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1. Programme strategy: main challenges and policy responses

Reference: points (a)(iii), (iv), (v) and (ix) Article 22(3) of Regulation (EU) 2021/1060 (CPR)

Situated at the centre of the Mediterranean, Malta's geographical location is on one of the main migratory routes from Africa to mainland Europe. The extent of its coastline and sea borders increases the chances of high influxes of irregular migrants fleeing North African countries by boat. Between 2015 and 2019, the number of irregular migrants increased from 106 to 3,405, whilst 2,281 migrants were registered in 2020[1].

Malta is one of the EU countries most impacted in relation to its population density with a total of 4,021 first-time applicants registered in 2019[2]. This brought increased administrative challenges for local authorities such as the International Protection Agency (IPA) to process asylum applications whereby the latter increased by 29% in 2020 over 2015 figures[3]. Similarly, the Dublin Unit[4] processed 7,169 new asylum applications from 2018 until 2020. Furthermore, 2,377 outgoing requests were recorded by the office whereas 2,467 were recorded as incoming requests from other Member States[5]. The unit enables the provision of interpretation services to assist asylum applicants and improve access to information. Although interpretation services are largely available for Somalis, Eritreans, Syrians and Libyans, a wider language coverage is required to improve service offering[6].

The Agency for Welfare of Asylum Seekers (AWAS) and the IPA are responsible for asylum seekers. The former provides accommodation and other services while the latter processes asylum applications. These entities collaborate as necessary with the Armed Forces of Malta, which rescues and disembarks migrants and the Malta Police Force (MPF) which *inter alia*, registers and fingerprints migrants and determines whether detention orders are issued. Civil society organisations are important in facilitating integration at the local level.

As regards EU *acquis*, Malta transposed the relevant Directives into the Immigration and the International Protection Act.

Schengen Evaluation Recommendations

Malta has successfully addressed most of the recommendations of the 2016 Schengen evaluation on returns and shall continue to ensure their sustainability in the long run. On-going progress is taking place to address recommendation 14 in the field of return through works envisaged at Hermes Block, which is commissioned through national funds. Further efforts will continue to improve the conditions of detention centres across all sites in Malta including Safi Detention Centre, through national funds. For future evaluations, the AMIF Programme will prioritise and take into account as much as possible the implementation of any Schengen recommendations under the scope of the Fund and that have financial implications.

Strengthening the CEAS

The capacity registered in seven open centres in December 2020 was of 2,232 persons[7] whereas capacity in the closed centre was of 794[8], accounting for a 45% increase compared to 2018. Under the AMIF 14-20 National Programme (NP) various initiatives were supported including those aimed at: improving the quality of reception centres; supplying material aid; treating infectious diseases; providing psychosocial support and language courses; facilitating the asylum determination process; supporting migrant children in education, amongst others. Sustaining and ameliorating the current reception facilities and services remains necessary by upgrading services within accommodation centres, providing medical treatment and ensuring communication especially through the support of medical professionals and interpreters.

Whereas healthcare services are offered to migrants seeking assistance, also with the support of nationally funded free healthcare services, the need to provide more specialised medical treatment to vulnerable

individuals remains necessary. Enhancing training opportunities to frontline workers will help improve efficiency in the asylum determination process.

Unaccompanied minors (UAMs) are issued with care orders and provided with legal guardians to support their basic needs in line with the Children and Young Persons Act providing migrant children with equal access to education and other social services. Support to unaccompanied minors is provided through a protection system involving legal guardianship, schooling and support services. Efforts to address gaps in legal guardianship, pending the result of the age assessment procedure are being undertaken through modifications of the Immigration Act.

All newly arrived irregular migrants are subject to stay at a closed Initial Reception Centre (IRC) until they are medically cleared and relevant screening procedures are completed. The period of stay at IRCs is kept as brief as possible. In coordination with all relevant stakeholders, the Agency for the Welfare of Asylum Seekers (AWAS) monitors and screens, as and where required, all newly arrived irregular migrants for vulnerabilities. Vulnerable persons are allowed to continue residing at open centres beyond the normal length of accommodation contracts.

Immigration authorities carry out the necessary checks to register asylum applicants in the EURODAC database. EUAA (European Union Agency for Asylum) officials currently assist the IPA within the framework of the Operational Plan that was signed between Government and EUAA assess applications for international protection that fall under Malta's responsibility. The need to invest in resources that facilitate the asylum determination process remains important for efficient asylum procedures at first and second instance.

Since migratory flows are still evolving and rapidly changing also in light of the consequences of the recent refugee influx from Ukraine, any emerging needs will be considered during the implementation of the Programme.

Irregular migration

Between 2015 and 2020, 724[9] irregular migrants were forcibly returned to their country of origin (CoO). Migrants returned forcibly are subject to an entry ban and their details are listed in the Schengen Information System, in line with national monitoring systems.

Malta will continue to participate in EU initiatives such as FRONTEX, EURINT (European Integrated Return Management Initiative), EURLO (European Return Liaison Officers Network) and ERRIN (European Return and Reintegration Network) to facilitate the repatriation of irregular migrants. To achieve this objective, it is necessary to continue strengthening the referral network involving relevant stakeholders to effectively encourage migrants to return voluntarily to their CoO.

While over recent years voluntary return was regularly promoted among TCNs, the number of TCNs who returned voluntarily to their CoO between 2015 and 2020 stood at 89[10]. Further promotion of assisted voluntary return complemented by return cooperation management systems is required to ensure a continued uptake of voluntary return. Investing in voluntary return with reintegration assistance may incentivise migrants to repatriate and provide a true alternative to those in detention.

Irregular migrants who apply for international protection are only detained if the reasons set out in the recast *Reception Conditions Directive* and *Return Directive* apply, and on the basis of an individual assessment if it is deemed that less coercive alternative measures may not be applied effectively[11].

Voluntary departure is granted to anyone issued with a return decision, unless otherwise denied in which case the person concerned will be detained until removed. Less coercive measures apply in instances where circumstances in detention change allowing returnees to be released from detention while maintaining a delineation from asylum seekers and the detention procedure. Hence, detention is only applied as a measure of last resort. Through detention centres, migrants are not only provided with

accommodation but also free legal aid at appeal stage and basic necessities, among other services.

Integration

Besides illegal migrants, Malta attracts a number of TCNs through legal channels. *The Immigration Act* and Subsidiary legislation regulates the admittance in Malta of TCNs, amongst others, for the purpose of work, study, family reunification and seasonal work. The total number of valid permits issued in 2019 was 48,053[12].

In 2017, Government launched the *Migrant Integration Strategy and Action Plan* with a view to harmonise the services offered to TCNs. As part of the integration strategy, a dedicated Intercultural and Anti-racism Unit has been set up to facilitate the integration of migrants. Government prepared a National Anti-Racism Strategy and Action Plan to effectively address racism and xenophobia, eliminate radical behaviour and to increase awareness and education on diversity. The Intercultural and Anti-racism unit assists TCNs through the provision of Maltese and English language learning and cultural orientation courses, with the support of EU funds, in preparation for acquiring their permanent residency status. In 2020, 777[13] TCNs submitted a formal integration request to this Unit, which continues to strengthen further the provision of basic services.

The need to further enhance the provision of pre-integration support measures remains important. This implies the need to facilitate access to educational services and to maximise economic opportunities for both migrants and the native community.

In recent years, Malta developed a number of initiatives to facilitate migrants' integration through educational programmes and social activities. However, the increased number of TCNs, particularly children, continues to necessitate increased efforts to address demographic challenges, especially in the northern and northern harbour districts of Malta, which account for 49% of registered TCN children. Enhancing further awareness on preventive measures and ensuring the preservation of human rights remains crucial.

A number of other services available to TCNs including the protection of children, families and the community through psycho-social welfare and health services are also supported, through national funds. Through the latter, TCNs also benefit from social welfare services which are the same services granted to Maltese nationals. Building on these services, continued support for TCNs to find legal and adequate employment remains a critical element towards effective integration. However, further support to strengthen the rights of vulnerable groups at the local level is necessary through enhanced referral mechanisms, awareness raising and capacity building measures to counter human trafficking, sexual and gender-based violence, amongst others.

Contributing to solidarity and responsibility sharing

Between February 2016 and October 2017, Malta was amongst the first Member States to successfully relocate migrants from Italy and Greece in line with the European Council Relocation Decisions. In addition, pursuant to the pledging exercise for resettling migrants in EU Member States, Malta resettled several Syrian migrants arriving from Turkey in 2017. With the help of AMIF, and the needs that will be identified throughout the 2021-2027, further bilateral cooperation with other Member States for voluntary admissions may be explored by Government in line with the criteria laid out in the relevant EU regulations and other signatory framework agreements.

Strategy, Complementarity and synergy with other Funds

Interventions under this Programme are based on lessons learnt, feedback provided by key stakeholders, national policies and the broad areas identified in the AMIF Programme Fiche for Malta issued by the European Commission, which all contribute towards the AMIF main objectives.

ESF+ will support the long-term integration of TCNs and migrants and address disparities amongst migrant children, amongst others, including through the Child Guarantee. Further information is outlined in Malta's Partnership Agreement.

Lessons Learnt

Different cultural backgrounds, beliefs and languages meant that a one-size fits all approach is not successful, both in terms of reception and integration measures. A more tailored approach in the immediate term together with the engagement of professionals in the field, mitigated such barriers and assisted migrants to settle in a new foreign country. Such an approach will continue in the new Programme. Moreover, providing training courses to TCNs proved difficult often due to short-term contract work. To mitigate this, a pilot action is being implemented by Jobs+ through EU funds, whereby financial support is given to those TCNs who successfully participated for a whole training course on jobs skills. In terms of increasing reception capacity, challenges brought about by the high influx of boat arrivals and logistical issues from the construction of a the new open centre, resulted in the refurbishment of the Hangar Open Centre in Hal Far, being the more feasible activity to equally meet the required reception capacity.

Challenges in Administrative Capacity

Based on lessons learnt, further coordination is required to avoid fragmentation. Adequate implementation of EU funded Programmes depends on the skills and expertise of the persons working within the entities involved in the process. Strengthening expertise within relevant entities involved in the management and control of the Fund will continue to be prioritized. This shall be supported through the development of capacity building initiatives for Managing Authorities (MAs) and implementing bodies involved in the Management, Control and Audit of the Programme.

Furthermore, in line with the 2017 AMIF mid-term review, further assistance is required by the MA to guide project beneficiaries at application stage in order to improve the quality of applications, and subsequently to ensure the timely implementation of projects.

Training on project management, performance auditing, simplification measures, online database system, public procurement, evaluation, monitoring and communication practices, amongst others, shall be envisaged as capacity building measures to be financed through Technical Assistance. Furthermore, in view of the technical nature of the funding instrument, Government may seek external expertise, as necessary, to assist in the successful implementation of the Programme.

Simplification measures

On simplification measures, the possible use of the simplified cost options (SCOs) is being considered at the national level, including SCOs developed at a Union level, to facilitate the implementation of interventions taking into account the local context, including in areas such as salaries and training.

