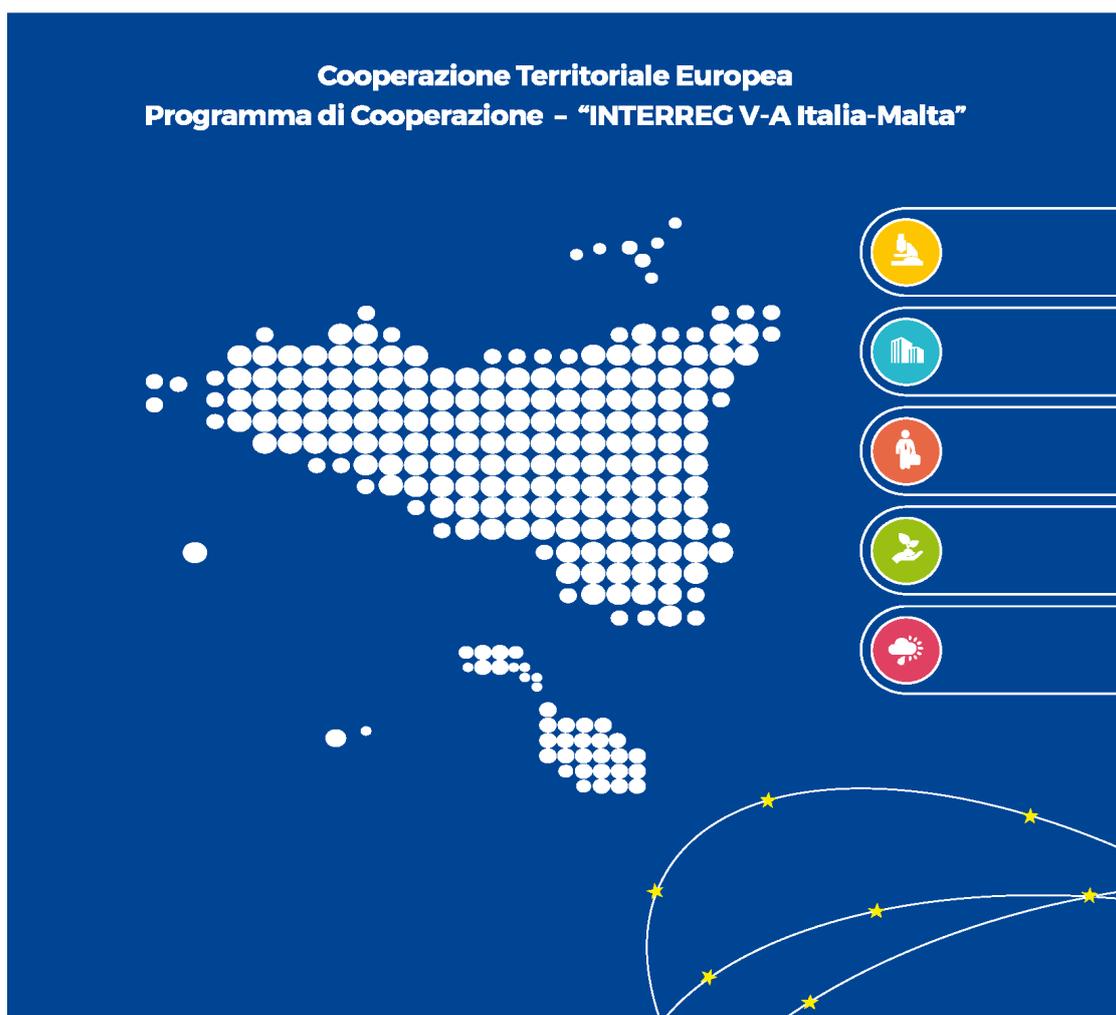




**Public Notice 1/2016 for the presentation of cooperation projects using a one step procedure under Priority Axes I, II, III of the INTERREG V-A Italy-Malta Programme**



## Article 1 – Subject

This *public notice* for the *selection of cooperation projects through a "one step procedure"* is aimed at acquiring punctual, concrete and feasible project proposals under the specific objectives 1.1, 2.1, 2.2, 3.1 and 3.2 of the INTERREG V-A Italy-Malta Programme – Axes I, II and III.

