



**European Territorial Cooperation 2007-2013
Cross-border Cooperation Programme Italy-Malta 2007 - 2013**

*CCI 2007 CB 163 PO 037
Decision C(2008) 7336 of 27 November 2008
Decision C(2013) 1080 of 27/2/2013 amending Decision C(2012) 7627 of 31/10/2012*

FINAL REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION



ABSTRACT

This document constitutes the 'Final Implementation Report' of the Italy-Malta Cross-Border Cooperation Programme 2007-2013 and outlines the final implementation status.

The report has been drafted in accordance with the provisions of Art. 67 of Reg. (EC) No 1083/2006, with Annex XVII entitled "annual report and the final report" of Reg. (EC) 1828/2006 and with the information provided for in Annex 1 with the Guidelines on the closure of the 2007-2013 Structural Funds under Commission Decision C (2015) No 2771 of 30/04/2015 amending Decision C (2013) No 1573 of 20-02-2013.

1. IDENTIFICATION

Operational programme	Objective concerned:	European Territorial Cooperation
	Eligible area concerned:	Italy - Malta
	Programming period:	2007-2013
	Programme number:	CCI 2007 CB 163 PO 037
	Programme title:	Operational Programme Italia- Malta 2007-2013
Final implementation report	Reference year:	2016
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2. OVERVIEW OF THE OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME

2.1 Results and progress analysis

2.1.1 Material progress of the Operational Programme

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 cooperation of the projects on a programme level

LEVEL OF COOPERATION OF PROJECTS AT PROGRAMME LEVEL										
Programme Indicators	Unit of measure*	Baseline	Objective	Progress						2013 Progress SFC 2007
				2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	
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%	4%	4%	n. 1
Projects that meet at least three 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%	16%	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%	80%	80%	n. 20

*Figures refer to the elaboration of data concluded in 2016

The table shows the percentage of operations approved (17 ordinary projects and 8 strategic projects) at the end of the programme compared to the cooperation arrangements provided for by Article 19 of Regulation 1080/2006, activated by each project for its management.

In detail, on the basis of data entered by the lead partner in the project proposal within the Application Form, Section A.4, for ordinary projects, and Section C (paragraph 27), for strategic projects, we recorded for each operation approved which cooperation mode the former would have guaranteed during the implementation of the project (joint development, joint implementation, joint staffing, joint financing).

For greater clarity, the column "Progression 2015 SFC2007" contains data expressed according to the unit of measure "project number" in line with what has been entered on the SFC2007 system for indicators with code 42, 43 and 44.

Processed data confirm the full achievement of the target set for the Programme indicator "Projects that meet all four of the following criteria: joint development, joint implementation, joint staffing, and joint financing." Indeed, **80%** of 25 operations carried out, 17 of which were financed under the call for tenders of ordinary projects and 8 under the call for tenders of strategic projects, comply with all the cooperation arrangements provided for by Article 19 of Regulation 1080/2006. The result achieved exceeds by 55 percentage points the estimated target value for the indicator, and justifies the failure to achieve the target values of "Projects indicators that met at least two of the following criteria: joint development, joint implementation, joint staffing,

joint financing” and “Projects that meet at least three of the following criteria: joint development, joint implementation, joint staffing, joint financing”.

Finally, the percentage figure of 80% of the operations that meet all four modes of cooperation established by the Regulation shows great liveliness and proactivity by the beneficiaries of cooperation areas that, on the basis of institutional networks established by the previous 2004-2006 Italy-Malta cooperation programme, have brought to fruition mature and concrete project proposals that are able to meet the OP objectives.

Below is the list of results obtained relative to the degree of cooperation at Programme level. These data were processed through the review of the final reimbursement requests submitted by the Leaders of ordinary and strategic projects throughout the programming cycle.

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	2014	2015
Projects that promote the common use of infrastructure	Percentage (%) of total projects	0	10%	0	12%	35%	32%	36%	40%
Projects that develop partnerships in the public services sector	Percentage (%) of total projects	0	15%	0	6%	24%	44%	48%	56%
Projects that reduce isolation through better transport accessibility, ICT networks and services	Percentage (%) of total projects	0	15%	0	0%	12%	20%	20%	28%
Projects that encourage and improve the protection and common management of the environment	Percentage (%) of total projects	0	20%	0	12%	41%	52%	52%	72%
Projects that contribute to the management of natural and anthropic risks	Percentage (%) of total projects	0	10%	0	6%	24%	32%	36%	40%
Projects that promote R & ST and innovative networks	Percentage (%) of total projects	0	10%	0	0%	24%	36%	36%	52%
Projects that jointly promote tourism in the cross-border area	Percentage (%) of total projects	0	20%	0	0%	18%	28%	48%	28%
Public institutions (regional, local) that cooperate on a cross-border level	Number	0	100	0	11	66	256%	20%	482

From data processed, it can be surmised that the target values for each individual Programme indicator have been fully achieved.

In particular, as regards the **first indicator** “Projects that promote the common use of infrastructure”, 40% of operations, equal to 10 projects out of a total of 25, has promoted the common use of infrastructure through interventions which, among others, have made possible the following: use of a public space for the realization of the Sicily-Malta HUB, whose use benefits on average 400 people per year (The Hub Project); recovery and accessibility of archaeological sites in Sicily (Cava Celone, Cisternazzi and Donnafugata), and in Malta (St. Augustine, and Ta’ Bistra) (Archaeotur Project); realization of 3 info points in Malta and Sicily for the remote reservation system through the use of new technologies that have favored the integration of Sicilian and Maltese territories as well as the hospitality and enjoyment of the sites (Obimed Project); realization of 5 cross-border cycle tourism packages, through the modernization of existing infrastructure and the adaptation of accommodation with services for bike tourists (Sibit Project); realization of 4 CEAs, “Centres for Environmental Education”, for the start of the pilot project aimed to raise awareness and contextual presentation of the distinctive elements of marine protected areas (Panacea Project); acquisition and installation of 4 HF radars for the monitoring of surface waves and currents in the Strait of Sicily, in order to optimize interventions in the event of deliberate or accidental hydrocarbon spills (Calypso Project); development of an Information System capable of identifying the level of breast cancer risk in the female population, classifying it as low, medium and high, through the analysis of family and environmental factors (ImagenX Project).

The **second indicator** shows the percentage of 56%, corresponding to 14 operations that have developed partnerships in the public service sectors. Among the activities of interest there are: commissioning activities of the Siracuse Hub with international networks (The Hub Project); realization of 3 public services such as the implementation of a technological platform, a tele-reservation system, and the assembly of 4 free WI-FI areas to provide targeted services to tourists (Obimed Project); involvement of nine bodies, authorities and institutions having expertise in environmental matters, in ecological restoration and optimization of the management of Natura 2000 sites included in the Symbiotic Project. In relation to this indicator, projects which have contributed to the achievement of the expected target have involved public bodies having expertise in activities that included: improvement of energy efficiency in ports and reduction of CO2 emissions in the cooperation areas (Port Pvev Project); creation of operational tools to support local administrators and maritime traffic operators, useful to limit the harmful effects of pollution from industrial, commercial, fishing and recreational marine traffic in the Strait of Sicily (Biodivalue Project); completion of the analysis of respiratory diseases in the Maltese and Sicilian territories linked to population exposure to pollutants (ImagenX Project); definition of the technical features of HF antennas installed on both Maltese and Sicilian coasts (Calypso Project).

The **third indicator** shows the percentage of 28% which corresponds to 7 operations aimed to reduce isolation through improved access to transport, ICT networks and services. In particular, among the activities that contributed to the achievement of the estimated target, we include: promotion of “heritage trails” of archaeological sites through the activation of 4 digital totems (Archaeotur Project); use of networks and services created in the context of the Sicily-Malta HUB (The Hub Project); realization of 2 2.0 web applications, one for the IOS operating system and the other for the Android system, for the dissemination of tourist routes and the involvement of the younger members of the Sicilian and Maltese population aimed at the promotion of exchanges among young people hinging on English language and Mediterranean identity (Obimed Project); installation of signalling and informative multimedia totems aimed to deliver tourism-road information services (Streets Project); creation of a sophisticated information system to assess the level of breast cancer risk in the

female population within the cooperation area, taking into account environmental and family factors (Imagenx Project).

In relation to the **fourth indicator**, 72% of operations, equal to 18 projects, encourages and enhances the protection and joint management of the environment. The most significant actions that have most contributed to the achievement of this value concern: involvement of public and private organizations in awareness-raising activities focusing on compliance and environmental management (The Hub Project); green culture awareness, aimed to safeguard the natural and cultural heritage through the promotion of sustainable tourism (Garmed Project); creation of cross-border cycling routes (Sibit Project); monitoring of groundwater (Moriso Project); completion of 6 studies on the environment and marine biodiversity in protected areas that provide for the establishment of ecological models (Panacea Project); implementation of ecological restoration activities of an area spanning 63,700 square meters (Symbiotic Project); collection and organization of information data useful for cataloguing and recording maritime traffic in Maltese and Sicilian waters (Biodivalve Project); crafting of 3 Local Action Plans RES for territories involved in the Resi Project; implementation of guidelines for the prevention of health effects in people who live in at-risk environments due to the presence of pollutants (Respira Project); identification of suitable solutions to define a reduced environmental impact by production activities aimed to improve environmental sustainability levels in Sicilian and Maltese wine regions (Vienergy Project); implementation of a stable and operating procedure for the monitoring of marine currents in the channel of Sicily by the use of an observation system based on HF (High Frequency) radars (Calypso Project); realization of 3 solar charging stations for electric bicycles and dissemination of electric mobility measures in port areas (Port Pvev Project); analysis of geomorphological and stratigraphic-structural type which made possible the calculation of the vulnerability of Sicily and Malta following natural disasters (Simit Project).

The fifth indicator shows the percentage of 40%, corresponding to 10 operations that contribute to the management of natural and anthropic risks. The significant changes that contributed to the achievement of the indicator concern: identification of a practical model of sustainable management for 6 gardens, both for cultural and structural aspects and for socio-economic ones. The application of this model led to the completion of two pilot projects which allowed the improvement of two green areas including a total area of 6 ha (Garmed Project), as well as: realization of activities aimed at the promotion of vineyards located in areas at risk, and at the correct use of different grape varieties adapted to local peculiarities (Promed Project); preparation of 2 reports on the impact caused by mainly urban-type sewage, and on water resources (Moriso Project); realization of an automatic system for monitoring and forecasting the dispersion of volcanic ashes (Vamos Seguro Project); realization of software for the monitoring of any environmental and genetic factors involved in the spread of malignant tumours in the Mediterranean (ImagenX Project); development of the "biodiware" IT platform, which, through the joint development of geo-referenced physical, chemical and biological and economic data related to maritime traffic, provides an estimate on the cause-effect relationship between maritime traffic and the state of the coastal marine environment (Biodivalve Project); completion of studies which made possible the collection of information regarding the seismic hazard potential of the area under study, approximately 40,000 square meters, and used to develop new probabilistic models of seismic hazards (Simit Project).

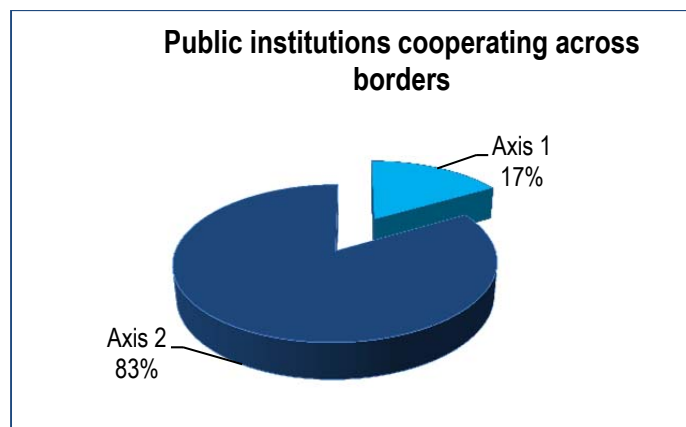
In relation to the **sixth indicator**, 52% of operations, equal to 13 projects, promotes R&I and innovative networks. The most significant activities include: launch of innovative networks, including: construction of the Siracusa Hub space and related events, installation of The Hub antenna in Lampedusa, development of the IT platform and connection of the Euro South HUB system to the international network (The Hub Project); promotion of scientific and educational activities through the International Centre for Research on stereotomy and implementation of a computer network with other research centres in Europe and the Mediterranean,

including both public and private entities (Lithos Project); definition of winemaking protocols, one of which is already recognized by the Ministry of Agricultural Policy, Food and Forestry, and creation of a Maltese experimental center able to carry on research activities already applied within the project (Promed Project); development of networks through the creation and implementation of a technological platform to improve the integration of Sicilian and Maltese tour operators, as well as their visibility and availability (Obimed Project); creation of an environmental and socio-economic database linked to the dissemination of RESs (Resi Project); creation of a network of 3 research centres involved in the study of conditions affecting the relationship between exposure to pollutants and health (Respira Project); involvement of authorities in the harmonization of spatial planning techniques aimed at an integrated environmental, urban and tourist development (Water Front Project); development of 6 innovations such as: experimental phyto-depuration facility, operating protocols for the treatment plant, use of e-diesel on urban transport dry runs in Sicily, use of e-diesel on urban transport dry runs in Malta, data collection of CO₂ fermentation in Sicily and use of CO₂ fermentation for the production of algae in Sicily (Vienergy Project); implementation of the “*Breast Screening Surveillance Programme (BCSP)*” through the use of sophisticated information technology systems aimed to measure the risk of breast cancer through the monitoring of environmental and genetic factors involved in the spread of malignant tumors in the Mediterranean (Imagenx Project) ; involvement of 27 small- and medium-size businesses in the promotion activities for forms of environmental energy efficiency and the use of technologies powered by renewable sources (Crim Safri Project).

The **seventh indicator** shows the percentage of 28%, which corresponds to 7 operations aimed to promote tourism across borders in a joint manner. In particular, among the activities that have contributed to the achievement of the expected target we include: identification of 7 projects resulting from the use of services provided by HUB, that will revitalize joint tourism and cultural promotion across borders; creation of 5 different “heritage trails” on archaeological sites in Sicily (province of Ragusa) and Malta, for tourism and educational purposes, which, through relevant work safety measures, ensure access by tourists with disabilities and young children (Archaeotur Project); increase of visitors in a measure equal to 30% to network gardens and which are connected through specially created tourist routes (Garmed Project); definition of 3 integrated routes in order to increase the attractiveness of territories through the use of the most innovative communication technologies (Obimed Project); promotion of tourism in border areas through the dissemination of the Energy Tour programme distributed to young people by high schools (Resi Project).

In relation to the **eighth indicator**, the majority of 21 operations in total involved public institutions engaged in activities undertaken within the projects. During the Programme, 482 public bodies were engaged in activities falling within priority Axes 1 and 2, thus largely exceeding the estimated target of 100 entities. In particular, 83% of the Bodies have been involved within the scope of projects financed under Priority Axis 2 (Figure 1).

Fig. 1 Public institutions cooperating across borders



2.1.2 Financial Information

Table 2 Financial data

PRIORITY	OP TOTAL BUDGET (EU AND NATIONAL) €	EU CONTRIBUTION CALCULATION BASIS (PUBLIC OR TOTAL COST)	TOTAL AMOUNT OF CERTIFIED ELIGIBLE EXPENDITURE INCURRED BY RECIPIENTS €	CORRESPONDING PUBLIC CONTRIBUTION €	IMPLEMENTATION RATE (%)
	A	B	C	D	E= D/A
Priority Axis I - Competitiveness: Research and Innovation; sustainable development	9.448.171	p	9.508.507	9.508.507	101%
Priority Axis II - Environment, Energy and Risk Prevention	20.575.796	p	19.628.831,98	19.628.831,98	95%
Priority Axis III - Technical Assistance, Awareness, Communication and Publicity	1.916.423	p	1.916.423	1.916.423	100%
TOTAL	31.940.390,00		31.053.761,98	31.053.761,98	97%

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	2.327.573	2.149.903
CTE	2 - R & TD infrastructures (including physical installations, equipment and high-speed computer networks linking research centres) and competence centres related to specific technology	04 - Other types of financing	08 - Areas of cross-border cooperation	00 - Not applicable	CTE	1.326.799	1.326.799
CTE	3 - Technology transfers and improvement of cooperation networks between small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), between the said small and medium-sized enterprises (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	1.152.205	1.152.205
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	581.176	581.176
CTE	26 - Multimodal Transport	04 - Other types of financing	08 - Areas of cross-border cooperation	00 - Not applicable	CTE	1.785.773	1.594.373
CTE	43 - Energy efficiency, cogeneration, energy management	04 - Other types of financing	08 - Areas of cross-border cooperation	00 - Not applicable	CTE	432.044	432.044
CTE	44 - Management of household and industrial waste	04 - Other types of financing	08 - Areas of cross-border cooperation	00 - Not applicable	CTE	1.589.500	1.533.429
CTE	46 - Water treatment (waste water)	04 - Other types of financing	08 - Areas of cross-border cooperation	00 - Not applicable	CTE	659.062	659.062
CTE	48 - Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control	04 - Other types of financing	08 - Areas of cross-border cooperation	00 - Not applicable	CTE	1.678.831	1.660.445

Ob.	Priority issue	Funding methods	Territory	Economic Activity	Location	Planned Community contribution	Allocated Community contribution*
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	1.815.309	1.815.309
CTE	52 - Promotion of clean urban transport	04 - Other types of financing	08 - Areas of cross-border cooperation	00 - Not applicable	CTE	2.117.138	2.030.451
CTE	53 - Prevention of risks (<i>including development and implementation of plans and measures intended 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	2.742.966	2.682.758
CTE	54 - Other measures intended 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	4.639.624	3.828.154
CTE	55 - Promotion of natural resources	04 - Other types of financing	08 - Areas of cross-border cooperation	00 - Not applicable	CTE	822.267	822.267
CTE	56 - Protection and enhancement of natural heritage	04 - Other types of financing	08 - Areas of cross-border cooperation	00 - Not applicable	CTE	618.978	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	1.031.175	1.031.175
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	199.953	199.953
CTE	85 - Preparation, implementation, monitoring and inspection	04 - Other types of financing	08 - Areas of cross-border cooperation	00 - Not applicable	CTE	1.030.145	1.030.145
CTE	86 - Evaluation and studies; information and communication	04 - Other types of financing	08 - Areas of cross-border cooperation	00 - Not applicable	CTE	598.815	598.815

* The amounts refer to the administrative measures disposed of by the AdG for the closure of ordinary and strategic projects taking into account the expenditures validated by the first and second level controls.

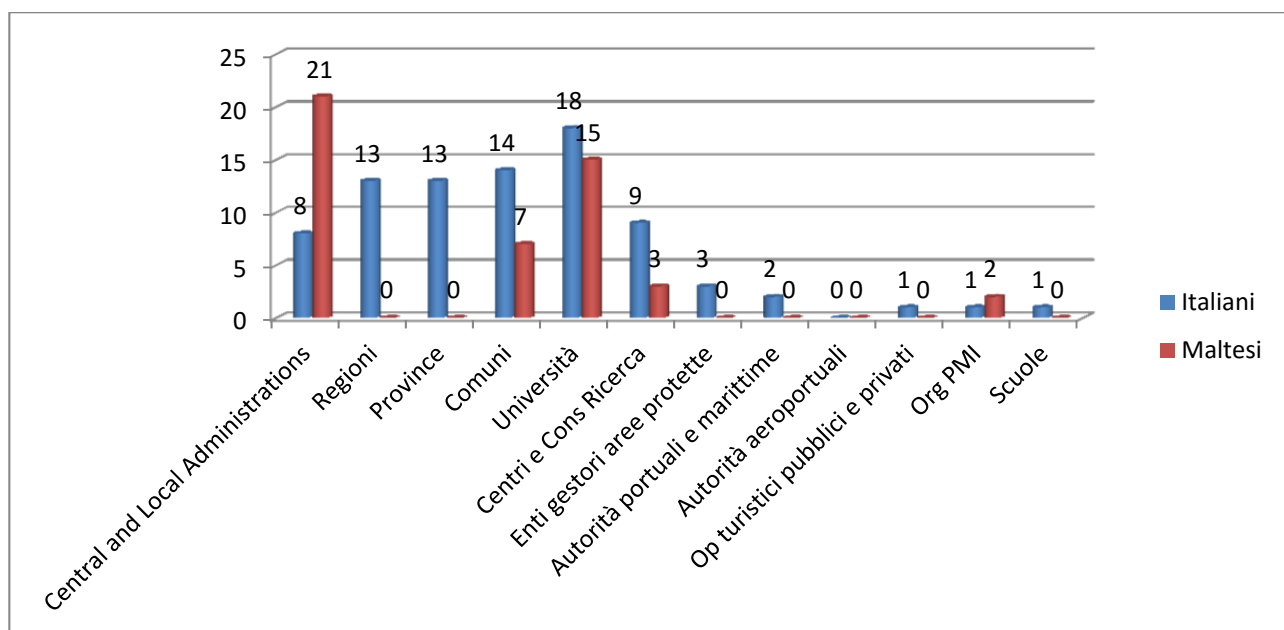
2.1.4 Progress achieved in the financing and implementation of financial engineering instruments former art. 44

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

2.1.5 Support allocated for target groups

In the Italy-Malta 2007-2013 Programming period, a total number of 25 operations were funded, with the involvement of 135 beneficiaries coming from the territories of the eligible area of which 85 Italian and 50 Maltese. As regards the groups of beneficiaries of Priority Axis 1 “Competitiveness: Innovation and Research, Sustainable Development”, the financed projects 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. As regards to Priority Axis 2 “Environment, Energy, and Risk Prevention”, the financed projects 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 below illustrates the stratification of beneficiaries who received financial support under the first call for strategic and ordinary projects.

Chart no. 1 - Stratification of beneficiaries – strategic and ordinary projects



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

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

As regards the **stratification by category** of beneficiary, the chart reveals the utmost participation by the Sicilian regional, provincial and local authorities and the Maltese central government. The latter are particularly numerous for the Maltese territory that, without having its own administrative apparatus any regional and

provincial structure, has participated in the calls for application of the OP Italia-Malta 2007-2013 with a strong presence of its central government.

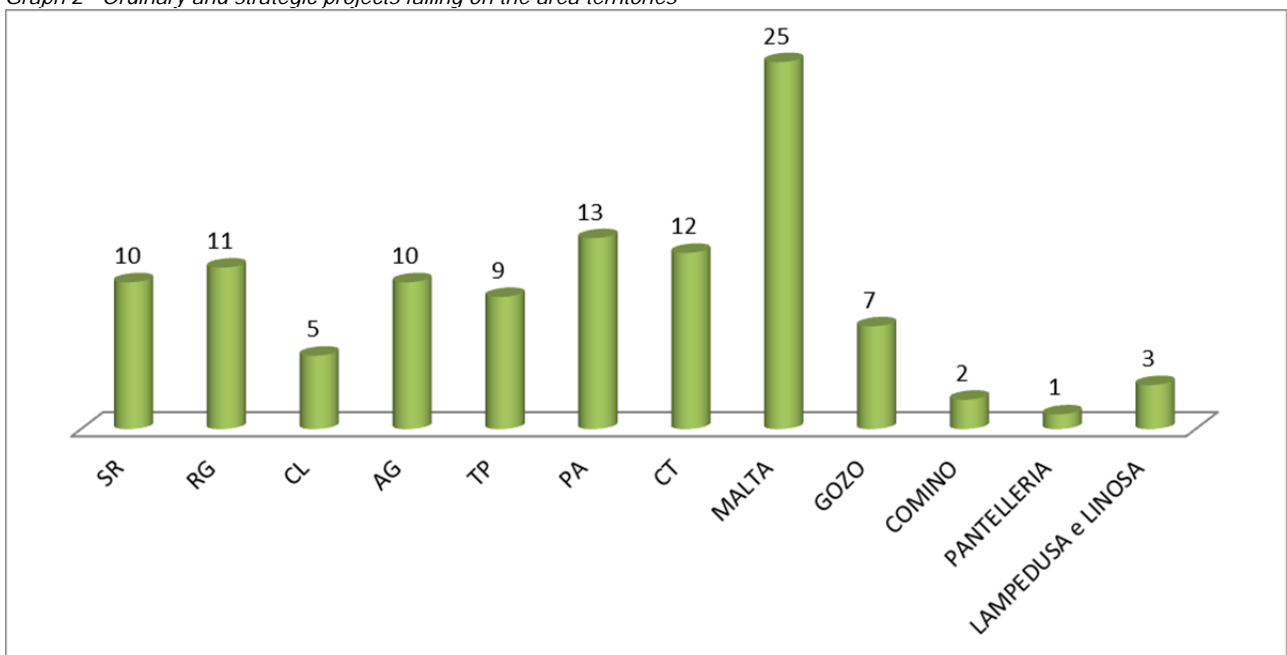
As for the **level of participation**, what emerges from the chart is the lack of participation in projects funded under the first call for strategic projects by Sicilian and Maltese maritime and aviation authorities. In fact, in response to Objective 1.2 “Improving cross-border accessibility and strengthening transport systems with low environmental impact” of the OP, in which the above-mentioned authorities would have been fully able to participate in the selection procedures, it should be noted that no project was feasibly placed in a favourable position favourable 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 Programme, private entities participated in the implementation of operations as justified design partners, with adequate motivation and information and the added value of their participation. A total number of 14 private entities, 10 Italian and 4 Maltese, participated in the financed operations. The presence of private-sector partners can be attributed to 6 different ordinary projects out of a total number of 17 financed operations and 5 strategic projects on a total of 8 financed operations. The strong presence of private participants certainly results from an interest shown by 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 local growth opportunities.