Where the total cost of an operation does not exceed EUR 200 000, the contribution provided to the beneficiary from the funds will take the form of unit costs, lump sums or flat rates, except for operations for which the support constitutes State aid. Where flat-rate financing is used, only the categories of costs to which the flat-rate applies may be reimbursed in accordance with reimbursement of eligible costs actually incurred by a beneficiary.

During the implementation of the Programme the MA will promote the strategic use of public procurement to support SOs (including professionalization efforts to address capacity gaps). Beneficiaries will be encouraged to use more quality-related and lifecycle cost criteria. When feasible, environmental (e.g. green public procurement criteria) and social considerations as well as innovation incentives will be incorporated into public procurement procedures.

Governance

The MA is guided by a set of rules, controls and procedures to ensure good governance in the administration and management of EU funded Programmes. Measures to mitigate the risks of fraud and other misconducts are applied by the MA through the use of tailored IT instruments, as outlined in the 2014 – 2020 Anti-Fraud Strategy and Policy[14] which aim to maintain high legal, ethical and moral standards, to adhere to the principles of integrity, honesty and objectivity. The MA also prepares a risk assessment register which includes all foreseeable risks and mitigating controls.

As for measures addressing conflicts of interests, the MA is guided by the Code of Ethics and the Public Service Management Code (PSMC) which sets standards of behaviour for all staff and covers conflicts of interest and confidentiality agreement. Declarations of Integrity, Confidentiality and Impartiality are also signed by all the staff of the MA.

[1] Source: MHSE, 2021

[2] Source: MHSE, 2021

[3] The IPA is responsible for the asylum determination process, regulated by the Refugees Act. IPA also receives applications for international protection from those already residing in the EU in a regular manner and those holding a residence permit/visa

[4] The Dublin Unit is responsible for the implementation of EU Regulation 604/2013

[5] Source: RefCom, 2021

[6] Asylum Information Database, 2019 Country Report: Malta

[7] These amounts reflect the number of residents residing in open centres as at January 2021

[8] AWAS, January 2021

[9] Source: MPF, January 2021, based on calendar years

[10] Source: IOM, January 2021

[11] Detention does not apply to vulnerable persons, including all unaccompanied minors, women with children, families and persons with a disability

[12] EUROSTAT, 2019. All valid permits by reason on 31 December, of each year

[13] Source: HRD: February 2021

[14] *And any subsequent amendments*, Funds and Programmes Division

2. Specific Objectives & Technical Assistance

Reference: Article 22(2) and (4) CPR

Selected	Specific objective or Technical assistance	Type of action
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	1. CEAS	Regular actions
<input type="checkbox"/>	1. CEAS	Specific actions
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	1. CEAS	Annex IV actions
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	1. CEAS	Operating support
<input type="checkbox"/>	1. CEAS	Emergency assistance
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	2. Legal migration and integration	Regular actions
<input type="checkbox"/>	2. Legal migration and integration	Specific actions
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	2. Legal migration and integration	Annex IV actions
<input type="checkbox"/>	2. Legal migration and integration	Operating support
<input type="checkbox"/>	2. Legal migration and integration	Emergency assistance
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	3. Return	Regular actions
<input type="checkbox"/>	3. Return	Specific actions
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	3. Return	Annex IV actions
<input type="checkbox"/>	3. Return	Operating support
<input type="checkbox"/>	3. Return	Emergency assistance
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	4. Solidarity	Regular actions
<input type="checkbox"/>	4. Solidarity	Specific actions
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	4. Solidarity	Annex IV actions
<input type="checkbox"/>	4. Solidarity	Operating support
<input type="checkbox"/>	4. Solidarity	Emergency assistance
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	4. Solidarity	Resettlement and humanitarian admission
<input type="checkbox"/>	4. Solidarity	International protection (Transfer in)
<input type="checkbox"/>	4. Solidarity	International protection (Transfer out)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	TA.36(5). Technical assistance - flat rate (Art. 36(5) CPR)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	TA.37. Technical assistance - not linked to costs (Art. 37 CPR)	

2.1. Specific objective: 1. CEAS

2.1.1. Description of the specific objective

In recent years and, more particularly, since 2018, the Maltese Islands have been experiencing an ever-increasing growth in migration flows. This increase resulted in considerable pressures on local administrative and financial resources particularly on the upkeep of reception facilities and long-term sustainability. Meeting the growing demands posed by increasing numbers of irregular migrants was rather challenging in terms of the capacity of physical infrastructures and even more so in terms of the human resources that are required to provide the necessary services of assistance.

Building on the 2014-2020 programming period where Malta sought to invest in its reception centres by upgrading existing open centres with a view to maintain adequate standards, focus in the next programming period will continue to aim towards safeguarding the interests and needs of the target group through the continuous provision of support services and the maintenance of accommodation centres to maintain the upkeep and support the needs of the migrant community. Complementary support for improving existing educational and recreational activities will also be pursued through this Programme with a view to improve the quality of life in reception centres.

Provision of Material Aid and Security Services

Support services for newly arrived asylum seekers will therefore contribute towards securing basic needs and access to rights and opportunities. Furthermore, Government aims to ensure that migrants continue to be accommodated in a secure environment, more so through the adoption of the Police Transformation Strategy. In this regard, the provision of security services to safeguard migrants shall continue to be supported through this Specific Objective. Such security services include regular checks around the centres with the objective to maintain order and prevent conflicts.

As per statistical data, over 13,500 migrants received some form of assistance between 2016 and 2020 through material aid and security services that were financed through the 2014 – 2020 AMIF NP. This justifies the need to continue investing in the provision of such services through the AMIF Programme, to ensure that migrants receive adequate support upon arrival as well as facilitate their eventual integration. This type of support is also in line with defined modalities for material reception conditions, as outlined in Article 18(2c) of Directive 2013/33/EC. Furthermore, complementary training initiatives supporting the operational capabilities of practitioners, in line with EUAA (previously known as EASO) guidelines, may be considered throughout implementation to strengthen the quality of work carried out by reception officers.

This holistic approach would aim to contribute towards achieving the objectives of the Fund while ensuring that investments will result in better management and coordination of reception centres. The expected results will be to continue assisting migrants with basic necessities, particularly vulnerable groups, improving the general well-being of migrants residing in open reception centres and reinforcing the security level of reception centres to maintain order and prevent conflicts.

Actions implemented through the AMIF Programme under this SO will contribute towards **implementation measure 1(a)** through the actions outlined in **Annex III(1f) and (2a)** which will be implemented through the following funding priorities:

·Ensuring continuous provision of basic material aid and security services

Such actions shall include the provision of material aid including food supplies, medical, social assistance, subsistence allowance and counselling support offered by social workers, amongst others and will contribute to output indicators **O.1.1** and **O.1.1.3** and result indicator **R.1.7**.

Strengthening communication with migrants

Facilitating communication with TCNs as well as ensuring the transfer of information through adequate channels requires a proactive approach across Government. In this regard, Government will seek to invest in redesigning communication tools through digital means to facilitate the transfer of information between Law Enforcement Authorities and newly arrived migrants. On average, Malta receives 1,214 boat arrivals per year which calls for the need of having in place a digitalised system that can be easily understood by migrants in different languages. Competent authorities will continue to build upon existing information actions to further assist new-comer migrants who arrive in Malta to better comprehend the asylum determination process. These shall extend to the general procedures, related remedies, available legal support and access to information. Information on their rights and duties within the asylum determination process can help facilitate this transitional period also through the assistance and support of cultural mediators and interpreters. In this regard, digital means may help simplify understanding and communication and facilitate accessibility to information. The expected result of this action is to contribute towards restoring a sense of belonging between the native and migrant communities, as well as improving communication.

Actions implemented with the support of the Fund will contribute towards **implementation measure 1(a)** through the actions outlined in **Annex III (1f)** which will be implemented through the following funding priority:

Facilitating access to information on the asylum determination process for migrants

Such actions will include the creation of an animated video that explains the rights and duties of migrants upon their arrival and will contribute towards output indicators **O.1.1** and **O.1.1.3**.

Support for vulnerable groups

Support towards assisting vulnerable groups will continue to be prioritized through this Programme, in order to ensure that migrants receive immediate assistance to address traumatic events. Building on initiatives supported through the 2014-2020 AMIF NP, the need to continue supporting applicants of international protection through continuous medical treatment and screening, in line with the Reception Conditions Directive remains important.

The Infectious Diseases Unit within Mater Dei, financed through the 2014 – 2020 AMIF NP, shall continue to be operational through national funds whereby contagious cases will be referred to this Unit for further treatment. This contributes towards sustaining the investment made in the Migrant Health Unit, set up in 2008 to address the specific needs of the population[1]. Nonetheless, the AMIF Programme will aim to focus on actions involving immediate care for asylum seekers whereas long-term support for vulnerable groups will continue to be provided through ESF+ through inclusivity, social protection, health and long-term integration services[1].

Malta has always been at the forefront in meeting the basic needs of all new irregular migrants including through the provision of health care services for the benefit of the whole migrant population. With the

support of EU funds, a total of 82 migrant patients received the necessary healthcare assistance in the form of emergency and treatment of serious mental disorders between 2014 and 2020. Similarly, over 1,000 migrants were also assisted through psychosocial assistance between 2019 and 2020. This justifies the need to continue providing mental care services to ensure the continuous support to all migrants, in particular vulnerable groups.

The AMIF Programme foresees the continuation of such actions which will contribute towards **implementation measure 1(a)** through the actions outlined in **Annex III (2d)** which will be implemented through the following funding priority:

Addressing the needs of the migrant community through the provision of healthcare services for the protection of vulnerable groups, in particular mental healthcare

This intervention will continue to offer medical services to all those in need, including migrants, through the provision of mental care services and psychosocial assistance, putting them on the same level as the rest of the population and will contribute towards output indicators **O.1.1** and **O.1.1.3**, and result indicator **R.1.7**.

From a social perspective, Government also aims to support the migrant community through the necessary social support services supported by other funding resources. In this regard, unaccompanied minors will continue to receive the necessary support through the assignment of legal guardians. Within this context, measures aimed at strengthening the system of legal guardianship of migrant children may be considered through the provision of training for legal guardians. Efforts will also be made to increase the pool of legal guardians.

All unaccompanied minors shall be provided with residential care services and have access to mainstream education[2]. In the eventuality that family members are identified, measures towards facilitating the reunification of the minor with the respective family members will continue to be adopted through other funding sources. The continuation of these support services will ensure that migrants are provided with good quality services that safeguard their interests while improving their general well-being.

Strengthening the asylum determination procedure

Nearly all of those migrants who reach Malta apply for international protection. The IPA registered a 29% increase in asylum applications in 2020 compared to 2015 figures, following an increase in migration flows. The substantial increase in asylum applications continues to put pressure on the competent authorities to process and issue decisions within reasonable timeframes. In order to address the challenge of processing asylum applications in an efficient and timely manner, increased capacity building measures including appropriate training in linguistic abilities, fundamental rights safeguards and cultural awareness is critical to equip professionals dealing with migrants with the necessary skills and competences.

Within this context, interpretation plays an important role in asylum determination. In this regard, Government will seek to strengthen the pool of interpreters for various languages that complement existing languages, including Arabic, French, Eritrean, Russian, Somali and Bengali, amongst others, to further facilitate the asylum determination process, particularly in first and second instance decisions as well as assist screening procedures. Measures aimed at strengthening the system of legal guardianship of children in migration including training for legal guardianship to increase the pool of legal guardians may also be considered.