In line with the implementation strategy of the Cooperation Programme, below are listed the Priority Axes of the CP together with the respective specific objectives and the eligible activities which contribute to the fulfilment of the following general objective: "**contribute to a smart, sustainable and inclusive growth at cross-border level, aiding specialization in the research and innovation sectors, fostering the competitiveness of micro, small and medium enterprises, protecting the environment and promoting actions to mitigate climate change effects and the natural and anthropogenic risks of the area**".

- Priority axis I **Promoting the smart and sustainable growth through research and innovation** aims at accomplishing the following specific objective:

1. Enhancing the activities of innovation and research to improve the quality of life and the utilization of the cultural heritage.

- Priority Axis II **Promoting the competitiveness in the cross-border area** aims at accomplishing the following specific objectives:

2. To promote the creation and the enhancement of enterprises (micro, small and medium) in the intervention field of the cooperation area;

3. To promote the mobility of the workers in the crossborder area through the creation of operative networks.

- Priority Axis III **Protecting the environment and fostering an efficient use of resources** aims at accomplishing the following specific objectives:

1. to contribute towards the arrest of the loss of terrestrial and marine biodiversity in the area, maintain and reactivate the ecosystem and the protected area;

2. to promote systemic actions and technologies able to mitigate the climate change effects and the natural and anthropic risks with a particular reference to the catastrophic risks.

Based on the decisions made by the Monitoring Committee of the programme on 25/08/2016 for Axes I, II and III it will be possible to present project proposals through a "one step" procedure in accordance with the following **eligible actions**:

### For Axis I - Specific objective 1.1

- A.1 Actions to support clusters and districts of the Programme territories to identify innovative solutions for the enterprises to develop "non-technological innovation" (eg. brands, processes, marketing and services for enterprises which operate within the cross-border area)
- A.2 Enabling the use of areas for open innovation such as living labs/hubs for business services and Public Administration
- B.1 Strengthening of the Research Centres through material investments for the R&I in favour of the productive system to safeguard the cultural heritage, thereby improving its utilization, and implement pilot projects to improve the quality of life and social inclusion

### **For Axis II - Specific objective 2.1**

- A.1 Development/strengthening of cross-border services linked to diagnostics, the commercial placement of products, the compilation of business plans and foresight studies, to the predisposition of instruments to strengthen the commercial area (e-invoicing, tracking, e-tendering, electronic catalogues, etc.) to be allocated to potential micro, small and medium enterprises
- A.2 Creation and strengthening of social innovation realities (co-working spaces, fab-lab, etc) to support and promote the birth of new enterprises and to strengthen those which already exist

### **For Axis II - Specific objective 2.2**

- A.1 Strengthening/creation of cross-border consultancy centres to support cross-border mobility and job searching via the provision of joint services (information, coaching, tutoring, cross-border job fairs, the creation of platforms and web devices, etc), supporting the demand and supply of labour in the priority sectors of the programme
- A.2 Pilot actions for cooperation between the centres for orientation and employment in Sicily and Malta for the establishment of joint protocols

### **For Axis III - Specific objective 3.1**

- A.1 Interventions of restoration of the land habitats with a very high cross-border character with the possible elimination/mitigation, of the critical issues existing on site while maintaining and/or improving the current ecosystems in the Natura 2000 network sites
- A.2 Interventions aimed at reducing the impact on the biodiversity of the land and the sea provoked by the presence of invasive non-indigenous species (flora and fauna) and antropic activities;
- A.3 Interventions for monitoring and the control of the invasive species and/or to verify the integrity of the seabed and the structure and the functions of the ecosystems; in line with Directive 2008/56/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 June 2008 establishing a framework for community action in the field of marine

environmental policy (Marine Strategy Framework Directive)

- B.1 Joint initiatives aimed at promoting awareness and management campaigns for a sustainable use of the natural resources of the area; initiatives for the strengthening/creation and the utilization of Centres of cross-border environmental information
- B.2 Initiatives for financing observation points, accesses and infrastructures for didactic purposes (even through the use of ICT) to highlight the nature emergencies of the area (geosites, parks, reserves, etc.)

