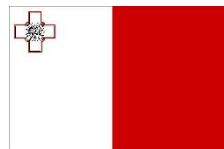


2nd Annual Meeting
EEA and NORWAY GRANTS
2014–2021

Thursday 21 March 2019
National Focal Point

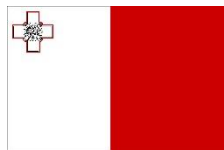


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The **overall objectives** of the EEA Norway Grants 2014-2021 are to:

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

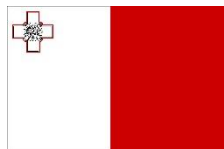
The **strengthening of bilateral relations** between the Donor and Beneficiary States through financial contributions in the priority sectors.



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**Overview of the implementation of
the EEA and the NORWAY GRANTS
2014 – 2021**

2018

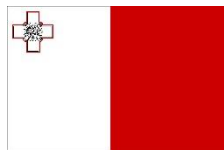


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Key activities in 2018

In January 2018, the NFP as PO submitted the Combined Strategic and Annual Report for year 2017. This was the last report for the 2009-2014 Programmes (adopted and approved during this same meeting).

On 20 March 2018, the NFP organised the Annual Meeting in relation to the closure of the 2009-2014 programme and updates on negotiations of the 2014-2021 programme. Following the annual meeting, the NFP organised the **second Joint Committee for Bilateral Relations on 21 March 2018**. During this event, the committee discussed the work plan and the Terms of Reference as well as various topics that can be of interest to Malta, Norway and the EEA countries in order to share experiences and knowledge. Two strategic topics that were discussed during this meeting were the Istanbul Convention on Domestic Violence and Our Oceans.



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From Supplementary Information to PA

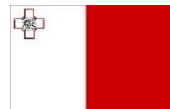
19th February 2018: The FMO gave the green light for the MT-Local Development Concept Note.

8th March 2018: the NFP as PO presented the first draft of the Supplementary Information to the FMO.

27 March 2018: The FMO sent their feedback on the first draft, followed by

23 April 2018: The NFP as PO sent the revised supplementary information. Constant feedback was being sent between the NFP, the NFP as PO, the country officer and the financial controller for the EEA and Norway Grants in order to discuss issues related to project budgets and the SGS selection process.

By end of May 2018: discussion, mainly on the Programme Agreement, was finalised in preparation **for the signing on 5 June 2018.**



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Signing of the Programme Agreement

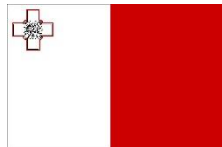
Malta signed the Programme Agreement for the EEA and Norway Grants 2014-2021 on **5 June 2018** at the Auberge d'Aragon, Ministry for European Affairs and Equality. Present at this ceremony were H.E. Margit F. Tveiten, Norwegian Ambassador for Malta, Hon. Aaron Farrugia, Parliamentary Secretary for EU Funds and Social Dialogue, Mr Paul Zahra, Permanent Secretary for EU Funds, and the Bilateral Unit within the Funds and Programmes Division amongst other guests. H.E Margit F. Tveiten signed the Programme Agreement on behalf of the Donors and Ms Carmen Dalli, Director Programmes and Projects, signed it on behalf of the Head of the National Focal Point within the Funds and Programmes Division.



Photo: DOI - Clifton Fenech



Photo: DOI - Clifton Fenech



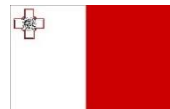
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Programme Launch

The Programme Launch for the EEA and Norway Grants 2014-2021 was held on **12 September 2018**. Present at this ceremony were H.E. Margit F. Tveiten, Norwegian Ambassador for Malta, Hon. Aaron Farrugia, Parliamentary Secretary for EU Funds and Social Dialogue, Mr Raphael Scerri, Director General at the Funds and Programmes Division, and the Bilateral Unit within the Funds and Programmes Division. Following the Programme Launch, Hon Aaron Farrugia held a bilateral meeting with H.E. Ms Tveiten to discuss various political issues including Brexit.