In order to further accelerate the asylum procedure, Malta will continue to engage in bilateral agreements with EU agencies such as EUAA, as long as it is deemed necessary by national authorities, to assist competent authorities to address capacity shortages in the asylum determination process by providing support in interviews, the drafting of evaluation reports and interpretation services. In line with the 2021 Operational and Technical Assistance Plan[3], EUAA will support competent authorities as necessary in the management of reception facilities, vulnerability screening, referrals and age assessment operations. Such support will be in complementarity with measures under this Programme and a clear delineation between the two streams of support will be ensured throughout the implementation of the Programme[4]. In particular whilst EUAA will provide support related to enhancing capacity of AWAS in identifying, prioritizing and supporting asylum applicants residing in Malta in general, under this Programme support will focus specifically on the provision of interpretation services, including training. This assistance will also be sought in order to reduce administrative backlogs while facilitating the asylum determination process. In addition, EUAA support may also be in synergy with measures under this Programme through cross cutting themes such as information sharing, training, interpretation and other logistical practices to further strengthen operational standards.

Complementary actions that aim to mitigate cases of asylum fraud are also envisaged through the AMIF Programme, through the acquisition of technological equipment for the IPA, such as document and language analysis equipment, to help facilitate the asylum application procedure. This measure is expected to positively contribute towards modernising the current system to reflect today's necessities in light of the increased receipt of asylum applications.

The expected results of these actions will aim to strengthen participation in training activities and enable staff to work simultaneously on document verification leading to more efficient and reliable decisions as well facilitate asylum procedures in line with asylum acquis for efficient decision making. Language analysis will aim to reduce cases of fraud or risks of inaccuracies.

Such actions will focus on **implementation measure 1(b)** through the actions outlined in **Annex III (2b)**, which will be implemented through the following funding priority:

·Enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of asylum procedures through interpretation services and modern technological equipment to facilitate the asylum determination process

In an effort to ensure that the asylum decision at first instance is issued within 6 months or less, in line with national legislation, actions supported under this SO will involve the continued training of interpreters and interpreting skills to maintain high standards within the asylum process. Furthermore, actions supporting document and language analysis equipment will aim to also facilitate the asylum application procedure. These actions will contribute towards output indicators **O.1.1**, **O.1.1.3** and **O.1.2**, and result indicator **R.1.5**.

Since migratory flows are still evolving and rapidly changing also in light of the consequences of the recent refugee influx from Ukraine, the objectives of the AMIF Programme may need to be reassessed to cater for emerging needs during the implementation of the Programme.

In line with Article 53 of the CPR, grants will be used to support the interventions foreseen. The use of financial instruments is not envisaged due to the small size of the Programme, nature of initiatives and limited economies of scale.

Operating support:

(i) Staff Costs – Legal Assistance

Building on the support provided through the 14 – 20 AMIF NP, operating support is foreseen to assist asylum seekers. At present, asylum seekers receive free legal assistance related to asylum processes, detention and removal orders, age assessments and decisions taken upon the Dublin Regulation. Operating support will be used to cover expenses related to the provision of legal assistance at appeals and/or review stage.

(ii) Service Cost[5] – Maintenance of reception centres

Pursuant to the challenges associated with maintaining long-term sustainable accommodation facilities and in view of 2019 Vulnerability Assessment recommendation (MT 002), Government prepared a contingency plan to cater for the possible increase in migration flows. This plan is intended to mitigate possible crisis situations. Although the AMIF Programme does not foresee investments to increase the existing accommodation capacity of the reception centres, actions supporting the maintenance of reception centres will be pursued through operating support. Operating support shall aim to strengthen the maintenance of reception centres in accordance with Union *acquis* in order to ensure that adequate standards are maintained in the long run.

Two dedicated areas are present through Dar il-Liedna and HTV Umas Area, both areas are separate from the presence of adult males, through location (in the case of Dar il-Liedna) and entrances (in the case of HTV minors area). A third zone exists for those minors who have been declared adults by AWAS but are in the appeal stage of the Age Assessment. The existing accommodation structures foresee separate reception areas for UAMs, which apply for all cases.

The main beneficiary benefitting from operating support will be the Ministry responsible for Home Affairs since it is the main entity responsible for managing matters related to the asylum procedure and reception centres.

Such actions will focus on **implementation measure 1(a)** and will be implemented through the actions outlined in **Annex III (2b) and (2e)**, which will be implemented through the following two funding priorities:

-Enhancing legal assistance and representation by public authorities

-Maintaining the upkeep of reception centres

These actions will contribute towards strengthening the quality and availability of legal assistance as well as improving the living conditions in reception centres, by also strengthening the provision of educational and recreational activities for asylum seekers, and will contribute towards output indicators **O.1.1**, **O.1.1.1**, and **O.1.4**, and result indicator **R.1.7**.

[1] Ministry for Energy and Health, 2014. A National Health Systems Strategy for Malta 2014 – 2020. MEH

[2] Ministry for Home Affairs and National Security currently the Ministry for Home Affairs, National Security and Law Enforcement, 2015. *Strategy for the Reception of Asylum Seekers and Irregular Migrants*. MHSE

[3] EASO. 2021 Operational and technical assistance plan agreed by EASO and Malta, 2020

[4] The AMIF Programme was prepared by the same coordinating body responsible for the drafting of all EU funded Programmes including HOME and Cohesion Funds. Such coordination aims to ensure coherence in the strategic direction of EU funds. A clear delineation is established at programming stage, whereby measures which explicitly address a specific cohort or sector for which there are established funds, will be covered through fund specific Programmes.

[5] Service costs shall include, amongst others, the maintenance and repair of infrastructure, as per EC Note on the eligible costs under operating support (Ref. Ares(2021)7753967).

2.1. Specific objective 1. CEAS

2.1.2. Indicators

Reference: point (e) of Article 22(4) CPR

Table 1: Output indicators

ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Milestone (2024)	Target (2029)
O.1.1	Number of participants supported	number	23,217	55,985
O.1.1.1	of which number of participants who received legal assistance	number	263	526
O.1.1.2	of which number of participants benefiting from other types of support, including information and assistance throughout the asylum procedure	number	0	0
O.1.1.3	of which number of vulnerable participants assisted	number	4,986	11,498
O.1.2	Number of participants in training activities	number	2	26
O.1.3	Number of newly created places in reception infrastructure in line with Union acquis	number	0	0
O.1.3.1	of which number of newly created places for unaccompanied minors	number	0	0
O.1.4	Number of renovated/refurbished places in reception infrastructure in line with Union acquis	number	0	542
O.1.4.1	of which number of renovated/refurbished places for unaccompanied minors	number	0	0

2.1. Specific objective 1. CEAS

2.1.2. Indicators

Reference: point (e) of Article 22(4) CPR

Table 2: Result indicators

ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Baseline	Measurement unit for baseline	Reference year(s)	Target (2029)	Measurement unit for target	Source of data	Comments
R.1.5	Number of participants who consider the training useful for their work	number	0	share	2021	21	number	2020 AMIF Annual Implementation Report – Training to interpreters funded under AMIF 1.13 (2014 -2020)	For reporting purposes, data will be split by gender and age-bracket.
R.1.6	Number of participants who report three months after the training activity that they are using the skills and competences acquired during the training	number	0	share	0	0	number	NA	
R.1.7	Number of persons placed in alternatives to detention	number	0	number	2021	8,090	number	MPF Statistical Data	
R.1.7.1	of which number of unaccompanied minors placed in alternatives to detention	number	0	number	0	0	number	NA	
R.1.7.2	of which number of families placed in alternatives to detention	number	0	number	0	0	number	NA	

2.1. Specific objective 1. CEAS

2.1.3. Indicative breakdown of the programme resources (EU) by type of intervention

Reference: Article 22(5) CPR; and Article 16(12) AMIF Regulation, Article 13(12) ISF Regulation or Article 13(18) BMVI Regulation

Table 3: Indicative breakdown

Type of intervention	Code	Indicative amount (Euro)
Intervention field	001.Reception conditions	14,850,000.00
Intervention field	002.Asylum procedures	2,222,576.00
Intervention field	003.Implementation of the Union acquis	4,600,000.00
Intervention field	007.Operating support	2,000,000.00

2.1. Specific objective: 2. Legal migration and integration

2.1.1. Description of the specific objective

Between 2008 and 2018 the total population grew by 20% whereby the main contributory factor was net migration[1]. Malta's efforts for the 2021-2027 period will build upon best practices implemented during previous years focusing on facilitating access of TCN children to mainstream education, enhancing awareness of cultural differences and religious beliefs, and providing the means to facilitate the delivery of language learning and cultural orientation programmes to improve TCN's integration at the local level. The Programme aims to contribute towards the specific objective on effective integration and social inclusion of TCNs by providing:

- Adequate access to quality services in terms of education, social cohesion and employment, amongst others; and
- Integration strategies aimed at developing a multi-cultural society in a harmonious and sustainable manner to ensure a smooth transition towards improved integration.

Integration services for TCNs

Integration requires the adaptation by both local and migrant communities based on a mutual understanding and acceptance of cultural diversity. Nonetheless, integration brings about a number of challenges often associated with language barriers, access to labour market, education facilities catered for the needs of vulnerable groups, and psychosocial assistance.

Building on Government's efforts to establish an integration unit, whereby a total of 3,247[2] applicants registered for the language courses offered by the unit since 2018, further efforts towards supporting the provision of pre-integration services involving integration learning programmes based on priority areas such as language learning, cultural orientation, cultural mediation and awareness raising campaigns, which may include anti-racism campaigns, are envisaged through the AMIF Programme in line with the integration strategy and action plan. Focus will be on supporting pre-integration activities also with the support of interpreters and cultural mediators to improve communication and facilitate integration services.

In addition, support to TCNs through the provision of language learning will continue to be prioritized through digital means to enable the possibility of extending the modules provided to a wider community as well as to support learning through the development of an online learning platform. Whilst such measures will target TCNs at large, Government will also explore the possibility of carrying out a territorial profiling exercise in order to assess the different needs of TCNs and any information gaps that inhibit their integration into society.

As outlined in the framework for the Education Strategy[3], the need to facilitate inclusivity within the educational framework is imperative for all students to mature their abilities. As a follow up to the educational measures supported under the 2014 – 2020 AMIF NP, Government will aim to reduce language barriers in schools and support social inclusion through the translation of educational resources into different languages to promote diversity in schools.

With the support of the Fund, Government will aim to address the realities brought about by multiculturalism. This intervention will assist students and other stakeholders to enhance communication and exchange ideas, including the use of or promotion in public spaces, while respecting different beliefs and customs in line with the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion as outlined in the Charter

for Human Rights of the EU. Government will seek to ensure that multiculturalism is well integrated at the local level through outreach and community activities for TCN learners and other peer cohorts, as well as through continuous professional development and career guidance tailored for those directly engaged in the area of migrant services in order to increase their openness to diversity and eliminate social exclusion. Efforts to ensure that the necessary structure is in place for effective recognition of prior learning (RPL) may also be prioritized. This can also contribute to the flagship initiative on addressing the fight against employment of irregular migrants as it will facilitate socio-economic integration whereby any shortages of qualified professionals can be mitigated through the recognition of past learning and experience acquired previously by migrants. This would in turn regularize employment and prevent the expansion of unwarranted or precarious employment.