With regard to the areas affected by the actions of the operational programme, it would be appropriate to point out that projects financed in the 2007-2013 programming period saw the admission of entities belonging to all eligible areas of the OP. 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. All Maltese partners are based in Malta, as well as a good number of Gozitan beneficiaries. Beneficiaries from the areas adjacent NUTS III, eligible for funding pursuant 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



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 Pantelleria and the corresponding sister islands of Gozo and Comino for the Maltese territory.

The analysis of the table shows that the beneficiaries of projects approved under the two ordinary and strategic selection tenders have absorbed a percentage of the ERDF, for the benefit of their respective territories (Palermo and Catania), which has always remained below the 20% threshold of the ERDF approved for each operation. Furthermore, as of 31/12/2014, the percentage of the ERDF certified in the territories of Palermo and Catania amounted to a weighted average of 13%.

Overall, the Italy Malta 2007-2013 OP secured the broad participation of entities of the Sicilian and Maltese territories, managing to involve virtually all categories of beneficiaries entailed in the Programme. Where entities were not involved in the capacity of beneficiaries, the benefit that such entities derived from the results of financed projects are evident (see, in this regard, the airport authorities as recipients of specific initiatives on matters related to risk prevention).

An important result sought by the Italy Malta 2007-2013 OP was also the involvement of entities not originally designated as recipients of funded projects. In this case too, the theme of risk prevention has resulted, at programme level, in the broadening of the final recipients of activities, as well as the involvement of subjects such as the Civil Protection and the Italian Navy, which required the use of output and instruments yielded by individual projects of the Italy Malta 2007-2013 OP in support of their own institutional activities.

The information presented above shows that in the 2007- 2013 programming cycle, cross-border cooperation between Sicily and Malta brought to the fore a strong demand for participation and involvement on the part of new subjects, which the programme drafters took into account in the drafting phase of the cooperation programme for 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 with regards to the Italian side is constituted not only by NUTS III border areas of the Sicilian Region (the Regional Provinces of Ragusa, Siracusa, Agrigento, Caltanissetta and Trapani), but also by 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 can 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 that beneficiaries belonging to adjacent areas can incur expenses in the neighbouring areas of the 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 has resulted in the need of 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*.

On the basis of the findings of the evaluation process, the Executive Committee has admitted 12 projects proposals for funding out of the 17 that have been approved, which have an impact on NUTS III areas adjacent to Catania and Palermo equal to 7.22%. In the table below, as regards to the cross-section of the regular projects, it is reported that the financial data of the certified expenditure in the adjacent areas of Catania and Palermo are to be considered as definitive as the operations (16 ordinary projects) were concluded on date 31/12/2014.

As for the **call for bids for the selection of strategic projects** the Executive Committee of the programme has reconfirmed the application of the *territorial belonging* principle for the beneficiaries of the adjacent NUTS III zones (Catania and Palermo) described above. In consideration of the selection criteria for the call for bids - strategic projects - that provided the necessary presence of a leader identified as national or regional public organization authorised for the thematic areas of the project proposal. Therefore, given that the Region of Sicily lies within the NUTS III zone of Palermo with the various Administration branch offices divided into Departments, it is understood that all projects with the Italian lead partner shall insist in the area adjacent to Palermo.

Based on the findings of the evaluation process, the Executive Committee has accepted to finance 7 proposed projects, out of the 8 approved projects, which have an impact on the NUTS III adjacent areas of Catania and Palermo.

So as to ensure that the financial data related to the planned ERDF in the adjacent Zone III 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 Executive 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 31/12/2014:

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 of the 31/12/2011	% of certified eligible expenditure supported by the beneficiaries as of the 31/12/2012	% of certified eligible expenditure supported by the beneficiaries as of the 31/12/2013	TOTAL till 31/12/2015
ORDINARY PROJECTS										
1	1.3	GARDMED A1.1.3-02	LP - University of Catania – Department of Biological Geological and Environmental Sciences		x	17.58%	6.35%	12.27%	18.62%	18,62%
1	1.1	LITHOS A1.1.1-10	PP 2 - University of Palermo - Department of History and Architecture Design	x		7.55%	0.00%	0.00%	5.44%	9.16%
			PP 3 – Regional Department of Cultural Heritage- Regional Centre for Planning and Restoration and for Natural and Applied Sciences for Cultural Heritage	x			0.00%	0.00%	3.72%	
1	1.1	T-CHEESIMAL A1.1.1-35	PP3 – University of Catania		x	8%	0.00%	0.00%	4.21%	4.21%
2	2.1	MORISO A1.2.1-73	LP – Sicilian Region – Department for Infrastructure Intervention on Agriculture	x		16.23%	0.00%	0.00%	7.19%	13.12%
			PP 2 – University of Catania - Department of Agri-food and Environmental System Management		x		0.08%	0.83%	0.97%	
			PP 3 - Centre for Economic Studies applied to Engineering - CSEI		x		0.00%	2.59%	4.96%	

2	2.1	PANACEA A1.2.1-57	PP 2 – Regional province of Palermo	x		20%	0.00%	0.00%	13.65%	14%
1	1.1	ProMed A1.1.1-42	LP – Regional Institute for Vines and Wine	x		20%	0,43%	17,64%	15,70%	17.51%
			PP 2 – Study Centre for Economy applied to Engineering - CSEI		x		0,00%	1,22%	1,81%	
2	2.1	REMASI A1.2.1-16	PP 2 - Legambiente (Environment Protection) Sicilian No-Profit Committee	x		15,33%	0,00%	0,00%	3,30%	16.48%
			PP 3 - University of Palermo	x			0,00%	0,00%	13,18%	
2	2.1	SIMBIOTIC A1.2.1-17	PP8 – University of Catania – CUTGANA		x	14,62%	0,00%	0,00%	6,89%	6.89%
2	2.3	CALYPSO A1.2.3-31	PP5 - ARPA Sicily	x		5,15%	0,00%	0,00%	0,42%	5.38%
			PP8 – University of Catania – CUTGANA		x		0,00%	0,00%	4,96%	
2	2.3	RESPIRA A1.2.3-72	PP3 – University of Palermo	x		20%	0,00%	0,00%	8,99%	19.69%
			PP4 – National Council of Research IBIM-Palermo	x			0,00%	0,00%	10,70%	
2	2.3	VAMOS SEGURO A1.2.3-62	LP – National Institute of Geophysics and Volcanology, section of Catania		x	20%	0,00%	2,31%	3,75%	15.85%
			PP2 - National Institute of Astrophysics		x		0,04%	13,85%	12,10%	
2	2.4	WATER FRONT A1.2.4-67	PP 2 – Regional Province of Palermo	x		12,84%	0,00%	0,00%	5,19%	18.36%
			PP 3 – Municipality of Palermo	x			0,00%	0,00%	4,58%	
			PP 4 – University of Palermo	x			0,00%	0,00%	8,59%	

* Figures refer to elaboration of data concluded in 2016

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 of 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 of 31/12/2013	% of certified eligible expenditure supported by the beneficiaries as of 31/12/2014	% of certified eligible expenditure supported by the beneficiaries as of 31/12/2015	TOTAL till 31/12/2015
STRATEGIC PROJECTS												
1	1.2	STREETS	LP – Department of infrastructures for mobility and transport	X		19.66%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.47%	0,99%	10,83%
			PP2- University College ARCES	X			0.00%	0.00%	2.65%	3.74%	3,86%	
			PP 4 - Port Authority of Catania		x		0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.70%	5,98%	
2	2.1	BIODIVALU E	PP4- ISPRA	X		15%	0.00%	0.00%	0.32%	4.65%	8,01%	17,77%
			PP8 – University of Catania		x		0.00%	0.00%	1.76%	5.90%	9,76%	
2	2.1	PORT PVEV	PP2-Port Authority of Catania		x		0.00%	0.00%	1.62%	12.70%	12,70%	12,70%
2	2.2	CRIM SAFRI	LP – Region of Sicily – Urban Department	X		19%	0.00%	0.00%	1.01%	3.38%	5,48%	14,63%
			PP2- University of Palermo – Department of Energy	X			0.00%	0.00%	0.77%	0.79%	1,22%	
			PP3 - Institute of Biomedicine and Molecular Immunology “Alberto Monroy” National Research Council	X			0,00%	0,00%	0,23%	0,98%	3,25%	
			PP4- Region of Sicily - Department of Cultural Heritage and Sicilian Identity	X			0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	1.43%	2,11%	
			PP7- Med O.R.O		x		0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	1.26%	2,56%	

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 of 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 of 31/12/2013	% of certified eligible expenditure supported by the beneficiaries as of 31/12/2014	% of certified eligible expenditure supported by the beneficiaries as of 31/12/2015	TOTAL till 31/12/2015
STRATEGIC PROJECTS												
2	2.3	IMaGenX	PP3 – University Territorial Board of Trapani (PTUT)	X		9.89%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	3.72%	8,48%	17,48%
			PP5 – University Hospital of Palermo "Paolo Giaccone"(AOUPP)	X			0.00%	0.00%	0.50%	0.95%	9,00%	
2	2.3	PIM ENERGETH ICA	LP – Region of Sicily – Department of infrastructure projects in agriculture	X		10%	0.00%	0.00%	0.21%	0.00%	2,53%	2,53%
2	2.3	SIMIT	LP - Region of Sicily Presidency Civil Protection Department	X		13.08%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	1,36%	14,25%
			PP2-University of Palermo	X			0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	5.40%	0,13%	
			PP3- University of Catania		x		0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	12,76%	
2	2.3	VIENERGY	LP – IRVO	X		20%	0.00%	0.00%	3.95%	5.49%	9,08%	16,77%
			PP2- CO.RI.S.S.I.A	X			0.00%	0.00%	0.50%	3.02%	5,27%	
			PP3- CSEI		x		0.00%	0.00%	0.43%	1.84%	2,41%	

* Figures refer to elaboration of data concluded in 2016

The above table illustrates how the beneficiaries of approved projects of both the ordinary and the 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 of the 31/12/2015, in their respective territories of Palermo and Catania, is below 13%.

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

The Italy Malta 2007-2013 Operational Programme has achieved a total number of three procedures aimed at the allocation of ERDF resources amounting to € 34,192,116.34 to finance a total of 25 priority actions under Priority Axis I “Innovation and Research; Sustainable Development” and Priority Axis II “Environment, Energy and Risk Prevention.

The table below gives details of the three procedures mentioned above, which ensured the programme's results in relation to the physical and financial indicators, namely in relation to the Italy Malta 2007-2013 Operational Programme.

The first procedure of the Programme began in January 2010 with the publication of the **01/2009 public tender for selection of ordinary projects** and ended in December 2010. A total of 80 project proposals were submitted, with 50 of them being admitted to the evaluation phase. During the first half of 2011, the Programme Executive Committee approved the final list of funded projects, projects approved but not funded and projects not allowed and ineligible projects, submitting the results to the Managing Authority. During the month of April, the Authority notified the results to the beneficiaries, published the ranking lists duly stamped by the relevant Court of Auditors, and signed the grant contracts with the designated lead partners. A total of 17 project proposals were financed, (8 projects under Priority Axis I and 9 projects under Priority Axis II), for a total amount of € 14,999,996.80. Project proposals of the ordinary type financed by the programme included a total of 88 beneficiaries, of which 55 in Sicily and 33 in Malta. All projects were completed in the second half of 2013.

The second procedure of the programme was initiated in July 2011 through the publication of the **01/2011 public tenders for the selection of strategic projects** and ended in April 2012, following a two-phase negotiated procedure during which beneficiaries initially submitted project concept notes, further defined through the submission of a complete application form. Out of 28 concept notes, 17 application forms were eventually submitted and 15 of them progressed to the evaluation phase. During the first half of 2012, the Programme Executive Committee approved the final list of projects eligible for funding, projects eligible for contingent financing, projects eligible but not suitable for financing, and projects rejected, forwarding the results to the Managing Authority. During the month of July 2012, the Authority notified the results to the beneficiaries, following a further definition of projects and the signing of grant contracts with the designated lead partners. A total of 8 project proposals were financed, of which 1 under Priority Axis I and relating to the priority theme “Accessibility and Eco-sustainable Transport”, 7 under Priority Axis II, and relating to the following priority themes: “Promoting Joint Actions to Prevent Risks caused by Natural Effects and Human Activity” (1 project); “Prevention of Risks related to Coastal Areas and Seas” (2 projects); and, “Renewable Energy and Waste Treatment” (4 projects). The project proposals were funded for a total amount of € 17,551,518.49. Project proposals of the strategic type financed by the programme counted a total of 47

beneficiaries, of which 30 from Sicily and 17 in Malta. Through data analysis, it is possible to confirm that these numbers are attributable, on the one hand, to discounts recorded by the beneficiaries of the programme for the execution of public procedures in the context of the acquisition of goods and services required by the operations; on the other hand, by administrative difficulties of state central structures in Malta and the Region of Sicily to ensure the execution of part of the activities. Indeed, although in the course of programme implementation, the Managing Authority, with the support of the JTS, secured specific measures for the acceleration of spending for strategic projects, in 2014, the programme authorities identified and tried to successfully overcome the mediocre capacity for coordination and management by the beneficiaries and the substantial difficulty in generating expenses by leads and beneficiaries of strategic projects. In addition to the aforementioned criticalities identified during the implementation of 8 strategic projects, it is equally important to mention the lack of attention with which the beneficiaries involved in strategic projects, during 2014, issued statements and/or reassurances about the activities carried out in the respective projects and that, at times, proved dissatisfactory during the verification activities carried out by the MA.

In line with the decisions of the Monitoring Committee, the Managing Authority, in the first half of 2014, implemented the **selection procedure concerning “additional and coherent activities”** to be applied to ordinary projects, which eventually led to the approval by the Executive Committee of the “Report on the additional and coherent activities proposed by the ordinary projects” and the positive assessment of consistency of five out of eight applications filed by ordinary projects. Concerning the 5 coherent projects, only 3 eventually resulted in the submission of the requested documentation, thus allowing the MA to proceed with the financing of additional and coherent activities relating to these 3 projects. Additional and coherent activities relating to the 3 aforementioned ordinary projects were financed for a total amount of €1,640,600,85, and have seen the involvement of 12 beneficiaries, 8 of which are from Sicily and 4 from Malta. The beneficiaries of additional and coherent activities concluded their work in 2015.

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

Priority Axis/Specific Objective	Indicator	Projects				%
		Ordinary Funded	Strategic Funded	Ordinary concluded	Strategic concluded	
		A		B		
Axis I: Competitiveness: Innovation and Research; Sustainable Development	N. Projects	8	1	8	1	100 %
1.1) Sustain research and innovation to encourage avenues of sustainable development		4	0	4	0	100 %
1.2) Improve cross-border accessibility and reinforce low-impact environmental systems of transport		0	1	0	1	100 %
1.3) Jointly development of the potentiality of tourism while contributing to an integrated touristic offer		4	0	4	0	100 %
Axis II: Environment, Energy and Risk Prevention		9	7	9	7	100 %
2.1) Contribute to environmental protection through the safeguarding, valorisation and monitoring of natural resources		4	2	4	2	100 %
2.2) Contribute to the development of renewable energies and energy efficiency		1	1	1	1	100 %

2.3) Promote joint actions for the prevention of natural and atrophic risks		3	4	3	4	100 %
2.4) Contribute to the reinforcement of cross-border institutional partnership in the subject matter of the axis		1	0	1	0	100 %
Total		17	17	8	8	100 %

With regard to the coherence of the OP actions with respect to the **renewed Lisbon Strategy** it is emphasised that the 25 operations selected in the first call - ordinary projects - and the first call - strategic projects – have helped to directly promote the competitiveness of the cross-border directly through actions that have fostered research and innovation for sustainable development of the territory and their resources.

Approved project proposals have been a real added value to a new and innovative planning of the cross-border area, providing practical measures to fully achieve the objectives set, in line with the main local assets (tourism, cultural heritage, natural and environmental resources). As will be discussed in sections 3.1.1.2 and 3.2.1.2 of "qualitative analysis" respectively for Priority Axis I and Priority Axis II, the 17 ordinary projects and the 8 strategic projects closed have directly contribute to the creation of scientific and technological networks, to the enhancement of research capacity, development and innovation, while promoting, among other things, institutional partnerships among government agencies, universities and business organizations.

With regard to the coherence 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 in 2008 by the Monitoring Committee, 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 increases 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, reference can be made to the following ordinary projects:

ARCHAEOTUR: at Ta 'Bistra site, a centre for visitors was set up and equipped with innovative promotion (3D video, educational programmes, use of, ICT equipment such as touch screens and kiosks to provide information and multimedia images) giving particular attention to the fruition of these devices by the most fragile groups (children and the disabled).

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

T-CHEESIMAL: has carried out, as part of the census of dairy farms, a specific study on "the role of women in the production and marketing chain 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, reference can be made to the following strategic project:

STREETS: It aimed at improving the transport chain and to strengthen integration of multimodal transport between Sicily and Malta also through the organization of transport for vulnerable users of the territory.

Priority Axis III

With reference to Priority Axis III, during the programme's implementation, the Managing Authority and the Maltese National Coordination Authority, 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 strategic projects in line with the Technical Assistance plan approved by the Monitoring Committee.

Further information regarding the main findings and progress made in relation to the physical objectives of each project, refer to sections 3.1.1.2 and 3.2.1.2.

With reference to the ordinary projects, funded through Notice 01/2009, and to the strategic projects, funded through Notice 01/2011, the Managing 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.

Moreover, the lead partners forwarded the original and electronic copies of the material produced for each work package to the Managing Authority in order to allow the Joint Technical Secretariat to proceed with the verification of output indicators, result indicators and programme indicators listed in the approved Application Forms.

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

- the consistency between the activities carried out as described in the respective sections 5 "Activities carried out during the reference period" of the intermediate and final 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 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 programme. 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 Executive Committee based on independent consistency assessments.

The documentation subject to verification was regularly filed at the Department della Programmazione – Piazza Sturzo 36, Palermo – Servizio V - 1° Piano – stanza n. 2. A file for each project was created containing the collection of outputs of the project, from its start to its closure, and for which specific closing minutes were drawn up.

2.2 Compliance with Community law

During the implementation of the OP no significant problems were encountered with regards 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 Priority 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 implemented at national and regional level.

With reference to Priority Axis III of the OP – with the Beneficiary being Sicilian Region (MA) and Maltese National Coordination Authority (MNCA), it should be noted that, all activated procedures were performed in compliance with the Legislative Decree of 12 April 2006, no. 163 "*Regulation of public procurement regarding works, services and supplies implementing Directives 2004/17/EC and 2004/18/EC*" published in the Official Gazette of the Italian Republic no. 100 of 2 May 2006 for Italy and by Legal Notice no. 296/2010 for Malta.

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 were implemented regarding the legislative framework.

With reference to the automatic decommitment registered on the 31/12/2013, it is highlighted that by means of Notice T-770/14 dated 19/07/2016, the European Court of Justice rejected the appeal presented by Italy on behalf of the Italy-Malta Programme contesting the decision of the European Commission (Ares note (2014)2975571 - 11/09/2014) through which the Commission launched the decommitment procedure, pursuant to Art. 97 of Reg. (EC) 1083/2006). The Programme Authorities expressed their disappointment with regard to this decision because it was felt that a substantial amount of the budgetary allocation of the Italy-Malta Programme had to be forfeited due to circumstances that were beyond the Programme's control.

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 the implementation period of the Italy-Malta OP the Programme Authorities ensured 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 programmes (ESF Sicily 2007-2013 OP, FEP 2007-2013 OP, PSR Sicily 2007-2013 and PAR FAS 2007-2013), it should be noted 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 Electoral Manifesto (MEAIM). The FPD is also the national coordinator of the Territorial Cooperation Programmes in which Malta participates, including the Med Programme, the INTERREG IVC Programme and ENPI CBC Med Programme, as well as the successor of such Programmes under the 2014-2020 programming period. The FPD is also the National Focal Point of the following: the EEA and the Norwegian Financial Mechanisms, the Swiss-Maltese Cooperation Programme, the Pre-Accession Funds, TAIEX and Transition Facility, the European Globalisation Fund (EGF) and the European Solidarity Fund. It also acts as the National Authority for the ERASMUS+ Programme as well as the Responsible Authority for the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) 2014-2020 and Internal Security Fund 2014-2020 (ISF). The FPD has also been appointed as the Managing Authority for the Rural Development and Agriculture Fund (EAFRD) as well as the European Maritime Fisheries Fund (EMFF).

In addition to this, MEAIM also includes the Planning and Priorities Coordination Division, which acts as the Managing Authority for the mainstream ERDF and Cohesion Fund (Operation Programme I) and ESF (Operational Programme II) programmes. The demarcation of the operations funded by the Italy-Malta OP with the other programmes, particularly those co-financed by the Cohesion Fund, the ERDF and the ESF Programmes, is ensured primarily through the FPD's participation in the Inter-ministerial Coordination Committee on EU Funding that discusses the projects selected under various Programmes, including the Italy-Malta 2007-2013 OP.

2.7 Monitoring and evaluation

The Programme Authorities, with the support of the JTS, made sure that during the programme's implementation of the Italy-Malta OP there was compliance with regulatory provisions aimed at guaranteeing an efficient monitoring system of the approved operations (ordinary and strategic projects).

This was done coherently following the recommendation of the European Commission with regard to the advice on the conformity of the system of management and control of the OP on July 2010. The MA, with the support of the JTS and the input of the MNCA, has provided the preparation of an alternative or complimentary monitoring system through the use of Pivot tables that allow the registration of the following information, by every single participating beneficiary, for each operation: *Section 1*, commitment data, *Section 2* General data, *Section 3* Document of Expenditure, *Section 4* Document of Payment, *Section 5* Monitoring, *Section 6* Claim for reimbursement, *Section 7* First Level Control Checks, *Section 8* First Level Control Checks by the FPD (applicable to Maltese partners), *Section 9* Lead Partner verification, *Section 10* Request for reimbursement, *Section 11* Certification, *Section 12* Second Level Checks, *Section 13* Transmission of BDU-IGRUE data. Data

entered into the system allowed to involve in the validation process the following subjects: beneficiary-Lead partner-MA/JTS-controll_Unit-Certify_Authority.

