



Interreg Italia-Malta

Fondo Europeo di Sviluppo Regionale
European Regional Development Fund



UNIONE EUROPEA
EUROPEAN UNION

Minutes

4th Meeting – Monitoring Committee

18th April 2018 – Malta

On April 18 2018, the members of the Monitoring Committee of the INTERREG V-A Italia Malta Programme met for a meeting, held at the Intercontinental Hotel, Malta, as per the annexed attendance sheet. The meeting started at 0900hrs. The members of the Joint Secretariat and the representatives of the MA, also took part in the Monitoring Committee meeting. The representative of the European Commission participated via video conference.

Raphael Scerri (Funds and Programmes Division) in his capacity as Chairman, opened the 4th Monitoring Committee meeting of the INTERREG VA Italia Malta Programme by greeting the participants, verifying the quorum, declaring the meeting valid and reading the agenda as follows:

1. Approval of the agenda;
2. Decision on the results of the selection of the projects Public Notice 01/2016, Specific Objectives 1.1 and 2.2 - including the list approved by the Steering Committee;
3. Performance Framework – 2018 milestones;
4. Annual Implementation Report 2017 and the respective timeframes;
5. European Territorial Cooperation Day 2018;
6. Information seminars with the beneficiaries of the projects in 2018;
7. Updates on the development of the Ulysses information system;
8. Changes to the technical assistance plan;
9. Any other business.

Raphael Scerri also called for the discussion of the following points to be included under point 9) "Any other business": 1) Registration of State aid; 2) Joint Secretariat – Updates on the selection procedure of Profile IV; 3) Publication of the second call – Timelines; 4) Over Booking - Financial resources; and 5) Programme's progress; 6) Designation of the MA and the Certifying Authority.

The Monitoring Committee members approved the modified agenda with the discussion of the additional topics under point 9) "Any other business".

Raphael Scerri (Funds and Programmes Division) asked all participants to complete and sign the declaration of absence of conflict of interest so as not to find themselves in a situation of current, potential or apparent conflict of interest as beneficiaries of interventions co-financed by the ERDF under the INTERREG VA Italy Malta cooperation programme. All of the participants filled in the above mentioned declaration.

Point 2 – decision on the results of the selection of the projects

Marco Sambataro (Joint Secretariat) illustrated the procedural and administrative procedure of the Notice 01/2016 as well as the selection procedure for project proposals based on the specific objectives 1.1, 2.1, 2.2, 3.1 and 3.2. In particular, Dr. Sambataro presented a general overview of the selection criteria, the Public Notice 01/2016 and the resources allocated in this regard. Subsequently the results of the said Notice were illustrated with particular reference to the project proposals presented, subdivided by specific objective, the distribution of potential beneficiaries among the Member States and legal status. The timing of the evaluation procedure was then presented, starting from the submission of the proposals to the Executive Committee (March 2017)

up to the seventh meeting of the Executive Committee (April 2018). The main systemic errors, the results of the admissibility and evaluation phases of the proposals, the measures approved by the EXC and the MC and finally the figures related to the projects eligible for financing, admissible under condition and rejected, were presented. Finally, Dr. Sambataro illustrated the figures related to the absorption rates of the financial resources under the Notice 01/2016, with particular reference to the ERDF allocations assigned at the CP level by the said notice, to the ERDF allocations financed at the specific target level, and to the savings registered on the 01/2016 Public Notice. At the end of the discussion, the rankings of the projects eligible for funding, eligible under conditions and rejected projects were presented. Dr. Sambataro summarized the proposals of the Executive Committee discussed during the sessions of 05-07 March 2018 and 10 April 2018, to be validated by the Monitoring Committee:

- 1) With reference to the Bythos project, the Monitoring Committee has to decide on the proposal of the Executive Committee to ratify the project's admissibility for funding, if the partnership includes both the original additional co-financing of € 121,050 in the Application Form of the project and the respective budget of the beneficiaries, without any variation between them;
- 2) With reference to the I-Access project, the Monitoring Committee has to decide on the proposal of the Executive Committee to ratify the project's admissibility for funding, if the partnership modifies the line item "staff costs" of partners LP, PP2 and PP7 so as to ensure compliance with the percentage of 40% limit;
- 3) For the purposes of the final classification of the specific objective 1.1, the Monitoring Committee has to decide on the proposal of the Executive Committee to use the financial the financial resources still available under Axis I of the programme in line with the provisions of Art. 6 of the Public Notice 01/2016, for an ERDF amount of €2,126,465 to finance I.T.A.M.A. and I-Access.

At the end of this discussion, a debate on the results of the Public Notice 01/2016 ensued.

Patrizia Valenti (Certifying Authority) asked if the Notice 01/2016 provides for the possibility of going further down the ranking list so as to be able to finance additional projects.