Government shall continue investing in accredited training courses addressing, amongst others, cultural mediation to help not only cultivate a higher level of acceptance within the receiving society but also mitigate against racial discrimination. Within this context, the training of cultural mediators would primarily aim to bridge the gap experienced in schools.

Such actions will aim to strengthen integration services offered to TCNs residing in Malta, improve language acquisition for enhanced communication, and provide equal access opportunities to all members of society.

The envisaged interventions will focus on **implementation measure 2(d)** and will be implemented through the measures outlined in **Annex III (3h)**, through the following funding priorities:

- *Strengthening multiculturalism and cultural mediation*
- *Addressing information gaps that inhibit local integration*
- *Reducing language barriers in schools to facilitate integration among children*
- *Provision of language learning to TCNs through digital means*

Foreseen investments include the promotion of cultural mediation, facilitating access to educational services including translation of educational resources, providing training and language courses through digital means, territorial profiling to identify information gaps on integration and the promotion of multiculturalism. These actions will contribute towards output indicators **O.2.3**, **O.2.3.3** and **O.2.7**, and result indicator **R.2.9**.

Promoting diversity and embracing ethnicity at the local level

In recent years, Government has identified ways to simplify the integration process of the Maltese society at large, including through the development of an integration policy[4]. The integration of the migrant community is dependent on various factors including the degree of openness to accept diversity, issues of conformity with national legislation, skills mismatch, education and communication. The inherent characteristics of TCNs such as language diversity and traditional customs often affect their level of integration at the local level. In addition, the limited participation of TCNs to effectively engage in social activities organised at local or community level is another factor that requires adequate support to break down social and cultural barriers.

Within this context, the need to continue promoting diversity remains important which will be prioritized by developing an analysis of the dynamic diversity that distinguishes children within the educational sector and society at large and proposes ways of how to adjust attitudes of diffidence and hostility.

Furthermore, Government will explore the possibility of assessing the dynamic features of diversity through a needs analysis study within the education sector including the design of an action plan and relevant training to stakeholders, in an effort to address current and future needs of society.

In addition, families of TCN children and students will continue to be supported through the Fund whereby the needs and competences required to cater for newcomers will be considered. This will be complemented by an action plan on the identified needs in order for families to feel closer to the community. As a follow up to the 2014 – 2020 AMIF NP support on language learning and psychosocial support, actions addressing psychosocial issues in schools will continue to be provided, to address mental well-being particularly among newcomer students fleeing warzone countries. This also contributes to the AMIF flagship initiative on developing mechanisms for the quick integration of specific categories of newcomers.

Government will look into the possibility of extending language assessments to all TCN children, complementing various educational programmes leading to mainstream education. By 2020, the total number of TCN children who attended the induction courses offered through the EU funded LLAPSI+ Programme was 1,844[5]. By means of these measures, the concept of integration will be introduced in the early stages of childhood to ensure that these principles are well rooted in adulthood. This will be particularly beneficial for victims of exploitation and abuse. As for unaccompanied minors and students, the strategy will aim to ensure that the necessary assistance will continue to be provided in order to facilitate their early integration in the community particularly in terms of education. The expected result of these actions will be to facilitate TCN children's participation in the educational sector.

Actions implemented through the AMIF Programme under this SO will focus on **implementation measure 2(d)** through the actions outlined in **Annex III (3k)** and will be implemented through the following funding priorities:

- *Promoting diversity in the educational sector to address current and future needs of society;*
- *Cultivating ethnicity in the social and educational sectors; and*
- *Provision of support services to migrant families to facilitate access in the education system.*

Proposed investments include actions promoting diversity and embracing ethnicity in the education sector as well as strengthening the support structure of educational services offered to migrant families and will contribute towards output indicators **O.2.3**, **O.2.3.3**, and **O.2.7**, and result indicator **R.2.9**.

Supporting victims of human trafficking

To mitigate the challenges experienced by vulnerable groups in the area of human trafficking, Government will continue to build on the support provided during the 2014 – 2020 AMIF NP, through which victims of human trafficking and migrants will continue to receive targeted support.

Approximately 14 cases of victims of human trafficking were referred by professionals for professional guidance services in 2021. The identification of victims of human trafficking therefore remains a challenge in particular among TCNs. Efforts to strengthen the identification and referral of THB in line with recommendations within UPR (2018), UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (2019) and GRETA (2021) will be pursued through this Programme with a view to ensure a timely identification of such victims as well as a swift provision of the necessary support. In this regard, actions involving capacity building measures such as training to all relevant bodies involved in the identification and referral

procedures of THB with the aim to streamline resources and increase coordination, in order to improve effectiveness and efficiency in tackling THB cases.

It is envisaged that further training will be organised for the benefit of the respective entities, as part of Malta's new Human Trafficking Action Plan, which is being formulated by the Human Rights Directorate within Ministry responsible for equality and human rights, in cooperation with the relevant stakeholders, and which will be approved, monitored and reported upon at a higher level. In the case of the Armed Forces of Malta a basic course has been developed for its personnel involved in border control duties, on the identification of vulnerable persons. Such course addresses also the issue of THB. Extensive support is also required to facilitate and ensure that TCNs are provided with professional social services specifically focusing on actual needs. This may involve medical and psychological checks to effectively determine the mental well-being of vulnerable persons. Support will aim to contribute towards the ambitions envisaged under the national strategy to combat trafficking in human beings, that is being developed through the Technical Support Instrument. The expected results will aim to support the needs of vulnerable groups for better integration at the local level.

Such actions will contribute towards **implementation measure 2(d)** through the actions outlined in **Annex III (3i)**, which will be implemented through following funding priority:

·Providing enhanced professional expertise and identification of victims of trafficking of human beings

Implemented actions will aim to ensure that the necessary skills of frontline workers are adequately improved to eradicate discrimination and facilitate integration. Such actions will also contribute towards the AMIF flagship initiative on early identification and assistance to victims of Trafficking of Human Beings (THB), which will be measured through output indicators **O.2.3**, **O.2.3.3** and **O.2.7**, and result indicator **R.2.9**.

Pursuant to Article 16 (9) and Annex IV of the AMIF Regulation, the AMIF Programme will therefore promote actions supporting integration measures that are to be implemented by local authorities and civil society organisations.

Complementary measures supporting TCNs' integration

The need for increased integration was further attested during the COVID-19 pandemic, whereby migrants' contribution as frontline workers was not only an economic incentive to the Maltese economy but also a means for promoting social inclusion and labour market integration. This implies the importance of fully integrating migrants in the labour market community which in the long run can contribute to economic gains in the form of fiscal profits, national pension schemes and national welfare, as outlined in the 2020 Action Plan on Integration and Inclusion[6]. In line with the EC's 2020 Action Plan, enhancing vocational skills training to facilitate integration in the labour market may also be considered under other funding instruments such as ESF+ in view of their long-term socio-economic integration. The implementation of such measures will be primarily supported by the integration unit in collaboration with relevant Ministries, Servizzi Ewropej f'Malta and NGOs as necessary.

Actions supported through the ESF+ Programme will aim to address socio-economic integration of TCNs through mainstreaming integration policies, inclusive support schemes, and measures that contribute towards assuring a sense of belonging. This will ensure additional streamlining in the provision of integration services between both Programmes in line with the interim evaluation recommendations of the 2014-2020 AMIF NP.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, national authorities took a proactive approach in limiting the disruption of educational services to TCN children. This was possible through the support received from various migrant parents and community liaison workers, whose coordination was indispensable in adapting the education systems to the new reality. Government will aim to ensure that the education system continues to be more inclusive through the development of digital infrastructure as a means to facilitate access to educational services while also introducing innovative teaching and learning tools addressing different pedagogies within the educational sector. Medium and long-term measures enhancing the learning experience of the target cohort will be considered through other funding instruments such as ESF+.

Support through national funds will facilitate the integration of migrant parents with young children in the labour market. Government is already investing in the provision of childcare services and free compulsory education up until the age of 16 through national funds. The aim is to avoid the segregation of services for migrants, as far as possible, initiatives will also ensure that adequate education and care services are provided to ensure equal access to basic educational services in line with Malta's National Strategy on Literacy. This shall be complemented by measures promoting an adequate work-life balance to enable a good quality of life in Malta.

In addition, in order to facilitate access to the labour market, guidance and employment support offices to assist migrants in securing legal employment, have been set up through the 2014 – 2020 AMIF NP. A total of 2,165 migrants were assisted through the guidance services offered by Jobsplus in 2020 followed by a total of 1,073[7] migrants who were placed on an employment scheme through the Job Brokerage Office. The continuation of existing employment support services, to assist TCNs to enter and move within the labour market with a view to obtain legal employment and improve the quality of employment, will continue to be administered at the local level through other funding sources. This will ensure that continued support will be provided for better access to legal employment through an organised and official system.

As regards Recognition of Prior Learning, Government already set up the Malta Qualifications and Recognition Information Centre in line with the European qualifications framework and provides support for persons requiring assistance in applying for the recognition of qualifications within community centres and online application processes. Further investments to strengthen labour market integration among the migrant community will be supported through other funding sources such as ESF+. Complementary support will also be provided through ESF+ to vulnerable groups through training, basic skills acquisition, literacy and digital skills learning amongst others to increase their education and employment opportunities in the labour market.

In line with Article 53 of the CPR, grants will be used to support the interventions foreseen. The use of financial instruments is not envisaged due to the small size of the Programme, nature of initiatives and limited economies of scale.

Operating Support:

Actions contributing towards operating support under specific objective 2 are not envisaged in the AMIF Programme.

[1] NSO, Key figures for Malta – 2019, pg. 12

[2] Human Rights Directorate, *I Belong Courses*. The total number of applicants allocated in a Stage 1

class under the 'I Belong' programme was 1,440 TCNs by Q3 2020, out of the total number of registered applicants.