PHOTO: DOI - Clodagh Farrugia O'Neill



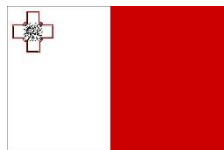
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CARS 1421

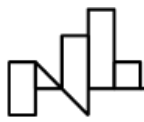
CARS 1421 contract between the Funds and Programmes Division and the Malta Information Technology Agency (MITA) was signed on **18 September 2017** and was **extended until end of March 2018**.

All data related to the Programmes and Projects was populated into the system. The PPs were then provided in-house training on the system in order to familiarise themselves and start processing payments.

The Treasury is in the process of following up on the Central Bank of Malta for the opening of the dedicated account on the grants. This process has taken slightly longer than expected and hence, the first IFR for this quarter was sent with a nil return.



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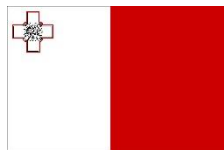


Management and Control System (MCS)

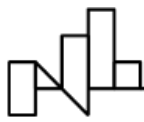
In reply to an email sent by the FMO on **23 September 2017** in which a list with comments and suggestions for improvement was provided, the second version of the MCS was again sent back to FMO on **30 January 2018**.

During 2018, several correspondence was made with regard to this document, with queries from FMO replied to in detail by **30 April 2018**. However, on **9 May 2018**, after confirmation that the CA has been assigned under our Ministry, the FMO informed that this constituted a change in the MOU. The amendment was done in both documents and the FMO accepted the change in the MCS and MOU in June and August 2018, respectively.

Latest update on the MCS: separation of duties was discussed during a training session with Mr Marius Henriksen on 7 February 2019, following which the FMO officially approved the MCS on **18 February 2019**. A further telephone conference with Mr Marius Henriksen and Ms Reka Kenesei was made on 14 March 2019 in order to clarify a few last issues. The requested clarifications were solved and the MCS shall be amended accordingly.

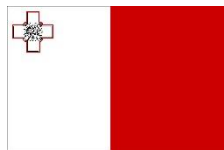


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Other Management updates

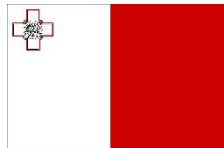
- A revised **Communication Strategy**, together with the **Communication Plan**, was sent by the NFP as PO on 15 March 2018. The FMO approved the Communication Strategy and Plan **on 7 May 2018**.
- The **Manual of Procedures** was drafted, reviewed and is already available on the Programme website (<https://eufunds.gov.mt/en/EU%20Funds%20Programmes/Bilateral%20Programmes/Pages/EEA--Norway-Grants-2014-2021.aspx#manual>)
- The current website **eeanorway2014-2021.gov.mt** is continuously being updated with latest information. A new mobile responsive website has been 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.



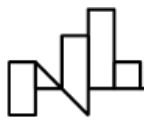
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Other Management updates.... Staff complement

- Staff Complement currently comprise 4 persons in all:
 - Head NFP (Director General)
 - NFP officer (Manager)
 - NFP as PO (one Director and one Manager)
- The position of a Senior Manager, is still vacant after Ms Marliese Attard joined our team in June 2018 but unfortunately moved to a higher position by end of August 2018. This position has not yet been filled to date.

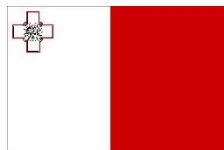


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Other Management updates.... Proposed changes to the PA

- A first request for changes to the PA was sent on 26th February 2019...
- The main amendments requested in the PA are namely related to the procedures to be carried out with regards to '*Selection of projects and Financial Parameters*' of the Small Grant Scheme. Other changes relate to details about PDP3 and the respective PP.
- An email from the FMO legal office on 18th March, confirmed that the NFP as PO can proceed to sign the agreement with the SGS Operator in accordance with the suggested changes.
- Other modifications, besides the above, are envisaged in the PA, including the introduction of baseline values in Annex I, as well as changes in the donor project partners and hence these issues will all be modified together at a later stage.

