 Result indicators of Axis II

Table 11 below represents the result indicators provided by the Operational Program for Axis II.

Tab. 11.b - Result Indicators at Program level - Axis II

Result Indicators Axis II	Units of Measurement	Objective	Base Line	Total 2013
Surface area of the cross-border area affected by projects for the preservation and environmental monitoring	% of the cross-border region	+ of 15%	-	6.45%
	% of the protected cross-border regions	+ of 10%	-	15.30%
EMAS Certification achieved by public local Entities	$\Delta N.$	8	0	0
Common actions for the institutional coordination against environmental and technological risks	Number	2	0	2
Increase in installed power from renewable sources	ΔKw	500	n.d.	5%
Public entities involved in the exchange of experience	$\Delta N.$	15	-	18

With respect to Axis II, it should be noted that based on the OP related to the frequency of detection of the results achieved, the same should be done at the end of the program. However, the year 2013 allows the MA to be able to make a first assessment of the results achieved at OP level taking into account only 8 ordinary projects concluded in December 2013 that allow to carry out the first assessments.

The **first indicator** shows that on the 31/12/2013 the surface of the cross-border area affected by projects for the conservation and environmental monitoring is 1,304,073,700 sq meters, being 6.45 % of the cooperation area within the Program. In this case, the projects that have provided for measures to promote the preservation of the environment in the cross-border region are 5 in total: Moriso, Simbiotic, Respira, Calypso and Water Front. By focusing the attention on protected areas, the projects that promoted actions for the protection and management of the environment affect a surface area of 1,299,153,700 sq meters, being 15.36% of the total of the surface of protected areas present in the cross-border region, including the NUTS III areas close to Catania and Palermo. In particular, there are 4 projects that contributed to the achievement of the indicator, namely: Panacea, Simbiotic, Respira and Water Front.

As at the 31/12/2013 no forward actions are recorded for the **second indicator**.

In relation to the **third indicator**, there are two projects that achieved common actions for institutional coordination against environmental hazards and technology, namely: Calypso and Vamos Seguro. The first project allowed the networking of a wide network of Sicilian and Maltese authorities (other than the one already include within the partnership) that developed an advanced technological instrumentation for the control and monitoring of the sea against deliberate actions and accidental oil spills. As regards the second project, it contributed to the creation among authorities responsible for the control of the territory and civil aviation, of a complex alert system (LIDAR technology) that allows identifying the areas, between Sicily and Malta, which are affected by harmful concentrations of ash and volcanic gas.

The **fourth indicator** shows an increase of 14,000 kw of installed power from a renewable source. The only project that has made actions for the improvement of energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy sources is RESI through the identification and implementation of an action plan for the dissemination of renewable and solar energy in the Sicilian and Maltese territory, favouring the technological transfer and good practices.

From the data processing regarding the **fifth indicator**, 18 public entities are detected, involved in the exchange of experience with other projects. In particular the projects that contribute to the achievement of this indicator are:

- **PANACEA** : with 5 public entities involved in the exchange with the Calypso and Sibit projects, both financed within the Program;
- **CALYPSO** with 8 public entities involved in the exchange with:
 - the EuroGOOS - European Global Ocean Observing System;
 - the MonGOOS - Mediterranean Operational Network for the Global Ocean Observing System;
 - the PRIMI project “PRogetto pilota Inquinamento Marino da Idrocarburi” promoted by the Italian Space Agency in order to monitor pollution from oil spills;
 - the MEDESS4MS project “Mediterranean decision support system for marine safety project” aimed at strengthening the protection of the seas through the mitigation of risks and impacts arising from oil spills;
 - with the TOSCA - OGS Radar Programme funded under the Med program;
 - the HF radar global network.

WATER FRONT with 5 public entities involved in the exchange with the Facecoast project "Face the challenge of climate change in the med coastal zones", funded under the Med program.

3.2.4 Additional information about the programme results and effects

The results of the projects financed by the Operational Programme Italia-Malta 2007-2013 produced significant cross-border effects in terms of better environmental protection and safety of population from natural and anthropic risks.

As highlighted by the close examination related to the full achievement of the result indicators (tables 10.b1 and 10.b2), the programme reached such a level of maturity that the true changes and benefits, caused by the programme to the involved population and authorities, are recognizable under each specific objectives of the priority axes.

AXIS II – The Environment Energy and Risk Prevention

With reference to the specific objective 2.1 “Contributing to the protection of the environment through the monitoring and efficient management of natural resources” the projects aimed to the safeguarding of coasts from the risk of erosion and pollution of the aquifers and the protection of marine and earth’s biodiversity.

With reference to the safeguard of coastal territories, the experimentation of innovative agronomic practices, supported by prototypes of desalination plants (MORISO project), allows nowadays to limit the damage of salt water contamination and/or pollution caused by agricultural activities. The new practices represent an advantage for people engaged in agricultural activities in the Iblei area and Malta, because they guarantee a greater water saving for irrigation purposes and a greater protection of the aquifers from salt water contamination and pollution.

Referring to the protection of biodiversity, the actions of environmental restoring and reinstatement of coastal wetlands and Mediterranean bush (SIMBIOTIC project), as well as the actions of monitoring of the Europe Africa bird migration routes (REMASI project) and the creation of environmental education centres at the Sicilian and Maltese maritime protected areas (PANACEA project), guaranteed more interest among all the involved subjects. In particular, the activities of reinstatement of coastal wetlands allowed the implementation by local administrators of the EU Directive “RAMSAR” and the use by local population of the natural heritage of an area until then not practicable due to the environmental decay. At the same time, the enhancement of the geosites engaged in the passage of migratory species and the creation of education centres supplied the tools for a better political and environmental planning to the political decision-maker and to the management bodies of the areas, as well as the promotion of a greater environmental consciousness at a local level, with a particular attention to youths, students and families.

Having regard to the Specific object 2.2 – “Contributing to the development of renewable energy and energy efficiency”, the programme achieved the monitoring of the best performed renewable energy systems in the territories of Agrigento, Ragusa and Malta (RESI project). The project assured to the local administrations a “catalogue” of the Best available Technologies already used for the possibility to replicate it in other contexts. The project had furthermore disseminate its findings versus the students of the area about the importance of using the renewable energies.

Having regard to the Specific object 2.3 – “Promoting joint actions in the sphere of prevention of risks resulting from both natural and human causes”, the programme achieved the development needs linked both to the risks of the maritime and aerial spatial and to the human health risks caused by human factors and activities.

With reference to the risks connected to the air navigation (civil and military) between Sicily and Malta caused by harmful concentrations of ash and volcanic gas from Etna volcano, the programme guaranteed a complex

alert system of the authorities responsible for the air traffic (VAMOS SEGURO project). As a consequence of this, it is clear demonstrate a advantage for the Sicilian and Maltese airport authorities that are able to predict, with exactness, the initiatives to undertake in case of eruption activity of the Etna volcano for the population of the area and the air companies that transit in the area.

Having regard to the risks that concern the maritime navigation between Pozzallo and Malta, the programme assured the development of a stable and operational HF radar global network able to anticipate the course of any oil spills spots before they reach the Sicilian and/or Maltese coasts (CALYPSO project). This main result is a clear advantage for the authorities responsible for the environmental surveillance. Today thanks to CALYPSO project the Sicilian and Maltese authorities are able to intervene, in real time, with preventive and/or repression actions for illegal behaviors caused by the transit of vessel in the Sicilian Channel.

Having regard to the theme of the human health risks, the programme finalized actions able to evaluate the prevalence of asthma and other respiratory allergic diseases in the identified areas and an assessment of the relations between pollutants and respiratory diseases (RESPIRA project). The evaluation programme, that interesting the health district and the health Ministry of Malta, represented a fundamental instrument to make up future safeguard policy and the prevention of the area citizens health.

Having regard to the Specific object 2.4 – “Contributing to the strengthening of cross-border institutional partnership in the areas identified under Priority Axis II”, the programme intervened for ameliorating the local policy in order to use the port areas of Valletta, Palermo and Trapani through the proposal for territorial planning (WATER FRONT project) interesting the local administrations.

3.3 Axis III - Technical Assistance, public awareness, advertising and communication

3.3.1.1 Financial and material progress

Table 9.c - allocated and disbursed amounts

Axis III	TOTAL CONTRIBUTION (A)	FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION			
		ALLOCATED AMOUNTS (B)	PAYMENTS (c)	ALLOCATED AMOUNTS (B/A) %	PAYMENTS (C/A) %
Technical support, awareness, communication and advertising	2,128,095	1,812,127	1,171,555	85.15%	55.05%

Table 10.c Priority Axis III Objectives

Axis 3								
Implementation indicators	Unit of measure	Objective	Progress					
			2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Personnel for the Joint Technical Secretariat	Number	4	0	2	2	4	4	4
Events related to communication and territorial animation	Number	30	0	0	4	25	32	58
Guidelines to facilitate the implementation of the OP	Number	5	0	1	3	5	0	48

The above table shows the financial progress of Axis III and highlights the total committed resources, arising from acts currently in force in relation to the payments for certified expenses as at the 31/12/2013. The data shows a significant progress on the commitments amounting to 85.15% of the advanced balances for the Axis at an OP level, which amount to €1,812,127. The said expenses commitments are clearly referable to both the MA and the MNCA. Therefore expenses amounting to €1,171,555 have been certified as at the 31/12/2013, which correspond to 55.05%.

The table 10.c above shows instead represented the advances made in the year 2012 in relation to the indicators at the level of Priority Axis III.

With reference to **critterion 1** " Personnel of the Joint Technical Secretariat" it is observed that during the year 2013, the personnel involved in the STC was composed of three components, which together with the contact point in Malta (extension of JTS in Maltese territory), adds up to the total number of 4 units of personnel involved in this role. Following a specific requirement of the MA related to the need to ensure the launch of the strategic projects, speeding up expenditure for ordinary projects and the start of the planning activities related to the cycle 2014-2020, in the course of 2013 steps were taken to initiate a comparative analysis of the titles of the current members of the STC in order to identify a coordinator.

With reference to **critterion 2** "Events related to communication and territorial animation", as described in Chapter 6 "information and communication", we observe that during 2013 the MA/JTS and the MNCA carried out the following events closely related to communication and territorial co-ordination:

In particular, during 2013, 2 Informative seminars were carried out, one in Sicily and the other in Malta, on reporting of expenditure and on the strategic projects monitoring system. Furthermore 3 meetings were also organized with the lead partners and the partners vis-à-vis the T-Cheesimal, Remasi, and Crim Safri projects. The purpose of these meetings was to check the state of the art of the two ordinary projects (T-Cheesimal and Remasi) and the start-up of the activities of the strategic project (Crim Safri). An operational meeting aimed at the organization of the European Cooperation Day 2013 and a workshop on the new Operational Program 2014/2020 were also held, which saw the involvement of public entities and private individuals to take part in the programming process.