The MA, in order to respect the principle of proportionality stipulated by the cohesion policy, which requires that the formulation of the Member States' obligations should be in line with the operational programme expenses, has decided to proceed with the activation of an administrative procedure (activated with note no. 24671 dated 28/12/2010) to request the Managing Authority of the Italy-France Maritime OP – Toscana Region – the free reutilization of the OP's IT System. This decision was prompted following an opportunity that takes into consideration the Operative Programme's resources in relation to the high costs involved in assigning the operation services to an adequate management system in line with the OP's requirements. Following the signing of an agreement protocol with the MA of the Italy-France Maritime OP, which took place on the 01/07/2011, a list of assignments were stipulated with the aim of assigning, through a transparent public procedure, the services for adjusting (vertically) the acquired IT system in accordance with the specific exigencies of the Italy-Malta OP. In September 2013 the MA completed the administrative procedures to appoint an external operator and thereafter gave start to the necessary procedures which later on resulted in the contracting of the economic operator Artensys to change and adapt the French-Italian Maritime programme information system according to the requirements of the Italy-Malta OP.

During 2013– in connection with the full launch of the activities of ordinary and strategic projects - the MA implemented all the necessary procedures for the adaptation of the Ulysses system while at the same time the beneficiaries were using the monitoring system described before, with the support of the JTS.

Moreover, in 2014, the data migrating activity was carried out for data relative to the financial progress, procedural and physical operations funded by the programme. This migration was performed through an automatic procedure that allowed importing the monitoring data of each Priority Axis I, II and III duly verified and consolidated by the MA into the system. In addition to this, the demographic data of the users of the beneficiary organizations, the demographic information of the projects, information concerning the activating procedures that have allowed the financing of the operations have been migrated.

During 2015 the Ulysses system was fully operational allowing beneficiaries of strategic projects and beneficiaries of Priority Axis III (MA and MNCA) direct uploading of financial progress data and procedural requirements, even for the validation of the first level controls and data transmission from the Certifying Authority.

Also, in 2016 the analysis and development of the adjustments useful to the management of the new cooperation programme 2014-2020 in line with the Regulation (EU) 1083/2013 were launched.

As a result of a complex and costly migration of physical and financial progress data of operations financed by the Italy-Malta programme (2011-2014) in the Ulysses system, the programme does not suffer from any problem related to registration or loss of data and essential information, related to the implementation of the programme throughout the 2007-2013 cycle. In addition, even though the Ulysses became operational during the year 2014-2015, the programme authorities - with valuable and essential support and assistance of the JTS –managed to bridge the delay matured in the initial phase. In fact, in the process of the closure phase of the programme, filing and computer recording of all relevant data relating to the procedural advancements and financial data were well stored and recorded.

Finally it seems appropriate to point out that the free reuse of an information system created and financed with public funds from another Administration represented and represents for the authorities of Italy-Malta programme an important experience of successful management. In fact, this experience deals with the ability

to capitalize outcomes and outputs achieved by the use of EU funds and, from another side, an efficient and economic exercise of the administrative action for a good sound management.

With regard to the activities of the **Monitoring Committee (MC)** it is being pointed out that during the implementation of the programme **7 meetings were held**, alternating between Sicily and Malta. In addition to the usual and regular activity of verbalization of all the meetings of the MC, the JTS has also introduced the practice of drawing up and signing a "*summary of the decisions taken*" by members of the committee at the end of every meeting. This document regularly published on the website of the programme in the aftermath of each meeting was an opportunity through which maximum and timely transparency of decisions taken was ensured, in the logic of the principle of partnership and sharing of decisions with the local stakeholders. Also, as part of the MC, **14 written procedures** were realized intended to allow the examination and approval of key documents and planning tools, implementation and monitoring. From a general point of view it is useful to point out that although the rules of procedure of the MC operation has provided the opportunity to vote by a majority the same decisions of the committee, this instrument has never been used since the programme's authorities have always tried to respect the principle of consensus and sharing of the choices related to the lines of programming, implementation and monitoring.

2.7.1 Executive Committee

On the basis of the provisions approved by the EC within OP, authorities have set up an Executive Committee which operated during the entire implementation cycle in close cooperation with the MC. During the implementation of the programming cycle **8 meetings** were held, alternating between Sicily and Malta and **23 written procedures were written intended** for the examination and approval of the following types of documents :selection criteria for the operations, Application pack for the selection of the operations, results of selection of operations including the ranking of operations, manuals and guides for the beneficiaries of the programme, proposals for amendments of approved projects and programme documentation.

From a general point of view it is useful to point out that the structure of the Executive Committee set up within the MC made it possible to make more efficient and effective decision-making of certain processes related to the examination and approval of the documentation listed before and in avoiding, among other things problem of conflict of interest. In fact, it remains clearly confirmed that within a relatively small cross-border cooperation programme some administrations represented on the MC have played the role of beneficiaries of the programme. Therefore, it was very useful for the MA to have an Executive Committee - composed of fewer administrations representative of the MC - in charge of the operations selection and approval of any proposed changes.

3. IMPLEMENTATION OF PRIORITY AXIS

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

3.1.1 Achievement of 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 (c/a) %
COMPETITIVENESS: INNOVATION AND RESEARCH, SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT	9.448.171	9.794.171	9.508.507	104%	100,64%

Table 10.a Priority Axis I Objectives

INDICATORS AT PRIORITY AXIS LEVEL	UNIT OF MEASURE	TARGET	SOURCE	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015*
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	15	16
Projects that promote actions of awareness including 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	12	13
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	6	6
Projects aimed at the improvement of the coordination and accessibility of the transportation systems in the programme area	Number	3	Annual monitoring and end of programme	0	0	2	1	3	4	5
Projects promoting the assisting of the conversion 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	3	4

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	3	2
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	6	8

*The data processing was finished in 2016

Table 9a above shows the financial progress of Priority Axis I and highlights the total committed resources, resulting from legally binding deeds against the payments of expenditure certified as of 31/12/2016. Data show that following the conclusion of the 2015 administrative procedures - called "additional and coherent activities", discussed in this report - the MA has ensured the further legal commitment of expenditure recorded at the level of Priority Axis I, thus committing 104% of the programme resources. With regard to payments, it is pointed out that they correspond to 100,64%. The gap between payments and expenditure commitments is, on the one hand, as verified during review of payment claims, due to savings achieved by the programme beneficiaries for the execution of public procedures, as part of the acquisition of goods and services required by the STREET strategic project, and, on the other, for administrative difficulties encountered by project leaders in the implementation of a portion of the project activities. More specifically, the MA's first-level control activities resulted in several expense installments incurred for communication and information costs

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

The first consisted in the processing of final claims for reimbursement duly verified and validated by the Managing Authority as of 31/12/2016. 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 examination of the coherence between the implementation indicators and results provided by the Project LP in the request for reimbursement, and the output of the products developed under each projects as of 31/12/2015 and accepted by the Managing Authority following a formal request addressed to all the LP of the projects.

Based on the methodology described above, steps were taken to develop tables 10.a, 10.a1 and 10.a2 where the following data has been reported:

- **Table 10.a:** number of operations that registered progress with respect to the implementation indicators of the OP;
- **Table 10.a1:** actual progress achieved by the operations within the framework of the programme indicators at a project level;
- **Table 10.a2:** actual progress achieved by the operations within the framework of the communication indicators.

Hereunder are the operations carried out within Priority Axis I of OP, .distributed among ordinary and strategic projects.

Ordinary projects

The HUB - The HUB is a physical and virtual co-working space active between Malta, Syracuse (Ortiga) and Lampedusa that connects Mediterranean “change makers” to a worldwide web of interdisciplinary skills.

PROMED - The project worked on product and process innovation applied to wine making, safeguarding the environment and the final product itself. Technicians from the Istituto Regionale del Vino e dell’Olio trialed three new wine-making protocols, including one in Pantelleria, later accepted within the DOC product specification by the Ministry of Agricultural, Food, and Forestry. At Buskett in Malta, an experimental winery was set-up and personnel was trained in the use of technical protocols for the cultivation of local grape varieties and their transformation according to tested, innovative technologies.

T-CHEESIMAL - The project has qualified Sicilian and Maltese dairy products with high biodiversity content through the development of farming traditions, applied research, and the use of innovative technologies. Thanks to the expertise of the CoRFILaC personnel and researchers of the University of Malta and Catania, the project has enabled the transfer of the required know-how to for the preparation in Malta of the first product specification for DOP Ġbejna cheese production. This has already been adopted by the Maltese governing bodies and is currently in approval stage at EU community level.

ARCHAEOTUR - The project deals with “minor” archaeological sites in the Iblei and Maltese areas which were subject to structural restoration and made more and wheelchair friendly. The usability of the regenerated sites has enabled the planning and realization of 4 common heritage trails through the Mosta, Rabat, Ragusa, and Santa Croce Camerina sites.

LITHOS - This project has created an International Research Centre for Stereotomia and Stone Materials housed in Palazzo La Rocca, a UNESCO site in the Ragusa Province with a complementary unit in Malta. The centre acts as an attractor for specialists and stone masons involved in rediscovering traditions and building techniques to apply to the recovery, requalification and restoration of historic town centres and areas of quality in Sicily and Malta. Moreover, the centre has created a specialized research laboratory working on understanding the physical-mechanical properties of stone and in diagnosing the degradation to which it is subject.

GARDMED - Through the mapping of 18 public and private gardens in both Sicily and Malta, the classification of the particular historic, stylistic, and landscaping characteristics of each garden has been undertaken, including a botanical census and recognition of the naturalistic and architectonic qualities of each one of them.

SIBIT – The project created the so called “MED in Bike”, a project which drew up cycling routes for a total of more than 1,000 km, for a total of 24 routes which go through five Sicilian provinces (Agrigento, Ragusa, Syracuse, Trapani, and Caltanissetta) and Malta. Along the routes, 70 accommodation facilities offer services aimed specifically at the cycle tourist and “hotel bike” kits were distributed for in all the five Sicilian provinces and Maltese hotels involved.

OBIMED - Wi-Fi free areas assisting tourists have been created in Malta and Gozo and the Sicilian towns of Sciacca and Castelvetro. Furthermore, the project has developed some 2.0 web applications and has engaged a group of Italian and Maltese youngsters who have been trained in the use of smartphone apps used for the diffusion of tourist itineraries fine-tuned by the project.

Strategic projects

STREETS - The project has mapped out the Sicilian and Maltese transport network through a WebGis system developed by Malta University that has contributed to a better understanding of the multimodal transport system between the two islands. Systems aimed at improving traffic flow and controls of vehicles in transit along the Catania- Vittoria-Malta route have been installed. Moreover, the project installed multimedia totems.

The table below illustrates where effective progress has been achieved by the operations listed in Table 10.a within the context of the programmed indicators at project level.

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

Implementation indicators Axis I	Unit of Measure	Operations of Priority Axis I									
		Acknowledgement of request for final reimbursement									
		The Hub	Lithos	ProMed	T-Cheesimal	Archaeotur	Gardmed	Obimed	Sibit	Streets	Total 2015**
Projects in R&I that involve public entities, research institutes, universities and other enterprises.	No. of entities involved	31	9	14	55					45	154
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	0	70		14.88
Project aimed at marketing the cross border natural and cultural heritage.	No. of Counties/ Tour operators contacted	15				50	5	10	6	0	86
Projects that improve the coordination and accessibility of transport in the cross border area.	No. of actions							1	1	66	68
Projects aimed at promoting the environmental sustainability of transport systems particularly towards reducing green house gasses.	No. of publicity interventions									5	5
Projects for the realisation and promotion of environmental sustainability across the cross border area.	No. of entities exposed to the promotion in this regards							100		0	100
Projects that improve the institutional partnership in the cross border area.	No. of entities involved	6	4		30	16	17	30		45	103

*The progress reported in the *Total 2015* column takes into account the sum of the advances achieved by individual projects, which have taken action directly linked to the indicators on Priority Axis I.

**The data processing was finished in 2016

Table 10.a2 illustrates the communication indicators concerning the activities carried out by individual projects selected under Priority Axis I, whose goal is to reach targets in matter of Programme communication.

Tab. 10.a2 - Communication indicators at the level of each Axis I operation

Communication indicators	Unit of measure	Priority I Axis I									
		The Hub	Lithos	ProMed	T-cheesimal	Archaeotur	Gardmed	Obimed	Sibit	Streets	Total 2015*
Public interest events (seminars, meetings and workshops, information meetings);	Number	44	6	28	11	14	40	8	20	15	186
Participants in events, to be recorded on an attendance sheet;	Number	1634	320	628	407	421	84	1209	695	559	5957
Contacts and mailing lists of identified target groups;	Number	623	15	2	200	320	150	2346	0	1016	4672
Transition at the local and national media of activities carried out;	Number	249	57	46	-	35	46	31	88	35	468
Project newsletter;	Number	46	1000	0	3	0	0	0	0	10	1059
Printed (brochures, posters, invitation cards, etc.) and multimedia (CD-Rom, DVD) material;	Number of copies	14	4	12	3	15	11	9	4	67	139
	Circulation		2532		4437	53820	5000	5000	10000		75789
Gadgets and promotional materials;	Number of copies		6	4	8	1	5		1	26	51
	Circulation	0	1010		5751	2800	3600		35000		48161
Exchanges 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	-	1	30
Publications related to the project and the results obtained;	Number	1	4	14	4	4	5	3	-	3	38
Development of the project website	Number	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9

(additional)											
Articles in magazines and newspapers	Number	-	-	14	-	-	-	-	-	-	14

*The data processing was finished in 2016

Data collected shows that 186 events were held under Priority Axis I, in which a total of 5957 people participated. During the organization of various events, seminars and events 4672 contacts were gathered and added to the mailing list. The number of the material produced for the dissemination of information on the activities of the projects concerned was substantial. Indeed, 75,789 pieces of paper material and multimedia, like brochures, posters, cards, CD-ROMs and DVDs, were produced. Among the information channels are also local and national media, for a total of 468 appearances on TV and printed media. Finally, for promotional purposes, we produced various gadgets (51 copies), which were distributed during events of public interest. In addition, to encourage and enhance collaboration and cooperation, we activated 22 experience exchanges with other projects, as well as networks and partnerships with 30 additional institutions.

3.1.2 Significant problems encountered and measures to resolve them

During the programme implementation period there were no difficulties in the implementation of Priority Axis I of the OP.

3.1.3 Result indicators of Priority Axis I

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

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

Result Indicators Axis I	Units of Measurement	Objective	Base Line	Progress as of 31/12/2013	Progress as of 31/12/2014	Progress as of 31/12/2015*
Development of cross-border projects based on R&ST by public entities, research institutes, universities and business organizations	No. participating organizations	15	4	15	15	154
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	32	1488
Countries/tour operators reached by the joint promotion action	Number	5	1	14	14	86
Area trade marks	Number	1	-	1	1	1
Public entities involved in the exchange of experience	ΔN	15	10	26	26	22
Networks created in the tourism sector	Number	3	1	4	4	4

*The data processing was finished in 2016

The **first indicator** shows that the number of organizations that contributed to the development of cross-border projects based on R&ST is 154. In particular the projects that contribute to the achievement of the objective are five: The Hub, Lithos, Promed and Streets.

Regarding the **second indicator**, it is being noted that 30.696 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 7: The Hub, Lithos, Promed, Archaeotur, Gardmed, Obimed and Sibit.

As for the **third indicator**, 86 tour operators 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 also an indirect at an international level reaching, on these occasions, 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:
 - ✓ In 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.
 - ✓ In the international meeting of all Hubs which focused on network strategies held in London in 2013.
 - ✓ In the Smart city Exhibition 2012, during which a specific meeting space was provided, dedicated to social innovation and Smart city, which represented an important opportunity for the dissemination of project results and the opening of the Hub in Syracuse as an example of innovative experience of growth and development;
- **SIBIT** which 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 this field, 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.

Regarding the **fourth indicator**, it is noted that the unit of measurement “number” refers to the number of realized area brands. In particular, Sibit project developed a brand area 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 is expected that it provides the possibility to autonomously commercialize the relevant cycling product within the cross-border region, in accordance with the regulations currently in force.

From the data relating the **fifth indicator**, 22 public entities were 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 Italy-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 Italy-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 Italy-Malta 2007-2013 OP;
 - 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 Italy-Malta 2007-2013 OP.

As for 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 seen as places of interest for the cooperation area were inputted 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 young people working in both Sicily and Malta, were put online.
- **SIBIT** with the implementation of a plan for 24 routes in the Sicilian and Maltese territories.

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	20.575.796	20.575.796	19.628.831,98	100%	95,40%

Tab. 10.b - Targets Priority Axis II

INDICATORS AT PRIORITY AXIS LEVEL	UNIT OF MEASURE	OBJECTIVE	SOURCE	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015*
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	7	8
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	10	17
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	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	7	5	8	10	13

*The data processing was finished in 2016

Table 9b shows the financial progress of Priority Axis II and highlights the total amount of committed resources following legally binding deeds resulting from payments made from disbursement certified as of 31/12/2016. Data show that following the conclusion of 2015 administrative procedures - called “additional and coherent activities”, as discussed in this report - the MA guaranteed the additional legally binding commitment of expenditure for Priority Axis I, thus ensuring the commitment of 100% of the programme resources. With regard to payments listed under the appropriate entry, it should be noted that they amount to 95,40%.

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

The first consisted in the processing of final claims for reimbursement duly verified and validated by the Management Authority as of 31/12/2016. 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 accurate analysis of the coherence between the implementation and results indicators provided by the Project LP in the request for reimbursement, and the output of the products developed under each project and accepted by the Managing Authority following a formal request addressed to all the LP of the projects.

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

- **Table 10.b:** number of operations that registered progress with respect to the implementation indicators of the OP;
- **Table 10.b1:** actual progress achieved by the operations within the framework of the programmed indicators at project level;;
- **Table 10.b2:** actual progress achieved by the operations within the framework of the communication indicators.

Hereunder are the operations carried out within Priority Axis II of OP, distributed among ordinary and strategic projects.

Ordinary projects

MORISO - The project dealt with the hydrogeological mapping and monitoring of underground water resources present in the Ragusa province and Malta thus allowing the identification of water tables at risk of saltwater intrusion and/or pollution deriving from agricultural activity.

REMASI - The project set up interventions for the appreciation of nature reserves and geo-sites in Sicily and Malta through fostering awareness of the need to protect biodiversity. These actions involved local communities, youngsters in particular, and were carried out in the nature reserves managed by Legambiente on the island of Lampedusa, the Macalube di Aragona, and the Grotta di Sant'Angelo Muxaro in the territory of Agrigento.

PANACEA - The project promoted the scientific and environmental values of ecosystems in the Protected Marine Areas of Dwejra (Gozo), Rđum Majjiesa (Malta), Pelagic Islands (Lampedusa and Linosa), Plemmirio (Syracuse), Ustica (Palermo), and Capo Gallo and Isola delle Femmine (Palermo) and improved their management. Four environmental educational centres open to the public were created and provided with equipment and life-sized models of the flora and fauna that populate the respective Protected Marine Area ecosystems. The centers also carry out activities of environmental awareness in Sicilian and Maltese schools through promotional campaigns for the safeguard of ecosystems and biodiversity in general.

SIMBIOTIC - The project has made a number of ecological re-establishment along the south-east side of Sicilian, at the Pantano Ponterio (salt marshes near Pachino) which allowed the removal of rubbish and the building of trails and observation posts for the complete usability of the re-naturalized wet area. On the Maltese side, on Gozo islet, the project dealt with the environmental restoration of some native species of the Mediterranean shrub and the planting of some characteristic species of the area which in the past had been subject to desertification and crop abandonment.

RESI - The project encouraged the spread of renewable energy use in Sicily and in Malta through the creation of a socio-economic and environmental data base tied to the spread of RES (renewable energy sources). It completed the mapping of installations and good practices present in the territories of Malta and the Agrigento and Ragusa provinces.

CALYPSO - The project fine-tuned a stable system for monitoring surface currents and waves in the channel between Sicily and Malta by way of a network of 4 HF radar antennas: one installed in the Pozzallo area, one in Marina di Ragusa, and the other two in the northern part of Malta at the Ta' Barkat and Ta' Sopus sites. The stable monitoring of this stretch of sea allows the authorities to intervene should there be a deliberate oil spill, to locate vessels in difficulty and to trigger search and rescue operations.

VAMOS SEGURO - The project has set up a system that automatically monitors and forecasts volcanic ash cloud dispersion resulting from Etna's eruptions. Thanks to the use of a complex instrumentation called LIDAR, the system is able to identify the areas between Sicily and Malta that, in case of an explosive eruption, will be affected by dangerous concentrations of volcanic ash and gases. Likewise, the system alerts the authorities responsible for air traffic control, both civil and military.

RESPIRA - The project studied in depth the conditions that can influence the relationship between exposition to pollutants and health through the analysis of the main factors of environmental risks. Moreover, guide-lines were laid down for the prevention of effects caused by polluting factors on the health of those who live in high-risk environments.

WATER FRONT - The project has banked on the exchange of good practices between local administrations and expert urban planners to create tools to develop the Trapani, Palermo, and La Valletta water fronts.

Strategic projects

IMAGENX - The project investigated the cause of breast cancer and its extent in the central Mediterranean integrating the knowledge and skills of research workers in both countries and setting up a monitoring programme based on the acquisition of data relating to family and environmental risks, and the life-styles of the whole Maltese population and that in the Syracuse and Palermo areas. Software and an IT tool were developed that allow women to know their personal level of risk of developing breast cancer.

SIMIT - The project dealt with the planning for, and management of, emergencies in Malta and the south eastern area of Sicily, an area characterized by significant coastal erosion and affected by the active Iblean-Maltese fault-line that generates high magnitude quakes. Thanks to the creation of two joint exercises of civil protection on Gozo and Lampedusa, relief mechanisms were tested in the event of disasters such as earthquake and tsunami.

BIODIVALUE - The project has devised a system of bio-physical measurements for the loss of bio-diversity in the Sicilian Channel and a system of economic assessment of its consequences caused to shore-based communities. Thanks to the gathering of physical, chemical, and biological data in the waters in the channel between Sicily and Malta obtained by the Towfish probe, it is possible to monitor the status of the marine environment in the area which today endures considerable maritime traffic. The elaboration of this data and their comparison with economic data relating to maritime traffic, carried out through the BioDiWare information-technology platform, allows a reliable estimate of the cause/effect relationship between maritime traffic and the environmental state of coasts.

PORT PVEV - The project set up pilot schemes that have demonstrated how the ports of La Valletta, Catania, and Gela can concretely reduce their dependency on fossil fuels through the production of electrical energy

from renewable sources. In the territories of Catania and Gela, the port authorities and Gela town council have devised green development plans for the development of their respective port areas and have provided their personnel with green vehicles for the reduction of CO2 emissions. Furthermore, the Valletta Grand Harbour and the Ċirkewwa Ferry Terminal port areas have been equipped with electric vehicles in conjunction with Transport Malta.

VIENERGY - The project carried out some experimental actions demonstrating that it is possible to obtain better energy efficiency in the wine industry and create an alternative income for winery owners through the reuse of waste products caused by the production process. The project trialed the use of residual biomass for heat production, the phyto treatment of oenological water for irrigation purposes, and the definition of an e-diesel fuel additive to use in vehicles.

CRIM SAFRI - The project created a research centre for environmental sustainability and renewable energy sources operating in Sicily and Malta. The centre supports both small and medium sized businesses in the activity of implementing energy efficient solutions, and public administrations in the energy requalification of public building. In Malta the project also created an innovative biomass pilot plant for the building industry.

Tab. 10.b1 Result objectives for each Priority Axis II*

Implementation indicators Asse II	Unit of Measure	Priority Axis II																
		Detections of final request for reimbursement																
		Moriso	Panacea	Remasi	Simbiotic	Resi	Respira	Calypso	Vamos Seguro	Water Front	Biodivalve	PORT PVEV	Crim Safri	ImagenX	Pim Energethica	Simit	ViEnergy	TOTAL 2015**
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	62,000,000					40,000		48,9 mln
Projects aimed at promoting the safeguarding of the environment of the cross-border 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	62,000,000					40,000	77,730	11,3 mln
Projects aimed at promoting the safeguarding of the environment of protected 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	62,000,000							1,3 mln
Projects for the improvement of the energy efficiency and the utilisation of sources of renewable energy	Kw of Energy produced by renewable sources								-	-		260,735	33				9,900	270,668
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	190	5	4	2		30		300

*The progress reported in the *Total 2015* column takes into account the sum of the advances achieved by individual projects, which have taken action directly linked to the indicators on Priority Axis II.

