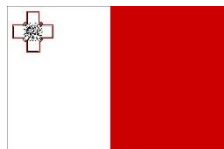


1st Annual Meeting
EEA and NORWAY GRANTS
2014–2021

Tuesday 20 March 2018
National Focal Point

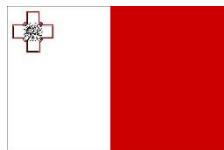


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The **overall objectives** of the EEA Norway Grants 2014-2021 are to:

Contribute to the **reduction of economic and social disparities** in the European Economic Area (EEA) and

The **strengthening of bilateral relations** between the Donor and Beneficiary States through financial contributions in the priority sectors.

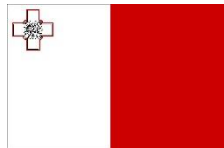


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Preparatory Meetings

The National Focal Point attended the National Focal Point Workshop on the EEA and Norway Grants 2014-2021 on **12 October 2016**. During this meeting feedback on the Blue book was discussed. Following these discussions, Ms Risa, acting Director at the time discussed the main proposals for change in the EEA and Norway Grants 2014-2021 Regulations. Other discussions included the following:

- The NFP's Role in Managing the Bilateral Funds;
- The Programme Preparation process – **From MOU to Concept Note.... From Concept Note to Programme Agreements;**



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Preparatory Meetings...[continued]

- The FMO invited the NFP to a meeting on the negotiation of the Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) on **2 December 2016** in Brussels. During this meeting, it was agreed that six Priority Areas were to be included in the MOUs namely:

European Public Health Challenges

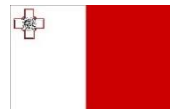
Children and Youth at Risk

Local Development (with special emphasis on urban areas) and Poverty Reduction

Cultural Entrepreneurship, Cultural Heritage and Cultural Cooperation

Decent Work (mandatory)

Civil Society (mandatory)



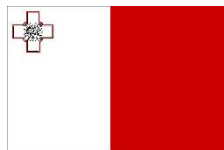
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Status of Programmes

Malta has received € 8 M from the peoples of Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway after two separate Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs), which were signed on **1 February 2017** between the 4 countries on the implementation of the EEA and the Norway Grants for the 2014-2021 programming period.

€ 4.4 M were allocated under the EEA Grant whilst € 3.6 M were allocated under the Norway Grant.

It is to be noted that Malta was one of the first countries to conclude the negotiations and sign the MoUs.

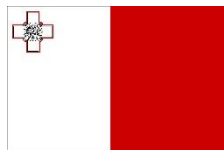


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Following the signing of the MOUs, the NFP invited potential stakeholders to submit their proposals in relation to the Programme Areas listed in the MOUs. These proposals were discussed together with the potential project promoters at a meeting held at the NFP's offices in Malta on **27 January 2017**.

The NFP was then invited to a kick-off meeting on the EEA and Norway Grants 2014-2021 in Brussels on **17 February 2017**. During this meeting, the following topics were discussed:

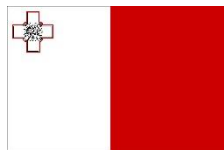
- The Legal Framework and main Milestones
- Financial elements in the Concept Note
- Planning for results
- Programme Areas in the MOU and implementation modalities
- The Active Citizens Fund
- The Bilateral Fund
- Next steps and guidelines



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The NFP in conjunction with the FMO, organised a **Stakeholder Consultation event** on **16 March 2017**, in which Project Promoters and sectoral stakeholders participated. Mr Sheamus Cassidy and Ms Anne Camilla Hilton met all stakeholders and discussed Malta's priorities as well as shared ideas with project promoters as well as other stakeholders.

The aim of this event was to agree on the main issues to be targeted by the 2014-2021 programme and the possible solutions to those issues.

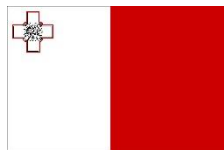


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Following the Stakeholders Consultation meeting, the NFP started working on the Concept Note. After presenting the first draft, the NFP was invited in Brussels for further consultations on the Concept Note. This meeting was held on **20 July 2017**.