### **For Axis III - Specific objective 3.2**

- A.1 Pilot interventions for the organisation of measures of timely mitigation of the effects of climate change (hydrogeological instability, coastal erosion and of the areas of the "Natura 2000" network)
- A.2 Interventions for the identification and health coordination of the main health risks of the area
- A.3 Organisation of small infrastructures (including blue-green infrastructures) for the monitoring, the prevention and the adaptation to the marine hazard and to the study and observation of the weather and sea conditions of the area
- B.1 Interventions for the widening of the cover of the joint safety systems (through ICT) of the cross-border area including for the assessment of the risks proceeding both from natural alterations and by human activities at sea
- B.2 Interventions for the development of management systems of disasters proceeding from the sea, increasing also the resilience level of the most exposed populations
- B.3 Interventions to support the Search and Rescue operations through also through the joint integration of existing technologies and innovative models

### **Article 2 - Characteristics of the cooperation projects**

Each cooperation project should provide for a package of (specific, concrete and feasible) actions which are logically and coherently connected together, enabling the implementation of a single eligible measure within a single Specific objective and Priority Axis of the programme. Each cooperation project will be made up of project partners and a lead partner; with the latter representing the whole partnership with the MA and the other programme authorities.

The general objective of the cooperation project should contribute directly to the achievement of the specific objective under the respective Investment Priority. Therefore, the results of the project should be connected to the result indicator of the Programme. Envisaged outputs of the project should be directly connected to the outputs of the programme.

As a general rule, each cooperation project should ensure:

- 1) the project's consistency with the programme's strategy, the investment priority and the specific objective of the investment priority;
- 2) the project's consistency with national and regional policies and the measures taken to create synergies and to avoid overlaps;
- 3) the scope and the cross-border character of the project with partners that share common objectives and needs;
- 4) the innovative character of the projects, their concrete specialization on KET (key enabling technologies) and their medium to long term impact;
- 5) the consistency of the partnership, the relevance and competences of the partners in achieving the project's objectives;
- 6) the relevance of the financial plan and the consistency of the budget with the objectives;
- 7) visible, concrete and lasting results;
- 8) a financial allocation between a minimum of EUR 500 000 and a maximum of EUR 2 500 000 00;
- 9) a maximum period of 36 months.

### **Article 3 - Available funds and co-financing rates**

The available funds under this notice consist of the public community co-financing of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), equivalent to 85 %, and the national contribution (NC), equivalent to 15 %.

For Italian partners (public entities and bodies governed by public law), the NC is charged completely to the "Fondo di rotazione ex L. n. 183/1987" and is guaranteed by the Ministry of Economy and Finance – General Inspectorate for Financial Relations with the European Union (IGRUE) as a result of the CIPE Decision No. 10 of 28th January 2015. Private partners will assure the NC by funds belonging to themselves or guaranteed by another bodies.

Maltese public entities must follow MFIN Circular 5/2014. For Maltese partners (public equivalent and private), the NC is ensured by funds belonging to the partners themselves or guaranteed by another public body or other bodies.

The financial resources (ERDF and NC) made available by this Notice for the selection of cooperation projects are distributed exclusively on a reimbursement basis calculated on the costs incurred by the beneficiaries, which are considered eligible according to the Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 481/2014 of 4 March 2014, on behalf of the competent programme bodies.

In this regard, it is being understood that the provisions referred to in paragraph 9.2 of the Implementation Manual allow a 50 % advance payment of the budget resources of the approved project; each beneficiary (the lead and the partners), following the approval of the project proposal, shall ensure the necessary financial resources for the implementation of the project activities.

Any possible delays by the MA with regard to the distribution of the advance should in no way be alleged by the lead and partner beneficiaries of the project to justify the delay or the lack of achievement of both the expenditure targets and the results and outputs identified in the work package that is established in the subsidy contract and the partnership agreement.

Based on the decisions made by the Monitoring Committee of the programme on 25/08/2016, the ERDF resources allocated for this notice for each Priority Axis are listed below:

**Priority Axis I: EUR 6 800 000.00** (ERDF share) of which approximately:

- EUR 6 800 000 for Investment Priority 1.b – Specific objective 1.1

**Priority Axis II: EUR 5 309 368.90** (ERDF share) of which approximately:

- EUR 4 000 000 00 for Investment Priority 3.a – Specific objective 2.1
- EUR 1 309 368 90 for Investment Priority 8.e – Specific objective 2.2

**Priority Axis III: EUR 20 294 651.00** (ERDF share) of which approximately:

- EUR 11 369 651 00 for Investment Priority 6.d – Specific objective 3.1
- EUR 8 925 000 00 for Investment Priority 5.b – Specific objective 3.2

#### **Article 4 – Areas concerned by the programme**

The eligible area of the Cooperation Programme regarding the NUTS III territories is in line with the Implementing Decision of the European Commission on 16/06/2014. In particular, the territory concerned by the programme is:

##### **For Italy**

Sicily – NUTS 3 areas: Palermo, Trapani, Caltanissetta, Agrigento, Ragusa, Syracuse, Enna, Catania and Messina;

##### **For Malta**

Malta, Gozo and Comino;

In duly justified cases, the Programme can finance the implementation of operations or parts of operations even beyond the admissible areas of the Programme as provided by Article 20 of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013 (the total amount allocated to operations located outside the admissible areas should not exceed 20 % of the ERDF resources dedicated to the project).