**The data processing was finished in 2016

Table 10.b2 provides the communication indicators concerning the activities undertaken by individual projects selected under Priority Axis II aimed at the achievement of the Programme's objectives in the field of communication.

Tab. 10.b2- Communication Indicators for each Axis II operation

Communication Indicators	Units of Measurement	Operations of Priority Axis II																
		Information as disclosed in the Final Request for Reimbursement																
		Moriso	Panacea	Remasi	Simbiotic	Resi	Respira	Calypso	Vamos Seguro	Water Front	Vienergy	Port Pvev	Pim Energethica	Biodivalue	Crim-Safri	Simit	Imagenx	Total 2015*
Public interest events (seminars, meetings and workshops, information conferences);	Number	5	10	4	5	11	10	6	6	7	15	3	-	40	13	8	3	146
Participants in events, registered on an attendance sheet;	Number	372	400	-	-	11	341	278	-	254	329	222	-	84	390	525	100	3306
Contacts and mailing list of groups of identified beneficiaries;	Number	-	181	-	-	1699	0	1552	-	110	20	2	-	150			0	3714
Coverage on local and national media of the activities carried out;	Number	60	10	-	18	17	6	150	10	18	68	15	-	46	30	194	8	650
Newsletter of the project;	Number	-	-	-	-	10	-	0	-	1		0	-	0	6			17
Printed material (brochures, posters, invitation cards, etc..) and multimedia material (CD-ROMs, DVD);	Specimen Number	7	6	-	12	4	3	8	14	16	15	1	-		-	9	18	113
	Press run	3090	235000	7100		4000		37000				1000		5000	4428	77090		373708
Gadgets and promotional material;	Specimen Number	4	14	-	-	2	3	3		2	1	4	-		3	16	13	65
	Press run	1101	50000	-	-	700	2500					0		3600		2300		60201
Exchanges of experience with other projects;	Number of media	-	2	-	-		0	7	-	2	2	1	-	5	-	1	3	23
Networks and partnerships with other institutions;	Number of copies	12	4	-	-		0	3	-	6	11	1	-	1	-	30	3	71
Publications related to the project and the results achieved;	Specimen Number	2	3	-	-	1	3	3	16	4		4	-	5	-	4	13	58
	Press run		14400	1500		2000										1		147501

Communication Indicators	Units of Measurement	Operations of Priority Axis II																
		Information as disclosed in the Final Request for Reimbursement																
		Moriso	Panacea	Remasi	Simbiotic	Resi	Respira	Calypso	Vamos Seguro	Water Front	Vienergy	Port Pvev	Pim Energetica	Biodivalue	Crim-Safri	Simit	Imagenx	Total 2015*
Implementation project website (additional)	Number	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	-	1	1	1	1	15

*The data processing was finished in 2016

The data collection suggests that, within Priority Axis II, 146 events were carried out with 3,306 participants. During the organization of the various events and seminars 3,714 contacts were gathered and added to the mailing list. The produced material is of relevance for the purposes of the dissemination of information on the activities of the projects concerned. There are in fact 113 typologies of paper and multimedia material such as brochures, flyers, business cards, CD-ROMs and DVDs. The information channels also include the local and national media for a total of 650 broadcasters and newspapers. Various items were also produced for promotional purposes (n. 60.201) and distributed during events of public interest for a total of 65 different items. In addition, in order to promote and enhance collaboration and cooperation, 23 exchanges of experiences were activated with other projects, networks and partnerships, with other 71 institutions.

3.2.2 Significant problems encountered and measures to solve them

During the programme's implementation period there were no difficulties in the implementation of Priority Axis II of the OP.

3.2.3 Result indicators of Priority Axis II

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

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

Result Indicators Axis II	Units of Measurement	Objective	Base Line	Total 2013	Total 2014	Total 2015*
The cross-border area affected by projects intended for the preservation and environmental monitoring	% of the cross-border region	+ of 15%	-	6.45%	6,45%	+56,24%
	% of the protected cross-border regions	+ of 10%	-	15.30%	15,30%	+15,36%
EMAS Certification attained by public local bodies	ΔN.	8	0	0	0	3
Common actions for the institutional coordination against environmental and technological risks	Number	2	0	2	2	4
Increase in installed power from renewable sources	ΔKw	+500	n.d.	5	5	270.668
Public entities involved in the exchange of experience	ΔN.	+15	-	18	18	23

*The data processing was finished in 2016

The **first indicator** shows that the surface of the cross-border area affected by projects for the conservation and environmental monitoring is 11.366.181.430 sq meters, that is, 56.24 % of the cooperation area within the Programme. In this case, the projects that have provided for measures to promote the preservation of the environment in the cross-border region are 8 in total: Moriso, Simbiotic, Respira, Calypso, Water Front,

Biodivalue, Simit and ViEnergy. By focusing on protected areas, the projects that have promoted actions for the protection and management of the environment for an area of 1,299,153,700 sq meters, accounting for 15.36% of the total area of protected areas present in the cross-border area, including the NUTS III areas adjacent 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.

With regards to the **second indicator**, 3 EMAS certifications were achieved by Public Bodies involved in the context of the interventions made by the Crim Safri Project. 3 additional certifications were achieved by some companies interested in the project. Only for this indicator, the estimated target value at the Programme level was not reached. However, the surpassing of the estimated target value for other indicators confirms the full achievement of the expected results at the Axis level.

In relation to the **third indicator**, there are four projects that achieved common actions for institutional coordination against environmental hazards and technology, namely: Calypso, Vamos Seguro, Biodivalue and Simit. The Calypso project has enabled the networking of a wide network of Sicilian and Maltese authorities (different from that already provided by the partnership) that developed an advanced technological instrumentation for the control and monitoring of the sea against deliberate actions and accidental oil spills. As for the Vamos Seguro 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 the identification of the areas between Sicily and Malta affected by harmful concentrations of ash and volcanic gas. Biodivalue Project allowed the monitoring status of the marine environment, currently the stage of major maritime traffic, through the development of appropriate technological support useful for the estimation of cause/effect relationship between maritime traffic and the state of the coastal marine environment. The Simit Project led to the development of a portal for the immediate exchange of information - an integrated virtual trading room - between Malta and Sicily and an integrated civil protection plan through which Sicilian and Maltese authorities can now jointly intervene in case of an emergency, through standard operating procedures between the two countries.

The **fourth indicator** shows an increase in installed capacity from renewable sources by 270,668 kW. The projects that have increased the installed power from renewable sources are 4: Resi, PortPvev, Crim Safri and ViEnergy. The Resi Project has taken action to improve energy efficiency and use of renewable energy sources through the identification and implementation of an action plan for the deployment of renewable and solar energy in the Sicilian and Maltese territories, encouraging the transfer of technology and best practices. The Port Pvev Project prepared "green" local development plans through the application of measures to reduce CO2 emissions in port areas included in the project. The Crim Safri Project produced research activities that led to the installation - at the headquarters of a Malta-based company - of one 15KW to 5 Hertz and 18 kW to 60 Hz biomass heating system. Through the installation of two solar cooling plants, the ViEnergy Project improved the energy performance of a cellar allowing cost savings and greater respect for the environment.

The processing of data relating to the **fifth indicator** shows that 23 government agencies were involved in the experience exchange with other projects. In particular, some exchanges were made with other territorial cooperation projects, many of which are funded under the same Italy-Malta Programme, while others took place at international conferences such as the "Greening the Islands in 2015" event, for the purpose of promoting investments focusing on green economy and dissemination of technological innovation.

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

3.3.1 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	1,916,423	1,916,423	1,916,423	100%	100%

Table 10.c Priority Axis III Objectives

Axis 3										
Implementation indicators	Unit of measure	Objective	Progress							
			2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015*
Personnel for the Joint Technical Secretariat	Number	4	0	2	2	4	4	4	4	4
Events related to communication and territorial animation	Number	30	0	0	4	29	45	59	64	89
Guidelines to facilitate the implementation of the OP	Number	5	0	0	9	31	59	80	109	121

*The data processing was finished in 2016

The above table (9.c) shows the financial progress of Priority Axis III and highlights the total committed resources, arising from acts currently in force in relation to the payments for certified expenses as of 31/12/2016. The data above shows how that the authority of the programme (MA and MNCA) benefiting from the resources of Priority Axis III have been able to bind and certify 100% of the resources allocated to Priority Axis III of the TA.

With reference to **criterion 1** *Personnel of the Joint Technical Secretariat*, it is being observed that during the programme's implementation period, the JTS was composed of three Sicilian counterparts, which together with the Maltese National contact point (extension of the JTS in Maltese territory) add up to a total number of 4 units of personnel.

With reference to **criterion 2** *Events related to communication and territorial animation*, as described in Chapter 6 *Information and Communication*, it is being observed that, in 2013, the MA/JTS and the MNCA carried out the following events closely related to communication and territorial co-ordination: 19 events, including the info-day and the animation activities, regarded the participation in the EC Day in Sicily and Malta.

With reference to **criterion 3**, "Guidelines to facilitate the implementation of the OP", as further described in Chapter 6 "Communication and Information", it is noted that during the implementation of the MA/JTS programme, steps were taken to update the OP manuals (reporting manual, Ulysses system user manual, check lists, etc.), according to the evolution of national and regional legislation, as well as the specific

requirements to improve both the management processes and those in charge of cost control. In addition, given the difficulty in implementation by the strategic projects, we created ad hoc forms needed to identify the project expenditures, as well as to take corrective actions and to re-modulate projects. Therefore, the total number of 121 “*Guidelines to facilitate the implementation of the OP*” for the whole planning cycle of the programme shows that the programme authorities paid particular attention to the difficult implementation of strategic projects.

Given the reorganization procedures of the regional departments, which coincided with the need to rationalize expenditure in Sicily, in the course of 2015 and 2016 actions were taken to ensure the adaptation of management flows, as described in the document “description of management and control systems”, pursuant to Article 71 of Regulation 1828/2006, among all those tasked with the OP management A preliminary analysis, which also takes into account the stability of data collected, shows a well-coordinated and integrated system that avoids any overlapping of activities and promotes the effectiveness of processes.

3.3.2 Significant problems encountered and measures for solving them

No difficulties related to implementation with regard to Priority Axis III of the OP were encountered during the implementation period.

3.3.3 Result indicators of Priority Axis III

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

Tab. 11.c - Result Indicators at programme level –Priority Axis III

Result Indicators Axis III	Units of Measurement	Objective	Base Line	Total 2015*
Population of the eligible area reached by the information campaigns	% of the population	20%	0	20%

*The data processing was finished in 2016

Data refer to the monthly average of visited online newspapers on which were distributed materials for the Programme promotional campaign. These include Blogsicilia.it, with a monthly average page views of 2,330,000; Livesicilia.it, with 10,000,000; Agrigentonotizie.it, with 857,000; Agrigentoflash.it, with 190,000; Siracusanews.it, with 500,000; Siracusaoggi.it, with 458,000; Ilfattonisseno.it, with 600,000; and, Timesofmalta.it, with 628,000.

In addition, the number of views of the 5 video-documentaries relating to the subject areas covered by the Programme also contributes to the achievement of the target value. Such areas include Research and Innovation: (342 views), Cultural Heritage and Tourism (357 views) Protection of the environment (254 views) Efficient use of resources (424 views) and Risk prevention (426 views).

4. MAJOR PROJECTS

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

5. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The expenditure verified under Technical Assistance included expenses incurred by the Managing Authority, and the MNCA as follows:

MNCA:

Up to 2011, the National Contact Point (NCP) in Malta for the Italy-Malta Programme 2007-2013 fell under the Planning and Priorities Coordination Division within the Office of the Prime Minister. In July 2011, the Funds and Programmes Division, then also within the remit of the Office of the Prime Minister, was set up to handle the management of several EU Programmes and other Funds, including the Territorial Cooperation Programmes of which the Italy-Malta Programme 2007-2013 formed part. In 2013, a new Ministry was set up – the Ministry for European Affairs and Implementation of the Electoral Manifesto - taking the Funds and Programmes Division under its remit.

Despite these changes within the 2007-2013 programming period, the set up of the Malta NCP for the Italy-Malta Programme remained unchanged, namely one Projects Manager responsible for the implementation and management of the Programme in Malta together with a national contact point. In addition, the Senior Manager responsible for the Territorial Cooperation Programmes' Unit, the Director for the Programmes and Projects Directorate, and the Director General responsible for the whole division (the Funds and Programmes Division) were all involved actively in the implementation and coordination of the Italy-Malta Programme in Malta.

In addition, in view of the First Level Control system adopted by Malta under the 2007-2013 programming period, which entailed a centralized system, a First Level Control Unit was set up, comprising of 3 members of staff, to verify all the expenditure incurred under such Programmes.

Apart from expenditure in connection with the above-mentioned staff costs, other expenses under TA included Malta's participation in the Monitoring Committees and other meetings in connection with the Programme, the organisation of information sessions and the promotion of the Programme (e.g. EC Day as outlined in other sections of this report) and the translation of documents from Italian into English.

The Italy-Malta 2007-2013 Cross-Border Cooperation has made use of the constant support of the Joint Technical Secretariat, established in 2009 by the Management Authority, in consultation with Member States, pursuant to Article 14 (1) of Regulation 1080/2006.

The Joint Technical Secretariat consists of three components that assist the Managing Authority and the Monitoring Committee Authority in carrying out their respective duties, as well as the Certifying if was necessary.

The tasks of the JTS are carried out through the allocation of areas of responsibility to each of the components involved in the following business areas:

- management and support to the OP implementation;
- monitoring and verification of the status of physical and financial implementation of the programme
- communication and support to the OP implementation;

- supporting the negotiation process, drafting and launch of the INTERREG V-A Italy-Malta 2014-2020.

As it pertains to the sphere of management, the **management and support for the OP implementation** has involved the JTS human resources primarily involved in implementation, monitoring and activity reporting processes concerning Axes I, II and III of the programme. With reference to Axes I and II, the activities were addressed to direct assistance actions to lead beneficiaries, as well as partner beneficiaries in relation to technical and administrative implementation modalities of funded interventions. Work methods were implemented through constant close interaction between the JTS, in collaboration with the MNCA, and the operations' "project manager", "financial officer" and "communications manager", who took care of the issues related to the advancement of the project, as well as any changes to work and/or financial plans.

Moreover, the JTS was responsible for the verification and review of progress reports submitted by partners and the lead partners, as well as change requests concerning both project financial plans and Application forms. In addition, it: validated the requirements of "grant agreements" with respect to the MA; provided support in resolving issues concerning the proper management of funded projects; validated the achievement of operation result indicators; prepared reports relating to the progress of financial operations (commitments and payments); and, provided support to the creation the reports, the preparation of reimbursement requests and the monitoring of spending for the adjacent NUTS III areas (Article 21 of Regulation (EC) 1080/2006). The support of JTS and MNCA was also expressed in the creation of appropriate support tools for beneficiaries of ordinary and strategic projects. These tools provided the assistance necessary to meet obligations under the programme (by way of example, we find it appropriate to cite: internal regulation form issued by the Executive Committee, reporting annex, reimbursement annex, procedural and financial monitoring annex, meeting minutes form, hourly cost calculation prospectus, etc.). Monitoring and reporting activities were addressed to direct assistance actions for lead beneficiaries, as well as partner beneficiaries in relation to expense monitoring operations through the IT systems used by the MA. Remodulation activities relating to projects came to fruition in the development of specific forms for use by beneficiaries, in the support activity for the proper filling out of such forms, in the review of about 70 remodulation of ordinary and strategic projects, and their subsequent notification to lead partners. Work methods included direct assistance of the JTS to lead partners and/or partners, to ensure a proper use of the system and data entry procedures. The support activity is carried out through the organization of meetings with beneficiaries through operational meetings followed by the subsequent drafting of the minutes pertaining to decisions taken.

With reference to the **monitoring and validation of the state of physical and financial implementation of the programme**, the Joint Technical Secretariat, in 2013, 2014 and 2015, promptly evaluated physical progress, as well as the state of implementation of completion and final indicators achieved by each project.

The methodology used for physical monitoring has included the analysis of the contents of Annex A - Technical-administrative reports of the projects' interim reimbursement requests through an analysis of descriptive contents and validation of completion indicators in line with the approved application form.

Concerning financial monitoring, in addition to the consolidation process of data submitted by lead partners, during 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015, we carried out periodic and timely reviews of critical issues and delays related to the advancement the project activities which may have prejudiced compliance with costs provided for in the grant contracts, in addition to their correct completion. In this regard, during the programme implementation, we identified corrective actions that ensured the proper physical and financial implementation of the financed projects. More specifically, the JTS - upon ascertaining a delay in the achievement of the cost objectives and the result of some operations - implemented a new direct work method, in addition to accelerating the conclusion of operations in order to control costs related to each project, and which would not

have been used for any reason if ascertained during the second half of 2015. Therefore, in agreement with each lead partner and other partners, we conducted meetings to verify both legally binding expenditures already assumed by each beneficiary and, at the same time, to “eliminate” some activities for which financing had not been secured, in light of the results expected for each project. This modus operandi allowed the MA, through the sharing with partners of minutes relating to the acceptance of cost de-obligation decisions, to make revisions, by way of dedicated de-obligation actions, to the financial resources assigned for the implementation of the strategic projects. Savings resulting from the elimination of activities that could not be realized by strategic projects eventually enabled the MA to finance additional and coherent activities that secured 100% of expenditure obligations of Axes I and II of the Programme.

Communication activities engaged the JTS in direct assistance to the lead beneficiaries and partner beneficiaries relating to the advancement of communication activities and related planned outputs, as well as to the MA, as it pertains to the technical aspects of the implementation of the programme's communication plan. The work method included the constant interaction between the JTS and leaders and/or partners, who provided information on issues related to the advancement of the communication plan. In detail, the JTS has taken care of the communication activities relating to Axes I, II and III, thus ensuring institutional communication and the implementation of the programme's communication plan through the preparation of news, newsletters and press in the media, as well as the implementation of specific website contents and the preparation of brochures and publications about the programme. Furthermore, the JTS has carried out connection activities between the Info point of the programme established in Malta to other Info points of other Territorial Cooperation programmes, and pledged its support to the programming, monitoring and implementation activities relating to the communication plans of projects financed in the context of the first call for proposals for ordinary projects.

With particular reference to the implementation of the communication plan, JTS and MNCA provided substantial support during the entire 2007-2013 programming period, through 200 meetings with lead partners and partners of ordinary and strategic projects in which 1,600 subjects participated in a variety of project activities. These meetings were aimed at supporting the implementation of projects and beneficiaries in their remodulation activities, as well as provide guidance on the acceleration of expenses and the implementation of corrective actions, on issues of eligibility of expenditures, of the financial accounting, monitoring and reimbursement of expenses, and of the procedures for filling out the documentation necessary to complete the accounting and reimbursement annexes, in accordance with the instructions provided in the financial accounting manual.

In the context of the operational programme management, MA and MNCA were responsible for the activities related to the conduct of at least one annual meeting of the Monitoring Committee. In turn, the JTS was in charge of preparing the preliminary documentation for the meetings and summoned participants to attend. In the context of the Monitoring Committee meetings, the Joint Technical Secretariat supported the president and authorities in carrying out their duties, as outlined in section 6.1.3 of the Italy-Malta OP. On the whole, the JTS carried out the following tasks: preparation of the relevant documentation useful to the organization, and conduct of meetings; organization and conduct of meetings of the Monitoring Committee (communication, information, contacts with participants, delivery and distribution of documents, reports and summaries of decisions taken, etc ..); assistance to the President of the Monitoring Committee in his/her functions. In the context of these meetings, the JTS participated with virtually all its members who, working through a distribution of tasks, illustrated themes and documents under discussion, offered assistance to the members of the Monitoring Committee and drafted meetings' minutes. The Monitoring Board of the Italy-Malta 2007-2013 OP, instituted, within itself, a Executive Committee, in line with the provisions of the OP, for the selection and

approval of projects in accordance with Article 19 of Regulation 1080/06 Furthermore, during the period of implementation of the programme, the JTS provided the necessary support for the completion of 23 written procedures deemed necessary to ensure that projects had a set budget and to postpone project completion dates where causes related to external and unforeseeable events beyond the control of the recipients occurred.

With regard to activities related to **the negotiation, drafting and launch of the INTERREG V-A Italy-Malta 2014-2020 programme**, the programme authorities, taking into account the meagre technical assistance (TA) financial resources, agreed to carry out with the drafting of the 2014-2020 Programme as well as the ex-ante evaluation through internal resources of the offices and the JTS itself. Therefore, the Joint Technical Secretariat preliminarily agreed to carry out these activities at no extra cost to the programme, thus supporting the work of task forces during 2014, in preparation for the drafting and final approval of the Italy-Malta 2014-2020 Cooperation Programme as well as the official kickoff at the European Commission via the SFC2014 system.

After approval, in December 2013, of the legislative package for the 2014-2020 programming period, the Managing Authority, with the assistance of the JTS, submitted the document “Summary of the Intervention Strategy” to the fourth TF assembly held in February 2014. The document offered a logical scheme to draw up the strategy of the Italy-Malta 2014-2020 OP Package In particular, the document contained selected thematic objectives, possible investment priorities, reasons for their selection, any specific targets in relation to the priorities of investment and a non-exhaustive number of indicators of results corresponding to specific objectives. The constant support of the JTS allowed the MA to oversee the work of eight cross-border Task Forces which, in turn, permitted the drafting and consolidation of the programme taking into account the comments of the European Commission following the completion of its consultation procedures.

It is useful here to point out that the MA, as previously done in the case of the JTS concerning the preparation and launch of the INTERREG V-A Italy-Malta 2014-2020 programme, evaluated the possibility of assigning the drafting of the “Ex-Ante Evaluation of the Italy-Malta 2014-2020 Package” to the NVVIP of the Region of Sicily - an external third party, which, however, was already networked into the headquarters of the MA for the purpose of implementation of the Sicily 2007-2013 ERDF. This has allowed the further reduction of the limited public resources assigned to Priority Axis III of the programme.

As pertains to the control sphere, the Italy-Malta 2007-2013 OP was regularly submitted to system and operation audits during the programming cycle by the Audit Authority, which made use of the controllers’ group instituted in accordance with Regulation 1080/2006.

Although the AA, during 2013 and 2014, recommended the acceleration of the procedures to set in motion the programme’s information system required to ensure compliance with all regulations concerning data exchange and storage, it is useful to point out that the AA never identified system errors and/or critical issues that may have otherwise led it to express opinions with reservations about the programme’s management and control systems. Indeed, the financial error rate estimated by the AA is around the 0.018%.

In conclusion, it is possible to state that all AT actions undertaken by the programme authorities have worked so as to ensure the proper management of expenditure and procedures, in line with the programme’s management and control systems.

6. INFORMATION AND PUBLICITY

6.1 Implementation of the communication plan

In line with the communication plan of the Cross Border Cooperation Programme Italy-Malta 2007-2013, the activities held in this programming period were carried out in line with the following four lines of action of the communication plan. More specifically:

- Line action 1: Information and publicity actions;
- Line action 2: Support actions;
- Line action 3: Transparency actions and the role of the European Union;
- Line action 4: Actions for communication with other programmes.

Information and advertisement activities carried out in 2007-2013 mainly contributed to increasing the programme's awareness, informing stakeholders on the opportunities offered by the programme and disseminating its results.

These actions were carried out through the use of four main communication tools: events and seminars; web services; media; publications and information materials.

Events and seminars

Through 19 organized events and seminars, the programme authorities involved a total of 2,247 potential beneficiaries, beneficiaries and the general public, to whom were illustrated opportunities offered by the programme and shown the results achieved.

