

# NATIONAL RURAL NETWORK MALTA



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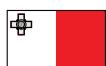
## Re-launch of Measures 4.1, 6.1 and 6.4

€3 million were allocated for M4.1 'Support for investments in agricultural holdings', €1 million for M6.1 'Business start-up aid for young farmers' and €2,500,000 million for M6.4 'Support for Investments in Creation and Development of Non-Agricultural Activities'.

The calls for these measures have opened on Monday 20th June 2022 and will close on the 30th September 2022 at 12.00pm.

More information on these calls can be found the website:

<https://eufunds.gov.mt/en/Pages/Home.aspx>



Rural Development Programme for Malta 2014-2020

Part financed by the European Union  
Co-financing Rate:  
75% European Union; 25% Government of Malta



*The European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development:  
Europe investing in rural areas*

## Measure 4.1 -

# SUPPORT FOR INVESTMENTS IN AGRICULTURAL HOLDINGS

### OVERVIEW

The aim of the scheme is to support livestock and arable farms in cost-effective and environmentally efficient systems and equipment concerning soil management, water capture and use, renewable energy, waste management, and improved efficiency of fertilizer and pesticide use and control. Support will also target improved productivity on holdings or within specific sectors, subject to the adoption of techniques and farming systems that will not cause environmental damage.

This measure will support on-farm investments aimed at improving the overall performance and sustainability of agricultural holding through operations that increase the productivity and rational use of inputs.

The Measure 4.1 budget for these calls derives from EURI budget which is aimed at contributing towards a resilient, sustainable, and digital economic recovery, in line, inter alia, with the agriculture - environment - climate objectives.

Investments that result in an increase of the irrigated area affecting a given body of ground or surface water shall not be supported under this call.

This new call has an allocation of €3 million, which in total will make the allocation for this measure under the current programme to €23.3 million. Farmers are entitled to receive up to €150,000 per approved project with an aid intensity of 50%.



### ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Investments in Measure 4.1 shall support applicants through the provision of grants to implement productive investments that are linked to the improvement of the overall performance and sustainability of the agricultural holding.

Investment for the adoption of techniques and farming systems which are sensible towards environmental ambitions are supported.

This measure is available to farmers, whether natural or legal persons must be registered on the Agricultural and Rural Paying Agency (ARPA) database (IACS). In case of legal persons, only small and medium-sized enterprises are eligible for funding. All applicants, whether individuals, partnerships or legal entities would need to be registered on their name having their own profile on IACS database and have the land being submitted as part of the application registered on their name with ARPA in the Land Parcel Identification System (LPIS).

Prospective applicants are advised to refer to the pertinent updated guidelines before submitting their project application.

Applicants are to note that purchase of soil is not an eligible investment.





## Measure 6.1 -

# BUSINESS START – UP AID FOR YOUNG FARMERS

### OVERVIEW

The Rural Development Programme recognizes the reality of young farmers and the challenges they face, economically and financially to set-up a rural enterprise. This scheme supports the creation and development of new viable Agricultural activities.

Article 19 of Regulation 1305/2013 defines a young farmer as ‘a person who is no more than 40 years of age at the moment of submitting the application and that has the adequate occupational skills and competence setting up for the first time an agricultural holding as head of that holding.

The same Regulation allows young farmers to set up with other young farmers to create a common agricultural holding between them.

All beneficiaries thus must:

1) meet the eligibility criteria in order to be recognized as young farmers, 2) also respect the thresholds defined at Member State level to enable access to support. Young farmers must have control of the holding.

Measure 6.1 will impact the following needs that are set out in the Rural Development Programme:

1) Maltese quality produce: improving quality, traceability, strategic marketing, adding value,

branding and promotion;

2) Sustainable Livestock: improving resource efficiency, competitiveness and productivity together with welfare;

3) Water, wastes and energy: improving sustainable use and generating renewable energy;

4) Wider rural economy and quality of life: developing rural tourism, rural skills and promoting social inclusion.

Young farmer start-ups will contribute to innovative developments as a younger and more highly trained generation enters the rural development sector. For example, the development of new products or new technologies, by young farmers or others setting

up in business will contribute to the innovation objective of the EU.

The new call has an allocation of €1M, which in total will make the allocation for this measure under the current programme to €6.7 million.

Type of support and maximum amount envisaged

Successful applicants will be granted a lump sum of €70,000. The lump sum is split into two instalments, the first instalment is of 80% of the eligible value that is payable to beneficiary upon signing of grant agreement while the other 20% are paid upon completion of the business plan by not later than a maximum of five years after receipt of the funding decision.



**Eligibility criteria**

The potential beneficiary should provide a business plan that has to be approved by the Project Selection Committee which shall contain as a minimum the following elements:

- 1) The present situation of the agricultural holding;
- 2) Milestones and targets for the development of the activities of agricultural holding;
- 3) Details of actions, including those related to environmental sustainability and resource efficiency, required for the development of the activities of the agricultural holding, such as investments, training, advice.

In order for the applicant to benefit from this scheme, they should possess at least one but not all of the following:

- 1) a holding or a farm,
- 2) VAT number
- 3) be recognized as a farmer with Malta's employment agency - JobsPlus
- 4) all the required licenses and permits

Applicants who benefitted already from measure 4.1 are not eligible to participate under this scheme.

Prospective applicants are advised to refer to the pertinent updated guidelines before submitting their project application.



## Measure 6.4 -

# Support for Investments in Creation and Development of Non-Agricultural Activities

### OVERVIEW

Measure 6.4 supports farmers to create or develop new economic activities by investing in non-agricultural activities with the aim to increase their income and to create occupational alternatives by investing in the domains identified in the Rural Development Programme (2014 – 2020).