Marco Sambataro (Joint Secretariat) clarified that Art. 6 of the Notice 01/2016 states that the final rankings (Priority Axis I, II and III) will have the validity of 24 months from the moment of their publication. Therefore, the Monitoring Committee will be able to allocate additional resources from those available in the programme at the request of the Member States for the possible financing of further project proposals which have obtained a good ranking, according to the minimum admissibility score defined in the notice. In this regard, Dr Sambataro clarified that the rankings relative to the specific objectives 2.1, 3.1, 3.2 (approved by the Monitoring Committee in December 2017) and 2.2 do not contain any projects that satisfy the condition provided for by Article 6 of the Notice 01/2016 and therefore no further projects can be financed.

Raphael Scerri (Funds and Programmes Division) informed the members of the Monitoring Committee that additional verifications are underway for the Maltese beneficiaries of the Notice 01/2016 with particular reference to those who have requested the de minimis contribution. Where it is ascertained that a beneficiary is not eligible on the basis of the provisions of Regulation (EU) no. 1407/2013 a reduction of the ERDF contribution to 50% will be required, thus adhering to the requirements of Regulation (EU) n. 651/2014. Moreover, a simultaneous modification of the budget before signing the subsidy contract and partnership agreement will be required.

Marco Sambataro (Joint Secretariat) clarified that it is also necessary for all private beneficiaries to verify whether the company is still active or whether there are particular situations that may have an impact on the Maltese legislative framework such as for example, bankruptcy procedures or companies in difficulty.

Raphael Scerri (Funds and Programmes Division) confirmed that the checks on the financial statements, on the activities of the companies and on their financial capacity had already been carried out. At the end of all the checks, the Maltese National Coordination Authority will send an official communication to the Managing Authority.

Silvana Dell'Abate (Agency for Territorial Cohesion) expressed a favorable opinion on the proposal of the Steering Committee to draw on the financial resources still available on Axis I of the programme in line with the provisions of Art. 6 of the Public Notice 01/2016 for an ERDF amount of € 2,126,465.

At the end of the debate, the Monitoring Committee ratified the admissibility for funding of the Bythos project if the partnership amends both the additional co-financing of € 121,050 in the Application Form of the project and the respective budget of the beneficiaries, without any variation to the amounts.

Furthermore, the Monitoring Committee ratified the admissibility for funding of the I-Access project on the condition that the partnership modifies the line item "staff costs" of the partners LP, PP2 and PP7 so as to ensure compliance with the limit of 40%.

The Monitoring Committee instructed the Managing Authority to notify the aforementioned decisions concerning the Bythos and I-Access projects, requiring the modification of the projects within seven days. The Monitoring Committee also authorized the Joint Secretariat to check whether the projects have complied with the aforementioned requests and to send the results of this verification to the Executive Committee. The MC finally authorized the Executive Committee to dissolve the conditions of eligibility to finance the Bythos and I-Access projects, if the respective partnerships have complied with the aforementioned requests.

The Monitoring Committee unanimously approved the proposal of the Executive Committee to utilise the financial resources still available under Axis I of the programme, in line with the

provisions of Art. 6 of the Public Notice 01/2016, corresponding to an ERDF amount of € 2,126,465 for the financing of the I.T.A.M.A. and I-Access projects.

The Monitoring Committee approved the rankings relative to the specific objectives 1.1 and 2.2, as well as the list of the proposals that are not eligible for the evaluation phase as transmitted by the Executive Committee.

Below are the rankings and lists of proposals, broken down by specific objective, as approved by the Monitoring Committee.

Avviso Pubblico 01/2016 – Graduatoria Obiettivo Specifico 1.1

N. Ulysses	Acronimo del progetto:	LP	Partner 2	Partner 3	Partner 4	Partner 5	Partner 6	Partner 7	Partner 8	TOTAL PROJECT FUNDS (ERDF+NC+PF)	TOTAL PUBLIC FUNDS (ERDF+NC)	PRIVATE FUNDS	SCORE VALUTAZIONE	CONDIZIONE DI ELEGGIBILITÀ ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	BUDGET FINANZIABILE (ERDF only)
70	Micro Watts	UNIMALTA	CNR	MCAST	UNICT	ECONETIQUE	Plastica Alfa Srl			2.415.048	2.415.048	-	489	progetto ammissibile al finanziamento - project eligible for funding	1.984.012
9	Bythos	UNIPA	Comune di Lipari	Distretto Pescaturismo e Cultura del Mare	UNIMalta	Malta Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture	Aquabiotec			In attesa di rettifica dell'AF/revised AF is pending	In attesa di rettifica dell'AF/revised AF is pending	In attesa di rettifica dell'AF/revised AF is pending	446	progetto ammissibile al finanziamento sotto condizione /project eligible for funding under conditions	In attesa di rettifica dell'AF/revised AF is pending
90	NATIFLife	UNICT	Comune di Catania	VITECO S.r.l.	Salupo s.a.s.	HELIOS srl	UNIMALTA	Paragon Europe Limited		1.118.889	1.118.889	-	437	progetto ammissibile al finanziamento - project eligible for funding	912.240
13	MEDIWARN	UNICT	UNIMALTA	AOU Policlinico Vittorio Emanuele						1.622.523	1.622.523	-	428	progetto ammissibile al finanziamento - project eligible for funding	1.379.145