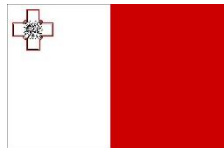


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Civil Society Fund – SOS Malta

The allocation to the Active Citizens Fund, Malta is EUR 700,000. SOS Malta was, once again, awarded the role of fund operator for this Fund on 4 October 2017, as a result of an open and competitive tender process. The organisation will be responsible for the development and implementation of the fund.

SOS Malta signed the Programme Implementation Agreement in February 2019. At present, SOS Malta is drafting the call text, guidelines and application for the issue of the Open Call as part of the pre-implementation process. A visit from FMO is also planned on 25th and 26th of March 2019.



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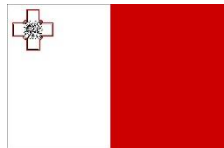
Social Dialogue Decent Work

The main objective of this programme is to strengthen tripartite cooperation between employer organisations, trade unions and public authorities and the promotion of decent work.

This Fund was launched **in October 2018** with a budget of €36,000 for Malta. On **3 December 2018**, the NFP as PO in conjunction with Malta EU Steering and Action Committee (MEUSAC) organised a meeting with the Malta Council for Economic and Social Development (MCESD) in order to promote the Social Dialogue Decent Work Programme with potential stakeholders. The deadline for the submission of project proposals was **the 7th February 2019**.

During the first call for proposals, the GRTU Malta Chamber of SME's submitted a proposal of €15,600 on fostering improved working relations for Micro and Small Businesses.

Since the budget was not fully exhausted, a second call might be issued in due course.



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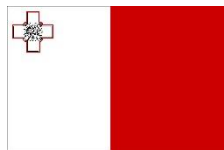


Fund for Youth Employment

The aim of the new EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment, launched in 2017, was to support measures that promote youth employment across Europe. Besides being a waste of human potential and talent, unemployment puts young people at risk of poverty and social exclusion, challenging the individuals welfare, health and future.

Malta shall be participating in a project, entitled **YOUNG-ICT_WOMEN**, which shall address the structural transformation of the digital labour market in which there are fewer women employed than men. The project will be implemented in 7 countries: Greece, Ireland, Latvia (Lead Partner), Lithuania, Malta, Romania and Spain. Partners from Norway (ECWT) and Belgium (Digital Europe) will use their expertise in the area of women and ICT jobs to support the programme. €2,717,396 was the requested grant.

The invitation to sign the project contract was sent to the Latvian lead partner in July 2018, for signature in August 2018.



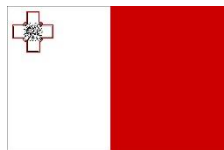
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Fund for Regional Cooperation 2018

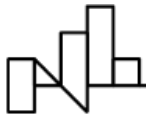
In May 2018, the NFP together with the Malta EU Steering and Actions Committee (MEUSAC), organised an Information Seminar on the Fund for Regional Cooperation. This information seminar was attended by all the eligible stakeholders including private companies and NGOs. During this information session, the attendees had the opportunity to discuss and plan in groups a concept note.



As a result, 5 Maltese entities participated in the call as Lead Partners while another 30 participated as partners. According to the information on the website, it is foreseen that the Financial Mechanism Committee will make their decision on the first step in March 2019 on which applications will be selected for the second application round.



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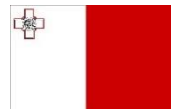


Programme Context with reference to the Combined Strategic and Annual Report 2018

A draft copy of this report highlighting the state-of-play of the programme for 2018 as well as the projects' current status since the launch of the programme was sent to the FMO on **18th January 2019**.

Alison shall be giving you an overview of the developments on the Projects during the year under review.