Concerning the initiatives for the programme's beneficiaries, we certainly include events realized in 2010-2011 to coincide with the launch of two calls for tenders relating to the 2007-2013 programming cycle, for the selection of ordinary and strategic project, respectively.

In particular, the two events held in Catania and Valletta, in 2010, focused on the presentation of the Programme by the MA and the experience of the cooperation between the two countries by the MNCA. Also in Catania and Valletta, for the purpose of dissemination and awareness, two in-depth workshops were organized on the modalities of participation in the first call for tenders for the selection of ordinary projects "aimed at potential beneficiaries" of the Programme, and which saw the participation of 321 individuals in Italy and 118 in Malta.

In 2011, the programme Authorities gave great relevance to the opportunities offered by the operational programme through the implementation of specific events, in Sicily and Malta, which guaranteed both the publication of opportunities offered by the OP and timely information on the terms of access to the programme's resources. Furthermore an event for the launch of the first call for tenders for strategic projects published in the Official Gazette of the Sicilian Region on 1 July 2011, and on mainstream media and official web sites in Sicily and Malta. This publication was followed by the organization of two info-days and a launch event in Sicily and Malta:

- 22 July 2011, in Sicily and;
- the hosting of the MC of the programme in Malta together with an information session held on the 12 July 2011.

The events received wide media coverage, including through the involvement of the Press Office of the President of the Region of Sicily, coupled with press releases in Malta, which ensured a wide dissemination of news related to the event in the main regional and local media news agencies.

The launch event relating to the call for tenders for strategic projects was widely advertised also through targeted advertising actions on institutional websites in Italy and Malta, and, in particular, on the OP official website, www.italiamalta.eu, the Sicily ERDF OP, www.euroinfosicilia.it, and on the website of the MNCA; the Planning and Priorities Coordination Department - www.ppcd.gov.mt. Finally, it was guaranteed in Italy the publication of a press release dedicated to the event on two national newspapers and three newspapers with regional circulation (La Stampa on 21/07/2011, Il Sole 24 Ore, on 27/07/2011, La Repubblica - Palermo edition, on 21/07/2011, Il Giornale di Sicilia, on 21/07/2011 and La Sicilia, on 21/07/2011).



As outlined above, a similar event dedicated to the call for tenders for strategic projects took place in Malta through the organisation of an info-session devoted to deeper discussions of priority themes, eligibility requirements, procedures and schedule for the submission of project proposals. 80 potential beneficiaries from Malta and Italy participated in this event.



In the context of events open to the general public, during 2012-2015, the MA and the Maltese National Coordination Authority participated in the yearly European Cooperation Days, an initiative promoted by the European Commission and organized by the INTERACT Programme.

The aim of the Day was to improve the visibility of European Territorial Cooperation, disseminate its main results and show the benefits of cooperation for the population of target areas. The joint initiative was carried out through the implementation of activities in Malta and Sicily, involving programme management bodies and projects financed under the Italy-Malta 2007-2013 OP in order to disseminate the results achieved by funded projects.

As regards the activities carried out in Sicily, we point out the events carried out in 2012 and 2013.

In particular, in 2012, the Italy-Malta 2007-2013 OP participated in the 15th edition of the International Festival of Cultural Integration “Cous Cous Fest”, held in San Vito Lo Capo (TP) from 25 to 30 September 2012. The recipient of the initiative was the general public, largely comprising visitors from EU countries who travelled to Sicily during the Cous Cous Fest.

The average attendance was of about 200,000 visitors coming from all Mediterranean countries, 80 journalists from all over Europe and 10 national and satellite television crews. The initiative took place through the creation of a 24 square meter exhibition area of dedicated to the Italy-Malta 2007-2013 OP within the expo village of the event. All projects were invited to present the information and communication material produced (brochures, leaflets, gadgets, information totems, videos and photos containing results of the respective projects etc.) and by participating in this initiative by means of a project representative who could illustrate the main results attained to the general public.

Within this event, a number of specific initiatives were targeted at the general public in order to give visibility to the programme and some projects turned out to be particularly interesting with respect to the results attained throughout 2012 and the objectives of the event.

One must note the creation of the *Mediterranean Food Lab for Cooperation*, a food tasting session with excellent Sicilian and Maltese agricultural food products explained by an Italian and a Maltese chef. These illustrated the various food preparation techniques and the respective cuisines to the general public present at this event. Furthermore, an event called *Tasting Cooperation: Cheese and Wines* was organized – a wine and food tasting session consisting of various wines paired to Sicilian and Maltese cheeses, carried out within the context of the T-CHEESIMAL and PROMED projects.

During the event, the MA has participated in initiatives that have received wide media coverage from the regional and national media. These include, amongst others, the Cous Cous live show "Café Le Cous Cous", a talk show of the same event which has allocated space for the presentation of the Italy-Malta 2007-2013 OP, and participation in the Decanter programme, which is broadcasted daily on the national radio broadcaster Rai Radio 2.



During the event, communication activities have accompanied the unfolding of events of ETC Day 2012 at the International Festival of Cultural Integration *Cous Cous Fest*. In particular, one must note the participation in the opening press conference of this event, the dissemination of press releases, the integrated communication activities concerning all references to the Italy-Malta 2007-2013 OP which aimed at giving maximum visibility to the programme and all funded projects (eg. editorial pages, leaflets etc.), the creation of a section dedicated

to the Italy-Malta 2007-2013 OP on the official website - www.couscousfest.it - with insertion of the OP logo and a link to official site - www.italiamalta.eu.

Furthermore, a video advert - ETC Day – Italy-Malta OP was shown daily on a led wall of 20 square meters placed on the performance stages of the *Cous Cous Fest* event. The advert was screened daily for the entire duration of the event in the moments leading up to the shows, so as to ensure maximum visibility and audience.

The ETC Day found ample space within the press campaign with a specific section in the event's official magazine, written in two languages and printed in 15,000 copies with a double page dedicated to the European Cooperation Day and one double editorial page dedicated to the Italy-Malta OP.



Thanks to the support of a press office, the initiatives promoted by the ETC Day have been included in 5 official event press releases, disseminated at a regional, national and international level. The press release was also included in the official press pack of the Cous Cous Fest that has been delivered to more than 100 accredited journalists, members of the event's jury and guests. The press releases have been widely disseminated with respect to the regional and national press as these were published by 45 different newspapers and online news websites with a media coverage spread from the 22nd of September until the 12th of October 2012.

Furthermore, an entire page dedicated to the event was published by the main Sicilian regional newspaper, // *Giornale di Sicilia*, by means of an article dedicated to the ETC Day 2012 event and to the Italy Malta 2007-2013 OP.



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

In collaboration with the MNCA, a four sided folding leaflet in both Italian and English language, containing the presentation of the EC Day and the calendar of upcoming events, as well as information and insights on the OP and funded projects was produced. 5000 copies of this leaflet were printed and distributed to the public and tourists attending the event both within the institutional exhibition space and during the side events of the programme.



The 'EC Day 2013 edition, which saw the "Cooperation bike tour" cycle-tourism event, which was held in the territory of Ragusa along two routes developed by the SIBIT - MED in Bike project, was also followed very closely.

The initiative, organized to promote the issues of environmental sustainability, sustainable tourism and natural heritage, cultural and gastronomic enhancement, recorded the participation of around 100 cyclists.

Along the "Ciclovia Barocco" the participants, accompanied by the Presidente Coordinamento Associazioni FIAB Regione Sicilia and the SIBIT project manager, crossed the old 115 state road, with a stop in Modica. Along the "Ciclovia Carrubi", achieved through the SIBIT-MED in Bike project, the participants visited the catacombs and the hypogeum of Cisternazzi and Trabacche, subject to restoration following the ARCHAEOTUR project, and the Donnafugata Castle, accompanied by an archaeologist of the Soprintendenza ai Beni Culturali of Ragusa, a project partner.

Principali punti di interesse
MAIN POINTS OF INTEREST

Caratteristiche tecniche dei percorsi
TECHNICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE ROUTES

Caratteristica	Carrubi	Barocco
Classe	1	1
Difficoltà	1	1
Tempo	1h 30'	1h 30'
Quilometri	30	30
Altezza	100	100
Dislivello	100	100
Asfalto	100%	100%
Costo	100%	100%
Tempo	1h 30'	1h 30'
Quilometri	30	30
Altezza	100	100
Dislivello	100	100
Asfalto	100%	100%
Costo	100%	100%

www.medinbike.com

Gli itinerari di Ragusa
RAGUSA ITINERARIES

Ciclovia/Route CARRUBI
This itinerary is a part of the large Barocco Ragusa route... It offers a mix of landscapes, from the sea to the mountains...

Ciclovia/Route NEROPETO
This itinerary is a part of the large Barocco Ragusa route... It offers a mix of landscapes, from the sea to the mountains...

Ciclovia/Route BAROCCO
This itinerary is a part of the large Barocco Ragusa route... It offers a mix of landscapes, from the sea to the mountains...

Ciclovia/Route CASTELLUCCIO
This itinerary is a part of the large Barocco Ragusa route... It offers a mix of landscapes, from the sea to the mountains...



At the end of both paths, participants were accompanied in Ragusa Ibla where they were welcomed by the Mayor of Ragusa and the Commissioner of the Regional Province of Ragusa at Palazzo La Rocca, headquarters of the International Centre on Stereotomy, which was realized by 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 on all the projects funded by the Italy-Malta 2007-2013 Cooperation Programme were distributed.

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



Throughout the communication activities, maximum visibility for the Italy-Malta 2007-2013 OP was ensured through the creation of information material dedicated to the programme together with the inclusion 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 Italy Malta 2007-2013 OP. A photographic reportage was also made and a 10 minute video of the event provided in "Windows Media Player" format and DVD provided in "Windows Media Player", "Nero StartSmart", "PowerDVD", Quicktime Player or VLC formats.

The event was given wide exposure through the social networks, mainly Twitter and Facebook. In addition, the APP developed by the INTERACT programme made it was possible to disseminate and "propagate" 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, as a result of the dissemination of two press releases by the MA/JTS staff.

The themes of the day have had extensive media coverage also at a national level thanks also to live interviews conducted by Federico Taddia in *L'Altra Europa* on Radio 24, a national radio station. This nationwide radio service belongs to *Il Sole 24 ORE*, Italy's main economic newspaper, a point of reference 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 Italy-Malta 2007-2013 OP programmes 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.

The MNCA also participated in various editions of the EC Day. For instance, in 2013, the MNCA coordinated various initiatives held in September 2013 which were aimed at promoting the results of the projects financed under the programme. Such events included site visits under several projects including T-CHEESIMAL, PANACEA, PROMED and ARCHAEOEUR. For instance under Promed, 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, which was restored through the project. In addition to the above mentioned site-visits, during September 2013, a documentary resulting from PANACEA was showcased in a video theatre to school children in order to raise awareness on Marine protected areas.



Also commemorating EC day 2013, the plantation of trees and endemic plants took place under the initiative of the SIMBIOTIC project:



Similarly, the project IMAGENX held various seminars and ensured public exposure through the Science in the City event which took place in Valletta. All the events organised in Malta in order to celebrate EC day 2013 were promoted by means of press releases on the local media.

Such activities enhanced the regular promotion, which was carried out by the projects during the year. For instance, the subjoined photo highlights the presentation of some of the deliverables of the PANACEA project to the EC Commissioner, Maria Damanaki, in May 2013 on the occasion of the European Maritime Day.



Photo : DOI - Clifton Fenech

The MNCA also coordinated and participated in the 2014 EC Day as follows: on 4th October 2014, the MNCA publicly promoted the Italy-Malta Programme during the 'Notte Bianca' event, which is an annual arts and culture festival that lights up the capital city of Valletta. Hundreds visited the display stand dedicated to the Italy-Malta Programme within the historic Auberge d'Aragon, which houses the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and the Ministry for European Affairs and Implementation of the Electoral Manifesto.



Furthermore during September 2014 the following events were held by the projects:

Project	Partner	Event
BIODIVALUE	UoM GAL XLOKK	The Biodivalue partnership met in Malta in order to present the project's aims and achievements to the Maltese maritime sector stakeholders. In this regard, a half day conference entitled "Towards sustainable maritime traffic within the Malta-Sicily Channel" showed the project's findings, placing them in the wider context of the maritime sector. Interventions by sectoral experts and authorities other than those involved in the project were also made. In the afternoon, a guided tour of the Grand Harbour was organised, to show some sites and share information on the research and the work carried out in Malta. This event was organised by the International Ocean Institute – Malta Operational Centre (IOI-MOC) and the Department of Mechanical Engineering at the University of Malta, in collaboration with Gal Xlokk – an NGO from the south of Malta which is also a Maltese partner in the BIODIVALUE project. The seminar was held on the 22 nd of September 2014.
VIENERGY	MSDEC	An open day pertaining to the VieEnergy project was organised with the aim of increasing awareness on reducing dependence on traditional energy sources and at developing new technologies for the production of energy from renewable sources in the wine sector. Also, a power-point presentation was featured at regular intervals and several Committee members were present to show the public around and explain the ViEnergy project. The event took place on the 21 st of September 2014 at the Buskett Winery Research Centre, Rabat.

The following photos were taken during the above-mentioned events:



For EC day 2015, the MNCA ensured that awareness on all Territorial Cooperation Programmes, including the Italia-Malta Programme, was increased through the publishing and dissemination of a brochure which was distributed to several key stakeholders:

<p>Title of project: T-Chestnut Beneficiary: University of Malta Budget: €341,067 Website: http://www.um.edu.mt/projects/tchestnut/</p>	<p>MED Programme 2007-2013 focused mainly on the following priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Networking and collaboration between Mediterranean rural regions facing similar problems. Comparative analysis of insular agriculture realities Sharing of experiences with respect to non-technological innovation Promotion of successful local agricultural enterprises Identification of areas requiring capacity building, training of economic actors, links with university and research, dissemination of quality management approach and networking <p>The programme is co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and has a budget of €5.08 M for Malta during the 2007-2013 period.</p>	<p>Title of project: Regions for Sustainable Change (RSC) Maltese Beneficiary: MER - Budget: €121,267.72 Website: http://www.merpa.org.mt/interreg_rsc/</p>	<p>The multilateral cross-border cooperation "Mediterranean Sea Basin Programme" is part of the new European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) and of its financing instrument (European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument - ENPI) for the 2007-2013 period. It aims at reinforcing cooperation between the European Union (EU) and partner countries regions placed along the shores of the Mediterranean Sea. The Operational Programme, establishes a strategic framework of 4 Priorities jointly defined by the participating countries:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) promotion of socio-economic development and enhancement of territories 2) promotion of environmental sustainability at basin level 3) promotion of better conditions and modalities for ensuring the mobility of persons, goods and capital 4) promotion of cultural dialogue and local governance. <p>The ENPI CBC "Mediterranean Sea Basin" Programme had a budget of €173 million, coming from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the Heading 4 - "EU as global partner" - of the EU budget. Projects can be funded up to a maximum of 90%, while partners have to provide a minimum of 10% co-financing. Malta benefited by more than €2 million from this programme, having 12 Maltese partners participating in 6 projects.</p>
<p>Italy-Malta Programme</p> <p>The Italy-Malta Programme is a cross-border Instrument implemented between Sicily and Malta. The programme aims towards reinforcing actions in the following priority axis:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Competitiveness: Research and innovation particularly in the sector of sustainable development. 2. Safeguarding the environment, promoting renewable energy and promoting joint actions in preventing risk both from natural and man made risks. <p>The programme is co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and has a total budget of €31,940,390 of which €10,321,483 for the 2007-2013 period.</p> <p>More concretely the Italy-Malta programme funded 25 projects with 52 Maltese beneficiaries.</p>	<p>MED Programme</p> <p>Title of project: Agrilus Partner: Ministry for Gozo - Budget: € 51,562.50 Website: http://www.agrilus.eu/en/partners/mis.html</p>	<p>Interreg IVC Programme</p> <p>The INTERREG IVC supports two thematic priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Priority 1: Innovation and the knowledge economy Priority 2: Environment and the risk prevention <p>Through these two priorities, the programme focused towards the contribution of economic modernisation and competitiveness across Europe.</p> <p>The overall objective of the INTERREG IVC Programme was to improve the effectiveness of regional policies and instruments. In general all projects throughout implementation have built on the exchange of experiences among partners who were ideally responsible for the development of their local and regional policies.</p> <p>The programme had a total ERDF budget of €321 million for the 2007-2013 period. In 2012, after 4 project calls, the INTERREG IVC programme committed all of the funding available under these two priorities and supported a total of 204 projects of which 23 include Maltese project partners. Malta's ERDF budgetary allocation for these 23 projects was of €2.4 M. Various Maltese entities were involved in these projects including Ministries, government entities, authorities, local councils and also bodies governed by public law. All projects closed by end of 2014.</p>	<p>ENPI CBCMED Programme</p> <p>Title of project: Sustainable domestic water use in Mediterranean Regions (SWMED) Maltese Beneficiary: Ministry for Gozo, Malta Resources Authority Budget: €137,948.08 (MRA) and €121,792.69 (MGCO) Website: http://www.swmmed.eu/</p>

Malta's participation in the Italy-Malta Programme 2007-2013 was also celebrated during EC Day 2016 by means of the planting 24 indigenous trees representing all 24 projects that were partly-implemented by Maltese partners.



WEB services

As part of the information and publicity actions, the services offered by the www.italiamalta.eu portal have ensured the widest possible dissemination of information concerning the programme. During the programming period a total of 108,645 users/visitors accessed an overall number of 533 news and downloadable documents, other two sections were created within the site to which a total of 440 beneficiaries had access to information pertaining their project. To date, the website of the programme is symbol of the historical cooperation between Sicily and Malta since one can also find information regarding both the 2004-2006 programming period and the the 2007-2013 programming period. In 2015-2016 the section pertaining to the INTERREG V-A Italy Malta was created with the relevant sections and information pertaining to the 2014-2020 programming cycle.

Media

Regional and local media gave great visibility to the Italy-Malta 2007-2013OP where in 497 circumstances these have given visibility to 53 videos, commercials and documentaries made by the programme and by the funded projects. In all, a total number of 857 articles, announcements and productions on the programme and projects were carried out with the purpose of informing the general public about the results achieved and benefits of interventions financed in the territories.

Publications and information materials

With reference to the activities concerning information and publicity on the OP results and benefits of the cooperation on the territories of the area concerned, during the 2007-2013 programming period there has been an extensive dissemination activities by the MA / JTS / MNCA mainly through six products: brochure of ordinary projects, brochure of the strategic projects, the programme's newsletter, final publication, documentary and promotional material about the programme.

In the case of brochures and newsletters the goal was to make products easily available to the general public, and that gave account in a concrete tangible results obtained by each of the funded projects.

The published brochure provided a summary of the themes and objectives of the programme containing also descriptions of the projects funded and the results obtained, including the impact on the territories. These were printed in A5 format, consisting of 48 full colour pages printed on glossy paper 130 gr and 200 grams hardcover in order to be handy and easy to use. For each project there are two/three pages containing information on the theme of the project, partnership, output achieved, description, public funds used, references (contact person, e-mail, website) and start/end date of the project.

The following images are part of the ordinary projects leaflet.



Below, by way of example, are some images from the brochure covering the strategic projects.





Foto: Power Paul Barbano

PORT-PVEV

Demonstrating how to make ports more energy efficient as well as demonstrating the use of electric mobility in ports and port areas

TEMA DEL PROGETTO: Miglioramento dell'efficienza energetica e riduzione delle emissioni di anidride carbonica nelle aree portuali di La Valletta, Catania e Gela attraverso l'installazione di infrastrutture fotovoltaiche e la diffusione dell'elettromobilità.
PARTNER: Transport Malta (capofila); Autorità Portuale di Catania; Ministry for Transport and Infrastructure; Provincia Regionale di Caltanissetta.



PORT-PVEV
PHOTO VOLTAGE ELECTRIC VEHICLE

SINTESI DEL PROGETTO

Il progetto PORT-PVEV ha realizzato azioni pilota dimostrative che hanno consentito alle autorità portuali di La Valletta, Catania e Gela di svolgere le proprie operazioni portuali utilizzando energia elettrica prodotta da fonti rinnovabili, riducendo così la propria dipendenza dai combustibili fossili. Successivamente alle azioni pilota, il partenariato ha realizzato a livello locale i cosiddetti *green plan*: un set di proposte/azioni per la decarbonizzazione di ulteriori aree portuali siciliane e maltesi.

PORT-PVEV non si è limitato tuttavia all'aspetto del "trasporto verde" su strada, ma ha anche studiato la fattibilità di un'infrastruttura di rete che permetta l'approvvigionamento di elettricità alle navi ormeggiate in porto, riducendo così l'utilizzo da parte di queste ultime di combustibili inquinanti. Ciò al fine di consentire non solo la diminuzione delle emissioni inquinanti, ma anche la riduzione dell'inquinamento acustico causato dai motori accesi delle navi ormeggiate presso i porti. Per il raggiungimento di tali obiettivi, il partenariato ha impiegato infrastrutture fotovoltaiche all'interno dei porti, utilizzando gli edifici pubblici per la sperimentazione sul campo di tali iniziative.

Fondi Pubblici	€ 2.500.000,00
Durata	30 settembre 2012 - 30 giugno 2015
Sito web	www.portpvev.eu
Contatti	euaffairs.tm@transport.gov.mt

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PORT-PVEV

RISULTATI DEL PROGETTO

Piani di sviluppo locale "green"
 Nei territori di Catania e Caltanissetta, l'Autorità Portuale e la Municipalità di Gela hanno messo a punto dei *piani di sviluppo locale cosiddetti "green"* ovvero una serie di misure finalizzate a ridurre le emissioni di CO₂ nelle rispettive aree portuali. Il piano relativo al territorio di Catania ha promosso l'utilizzo del sistema di *bike sharing* e la diffusione di interventi di elettromobilità nelle aree portuali.

- 1 autovettura elettrica a 5 porte
- 1 totem di ricarica veloce a due prese
- 1 stazione solare di ricarica veloce per due veicoli elettrici
- 20 biciclette elettriche destinate al *bike sharing*
- 1 stazione per il parcheggio e la ricarica di biciclette elettriche
- 3 stazioni solari di ricarica per biciclette elettriche
- 1 parcheggio solare coperto con due posti auto
- 100,26 m² di superficie totale coperta da pannelli fotovoltaici.

Il piano relativo alla provincia di Caltanissetta ha incluso la realizzazione di interventi finalizzati a favorire la mobilità dei lavoratori presso l'area portuale di Gela attraverso mezzi di trasporto a impatto zero.

- 3 furgoni elettrici per il trasporto di beni e persone
- 2 autovetture elettriche
- 5 biciclette elettriche
- 3 totem di ricarica



Gli interventi dei rispettivi piani hanno pertanto contribuito alla riduzione delle emissioni di anidride carbonica e al miglioramento della qualità dell'aria grazie soprattutto alla sostituzione dei veicoli tradizionali utilizzati nelle aree portuali con veicoli ad emissione zero. Il totale dell'area coperta da pannelli e da stazioni di ricarica è in grado di produrre oggi a Catania e Gela una quantità di energia pari a 22.180 kWh/anno.

Studio di fattibilità per il rifornimento delle navi ormeggiate sotto costa

Presso il Grand Harbour di La Valletta è stato effettuato uno studio di fattibilità da parte di Transport Malta per l'implementazione di un *sistema di approvvigionamento energetico da terra alle navi ormeggiate in porto*. Lo studio ha individuato il numero di ancoraggi e l'esatta collocazione delle navi nell'area portuale al fine di poter assicurare la sostenibilità del sistema.

- 1 totem di ricarica veloce a tre prese
- 1 totem di ricarica Z.E. a una presa
- 1 stazione di ricarica a muro a una presa Z.E. Ready
- 4 furgoni elettrici a 5 posti per trasporto persone
- 2 furgoncini per trasporto merci
- 3 autovetture elettriche a 5 porte
- 4 autovetture elettriche 2 posti

Lo studio è stato approvato dal Governo Maltese ed è stato inviato alla Commissione Europea - DG Mobilità e Trasporti in linea con la Direttiva Europea 2014/94/UE del Parlamento Europeo e del Consiglio del 22 Ottobre 2014 sulla realizzazione di un'infrastruttura per i combustibili alternativi.