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41	I-ACCESS	Università degli Studi di Palermo	CNR ICAR	Comune di Palermo	Dipartimento BBCC Soprintendenza BB.CC. E AA.	UNIMALTA	Valletta Local Council	Innovogy Ltd		In attesa di rettifica dell'AF/revised AF is pending	In attesa di rettifica dell'AF/revised AF is pending	-	419	progetto ammissibile al finanziamento sotto condizione /project eligible for funding under conditions	In attesa di rettifica dell'AF/revised AF is pending
18	I.T.A.M.A.	UNIPA Dip. di Fisica Chimica	UNIME-Dip. di Patologia umana dell'adulto e dell'età evolutiva	Ministero della Salute	AcrossLimits Ltd					2.081.623	2.081.623	-	416	progetto ammissibile al finanziamento - project eligible for funding	1.769.380
32	3CNet	UNIMALTA	6PM	UNIPA	Euro-Mediterranean Institute of Science and Technology					2.245.510	2.245.510	-	381	progetto ammissibile ma non finanziabile/project is eligible but cannot be financed	
58	IMOTRAD	UNICT	Ministry for Sustainable Development, the Environment and Climate Change	UNIMALTA	Municipality of Randazzo	Municipality of Castel Umberto				2.285.344	2.285.344	-	371	progetto ammissibile ma non finanziabile/project is eligible but cannot be financed	

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91	City+	Valletta Local Council	UNIMALTA	Icon	Comune di Palermo	CNR	InformAmuse S.r.l.			1.431.025	1.431.025	-	367	progetto ammissibile ma non finanziabile/project is eligible but cannot be financed	
43	Proteus	CNR IAMC	Regione Siciliana - Dipartimento BBCCI	ISTITUTO NAZIONALE DI FISICA NUCLEARE	Euro-Mediterranean Institute of Science and Technology	Etna Hitech	UNIMALTA	STARGATE STUDIOS MALTA LIMITED		2.441.988	2.398.988	43.000	354	progetto ammissibile ma non finanziabile/project is eligible but cannot be financed	
64	OLIMEDforHEALTH	Istituto regionale del Vino e dell'Olio	UNIPA - Dipartimento Scienze Agrarie e Forestali	UNIMALTA Institute of Earth Systems	Imġarr Local Council					1.212.245	1.212.245	-	349	progetto ammissibile ma non finanziabile/project is eligible but cannot be financed	
55	TRACER	CNR - Istituto per i Beni Archeologici e Monumentali	MCAST	National Archives of Malta	Etna Hitech	Capitale Cultura SAS	Acrosslimits Limited	The Hub Sicilia Società Cooperativa	Notarial Archives	1.983.952	1.983.952	-	348	progetto ammissibile ma non finanziabile/project is eligible but cannot be financed	

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38	MuSe	UNICT	UNIMALTA	PROGEN SRL	Regione Siciliana - Dipartimento BBCCI					985.044	944.844	40.200	341	progetto ammissibile ma non finanziabile/project is eligible but cannot be financed	
28	CUBIC-H	UNIPA DISTEM	UNIMALTA							1.171.345	1.171.345	-	316	Progetto rigettato/rejected project	
66	SPELAION	UNICT	Heritage Malta	INGV	ECOSTAT	GBT LTD				2.157.610	2.157.610	-	310	Progetto rigettato/rejected project	
19	ITINERA	Etna Hitech	Digitarca S.A.S.	Datanet	Teseo s.r.l.	Mad About video	Heritage Malta	Parco Archeologico Agrigento		2.327.224	2.327.224	-	308	Progetto rigettato/rejected project	
30	BIOREP	UNIPA	UNIMALTA	Silvercraft Products Ltd	K-Composites SRL					1.411.722	1.290.246	121.476	291	Progetto rigettato/rejected project	
51	VRAP	UNIPA	UNIMALTA- Department of History of Art	Soprintendenza BB.CC.AA di Palermo	Accademia di Belle Arti di Palermo					1.296.950	1.296.950	-	267	Progetto rigettato/rejected project	
102	ASPICI	James Caterers Ltd	Maltese Italian Chamber of Commerce	Comune di Favara	ISORS					957.071	957.071	-	261	Progetto rigettato/rejected project	