With reference to criterion 3 "Guidelines to facilitate the implementation of the OP", as described in Chapter 6 "information and communication", we observe that during 2013 the MA/JTS has updated the manuals the OP (manual reporting, checklists, etc.) based on development of the national and regional levels as well as the specific needs to improve both the management processes that those responsible for the control of expenses.

During 2013 steps were taken to ensure compliance with the management flows, as described in the document "Description of the Management and Control System" under Article. 71 Reg.1828/2006, among all those responsible for the management of that OP in detail are: the Office Responsible for Operations (UCO) of Axis I and II, UCO Axis III, the Control Unit and the Head of the Axes (MA) of the OP. From a preliminary analysis and taking into account the stability of the observations, it is well-coordinated and integrated to avoid any possibility of over-lapping activities, is able to manage flows as provided in the above document.

With regard to the administrative and accounting obligations by the MNCA, with regards to management of expenditure items as approved in the plan of Technical Assistance, towards the MA, it should be noted that the same authorities took steps during 2013, with the support of the JTS, to submit two applications for reimbursement of expenses incurred pursuant to Article 16 of Reg. 1080/2006 regularly validated. The costs that fall into these claims for reimbursement mainly concerned the allocation of man hours of 4 officials of the Funds and Programmes Division engaged on the Italy-Malta Programme to ensure the timely and proper implementation. The costs are also related to the activities carried out by the Information Executive, engaged in the role of contact point of the program at the MNCA.

3.1.2 Significant problems encountered and measures for solving them

No difficulties related to implementation with regard to Priority 3 of the OP were encountered during 2013.

3.3.3 Result indicators of Axis III

Table 11.c below represents the result indicators provided by the Operational Program for Axis III.

Tab. 11.c - Result Indicators at program level - Axis III

Result Indicators Axis III	Units of Measurement	Objective	Base Line	Total 2013
Population of the eligible area reached by the information campaigns	% of the population	20%		17%

Based on the OP provisions in relation to the frequency of detection of the results achieved at Program level it should be noted that the same should be done at the end of the program. However, 2013 allows the MA to be able to make a first assessment of the results achieved at OP level.

In relation to the single result indicator of Axis III at Program level, the data processing shows that as at the 31/12/2013 the percentage of the eligible area population reached by the information campaigns amounts to 17%. In particular, the participants in the events organized by the 16 concluded ordinary projects, which overall amounted to 7,405, contributed to the achievement of this objective, as well as the participants in the European day of communication, which amounted 80,000 involved people, and the unique visitors of information sites which were mostly involved in the Program.

4. LARGE PROJECTS

The OP Italia-Malta 2007-2013 does not provide for the realization of large projects

5. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The CBC Programme Italy-Malta 2007-2013 is supported by the Joint Technical Secretariat, established by the Programme Authorities, in accordance with Art. 14(1) of Reg. 1080/2006.

The Joint Technical Secretariat is represented by 3 members who assist the Managing Authority and the Monitoring Committee, as well as the Audit Authority, in carrying out their respective duties.

The tasks of the JTS are conducted through the allocation of areas of responsibility to each of the components involved in the following activity areas:

- Management and support in connection with the OP implementation;
- output verification and implement status of achievement indicators, result and at the program level;
- Communication and support in connection with the OP implementation.
- Support to the process of negotiation and drafting of the CP Italy Malta 2014-2020.

With regard to management, during 2012, the **management and support efforts for the OP implementation** have seen the engagement of two individuals in the JTS, which were mainly involved in the implementation, monitoring and reporting processes of the activities, related to Axes I, II and III of the programme. With regard to Axes I and II, the activities were directed towards the direct assistance actions offered to lead partner beneficiaries and to partner beneficiaries in connection with the technical and administrative implementation methods of the funded interventions. The mode of operation was executed through the constant connection between the JTS and the “project manager”, the “financial manager” and the “communication manager” in collaboration with the MNCA overseeing the operations who handled the aspects related to project progress and to any changes made to the work plan and/or financial plan.

In detail, the JTS was responsible for the verification and appraisal of the progress reports for partners and lead partners, as well as the requests for modifications to the projects financial planning, for verifying the fulfilment of the "Subsidy Contract" with respect to the MA, for providing support in resolving problems regarding the correct management of funded projects, verifying whether project performance indicators are achieved, for the drawing up of reports on the operations' financial progress (commitments and payments), for supporting the implementation of reporting duties and the filling in of reimbursement requests and for the monitoring of expenditure in connection with the adjacent NUTS III areas (Art. 21 of Reg. (EC) 1080/2006). The JTS, in collaboration with the MNCA support was also evidenced through appropriate support for the strategic project beneficiaries which was aimed at providing them with the assistance tools necessary for fulfilling their responsibilities under the program (by way of example, we can mention the following: Model Rules of Procedure of the Steering Committee, reporting annex, reimbursement annex, annex for financial and procedural monitoring, meeting minutes template, table for calculation of cost per hour, etc.). The monitoring and reporting activities were addressed to the actions for the provision of assistance to lead partner and partner beneficiaries in connection with the expenditure monitoring operations via the MA's computerised system. The activities related to the budget reshape of the ordinary projects were carried out through the realization of specific template, the direct support to beneficiaries for correctly fulfilment of it, the analysis of a number of 12 budget reshape requests and the subsequent notifications of their outcomes. The mode of operation has provided for direct assistance to the lead partners and/or to the partners, so as to ensure the correct use of the system and of the procedures for data input. The support activity was then implemented

through the holding of face to face meetings with the beneficiaries and through the use of specific tools such as the website's FAQ section , which ensured timely feedback to requests for support from the beneficiaries.

With reference to the verification activities **of the outputs, achievement and result indicators**, the Joint Technical Secretariat proceeded, during the first half of 2013, to the verification of the physical progress and progress in the implementation of the above indicators achieved since the beginning of each project up to the 31/12/2012

The final adjustments made to the projects and the punctual verification occurred over 2013 of the output produced by the said projects have made it possible to check that all the projects have correctly concluded the activities in 2013 and have also achieved the intended target for each of the achievement, result indicators and at the program level.

The methodology used for the realization of the above work required the analysis of the content of Annex A - Administrative-technical reports for the intermediate repayment applications, in accordance to the method described in paragraph 2.1.7 of the present document.

The **communication activity** has seen a human resource engaged primarily in direct assistance actions to lead partner and to project partners in connection with any communication activities and their planned output, and to the MA in relation to the technical aspects related to the implementation of the communication plan of the programme. The mode of operation provides for the continued close relationships between the JTS and the lead partners and/or partners who have reported on the issues related to the communication plan. In detail, the JTS, in close collaboration with the contact point, was responsible for the communication activities under Axes I, II and III for carrying out the institutional communication and implementation activities of the programme's communication plan through the release of news, adverts and notices in the press, and through the implementation of specific content on the website. The JTS has also worked as a liaison with the programme's Info point in Malta and with Info points of other Territorial Cooperation programmes, and has provided support to the activities related to planning, monitoring and implementation of the communication plans for projects funded under the first call for ordinary projects. The JTS's communication activities were also carried out through the management of relations with the programme beneficiaries and the monitoring of stipulated ERDF agreements, that has allowed the preparation of meetings held with the project leaders that were deemed eligible for funding so as to explain the contract procedures for monitoring and for the presentation of intermediate documentation, and for information/training regarding the beneficiaries' obligations.

Referring to the implementation of the communication plan, the JTS and the MNCA implemented a number of support activities during the year through the realization of n. 69 meetings with LPs and PPs of ordinary and strategic projects where a number of 707 beneficiaries involved in the implementation of the projects took part. These meetings aimed at supporting the start and implementation of the each projects, supporting the beneficiaries in the budget reshape, providing indications to speed up expenditures as well as implement eventual corrective actions and supporting beneficiaries on the eligibility rules, monitoring, claiming and reimbursement of expenditures, on the fulfilment of the claim and request for reimbursement in line with the manual for reporting of expenses.

With reference to the overall management of the Programme, one is to make reference to the JTS support action towards the OP Monitoring Committee and Executive Committee activities. In particular, the Joint Technical Secretariat has supported the MA during the performance of its duties as outlined in paragraph 6.1.3 of the Italy-Malta OP. With regard to assistance given to the MC for the holding of the meeting of the 18

October 2013, with all its components which, operating through a distribution of tasks, illustrated the subjects and documents to be discussed, offered assistance to MC members in the preparation for the meeting minutes. In addition, during 2013, the JTS has guaranteed the start-up and closing support for a written procedure, performed in April, where the final version of the *on-going* evaluation of the Italia-Malta 2007-2013 program was approved.

The MC, of the OP Italy Malta 2007-2013, established an internal Executive Committee, in line with the provisions of the OP, for the selection and approval of projects within the meaning of art. 19 Reg. 1080/06. The JTS, during 2013, also assured the necessary support for the completion of 6 written procedures required to ensure the Ordinary projects with a final adjustment budget and a postponement of the closing date (13 over 16 completed projects) related to issues arising from external and unpredictable events, which were beyond the control of the recipients themselves. With reference to the single, still unconcluded ordinary project, it should be noted that following the procedure for the suspension of the grant contract of the REMASI project, activated within the meaning of paragraph 1 of article 16 b): "the Lead partner did not submit any refund request within six months" and c): "the Lead partner does not meet the deadlines for the submission of the progress report, the data and support documentation or does not provide the required information", the Lead partner removed the causes that had led to the suspension of the grant contract and therefore the MA, on 16/12/2013, had to withdraw the suspension of the subsidy contract, in line with the guidance of the Executive Committee.

With reference to activities related to **the negotiation and drafting process of the CP Italy Malta 2014-2020**, the Joint Technical Secretariat supported the work of the 2nd and 3rd task force, held respectively during the months of January and May 2013 and in line with article 5 of the (EU) Regulation 1303/2006 supported the Regione Siciliana - Dipartimento della Programmazione - newly designated MA of the future CP and the offices of the Funds and Programs Division of the State of Malta in initiating the "combined and multi-level path" for the involvement of the partnership for the preparation activities of the future cooperation program.

The combined approach entailed the design of the OP based on both the decision and orientation of the cross-border Task Force and the recommendations of the cooperation area partnership which was consulted from time to time.

The multilevel approach involved both general partnerships (open to all public/private subjects and citizens) and qualified partnerships (aimed at involving authorities and subjects skilled in the OP priority issues) in the different public consultation processes.

Hereunder is a breakdown of the involvement process launched by the authorities in charge of drafting the Italy-Malta 2014-2020 OP as from 2012.