#### **Article 5 – Types of admissible beneficiaries**

In accordance with the Cooperation Programme, the following bodies, with legal or operational set-up within the cooperation area, which fall under one of the categories listed for each Priority Axis, can participate in this call:

#### **Priority Axis I – Specific objective 1.1**

Central administrations and local authorities, research institutions, Universities, clusters/districts, SMEs, micro enterprises, enterprise incubators, chambers of commerce.

#### **Priority Axis II – Specific objective 2.1**

SMEs and micro enterprises (even in partnership), newly established enterprises, clusters/districts, universities, public and private research centres, scientific parks, innovation poles, category associations.

#### **Priority Axis II – Specific objective 2.2**

Regional and national research institutions, public administrations, higher education schools (technical high schools), enterprises (SMEs including the newly established ones) operating in the sectors of strategy, consortia/associations of SMEs, manufacturing and technological districts.

#### **Priority Axis III – Specific objective 3.1**

Regional and national research centres, universities and research centres, central, local and regional administrations, specialized state agencies and institutions, authorities that manage protected areas, category associations in the sectors of intervention of Axis III.

#### **Priority Axis III – Specific objective 3.2**

Regional and national research centres, universities and research centres, central, local and regional administrations, harbour offices, civil and military authorities, state agencies and institutions, category associations in the sectors of intervention of Axis III.

The beneficiaries listed above, for the purposes of eligibility to this notice for the selection of cooperation projects, should have one of the **legal statuses** listed below:

- Public entities:
  - "Contracting authorities" according to Article 2(1)(1) of Directive 2014/24/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council;
- "Bodies governed by public law" according to Article 2(1)(1) of Directive 2014/24/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council;
- Private entities, provided that they have a legal personality.

### **Article 6 – Selection criteria and procedures**

The selection of cooperation projects should respect the provisions referred to in Annex 1 of this Notice "*Selection criteria for operations Call No.01*".

On the basis of the conditions of eligibility for financing included within the selection criteria, each project proposals could be eligible for financing, eligible for financing with conditions, eligible but cannot be financed, rejected non-eligible.

Having regards to an “eligible for financing with conditions” project proposal, such conditions could refer to eventual budget, activities or part of, output/result indicators modifications that we'll be detailed within the evaluation grid of each project proposal. The revised project proposal, in line with the specific requirements, will be further evaluated.

Having regards to an “eligible but cannot be financed” project proposal, such condition refers to the lack of financial resources available for carrying out the project. On this regards, it is highlighted that the final rankings (Priority Axes I, II and III) shall be valid for 24 months from publication and the Monitoring Committee will be able to allocate further resources within the context of those available in the programme upon request of the Member States for the potential financing of further project proposals that get a final score not less than the minimum one specified within this public notice.

Having regards to a “rejected non-eligible” project proposal, such condition refers to the minimum score under which the project proposal won't be in any case financed due to its low quality.

The minimum score refers to:

- n. 130 scores for the assessment criteria of the project strategy
- n. 125 scores for the operational assessment criteria
- n. 60 scores for the specific criteria of the investment priorities

The project is considered “rejected non-eligible” whether the minimum score for each set of criteria is not reached.

### **Article 7 – Eligible expenditure**

With regard to the eligible expenditures, please refer to the expenditures identified in paragraph 9.4 of the "Manual for Programme Implementation" according to the existing regulation (Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 481/2014).

### **Article 8 – Documentation and modes of presentation of project proposals**

The documentation for the participation under this call should consist the following documents:

1. **Application Form** (part Word + part Excel) in two copies duly compiled in all sections, signed and stamped by the legal representative of the lead beneficiary who is responsible of its compilation and transmission;
2. **Letter of intent and co-financing (lead/partners)** duly signed and stamped by the legal representative of the lead/project partners of the project proposal; (Annex A)

3. **Copy (front and back) of a valid identity document** belonging to the legal representative of the lead beneficiary and each project partner;
4. **Formal administrative act** (Decree, Decision, Resolution, formal letter, etc.) which approves the project proposal, highlighting the total budgetary amount for the implementation of the project activities of the whole partnership. This letter/administrative act should be endorsed by the legal representative of the lead partner.;
5. **Any necessary permissions or authorisations** which verify readiness to develop the project proposal.