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47	OPER@	Distretto Tecnologico o Sicilia Micro Nano Sistemi S.c.a.r.l	UNICT BRIT	UNIMALTA	Maltese-Italian Chamber of Commerce					1.256.894	1.256.894	-	252	Progetto rigettato/rejected project	
3	SEMPort	NAVTEC s.c.a.r.l.	UNIME	UNIMALTA	Autorità Portuale di Messina					1.246.591	1.246.591	-	251	Progetto rigettato/rejected project	
75	SMArtBre ad	UNIMALTA	UNICT	Consiglio per la ricerca in agricoltura e l'analisi dell'economia agraria						1.924.066	1.924.066	-	247	Progetto rigettato/rejected project	
85	Better Cities	UNIPA	UNIMALTA	Valletta Local Council	Comune di Favara	ETT SpA				1.920.456	1.789.208	131.248	247	Progetto rigettato/rejected project	
52	GrHUB	UNIPA - CIRCES	UNIMALTA	Modica municipality	Ghajnsielem Local council					2.494.639	2.494.639	-	242	Progetto rigettato/rejected project	
74	FRONTIERE 3.0	Comune di Pachino	Città di BIRGU	Scuola Superiore di Catania	Fondazione Zammit					1.354.907	1.354.907	-	242	Progetto rigettato/rejected project	
63	VISITACI	UNICT	UNIMALTA	CNR IBAM	SOPrintendenza BB.CC.AA. SIRACUSA	COMUNE DI PALAZZO LO ACREIDE	CGC SRL			1.410.990	1.410.990	-	224	Progetto rigettato/rejected project	

N. Ulysses	Acronimo del progetto:	LP	Partner 2	Partner 3	Partner 4	Partner 5	Partner 6	Partner 7	Partner 8	TOTAL PROJECT FUNDS (ERDF+NC+PF)	TOTAL PUBLIC FUNDS (ERDF+NC)	PRIVATE FUNDS	SCORE VALUTAZIONE	CONDIZIONE DI ELEGGIBILITÀ ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	BUDGET FINANZIABILE (ERDF only)
42	SUTONET	Consorzio Centro per lo Sviluppo del Turismo Culturale per la Sicilia	Comune di Barcellona Pozzo di Gotto	Local Council of Birkirkara	Equinox Advisory Ltd					838.600	838.600	-	193	Progetto rigettato/rejected project	
27	MEDNET S	Ass.For.SEO Srl	Comune di Lampedusa e Linosa	Sicilia Film Commission	Charichelon Company Limited	Università Telematica San Raffaele Roma	Malta Tourism Authority			2.350.000	2.350.000	-	190	Progetto rigettato/rejected project	
20	KELIM	Comune di Rosolini	Comune di Noto	UNICT	Softeco Sismat s.r.l.	Valletta Local Council	Innovogy LTD			2.300.000	2.300.000	-	157	Progetto rigettato/rejected project	

Avviso Pubblico 01/2016 – Graduatoria Obiettivo Specifico 2.2

N. Ulysses	Acronimo del progetto :	LP	Partner 2	Partner 3	Partner 4	Partner 5	Partner 6	Partner 7	Partner 8	TOTAL PROJECT FUNDS (ERDF+NC+PF)	TOTAL PUBLIC FUNDS (ERDF+NC)	PRIVATE FUNDS	SCORE VALUTAZIONE	CONDIZIONE DI ELEGGIBILITÀ ELIGIBILITÀ E CRITERIA	BUDGET FINANZIABILE (ERDF only)
10	Job Match 2020	Collegio Universitario di Merito ARCES	ARANCIA ICT SRL	MALTA VOCATIONAL CENTER	MALTESE ITALIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE					661.369	661.369	-	431	progetto ammissibile al finanziamento - project eligible for funding	562.164

Avviso Pubblico 01/2016 – Proposte progettuali inammissibili alla fase di valutazione - Obiettivo Specifico 1.1