The primary benefit derived from this measure is to give the opportunity to farmers to diversify their economic activity, so that their income also derives from other businesses, which is not necessarily related to agriculture. This is to compensate for the seasonality effects on their agricultural activity and have a more stable income throughout the year. This puts the

farmer in a better position to retain the agricultural activity whilst not be totally exposed to the risk of a volatile agricultural activity by widening the business portfolio to other economic activities which are not related to agriculture.

The new call has an allocation of €2.5 million, which in total will make the allocation for this measure under the current programme to €3.3 million

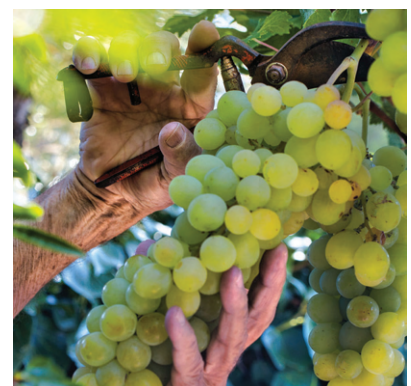
### Eligibility Criteria

Farmers (natural or legal persons [SMEs]) may be eligible beneficiaries no matter whether these are located in urban or rural areas. Projects however have to be implemented in a rural area. The list of rural areas is indicated in Annex I of the guidance notes to this measure published on

the website of the Managing Authority.

The eligible domains under this measure include investments related to rural tourism activities or activities linked to territorial economic development that are in line with and fall within the scope of the Rural Policy and Design Guidelines (2014) issued by the Planning Authority, the processing and marketing of non-Annex I products, the provision of services to all rural economic sectors or the rural population, the development of crafts and handicraft activities, the creation and development of parks such as wildlife and bird parks, and investments in leisure, recreational and sport activities.

The maximum grant amount that may be awarded is €200,000 and 50% of the total eligible investment cost may be financed under the measure subject that the relevant thresholds set under de minimis state aid rules are not exceeded.





# Crop wild relatives in the Maltese Islands

The development of agriculture was a great turning point in human evolution, which revolutionised human growth, due to a great shift in human lifestyle, from a hunting and gathering survival mode, to a technological self-sustaining state, entering the civilisation stage. However, this couldn't have been possible without the wild potentially cultivable species which, through artificial selection, have developed in the crops, both vegetables and fodder, which feed livestock and ourselves today. The development of cultivable crops also encouraged the developed of husbandry of livestock. To understand the importance of these species and breeds, we have defined these into two categories.

**Definition of local varieties or breed**  
Local varieties or breeds are those species, both cultivated vegetables, and domesticated animals, which morphologically, may be unique to that country or region within a country. Another terminology that can classify these varieties or local breed is the word 'Landrace'. 'Landrace' refers to those traditional breeds or varieties that belong to that country or region, where they have evolved culturally and environmentally, and that are truly adapted to the climate of their country, but still, man-made. They are different from pure commercial breeds, consisting of grasses or animals where the breed rarely varies, and which depends entirely

on man to live and breed, while the landraces are distinct, but variable in their population, and do not depend on intensive systems to be propagated, or bred.

## Definition of wild vegetable relatives (CWR's)

The wild relatives of agricultural crops, also called 'Crop Wild Relatives' (CWR's for short) can be considered as species of wild flora which, in terms of genetics, morphology and taxonomy, are truly close to their similar agricultural crops. The degree of proximity depends on the existing species, that is, which still persist in the wild, and on the basis of how they are taxonomically classified. Generally in taxonomy, species that are in a common genus, are likely to be closest to each other, however, and the classification depends heavily on morphology, and more recently on genetic studies.

Wild relatives may be either the ancestral or progenitor species of agricultural crops, which are probably best able to pollinate agricultural crops, or closely related



species, but which are not able to pollinate vegetables. Local examples of progenitor species are the Wild Artichoke (*Cynara cardunculus*), which is the ancestor of cultivated artichokes. On the other hand, a local example of wild relatives' species other than the ancestors, is the Squirting Cucumber (*Ecballium elaterium*), which is found in the same family, but not in the same genus of several species of Cucurbits', such as melon, watermelon, pumpkin, pumpkin and pumpkin.

Some cultivated fodder in the Maltese Islands can be found growing locally in the wild, such as White Pea (*Lathyrus ochrus*), Sulla (*Hedysarum coronarium*) and Common Vetch (*Vicia sativa* subsp. *sativa*)

The Plant Protection Directorate of Malta embarked on a project which focused on the conservation of local crop varieties and CWR's between 2013 and 2016.



Here are some other local examples

Closest possible Wild Maltese CWR's	Locally grown Crops
<i>Solanum villosum</i> and <i>Solanum nigrum</i>	Potatoes, Tomatoes, Green Peppers, Aubergines
<i>Malva arborea</i>	Cotton
<i>Lathyrus clymenum</i>	Peas
<i>Vicia leucantha</i>	Fava Bean
<i>Daucus carota</i> subsp. <i>Carota</i>	Carrots
<i>Hedysarum glomeratum</i>	Sulla
<i>Brassica napus</i> and <i>Brassica rapa</i>	Cabbage, Cauliflower, Kohlrabi, Broccoli, Kale
<i>Allium comutatum</i> , other <i>Allium</i> sp.	Leek, Onion, Garlic
<i>Aegilops geniculata</i>	Wheat

### Importance of Crop Wild relatives

Two reasons can be achieved:

- 1) For educational purposes for the general public and schools, showing that agricultural vegetables were once wild plants, and educating the public about the perceptions and misconceptions of some of the local flora.
- 2) For future genetic studies. CWR's are a genetic resource that can help local varieties of crops in the future, in particular to adapt to future climate change. CWR's may also form part of the daily diet or as feed for humans and livestock, respectively, and in the future may also be sources of medication.