The Concept Note was accepted by the donors on **19 February 2018**.

The Programme Agreement was then forwarded to the FMO on the required template, and is currently at their end awaiting approval.

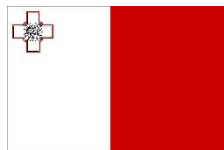


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TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE and BILATERAL FUND AGREEMENTS

The Agreements on the financing of Technical Assistance and the Fund for Bilateral Relations, amounting to **340,000 euros each**, were signed by the Financial Mechanism Office (FMO) and the National Focal Point (NFP) on **20 September 2017**.

No expenses have been charged to the technical assistance to date.

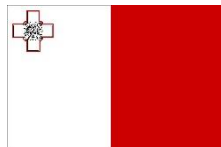


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Progress by the Joint Committee on Bilateral Funds

First meeting of the Joint Committee for Bilateral Funds (JCBF), took place on **20 and 21 November 2017**. During this meeting, there was:

- Discussion and approval on the Terms of Reference (ToR)
- Discussion and approval on the Work Plan:
 - To implement programme through a pre-defined approach
 - Bilateral Fund to be implemented through pre-defined initiatives (€200K) and through open call procedure (€140K)
- Update on the first year of implementation of the EEA Norway Grants 2014-2021



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The financial contributions shall be available in all the **priority sectors**, namely:

Innovation, research, education and competitiveness

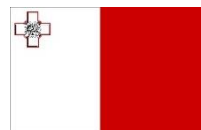
Social inclusion, youth employment and poverty reduction

Environment, energy, climate change and low carbon economy

Culture, civil society, good governance, fundamental rights and freedoms

Justice and home affairs

It is to be noted that there is a significant increase in the interest shown by Project Partners from Donor countries when one compares the current programming period to that of 2009-2014, signifying stronger bilateral relations.



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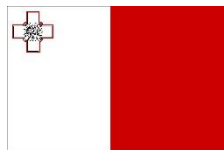
Major Proposals put forward for bilateral activities

The **Norwegian side** proposed:

- the prevention of domestic violence and violence against women, by concrete work on implementation of the Istanbul Convention and
- clean oceans, by concrete activities regarding the 'Our ocean' conference to be held in Oslo in 2019
- Valletta as the European Capital of Culture in 2018

The **Malta side** proposed:

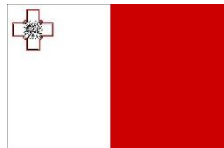
- collaboration between women mediators' networks in Mediterranean and Nordic countries
- initiatives in the maritime sector



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During **second meeting** of the JCBF to be held on **21 March 2018**, there will be discussion and decision on the:

- Pre-defined projects or the call for Projects
- Budget Annual Allocation
- Duration, budget and threshold for projects
- Priority areas
- The Application Pack, needed for the project selection and implementation



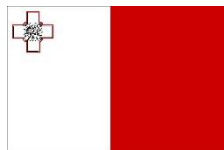
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Active Citizen's Fund

In view of Solidarity Overseas Service (SOS) Malta's recent re-appointment as Fund Operator of the Active Citizen's Fund (ACF), a Stakeholder Consultation meeting took place on **11 December 2017**.

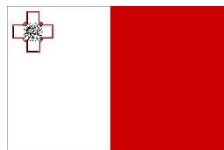
A presentation about the ACF, wherein the Funds and Programmes Division (FPD) participated as observer, was given by SOS Malta who explained the goals, aims and methodologies of the **€700,000** fund.

SOS Malta explained that the aim of the session was to hear from those present and discuss solutions.