As reported in the AIR 2012, held in July 2012, the work modalities were shared as well as some cooperation areas of the future OP Italia Malta 2014 were drafted. The main output of the meeting was a programme structure hypothesis and the identification of possible thematic objectives to be further discussed.

At the beginning of 2013, during **the 2nd meeting, the task force group** defined the negotiated procedures to be adopted between Member States in synergy with the European Commission by also drafting an action plan and identifying the roles and responsibilities of the authorities involved in the drafting of the OP and of the ones in charge of drawing up the ex-ante evaluation and the strategic environmental assessment. The issue related to the selection of thematic objectives was further discussed as well as the need for a public consultation to be launched in order to involve the population, the socio-economic and institutional partners in

the definition of the investment priorities. Thus, the main outputs of the meeting were the definition of the programming steps and the approval of the modalities to involve the general and the qualified partnership.

During the months of February and March 2013, in line with the European Commission staff working document "The partnership principle in the implementation of the Common Strategic Framework Funds - elements for a European Code of Conduct on Partnership" a **public consultation through an on line survey** was launched.

The web platform of the OP Italia Malta 2007-2013 www.italiamalta.eu as well as the Sicily Region institutional website www.regione.sicilia.it, the Sicilian ERDF website www.euroinfosicilia.it and the Maltese Government website www.fpd.gov.mt were made available from the 16th of February to the 31st of March 2013 for completing an online questionnaire. The rationale behind the decision to publish the questionnaire on the above four web sites was due to the fact that they represent the most visited institutional web sites in Malta and Sicily so that to facilitate the widest involvement and an active participation of the partners. The aim of the survey was to collect contributions and indications in order to contribute to the definition of thematic objectives and investment priorities, to the improvement of programme implementation and to streamlining the next OP's effectiveness. The beneficiaries involved were both socio-economic and institutional partners as well as private subjects and citizens, in particular: 1) Regional and local authorities, municipalities and other public authorities; 2) Socio-economic representatives; 3) Organizations representing civil society, environmental partners, non-governmental organizations, and bodies responsible for promoting equal opportunities. The questionnaires deemed as valid were 215 and they were further analyzed using the SPSS software for the analysis of statistical data. The great part of the participants were high skilled (89%), mainly working as employees (70%), aged between 35-50 years (47%) and over 50 years old (35%). The most interested bodies that took part to the survey were public (75%) and private (11%) entities. The questions proposed investigated the level of information on the strategy "Europe 2020", the level of importance attributed to new investment priorities, the promotion of equal opportunities and ultimately the overall evaluation of the 2007-2013 programme still in progress. The main results of the public consultation represented a tool for the Task Force of the Italy-Malta CBC Programme 2014-2020.

The main outcomes of the public consultation were the preparatory work of the **3rd Task force meeting** held in May 2013. The Managing Authority submitted to the group a Strategic Guidance Document to the path planning of the OP Italia-Malta 2014-2020. The document was drawn up with aim of: 1) highlighting the results of the public consultation process carried out at the CBC area level; 2) analyzing Italian and Maltese position papers, drawn up by the European Commission, 3) submitting a first draft of the SWOT analysis carried out on the basis of the principal assets of the cross-border area, of the results achieved by ordinary and strategic projects and of the main results of the mid-term evaluation in relation to the 2007-2013 programming period.

Based on the drafting of the *Document of strategic orientation*, the Managing Authority, with the contribution of the Joint Technical Secretariat, organized a **co-working activity** with the qualified partnership, held in the month of July 2013, in Syracuse. It was an initiative having significant added value, due to the fact that the partnership involved has considerably influenced the strategic choices in the prioritization of future investments and expected results of the CP Italia-Malta 2014-2020. This result was achieved thanks to the use, within the co-working activities, of a work methodology known as *Art of Hosting Meaningful Conversation*, i.e., the experimentation of techniques that stimulate the collective intelligence to undertake common choices, when important decisions involving a group or a community need to be taken. The activity, organised in two work sessions called "*World Café*" and "*Open Space Technology*", allowed the involvement about 90 local cross-border individuals belonging to the following categories: central, regional and local authorities (ministries, regional departments, municipalities); universities and research centres; highly qualified consortia

in the agro-food sector; Entities involved in the protection and management of the environment; organizations of small and medium-sized enterprises; associations of the third sector and of the social economy; associations for the protection of civil and health rights, representatives of professional groups (medical and paramedical). The main results of the activities was the drafting of 12 thematic schedules aimed at consolidating the SWOT analysis and the drafting of 12 factsheets for as many specific investment actions.

Following the drafting of the Strategic Guidance Document, in July 2013, the Managing Authority with the contribution of the Joint Technical Secretariat organized a **co-working activity with qualified partnership**, in Syracuse. It dealt with a significant added value initiative due to the fact that the partnership involved significantly influenced strategic choices in terms of definition of the future investment priorities and expected results of the OP Italia Malta 2014-2020. This goal was reached through the use of a work methodology known as Art of Hosting Meaningful Conversation within the co-working activity; that is to say to experiment techniques stimulating common intelligence to guide common choices when important decisions that involve a group and/or a community have to be made. The activity, organized in two working sessions, namely a “world café” and an “open space technology”, involved about 90 cross-border local actors belonging to the following categories: central, regional, local authorities (ministries, regional departments, municipalities); universities and research centres; highly qualified consortia in the agri-food sector; entities involved in the environmental protection and management; SMEs’ organizations; associations of the third sector and social economy; associations for the protection of civil rights and health, representatives of professional categories (medical doctors and paramedics). The main results of the activity were the drafting of 12 thematic sheets aimed at the consolidation of the SWOT analysis and 12 thematic sheets for specific investment actions. In order to facilitate a wide involvement and an active participation of the partners, including in terms of accessibility, the two sessions of the co-working activities were held in Syracuse where a good number of air/sea connections guaranteed the possibility for the Maltese partners to take part in a low cost initiative without wasting time.

Once again, after having consolidated the results of the co-working activity, **a new public consultation for consolidating the SWOT analysis** was launched. The web platform of the OP Italia Malta 2007-2013 www.italiamalta.eu was made available from the 2nd of December to the 31st of December 2013 to receive integrations to the SWOT analysis on the main assets targeted by the OP Italia Malta 2014-2020: Objective 1 – Enhancing research, technological development and innovation; Objective 3 – Promoting the competitiveness of small and medium enterprises; Objective 6 – Protecting environment and promoting the efficient use of resources. The comments received were integrated in the draft document and the definitive version was sent to authorities involved in the drafting of the OP.

With regards to certifications of costs in 2013 the JTS has offered its’ support in the consolidation of the request for reimbursement. Particularly in December 2013. The JTS has supported the competent authorities within the Managing Authority of the Italia-Malta OP 2007-2013 through the consolidation of the quality of controls being done, the amount of expenditure being issued, recovered or on hold, the level of commitments issued, the list of operations taken place, the compilation of the audit certificates for the certification of expenditure with respects to ex art. 16 of the decision (CE) 1080/2006 in relation to the Italian expenses under Axis I, II and III and the compilation of audit certificates as per art 16 of the decision (CE) 1080/2006 in relation toe the Maltese expenditure in Axis I, II and III.

With regards to the TA Plan of the OP, the MNCA follows the LN 296.10 which refers to public procurement regulations. Therefore during 2013 the MNCA has implemented Axis III in line with the approved TA plan.



At the end of both paths, the participants were accompanied in Ragusa Ibla where they were welcomed by the Mayor of Ragusa and the Extraordinary Commissioner of the Regional Province of Ragusa at Palazzo La Rocca, the headquarters of the International Centre on stereotomy, which was realized thanks to the LITHOS project.

The "Cooperation bike tour" ended with a visit to the stand of the European Cooperation Day, organized at Ibla by the Ragusa Municipality, where promotional materials were distributed on all the projects funded by the Italia-Malta 2007-2013 Cooperation Program.



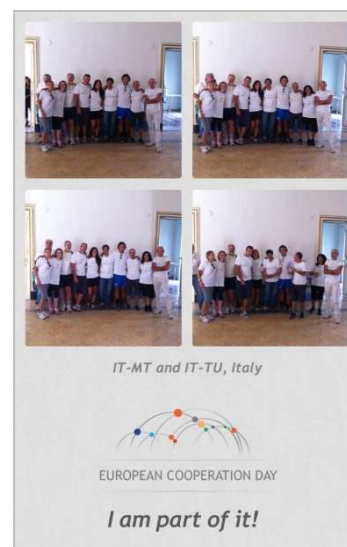
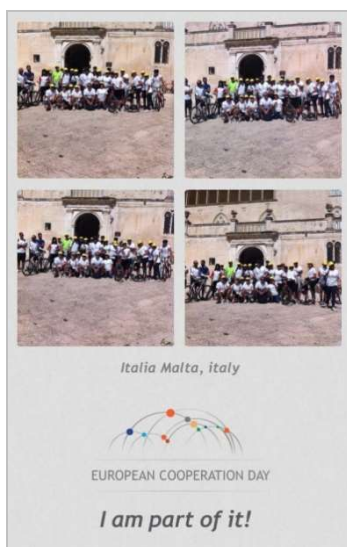
The European Cooperation Day continued in the afternoon with the visit of CoRFiLaC, with the organization of a Sicilian-Maltese cheese and wine tasting session, which is the subject of experimentation by the T-Cheesimal and PROMED projects.

Throughout the communication activities, maximum visibility for the Italia-Malta 2007-2013 OP was ensured through the creation of information material dedicated to the program together with the insertion of the official logos on all communication material.

A full colour A4 size 3 full-page flyer was produced, containing the presentation of the ETC Day, as well as information and insights on the OP and funded projects. The flyer was printed in 500 copies and distributed to the public and tourists who participated at the event, both within the institutional exhibition space at Ragusa Ibla, and at the beginning of the path.

At the beginning of the two paths, all participants were provided with the material needed to cover the routes: caps, t-shirts and water bottles. All the material had the logo of the event and of the OP Italy Malta 2007-2013. A photographic reportage was also made and a 10 minute video of the event provided in playable format with "Windows Media Player" and DVD formats playable with "Windows Media Player", "Nero StartSmart", "PowerDVD", Quicktime Player or VLC.

The event was given wide relevance through the social networks, mainly Twitter and Facebook. In addition, the APP developed by the INTERACT program made it was possible to disseminate and "socialise" the events carried out by the OP Italy Malta 2007-2013.



During the event days, constant communication activities accompanied the unfolding of events of the ETC Day 2013 in Sicily. In particular, in the previous and following days, eight different regional and local newspapers highlighted the news on the event, thanks to the dissemination of two press releases, by the MA/JTS staff.