[3] Ministry for Education and Employment, *Framework for the Education Strategy for Malta 2014 – 2024*, MEDE

[4] Ministry for European Affairs and Equality. *Migrant Integration Strategy and Action Plan – Vision 2020*. Accessed on 18th February 2020 from: <https://meae.gov.mt/en/Documents/migrant%20integration-EN.pdf>

[5] Source: MFED, January 2021

[6] European Commission, 2020. *Action Plan on Integration and Inclusion 2021 – 2027*, Brussels

[7] Source: Jobsplus, March 2021

2.1. Specific objective 2. Legal migration and integration

2.1.2. Indicators

Reference: point (e) of Article 22(4) CPR

Table 1: Output indicators

ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Milestone (2024)	Target (2029)
O.2.1	Number of participants in pre-departure measures	number	0	0
O.2.2	Number of local and regional authorities supported to implement integration measures	number	0	0
O.2.3	Number of participants supported	number	5,062	10,025
O.2.3.1	of which number of participants in a language course	number	0	0
O.2.3.2	of which number of participants in a civic orientation course	number	0	0
O.2.3.3	of which number of participants who received personal professional guidance	number	118	333
O.2.4	Number of information packages and campaigns to raise awareness of legal migration channels to the Union	number	0	0
O.2.5	Number of participants receiving information and/or assistance to apply for family reunification	number	0	0
O.2.6	Number of participants benefitting from mobility schemes	number	0	0
O.2.7	Number of integration projects where local and regional authorities are the beneficiary	number	0	9

2.1. Specific objective 2. Legal migration and integration

2.1.2. Indicators

Reference: point (e) of Article 22(4) CPR

Table 2: Result indicators

ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Baseline	Measurement unit for baseline	Reference year(s)	Target (2029)	Measurement unit for target	Source of data	Comments
R.2.8	Number of participants in language courses who have improved their proficiency level in the host-country language upon leaving the language course by at least one level in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages or national equivalent	number	0	share	0	0	number	NA	
R.2.9	Number of participants who report that the activity was helpful for their integration	number	0	share	2021	8,020	number	MT/2017/AMIF/6.05 - Project Final Report	
R.2.10	Number of participants who applied for their qualification or skills acquired in a third country to be recognised / assessed	number	0	number	0	0	number	NA	
R.2.11	Number of participants who applied for a long-term residence status	number	0	number	0	0	number	NA	

2.1. Specific objective 2. Legal migration and integration

2.1.3. Indicative breakdown of the programme resources (EU) by type of intervention

Reference: Article 22(5) CPR; and Article 16(12) AMIF Regulation, Article 13(12) ISF Regulation or Article 13(18) BMVI Regulation

Table 3: Indicative breakdown

Type of intervention	Code	Indicative amount (Euro)
Intervention field	002. Victims of trafficking in human beings	2,700,000.00
Intervention field	003. Integration measures – information and orientation, one stop shops	3,294,224.00
Intervention field	005. Integration measures – civics and other training	810,000.00
Intervention field	006. Integration measures – Introduction, participation, exchanges host society	5,400,000.00
Intervention field	007. Integration measures – basic needs	1,350,000.00

2.1. Specific objective: 3. Return

2.1.1. Description of the specific objective

Malta has been at the forefront for those migrants who really are in need of protection, however, it is also committed to returning irregular arrivals humanely and efficiently, in line with pertinent EU legislation. The success of return management largely depends on the availability of a travel document or the possibility of obtaining valid travel documents for the TCNs, which is usually one of the main challenges encountered by local authorities to implement effective return.

Addressing effective return cooperation management systems

Cooperation with consular offices from embassies of the CoO is necessary to arrange interviews with migrants who wish to return to their CoO. Maltese authorities will continue to participate in international and EU initiatives to facilitate joint return operations. Maltese authorities will continue to request the assistance of FRONTEX (now EBCGA), if necessary, to obtain travel documentation when these are difficult to retrieve. Within this context, with the support of FRONTEX, national authorities will centralize all systems involved in the process of returning irregular migrants through a specific IT system. This is in line with the recommendation to develop return management systems in conformity with the RECAMAS model to facilitate exchange of information with other EU member states.

In addition, through the support of the AMIF Programme, Government will explore the possibility of looking at methods to facilitate and strengthen cooperation with third countries to implement migration management solutions with a focus on legal avenues of migration. This action builds upon previous projects implemented under the 2007 – 2013 programming period, which sought to develop a long-term evidence based strategic approach to efficient integrated return management. It will aim to establish operational frameworks between Malta and third countries as well as promote voluntary return and reintegration assistance through exchange of information and best practices. The WestMed Initiative may also be explored in such instances as a useful framework for regional cooperation in social inclusion issues such as blue skills, in line with the objectives of the Fund. The expected result of this action will be to strengthen cooperation with third countries for effective migration management solutions.

Such actions will contribute towards **implementation measure 3(d)** through the actions outlined in **Annex III (4k)**, which will be implemented through the following funding priority:

Strengthening dialogue and cooperation with third countries to implement migration management solutions

Actions supported through this intervention will aim to increase cooperation with third countries to counter irregular migration and effective return and readmission and will contribute towards result indicator **R.3.6**.

Strengthening the referral network to promote voluntary return

Opportunities will be made available in a determined and systematic manner for both regular and irregular TCNs, offering them the option of being assisted to return voluntarily to their CoO and restart their lives through reintegration assistance. Voluntary returns will be monitored, when possible, to ascertain the success rate of the initiative. With the support of the 2014 – 2020 AMIF NP, a total of 87 migrants were

returned voluntarily through the AVRR between 2016 and 2020. In order to strengthen the uptake of voluntary return activities by migrants, further information dissemination and counselling services are required with each returnee to ensure their successful return. This complements the role carried out by the *Returns Unit* within the Ministry responsible for Home Affairs, National Security, and Law Enforcement, set up in 2021, to further assist AVRR. Reintegration assistance continues to be essential to encourage migrants to return to the CoO.

Such actions will contribute towards **implementation measure 3(c)**, through the actions outlined in **Annex III (4g)** and **(4i)**. Actions implemented under this SO will aim to focus on voluntary return, without excluding forced return actions and will be implemented through the following funding priority:

·Promoting assisted voluntary return and reintegration assistance among TCNs

Through reintegration assistance, migrants will continue to be supported to cover any expenses s/he may incur for settling back in their CoO. In view of the increased number of irregular migrants, tailored information sessions, counselling and preparations prior to departure will be strengthened and maintained to encourage more migrants to make use of assisted voluntary return. In addition, there will be a focus on enhancing the outreach component of the AVRR programme to provide more tailored support to migrants in situations of vulnerability. The expected result of this action will be to increase assisted voluntary return and reintegration assistance and will contribute towards output indicator **O.3.3** and result indicator **R.3.6**.

Pursuant to Article 16 (9) and Annex IV of the AMIF Regulation, the AMIF Programme will seek to promote actions supporting assisted voluntary return and reintegration programmes and related activities.

Countering irregular migration

In cases where the option of voluntary return is not taken up, forced return will be necessary to return irregular TCNs who have no right of stay[1]. With the support of the 2014 – 2020 AMIF NP a total of 669 illegal migrants were returned to their CoO between 2016 and 2020. Such actions involve obtaining the necessary travel documentation, logistical support to travel back to their CoO as well as the imposition of all the necessary security measures. This will at times require additional medical escorts to assist TCNs when travelling back to third countries which may continue to be supported through the fund. This action will aim to contribute towards better management of irregular migration through improved return mechanisms as well as enhance national security against overstayers through effective return mechanisms.

Actions implemented under this SO will contribute towards **implementation measure 3(a)** through the actions outlined in **Annex III (4h)**, which will be implemented through the following funding priority:

·Providing forced return measures to illegally residing TCNs

The Principal Immigration Officer maintains constant and regular communication with the Embassies of the relevant countries of origin, as the main concern when it comes to effecting returns is the absence, and the need to acquire, travel documents. Malta's current return caseload is mainly made up of Bangladeshi and Moroccan nationals. Notwithstanding the challenges that such returns pose, particularly in the context of the pandemic, Malta conducted three charter flights to Bangladesh during a pandemic year; the only EU Member State to do so.

Efforts are also made by the authorities to make more frequent use of less coercive measures, or alternatives to detention. At the same time it should be recalled, however, that each Member State is legally bound to follow up on return decisions issued and to ensure that return is effectively carried out. In some cases, detention is therefore required. The assessment as to whether detention is required or otherwise falls under the remit of the officer dealing with the individual case. It cannot be assumed that cases would have merited less coercive measures on the basis of statistical information alone. The use of non-coercive measures in respect of cases that are not deserving would compromise return capabilities and failure to uphold responsibilities towards the Schengen area.

The legal provisions on forced return monitoring set out in the Returns Directive will continue to be respected to ensure more timely and improved exchange of information with third countries, as well as reduce the resurgence of irregular migrants. As part of this initiative, support shall also extend towards the operations of the forced return monitoring board. In addition, training initiatives for officers in the Immigration Unit of the Malta Police Force will continue being organised. These actions will contribute towards output indicator **O.3.1** and result indicator **R.3.7**.

Other complementary investments may be considered to contribute towards implementation measure 3(a) on ensuring the uniform application of the Union acquis by strengthening the resources available at the immigration office through possible investments in equipment to help facilitate the detection of fraudulent documents and comply with the EURODAC Regulation such as fingerprint scanners. These would aim to complement the investment that has already been undertaken through the 2014 – 2020 AMIF NP in acquiring magnifying lenses and other sophisticated equipment to be better equipped against any emerging criminal activities. In this way, Government will continue to ensure that this equipment remains sustainable in the long run as well as adopt the necessary means to facilitate removal operations in accordance with the standards outlined in Union law, in line with the respective provisions of the AMIF Regulation.

In line with the Reception Conditions Directive, the detention of irregular migrants in closed centres is applied once relevant alternative measures to detention have been explored. Within this context, the training of public authorities and institutions involved in legal services may be considered to assist in challenging decisions relating to migration and return.

In line with Article 53 of the CPR, grants will be used to support the interventions foreseen. The use of financial instruments is not envisaged due to the small size of the Programme, nature of initiatives and limited economies of scale.

Operating Support

Actions contributing towards operating support under specific objective 3 are not envisaged in the AMIF Programme at initial programming stage.

[1] This is subject to the provisions highlighted in Directive 2008/115, *Common standards and procedures for returning illegally staying third country nationals*.

2.1. Specific objective 3. Return

2.1.2. Indicators

Reference: point (e) of Article 22(4) CPR

Table 1: Output indicators

ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Milestone (2024)	Target (2029)
O.3.1	Number of participants in training activities	number	0	8
O.3.2	Number of equipment purchased, including number of ICT systems purchased / updated	number	0	0
O.3.3	Number of returnees who received re-integration assistance	number	28	84
O.3.4	Number of places in detention centres created	number	0	0
O.3.5	Number of places in detention centres refurbished/renovated	number	0	0

2.1. Specific objective 3. Return

2.1.2. Indicators

Reference: point (e) of Article 22(4) CPR

Table 2: Result indicators

ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Baseline	Measurement unit for baseline	Reference year(s)	Target (2029)	Measurement unit for target	Source of data	Comments
R.3.6	Number of returnees voluntarily returned	number	0	number	2021	130	number	IOM Statistics	Reported data will be broken down by gender and age bracket.
R.3.7	Number of returnees who were removed	number	0	number	2021	966	number	MPF statistical records	Reported data will be broken down by gender and age bracket.
R.3.8	Number of returnees subject to alternatives to detention	number	0	number	0	0	number	NA	

2.1. Specific objective 3. Return

2.1.3. Indicative breakdown of the programme resources (EU) by type of intervention

Reference: Article 22(5) CPR; and Article 16(12) AMIF Regulation, Article 13(12) ISF Regulation or Article 13(18) BMVI Regulation

Table 3: Indicative breakdown

Type of intervention	Code	Indicative amount (Euro)
Intervention field	004.Assisted voluntary return	1,627,112.08
Intervention field	005.Reintegration assistance	557,608.68
Intervention field	006.Removal/Return operations	1,650,000.00

2.1. Specific objective: 4. Solidarity

2.1.1. Description of the specific objective

Since 2018, Malta experienced an exponential increase in boat arrivals. Malta registered a 95% increase in boat arrivals in 2020 compared to 2015 figures, with migrants coming from different countries including Syria, Somalia, Eritrea, and Sudan amongst others. While most of these people applied for international protection and remained in Malta, a number of those arriving on boats are being relocated to other EU countries following ad hoc agreements between EU Member States.