Elettromobilità ed emissioni zero a Malta

Le aree portuali del Valletta Grand Harbour e del Terminal traghetti di Cirkewwa sono state attrezzate con un parco veicoli elettrici in dotazione a Transport Malta.

- 1.200 m² di superficie del tetto del Malta Transport Centre rivestita con pannelli fotovoltaici
- 3 posti auto coperti ad energia solare con totem di ricarica a due prese Z.E. Ready per lato, per un totale di 6 totem e di complessivi 12 punti di ricarica
- 216 m² di copertura totale di pannelli fotovoltaici

Inoltre, per sostenere la flotta di veicoli elettrici messi in servizio, sia Transport Malta

sia il Ministry for Transport Infrastructure si sono dotati dell'infrastruttura necessaria alla ricarica dei veicoli elettrici utilizzati nelle aree portuali. Il totale dell'area coperta da pannelli fotovoltaici e da stazioni di ricarica è in grado di produrre oggi a Malta una quantità di energia pari a 238.515 kWh/anno.

Azioni di sensibilizzazione

Il progetto ha dedicato grande attenzione alle iniziative di sensibilizzazione della popolazione locale siciliana e maltese sui temi della salvaguardia ambientale. In particolare, sono state svolte azioni di sensibilizzazione per la diffusione dell'utilizzo di modelli eco-compatibili nel settore del turismo e della corretta gestione delle risorse naturali che hanno coinvolto in maniera diretta e indiretta 494.546 soggetti, incluse le PMI. PORT-PVEV ha altresì realizzato 3 interventi di promozione per la riconversione del sistema dei trasporti in un sistema che rispetti i principi della sostenibilità ambientale, con particolare riferimento alla riduzione delle emissioni di gas serra.



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The leaflet was produced in Italian and in English; 500 copies were printed and distributed throughout Europe following a precise distribution plan targeted to: the Programme beneficiaries, the Community institutions (European Commission, Italian and Maltese Representation in Brussels, INTERACT), to the general public attending dissemination events organized by INTERACT (EC Day 2014) and also by other mainstream programmes such as the ERDF etc.

The newsletter for this programme is an editorial product, published and distributed every three months in Sicily, Malta and through the Community Institutions. The newsletter has been structured in a way to contain a description of three projects, and offered a space dedicated to each and every project containing detailed information on each project. This space provided the opportunity to share the benefits of the added value of the projects and share it with those residing in the area. The last issue of the newsletter published in 2015 was a special edition which provided an overall review of the entire 2007-2013 programming period.

Each issue was uploaded on the programme's website and has been downloaded 10,087 times. Another 1,200 copies were printed and distributed in hard copy and about 500 others were sent through the programme's mailing list.

Below are some images of the published newsletter:





The final publication of the Italy-Malta 2007-2013 OP was in a catalogue format including a DVD which contains all the projects financed during the programme's implementation period. In this regard, the catalogue has been organized by themes and projects fell within the related themes:

1. Risk prevention: Calypso, Vamos Seguro, Simit, Imagenx, Respira
2. Safeguarding the environment: SIMBIOTIC, Panacea, Remasi, Biodivalue
3. Cultural Heritage and Tourism: GARDMED, Sibit, Obimed, Archaeotur, Lithos, Waterfront
4. Innovation and Research: The Hub, Promed, T-Cheesimal
5. Efficient use of resources: Moriso, Returns, Vienergy, Crim Safri, Port Pvev, Streets

The publication had a layman's purpose rather than a didactic one and was therefore meant for the general public, both in size and in content. For this reason very light graphics, able to attract attention, with essential information and engaging pictures were used.

I BUONI FRUTTI DELLA COOPERAZIONE TRANSFRONTALIERA



Catalogo del Programma Operativo
Italia Malta 2007-2013

Il Programma Operativo Italia-Malta 2007-2013

Sicilia e Malta, due isole accomunate dallo stesso mare e da legami storico-culturali ed economico plurisecolari. Due realtà geografiche e politiche per le quali il Programma Operativo Italia-Malta 2007-2013 ha rappresentato un prezioso strumento di sviluppo reciproco e di valorizzazione delle risorse territoriali.

Il PO Italia-Malta 2007-2013 ha avuto quale obiettivo primario quello di rafforzare la cooperazione tra la Sicilia e Malta per migliorare l'attrattività e la competitività dei due territori nel pieno rispetto del principio della sostenibilità ambientale. Il programma fa parte dell'obiettivo "Cooperazione Territoriale Europea", previsto dalla politica di coesione dell'Unione Europea, e ha supportato iniziative legate all'innovazione e alla ricerca nei settori chiave dell'economia siciliana e maltese nonché alla salvaguardia dell'ambiente attraverso la prevenzione dei rischi e l'uso di forme di energia rinnovabile.

Le aree interessate dal programma sono state l'intero territorio di Malta, comprese le isole di Gozo e Comino, e la regione Sicilia - con le province di Agrigento, Caltanissetta, Ragusa, Siracusa, Trapani, Palermo e Catania, coinvolgendo una popolazione complessiva di 5.094.937 persone (di cui 5.084.837 italiani e 101.104 maltesi).

La dotazione finanziaria stanziata per l'attuazione dell'intero PO è stata di € 35.498.255. Questa ha permesso il finanziamento di 24 progetti (17 ordinari e 7 strategici) attraverso i quali il Programma ha coinvolto un numero complessivo di 131 beneficiari siciliani e maltesi tra i quali amministrazioni pubbliche centrali e locali, università, enti/strutture di ricerca, autorità portuali, enti gestori di aree protette, operatori turistici pubblici e privati, organizzazioni di PMI, consorzi e agenzie di sviluppo locale.



5 AREE TEMATICHE

- RICERCA & INNOVAZIONE
- PATRIMONIO CULTURALE & TURISMO
- SALVAGUARDIA DELL'AMBIENTE
- USO EFFICIENTE DELLE RISORSE
- PREVENZIONE DEI RISCHI

popolazione totale

SICILIA 5.094.937
(dati ISTAT 2011, ISTAT 2011)

MALTA 421.364
(dati ISTAT 2010, ISTAT 2010)



PROVINCE SICILIANE COINVOLTE

Trapani, Agrigento, Ragusa, Siracusa, Caltanissetta, Palermo e Catania

MALTA
Malta, Gozo e Comino

17 PROGETTI ORDINARI **TOTALI SPANZIATI**
13 beneficiari italiani / 33 beneficiari maltesi € 15.000.000

52,13 % risorse investite nei progetti ordinari per la competitività, innovazione e ricerca sviluppo sostenibile

47,87 % risorse investite nei progetti ordinari per ambiente, energia e prevenzione dei rischi

TOTALI SPANZIATI
€ 35.498.255
131 beneficiari italiani / 43 beneficiari maltesi

7 PROGETTI STRATEGICI **TOTALI SPANZIATI**
18 beneficiari italiani / 15 beneficiari maltesi € 17.551.537

14,22 % risorse investite nei progetti strategici per la competitività, innovazione e ricerca sviluppo sostenibile

85,78 % risorse investite nei progetti strategici per ambiente, energia e prevenzione dei rischi



PROMED

La protezione dell'ambiente nelle isole del Mediterraneo attraverso la valorizzazione di un sistema culturale arboreo

Il progetto ha lavorato sull'innovazione di prodotto e di processo applicata alla viticoltura per salvaguardare l'ambiente e il prodotto finale. I tecnici dell'Istituto Regionale del Vino e dell'Uva hanno sperimentato tre nuovi protocolli di viticoltura, di cui uno a Pantelleria successivamente recepito all'interno del disciplinare della DOC da parte Ministero delle Politiche Agricole, Alimentari e Forestali. A Malta, presso Birklett, è stata realizzata una cantina sperimentale e il personale è stato addestrato all'uso dei protocolli tecnici di coltivazione di

vitigni autoctoni e sulla trasformazione delle uve secondo le metodologie innovative sperimentate.

Grazie anche ai risultati del progetto è stato compilato un primo piano per il ritorno alla viticoltura nelle isole Pelagie tramite l'assegnazione da parte del Dipartimento Regionale dell'Agricoltura di una quota di ettari di riserbo in via prioritaria a Linosa e a Lampedusa, offrendo la possibilità agli imprenditori di avviare l'iter per l'impianto di nuovi vigneti.

Per informazioni
www.progettopromed.eu
lucre.monte@regione.sicilia.it

RICERCA E INNOVAZIONE

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OBIMED
Out of the Blue - Isles in the Mediterranean



Il progetto ha ampliato l'offerta turistica integrata tra Sicilia e Malta attraverso la creazione di nuovi percorsi tematici e la messa a punto di strumenti di promozione innovativi.

Sono state realizzate delle aree Wi-Fi free, a supporto dei turisti, nelle città di Siracusa e Castelvetrore, a Malta e a Gozo.

Il progetto ha inoltre sviluppato alcune applicazioni web 2.0 e ha coinvolto un gruppo di ragazzi, italiani e maltesi, che sono stati formati all'uso delle app per scopi turistici utilizzate per la diffusione degli itinerari turistici messi a punto dal progetto. Per gli studenti delle scuole superiori, con particolare attenzione agli istituti alberghieri e del turismo, è stata realizzata una piattaforma collegata ai social network più diffusi per l'invito a raccomandare e offrire di stage.

Per informazioni:
www.obimed.it
info@obimed.it

PATRIMONIO CULTURALE E TURISMO

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PANACEA
Promozione della flora naturale attraverso centri di educazione ambientale



Il progetto ha promosso il valore scientifico e ambientale degli ecosistemi delle Aree Marine Protette di Dwejra (Gozo), Riserva Marina di Malta, Isola Pelagie (Lampedusa e Linosa, Pianello (Siracusa), Ustica (Palermo), Capo Gallo e Isola delle Femmine (Palermo)) e ne ha migliorato la gestione.

Sono stati creati quattro Centri di educazione ambientale aperti al pubblico e dotati di attrezzature di modelli in scala reale delle specie animali e vegetali che popolano gli ecosistemi delle rispettive Aree Marine Protette; i centri svolgono anche attività di sensibilizzazione sui temi ambientali presso le scuole italiane e maltesi attraverso campagne di promozione della salvaguardia degli ecosistemi e della biodiversità.

Per informazioni:
www.panaceaaprovincia.siracusa.it
panacea@provincia.siracusa.it

Foto di Alan Decker

SALVAGUARDIA DELL'AMBIENTE

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VIENERGY
Vigna Energetica



Il progetto ha condotto alcune azioni sperimentali dimostrando che è possibile ottenere una migliore efficienza energetica lungo la filiera agricola e creare forme di reddito alternativo per i proprietari delle carine attraverso il riutilizzo scarti di lavorazione per alimentare la filiera.

Le azioni del progetto hanno sperimentato l'utilizzo delle biomasse residuali per la produzione di calore, la riutilizzazione delle acque ecologiche a fini irrigui, la distribuzione di un additivo di origine agricola per la produzione di olii da impiegarli nei motori. L'installazione di due impianti di co-generazione presso il Centro di Ricerca di Enologia e Viticoltura a Rabat (Malta) ha dimostrato che è possibile migliorare la performance energetica di una carina consentendo un risparmio economico e un maggiore rispetto per l'ambiente.

Per informazioni:
www.progettoenergetica.viciniaenergetica.sicilia.it

USO EFFICIENTE DELLE RISORSE

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SIMIT
Costruzione di un sistema integrato di protezione civile transfrontaliero italo-maltese



Il progetto si è occupato della pianificazione e della gestione delle emergenze nella zona compresa tra Faro Sud Est della Sicilia e Malta, un'area caratterizzata da una notevole erosità costiera ed interessata dalla taglia attiva italo-maltese che genera eventi anche di magnitudo elevata.

Grazie alla realizzazione di due esercitazioni congiunte di protezione civile, a Gozo e a Lampedusa, è stata testata la macchina del soccorso in caso di eventi calamitosi quali terremoto e tsunami.

Attraverso la realizzazione di un portale per lo scambio immediato delle informazioni - una sala operativa virtuale integrata - tra Malta e la Sicilia e di un piano integrato di protezione civile, le autorità siciliane e maltesi possono oggi intervenire congiuntamente al verificarsi di un'emergenza, grazie alla standardizzazione delle procedure operative di intervento tra i due paesi.

Per informazioni:
www.protezionecivile.sicilia.it
c.simp@regione.sicilia.it
simit@protezionecivile.sicilia.it

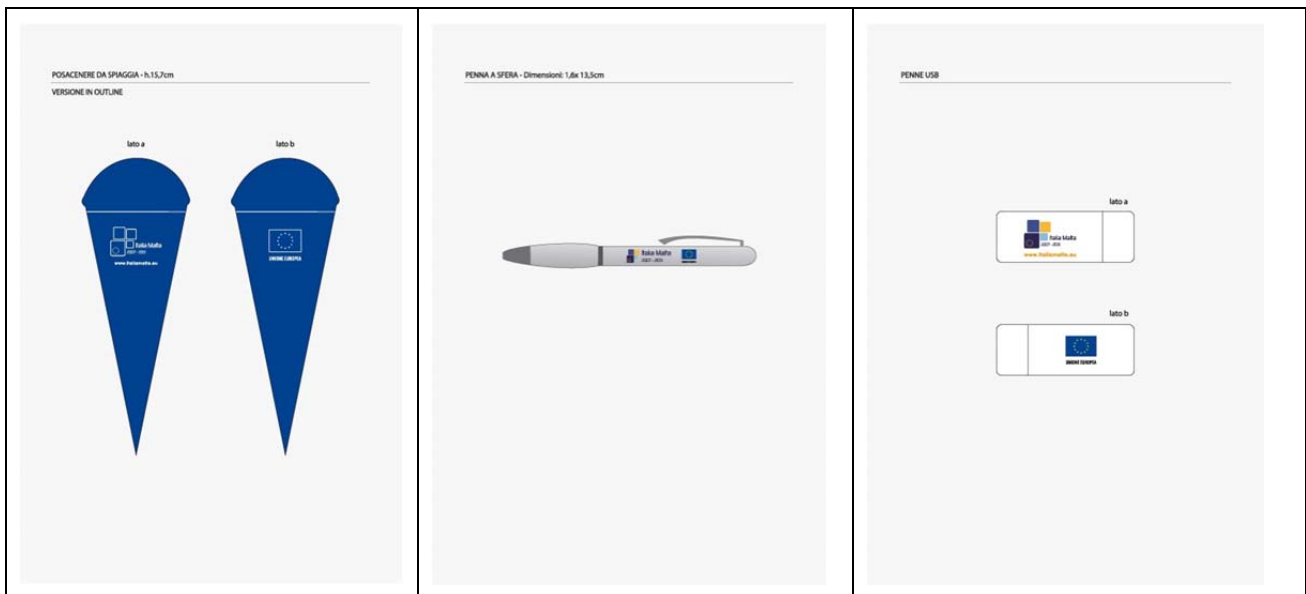
PREVENZIONE DEI RISCHI

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The final publication/catalogue was published in Italian and English and. 800 copies were printed. These were distributed on the Maltese territory, at the Community institutions, the national Italian and Sicilian territory as well as to the public present at the event of closing event of the programme held in Palermo on the 17th of December, 2015.

The final publication includes a DVD containing 5 documentaries related to the funded projects and containing footage related to each project both in Sicily and in Malta, as well as interviews with beneficiaries. The 5 documentaries, each having duration of 5 minutes each, were also distributed over 30 days. Moreover, each video has been distributed over 6 days and visible 24 hours a day on the following online publications: blogsicilia.it, livesicilia.it, agrigentonotizie.it, gds.it, siracusanews.it, ilfattonisseno.it, timesofmalta.mt. As for the promotional material, the main purpose of the distribution of this material, which included the corporate image of the programme, was to further promote and give visibility to the Italy-Malta 2007-2013 Programme. These were distributed to the general public in the Maltese and Sicilian territories and included pens, USBs and beach ashtrays.

It is worth noting that the ashtrays were distributed in protected marine areas and in parks, with the aim of increasing awareness on the protection of the environment among other important themes which are addressed in the OP Italy-Malta 2007-2013.





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

INFORMATION AND ADVERTISEMENT ACTIVITIES									
Information and advertising tools	Output	Indicators	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Events of public interest	Organization of the programme launch event and other scheduled events (info day, seminars, meetings and workshops, information conferences)	No. of organized seminars		2	4	4	4	5	5
		No. of organized events		2	4	6	8	12	14
		No. of final participating beneficiaries		420	670	913	1013	1063	2247
		No. of articles and notices for publicizing the events		3	7	65	75	78	89
Launch of the OP website	Enhancement of the OP website	No. of users/visitors		30.621	63.344	78.388	88.658	96.295	108.645
	Verticalisation of the information of the previous Interreg III Programme	No. downloaded documents		22	22	22	22	22	22
	Setting up of a back-end section	No. of news published in the news section	1	2	2	2	2	2	2
	Setting up of a section reserved for OP beneficiaries	No. of content System management (CSM)			1	1	1	1	1
	Constant updating of website	No. of reserved sections	2	29	50	77	99	123	145
		No. of published news	42	100	202	256	298	360	388
	Creation of a database of participating beneficiaries/partners	No. of documents uploaded			1	2	2	2	2
No. of databases created			182	335	440	440	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	488	497

INFORMATION AND ADVERTISEMENT ACTIVITIES									
Information and advertising tools	Output	Indicators	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
	Mass media productions and dissemination	No. of articles, notices and video productions regarding the OP and the funded projects			146	271	680	850	857
		No. of productions created by the mass media			1	11	28	48	53
News letter of the OP	Quarterly preparation of the news letter of the OP	No. of printed copies					100	600	1200
		No. of download of the newsletter from the web site					1738	2729	10087

**Figures refer to the elaboration of data concluded in 2016*

With reference to **support actions**, the Managing Authority and Maltese National Coordination Authority, supported by the JTS, set up informative seminars targeted at beneficiaries of ordinary and strategic projects.

These meetings were organized for the purpose of supporting the beneficiaries and to ensure the success of projects and a healthy management of the programme. Overall, in the programme's life cycle 200 seminars and workshops were held in Sicily and Malta with a total of number of 1,675 beneficiaries who participated in these sessions.

The beneficiaries were also supported through the drafting of guidelines, manuals and forms which during the programme's cycle have accompanied them in the presentation of the projects, in the implementation phase, the monitoring and reporting phase, in terms of the requirements information and communication and in the control procedures. A total number of 143 documents were drafted and published on the programme's corporate website, www.italiamalta.eu, which have been downloaded 216,855 times. The FAQ section found on the corporate site and the forum offered valuable support to 2011 beneficiaries.

The programme's authorities attended an average of two Steering Committee meetings for each project, for a total of 43 meetings. This has proven to be particularly useful in the most delicate phases, such as, during the project implementation phase, or in the startup phase and in the consolidation of partnerships, and in proximity of the financial target deadlines directly linked to the achievement of the programme's spending targets

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

Information and advertising tools	Output	Indicators	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Seminars/workshops with beneficiaries	Organisation of seminars and workshops	No. of organised seminars and workshops			23	74	143	198	200
		No. of participating beneficiaries			199	534	1241	1660	1675
Informative material	Guidelines for beneficiaries, reporting manuals, forms, etc.	No. of created documents		9	31	59	80	109	121
		No. of downloads from the OP website	5828	51741	82420	139227	197032	207203	216.855
		No. of programme related publications				16	18	19	22
		No. of FAQs published on the site		29	84	84	84	84	84
		No. of answers on the Forum		62	62	62	62	62	62
		No. of Forum members		2011	2011	2011	2011	2011	2.011
Assistance actions for beneficiaries	Meetings held with the JTS and with the Maltese National Contact Point	No. of organised meetings		1	7	10	10	10	10
	Meetings with the Programme authorities	No. of information requests			55	108	112	266	268
	Meetings with the project beneficiaries	No. of participants in Executive Committees			17	22	27	42	43

*Figures refer to the elaboration of data concluded in 2016

With reference to **actions for transparency and promotion of the role of the EU**, the strategic and ordinary projects organized information and communication activities themselves, in line with Regulation 1828/2006 and with the guidelines of the reporting manual of the OP. Each funded project has followed the communication plan requirements, ensuring both transparency of the procedures and also the visibility of the contribution played by the European Union. In line with their communications plans, prepared in accordance with the OP's communication plan, mature projects made dissemination activities on regional and national media, always ensuring adequate visibility to the role played by the European Union and ERDF. In particular, all projects have been advertised on the regional and national mass media, which have reported detailed information on the type of activities funded by the European Union under the Operational Programme and with the possible additional funding of beneficiaries involved.

Hereunder is reported a table of the communication plan indicators, 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	Indicatori	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
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	13	16
		No. of projects that meet the CP requirements			17	22	25	25	25
		No. of projects publicised by the mass media			6	10	17	25	25
Monitoring of websites created by the OP beneficiaries	Verification activities of websites created by the approved projects	No. of consulted websites			5	16	17	24	24
		No. of links leading to the OP website			5	16	17	24	24
Assistance activities for final beneficiaries	Creation of a section within the OP website with a list of links connected to regional, national and EU statutory provisions	No. of uploaded documents	43	101	167	215	257	357	357
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	86	97

*Figures refer to the elaboration of data concluded in 2016

With reference to **actions for communication with other Community programmes**, the Managing Authority of the OP and the Joint Technical Secretariat, during the program implementation periods have participated in 27 meetings and seminars organized by the European Commission and the INTERACT programme attended by 136 overall authorities.

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

Information and advertising tools	Output	Indicatori	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
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Information and advertising tools	Output	Indicatori	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Participation of the authorities involved in the OP in events of public interest	Participation in training/information days	No. di events			4	13	20	24	27
		No. of involved Authorities			30	80	115	132	136
		News published on the website in relation to the activities			4	12	12	13	13

*Figures refer to the elaboration of data concluded in 2016

During the programme's implementation periods the Managing Authority has proceeded to the publication of a list of beneficiaries under the OP. This publication was made available in the institutional website of the OP ItalyMalta 2007-2013 www.italiamlta.eu and on the official website of the ERDF OP Sicily www.euroinfoscilia.it.

For further information, please find below, in addition to the list of beneficiaries as of 31/12/2015, the payments made by the European Commission.

Taking into account the achievement indicators of the communication plan of the programme, one can clearly understand the achievement of operational objectives of the communication plan.

With reference to the operational objective 1) "*to inform the public about the role of the European Union in regional development and territorial integration of the European territory*", communication actions carried out by the beneficiaries of the programme have ensured a high level of accuracy and effectiveness to guarantee the added value of the activities planned to achieve the objectives of the communication plan. In particular, the MA and the MNCA succeeded, given the limited financial resources, to maximize the impact of communication through the contribution of each beneficiary of the ordinary and strategic projects in order to reach different audiences (citizens, tourists, young students, researchers, administrators and associations) and inform about the European Union's contribution in developing joint programmes aimed at solving the problems of border areas.

With reference to the operational objective 2) "*to ensure transparency in the decision-making procedures, and the implementation and monitoring phases of the programme, bringing into effect the rights of citizens towards the full and proper information*" it can be said that the measures of communication and information carried out by the authorities of the programme were highly adherent to the targets set. In particular, the programme has ensured the highest level of participation in choices and the broad programming through multidimensional communication approaches.

Table n. 16 Payments granted by the European Commission

PAYMENTS GRANTED BY THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION								
PRIORITY AXIS	PRE-FINANCING	PAYMENTS ON RFR TILL 31/12/2010	PAYMENTS ON RFR TILL 31/12/2011	PAYMENTS ON RFR TILL 31/12/2012	PAYMENTS ON RFR TILL 31/12/2013	PAYMENTS ON RFR TILL 31/12/2014	PAYMENTS ON RFR TILL 30/06/2016	TOTAL PAYMENTS RECEIVED BY THE EC TILL 30/12/2016
I	1.329.527,55	-	762.877,35	2.399.699,00	3.377.749,82	520.521,15	326.266,81	7.387.114,13
II	1.220.994,69	-	786.288,24	2.369.814,50	3.160.771,94	4.873.588,13	3.054.803,93	14.245.266,74
III	162.799,29	99.654,13	409.539,41	205.578,00	281.050,33	276.824,99	173.516,11	1.446.162,97
TOTAL AXIS	2.713.321,53	99.654,13	1.958.705,01	4.975.091,50	6.819.572,09	5.670.934,28	3.554.586,85	23.078.543,86

Table n. 17 - List of beneficiaries as at the 31/12/2016.