The Day's themes received widespread media coverage throughout Italy thanks also to live interviews conducted by Federico Taddia in L'Altra Europa transmission broadcast nationally by Radio 24. The nationwide radio service belongs to Il Sole 24 ORE, Italy's main economic newspaper, a reference point for professionals, entrepreneurs, and public administration officials wanting in-depth economic, political, and administrative news at the national and European level. The interviews from Valencia and Ragusa to representatives of the INTERACT and PO Italia-Malta 2007-2013 programmes, Amaro Montan and Marco Sambataro set out the spirit of the Day, that is, to show the citizens that the good use of community funds creates solutions to problems countries of the Union have in common.

With regards to the activities held in Malta, the Funds and Programmes Division (FPD), in its role as the Maltese National Coordination Authority of the Italy-Malta 2007-2013 programme has promoted the theme of

territorial cooperation towards various initiatives held in September which were aimed at distributing the results of the projects financed under the programme.

These events were particularly related to the diffusion and inauguration of a documentary, site visits and explorations of the projects T-CHEESIMAL, PANACEA and ARCHAEO TUR. In addition to this the plantation of trees and endemic plants to the Mediterranean area took place under the initiative of the project SIMBIOTIC. Finally the project IMAGENX held various seminars and had public exposure through the Science in the City event which took place in Valletta.



These events organised in Malta in order to celebrate ETC day 2013 were duly publicised through a press release of the events and themes which would take place and which were also publicised through the local media.

The events relating to the European of Cooperation Day were also included in the institutional website of the OP Italy Malta 2007-2013 www.italiamalta.eu, on the site of the ERDF OP of Regione Siciliana www.euroinfocilia.it and on the website of the National Authority of Maltese Coordination www.ppcd.gov.mt.

In a transversal manner with respect to the initiatives described above, the Joint Technical Secretariat deal with relations with the INTERACT programme, by currently updating the www.eeday.eu portal with a programme of initiatives, photos, reports etc.

The information and publicity activities, during 2013, have been maintained through constant updating and improvement of the programme's official website www.italiamalta.eu. This activity was ensured both through the uploading of content and the publication of news which were always up-to-date, as well as through the implementation of new utilities such as calendar events, the counter and the job opportunities section.

Particularly with respect to the documentation section of the website, throughout 2013, a total of 20 documents related to procedures, records, lists, relevant Italian and Maltese legislation, lists of beneficiaries, etc. were uploaded and more than 22 news items regarding significant events concerning the operational programme were published. The amount of documents published in 2013 was in line with the average of previous years and this in order to ensure timely and updated information with respect to the activities of the programme.

With reference to the communication activities on the results of the OP and information about the benefits of cooperation on the territories of the cooperation area, it is worth mentioning the dissemination activities carried out by the MA, with reference to the Vamos Seguro and Promed projects.

The Vamos Seguro project implemented an automatic system for the monitoring and predicting of dispersion of volcanic ash in the cross-border region also aimed at identifying the areas at risk for air navigation.

At the European Parliament in Strasbourg on the 10th September 2013, the results of the project were officially presented. Vamos Seguro was one of the five European best practices regarding the mitigation and prevention of natural risks identified by the European Commission between the hundreds of initiatives of territorial cooperation funded by the Structural Funds of the 2007-2013 programming. This important recognition occurred in the context of a debate on the programming of the European Funds 2014-2020 which was attended by the representatives of the Sicilian Region; the European Commissioner, Hahn; the Manager of the DG Regional Policy, Palma Andrés; the Director of the Regions Committee, Thieule and the representatives of the regions involved in territorial cooperation programs. A photo exhibition was held at the end of this debate together with the projection of a promotional video made by the European Commission with the support of the INTERACT program.



The video can be seen on Youtube through the following links: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n3EQKOg-JYg> (in French); <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kD6pCn2mOhU> (in German); <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6qK2T42W8rw> (in English).

During 2013, the contribution to the drafting of a *factsheet* was also supplied on the Vamos Seguro project that will be published during 2014 in relation to the Inforegio portal of the European Commission.

With reference to the Promed project, the same project has been identified by the European Commission, as a relevant example in research and innovation to promote sustainable development paths.

The project allowed the vineyards plantation optimization and the correct use of the vines for the smaller islands of Sicily and Malta, in order to prevent the territorial erosion and ensure the system's profitability, also through the definition of oenological protocols, one of which has already been acknowledged in Italy by the MIPAAF - Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forestry Policies.

On the 5th and 6th July 2013 representatives of the European Commission visited the headquarters of the experimental wine cellar "Dalmasso" in Marsala (TP) where the oenological trials of produced wines were carried out, they visited the vines produced on the island of Pantelleria, within the activities of PROMED and met with local producers to identify the system's strengths and weaknesses.



In addition, during 2013 the activity of the Ordinary financed projects had a wide media diffusion and advertising in consideration of the fact that the activity of the same projects was concluded within the month of October 2013.

In particular, with reference to the implementation indicators shown in the Communication Plan of the OP during 2013, involved 163 media entities in the OP, 409 articles, (ads and video productions) were issues and 17 productions were completed, through the mass media.

The communication tools of the PROMED project were particularly effective, based on the specific objective 1.1 , and the PANACEA project for objective 2.1 of the OP.

During the 2013 the communication and information activities of the PROMED project were aimed at the production of three objectives: 1) the dissemination of the results obtained by the operators in the sector, the institutional subjects and the inhabitants of the affected areas; 2) awareness among the operators of the sector and consumers on the territoriality of productions, and being able to maximize what has been done in terms of an increase in the value of production; 3) propose to the tourist sector operators new territory and production items able to enrich the offer.

The project has identified, from these objectives, five different target groups: the operators of the wine sector, local entities and institutions operating in the territories involved, consumers, tour operators, the press, and, more farmers in general .

Over the year 2013, the activities were developed within certain macro-areas. In particular:

1. Web Area

The communication activity made through the website has seen the constant updating of the information related to the project.



In particular, all the information on the objectives and the aims of the project are present, as well as the results about the 28 events that involved over 620 participants for amongst conferences, seminars and workshops.

2. Dissemination of the research activity

During 2013, the project lead to the dissemination of various press releases of the most relevant events connected to the project life. In particular, a first press release was drafted and issued on the occasion of the conclusion of the work at the Buskett centre, a second press release was related to the dissemination of project results and 5 different press releases were circulated on the occasion of the events listed below.

3. Events and shows

a) Open Winery - Buskett

The Ministry for Resources and Rural Affairs in collaboration with VITIMALTA organized an open day for the public and the press at the experimental wine cellar of Buskett. The Maltese people and the press were involved to promote the role that the research station will have on the Maltese viticulture, even after the conclusion of the project.

b) Vinitaly – International Exhibition of wines and spirits, 2013 edition

The Istituto Regionale Vini e Oli di Sicilia (Lead partner) attended, for the second consecutive year, from the 7 to the 10 April 2013, the most important exhibition of wine and spirits in the world. The objective was to consistently contribute to the dissemination of the project scientific results thanks to the presence of operators in the industry and the specialised press. The participation in the 2013 edition allowed the necessary continuity to the communication activities already undertaken during 2012. In fact, during the previous edition a significant number of visitors had

been registered at the booth of the Regione Siciliana in Verona where the IRVO and MRRA technicians were able to give useful information about the research lines undertaken and the results achieved at that point. In the 2013 edition, space was again dedicated to the project, thus exploiting the high resonance which the exhibition enjoys, not only in Italy but also abroad, and attracting attention on the project's results through the presentation of the wines produced during the second harvest.



c) Seminar on the capitalization of the project's results

During the month of July 2013 the IRVO organised a meeting-debate on the perspectives for research and sustainable development of the Mediterranean islands, in line with the objectives of the Promed project. The event took place between Marsala (TP) and Pantelleria (TP), with the latter providing, after the debate, a tasting of some experimental Promed wines in conjunction with some specialities of the Pantelleria gastronomy. In addition, the activity provided, a site visit to some typical vineyards of the island and the cellar involved in the experimentation of the corporate test for the production of Zibibbo according to the Promed protocol.

d) Dissemination activities at Buskett

During the month of June 2013, VITIMALTA organised a promotional event on the occasion of Imnarja, one of the most popular fiestas in Malta dating back to the time of the Knights of Malta. This event was held at Buskett, near the Promed experimental cellar, and saw a large public and press turnout that also gave the opportunity to visit the cellar. The visit was concluded with a wine tasting event of some of the wines produced during the two years of experimentation together with a short tour at some of the Maltese representative vineyards involved in research.

e) Conference for the conclusion of the project

The conference held in Malta and organized by MRRA, saw the participation of all the beneficiaries of the project each of which reported on the project results. The conference was followed by a tasting event of some experimental wines produced within the project.

4. Participation in internationally relevant scientific conferences

The applied scientific research component has allowed a substantial educational activity, During 2013 the PROMED project has participated in the following congress:

a) 36th World Congress of the Vineyard and Wine organized by OIV

Within the event framework, held in Bucharest from the 2 to the 7 June 2013 entitled "The vineyard and the wine between tradition and modernity", the lead partner in the project presented the poster entitled " Ampelographic characterization of the Girgentina and Gellewza grapes cultivars grown in the island of Malta". The congress was attended by researchers, technicians and operators from different parts of the world and provided the opportunity to maximize the visibility and usability of the project's results.

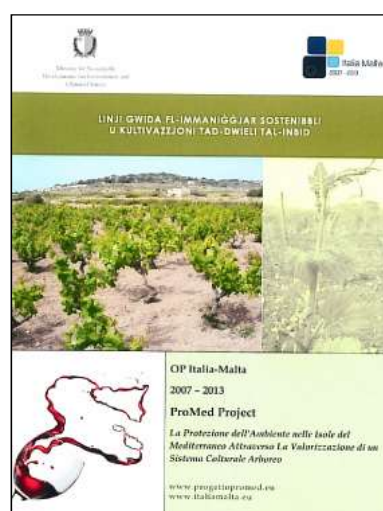
5. Complementary dissemination activities

The PROMED project, during 2013, was also presented on the occasion of exhibitions/seminars/conferences at:

- a) Training Course “Produzione e trasformazione di biomasse erbacee a scopi energetici da sistemi di fitodepurazione” – Catania, March 2013;
- b) Seminar “I sistemi di fitodepurazione per il trattamento e la produzione di biomasse a scopi energetici: esperienze del progetto fitoprobio” – Catania, March 2013;
- c) Study Day on “Trattamento della ricerca in viticoltura ed enologia” – Marsala (TP), March 2013;
- d) Seminar “Il valore dell’acqua” – Ragusa, March 2013;
- e) Conference “Energie, rifiuti, depurazione e sviluppo del territorio”, Giarre (CT), April 2013

6. Technical publications

- a) Printing of the technical and operating manual and its related dissemination to Sicilian and Maltese producers



7. Info-divulgative material

An integral part of the communication action was, moreover, the production of gadgets and promotional materials as brochures, flyers, invitation tickets and CD-ROMs. The communication activity also enlisted the traditional media and new media: 46 presences on local and national media; 14 articles were published in magazines, newspapers and many publications relating to the project and to the dissemination of the results obtained.