In case of participation of a private body and/or a "body governed by public law" (public equivalent entities) in line with the indications of paragraph 9.6.4 of the manual for programme implementation, it shall be necessary to attach also the following documentation:

6. **Status of the entity** (certified copy);
7. **Last two balance sheets/management accounts** approved by the entity;
8. **Option between contribution under the system of exemption or *de minimis*** (Annex C). In case the beneficiary (with legal status as a private entity and/or "body governed by public law") chooses the *de minimis* system, **ANNEX C - Section 1 - Declaration of State Aids** and **Annex C - Section 2 DE MINIMIS Declaration** should also be compiled. In case the beneficiary (with legal status as a private entity) chooses the system of exemption, he/she should also compile **ANNEX C - Section 1 - Declaration of State Aid** and **ANNEX C - Section 3 - Declaration of incompatible aid**.

In case the National Contribution (NC) for covering 15 % of the budget share of the private partner was guaranteed by another subject and not by the private partner themselves, the partner in question should also present the following document: **Letter of co-financing in favour of the private partner** duly signed and stamped by the legal representative of the subject which is ensuring the NC of the private partner; (Annex B).

The project proposals should be submitted **within 60 calendar days after the publication of this public notice in the Gazzetta Ufficiale della Regione Siciliana (GURS)** under penalty of exclusion.

Potential lead partners should also upload into the Ulysses System the above listed documentation no later than the expiry date of this public notice (60 calendar days after the publication of this public notice in G.U.R.S.).

For this purpose, each potential lead partner should submit to the email address [stc.italia-malta@regione.sicilia.it](mailto:stc.italia-malta@regione.sicilia.it) a request of an Ulysses system' account using the Annex D template.

The request should be submitted after the publication of the present Public notice but not later than seven calendar days before its dead line.

After the authorisation of the account, the potential lead partner should upload the required information for presenting the project proposal and attach in the proper section the whole documentation above listed, duly scanned (stamped and signed), except the excel section of the Application form (point 1) that should be uploaded in the original excel format.

After finalization of the uploading activities related to the documentation into Ulysses no later than the expiry date of this public notice, the potential lead partner should print the receipt generated by Ulysses confirming the upload of the project proposal.

In order to complete the submission of the project proposal no later than the expiry date of this public notice, each potential lead partner should submit to the MA an envelope containing the above listed documents and the receipt generated by Ulysses.

The envelope, sealed and signed on closing should read: **Programma di Cooperazione INTERREG V – A Italia-Malta (CCI: 2014TC16RFCB037) Avviso pubblico 1/2016 per la presentazione di progetti di cooperazione con procedura “one step” per gli Assi prioritari I, II e III del programma INTERREG V – A Italia-Malta Obiettivo Specifico \_\_\_\_\_** (indicate the specific objective for participation) - **NON APRIRE**, and should be sent , **no later than the tenth (10<sup>th</sup>) calendar day, at h 14:00, after the closing of the call, under the penalty of exclusion.** to the following address:

*Presidenza della Regione Siciliana*

*Dipartimento Regionale della Programmazione*

*Autorità di Gestione del Programma INTERREG V - A Italia-Malta*

*P.zza Sturzo, 36 – 90139 PALERMO*

The documentation for the participation in this notice can be delivered by hand or sent by registered letter or by mail, by the deadline stipulated in the call, as evidenced by the date shown by means of the postmark. In addition to the postmark, the validity of the procedure shall be confirmed by taking into consideration the date on which the application has been received. This date will be stamped on the package by the registry services of the Managing Authority.

