



14 December 2023

MEFL/EF/ Circular No 8/2023

To: Permanent Secretaries
Heads Managing Authorities
Head Audit Authority
Heads of Beneficiary Organisations
Chief Coordinators
Project Leaders

Electronic data exchange system

The Government of Malta is committed to further reduce bureaucracy and improve simplification in the management of EU Funds in Malta during the programming period 2021-2027.

Exchanges of information between programme authorities and the beneficiaries, when carried out by means of electronic data exchange systems, these are to be in line with Regulation (EU) 2021/1060 of the European Parliament and of the Council, including but not limited to, the data security, data integrity, data confidentiality, authentication of the sender in accordance with Articles 69(6), 69(8), point (e) of Article 72(1) and Article 82.

System accessibility and data entry to date was mainly through an interactive user-interface (i.e. a web-application) in the respective programmes' national information system.

A pilot project is being launched for beneficiaries under the programming period 2021-2027¹ via an optional technical interface using pre-defined protocols (i.e. web-services) that allows for transmission of data between Beneficiaries' information systems and the programme authorities. Through the use of Application Programming Interface (API) beneficiaries who opt-in to use this facility may transmit data related to the payment claim level. This facility may be expanded in the future to include other system areas.

¹ Applicable to the European Regional Development Fund; the European Social Fund Plus; the Cohesion Fund; the Just Transition Fund; the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund; the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund; the Internal Security Fund; and the Instrument for Financial Support for Border Management and Visa Policy. The electronic data exchange facility is also being made available to the Recovery and Resilience Facility.

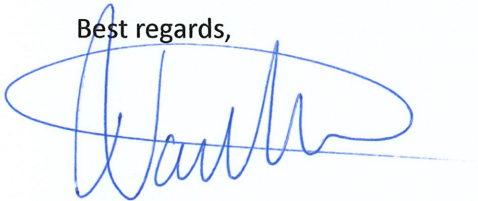
Heads of beneficiary organisations who opt-in to the use of APIs should ascertain that adequate procedures are in place to ensure:

- a. the security and maintenance of the Beneficiary's electronic system;
- b. data integrity taken account of internationally accepted standards as for example ISO/IEC 27001 and ISO/IEC 27002, data confidentiality;
- c. the authentication of the sender;
- d. storage of documents and data;
- e. the protection of individuals with regard to the collection and processing of personal data under the Directive (EU) 2015/849 and the Data Protection Act (Chapter 586).

In view that the national information system undertakes regular system updates, Heads of beneficiary organisations are hereby informed that APIs may be updated to accommodate enhancement requests from European and/or national authorities at short notice. Such enhancements may warrant rapid updates which in turn require the beneficiary to update their information systems. Heads of beneficiaries are to ensure that adequate resources are available within their organisation prior to undertake the commitment to use such electronic exchange of data.

Any queries pertaining to the onboarding and implementation of the electronic data exchange by beneficiaries are to be addressed through their respective programme contact within my ministries Managing Authority.

Best regards,



Mr Jonathan Vassallo
Permanent Secretary (EU Funds)