The PANACEA project promoted the scientific and environmental value of Mediterranean marine ecosystems both through a monitoring role of Sicilian Marine Protected Areas (Palermo, Syracuse, Lampedusa and Linosa) and Maltese (Gozo) in order to improve their management and encourage interaction, both through the construction of four Centri di Educazione Ambientale (Environmental Education Centres) (CEA).

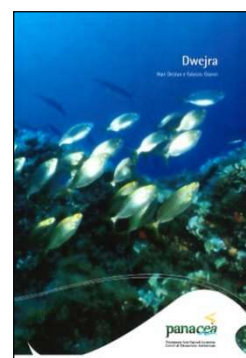
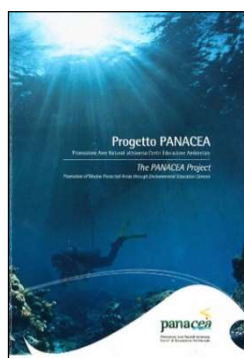
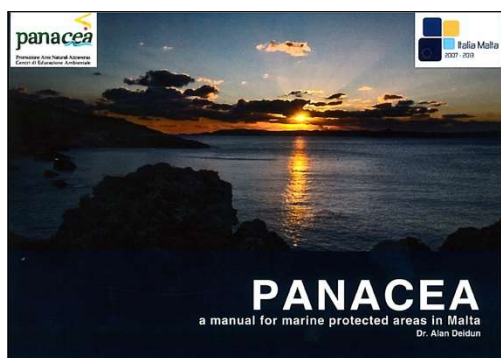
The CEA inaugurated at Dwejra, Pelagic Islands, Plemmirio and Capo Gallo/Isola delle Femmine are open to the public, and equipped with 1:1 scale models of the plant and animal species that inhabit the ecosystems of the marine protected areas. The sites were also supplied with equipment suited to propose through documentaries, *edutainment* panels, dioramas, experiential workshops, a knowledge path of the areas and their biodiversity.



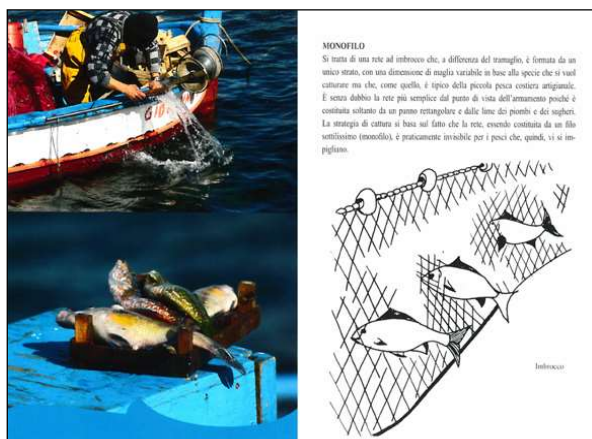
The communication activities made by the project partnership were wide and effective

The partnership has, in fact, promoted, through the CEA, a remarkable activity of both scientific disclosure and to raise public awareness on environmental issues in the Sicilian and Maltese schools which participated to the promotion and preservation of the environment.

The project has produced a website full of information on the actions taken, on the goals reached and the specificity of reference to Marine Protected Areas. In addition, to support the information and dissemination action for the knowledge of the flora and fauna, the project has implemented a large number of publications, including a manual on Maltese marine protected areas, a scientific volume and descriptive brochures on the marine protected areas.



A considerable amount of informative material, both printed and multimedia, coherent in both content and "didactic" spirit that characterized each action of the project, was also produced during 2013. In particular: 4 DVDs on the marine protected areas of Plemmirio (Syracuse), Pelagie (Agrigento), Ustica-Capo Gallo (Palermo), Dwejra (Gozo) and Rdum Majjiesa (Malta); brochures relating to various aspects regarding fauna and flora and cultural traditions of the areas affected by the project; 4 types of brochures on the biodiversity of the Mediterranean Sea.



The PANACEA project also received great appreciation at European level, during the *Giornata Europea Dei Mari* organised by the European Commission during 2013 at Valletta. Experts from all the maritime sectors highlighted the crucial role that seas and oceans play in everyday life not only in coastal communities but for all citizens of the EU. During the European Maritime Day more than 400 children were involved and made aware of environmental issues and attended the projection of documentaries made by the project.

PANACEA was also widely disseminated in Italy within the media. During the interview conducted in the context of the national television broadcast Linea Blu (RaiUno-29 June 2013), Alan Deidun - Senior Lecturer at the Physical Oceanography Unit of the University of Malta - illustrated the important work of raising awareness within the centre of Dwejra, especially with the younger generations.



Tab. 12 - Indicators of the communication plan (Information and advertising measures)

Information and advertising tools	Output	Indicators	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Events of public interest	Organization of the programme launch event and of other scheduled events (info day, seminars, meetings and workshops, information conferences)	No. of organised seminars		2	4	4	4
		No. of organised events		2	4	6	8
		No. of final participating beneficiaries		420	670	913	1013
		No. of articles and notices for publicising the events		3	7	65	75
Launch of the OP website	Enhancement of the OP website	No. of users/visitors		30,621	63,344	78,388	88,658
	Verticalisation of the information of the previous Interreg III Programme	No. downloaded documents		22	22	22	22
	Setting up of a back-end section	No. of news published in the news section	1	2	2	2	2
	Setting up of a section reserved for OP beneficiaries	No. of content System management (CSM)			1	1	1
	Constant updating of website	No. of reserved sections	2	29	50	77	99
		No. of published news	42	100	202	256	298
	Creation of a database of participating beneficiaries/partners	No. of documents uploaded			1	2	2
		No. of databases created		182	335	440	440
Advertising in local and national media	Publication of items related to the OP and to funded projects in national regional press	No. of media showing interest in the OP			84	236	399
	Mass media productions and dissemination	No. of articles, notices and video productions regarding the OP and the funded projects			146	271	680
		No. of productions created by the mass media			1	11	28
News letter of the OP	Quarterly preparation of the news letter of the OP	No. of printed copies					100
		No. of download of the newsletter from the web site					729

With reference to the **support actions**, the activities of the Managing Authority and the Maltese National Coordination Authority, supported by the Joint Technical Secretariat, have ensured the realization of information seminars and support to the beneficiaries of the ordinary and strategic projects.

In particular, during 2013, 2 informative seminars were carried out, one in Sicily and the other in Malta, on reporting of expenditure and on the monitoring system for the strategic projects. The beneficiaries present at the seminars were 144 in total. Furthermore 3 meetings were also organized with the lead partners and the partners in the T-Cheesimal, Remasi, and Crim Safri projects with the participation of 45 beneficiaries. The purpose of these meetings was to check the state of the art of the two ordinary projects (T-Cheesimal and Remasi) and the start-up of the activities of the strategic project (Crim Safri). An operational meeting aimed at the organization of the European Cooperation Day 2013 (27 participants) and a workshop on the new Operational Program 2014/2020 were also held, which saw the involvement of 71 participants from public entities and private individuals interested in the programming process

During 2013, the Maltese National Coordination Authority was in constant contact with the Maltese partners, regularly debating with the Managing Authority and the Joint Technical Secretariat in order to ensure the proper implementation of ordinary and strategic projects. In this regard, 28 bilateral meetings with all projects were held with 252 Maltese subjects, in order to monitor the financial and physical progress made. These meetings were crucial in overcoming obstacles encountered from time to time by the partners in the daily management of the activities. The MNCA followed with particular attention some of the projects in order to prevent that bottlenecks which could jeopardize the attainment of the objectives. In fact, 33 meetings were organized with the projects' beneficiaries who were suffering a delay in terms of the implementation of the activities and presentation of reports during which the MNCA supported the beneficiaries in the resolution of specific problems encountered during the project implementation. Thanks to these constant monitoring activities, the majority of the ordinary projects regularly concluded the activities in 2013.

In addition to the above, in February 2013, MNCA held an information seminar on first-level checks addressed to the Maltese beneficiaries for ordinary and strategic projects. During the seminar, which was also attended by the controllers, guidance was provided on the procedures related to the compilation and presentation of the expenses accounting.

During 2013, MNCA and the Joint Technical Secretariat participated in specific meetings organized by the Lead partner of the ordinary and strategic projects. The presence was also guaranteed to the Steering Committees that needed the required support for the continuation of activities and the reshaping of design budgets. In particular, the Secretariat participated in the Steering Committees of the projects Promed, The Hub, Vienergy Biodivalve, Simit. On the strategic projects, the Joint Technical Secretariat provided its support on the subject of the eligibility of expenses, the reporting and advertising obligations, the procedures for reporting, monitoring, and reimbursement of expenses, on how to fill out the necessary documentation for the definition of the reporting and reimbursement annex, according to the reporting manual.

During 2013, the Managing Authority and the Maltese National Coordination Authority, supported by the JTS and the Maltese Contact Point, have ensured constant linking between the activities of the OP and the commitments to be carried out on the two territories through constant dialogue and sharing of activities. During 2013, the Joint Technical Secretariat constantly liaised with the Maltese National Coordination Authority and the contact point in defining n. 6 supporting documents for beneficiaries in order to provide them with the necessary support tools for complying with their obligations under the programme (the following are referred to by way of example: Partnership Agreement, Grant Contract, Manual of accounting of the expenses , of

reimbursement annex). The documentation for the beneficiaries' use has been distributed to all stakeholders, also through the publication of the same documentation within the documentation section of the corporate website www.italiamalta.eu. In 2013, the Joint Technical Secretariat has also instructed regarding 15 reformulations of ordinary projects by providing the necessary guidance for the proper compilation of the relevant files processed.