The introduction to the report highlights why Malta, through these grants, shall be investing in a number of key strategic areas that specially target vulnerable children, youth, persons with disabilities, the elderly, the working poor and the unemployed. This follows on Malta's *National Strategic Policy for Poverty Reduction and for Social Inclusion 2014-2024* (3 objectives). This strategy will form the basis of all PDPs and a Small Projects Initiative funded through a small grant scheme in order to provide support for the implementation of pilot initiatives in physical, economic and social regeneration of these deprived communities in urban areas.



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Projects

Four projects of which contract was signed in October 2018, and a Small Grant Scheme to be launched later on this year, shall be implemented under the EEA and Norway 2014-2021 Financial Mechanisms namely:

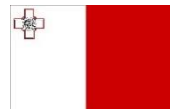
PDP 1: Reduction in social inequalities in health and the burden of disease- The Ministry for Health - €2,407,059

PDP 2: Opportunity Knocks- The Foundation for Social Welfare Services (FSWS)- €941,176

PDP 3: Training of Local Council Staff in Principles of Good Governance, Transparency and Accountability – Local Government Division- €200,000

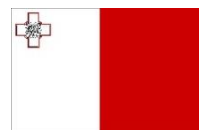
PDP 4: The Malta Maritime Museum- Heritage Malta- €2,015,529

Small Grant Scheme open to Local Councils in Urban Areas- €1,000,000



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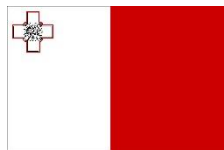
Project Promoter	Project Partner(s)	Donor Project Partner	Project Title	Budget €
Ministry for Health Malta	Ministry for Education and Employment (MEDE)	Norwegian Occupational Therapy Association (to be changed)	Reduction in social inequalities in health and the burden of disease	2,407,059
Appogg Agency 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; Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities (KS)	Est 09/2019



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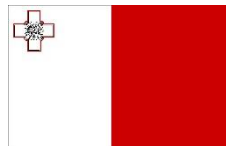
PDP 1: Reduction in social inequalities in health and the burden of disease

This project shall focus on three main areas in health:-

- Sensory Integration Therapy (SIT),
- Screening for phenylketonuria (PKU) and
- Nucleic Acid Amplification Testing (NAT).

Sensory Integration Therapy (SIT)

The SIT Centre will provide an opportunity for accessibility and equality in health services within the EU society. SIT aims to help children with sensory processing difficulties by exposing them to sensory stimulation in a structured, repetitive way. The theory behind it is that over time, the brain will adapt and allow children to process and react to sensations more efficiently.

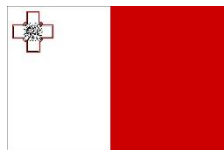


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PDP 1: Reduction in social inequalities in health and the burden of disease [cont'd]

Screening for phenylketonuria (PKU)

Screening for PKU shall enable professionals to recognise a genetic disorder that affects children at a very early stage of their lives in order to give ample time for modification of their diet and hence prevent the devastating mental degeneration that accompanies exposure to wrong diet.

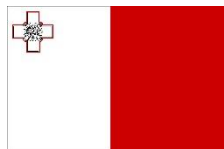


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PDP 1: Reduction in social inequalities in health and the burden of disease [cont'd]

Nucleic Acid Amplification Testing (NAT)

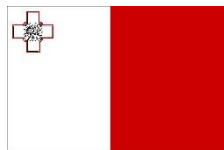
The NAT testing is a technique utilised to detect a particular nucleic acid, virus or bacteria which acts as a form of germ in blood, tissue and urine. The NAT system differs from other tests in that it detects genetic materials rather than antigens or antibodies. Part of this project shall be dedicated to the investment of hardware and capacity building specifically for NAT testing.



