
EX-POST EVALUATION OF THE EEA & NORWAY FINANCIAL MECHANISMS 2009-2014 IMPLEMENTED IN MALTA

EMCS Ltd

Evaluation Team:

Alison Mizzi (Project Manager)

Ramon Muscat (Key Expert)

Elena Pace (Researcher)

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Executive Summary

Purpose

This report presents the findings of the ex-post formative evaluation of projects funded under the European Economic Area (EEA) and Norway Financial Mechanisms 2009-2014, and in so doing, and as specified in the tender document “*assess actual effects at the outcome level that will contribute to a learning process and inform policy-making and programming*”¹.

The overarching purpose of the EEA and Norway financial mechanisms is the reduction of economic and social disparities within the EEA. Furthermore, the funds seek to strengthen bilateral relations between the three Donor States (Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway) and the Beneficiary States. In order to achieve this, contributions are channelled to specific priority sectors by means of individual projects.

Scope and Objectives

The objectives targeted by Malta under the EEA Grants included Environmental Protection and Management, Climate Change and Renewable Energy. While those under the Norway Financial Mechanism consist of Human and Social Development and Justice and Home Affairs.

Throughout the programming period 2009-2014, a total of five projects were implemented locally to address these objectives.

The first project focused on capacity building in the field of Oil/HNS spills for enhanced protection of Malta’s seas. Through a second project, the Hal-Saflieni Hypogeum World Heritage Site was equipped with a new environmental management system amongst other interventions. The third project consisted of the development of a Water Conservation Awareness Centre². A fourth project aimed at strengthening cooperation between public institutions, local and regional authorities in the Beneficiary States and similar institutions in

¹ Ministry for European Affairs and Equality. Ex-Post Evaluation of the EEA and Norway Financial Mechanism Programmes 2009-2014 implemented in Malta, MEAE/FPD/065/2017, 27 October 2017, p.6

² This project was selected in replacement to another project, which was withdrawn by WasteServ Malta in 2014.

Norway. Whereas the fifth project focused on the renewal of the Centre of Residential Restorative Services in Mtaħleb.

Summary of Evaluation Results

The main findings of the analysis carried out are summarised below. Chapter 3 of this report further delves into the findings providing a comprehensive analysis of the five projects under review.

- **Project 1- Oil/ HNS spill response capacity building for the protection of Malta’s seas**

The evaluation team found that, overall, the project was well executed and the overarching goals of the projects were successfully achieved. The project was effective in increasing the number of trained personnel able to respond to oil/HNS spills on a national scale. In fact, the number of trained personnel exceeded the initial target of 22. The project also made savings from the training, which allowed for the purchasing and upgrading of equipment. Of course, it will also be important to ensure that refresher courses will continue to be organised to sustain building on these positive outcomes.

- **Project 2- A new environmental management system for the Hal-Saflieni Hypogeum World Heritage Site**

The new environmental control system at the Hypogeum stabilises the climatic conditions of the site thus ensuring a longer preservation of the site. This is considered a highly relevant project considering the cultural significance of the site which has also been inscribed in the World Heritage List in 1980. The project benefitted from the experience gained from previous conservation projects. In fact, the project implementation was effective despite some challenges in the procurement processes and the risks related to the delicate nature of the site. Besides the changes in the mechanics, a number of changes were also undertaken for a longer preservation of the site. The site also benefitted from an upgrading of the visitor area, which now allows visitors that are unable to secure a ticket to the underground site to explore it through an audio-visual presentation.

- **Project 3- Malta Water Conservation Awareness Centre**

The Water Awareness Conservation Centre is also considered a highly relevant project in terms of the objectives it seeks to attain also taking into consideration the problems Malta faces with regard to water scarcity. One of the major challenges that emerged during the implementation of the project was related to the archaeological findings that required a re-design of the project. However, the project outputs were achieved in terms of the construction of the centre and the inclusion of digital exhibitions, the introduction of audio-visual material and equipment. As

highlighted further on in the analysis the benefits of such a project, in raising awareness and thus bring a shift in behaviour, can only be effectively measured in the long-term.

- **Project 4- A Partnership for Creative Governance**

The Partnership for Creative Governance has as its focus area an advancement in Local Governance in Malta. To that end, a number of initiatives including, a training needs analysis, a National Training Strategy, Performance Management indicators, a Leadership Academy Programme and a Strategy for innovation and good governance were implemented as part of the project. The Project is deemed to have the potential to highly impact local communities, though this will require a continuation of efforts.

- **Project 5- Renewing the Centre of Residential Restorative Services (CORRS)**

This project involved two strands of work, the extension of the premises in Mtahleb and the work on the operational system itself and training. This is considered a highly relevant project because it seeks to achieve higher standards in Malta's correctional services. The new development also allowed for the relocation of young female inmates, aged between 14 and 21, who were still being housed with adult female inmates at the main Corradino Facility in Paola. The new system provides young inmates with more opportunities to develop skills while serving their time in prison and thus prepare them for their re-inclusion into society. Furthermore, the therapeutic aspect of the project allowed correctional officers to be trained on the new CORRS system. The effective implementation of the project was mostly impacted by the delay in commencement of activities in view of the time it took to identify the most appropriate site further compounded by challenges in the procurement procedure. However, works were completed within the stipulated timeframes.

Overall Conclusions and Recommendations

Overall, the Evaluation team has positively judged the five projects under review. A number of recommendations have also been put forward in Chapter 5 with a view of contributing to a learning process and inform future project implementation. The recommendations are horizontal in nature covering the following aspects: simplification of administrative procedures; weighing the obligation to keep to pre-set timeframes; strengthening of bilateral relations; collecting feedback from participants and beneficiaries; training; skills retention; and flexibility.