Table n. 13 - Indicators of the communication plan (Support actions)

Information and advertising tools	Output	Indicators	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Seminars/workshops with beneficiaries	Organisation of seminars and workshops	No. of organised seminars and workshops			23	74	143
		No. of participating beneficiaries			199	534	1241
Informative material	Guidelines for end beneficiaries, reporting manuals, forms, etc.	No. of created documents		9	31	59	20
		No. of downloads from the OP website	5828	51741	82420	139227	197032
		No. of programme related publications				16	18
		No. of FAQs published on the site		29	84	84	84
		No. of answers on the Forum		62	62	62	62
Assistance actions for end beneficiaries	Meetings held with the JTS and with the Maltese contact point	No. of organised meetings		1	7	10	10
	Meetings with the Programme authorities	No. of information requests			55	108	112
	Meetings with the project beneficiaries	No. of participations in Steering Committees			17	22	27

With reference to **actions for transparency and promotion of the role played by the EU**, in 2013, strategic projects also started information and communication activities, in accordance to the obligations imposed by Reg 1828/2006 and to the indications of the reporting manual of the OP. In particular, the activities have ensured that the 3 strategic projects, SIMIT, IMAGENX and PIM ENERGETHICA complied with the requirements of the communication plan, ensuring both transparency of procedures and activities and the visibility of the European Union's contribution. In conformity with their communication plans, prepared in accordance with the communication plan of the OP, ordinary projects have realized dissemination action with respect to regional and national media, always ensuring adequate visibility to the role played by the European Union and the instrument of the European Fund for Regional Development in territorial development. In particular, all 17 ordinary projects have been promoted in national and regional media which have reported detailed information on the types of activities funded by the European Union under the Operational Programme and on the possible additional funding from the beneficiaries involved. Moreover during the ETC Day, 2 press conferences were held and 8 articles were issued.

. These articles, written in both Maltese and English, are aimed to reach a wider audience, focused on some documentaries and onsite visits connected to the T-CHEESIMAL, PANACEA and ARCHAEOUR projects, the planting of trees and species that are typical of the Mediterranean marquis, performed within the SIMBIOTIC project, the participation in seminars and public events such as the Science in the City (La Valletta) by the IMAGENX project.

Below is a table indicative of the progress of the indicators of the communication plan, with reference to actions for transparency and the promotion of the role played by the European Union.

Table n. 14 - Indicators of the communication plan (Support actions)

Information and advertising tools	Output	Indicators	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Ensuring compliance with provisions in the preparation of the section of the annual and final implementation report with regard to the activities and results of the CP	Drawing up of the section related to the activities and results of the CP in the annual and final reports	No. of examples of promotional activities reported in the annual and final reports			4	7	10
		No. of projects that meet the CP requirements			17	22	25
		No. of projects publicised by the mass media			6	10	17
Monitoring of websites created by the OP beneficiaries	Verification activities of websites created by the approved projects	No. of consulted websites			5	16	17
		No. of links leading to the OP website			5	16	17
		No. of uploaded documents	0	30	7	37	43
Ensuring observance of transparency with regard to the opportunities offered by the OP	Publication of press releases, advertorials, and articles	No. of articles, press releases and advertorials published		11	15	73	83

With reference to actions for **communication with other Community programmes**, the Managing Authority of the OP and the Joint Technical Secretariat, in 2013, participated in 7 meetings and seminars organized by the European Commission and the INTERACT Programme.

In particular, during the month of January 2013, the MA and the JTS went to Rome to participate in the working meeting of the Strategic coordination Group for Territorial Cooperation in order to deal with the issues related to the 2014-2020 programming and in particular the definition of both cooperation and designation geographical areas of the Managing Authorities and the European macro regional strategies.

During March 2013, the MA and the JTS participated in the launch event for the European territorial cooperation programs 2014-2020 held in Rome.

During the month of April 2013 the MA and the JTS met the representatives of the European Commission in Brussels for the presentation of the OP future index in line with the recommendations of the draft regulation on CTE.

During the month of July 2013 the BUT and the JTS participated at the workshop organised by the INTERACT program in collaboration with the Ministry of Economic Development for the start of the European territorial cooperation programs 2014-2020.

On the 10th September 2013, the JTS participated in the "Kick-off event of the European Cooperation Day Campaign" held in Strasbourg at the headquarters of the European Parliament. On the same day the JTS also participated in the inauguration of the exhibition, where the VAMOS SEGURO project was presented and selected by the European Commission as best practice regarding the prevention of risks.

During the month of October 2013 the MA and the JTS participated in the working meeting with the representatives of the MISE - DPS for matters relating to the establishment of geographical areas and allocation of financial resources for the CTE 2014-2020 programs held in Rome.

In December the JTS went to Florence to take part in the working meeting organised by Regione Toscana within the *Mattone internazionale* project in order to submit the progress of the negotiations of Regione Sicilian in connection to health issues in the future Cooperation Program Italia-Malta 2014-2020.

Below is an indicative table of the progress of the indicators of the communication plan, with reference to actions for communication with other Community programs.

Table n. 15 – Achievement indicators of the communication plan (Actions for communication with other community programs)

ACTIONS FOR COMMUNICATION WITH OTHER COMMUNITY PROGRAMS							
Information and advertising tools	Information and advertising tools	Information and advertising tools	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Participation of the authorities involved in the OP in events of public interest	Participation in training/information days	No. di events			4	13	20
		No. of involved Authorities			30	80	115
		News published on the website in relation to the activities			4	12	12

During 2013, the Managing Authority provided for the publication of a list of beneficiaries under the OP. This publication was made on the website of the Italia-Malta 2007-2013 OP website www.italiamalta.eu and on the official ERDF OP www.euroinfosicilia.it.

Taking into account the indicators of realization of the communication plan, an accurate reasoning about the achievement of the operational objectives of the communication plan is carried out hereunder.

With reference to the operative objective 1) **“to inform the public opinion about the role the UE has in favour of the regional development and of the European territorial integration”**, the communication actions realized by the beneficiaries of the programme are adequate to the objective. In particular, the MA and the MNCA succeed, despite the limited financial resources, to optimize the effects of communication, also with the contribution of the beneficiaries of the ordinary and strategic projects, in order to reach a various audience (citizens, tourists, youths, students, researchers, administrators and associations) and inform it about the EU contribution in the realization of joint programmes capable of solving cross-border area problems.

With reference to the operative objective 2) **“to guarantee the transparency of the decisions made and of the modality of the implementation and of supervision of the programme, making effective the citizens right to complete and correct information”**, communication and information measures realized by the programme authorities resulted highly appropriate to the objective. In particular, the programme assured the most high participation to the choices and the planning orientations through multidimensional communication approaches.

On occasion of the Programme closure activities, the effects reached by communication actions will be better described.

To be thorough, below is a list of beneficiaries updated as at 31/12/2013 and the payments made by the European Commission.

Table n. 16 Payments granted by the European Commission

PAGAMENTITIES GRANTED BY THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION				
PRIORITY AXIS	PRE-FINANCING	PAYMENTS ON APPLICATION FOR PAYMENT	PAYMENTS ON APPLICATION FOR PAYMENT	TOTAL PAYMENTS
		AS AT 30/06/2013	AS AT 30/06/2014	
I	1,329,527.55	3,162,576.08	4,017,376.57	5,346,904.12

II	1,220,994.69	3,156,102.81	9,004,464.72	10,225,459.41
III	162,799.29	714,771.67	831,181.36	993,980.65
TOTAL AXIS	2,713,321.53	7,033,450.56	13,853,022.65	16,566,344.18

Table n. 17 - List of beneficiaries as at the 31/12/2013.

Beneficiary Name	Axis	Name of the operation	Funding Year	Allocated community contribution	Amount actually delivered	
					Total	ERDF Share
Regione Siciliana	3	Technical Assistance Contribution	2009	24,000.00	23,936.03	20,345.63
Regione Siciliana	3	Monitoring Committee Catania - April 2009	2009	9,024.00	9,024.00	7,670.40
Regione Siciliana	3	Payment for JTS Notice Publication on Repubblica	2009	1,500.00	1,500.00	1,275.00
Regione Siciliana	3	Payment for JTS Notice Publication on Sicilia e Giornale di Sicilia	2009	3,434.76	3,434.76	2,919.55
Regione Siciliana	3	Compensation for J.T.S.components	2009	500,000.00	372,997.53	317,047.90
Regione Siciliana	3	Missions payment	2009	70,000.00	51,923.85	44,135.27
Regione Siciliana	3	Publication translations events organization	2010	250,000.00	211,155.54	179,482.21
Regione Siciliana	3	Fee 3rd JTS component	2011	310,000.00	148,020.85	125,817.72
Regione Siciliana	3	Other MA expenditure	2011	44,000.00	35,373.60	30,067.56
Regione Siciliana	3	Catering service during the Steering Committee of October 5 and 6, 2011	2011	700.00	700.00	595.00
Regione Siciliana	3	Services for the organization of the ETC Day	2012	39,034.60	39,034.60	33,179.41
Maltese National Coordination Authority	3	Expenditure MNCA Axis 3	2009	388,150.00	274,454.53	233,286.35
Mosta Local Council	1.3	ARCHAEOTUR Project	2011	413,500.00	358,235.12	304,499.85

Beneficiary Name	Axis	Name of the operation	Funding Year	Allocated community contribution	Amount actually delivered	
					Total	ERDF Share
Heritage Malta	1.3	ARCHAEOTUR Project	2011	157,700.00	98,699.90	83,894.92
Malta Tourism Authority	1.3	ARCHAEOTUR Project	2011	94,500.00	79,027.67	67,173.52
Rabat local Council	1.3	ARCHAEOTUR Project	2011	81,900.00	29,393.64	24,984.59
Comune di Ragusa	1.3	ARCHAEOTUR Project	2011	196,558.00	189,625.55	161,181.72
Regione Siciliana - Soprintendenza ai BB.CC. Ragusa	1.3	ARCHAEOTUR Project	2011	223,494.00	221,992.83	188,693.91
Comune di Santa Croce Camerina	1.3	ARCHAEOTUR Project	2011	80,600.00	78,024.77	66,321.05
GiriTravel srl	1.3	ARCHAEOTUR Project	2011	116,565.00	116,459.42	98,990.51
University of Malta	2.3	CALYPSO Project	2011	598,271.00	604,978.52	514,231.74
Transport Authority (TA)	2.3	CALYPSO Project	2011	142,722.00	140,908.00	119,771.80
Civil Protection Department (CPV)	2.3	CALYPSO Project	2011	27,245.00	21,874.95	18,593.71
Armed Forces of Malta (AFM)	2.3	CALYPSO Project	2011	30,405.00	19,645.15	16,698.38
ARPA Sicilia – Agenzia Regionale per la Protezione dell'Ambiente	2.3	CALYPSO Project	2011	174,666.00	174,666.00	148,466.10
Istituto per l'Ambiente Marino Costiero uos di Capo Granitola, Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche (IAMC-CNR CAPO GRANITOLA)	2.3	CALYPSO Project	2011	119,545.00	118,322.00	100,573.70
Università degli Studi di Palermo – Polo Universitario di Trapani	2.3	CALYPSO Project	2011	186,590.00	182,975.33	155,529.03