Strengthening effective solidarity between Member States to curtail migrant arrivals is one of the objectives of the New Pact on Migration and Asylum, which aims to consolidate efforts among Member States experiencing disproportionate migratory challenges through identification of risks and mitigating actions. With the support of EU funds, Malta has already contributed towards facilitating the relocation of 499 persons in need of international protection to other EU Member States between 2017 and 2019. Similarly, a total of 17 migrants were resettled to Malta in 2017. Taking into consideration the increased political turmoil in adjacent African countries and other emergency situations provoking further irregular migration, Malta will continue to assist in the best possible way to alleviate humanitarian crises through resettlement, humanitarian admissions and relocation. Such actions will contribute towards supporting implementation measures 4(a) and (b) by enhancing solidarity and cooperation with third countries affected by migratory flows, including resettlement, and supporting transfers from one Member State to another of applicants for international protection or beneficiaries of international protection.

Pursuant to Commission Recommendation (EU) 2020/1364 on legal pathways to protection in the EU, Malta will aim to contribute towards resettlement efforts, in line with national capacities and resources and provide humanitarian admission to people in need of international protection, as necessary. Relocation measures will continue to be applied through transfers of applicants for international protection or beneficiaries of international protection, while respecting the notion of family unity, in view of the ongoing increase in migration flows. These measures will aim to contribute towards enhancing solidarity between Member States through effective cooperation and alleviate some of the pressure provoked by migration flows.

2.1. Specific objective 4. Solidarity

2.1.2. Indicators

Reference: point (e) of Article 22(4) CPR

Table 1: Output indicators

ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Milestone (2024)	Target (2029)
O.4.1	Number of staff trained	number	0	0
O.4.2	Number of participants who received pre-departure support	number	0	0

2.1. Specific objective 4. Solidarity

2.1.2. Indicators

Reference: point (e) of Article 22(4) CPR

Table 2: Result indicators

ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Baseline	Measurement unit for baseline	Reference year(s)	Target (2029)	Measurement unit for target	Source of data	Comments
R.4.3	Number of applicants for and beneficiaries of international protection transferred from one Member State to another	number	0	number	0	0	number	NA	
R.4.4	Number of persons resettled	number	0	number	2021-2022	21	number	RES.ARES(2022)241206-13/01/22	
R.4.5	Number of persons admitted through humanitarian admission	number	0	number	0	0	number	NA	

2.1. Specific objective 4. Solidarity

2.1.3. Indicative breakdown of the programme resources (EU) by type of intervention

Reference: Article 22(5) CPR; and Article 16(12) AMIF Regulation, Article 13(12) ISF Regulation or Article 13(18) BMVI Regulation

Table 3: Indicative breakdown

Type of intervention	Code	Indicative amount (Euro)
Intervention field	003.Resettlement (Article 19)	210,000.00

2.2. Technical assistance: TA.36(5). Technical assistance - flat rate (Art. 36(5) CPR)

Reference: point (f) of Article 22(3), Article 36(5), Article 37, and Article 95 CPR

2.2.1. Description

The scope of Technical Assistance is to attain an effective implementation of the Programme through preparatory, management, monitoring, evaluation, information and control actions of the financed interventions. The implementation of the AMIF Programme shall thus be based on effective and efficient practices through clear and transparent processes that seek to reduce administrative burden, strengthen organisational capacity and improve exchange of information and communication among the main stakeholders.

Pursuant to Article 36(5) of the CPR, Technical Assistance of the Member States for the AMIF Programme shall be reimbursed on the basis of 6% of the total eligible expenditure claimed in each payment application, in line with Article 91(3) of the CPR, for simplification purposes. In line with Article 15 (6) of the AMIF Regulation, Technical Assistance may be financed up to 100% of the Union contribution. Consequently, Technical Assistance shall be used to support the following actions:

- Actions relating to the preparation, selection, appraisal, management and monitoring of the Programme or interventions such as delivery of information sessions and project award ceremonies;
- Actions involving audits and support for on-the-spot check controls of interventions;
- Actions relating to evaluations of Programme such as the mid-term and ex-post evaluations;
- Actions promoting the objectives of the fund organised *inter alia* at the local level followed by the dissemination of information. These types of actions can take the form of training sessions, workshops, and networking events involving the participation of the main stakeholders, amongst others;
- Actions supporting the installation and maintenance of the electronic information system used as a database for project beneficiaries and for the MA to monitor and evaluate the progress registered during project implementation. The system is also used to process claims for payments incurred during project execution. Training of the main stakeholders in the use of the information system shall also be provided;
- Actions involving the setting up and organisation of meetings of the monitoring committees related to the implementation of interventions including costs of experts and other participants attending the committee meetings;
- Actions supporting previous and future programming periods necessary for effective administration, in line with Article 36 (1) of CPR.

The Authorities responsible for implementing the Programme shall be supported in strengthening their administrative capacity through enhanced development of existing resources together with capacity building initiatives with a focus on the acquisition of relevant skills obtained from participating in training Programmes organised both locally and abroad. Training sessions on the basic principles required for successful implementation of the approved interventions shall also be organised by the MA, which shall be extended to project beneficiaries and civil society organisations.

Information and publicity constitute an integral part of the Programme whereby the necessary actions shall be adopted to increase the visibility of the Programme's co-financing. This shall take the form of material such as: visibility stickers, banners, adverts, and other visibility materials as decided by the MA to be disseminated during public events in order to raise further awareness on the achievements being made through the Fund. The MA shall also maintain a website with all relevant information promoting the objectives of the Fund as well as the means to assist project beneficiaries in successfully implementing their projects.

2.2. Technical assistance TA.36(5). Technical assistance - flat rate (Art. 36(5) CPR)

2.2.2. Indicative breakdown of technical assistance pursuant to Article 37 CPR

Table 4: Indicative breakdown

Type of intervention	Code	Indicative amount (Euro)
Intervention field	001.Information and communication	148,577.47
Intervention field	002.Preparation, implementation, monitoring and control	1,956,270.08
Intervention field	003.Evaluation and studies, data collection	99,051.65
Intervention field	004.Capacity building	272,392.04

3. Financing plan

Reference: point (g) Article 22(3) CPR

3.1. Financial appropriations by year

Table 5: Financial appropriations per year

Allocation type	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
Initial allocation		5,731,129.00	8,074,463.00	8,084,412.00	8,122,323.00	7,433,154.00	6,092,331.00	43,537,812.00
Mid-term review								
Thematic facility WPI		210,000.00						210,000.00
Thematic facility WP II								
Thematic facility WP III								
Transfer (in)								
Transfer (out)								
Total		5,941,129.00	8,074,463.00	8,084,412.00	8,122,323.00	7,433,154.00	6,092,331.00	43,747,812.00

3.2. Total financial allocations

Table 6: Total financial allocations by fund and national contribution

Specific objective (SO)	Type of action	Basis for calculation Union support (total or public)	Union contribution (a)	National contribution (b)=(c)+(d)	Indicative breakdown of national contribution		Total (e)=(a)+(b)	Co-financing rate (f)=(a)/(e)
					Public (c)	Private (d)		
CEAS	Regular actions	Total	17,072,576.00	5,690,858.67	5,690,858.67	0.00	22,763,434.67	74.9999999890%
CEAS	Annex IV actions	Total	4,600,000.00	511,112.00	511,112.00		5,111,112.00	89.9999843478%
CEAS	Operating support	Total	2,000,000.00				2,000,000.00	100.0000000000%
Total CEAS			23,672,576.00	6,201,970.67	6,201,970.67	0.00	29,874,546.67	79.2399505221%
Legal migration and integration	Regular actions	Total		0.00		0.00	0.00	
Legal migration and integration	Annex IV actions	Total	13,554,224.00	1,506,024.89	1,506,024.89	0.00	15,060,248.89	89.999999934%
Total Legal migration and integration			13,554,224.00	1,506,024.89	1,506,024.89	0.00	15,060,248.89	89.999999934%
Return	Regular actions	Total	2,124,720.76	708,240.25	708,240.25	0.00	2,832,961.01	75.0000000882%
Return	Annex IV actions	Total	1,710,000.00	190,000.00	190,000.00	0.00	1,900,000.00	90.0000000000%
Total Return			3,834,720.76	898,240.25	898,240.25	0.00	4,732,961.01	81.0216004716%
Solidarity	Regular actions	Total						
Solidarity	Annex IV actions	Total						
Solidarity	Resettlement and humanitarian admission		210,000.00				210,000.00	100.0000000000%
Total Solidarity			210,000.00				210,000.00	100.0000000000%
Technical assistance - flat rate (Art. 36(5) CPR)			2,476,291.24				2,476,291.24	100.0000000000%
Grand total			43,747,812.00	8,606,235.81	8,606,235.81	0.00	52,354,047.81	83.5614700868%

Table 6A: Pledging plan

Category	Number of persons per year						
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027
Resettlement		21					
Humanitarian admission in line with Article 19(2) of AMIF Regulation							
Humanitarian admission of vulnerable persons in line with Article 19(3) of AMIF Regulation							

3.3. Transfers

Table 7: Transfers between shared management funds¹

Transferring fund	Receiving fund						
	ISF	BMVI	ERDF	ESF+	CF	EMFAF	Total
AMIF	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

¹Cumulative amounts for all transfers during programming period.

Table 8: Transfers to instruments under direct or indirect management¹

Instrument	Transfer Amount
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¹Cumulative amounts for all transfers during programming period.