It is hereunder reported the steps and the timing for submission of the project proposals:

- Validity of the Public Notice 01/2016: 60 (sixty) calendar days after its publication in G.U.R.S
- Request of an Ulysses system account: starting from the publication of the Public Notice 01/2016 in G.U.R.S till 7 (seven) calendar days before its expiry date
- Uploading of the project documentation into Ulysses system: starting from receiving Ulysses account till the expiry date of Public Notice 01/2016, under the penalty of exclusion
- Delivery of the project documentation by hand: no later than the sixtieth (60<sup>th</sup>) calendar day, at h 14:00, after the publication of this Public Notice 01/2016 in G.U.R.S.,

under the penalty of exclusion. The validity shall be confirmed by the date stamped on the package by the registry services of the Managing Authority

- Submission of the project documentation by registered letter or by mail: no later than the sixtieth (60<sup>th</sup>) calendar day after the publication of this Public Notice 01/2016 in G.U.R.S., under the penalty of exclusion. The validity shall be confirmed by the date shown by means of the postmark
- Delivery of the project documentation sent by registered letter or by mail: no later than the tenth (10<sup>th</sup>) day, at h 14:00, after the expiry date of this Public Notice 01/2016, under the penalty of exclusion. The validity shall be confirmed by the date stamped on the package by the registry services of the Managing Authority

Possible information and/or clarifications will be published on the website of the Programme [www.italiamalta.eu](http://www.italiamalta.eu), and the website [www.eufunds.gov.mt](http://www.eufunds.gov.mt).

### **Article 9 – Personal data protection and information on its processing**

The data acquired through this notice, which is necessary for the evaluation of the project proposals, is processed by the Programme Managing Authority (Presidenza della Regione - Dipartimento Regionale della Programmazione, P.zza Sturzo, 36 – 90100 Palermo) in accordance with existing law. According to the indicated law, such processing should be characterized by the principle of correctness, legality, transparency and privacy protection and the rights of the applicants to the contribution.

According to Article 115 and Annex XII of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013, the list of beneficiaries eligible to financing under the Programme, reference to the approved projects and the amount of allocated funds are subject to publication on the website of the programme [www.italiamalta.eu](http://www.italiamalta.eu).

### **Article 10 – Contact details**

The officer responsible for this public procedure is Gianpaolo Simone – Manager of the Regional Department of the Programme for the Region of Sicily [OOOOOOOOOO@regione.sicilia.it](mailto:OOOOOOOOOO@regione.sicilia.it). tel.: (+39) 091 7070036.

Contact details of the Authority:

#### **MANAGING AUTHORITY**

#### **Presidenza della Regione**

Dipartimento Regionale della Programmazione P.za Sturzo, 36 – 90139 Palermo

Telephone: (+39) 091.7070013/032

Fax: (+39) 091.7070273

Email: [dipartimento.programmazione@regione.sicilia.it](mailto:dipartimento.programmazione@regione.sicilia.it)

Website: [www.italiamalta.eu](http://www.italiamalta.eu)

#### **National Coordination Authority of Malta**

OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER – Funds and Programmes Division

Triq-il Kukkanja, Santa Venera - Malta

Telephone: 00356 22001142  
Fax: 00356 22001141  
Email: info.ppcd@gov.mt  
Website: www.eufunds.gov.mt

### **Article 11 – Disputes**

The lead partner of an "eligible but non-fundable project" and/or a "rejected, non-eligible project" will be informed in writing on the reasons for its rejection.

Only the lead partner of the project proposal has the power to appeal to the MA. The latter should be sent to the MA in writing by the lead beneficiary by not later than 10 calendar days after notification of the project being "eligible but non-fundable" and/or in the case of "rejected, non-eligible projects".

The appeals will be examined by the MA, who will then proceed by forwarding them to the Steering Committee. Once the counter-deductions have been examined, the Steering Committee will draft terms of reply, which will then be notified to the lead partner through the MA.

If deemed necessary by the members of the Steering Committee, such appeals will also be sent to the Monitoring Committee for the relative assessments.

In case of possible disputes resulting from the application of this procedure, the jurisdiction lies within the ordinary court of the Foro di Palermo.

### **Article 12 – Applicable rules and reference**

All provisions mentioned in this notice and the Manual for Programme Implementation shall apply to this procedure as well as during the implementation phase of the project. Although not explicitly provided for in this Notice, please refer to existing Community, national and regional reference law.

### **Article 13 – Annexes**

The hereunder listed documentation is attached to the Public Notice 1/2016 for the presentation of cooperation projects using a one step procedure under Priority Axes I, II, III of the INTERREG V-A Italy-Malta Programme and is part of it:

- Application Form (word + excel sections)
- Annex 1 – Selection and sub-selection criteria
- Annex A – Letter of intent and co-financing
- Annex B – Co-financing letter by the co-financing entity
- Annex C – Option between contribution under the system of exemption or “de minimis”
- Annex D – Request of an Ulysses system account
- Implementation Manual of Interreg “V-A ITALY MALTA”.