N. Ulysses	Acronimo del progetto: / Project acronym	Titolo progetto / Project Title:	LP	STATUS	MOTIVAZIONE / REASON
1	NAVNET	NAVal and Yachting transnational NETwork	Consorzio di Ricerca per l'Innovazione tecnologica, Sicilia, Trasporti navali, commerciali e da diporto s.c.a.r.l	Inammissibile alla fase di valutazione fornendo le dovute motivazioni / Ineligible for the evaluation phase with supporting arguments.	Mancata conformità del partenariato rispetto al criterio 9 Lack of partnership compliance with criterion 9
22	S.DA.Food-CE.IN Health	Sheep Dairy Food: Certification Innovation and Healthy Life	Consorzio per la Ricerca sulla Filiera Lattiero Casearia	Inammissibile alla fase di valutazione fornendo le dovute motivazioni / Ineligible for the evaluation phase with supporting arguments.	Mancata conformità del partenariato rispetto al criterio 4 Lack of partnership compliance with criterion 4
24	TENET	Tecnologie per un network per la valorizzazione del patrimonio culturale	Università degli Studi di Catania	Inammissibile alla fase di valutazione fornendo le dovute motivazioni / Ineligible for the evaluation phase with supporting arguments.	Mancata conformità del partenariato rispetto al criterio 8 Lack of partnership compliance with criterion 8
34	Crossbrand	Safety and Traceability in the rural productive sectors for the Community Led Local Development in Mediterranean Area	Università di Catania	Inammissibile alla fase di valutazione fornendo le dovute motivazioni / Ineligible for the evaluation phase with supporting arguments.	Mancata conformità del partenariato rispetto al criteri 5 e 8 Lack of partnership compliance with criteria 5 and 8
44	DORIDE	Monitoraggio Del patrimoniO archeologico marino finalizzato alla Ricerca Industriale per la ricaDuta sociale	Comune di Marsala	Inammissibile alla fase di valutazione fornendo le dovute motivazioni / Ineligible for the evaluation phase with supporting arguments.	Mancata conformità del partenariato rispetto al criterio 5 Lack of partnership compliance with criterion 5

N. Ulysses	Acronimo del progetto: / Project acronym	Titolo progetto / Project Title:	LP	STATUS	MOTIVAZIONE / REASON
46	VaRiOrIsMe	La Valorizzazione dei Rifiuti Organici nelle Isole del Mediterraneo	Agency for the Governance of Agriculture Bio Resources	Inammissibile alla fase di valutazione fornendo le dovute motivazioni / Ineligible for the evaluation phase with supporting arguments	Plico arrivato oltre il termine massimo fissato dall'Avviso Envelop sent after the expiring date indicated within the Public Notice
54	ValCon	Creating Value Constellation trough Culture as economic and social driver for the territories	Comune di Caltanissetta	Inammissibile alla fase di valutazione fornendo le dovute motivazioni / Ineligible for the evaluation phase with supporting arguments	Mancata conformità del partenariato rispetto al criterio 8 Lack of partnership compliance with criterion 8
73	CheBike	A Pervasive Platform based on Augmented e-Bikes for Cultural Heritage Sustainable Exploration	Università degli Studi di Catania	Inammissibile alla fase di valutazione fornendo le dovute motivazioni / Ineligible for the evaluation phase with supporting arguments	Mancata conformità del partenariato rispetto al criterio 8 Lack of partnership compliance with criterion 8
95	SMART LAB	Sicilian Maltese Across-the-board Reaserch and Technologies LAB	Comune di Mascalucia	Inammissibile alla fase di valutazione fornendo le dovute motivazioni / Ineligible for the evaluation phase with supporting arguments	Plico arrivato oltre il termine massimo fissato dall'Avviso Envelop sent after the expiring date indicated within the Public Notice
97	RAST	Rete Transfrontaliera di Agricoltura Sociale	Dipartimento Regionale dell'Agricoltura - Assessorato regionale dell'agricoltura, dello sviluppo rurale e della pesca mediterranea - Regione Siciliana	Inammissibile alla fase di valutazione fornendo le dovute motivazioni / Ineligible for the evaluation phase with supporting arguments	Mancata conformità del partenariato rispetto al criterio 8 Lack of partnership compliance with criterion 8

N. Ulysses	Acronimo del progetto: / Project acronym	Titolo progetto / Project Title:	LP	STATUS	MOTIVAZIONE / REASON
100	IN.TOUR	INNOVATION IN TOURISTIC ACTIVITIES	Gharb Local Council	Inammissibile alla fase di valutazione fornendo le dovute motivazioni / Ineligible for the evaluation phase with supporting arguments	Mancata conformità del partenariato rispetto al criteri 1 e 9 Lack of partnership compliance with criteria 1 and 9

Avviso Pubblico 01/2016 – Proposte progettuali inammissibili alla fase di valutazione - Obiettivo Specifico 2.2

N. Ulysses	Acronimo del progetto: / Project acronym	Titolo progetto / Project Title:	LP	STATUS	MOTIVAZIONE / REASON
23	WITS	WORKING IN THE SUN	SPORT E' VITA SOCIETA' COOPERATIVA	Inammissibile alla fase di valutazione fornendo le dovute motivazioni / Ineligible for the evaluation phase with supporting arguments.	Mancata conformità amministrativa rispetto al criterio 2 Lack of administrative compliance with criterion 2