Beneficiary Name	Axis	Name of the operation	Funding Year	Allocated community contribution	Amount actually delivered	
					Total	ERDF Share
UNIVERSITÀ DI CATANIA - Centro Universitario per la Tutela e Gestione degli Ambienti Naturali e degli Agro-ecosistemi (CUTGANA)	2.3	CALYPSO Project	2011	75,955.00	73,203.79	62,223.22
Università di Catania – Dipartimento di Scienze Biologiche Geologiche e Ambientali	1.3	GARDMED Project	2011	219,513.00	230,587.59	195,999.45
University of Malta - Argotti Botanical Gardens	1.3	GARDMED Project	2011	212,996.00	191,233.44	162,548.42
Comune di Siracusa	1.3	GARDMED Project	2011	187,951.00	182,334.95	154,984.71
Floriana Local Council	1.3	GARDMED Project	2011	127,902.00	124,053.01	105,445.06
Provincia regionale di Ragusa	1.1	LITHOS Project	2011	322,475.04	319,207.34	271,326.24
Università degli Studi di Palermo - Dipartimento Storia e Progetto nell'Architettura	1.1	LITHOS Project	2011	188,111.00	185,530.29	157,700.75
Assessorato regionale Beni Culturali - Centro Regionale per la Progettazione e il Restauro e per le Scienze Naturali ed Applicate ai Beni Culturali	1.1	LITHOS Project	2011	116,449.00	112,520.82	95,642.70
Heritage Malta	1.1	LITHOS Project	2011	268,729.20	246,634.28	209,639.14
Regione Siciliana - Dipartimento Interventi Infrastrutturali in Agricoltura	2.1	MORISO Project	2011	288,610.00	286,430.48	243,465.91
Università di Catania - Dipartimento di Gestione dei Sistemi Agroalimentari e Ambientali	2.1	MORISO Project	2011	51,205.00	50,606.39	43,015.43
Centro Studi di Economia applicata all'Ingegneria - CSEI	2.1	MORISO Project	2011	139,650.00	138,340.88	117,589.75
Agenzia Regionale per la Protezione dell'Ambiente – DAP di Ragusa	2.1	MORISO Project	2011	37,240.00	32,122.47	27,304.10

Beneficiary Name	Axis	Name of the operation	Funding Year	Allocated community contribution	Amount actually delivered	
					Total	ERDF Share
Malta Resources Authority - Directorate for Water Resources Regulation Directorate for Water Resources Regulation	2.1	MORISO Project	2011	153,615.00	142,768.75	121,353.44
Water Services Corporation	2.1	MORISO Project	2011	139,650.00	125,098.29	106,333.55
Comune di Sciacca	1.3	OBIMED Project	2011	313,644.00	313,380.47	266,373.40
Comune di Gharb	1.3	OBIMED Project	2011	146,900.00	143,527.57	121,998.43
Maltese Italian Chamber of Commerce	1.3	OBIMED Project	2011	158,000.00	151,272.46	128,581.59
Comune di Castelvetro	1.3	OBIMED Project	2011	45,800.00	42,982.98	36,535.53
Malta Tourism Society	1.3	OBIMED Project	2011	34,000.00	32,573.40	27,687.39
Provincia Regionale di Siracusa	2.1	PANACEA Project	2011	446,132.00	329,594.42	280,155.26
Provincia regionale di Palermo	2.1	PANACEA Project	2011	243,620.00	166,890.47	141,856.90
Comune di Lampedusa e Linosa	2.1	PANACEA Project	2011	103,784.00	52,725.34	44,816.54
Kunsill Lokali San Lawrenz	2.1	PANACEA Project	2011	188,054.00	132,766.03	112,851.13
University of Malta	2.1	PANACEA Project	2011	240,866.00	260,853.19	221,725.21
Istituto Regionale della Vite e del Vino	1.1	ProMed Project	2011	574,725.00	579,149.19	492,276.81
Centro Studi di Economia applicata all'Ingegneria - CSEI	1.1	ProMed Project	2011	110,300.00	114,104.36	96,988.71
University of Malta	1.1	ProMed Project	2011	198,500.00	198,428.24	168,664.00

Beneficiary Name	Axis	Name of the operation	Funding Year	Allocated community contribution	Amount actually delivered	
					Total	ERDF Share
Ministry for resources and Rural Affairs	1.1	ProMed Project	2011	342,520.00	339,111.90	288,245.12
Comune di Lampedusa e Linosa	1.1	ProMed Project	2011	15,000.00	3,194.80	2,715.58
Comune di Pantelleria	1.1	ProMed Project	2011	15,000.00	6,368.91	5,413.57
Organizzazioni Produttori Gheneb Ghall-Inbid Malta	1.1	ProMed Project	2011	114,300.00	115,177.66	97,901.01
Comune di Bivona	2.1	REMASI Project	2011	142,712.00	9,539.10	8,108.24
Legambiente Comitato Regionale Siciliano onlus	2.1	REMASI Project	2011	92,120.00	19,683.96	16,731.37
Università degli Studi di Palermo	2.1	REMASI Project	2011	115,068.00	80,818.58	68,695.79
Heritage Malta	2.1	REMASI Project	2011	115,600.00	16,145.35	13,723.55
Provincia Regionale di Ragusa	2.2	RESI Project	2011	176,152.09	167,340.32	142,239.27
Provincia Regionale di Agrigento	2.2	RESI Project	2011	158,843.91	128,520.21	109,242.18
Malta Resources Authority	2.2	RESI Project	2011	126,004.40	83,170.53	70,694.95
University of Malta - Institute for Sustainable Energy	2.2	RESI Project	2011	126,697.60	122,983.68	104,536.13
Ministry for Health, Elderly, and Community Care - Malta	2.3	RESPIRA Project	2011	345,744.00	307,767.86	261,602.68
Azienda Sanitaria Provinciale Caltanissetta - Distretto di Gela	2.3	RESPIRA Project	2011	146,873.00	79,273.93	67,382.84
Università degli Studi di Palermo - Dipartimento D.R.E.A.M.	2.3	RESPIRA Project	2011	121,488.00	117,398.82	99,789.00

Beneficiary Name	Axis	Name of the operation	Funding Year	Allocated community contribution	Amount actually delivered	
					Total	ERDF Share
Istituto di Biomedicina e di Immunologia Molecolare del Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche (IBIM-CNR)	2.3	RESPIRA Project	2011	250,255.00	257,997.51	219,297.88
Provincia Regionale di Agrigento - Ufficio Politiche Comunitarie	1.3	SIBIT Project	2011	344,160.00	335,985.68	285,587.83
Provincia Regionale di Ragusa	1.3	SIBIT Project	2011	137,650.00	121,036.99	102,881.44
Provincia Regionale di Siracusa	1.3	SIBIT Project	2011	137,650.00	102,228.89	86,894.56
Provincia Regionale di Trapani	1.3	SIBIT Project	2011	137,650.00	99,357.14	84,453.57
Provincia Regionale di Caltanissetta	1.3	SIBIT Project	2011	137,650.00	108,528.92	92,249.58
Malta Tourism Authority	1.3	SIBIT Project	2011	91,770.00	91,712.90	77,955.97
Local Council Association - Malta	1.3	SIBIT Project	2011	91,770.00	89,373.73	75,967.67
Polo Universitario Agrigento	1.3	SIBIT Project	2011	22,940.00	19,187.70	16,309.55
University of Malta - International Environment Institute	2.1	SIMBIOTIC Project	2011	413,616.00	394,701.29	335,496.10
Ministry for Gozo	2.1	SIMBIOTIC Project	2011	161,349.00	134,360.23	114,206.20
Università di Catania – Dipartimento di Biologia "Marcello La Greca"	2.1	SIMBIOTIC Project	2011	226,975.00	218,886.64	186,053.64
Comune di Pachino	2.1	SIMBIOTIC Project	2011	200,088.00	166,796.78	141,777.26
University of Malta	1.1	T-CHEESIMAL Project	2011	341,087.00	338,483.20	287,710.72
CoRFiLaC - Consorzio per la Ricerca sulla Filiera Lattiero-Casearia	1.1	T-CHEESIMAL Project	2011	228,010.00	222,032.12	188,727.30
Università degli Studi di Catania	1.1	T-CHEESIMAL Project	2011	205,342.00	137,901.83	117,216.56
Università di Catania - Facoltà di Architettura Siracusa	1.1	THE HUB Project	2011	380,967.00	369,380.20	313,973.17
University of Malta	1.1	THE HUB Project	2011	190,484.00	198,211.57	168,479.83
Confcooperative Siracusa	1.1	THE HUB Project	2011	34,633.00	25,489.53	21,666.10
Istituto Onnicomprensivo L.	1.1	THE HUB Project	2011	86,584.00	82,494.06	70,119.95

Beneficiary Name	Axis	Name of the operation	Funding Year	Allocated community contribution	Amount actually delivered	
					Total	ERDF Share
Pirandello						
Comune di Siracusa	1.1	THE HUB Project	2011	173,167.00	162,745.93	138,334.04
Istituto Nazionale di Geofisica e Vulcanologia, sezione di Catania	2.3	VAMOS SEGURO Project	2011	205,264.00	188,000.67	159,800.57
Istituto Nazionale di Astrofisica	2.3	VAMOS SEGURO Project	2011	105,565.00	104,582.41	88,895.05
Atmospheric Research Physic Department University of Malta	2.3	VAMOS SEGURO Project	2011	111,429.00	111,429.00	94,714.65
Comune di Montedoro	2.3	VAMOS SEGURO Project	2011	164,212.00	163,819.82	139,246.85
Provincia regionale di Trapani	2.4	WATER FRONT Project	2011	86,091.00	66,921.78	56,883.51
Provincia regionale di Palermo	2.4	WATER FRONT Project	2011	28,697.00	19,566.98	16,631.93
Comune di Palermo	2.4	WATER FRONT Project	2011	18,560.00	13,136.61	11,166.12
Università degli Studi di Palermo	2.4	WATER FRONT Project	2011	67,531.00	51,523.47	43,794.95
University of Malta	2.4	WATER FRONT Project	2011	86,091.00	84,389.83	71,731.36
ARPA SICILIA	2	BIODIVALUE Project	2013	656,417.00	16,787.06	14,269.00

7. OP Results

In accordance with the recommendations of the Ares (2014)5810 notes dated 06/01/2014 and Ares (2014)428582 dated 20/02/2014 of the European Commission, containing indications about the compilation of the Annual Implementation Report 2013, the present chapter synthetically accounts the most important results achieved to date by the Program and its benefits for the cooperation area, giving evidence of all this through some of the achievement and the result indicators already thoroughly analyzed in paragraphs 3.1 and 3.2 of the present AIR.

The main results that can be accounted currently within the Cooperation Program Italia-Malta 2007-2013 relate to certain areas of implementation of the ordinary and strategic projects. In particular:

1. The prevention of risks and safeguard of the environment
2. Scientific research and social innovation

The prevention of risks and safeguard of the environment

What, in your opinion, has your programme achieved?