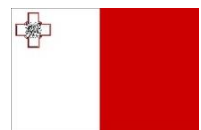
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Pre-defined projects under the EEA and Norway Grants 2014-2021



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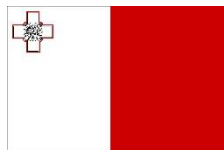
Project Promoter	Project Partner(s)	Doner Project Partner	Project Title	Budget €
Ministry for Health Malta	Ministry for Education and Employment (MEDE)	Norwegian Occupational Therapy Association	Reduction in social inequalities in health and the burden of disease	2,407,059
Appogg Agency within the Foundation for Social Welfare Services	None	Barnaverndarstofa - the Government Agency for Child Protection in Iceland	Opportunity Knocks (OK)	941,176
Local Government Division	The Local Councils' Association of Malta (LCA) The National Association for Local Council and Regional Executive Secretaries - MALTA (ANSEK)	Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities (KS)	Training of Local Council Staff in Principles of Good Governance, Transparency and Accountability	200,000
Heritage Malta	None	None	The Malta Maritime Museum: local development through cultural heritage	2,015,529



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Small Grant Scheme

Outcome(s)	Total amount reserved for the Call (€) including co-financing	Maximum grant amount per project	Minimum grant amount per project	Eligible applicants	Eligible partners	Estimated date
Improved quality of life of deprived communities in urban localities	€1,000,000	€100,000	€25,000	Local Councils considered as urban localities	Public sector entities; public service entities; registered NGOs	01/2019

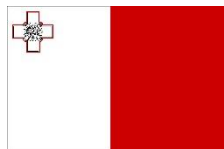


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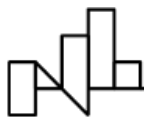
CARS II

Currently testing is being carried out on the CARS II online payment system, and it is envisaged that this programme will be up and running in **April 2018**.

CARS II contract between the Funds and Programmes Division and the Malta Information Technology Agency (MITA) signed on **18 September 2017** and was extended until end of **March 2018**.



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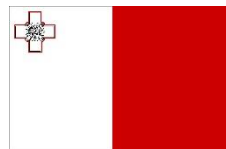
Further updates...DMCS

The first version of the Description of the Management and Control Systems (DMCS) submitted to the FMO together with the Audit Report and the Audit Opinion on **1 August 2017**.

The Audit Opinion included two observations namely

- the computerised accounting and information system which was still at design stage at the time of the audit opinion. An action plan for the implementation of the system was agreed between the Audit Authority (AA) and the NFP.
- the management and control system will be thoroughly checked by the AA during the system audits envisaged to be carried out in 2018.

Feedback on the DMCS was received from the FMO on **23 September 2017**. The second version was then sent back to FMO on **30 January 2018**.

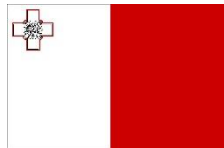


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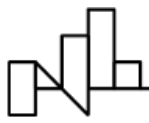
Further updates...[continued]

The Ministry for European Affairs and Social Dialogue issued calls for the positions of Senior Managers, Programme Managers and Programme Officers within the same Ministry in **November 2017**. Results related to all calls were published in **February 2018**. Since staff complement within the Bilateral Funds Unit responsible for the EEA and Norway Grants is not full, new recruits shall be joining the unit.

First draft of the Communication Strategy was sent to the FMO on **28 August 2017**. Feedback from FMO was sent on **27 October 2017**. A revised version was sent again to FMO on **1 March 2018**. FMO accepted the draft Communication Strategy on **13 March 2018**. Once finalised by the NFP, this shall be sent to the Donors.



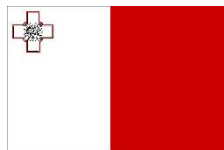
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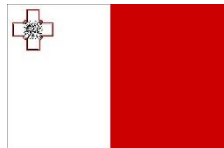
Further updates...[continued]

The Manual of Procedures was drafted, reviewed and is already available.

Current website **eeanorway2014-2021.gov.mt** is continuously being updated with latest information. A new mobile responsive website is being developed and can be accessed through various electronic devices such as smartphones and tablets. This mobile responsive website can be accessed by installing the *Maltapps* application is on the device. Thanks to this app, the general public can access through the Funds and Programmes Division for further information on all Funding Opportunities.



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