Point 3 - Performance Framework - 2018 milestones

Marco Sambataro (Joint Secretariat) informed the members of the Executive Committee that during the month of March 2018 the Joint Secretariat carried out a detailed examination of the application forms of the approved projects and those that were envisaged to be approved, with specific reference to the activities, the financial outputs and performance targets set for 31/12/2018. The JS also held one-to-one meetings with the lead partners and the beneficiaries of these projects, with the aim at acquiring concrete feedback on the actual achievement of the respective outputs by 31/12/2018. At the end of this activity, each Lead Partner was asked to fill in a table showing the descriptive details (project output) and data (quantification of the outputs by 31/12/2018) of the project outputs that will contribute towards the valorisation of the programme's outputs and to the achievement of the performance framework indicators. On the basis of what was declared by each Lead Partner, Dr. Sambataro illustrated the outcome of this exercise and the contribution of each project towards the achievement of the output indicators at programme level, including the performance framework. The analysis highlighted the following:

Concerning the output indicators, the information provided by the Lead Partners shows that by 31/12/2018 the achievement of at least 65% of the expected target in the performance framework of the programme, should be ensured;

With regard to the financial indicators, a prudential estimate ensued, relative to a percentage between 10% and 20% of the declared expenditure that will be included in reimbursement requests by 31/12/2018 by the beneficiaries in the latest approved AF. On the basis of this exercise, it is highlighted that all the financial indicators envisaged by the performance framework based on Axes I, II and III would not ensure the achievement of 65% of the target as foreseen in the Programme's PF.

Gianluca Comuniello (European Commission) reiterates what has already been clarified during the Executive Committee meeting of the programme held in December 2017, explaining that the European Commission foresees the possibility of a review of the performance framework within the first half of 2018. Furthermore, Dr. Comuniello clarified certain aspects contained in the recent guidelines of the European Commission on how to revise the performance framework which include, among others:

- The possibility to review the performance framework in light of any factors that are not under the control of the authorities;
- that a single indicator, which will not be met, does not imply the interruption of payments by the European Commission, where more than two indicators would have been achieved under one programme axis;

- that the 2018 financial milestones may be reduced by the amount of advances paid to the programme pursuant to art. 134 of the Reg. (UE) n. 1303/2016 (initial pre-financing + annual pre-financing).

Dr. Comuniello suggested that the revision of the financial data in connection with the review of the performance framework should be submitted to the European Commission by the end of June 2018.

Raphael Scerri (Funds and Programmes Division) asked whether the advance payment received by the programme, can be redistributed by the Monitoring Committee on the different axes of the programme.

Gianluca Comuniello (European Commission) clarified that any reduction is to be dealt with at programme level, although it was also noted that the redistribution must be applied reflecting the allocation of resources on the respective axis.

Point 4 – timeframes pertaining to the Annual Implementation Report 2017

Raphael Scerri (Funds and Programmes Division) requests that the Italian version be transmitted to the Maltese National Coordinating Authority by the second week of May 2018 to allow the transmission of the same to the translator in charge. Finally, Mr. Scerri suggested that the approval of the Annual Implementation Report will be obtained using the provisions for an urgent written procedure as referred to in art. 10 (II) of the internal regulations of the Monitoring Committee.

The Monitoring Committee unanimously approved the proposal.

Point 5 – European Territorial Cooperation Day 2018

Raphael Scerri (Funds and Programmes Division) highlighted that since 2012, the Italia-Malta programme has always participated in the initiative promoted by the European Commission, carrying out interesting activities both on the Sicilian and the Maltese territories. On the occasion of EC Day 2018 it would be interesting to realize a joint event. In this regard, he asked the MA and / or the SC if there are proposals or initiatives worthy of being evaluated.

Chiara Di Bella (Joint Secretariat) said that the JS shares the idea of a joint event considering the fact that in 2018 Valletta is the European Capital of Culture and Palermo is the Italian Capital of Culture.

Therefore, the implementation of a joint initiative involving both cities would be a unique opportunity for the European Cooperation Day. Furthermore, Ms. Di Bella highlighted that among the projects approved under the Notice 01/2016, the I-Access project deals with cultural heritage and includes the municipalities of Valletta and Palermo as project partners.

Gianluca Comuniello (European Commission) also stressed that 2018 is the European Year of Cultural Heritage with the aim of encouraging more people to discover Europe's cultural heritage and to strengthen the sense of belonging vis-à-vis a common European area. Therefore, a joint initiative of the programme within the EC Day 2018 involving Valletta as the European Capital of Culture and Palermo as the Italian Capital of Culture, focusing on cultural heritage, will certainly have a broad media coverage at the European level, which might also interest officials within the European Commission that follow the "European Year of Cultural Heritage" initiative.

Raphael Scerri (Funds and Programmes Division) agreed with the proposed ideas and informed the MC members that the initiatives related to Valletta-European Capital of Culture are followed by the "Valletta 2018 Foundation", responsible for activities in Malta. Therefore, the MNCA will initiate contacts with the Foundation for their involvement.

Point 6 - Information seminars with project beneficiaries in 2018

Raphael Scerri (Funds and Programmes Division) asked the MA and/or the JS for a workplan in this regard.