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Status of PDP 1

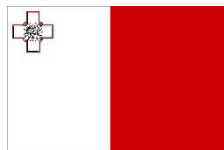
- Tender for Structural Works for the setting up of a Sensory Integration Therapy (SIT) Unit at the Marsa Primary School has been awarded. Contract is signed and bank guarantee has also been provided. Amount of tender, excluding VAT, is €734,553. Amount of Tender exceeds original budgeted amount of €630,000. The extra costs of this tender shall be covered by savings from other tenders. Works will start by end of March in order to start during the Easter recess, thus avoiding having schoolchildren on the premises. Duration of works is planned for 14 months.
- A ramp was also constructed in order to facilitate access to the physically impaired. This ramp is being paid through National Funds.



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Status of PDP 1 [cont'd]

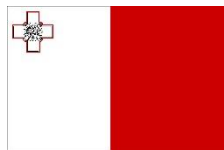
- Tender for Mechanical and Electrical Works has also been awarded and the contract signed by both parties. In this case, the project has recorded savings of €78,000. Amount of tender, exc. VAT, amounts to €287,000. Works on M&Es shall work in parallel with construction works.
- Tender for the supply, installation and commissioning of lifts at the Marsa Primary School has been awarded. Contract was signed by bidder, with a deadline until 28 May 2019. Since structural works experienced some delays, the contract may need to be extended. Eligible amount is €67,320.
- Tender for the supply of Standardized Assessment Tools for the SIT unit in Marsa has also been awarded and the contract signed on 6 December 2019. Delivery is planned for June 2019. Eligible amount is €28,692.



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Status of PDP 1 [cont'd]

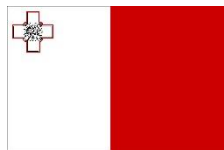
- Tender for the supply and fitting of floor and wall matting was awarded and signed. Delivery and installation of floor and wall matting will be postponed due to storage space. Eligible amount is €15,730.
- Tender for the procurement of sensory Integration Equipment was awarded in two lots. Both suppliers were awarded tender and contract was signed. This equipment shall be delivered by June 2019.



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Status of PDP 1 [cont'd]

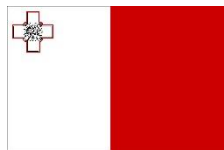
- Contract for the supply and implementation of a fully automated individual donor nucleic acid amplification technology (NAT) testing system for the national blood transfusion service has been awarded through leasing. Leasing for 10 years was considered as the best option since the other option of purchasing the equipment was considered highly risky, bearing in mind that the equipment can become obsolete in a very short period. The budget allocation on the project for this budget heading shall be covering 2 years of leasing. The other 8 years shall be covered through the Ministry's for Health National Funds. The cost is of €264,492 annually. Total amount to be covered by the project is €532,180. Delivery of the equipment is expected in May 2019. Contract includes training of two days to be provided by the Italian supplier in Ragusa, Sicily.



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Status of PDP 1 [cont'd]

- Tender for the supply, installation, commissioning and training equipment for PKU is awarded and contract is signed by contractor. Equipment was delivered. PP is awaiting first invoice in order to start processing payment through the CARS 1421 system. Eligible amount for this contract is €68,460. Training on this equipment is also to be provided in April 2019.
- Tender for publicity material was awarded and signed. Eligible amount is of €10,000. contracted amount to date is of €4,200 covering publicity material such as a billboard at the Marsa School, leaflets, roll-up banner and a plaque. The billboard was attached to the school's façade on 14 March 2019. The leaflets shall be disseminated to the parents of children attending the Marsa Primary school during a parents' day in order to be familiar with the project.