Beneficiaries	Axis	Operations	Year of the financing	Budget	Certified amount	
					Total	ERDF
Regione Siciliana	3	Compenso Assistenza Tecnica	2009	24.000,00	23.936,03	20.345,63
Regione Siciliana	3	Comitato di Sorveglianza Catania - aprile 2009	2009	9.024,00	9.024,00	7.670,40
Regione Siciliana	3	Pagamento pubblicazione bando STC su Repubblica	2009	1.500,00	1.500,00	1.275,00
Regione Siciliana	3	Pagamento pubblicazione bando STC su Sicilia e Giornale di Sicilia	2009	3.434,76	3.434,76	2.919,55
Regione Siciliana	3	Compenso componenti S.T.C.	2009	500.000,00	617.778,13	525.111,41
Regione Siciliana	3	Pagamento missioni	2009	70.000,00	66.636,07	56.640,66
Regione Siciliana	3	Pubblicazioni traduzioni organizzazione eventi	2010	250.000,00	395.231,70	335.946,95
Regione Siciliana	3	Compenso 3° componente STC	2011	310.000,00	256.598,91	218.109,07
Regione Siciliana	3	Altre spese ADG	2011	44.000,00	35.373,60	30.067,56
Regione Siciliana	3	Servizio di catering in occasione del Comitato Direttivo del 5 e 6 ottobre 2011	2011	700,00	700,00	595,00
Regione Siciliana	3	Servizi per l'organizzazione dell'ETC Day 2012	2012	39.034,60	39.034,60	33.179,41
Regione Siciliana	3	Manutenzione ed evoluzione del sistema informativo per il monitoraggio del PO Italia-Malta	2013		62.994,90	53.545,67

Regione Siciliana	3	Servizi per l'organizzazione dell'ETC Day 2013	2013		10.935,47	9.295,15
Regione Siciliana	3	Tirocinio Formativo nell'ambito del PO Italia-Malta	2013		1.800,00	1.530,00
Autorità Nazionale di Coordinamento Maltese	3	Spese ANCM Asse 3	2009	388.150,00	391.444,83	332.728,11
Mosta Local Council	1.3	Progetto ARCHAETUR	2011	413.500,00	378.817,51	321.994,88
Heritage Malta	1.3	Progetto ARCHAETUR	2011	157.700,00	110.930,62	94.291,03
Malta Tourism Authority	1.3	Progetto ARCHAETUR	2011	94.500,00	83.003,17	70.552,69
Rabat local Council	1.3	Progetto ARCHAETUR	2011	81.900,00	36.785,51	31.267,68
Comune di Ragusa	1.3	Progetto ARCHAETUR	2011	196.558,00	187.132,83	159.062,91
Regione Siciliana - Soprintendenza ai BB.CC. Ragusa	1.3	Progetto ARCHAETUR	2011	223.494,00	221.992,83	188.693,91
Comune di Santa Croce Camerina	1.3	Progetto ARCHAETUR	2011	80.600,00	78.024,77	66.321,05
GiriTravel srl	1.3	Progetto ARCHAETUR	2011	116.565,00	116.459,42	98.990,51
University of Malta	2.3	Progetto CALYPSO	2011	598.271,00	751.179,10	638.502,24
Transport Authority (TA)	2.3	Progetto CALYPSO	2011	142.722,00	140.908,00	119.771,80
Civil Protection Department (CPV)	2.3	Progetto CALYPSO	2011	27.245,00	21.874,95	18.593,71
Armed Forces of Malta (AFM)	2.3	Progetto CALYPSO	2011	30.405,00	19.645,15	16.698,38

ARPA Sicilia – Agenzia Regionale per la Protezione dell'Ambiente	2.3	Progetto CALYPSO	2011	174.666,00	182.076,69	154.765,19
Istituto per l'Ambiente Marino Costiero uos di Capo Granitola, Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche (IAMC-CNR CAPO GRANITOLA)	2.3	Progetto CALYPSO	2011	119.545,00	393.113,94	334.146,85
Università degli Studi di Palermo – Polo Universitario di Trapani	2.3	Progetto CALYPSO	2011	186.590,00	339.807,65	288.836,50
UNIVERSITÀ DI CATANIA - Centro Universitario per la Tutela e Gestione degli Ambienti Naturali e degli Agro-ecosistemi (CUTGANA)	2.3	Progetto CALYPSO	2011	75.955,00	104.590,19	88.901,66
Università di Catania – Dipartimento di Scienze Biologiche Geologiche e Ambientali	1.3	Progetto GARDMED	2011	219.513,00	230.587,59	195.999,45
University of Malta - Argotti Botanical Gardens	1.3	Progetto GARDMED	2011	212.996,00	191.233,44	162.548,42
Comune di Siracusa	1.3	Progetto GARDMED	2011	187.951,00	182.334,95	154.984,71
Floriana Local Council	1.3	Progetto GARDMED	2011	127.902,00	124.053,01	105.445,06
Provincia regionale di Ragusa	1.1	Progetto LITHOS	2011	322.475,04	319.207,34	271.326,24
Università degli Studi di Palermo - Dipartimento Storia e Progetto nell'Architettura	1.1	Progetto LITHOS	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	Progetto LITHOS	2011	116.449,00	112.520,82	95.642,70
Heritage Malta	1.1	Progetto LITHOS	2011	268.729,20	245.881,42	208.999,21
Regione Siciliana - Dipartimento Interventi Infrastrutturali in Agricoltura	2.1	Progetto MORISO	2011	288.610,00	286.430,48	243.465,91

Università di Catania - Dipartimento di Gestione dei Sistemi Agroalimentari e Ambientali	2.1	Progetto MORISO	2011	51.205,00	50.606,39	43.015,43
Centro Studi di Economia applicata all'Ingegneria - CSEI	2.1	Progetto MORISO	2011	139.650,00	138.340,88	117.589,75
Agenzia Regionale per la Protezione dell'Ambiente - DAP di Ragusa	2.1	Progetto MORISO	2011	37.240,00	32.122,47	27.304,10
Malta Resources Authority - Directorate for Water Resources Regulation Directorate for Water Resources Regulation	2.1	Progetto MORISO	2011	153.615,00	142.768,75	121.353,44
Water Services Corporation	2.1	Progetto MORISO	2011	139.650,00	125.098,29	106.333,55
Comune di Sciacca	1.3	Progetto OBIMED	2011	313.644,00	313.380,47	266.373,40
Comune di Gharb	1.3	Progetto OBIMED	2011	146.900,00	143.527,57	121.998,43
Maltese Italian Chamber of Commerce	1.3	Progetto OBIMED	2011	158.000,00	151.272,46	128.581,59
Comune di Castelvetro	1.3	Progetto OBIMED	2011	45.800,00	42.982,98	36.535,53
Malta Tourism Society	1.3	Progetto OBIMED	2011	34.000,00	32.573,40	27.687,39
Provincia Regionale di Siracusa	2.1	Progetto PANACEA	2011	446.132,00	329.594,42	280.155,26
Provincia regionale di Palermo	2.1	Progetto PANACEA	2011	243.620,00	166.890,47	141.856,90
Comune di Lampedusa e Linosa	2.1	Progetto PANACEA	2011	103.784,00	52.725,34	44.816,54
Kunsill Lokali San Lawrenz	2.1	Progetto PANACEA	2011	188.054,00	132.766,03	112.851,13
University of Malta	2.1	Progetto PANACEA	2011	240.866,00	260.533,41	221.453,40

Istituto Regionale della Vite e del Vino	1.1	Progetto ProMed	2011	574.725,00	657.568,47	558.933,20
Centro Studi di Economia applicata all'Ingegneria - CSEI	1.1	Progetto ProMed	2011	110.300,00	231.325,10	196.626,34
University of Malta	1.1	Progetto ProMed	2011	198.500,00	257.791,80	219.123,03
Ministry for resources and Rural Affairs	1.1	Progetto ProMed	2011	342.520,00	339.111,90	288.245,12
Comune di Lampedusa e Linosa	1.1	Progetto ProMed	2011	15.000,00	3.194,80	2.715,58
Comune di Pantelleria	1.1	Progetto ProMed	2011	15.000,00	6.368,91	5.413,57
Organizzazioni Produttori Gheneb Ghall-Inbid Malta	1.1	Progetto ProMed	2011	114.300,00	164.984,66	140.236,96
Comune di Bivona	2.1	Progetto REMASI	2011	142.712,00	117.478,78	99.856,96
Legambiente Comitato Regionale Siciliano onlus	2.1	Progetto REMASI	2011	92.120,00	42.255,49	35.917,17
Università degli Studi di Palermo	2.1	Progetto REMASI	2011	115.068,00	104.978,56	89.231,78
Heritage Malta	2.1	Progetto REMASI	2011	115.600,00	19.941,71	16.950,45
Provincia Regionale di Ragusa	2.2	Progetto RESI	2011	176.152,09	167.340,32	142.239,27
Provincia Regionale di Agrigento	2.2	Progetto RESI	2011	158.843,91	134.069,86	113.959,38
Malta Resources Authority	2.2	Progetto RESI	2011	126.004,40	83.169,53	70.694,10
University of Malta - Institute for Sustainable Energy	2.2	Progetto RESI	2011	126.697,60	123.706,68	105.150,68
Ministry for Health, Elderly, and Community Care – Malta	2.3	Progetto RESPIRA	2011	345.744,00	307.767,86	261.602,68

Azienda Sanitaria Provinciale Caltanissetta - Distretto di Gela	2.3	Progetto RESPIRA	2011	146.873,00	79.273,93	67.382,84
Università degli Studi di Palermo - Dipartimento D.R.E.A.M.	2.3	Progetto RESPIRA	2011	121.488,00	117.398,82	99.789,00
Istituto di Biomedicina e di Immunologia Molecolare del Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche (IBIM-CNR)	2.3	Progetto RESPIRA	2011	250.255,00	246.737,46	209.726,84
Provincia Regionale di Agrigento - Ufficio Politiche Comunitarie	1.3	Progetto SIBIT	2011	344.160,00	335.985,68	285.587,83
Provincia Regionale di Ragusa	1.3	Progetto SIBIT	2011	137.650,00	121.036,99	102.881,44
Provincia Regionale di Siracusa	1.3	Progetto SIBIT	2011	137.650,00	102.189,69	86.861,24
Provincia Regionale di Trapani	1.3	Progetto SIBIT	2011	137.650,00	99.357,14	84.453,57
Provincia Regionale di Caltanissetta	1.3	Progetto SIBIT	2011	137.650,00	108.528,92	92.249,58
Malta Tourism Authority	1.3	Progetto SIBIT	2011	91.770,00	91.712,90	77.955,97
Local Council Association - Malta	1.3	Progetto SIBIT	2011	91.770,00	89.373,73	75.967,67
Polo Universitario Agrigento	1.3	Progetto SIBIT	2011	22.940,00	19.187,70	16.309,55
University of Malta - International Environment Institute	2.1	Progetto SIMBIOTIC	2011	413.616,00	392.965,40	334.020,59
Ministry for Gozo	2.1	Progetto SIMBIOTIC	2011	161.349,00	134.360,23	114.206,20
Università di Catania - Dipartimento di Biologia "Marcello La Greca"	2.1	Progetto SIMBIOTIC	2011	226.975,00	213.094,78	181.130,56
Comune di Pachino	2.1	Progetto SIMBIOTIC	2011	200.088,00	166.796,78	141.777,26
University of Malta	1.1	Progetto T-CHEESIMAL	2011	341.087,00	337.886,64	287.203,64
CoRFiLaC - Consorzio per la Ricerca sulla Filiera Lattiero-Casearia	1.1	Progetto T-CHEESIMAL	2011	228.010,00	222.011,49	188.709,77
Università degli Studi di Catania	1.1	Progetto T-CHEESIMAL	2011	205.342,00	137.901,83	117.216,56
Università di Catania - Facoltà di Architettura Siracusa	1.1	Progetto THE HUB	2011	380.967,00	369.380,20	313.973,17
University of Malta	1.1	Progetto THE HUB	2011	190.484,00	198.211,57	168.479,83
Confcooperative Siracusa	1.1	Progetto THE HUB	2011	34.633,00	25.489,53	21.666,10

Istituto Onnicomprensivo L. Pirandello	1.1	Progetto THE HUB	2011	86.584,00	82.494,06	70.119,95
Comune di Siracusa	1.1	Progetto THE HUB	2011	173.167,00	162.745,93	138.334,04
Istituto Nazionale di Geofisica e Vulcanologia, sezione di Catania	2.3	Progetto VAMOS SEGURO	2011	205.264,00	480.780,94	408.663,80
Istituto Nazionale di Astrofisica	2.3	Progetto VAMOS SEGURO	2011	105.565,00	413.051,12	351.093,45
Atmospheric Research Physic Department University of Malta	2.3	Progetto VAMOS SEGURO	2011	111.429,00	145.338,10	123.537,39
Comune di Montedoro	2.3	Progetto VAMOS SEGURO	2011	164.212,00	163.819,82	139.246,85
Provincia regionale di Trapani	2.4	Progetto WATER FRONT	2011	86.091,00	66.921,78	56.883,51
Provincia regionale di Palermo	2.4	Progetto WATER FRONT	2011	28.697,00	19.566,98	16.631,93
Comune di Palermo	2.4	Progetto WATER FRONT	2011	18.560,00	13.136,61	11.166,12
Università degli Studi di Palermo	2.4	Progetto WATER FRONT	2011	67.531,00	51.523,47	43.794,95
University of Malta	2.4	Progetto WATER FRONT	2011	86.091,00	84.089,83	71.476,36
ARPA SICILIA	2	Progetto BIODIVALUE	2013	656.417,00	650.109,90	552.593,42
Consorzio Plemmirio - Area Marina Protetta	2	Progetto BIODIVALUE	2013	218.807,00	199.531,29	169.601,60
Università Malta	2	Progetto BIODIVALUE	2013	218.807,00	217.360,88	184.756,75
ISPRA - Istituto Superiore per la Protezione e la Ricerca Ambientale	2	Progetto BIODIVALUE	2013	218.807,00	158.612,38	134.820,52
Area Marina Protetta Isole Pelagie	2	Progetto BIODIVALUE	2013	218.807,00	160.566,80	136.481,78
GAL XLOKK	2	Progetto BIODIVALUE	2013	218.807,00	167.993,05	142.794,09
Green Life soc. coop. a r.l.	2	Progetto BIODIVALUE	2013	218.807,00	184.233,23	156.598,25
Università degli Studi di Catania - Dipartimento di Ingegneria Industriale Meccanica	2	Progetto BIODIVALUE	2013	218.807,00	215.056,77	182.798,25
Regione Siciliana - Dipartimento regionale infrastrutture mobilità e trasporti	1	Progetto STREETS	2013	748.612,19	412.039,81	350.233,84
Collegio Universitario ARCES	1	Progetto STREETS	2013	499.074,80	435.333,14	370.033,17
Comune di Vittoria	1	Progetto STREETS	2013	249.537,40	179.575,34	152.639,04

Autorità portuale di Catania	1	Progetto STREETS	2013	249.537,40	172.425,02	146.561,27
Transport Malta	1	Progetto STREETS	2013	499.074,80	436.154,99	370.731,74
University of Malta	1	Progetto STREETS	2013	249.537,40	243.149,10	206.676,74
Istituto Regionale Vini & Oli di Sicilia	2	Progetto VIENERGY	2013	660.111,00	521.904,40	443.618,74
Consorzio di Ricerca per lo Sviluppo di Sistemi Innovativi Agroambientali "Co.Ri.S.S.I.A"	2	Progetto VIENERGY	2013	190.400,00	189.208,97	160.827,62
Centro Studi di Economia applicata all'Ingegneria - CSEI Catania	2	Progetto VIENERGY	2013	191.790,00	190.891,60	162.257,86
ABE - Alternative BioEnergy srl	2	Progetto VIENERGY	2013	190.850,00	187.400,74	159.290,63
Ministry for Resources and Rural Affairs	2	Progetto VIENERGY	2013	452.200,00	374.470,46	318.299,89
University of Malta	2	Progetto VIENERGY	2013	214.800,00	214.398,45	182.238,68
Transport Malta	2	Progetto PORT PVEV	2013	825.000,00	785.173,85	667.397,77
Autorità portuale di Catania	2	Progetto PORT PVEV	2013	500.000,00	317.420,32	269.807,27
Ministry for Transport and Infrastructure	2	Progetto PORT PVEV	2013	750.000,00	349.555,84	297.122,46
Provincia di Caltanissetta	2	Progetto PORT PVEV	2013	425.000,00	216.763,10	184.248,64
Dipartimento Urbanistica – Assessorato Territorio ed Ambiente della Regione Siciliana	2	Progetto CRIM SAFRI	2013	657.494,10	390.564,88	331.980,15
Università degli Studi di Palermo Dipartimento dell'Energia	2	Progetto CRIM SAFRI	2013	219.164,70	205.966,44	175.071,47
Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche Istituto di biomedicina ed immunologia molecolare "Alberto Monroy"	2	Progetto CRIM SAFRI	2013	219.164,70	208.827,62	177.503,48
Dipartimento dei Beni Culturali e dell'Identità Siciliana dell'Assessorato Beni Culturali e dell'Identità Siciliana della Regione Siciliana	2	Progetto CRIM SAFRI	2013	219.164,70	190.635,05	162.039,79
Camera di Commercio Industria Artigianato Agricoltura di Agrigento	2	Progetto CRIM SAFRI	2013	219.164,70	114.778,87	97.562,04
Malta College of Art, Science and Technology (MCAST)	2	Progetto CRIM SAFRI	2013	219.164,70	214.539,88	182.358,90

Med.O.R.O. Organizzazione per la Ricerca, l'occupazione e lo sviluppo territoriale nel Mediterraneo – Società consortile a r.l.	2	Progetto CRIM SAFRI	2013	219.164,70	211.837,28	180.061,69
Malta Intelligent Energy Management Agency (MIEMA)	2	Progetto CRIM SAFRI	2013	219.164,70	153.825,96	130.752,07
Ministry of Health, Elderly and the Community Care	2	Progetto IMAGENX	2013	725.984,50	542.722,01	461.313,71
University of Malta	2	Progetto IMAGENX	2013	454.360,00	470.919,84	400.281,86
Università degli Studi di Palermo Polo della Provincia di Trapani	2	Progetto IMAGENX	2013	502.322,00	590.443,59	501.877,05
Malta Council for science & technology	2	Progetto IMAGENX	2013	241.116,00	185.885,51	158.002,68
Azienda ospedaliera Universitaria di Palermo - "Paolo Giaccone"	2	Progetto IMAGENX	2013	241.463,00	216.636,54	184.141,06
Azienda ospedaliera provinciale di Siracusa	2	Progetto IMAGENX	2013	241.463,00	50.612,40	43.020,54
Regione Siciliana - Presidenza - Dipartimento della Protezione Civile	2	Progetto SIMIT	2013	895.352,38	854.730,55	726.520,97
Università degli Studi di Palermo	2	Progetto SIMIT	2013	387.000,00	384.721,70	327.013,44
Università degli Studi di Catania	2	Progetto SIMIT	2013	310.000,00	302.338,71	256.987,90
Emergency Services in Malta - Civil protection department Malta	2	Progetto SIMIT	2013	407.219,62	343.889,91	292.306,42
University of Malta	2	Progetto SIMIT	2013	370.000,00	366.174,34	311.248,19
Regione Siciliana, Assessorato regionale delle risorse agricole e alimentari Dipartimento interventi infrastrutturali per l'agricoltura	2	Progetto PIM ENERGETHICA	2013	470.000,00	21.982,02	18.684,72
Gruppo d'azione locale GAL VAL d'Anapo	2	Progetto PIM ENERGETHICA	2013	210.000,00	8.228,48	6.994,21
Comune di Mellieha	2	Progetto PIM ENERGETHICA	2013	210.000,00	4.360,77	3.706,65
Local Councils' Association	2	Progetto PIM ENERGETHICA	2013	150.000,00	11.270,72	9.580,11

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 Programme 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.

During the 2007-2013 programming period, the Italy-Malta 2007-2013 Cross-Border Cooperation Operational Programme brought significant results through the implementation of ordinary and strategic projects.

These results are allocated mainly under five thematic areas in which projects funded by the programme belong:

1. Research and Innovation: The Hub, Promed, T-Cheesimal
2. Cultural Heritage and Tourism: Archaeotur, Lithos, Gardmed, Sibit, Obimed e Water Front
3. Environmental Protection: Biodivalue, Panacea, Simbiotic, Remasi
4. Efficient Use of Resources: Vienergy, Moriso, Crim Safri, Resi, Port Pvev, Streets
5. Risk Prevention: Calypso, Vamos Seguro, Simit, Imagenx, Respira

What, in your opinion, has your programme achieved?

Within the **Research and Innovation** category, the Italy-Malta 2007-2013 OP has funded initiatives in key sectors of the Sicilian and Maltese economies through the creation of networks of cooperation among public authorities, corporate research institutes/universities, as well as through the creation and dissemination of solutions and forms of social innovation. In particular, three projects belong in this category - The *HUB* (social innovation), *PROMED* (research and product innovation applied to the winemaking process), and *T-CHEESIMAL* (technology innovation applied to dairy production) - which achieved the results described below.

THE HUB - An Italo-Maltese social network which is part of the Impact Hub international network, a community of entrepreneurs and social innovators, sustainable businesses, professionals and associations that focus on the social, economic and environmental impact of their businesses. Through its network of social innovators, The Hub implements today microcredit policies through the management of a few credit lines funded by the Jeremie-ESF Fund, the Guarantee Fund for Microcredito Siciliano and the PerMicro Fund.

PROMED - Product and process innovations applied to the wine sector, which allowed an increase in the fresh grape must yields, while maintaining the quality of the final product Experimentation has also encouraged the return to viticulture in the Pelagie islands through the award by the Regional Department of Agriculture of a share of replanting rights primarily to Linosa and Lampedusa, thus offering the opportunity to entrepreneurs for initiating the process of planting new vineyards.

T-CHEESIMAL – The qualification of high-biodiversity content Sicilian and Maltese dairy products through the enhancement of rural traditions, applied research and the use of innovative technologies. Business, promotional and communication strategies were identified; their aim was to position Sicilian and Maltese dairy products in joint marketing efforts.

Within the **Cultural Heritage and Tourism** category, the Italy-Malta 2007-2013 OP funded initiatives that enhanced the natural wealth and cultural heritage linking Sicily and Malta, by improving the usability of landmarks, public spaces, nature trails and common traditions. To this category belong the *ARCHAEOTUR*, *LITHOS*, *GARDMED*, *SIBIT*, *OBIMED* and *WATER FRONT* projects, thus contributing to the improvement of

an integrated tourist offer and to the dissemination of solutions, initiatives and innovative methods to preserve and promote the cultural and natural heritage.

ARCHAEOTUR – Increased opportunities for socio-economic development in terms of increase in tourist flows and compensation for seasonal variations, as well as the rediscovery of roots and common cultural identity thanks to the restoration of minor archaeological sites that today represent the potential attractions for cultural tourism in these two areas.

LITHOS – The discovery of a centuries-old building tradition that unites Sicily and Malta, the exchange and transfer of expertise between Sicilian and Maltese craftsmen and apprentices, the identification of important construction techniques that are still applicable to recovery today, the redevelopment and restoration of both historical centers of the most valuable areas in the two islands.

GARDMED - The dissemination of green culture, the preservation of natural and cultural heritage and the promotion of sustainable tourism through the transformation of the Mediterranean gardens from isolated, hardly appreciated areas into important social, environmental and tourism development centres.