Marco Sambataro (Segretariato Congiunto) informed the members that it would be opportune to organise three (3) information seminars for the beneficiaries (in Palermo, in Catania e in Malta), during the months of May/June 2018.

Carmen Dalli (Funds and Programmes Division) suggested organising the information session in Malta, on a date during the week between 21-25 May 2018. The JS will be liaising with the MNCA regarding the proposed dates.

Point 7 – Updates on the developments on Ulysses Information System

Raphael Scerri (Funds and Programmes Division) asked the MA and/or the JS for an update with regard to the developments on the Ulysses Information System.

Ilva Parlato - (Joint Secretariat) informed that, based on the advice of IGRUE/Audit Authority in preparation for the designation of the MA and the CA, the system is in line with the requirements stipulated by Reg (EU) no. 480/2014 section III as well as in line with the “protocollo unico di colloquio” necessary to submit information and monitoring data to the Italian “Baca Dati Unitaria”. Appropriate training activities for the programme authorities and beneficiaries will be planned during the month of May.

Carmen Dalli (Funds and Programmes Division) suggested to organise the information seminar in Malta, in conjunction with the seminars mentioned under point 6 above. Ms. Dalli informed that there is a Computer Lab at the Institute for Public Services. The JS will be liaising with the MNCA regarding the dates for the training session.

Point 8 – Modifications to the Technical Assistance Plan

The Monitoring Committee approved the modifications requested by the MNCA, which were already presented during the meeting of the Monitoring Committee meeting held during the month of December 2017, however the annual distribution of the relative resources should still be forwarded, in the absence of which it will not be possible to proceed with the uploading of the annual budget in the Ulysses system.

Point 9 – Any Other Business

With reference to the **Registration of State Aid**, the Managing Authority and the Maltese National Coordination Authority asked the representative of the European Commission for a clarification regarding the maximum amounts of de-minimis contributions in the context of territorial cooperation programmes. Dr. Comuniello clarified that the official position of the European Commission remained as stipulated during the INTERACT seminar held in Rome during the month of January 2018 and therefore, in the case of the de-minimis contribution, the conditions envisaged are those of Regulation (EU) no. 1407/2013. The ceiling foreseen by the Regulation (€200,000 public funds over a period of three years) is to be referred to the amount per Member State.

With reference to “Joint Secretariat – updates on the procedure for the selection of Profile IV”, Dr. Gianpaolo Simone informed the MC that the text of the public notice is now definitively agreed between the two Member States and that it will be published in the Official Gazette of the Sicilian Region in April 2018, and it will be widely distributed on the institutions’ websites.

With regard to the “**Timings of the publication of the second call**” Raphael Scerri (Funds and Programmes Division) asked the MA and / or the SC for a possible work plan on how to commit the remaining financial resources of the programme..

Dr. Marco Sambataro (Joint Secretariat) reported that the JS has made internal technical evaluations regarding the next programming activities on the financial resources of the programme that take into account both the need to ensure the achievement of all results and output indicators provided by the programme, and to use the savings generated by the public notice 01/2016. Therefore, Dr. Sambataro illustrated an operative proposal for the subsequent approval of the MC:

Notice II in connection with the call for projects proposals: (to be published immediately):

- OS 1.1 - *Targeted call* notification for the selection of operations related to the eligible action «C.1 Support for cross-border mobility of researchers through the provision of vouchers for the development of an" innovative and / or research project "»; € 3,400,000;
- OS 2.2 – *Targeted call notification* for the selection of operations relating to the eligible action «B.1 Creation of networks between Sicilian and Maltese professional technical training institutes and schools for the activation of work placement for young people and

new graduates, at companies (micro, small and medium) operating in the sectors of the programme's strategies ».€ 2,412,836;

- OS 3.1 - *Targeted call notification* for the selection of operations relating to eligible actions: "A - *Safeguard actions for terrestrial and marine biodiversity of the area and sites of the Natura 2000 network*" and "B - *Support for the dissemination of knowledge of the assets natural through the creation of innovative services and / or systems and the use of advanced technologies* » € 8.455.063;
- OS 3.2 - *Targeted call notification* for the selection of operations relating to the eligible action «B - *Measures to deal with the various risk scenarios*» € 1,798,852.

Notice III for the selection of projects (to be published after a first evaluation of the output and result of the operations already financed under the public notice 01/2016)

- OS 1.1 - *Targeted call notification* for the selection of transactions relating to eligible shares: «B.2 Investments to favor spin-offs (incubated and not incubated) for activities with high technological and innovative value between Universities and companies operating in the heritage sectors cultural and quality of life and health of citizens; » € 859.186;
- OS 2.1 - *Targeted call notification* for the selection of operations related to the eligible action «A.3 Aid for the start-up of innovative start-ups in the Axis II strategy intervention sectors» € 1,957,103.