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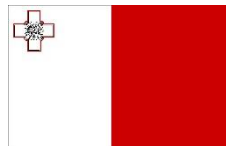
PDP 2: Opportunity Knocks (OK)

The Ok project pivots round the below four pillars:

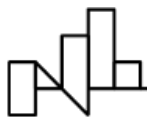
- OK Pack
- Fast Track
- Home Pack
- On Track

Project activities shall include:

- Campaign focused on rights and duties of young people towards leading an independent healthy life;
- Multi-disciplinary team of professionals providing professional services to the participating cohort of young people;
- 'safe house' setting supporting highly vulnerable and young individuals coming from dysfunctional families/ background needing a sheltered environment
- 'start-up and employment opportunities for individuals entering into duty-oriented agreements

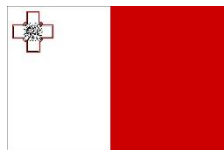


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Status of PDP 2

- Recruitment of professionals and other personnel is ongoing. At present seven professionals are working on the project.
- The PP is working on a prevention campaign as part of their publicity.
- Training of Professionals shall be focused on severe mental behaviour. PP is awaiting feedback from the Donors and FMO in order to see whether this training can be provided by the Norwegian Donor Project Partner should they still be interesting in pursuing their tasks within the project.
- The PP is constantly contacting the Norwegian Donor Project Partners in order to perform the bilateral visit initially planned for February. Unfortunately to date, the Norwegian Project Partners have not come up with a plan on the visit.



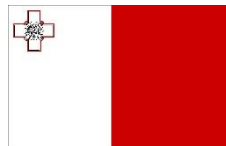
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PDP 3: Training of Local Council Staff in Principles of Good Governance, Transparency and Accountability

This project will focus on different forms of measures of capacity building, which may include

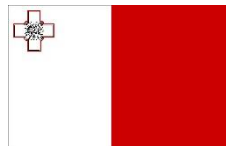
- the mapping out and identification of current community realities;
- information sessions with the eligible urban localities' Executive Secretaries in preparation to the launch of the SGS;
- Thematic networking initiatives in order to share experience and best practices for eligible urban localities;
- Fostering of dialogue between the political and administrative arms of Local Councils between the Local Government Division, the Local Councils and other Regional Authorities;
- Internships and/or study visits and/or stages and/or experience exchanges networks both on national and international level for Local Council Staff;
- Training to newly elected councillors following the local elections to be held in May 2019.



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Status of PDP 3

- The Local Government Division (LGD) visited Norway in September 2018 to meet bilaterally with the Norwegian Local Councils Association (KS) in preparation for this PDP. During this visit, the project promoter and KS finalised the Memorandum of Understanding between them outlining the roles and responsibilities of both parties on the pre-defined project. They also confirmed that all the logistics necessary to guarantee the smooth running of the officers' placements during the planned study visits are in place and that the Norwegian Local Authorities are fully aware of their support and mentoring role to the officials benefitting from these opportunities.
- Tender on Project Management was issued in February 2019 with deadline on 25 February 2019. Tender was evaluated and awaiting to be awarded.
- Publicity Tender is currently being drafted and shall be published by April 2019.

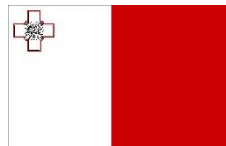


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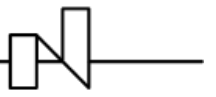
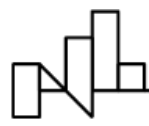
PDP 4: The Malta Maritime Museum: local development through cultural heritage

The main activities of this project are

- the restoration and structural upgrading of the Malta Maritime Museum, leading to an increase in the total area of visitor facilities, museum and exhibition space
- Innovative presentation of the Malta Maritime Museum's collection supported through assets digitisation

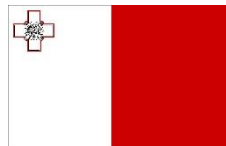


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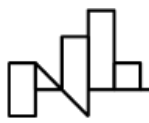


Status of PDP 4

- Tender for Project Management is in its drafting stage. This shall be a Contract for Service and shall cover the duration of the project i.e. 4 years
- Tender for Restoration and upgrading of the Maritime Museum is being drafted and shall be open to the market in the coming days. PP is planning to start works related to this tender before Summer 2019.
- Tender on restoration and upgrading (M&E and finishes) shall be drafted once civil works have been defined.
- Heritage Malta Technical Staff shall be attending the Museum and Heritage Fair in London in May 2019 in order to obtain knowledge on digitisation of historical artefacts. This event will be covered by Heritage Malta Budget.
- HM has installed a tablet at the door of the Maritime Museum in order for visitors to report their experience at the Museum. The results shall be part of the baseline for the average audience experience rating on a scale 1 to 5 as part of outcome 4 – Cultural Heritage Management enhanced.