4. Enabling conditions

Reference: point (i) of Article 22(3) CPR

Table 9: Horizontal enabling conditions

Enabling condition	Fulfilment of enabling condition	Criteria	Fulfilment of criteria	Reference to relevant documents	Justification
1. Effective monitoring mechanisms of the public procurement market	Yes	Monitoring mechanisms are in place that cover all public contracts and their procurement under the Funds in line with Union procurement legislation. That requirement includes: 1. Arrangements to ensure compilation of effective and reliable data on public procurement procedures above the Union thresholds in accordance with reporting obligations under Articles 83 and 84 of Directive 2014/24/EU and Articles 99 and 100 of Directive 2014/25/EU.	Yes	<p>LN 352 of 2016 – Public Procurement Regulations (https://legislation.mt/eli/ln/2016/352/eng?fbclid=IwAR12WxV0wrlgyoGAS32myHR90130QKL9WK4fdQNaxXr-MPID6CB50W-lyzU)</p> <p>LN 351 of 2016 – Public Procurement of Entities operating in the Water, Energy, Transport and Postal Services Sectors Regulations (https://legislation.mt/eli/ln/2016/351/eng?fbclid=IwAR3BiHHVgWUepdcv_b3WpSKz29G-fkneTzvMGj6eOIAIwww_SriXMFd0x8E)</p> <p>LN 411 of 2011 – Public Procurement of Contracting Authorities or Entities in the fields of Defence and Security Regulations</p>	<p>The Department of Contracts (DOC) is the single centralised public procurement institution for most functions on the national level. It is responsible for developing standard procedures and routines, for developing a procurement policy, preparing guidelines and instructions, the national contribution to EU advisory committees, the Maltese Public Procurement Network participation, collecting statistical data and advises Government on public procurement policy, amongst others.</p> <p>Arrangements are in place to ensure the compilation of effective and reliable data as per SL 601.03 (Articles 12)(1)(a) 12(2), 13(n) and 14) and SL 601.05 (Articles 33 and 34(n)). Within this context, a monitoring report is prepared and submitted to the European Commission based on statistical quantitative data extracted from Government's e-Procurement Platform. Qualitative information is collated directly from each Ministry and relevant bodies. In addition, both articles mentioned in the regulations outline the roles that the office of the Director of Contracts must fulfil to ensure adherence to the public procurement regulations as laid down in the legislations.</p>
		2. Arrangements to ensure the data cover at	Yes	(Refer to previous documents)	Arrangements are in place that enable the

Enabling condition	Fulfilment of enabling condition	Criteria	Fulfilment of criteria	Reference to relevant documents	Justification
		<p>least the following elements:</p> <p>a. Quality and intensity of competition: names of winning bidder, number of initial bidders and contractual value;</p> <p>b. Information on final price after completion and on participation of SMEs as direct bidders, where national systems provide such information.</p>			<p>Department of Contracts (DoC) to extract information related to the names of the winning bidders, number of initial bidders and contractual value from the electronic Public Procurement System (ePPS). Following the adoption of the Public Procurement Regulations, Government enacted the ePPs to significantly reduce administrative burden in line with the concept of e-cohesion, as per the Common Provisions Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013.</p> <p>Even though the national system does not automatically disclose information on final price after completion of projects, a specific module entitled Open Contracting Data Standard (OCDS) is integrated within ePPS to enable the disclosure of data and documents at all stages of the contracting process by defining a common data model.</p> <p>This is aimed to increase contracting transparency, improve accountability and capture salient statistics with the scope of enhancing in-depth analysis of contracting data by a wide range of users. Information regarding the participation of SMEs as direct bidders can be extractable from the ePPS portal.</p>
		<p>3. Arrangements to ensure monitoring and analysis of the data by the competent national authorities in accordance with article 83 (2) of directive 2014/24/EU and article 99 (2) of directive 2014/25/EU.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Contracts Circular No 19/2016 – The New Public Procurement Regulations 2016 (https://contracts.gov.mt/en/Circulars/2016/Documents/Circ19_2016.pdf)</p>	<p>The DOC is a single centralized public procurement institution for most functions on the national level. Complementing its monitoring and evaluation role are Ministerial Procurement Units which have been established within Ministries, as per Contracts Circular No 19/2016, to be responsible for procurement practices at Ministerial level while ensuring</p>

Enabling condition	Fulfilment of enabling condition	Criteria	Fulfilment of criteria	Reference to relevant documents	Justification
					<p>decentralisation of procurement practices. A separate Post-Contracts module titled the Contracts Register, includes information related to the contract signing and post-contract stage. The information contained within the Contracts Register can be made available through the aforementioned OCDS module. Thus, information pertaining to the full procurement cycle may be made available.</p> <p>In line with Article 83(2), procurement related information is consolidated in an EU Monitoring Report, prepared every three years for formal submission to the European Commission. This report gathers and systematises the collection of relevant procurement statistics across Government by the DOC via the ePPS, also addressing qualitative elements which are coordinated by this department through relevant Ministries.</p>
		<p>4. Arrangements to make the results of the analysis available to the public in accordance with article 83 (3) of directive 2014/24/EU and article 99 (3) directive 2014/25/EU.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Article 12(1a), 13(n) and 14 of LN 352 of 2016 and Article 33 and 34(ni&ii, o) of LN 351 of 2016 https://legislation.mt/eli/ln/2016/351/eng?fbclid=IwAR3BiHHVgWUepdcv_b3WpSKz29G-fkneTzvMGj6eO1Alwww_SriXMFd0x8E</p>	<p>The necessary arrangements are in place with regard to the publication of results in line with SL 601.03 Articles 12(1a), 13(n) and 14 and SL 601.05 respectively (Article 33 and 34(n), (i & ii), o)). The EU monitoring report is prepared every three years and includes data on procurement above the EU threshold, in line with the Directive. The information extracted from this report is already made available to the public through the ePPS. Any data concerning procurement below the EU threshold is published in the Government Gazette.</p>
		<p>5. Arrangements to ensure that all information pointing to suspected bid-</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>(Refer to previous documents)</p>	<p>Arrangements are in place to detect suspected bid-rigging situations by</p>

Enabling condition	Fulfilment of enabling condition	Criteria	Fulfilment of criteria	Reference to relevant documents	Justification
		rigging situations is communicated to the competent national bodies in accordance with Article 83(2) of Directive 2014/24/EU and Article 99(2) of Directive 2014/25/EU.			competent bodies. In this regard, the Director of Contracts, in line with Regulation 12(2) of the Public Procurement Regulations, which stipulates that in cases of misconduct involving violations or systematic problems, the Director shall be empowered to report the matter to competent authorities. A Compliance and Monitoring Unit has been set up within DoC that tackles initial investigations, that could be followed up by the Malta Police Force, the Internal Audit and Investigations Department and the National Audit Office, on a case-by-case basis.
3. Effective application and implementation of the Charter of Fundamental Rights	Yes	<p>Effective mechanisms are in place to ensure compliance with the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union ('the Charter') which include:</p> <p>1. Arrangements to ensure compliance of the programmes supported by the Funds and their implementation with the relevant provisions of the Charter.</p>	Yes	Covenant between MAs and Ministry responsible for Human Rights	<p>With regard to arrangements to ensure compliance with the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, the Managing Authorities and the Ministry responsible for Human Rights have finalised a covenant to formalize the arrangements required for ensuring compliance with the Charter of Fundamental Rights. Furthermore, a monitoring unit within the Policy Development & Programme Implementation Directorate under the responsibility of the Ministry responsible for Human Rights has been set up to ensure compliance with the Charter. The Unit in liaison with the Human Rights Directorate will be receiving requests from the Managing Authority/s to assess and ensure that project proposals are compliant with the Charter provisions during both the preparation and the implementation of the Programmes and operations supported by EU Funds.</p>
		2. Reporting arrangements to the	Yes	(Refer to previous document)	The Ministry responsible for Human

Enabling condition	Fulfilment of enabling condition	Criteria	Fulfilment of criteria	Reference to relevant documents	Justification
		<p>monitoring committee regarding cases of non-compliance of operations supported by the Funds with the Charter and complaints regarding the Charter submitted in accordance with the arrangements made pursuant to Article 69(7).</p>			<p>Rights will be represented on the Monitoring Committees of applicable programmes to report on cases of non-compliance of operations supported by the Funds as well as complaints reported in accordance with Article 69(7) of the CPR. Furthermore, the Ministry will also form part of the Inter-ministerial Consultative Committee on EU Funds. Such provisions are stipulated in the agreement mentioned above. Furthermore, the Covenant also outlines the areas of cooperation between the MAs and the responsible entity for human rights throughout the programming period.</p> <p>With regard to reporting arrangements, the MA will inform the Monitoring Committees on: 1) The cases on non-compliance of operations supported by the Funds with the Charter and complaints regarding the Charter; 2) The assessment of the case/s; and 3) The action/s taken/to be taken. This report will be provided during the MC as part of the update on the implementation of the Enabling Conditions.</p> <p>Further information on the reporting arrangements to the Monitoring Committee can be found in the Covenant drafted between the MAs and the Ministry responsible for Human Rights.</p>
4. Implementation and application of the United Nations Convention on the	Yes	<p>A national framework to ensure implementation of the UNCRPD is in place that includes:</p> <p>1. Objectives with measurable goals, data</p>	Yes	<p>Malta's 2021 - 2030 National Strategy on the Rights of Disabled Persons (https://inclusion.gov.mt/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Disability-Doc-ENG-SEP-21.pdf)</p>	<p>Malta's National Disability Strategy addresses aspirations stemming from the 2014 National Disability Policy and lays out a national plan to improve the quality of life of disabled persons and their</p>

Enabling condition	Fulfilment of enabling condition	Criteria	Fulfilment of criteria	Reference to relevant documents	Justification
rights of persons with disabilities (UNCRPD) in accordance with Council Decision 2010/48/EC		collection and monitoring mechanisms.		Equal Opportunities (Persons with Disability) Act (Chapter 413 of the Laws of Malta) (https://legislation.mt/eli/cap/413/eng/pdf)	<p>families.</p> <p>The Strategy includes several actions as well as timeframes for every specific action in line with the requirement of this criterion.</p> <p>The Strategy will be implemented through a National Coordination Mechanism (Inter-Departmental Coordination Committee/Inter-Ministerial Administrative Committee on Disability) and consultations with stakeholders (Civil Society Participation Mechanism) as required by the United Nations Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities (UNCRPD). Implementation will be monitored through the Commission for the Rights of Persons with Disability's (CRPD) UNCRPD Monitoring Unit, and breaches addressed through CRPD's Directorate for Investigations, Compliance and Enforcement.</p> <p>As outlined under Objective 2 of the Strategy, a National Disability Register will be set up to facilitate data collection. The register will also be linked to an Integrated Disability Assessment system.</p>
		2. Arrangements to ensure that accessibility policy, legislation and standards are properly reflected in the preparation and implementation of the programmes.	Yes	Accessibility Standards for All in a Built Environment Regulations - Legal Notice 198 of 2019 (https://legislation.mt/eli/sl/413.3/20190828/eng)	From a legal point of view, several measures have been developed to ensure compliance with accessibility policy, including the development of Accessibility Standards for all in the Built Environment Regulations, 2019 (Subsidiary Legislation 413.03).

Enabling condition	Fulfilment of enabling condition	Criteria	Fulfilment of criteria	Reference to relevant documents	Justification
					<p>As to the preparation of the programmes, consultations with CRPD were held as part of the consultations on the programme objectives to ensure that the accessibility policy, legislation and standards are properly reflected in the preparation of the programmes in line with Article 9 of the CPR.</p> <p>A monitoring mechanism for the implementation of Article 9 UNCRPD covering the ESI Funds cycle was set up for the 2014 – 2020 programming period between CRPD and the relevant Managing Authority (MA). A similar monitoring mechanism will continue to be implemented during the 2021-2027 programming period, in line with the Covenant that is in place between the MAs and CRPD covering the 2021-2027 period.</p>
		<p>3. Reporting arrangements to the monitoring committee regarding cases of non-compliance of operations supported by the Funds with the UNCRPD and complaints regarding the UNCRPD submitted in accordance with the arrangements made pursuant to Article 69(7).</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Covenant between MAs and CRPD</p>	<p>Reporting arrangements adopted for the 2021 – 2027 programming period will continue to build on the arrangements made in the 2014-2020 period, whereby project applications are sent to CRPD for vetting their compliance with the UNCRPD, and with necessary standards and procedures. In line with the Covenant, CRPD, the responsible entity, will be included as a member of the Monitoring Committee of applicable programmes to report on cases of non-compliance of operations supported by the Funds as well as complaints reported in accordance with Article 69(7) of the CPR. It will also form part of the Inter-Ministerial Consultative Committee on EU Funds.</p>

Enabling condition	Fulfilment of enabling condition	Criteria	Fulfilment of criteria	Reference to relevant documents	Justification
					Further information on areas of cooperation between the MAs and CRPD throughout the programming period can be found in the Covenant.