Raphael Scerri (Funds and Programmes Division) asked to set proposed dates to ensure the publication of public notice II.

Gianpaolo Simone (Managing Authority) proposed August 2018 for the approval of the public notice by the MC in order to ensure publication in September 2018.

The Monitoring Committee approved the proposed plan and shall wait to receive the documentation relating to the public notice II.

With reference to the **Over booking of the Financial Resources**, the members of the MC agreed that over booking could be applied for the projects deemed to be 'eligible but not financed' which were not selected due to lack of resources under specific objective 1.1.

Raphael Scerri (Funds and Programmes Division) noted that past experience of the OP Italia Malta 2007-2013 has shown that the projects will underspend about 20% of the approved budget and therefore one could proceed with the selection of at least another project under the specific objective 1.1, using over booking. In this regard, Mr. Scerri informed the members that in Malta Circular MFIN 5/2014 confirms that, in similar cases, if a project is approved, Malta ensures coverage of the cost of the project. Therefore, he asked the MA to enquire about the possibility of funding a further project proposal under national/regional sources. In the event that one of the financed projects under the programme foresees savings, the project costs will be then charged to the programme.

Gianluca Comuniello (European Commission) asked if it is more appropriate to wait for the implementation of the projects and possibly finance further projects with future economies.

Raphael Scerri (Funds and Programmes Division) underlined that this procedure would require at least 18 months taking into consideration that the projects have just started the activities and from previous experiences on other programmes the procedure of verification and subsequent approval of use of resources takes a long time.

Gianpaolo Simone (Managing Authority) on the basis of what was reported by Dr. Scerri about the coverage of the cost of a project with resources foreseen by the MFIN circular, informed that he will verify a similar possibility through national resources.

Marco Sambataro (Joint Secretariat) informed that just in case the MA confirms the possibility of covering the costs with national resources, the JS should proceed with the verification process to finance the next among the projects deemed to be "admissible but not eligible". These conditions will be evaluated and approved by the Executive Committee.

Gianpaolo Simone (Management Authority) informed the members that the verification by the MA will take place in a short time to ensure the possible simultaneous launch of this project with the other projects already approved.

With reference to the theme of the programme's progress, Mr. Raphael Scerri asked the representative of the European Commission if even in the 2014-2020 programming period we can make use of the possibility of using the 10% flexibility principle as it was the case in the 2007-2013 programming period.

Gianluca Comuniello (European Commission) informed the members that the programme closure guidelines do not yet exist but the principle of flexibility of 10% should remain, probably between investment priorities and not between programme axes.

Raphael Scerri (Funds and Programmes Division) emphasized that to date the developments of the programme show that the projects funded under priority 3.1 would ensure the achievement of programme indicators. At the same time, priority 3.1 records savings of more than 8 MEuro, which using 10% flexibility or by modifying the programme financial allocation to OS 1.1, would allow the financing of further projects.

Gianluca Comuniello (European Commission) clarified that the "financing of further projects" is not a sufficiently strong motivation to use the principle of flexibility and / or to make a change to the programme. In any case, it is necessary in this phase to monitor the progress of the projects very carefully, verifying both their performance capacity and their capacity for absorbing resources, as it is absolutely certain that the programme indicators are reached. Only later it is worthwhile to think about any changes to the programme.

Raphael Scerri (Funds and Programmes Division) stated that the motivation behind the financing of further projects on OS 1.1 could be linked to the achievement of the target of n. 100 companies that is very ambitious.

Gianluca Comuniello (European Commission) agreed that this would be a good motivation but reiterated the importance of monitoring very closely the physical and financial performance of the projects already approved, before taking any decisions.

Ian Borg (Funds and Programmes Division) reiterated the need for a punctual check of the physical and financial indicators of each project that is perhaps more appropriate to do in a year's time when they are in full implementation phase.

Marco Sambataro (Joint Secretariat) emphasized that taking steps linked to the use of the flexibility principle or the modification of the programme is certainly premature, given the state of implementation of the programme. Furthermore, operating such a choice today would undermine the INTERREG V-A Italia Malta programme in which Axis 3 is particularly significant.

Silvana Dell'Abate (Agency for Territorial Cohesion) clarified that a more complete reasoning on the possible reuse of economies and / or displacement of programme resources according to the principle of flexibility could be more useful only after an evaluation of the results of the second public notice for the selection of projects.

The MC agreed with the proposal of reprogramming based on specific objectives 3.1 and 3.2, to be carried out in the event of a negative outcome of the second call.

With reference to the topic **Designation of the Managing Authority and the Certifying Authority**, the Managing Authority informed the members that the relative documents have been sent to the Regional Government Council for their immediate approval.

The 4th Monitoring Committee meeting ended at 2:00 pm.