SIBIT - The improvement of cycling offers in Sicily and Malta through the creation of cross-border routes, the modernization of existing infrastructure and the adaptation of accommodation suitable for bike tourism.

OBIMED – The broadening of integrated tourist offers between Sicily and Malta through the creation of new thematic routes and the development of innovative promotional tools.

WATER FRONT - The integration between the western shore of Sicily and Malta through the cultural, economic and social enhancement of the water front for the harmonization of land-use planning techniques.

Within the general **Environmental Protection** category, the Italy-Malta 2007-2013 OP financed initiatives that enhanced terrestrial and marine biodiversity. These two results were achieved through support activities useful to limit the effects of marine pollution (*BIODIVALUE*), monitoring/control of cross-border marine species (*PANACEA*), repair or replacement of terrestrial habitats (*SIMBIOTIC*), as well as through actions of environmental awareness (*REMASI*). The following results were achieved by each of these projects.

BIODIVALUE - A biophysics system to measure the risk of loss of biodiversity in the Sicilian Channel and an economic evaluation system to determine the consequences to coastal communities. The tools used to carry out this project are today the subject of an agreement with the Italian Navy as part of the activities assigned to the Armed Forces, such as anti-pollution activities.

PANACEA – The promotion of scientific and environmental value of the ecosystems of the Sicilian and Maltese Marine Protected Areas and the improvement of their management.

SIMBIOTIC - The recovery and use of some former Natura 2000 sites to improve their management, increase ecological connectivity between south-eastern Sicily and Malta, and to promote greater environmental awareness at the local level.

REMASI – The improvement of knowledge of the nature reserves of geo-sites and the sites of community importance in Malta and Sicily, as well as the promotion of awareness-raising activities on the protection of biodiversity in local communities.

Within the category of **Efficient Use of Resources**, the Italy-Malta 2007-2013 OP has funded initiatives that have encouraged the use of natural resources and renewable energy through the development of innovative systems for energy efficiency. This category has seen the implementation of six projects focused, respectively, on: innovation applied to the vineyard system (*VIENERGY*), monitoring of groundwater resources (*MORISO*),

design of environmentally sustainable building solutions (*CRIM-SAFRI*), dissemination and experimental use of renewable energies (*RESI* and *PORT-PVEV*), and, promotion of integrated and sustainable transport strategies (*STREETS*). The following results were achieved by each of these projects.

VIENERGY – The improvement of energy performance of a cellar, allowing cost savings and greater respect for the environment as well as the creation of alternative forms of income for the owners of the wineries.

MORISO – The increase in water saving and protection of groundwater through the definition of new agricultural practices and the prevention of salinization and groundwater pollution.

CRIM-SAFRI – The overcoming of the technological gap and expertise that characterizes Sicilian and Maltese SMEs, through the creation of a research center on environmental sustainability and renewable energy.

RESI – The increase in the widespread use of renewable energies (and, in particular, of solar energy) in Sicily and Malta also through the dissemination of best practices.

PORT-PVEV – The reduction in use of fossil fuels in port areas through the production of electricity from renewable sources.

STREETS – The improvement of knowledge of the multimodal transport system between Malta and Sicily and the definition of a transport promotion strategy along the main freight and passengers transit routes between the two islands in the context of integration and sustainability goals.

Within the **Risk Prevention** category, the Italy-Malta 2007-2013 OP financed initiatives related to the protection of population from natural hazards caused by human activity, as well as to the coordination of rescue procedures in the event of natural disasters and to the acquisition new tools to improve people's health. These aspects have directed the activities of projects that fall in this category towards actions aimed at the extension of coverage of systems for the monitoring and control of maritime (*CALYPSO*) and air (*VAMOS SEGURO*) navigation, the protection of population (*SIMIT*) and the prevention of specific diseases - such as breast cancer (*IMAGENX*), asthma and respiratory disease (*RESPIRA*) - resulting from possible pollutants or activities related to lifestyle and genetic heritage.

CALYPSO – The improvement of the surveillance system for the prevention of the deliberate spillage of hydrocarbons into the sea, the location of boats in distress and for search & rescue activities. The CALYPSO system and data collected through the HF antenna system are now able to communicate with the operations room of the Civil Protection of the Region of Sicily in support of its activities.

VAMOS SEGURO – The improvement of the monitoring and forecasting system for the dispersion of volcanic ashes from Mount Etna in the cross-border area, which can disrupt both civil and military aviation.

SIMIT – The improvement of the capacity for planning and managing the joint civil protection interventions by Sicilian and Maltese authorities during emergencies.

IMAGENX – The improvement of the degree of integration of skills and studies of Sicilian and Maltese researchers for the development of a monitoring programme related to the prevention of breast cancer.

RESPIRA – The improvement of knowledge of the conditions that may affect the relationship between exposure to pollutants and health through the analysis of the main environmental risk factors.

Who has benefitted?

The main subjects that benefited from the results of the activities related to the Italy-Malta 2007-2013 OP in the social **Research and Innovation** are: cross-border population with particular attention to people inhabiting

the smaller islets of both islands, farming communities, research community, entrepreneurs, young people who are entering the workforce and women.

Concerning the issue of product and process innovation applied to viticulture and agribusiness, as well as the exchange and transfer of knowledge, agricultural and wine sector businesses, professional associations and entrepreneurs interested in investing on viticulture in Sicily and Malta can now point to a more competitive industry that is able to ensure the profitability of cropping systems, while also safeguarding the ecosystem and the final product.

In addition, the enterprise system linked to agribusiness and to large retail chains are now able to aim for a better positioning of companies on the market thanks to the advertising of their innovative winemaking protocols and the introduction to the market of new dairy products.

Finally, concerning the theme of social innovation, within areas created in Ortigia, Lampedusa and Malta, hubbers run workshops related to business enterprises, social innovation and sustainable economy, and organize initiatives aimed principally at entrepreneurs, young people entering the workforce and women. Hubbers also advice the local population for the start-up of entrepreneurial activities through the review of the disbursement of micro-credits. This so-called “Living Lab” approach born essentially with the activities of the Italy-Malta programme has determined, especially on the Sicilian side, the emergence of a new model of development for the island, which is capable of involving different stakeholders in the co-creation and co-validation process of onew products/services/infrastructure.

It is important to point out here that in the context of the preparation of both the 2014-2020 “regional strategy for the smart innovation of Sicily”, the programmer has identified on the island a strong potential and interest in the issue of social innovation and the Lab Living approach by local stakeholders and communities of Sicilian innovators In view of these developments, different priority actions have been identified within the mainstream programme (ERDF Sicily OP) to finance enhancement and investment activities aimed at social innovation entities in order to guarantee development based on the “Quadruple Helix” capable of identifying the main categories of origin of stakeholders, as well as civil society, business world, universities and public administration.

The main subjects that benefited from the results of the activities related to the Italy-Malta 2007-2013 OP in matter of **Risk prevention and Environmental Protection** are: cross-border population with particular attention to people inhabiting the coastal areas, the authorities in charge of environmental protection, airport authorities and the research world.

Concerning the issue of prevention of risks at sea, the authorities responsible for environmental supervision (Transport Malta, Civil Protection Department, Armed Forces of Malta, the Regional Agency for Environmental Protection) can now participate in real time with preventative actions and/or the suppression of illegal behaviour caused by deliberate oil spillage from ships in transit in the Strait of Sicily.

As for the theme of the prevention of risks related to civil and military aviation activities, the airport authorities of Malta and the city of Catania, as well as the neighbouring territories, can now activate alert mechanisms for air navigation and for the local population in case of eruptive activity on the Etna volcano.

It is also noted that in addition to the beneficiaries, more recipients have expressed interest in using the results of the programme for purposes not originally envisaged.

In particular, the General Command of the Italian Port Authority required the use and integration of data captured by HF antenna system within their investigation procedures in order to develop operational tools to support search & rescue (SAR) and/or civil defence operations not initially considered by the beneficiaries.

Moreover, the potential of the monitoring of volcanic ash and the type of data that the system is able to collect today are being considered for other areas of research and study, such as meteorology. In this regard, the collection and sharing of data by the Italian Air Force which, in Sicily, manages weather forecast services are of interest.

Concerning environmental protection, the monitoring system of the Sicilian and Maltese port areas allows performing an economic assessment of biodiversity loss in the Sicilian Channel and an estimate of the consequences suffered by coastal communities, which have a population of more than 800 thousand.

Finally, local populations, with particular reference to tourists, representatives of environmental organizations and persons with disabilities can now enjoy the natural and cultural heritage of the two islands thanks to archaeological and environmental rehabilitation and restoration.

Tourists are also major subjects that have benefited from the results of the activities related to the Italy-Malta 2007-2013 OP in the field of **Cultural Heritage and Tourism** of the restored buildings, the restoration of archaeological sites and the development of the support and guide instrumentation for the fruition of cultural heritage.

The main subjects that benefited from the results of the activities related to the Italy-Malta 2007-2013 OP in matter of **Efficient Use of Resources** were primarily the population in cross-border areas, SMEs and the public administration.

In this regard, the wineries involved in Vienergy projects have conducted experiments on the use of pomace and shoots for the production of electrical energy, thereby satisfying the energy needs of the wineries involved.

In the implementation phase of the project, all agricultural companies contacted indicated their interest in the construction of a phyto-purification plant similar to the experimented type, as well as the wineries involved in Moriso project.

At the end of the phase of analysis conducted on polyphenols from a waste product, resulting data were of interest both for growers and wineries in terms of creating additional income components for the pharmaceutical, nutraceutical and cosmetic industries, considering that polyphenols are excellent agents that fight the aging not only skin, but of the whole organism.

Innovative technology related to the use of bio-ethanol was successfully tested on school transport means and, therefore, in the future will be extended to urban transport of Sicilian and Maltese cities.

Through the collection and storage of carbon dioxide produced, owners of wineries will evaluate the possible leveraging of waste resulting from work processes in cellars.

Considering that the achievements of the PORT-PVEV project mainly focused on the port areas of the cross-border regions, it is possible to consider possible recipients that include:

554 Transport Malta employees

2.229 employees of the port of Catania

454 employees of the city of Gela

52.995 residents inside project target areas in Malta

58.187 residents inside project target areas in Catania

76.826 residents inside project target areas in Gela

1.882.315 ferry passengers between Malta and Gozo

154.770 ferry passengers of the port of Catania

1.520.828 tourists visiting Valletta

364.097 tourists visiting Catania

63.254 tourists visiting Gela/Caltanissetta

Finally, the Sicilian and Maltese SMEs and the population have been involved in awareness-raising activities and the dissemination of green technologies.

Evidence of achievements

Concerning the areas of **Environmental Protection** and **Risk Prevention**, we present below data demonstrating the achievement of results by the Italy Malta 2007-2013 OP.

As for the marine and terrestrial environments, performance indicators show that Italy Malta 2007-2013 promoted safeguard, management, monitoring and awareness measures on a cross-border area of 1,304 sq km, 1,299 sq km of which were from protected areas (see table 10.b.1 “Outcome for each Axis II operation”).

Monitoring data of the Italy-Malta 2007-2013 Programme show that a marine area of 10,000 square meters (see table 10.b.1 “Outcome for each Axis II operation” - Calypso Project), coinciding with the Malta Channel, it is now submitted to monitoring programmes by relevant authorities for the prevention of deliberate pollution actions.

An even wider marine area of 50,000 square meters (see table 10.b.1 “Outcome for each Axis II operation” - Biodivalue Project), which, in addition to including the Malta Channel extends to a part of the Strait of Sicily, is affected by operations of commercial and non-commercial ships, including fishing, tourism and recreation vessels, is presently submitted to monitoring actions to reduce pollution linked to maritime transport activities.

On the terrestrial side, an area of 63.700 square meters (see table 10.b.1 “Outcome for each Axis II operation” - Symbiotic and Remasi Projects), pertaining to the territories of Siracusa, Agrigento and Gozo, is now being accessed by local population and tourists, including disabled users, thanks to the environmental restoration and repair work of the Mediterranean vegetation in the wetlands of EU interest which were once abandoned as a result of human, predominantly agricultural activities.

Concerning the skies, civilian and military routes stretching across an area of 37,500 square kilometres between Malta and Catania, and which are the recipient of the eruptive activity of Mount Etna are today monitored to account for ash released by Mount Etna (Vamos Seguro Project). Monitoring allows a higher level of safety for aircrafts in the areas above the volcano and, as a result, better management of air traffic and airport activity in the airports of Catania and Malta.

As regards biodiversity in protected Sicilian and Maltese marine areas, it is presently being enhanced thanks to work carried out under the Italy-Malta 2007-2013 OP, which allowed the opening of 4 new environmental education centres in Siracusa, Palermo, Agrigento, Palermo and Gozo for the benefit of local population, and, in particular, young people and students who are constantly involved in activities aimed to raise awareness on environmental issues (PANACEA project).

The smaller islands of Lampedusa and Gozo are now under a risk prevention programme through the development of a civil protection plan to be activated upon the occurrence of an emergency, such as an earthquake or natural tsunami (SIMIT Project), and that involves the entire population of the two islands.

Concerning the issue of risk prevention mainly related to health, a clinical investigation (RESPIRA Project) conducted on 1,401 young Sicilian and Maltese subjects has allowed quantifying the prevalence of asthma and other allergic respiratory diseases in indoor and outdoor environments. Similarly, the development of a joint monitoring programme related to the prevention of breast cancer (IMAGENX Project) has allowed the improvement of clinical investigations to determine the causes of breast cancer and its spread in the central Mediterranean.

Concerning the areas of **Cultural Heritage and Tourism**, we present below data demonstrating the achievement of results by the Italy Malta 2007-2013 OP.

Concerning the enjoyment of cultural heritage of the two islands, cultural assets are now more accessible across borders, both by local people and tourists, including disabled users, thanks to the restoration of 8 minor archaeological sites and the creation of 5 joint heritage trails (ARCHAEOTUR Project), as well as through the installation of multimedia information points scattered across Sicily and Malta (OBIMED Project). The harmonization of land-use planning techniques of port areas has also improved the usability of the waterfront of Trapani, Palermo and Valletta (WATER FRONT Project).

In terms of natural heritage, the creation of 24 cross-border cycling routes, the modernization of 7 existing infrastructures (5 in Sicily and 2 in Malta), the adaptation of 70 accommodations facilities with services for bike tourism (SIBIT Project), contributed to the improvement of cycling in Sicily and Malta. The programme has also enhanced for tourism purposes 18 gardens, preparing, for 6 of them, a sustainable management model (GARDMED Project).

As regards architectural assets, the restoration of one of the facades of the Inquisitor's Palace in Birgu, for which ancient stone-cutting techniques were employed, points to the rediscovery of traditional architectural techniques shared by the Sicilian and Maltese master stone masons (LITHOS Project).

Concerning the areas of **Efficient Use of Resources**, we present below data demonstrating the achievement of results by the Italy Malta 2007-2013 OP.

As regards the reduction of dependence on traditional energy sources (VIENERGY Project), the OP analyzed around 69,660 hectares of areas planted with vines in the province of Trapani, including on Egadi and Pantelleria Islands, and about 16,000 hectares in the province of Palermo, while the Maltese vineyards placed under review were a little more than 600 hectares. These lands were subjected to a characterization of residual biomasses, and samples from them were then submitted to a compression process which eventually yielded so-called AGRIPELLETS, usable in biomass boilers for heat production. With reference to the treatment of waste water, the construction of the pilot-scale phyto-depuration plant led to a qualitative improvement of about 1/3 of waste water produced by the experimentation cellar. Prior to the completion of the experimental plant, waste water was scattered on the ground by means of a subsurface irrigation system while, at present, it is used for the irrigation of green area of about 1,000 m² adjacent to the plant itself, resulting in an increase of about 1% of the winery's irrigated area. Experimental investigations have shown that the phyto-depuration plant was able to produce a higher percentage of samples compatible both with the qualitative standards provided for in Legislative Decree no. 152/2006 (in line with Directive 2001/42/EC) for discharge into surface water bodies, and with the more restrictive provisions set forth in Ministerial Decree n. 185/2003, for the reuse of irrigation wastewater. With reference to the recovery of substances of

pharmaceutical interest, the content of polyphenols was quantified in branches during winter pruning, in leaves and grapes during the different stages of maturation, as well as in musts and in the cellar's waste water. A common protocol for sampling and sample preparation was defined in order to carry out analyses that showed the level of accumulation of anthocyanins and flavonoids both in relation to the variety and type of samples (grape, leaf or branch), and to different sampling times. Concerning waste water, it was estimated a content of about 120 mg of polyphenols per litre of water, with a very high potential in light of water consumption levels in a winery. With reference to the reduction of harmful emissions, the Project collaborated with the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission, testing the use of ethanol-diesel blends of bus engines, both in Sicily and Malta. The JRC took steps to install on vehicles used for public transport a system to measure emissions and engine performance. The results obtained have shown by some tests that it is possible to significantly reduce emissions of particulate matter in percentages that can reach up to 30% and that this solution in urban areas could profoundly improve air quality. With reference to the recovery of fermentation CO₂, a liter of must in fermentation produces about 90 grams of carbon dioxide. This climate-neutral gas had never been considered as a usable resource for the benefit of wineries. The captured carbon dioxide was submitted to analysis, which confirmed expectations about the possibility of direct re-use thanks to its high degree of purity, and, therefore, its immediate reuse for other purposes, such as in the winery life cycle, for the production of carbonates and bicarbonates to be reused for re-composition of salts in food-grade water obtained through the water desalination process, for use as an additive in soft drinks or as a raw material in the food industry.

The MORISO Project too addressed the issue of waste water, through the reconstruction of the hydro-geological structure of some aquifers and the identification of river basins at risk of saltwater intrusion and/or pollution from agricultural activities in Ragusa and its province and Malta, which allowed improving the area's water consumption levels.

Activities carried out under the PORT PVEV Project contributed to reducing carbon emissions and improving air quality, thanks, in particular, to the removal of combustion vehicles used in port operations, which were replaced with zero-emission vehicles. The energy produced by the project is generated to date through the following tools:

Photovoltaic panels at Transport Malta: The area covered by photovoltaic panels is of 1,290 square meters and the estimated production per year is 189.240kWh, corresponding to $1.660\text{kWh/kWp} \times 114\text{kWp}$.

Solar carports in Malta: The total area covered by photovoltaic panels for the three canopies is 216 m² (3 X 72 m²). Each canopy produces $11.25\text{kWp} \times 1,460\text{kWh/kWp} = 16,425\text{kWh/year}$ * 3 canopies = 49,275 kWh/year.

Solar carports in Catania: The total area covered by photovoltaic modules for the two canopies is of 39.96 m² (3.3 X 6.06 m²). All canopies produce $6.00\text{kWp} \times 1,550\text{kWh/kWp} = 9,290\text{kWh/year}$.

Solar bikeport no. 1 in Catania: The total area covered by photovoltaic modules for the canopy is of 19.998 m² (3.3 X 6.06 m²). The canopy produces $3.00\text{kWp} \times 1,540\text{kWh/kWp} = 4,610\text{kWh/year}$.

Solar bikeport no. 2 in Catania: The total area covered by photovoltaic modules for the canopy is of 19.998 m² (3.3 X 6.06 m²). The canopy produces $3.00\text{kWp} \times 1,310\text{kWh/kWp} = 3,940\text{kWh/year}$.

Solar bikeport no. 2 in Catania: The total area covered by photovoltaic modules for the canopy is 19.998 m² (3.3 X 6.06 m²). Bikeport no. 2 produces $3.00\text{kWp} \times 1,450\text{kWh/kWp} = 4,340\text{kWh/year}$

As regards awareness-raising activities concerning the use of renewable energy, 1 complete mapping of RES plants, 2 Renewable Energy Tours (RESI Project), as well as the creation of a Maltese-Italian centre for

renewable energy (CRIM Safri Project) provide support to SMEs, public administration authorities and the general population in Malta and the provinces of Agrigento and Ragusa for the implementation of the eco-design directives and of environmental and energy management systems.

Finally, the mapping of the transport network and an integrated survey of supply and demand along the Catania-Vittoria-Malta corridor (STREETS Project) now ensures greater integration and sustainability of the transport system.

Concerning the areas of **Research and Innovation**, we present below data demonstrating the achievement of results by the Italy Malta 2007-2013 OP.

Concerning forms of product and process innovation, experimentation in the wine-production sector (PROMED Project) ensured the development of 3 innovative winemaking protocols. Two of them were applied in Linosa (Agrigento), for the first annual production of sweet and dry Zibibbo wines, and one in Pantelleria, which allowed an increase in the fresh grape juice yields into must from 60% to 70%, without decreasing the quality of the final product.

The validity of these innovations has been recognized by entrepreneurs interested in investing on viticulture in Linosa, as well as by the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forestry, which implemented, within the parameters of the DOC production procedures, the protocol tried in Pantelleria (Trapani) thanks to the Italy Malta 2007-2013 OP. Furthermore, in Malta was created an experimental centre, on the model of the Dalmasso Winery in Marsala (Trapani).

In terms of agribusiness linked to dairy products (T-CHEESIMAL Project), the programme ensured the exchange and transfer of skills required for the preparation, in Malta, of the first specifications for the DOP production of the Gbejna cheese. This protocol was adopted by the relevant Maltese ministerial bodies and it is being reviewed for approval by EU bodies.

As regards the issue of social innovation (The HUB Project), the Impact Hub - Mediterranean Change Makers community is now part of the www.hub-net.com international network, which is present in more than 40 cities around the world.

In Sicily, the network participates in the management of 3 different sources of funding 1) One from the Jeremie Fund ESF Fund managed by Banca Etica in partnership with Microfinance, Furrow, Bee and Impact Hub, which focused on assisting micro, small and medium-sized companies with a strong social vocation; and, 2) The Guarantee Fund for Microcredito Siciliano, run in partnership with Banca Etica and the Messina Community Foundation designed for companies and businesses that cannot access traditional credit due to lack of collateral or insufficient credit history. 3) PerMicro, the leading microcredit company in Italy which operates throughout the country, with a clear social mission and which has been active in Sicily since 2013.

The Impact Hub experience has paved the way to Sicily for a series of similar initiatives that aim to create new communities and their networking to create in turn programmes dedicated to growing the skills and professionalism and innovation of large and small organizations alike.

Annex VIII – Closure of the OP Italia Malta 2007-2013

Financial Plan							Final declaration of expenditure		Calculation at the level of the priority axis			Calculation at the level of the programme	
Priority	Eligible Total	EU (Fund Contribution)	National Counterpart	National Public	National Private (*)	Cofin Rate	Total expenditure	Public Contribution	Calculated Fund Contribution (1)	Flexibility limit	Amount retained at priority level (2)	Capping to Public Contribution (3)	Capping to Fund Contribution (4)
	A=B+(z)	B	(z)=(x)+(y)	(x)	(y)	C=B/A	D	E	F=D*C	G=B+B*10%	H=min(F,G)	I = MIN (H;E)	L=min (I;B)
Priority 1	9.448.171	8.030.946	1.417.225	-	-	85%	9.508.507	9.508.507	8.082.232	8.834.041	8.082.232		
Priority 2	20.575.796	17.489.427	3.086.369	-	-	85%	19.628.832	19.628.832	16.684.508	19.238.370	16.684.508		
Priority 3	1.916.423	1.628.959	287.464	-	-	85%	1.916.423	1.916.423	1.628.959	1.791.855	1.628.959		
Programma	31.940.390	27.149.332	4.791.058	0	0	85%	31.053.762	31.053.762	26.395.698	29.864.265	26.395.698	26.395.698	26.395.698

(*) To be completed only when priority axes are expressed in total costs

(1) The amount resulting from applying the co-financing rate, established under the latest financing plan in force, to the declared eligible expenditure

(2) Capping to the maximum amount of assistance from the Funds as laid down in the decision of the Commission approving the operational programme increased by 10%

(3) Capping to the public contribution declared

(4) Capping to the maximum amount of assistance from each Fund to the operational programme as laid down in the decision of the Commission approving the operational programme