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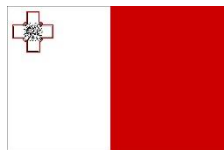


Risks Associated with the Projects

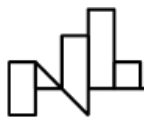
Programmatic risks



MEDIUM – HIGH		MEDIUM – LOW		LOW	
Risk Description	Response	Risk Description	Response	Risk Description	Response
Inadequate prog/project strategy or processes of the SGS	LDG, entrusted as SGSO, is the only government entity in charge of the LCs; building on previous experience in similar schemes	Technological issues related to CARS 1421	Ongoing IT support; training to all users; Help screens as reference	Obtaining permits	Basic permits are already in hand and hence the risk is limited. Contingency changes might be required in specific cases like MMM, an 1800's building with the possibility of revealing new archaeological findings.
		Lack of time for proper implementation	Milestone plans by PPs; bilateral meetings to keep track of timelines		



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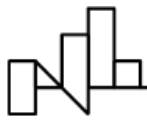
Risks Associated with the Projects

Operational risks

MEDIUM – HIGH		LOW	
Risk Description	Response	Risk Description	Response
Tender offers found technically non compliant during the evaluation process	Regular contact between NFP as PO and PPs for timely necessary actions taken with the Department of Contracts. Detailed Market research recommended pre-publication of tenders.	Possible delays in Procurement Tender offers exceeding available budget	Basic permits are already in hand and hence the risk is limited. Contingency changes might be required in specific cases like MMM, an 1800's building with the possibility of revealing new archaeological findings.
Eventuality of appeals lodged following publication of further results	PPs will be encouraged to organise clarification meetings/site visits during the procurement procedure in order to avoid such occurrences.	Retain the right staff in adequate numbers	Higher financial packages will be offered to the staff. Better communication between senior management and officers.



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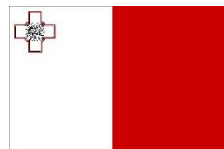


Bilateral Relations and JCBF

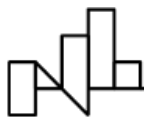
UPDATE ON THE MEETING HELD YESTERDAY, 20TH MARCH, 2019

MAIN POINTS DISCUSSED

1. Strategic Priorities and revision of the Work Plan
2. Pre-defined projects and Open Call for Projects
3. Budget Annual Allocation
4. Eligibility Criteria

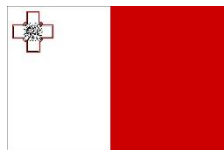


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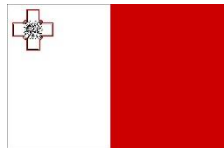


Communication

- Communication Workshop, attended by Ms Angele Azzopardi in Lisbon, on 24th and 25th October 2018 in order to share best communication practices and discuss common challenges and plans, now that most of the MSs had submitted their Communication Strategies and Plans, including Malta.
- Regarding the 25th Anniversary of the EEA and Norway Grants: Malta had already planned a drawing competition with schoolchildren and we are thinking of integrating this activity with the 25th Anniversary of the Grants. Any suggestions by the donors will be more welcome!
- Communication with FMO is ongoing even with regards to projects' monitoring. A monitoring mission was held in January this year by the FMO during which the FMO delegation met all PPs and now, on a bi-monthly basis, the NFP as PO is sending the briefs of the projects' status following bilateral meetings.



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