The programme achieved the following results:

1. The marine area included between Pozzallo (RG) and Malta, is currently fully monitored through a system of HF antennas that provides surface currents maps on an hourly scale, which is able to anticipate the course of any oil spills spots before they reach the Sicilian and/or Maltese coast. The system also ensures a preventive action because it also allows the definition of the optimum position in which the containment barriers for coastal protection should be located (CALYPSO project).
2. The air navigation, both civil and military, between Malta and Catania where the largest active volcano in Europe, Etna, is located, is safe thanks to an alert system capable of identifying harmful concentrations of ash and volcanic gas and producing alert systems for the authorities in charge of air traffic (VAMOS SEGURO project)
3. The marine area corresponding to the sea areas facing the 4 Italian-Maltese harbours (1 in Syracuse, 1 in Lampedusa and 2 in Malta) is now monitored by an underwater system that allows the prevention and reduction of air-water pollution caused by maritime transport activities and in particular the operations of ships carrying hazardous and noxious substances as well as by vessels engaged in commercial activity and not, such as fishing and tourism (BIODIVALUE project).
4. Some areas of great importance at a national and Community level and defined Natura 2000 sites, falling in the territory of Syracuse, Agrigento and Gozo, were affected by environmental restoration actions both through the recovery of some coastal wetland areas either through the restoration of the Mediterranean vegetation and the monitoring of the migratory routes of the avifauna between Europe and Africa (SIMBIOTIC and REMASI project).
5. The population within the cross-border area is more aware on the need to preserve the natural heritage and preserve it from anthropogenic activities thanks to the opening of four Environmental Education Centres (PANACEA project) at four Sicilian and Maltese protected marine areas (Plemmirio-Syracuse, Pelagie-Agrigento Islands, Capo Gallo/Isola delle Femmine-Palermo, Dwejra-Gozo).
6. The cultural heritage of the two islands is now more accessible to the population and integrated at cross-border level thanks to the restoration of 8 archeological sites and the creation of n. 5 heritage trails (ARCHAEOTUR project).

Who has benefitted

The main parties that have benefitted from the results of the activities within the OP Italia Malta 2007-2013 with particular regard to the prevention of risks and safeguard of the environment are: the population of the cross-border area, namely coastal communities, authorities responsible for the protection of the environment, the airport authorities, the researchers.

Having regards to the prevention of marine risks, the authorities responsible for the environmental surveillance (Transport Malta; Civil Protection Department; Armed Forces of Malta; Agenzia Regionale per la Protezione dell'Ambiente) are today able to intervene in real time with preventive and/or repression actions for illegal behaviors such as deliberate oil spills spots caused by ships transiting Sicilian Channel.

Having regards to the prevention of air navigation risks, both civil and military, the Maltese and Italian airport authorities are now capable of producing alert systems for air traffic and for population in the case of explosive activity of the Etna volcano.

It is also highlighted that other public authorities, besides the beneficiaries of the OP, showed interest to the use of programme's results for purposes not initially mentioned.

In particular, the Italian General Harbour Office Command required the use and integration of the acquired data from the system within their own inquiry systems in order to develop operational tools to support the search and rescue (SAR) operations and/or civil protection not initially considered by the beneficiaries.

Furthermore, the potential for system capable of identifying harmful concentrations of ash and volcanic gas and the type of data that it is able to collect are also of interest in other research and study areas such as meteorology and in this respect, interest has already been expressed in the collection and sharing of data to form part of the services by the Aeronautica Militare Italiana that manages the weather forecasting services in Sicily.

Having regard to the safeguard of the environment, the monitoring system of the Sicilian and Maltese port areas allows today the economic assessment of the risk of loss of biodiversity in the Channel of Sicily and the possible consequences suffered by coastal communities, with a population of over 800,000 inhabitants.

Finally, the local population namely tourists, environmental organizations, disadvantaged people, are able to enjoy the natural and cultural heritage of the two islands thanks to actions of environmental and archaeological restoration.

What evidence do you have for achievements

As regards the marine and coastal environment, the result indicators show that the programme has emphasized the safeguard, management, monitoring and awareness actions related to environmental issues and has currently covered a cross-border area of 1,304 sq km, with 1,299 sq km represented by protected areas (see table 10.b1 "Result objectives for each operation Axis II").

As already listed in the data report *State of the Mediterranean marine and coastal environment 2012 - United Nations Environment Programme/Mediterranean Action Plan (UNEP/MAP)* the spillages of hydrocarbons in the Mediterranean, and in particular in the area between Sicily and Malta, are placed at very high levels, since they may also cause extremely serious consequences for the marine or coastal flora and fauna.

The monitoring data results of the OP Italia Malta 2007-2013 give evidence that a marine area equal to 10,000 square meters (see table 10.b1 "Result objectives for each operation Axis II" – CALYPSO project) corresponding to Malta Channel is now interested by a wide surveillance programme by the authorities in charge of preventing actions for illegal behaviors such as deliberate oil spills spots caused by ships transiting Sicilian Channel.

A wider marine area equal to 50,000 square meters (see table 10.b1 "Result objectives for each operation Axis II" – BIODIVALUE project) including the Malta Channel and part of the Sicily Channel, is now subject to monitoring actions for the reduction of the pollution caused by transiting vessels engaged in commercial activity and not, such as fishing and tourism.

Having regard to the coastal area, a cross-border surface of 63,700 sq m (see table 10.b1 "Result objectives for each operation Axis II" – SIMBIOTIC and REMASI projects) falling in the territory of Syracuse, Agrigento and Gozo, is now accessible by population and tourists, also disadvantaged ones, thanks to environmental restoration actions and the recovery of some coastal wetland areas either that had been farmed and then abandoned.

Over a space of 37,500 square kilometres between Malta and Catania, where the largest active volcano in Europe, Etna, is located, the civil and military routes are subject to the monitoring of the harmful concentrations of ash and volcanic gas (progetto VAMOS SEGURO). Thus, a higher security level for the navigation of the aircrafts over the volcano as well as a better management of the air traffic and the airport activities in Catania and Malta are assured in the cross-border area.

Referring to the safeguard of the biodiversity, the natural heritage of the Sicilian and Maltese marine protected areas has been promoted thanks to the interventions of the OP Italia Malta 2007-2013 that allowed the opening of 4 environmental centres in Syracuse, Palermo, Agrigento and Gozo for the population of the area, namely young people and students that are always involved in awareness-raising activities (PANACEA project).

Also the cultural heritage of the two islands is today more accessible at cross-border level by local population and tourists thanks to the restoration of 8 archeological sites and the creation of n. 5 heritage trails (ARCHAEOTUR project).

Scientific research and social innovation

The scientific research and forms of social innovation brought forward by the program were functional to the achievement of economic and environmental benefits for the entire cooperation area

What, in your opinion, has your programme achieved?

The programme achieved the following results:

1. Product and process innovations applied to viticulture that allowed an increase in the yield of fresh grape must, without reducing the quality of the final product (PROMED project).
2. Innovative winemaking protocol acknowledged by the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forestry Policies that transposed, within the specification for the DOC (PROMED project).
3. Know how on the relevant methodologies of agronomic data and on the sustainable management of the vineyard transferred to producers and applied to an experimental cellar in Malta (PROMED project).
4. Sicilian and Maltese milk products with a high content of biodiversity more qualified thanks to their improvement through the applied research component (T-CHEESIMAL project).
5. The network of Italian-Maltese social innovation - Impact Hub - Mediterranean Change Makers - become part of the international network www.hub-net.com (THE HUB project).
6. Micro credit policies implemented through the network of social innovators that are today in charge of the management of three different sources of funding, in Sicily: Jeremie-ESF, Fondo di Garanzia for the Sicilian Microcredit, PerMicro fund (THE HUB project).

Who has benefitted

The main parties that have benefitted from the results of the activities within the OP Italia Malta 2007-2013 with particular regard to the scientific research and social innovation are: the population of the cross-border area, namely the farming communities, researchers, entrepreneurs, young people who come into the working world and women.

Having regards to product and process innovations applied to viticulture and agri-food sector as well as the exchange and transfer of knowledge, the farming firms, trade associations and entrepreneurs interested to invest in Sicily and Malta are able to work in a more competitive sector, capable of ensuring the profitability of the system, safeguarding the ecosystem and the final product.

Furthermore, the business system linked to the agri-food and the retail is now able to point to a better positioning of the companies in the market thanks to the innovative products related to wine sector and traditional milk products.

Finally, having regards to social innovation, in the hub spaces in Ortigia (Syracuse), Lampedusa and Malta, the hubbers manage laboratories linked to the business, social innovation and the green economy and organize initiatives mainly aimed at entrepreneurs, young people who come into the working world and women.

The hubbers also provide expertise to local people to engage entrepreneurial activities by providing support in the phase of request of grants in the form of micro-credit.

What evidence do you have for achievements

Having regards to the product and process innovations, the research applied to viticulture determined the definition of three innovative winemaking protocols. Two in Linosa (Agrigento), with the first production of Zibibbo in dry and sweet types, and one on the island of Pantelleria that allowed an increase from 60% to 70% in the yield of fresh grape must, without reducing the quality of the final product.

The validity of these innovations has been acknowledged by entrepreneurs interested in investing in viticulture in Linosa and by the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forestry Policies that transposed, within the specification for the DOC, the protocol experienced in Pantelleria (Trapani) thanks to the OP Italy Malta 2007-2013. An experimental centre was also created in Malta, following the tracks of the Cantina Dalmasso in Marsala (Trapani) – PROMED project.

Having regards to the agribusiness linked to dairy products, the program has guaranteed the exchange and transfer of skills necessary for the preparation in Malta of the first DOP production specification for the *Gbejna* cheese. This specification has been adopted by the competent Maltese ministerial entities and is in the process of being approved by the Community bodies (T-CHEESIMAL project)

Referring to the social innovation issue, the community Impact Hub - Mediterranean Change Makers has become part of the international network www.hub-net.com on the already experienced model in about 40 cities around the world.

The network currently participates in the management of three different sources of funding, in Sicily: 1) a line of intervention from the Jeremie-FSE Fund managed by Banca Etica in partnership with Microfinanza, Solco, Ape and Impact Hub, in fact, aimed at supporting micro, small and medium-sized enterprises with strong social vocation; 2) the Fondo di Garanzia for the Microcredito Siciliano, managed in conjunction with Banca Etica and with the Fondazione di Comunità of Messina intended for companies and businesses that cannot access traditional credit due to lack of collateral or insufficient credit history; 3) PerMicro, the most important microcredit company in Italy operating throughout the national territory with a clear social mission that has been active in Sicily since 2013.

The Impact Hub experience opened the way in Sicily for a series of similar initiatives that are aimed at creating new community and networking to in turn create dedicated programs to grow the competence and professionalism and innovate large and small organizations (THE HUB project).