5. Programme authorities

Reference: point (k) of Article 22(3) and Articles 71 and 84 CPR

Table 10: Programme authorities

Programme Authority	Name of the institution	Contact name	Position	Email
Managing authority	Funds and Programmes Division within the Ministry responsible for EU Funds	Anthony Camilleri	Director General	anthony.c.camilleri@gov.mt
Audit authority	Internal Audit and Investigations Department within the Office of the Prime Minister	Stefano Manicolo	Director General	stefano.manicolo.1@gov.mt
Body which receives payments from the Commission	The Managing Authority within the Funds and Programmes Division	Anthony Camilleri	Director General	anthony.c.camilleri@gov.mt

6. Partnership

Reference: point (h) of Article 22(3) CPR

In accordance with Article 8 of the CPR, Malta is committed to ensure that the partnership principle and multi-level governance approach is adopted throughout the preparation of the Programmes. Throughout the first half of 2019, bilateral consultations were held across Government including the Ministry responsible for Education, the Ministry responsible for Gozo, the Ministry responsible for Home Affairs, National Security and Law Enforcement, the Ministry responsible for social justice, solidarity and family's rights, the Ministry responsible for Justice and Governance, the Ministry responsible for Health and corresponding relevant entities, regarding the country's needs and policy developments as well as possible support from EU funding, including through the AMIF 2021 – 2027 Programme.

The consultation process was officially launched during the 5th Monitoring Committee organised by the AMIF Responsible Authority in June 2019. Present for the Monitoring Committee were members from Government bodies representing the education, health, integration, employment and home affairs sectors together with CION representatives, during which members were invited to submit any proposals that may be financed through the AMIF Programme.

In early 2020, over 145 entities, representing Government, urban and other public authorities, civil society, bodies representing social inclusion, fundamental rights, gender equality and non-discrimination amongst others were invited to participate in committee meetings focusing on the main policy objectives under the Common Provisions Regulation. In identifying the strategies and key requirements in the field of asylum and migration, relevant entities, including entities responsible for safeguarding fundamental rights were consulted during the drafting phase in order to provide insights on the needs and challenges as well as any actions that would need to be undertaken to address these challenges. In order to keep the members of the Monitoring Committee abreast with the developments involved in the programming phase, another presentation was held on 6th November 2020 to explain the state of play of consultations and engage representatives in discussions on the Programme.

A targeted consultation exercise on the needs and priorities identified in the AMIF Programme was held in June 2021. Around 24 entities, including civil society, such as NCPE, non-governmental organisations and international organisations including UNHCR were directly invited to contribute towards the Programme's identified needs and initiatives. The feedback received contributed to further developing the needs analysis as well as identifying any gaps related to the interventions foreseen.

Taking into account the consultations held during the programming stage as well as the role of main entities with respect to the sectoral areas covered by AMIF, the following entities have been identified as the main partners:

- (a) regional, local and other public authorities, including in the education sector, home affairs, national security, health, integration and equality, as well as Gozo;
- (b) economic and social partners as well as civil society; and
- (c) relevant bodies representing environmental matters as well as those responsible for promoting social inclusion, fundamental rights, rights of persons with disabilities, gender equality and non-discrimination.

In line with Article 38 of the CPR, a Monitoring Committee for the new AMIF Programme shall be set up within three months from the date of approval of the Programme which composition shall reflect the partnership principle and multi-level governance approach, as delineated in Article 8 of the CPR, to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the AMIF Programme, pursuant to Article 39 of the CPR. Initiatives undertaken during the previous programming period to involve relevant stakeholders promoting equality, the respect for fundamental rights and non-discrimination will continue under the 2021 – 2027 AMIF Programme in accordance with national practice.

Throughout the Programme's implementation, the members of the Monitoring Committee will meet at least once a year, to examine *inter alia* the progress registered in the Programme's implementation including progress on achieved targets and milestones, any challenges affecting the performance of the Programme, the implementation of communication and visibility actions, fulfilment of enabling conditions and the progress in enhancing administrative capacity building, in line with Article 40 of the CPR. The MA will make use of various monitoring tools to evaluate the implementation of the Programme. In cases of changes in national context and characteristics prevalent over the Programme's implementation, the MA may revise the Programme in line with the mechanisms established in the Monitoring Committee's terms of reference.

Bilateral meetings with beneficiaries may also be carried out, based on the context and risks of their project, with the objective of discussing any challenges encountered and progress registered throughout implementation. The relevant information will be used for the annual performance review and final performance report.

7. Communication and visibility

Reference: point (j) of Article 22(3) CPR

Communication and visibility measures will build upon the national communication strategy for 2014 – 2020 as well as the communication measures adopted under the AMIF 14-20 NP. Such measures shall aim to enhance transparency, visibility and awareness among the main recipients of EU funds and the general public at large.

The objectives of the communication activities will include:

- Set up one cohesive and coherent web portal for all EU funds, facilitating usability and ensuring a more targeted approach in the messages that are to be conveyed on EU funding;
- Enhance the existing communication channels such as the website to continue acting as the source of information for Potential Applicants, Beneficiaries and the General Public;
- Inform Union citizens on the role and achievements of the AMIF Regulation through annual information and communication activities on the results and impact of the AMIF Programme. Targeted activities may also be undertaken with a special focus and smart potential, where possible and applicable;
- Assist all beneficiaries in understanding publicity requirements and adopting appropriate measures to meet them;
- Provide consistent messages and branding through the publication of Visual Identity Guidelines and publicity material to be used by all supported projects to ensure appropriate recognition of the funds received;
- Promote the scope of the fund and the EU's contribution in meeting national objectives.

Communication shall also be undertaken in line with Article 30 of the AMIF Regulation. For all other instances, relevant stakeholders shall comply with the necessary visibility guidelines accordingly as published by the MA. Publicity measures shall vary in accordance with the needs of the target audience/s including the general public, potential beneficiaries and sensitive cohorts such as migrant community, who are amongst the main recipients of this fund. The objectives and results of the Programme shall therefore be promoted among the general public through various communication channels such as the media and research institutions. Publicity shall be extended to potential beneficiaries which include public entities, NGOs, and international / voluntary organizations that may be eligible for funding. These beneficiaries shall adopt the necessary means to inform their participants / target groups about the union co-financing element in their respective projects.

In line with Article 49 of the CPR, the MA shall upload information on the Programme on the website. A timetable with the list of planned calls for proposals, except for projects awarded through the direct award procedure, shall be uploaded at least three times a year, in line with Article 49 of the CPR. This shall be followed by the upload of the selected list of operations under AMIF which shall be updated every four months by the appointed communication officer. A national communication coordinator has been nominated to act as a contact point for all CPR funds.

Pursuant to EU Regulation Nos. 1048/2014 and 1049/2014 on information and publicity measures and Article 50 of the CPR, the necessary references to the EU's publicity criteria shall be adopted throughout the Programme's implementation. In addition, beneficiaries shall also be responsible for informing the public about the financial assistance received under the AMIF Programme should the operation involving physical investment or purchase of equipment exceed the €100,000 threshold, whereby a plaque of decent size or billboard shall be installed following the start of the operation or purchased equipment installed.

Specific visibility requirements may be established for operations supported by the Fund where this is justified for reasons of security and public order, as per Article 69(5) of the CPR. For all other operations that fall outside the €100,000 threshold, visibility measures including displaying at least one poster of a minimum A3 size or equivalent electronic display with information on the support received from the Fund.

Some of the communication channels that shall be adopted to reach out to the targeted audience may include the following: audio-visual and print media, social/online/digital media, promotional material, signage, information sessions, and participation in public events amongst others. Both Maltese and English may be employed as communicating channel languages, taking into consideration the specific situation. The indicative budget allocated for such interventions will be approximately 10% out of the total budget allocated for Technical Assistance as outlined under section 2.2. This allocation shall also finance evaluation measures required for assessing progress on the impact of communication activities, in terms of raised awareness and achievement of output indicators. By 2024, it is foreseen that one (1) launch event and one (1) annual event will be organised reaching a total of eight (8) communication activities by 2029. In addition, by 2029 an evaluation on the success of such promotional activities is also foreseen.

8. Use of unit costs, lump sums, flat rates and financing not linked to costs

Reference: Articles 94 and 95 CPR

Intended use of Articles 94 and 95 CPR	Yes	No
From the adoption, the programme will make use of reimbursement of the Union contribution based on unit costs, lump sums and flat rates under the priority according to Article 94 CPR	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
From the adoption, the programme will make use of reimbursement of the Union contribution based on financing not linked to costs according to Article 95 CPR	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Appendix 1: Union contribution based on unit costs, lump sums and flat rates

A. Summary of the main elements

Specific objective	Estimated proportion of the total financial allocation within the specific objective to which the SCO will be applied in %	Type(s) of operation covered		Indicator triggering reimbursement (2)		Unit of measurement for the indicator triggering reimbursement	Type of SCO (standard scale of unit costs, lump sums or flat rates)	Amount (in EUR) or percentage (in case of flat rates) of the SCO
		Code(1)	Description	Code(2)	Description			

(1) This refers to the code in Annex VI of the AMIF, BMVI and ISF Regulations

(2) This refers to the code of a common indicator, if applicable

Appendix 1: Union contribution based on unit costs, lump sums and flat rates

B. Details by type of operation

C. Calculation of the standard scale of unit costs, lump sums or flat rates

1. Source of data used to calculate the standard scale of unit costs, lump sums or flat rates (who produced, collected and recorded the data, where the data is stored, cut-off dates, validation, etc.)

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2. Please specify why the proposed method and calculation based on Article 94(2) CPR is relevant to the type of operation.

3. Please specify how the calculations were made, in particular including any assumptions made in terms of quality or quantities. Where relevant, statistical evidence and benchmarks should be used and, if requested, provided in a format that is usable by the Commission.

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4. Please explain how you have ensured that only eligible expenditure was included in the calculation of the standard scale of unit cost, lump sum or flat rate.

5. Assessment of the audit authority(ies) of the calculation methodology and amounts and the arrangements to ensure the verification, quality, collection and storage of data.

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Appendix 2: Union contribution based on financing not linked to costs

A. Summary of the main elements

Specific objective	The amount covered by the financing not linked to costs	Type(s) of operation covered		Conditions to be fulfilled/results to be achieved triggering reimbursement by the Commission	Indicators		Unit of measurement for the conditions to be fulfilled/results to be achieved triggering reimbursement by the Commission	Envisaged type of reimbursement method used to reimburse the beneficiary(ies)
		Code(1)	Description		Code(2)	Description		

(1) Refers to the code in Annex VI of the AMIF, BMVI and ISF Regulations.

(2) Refers to the code of a common indicator, if applicable.

B. Details by type of operation

Appendix 3

Thematic facility

Procedure reference	Programme version	Status	Accept/Decline date	Comments
C(2021)8458 - 25-Nov-2021 - 1	1.1	Accepted	04-Feb-2022	

Specific objective	Modality	Type of intervention	Union contribution	Pre-financing rate	Description of the action
4. Solidarity	Resettlement and humanitarian admission		210,000.00		Initial TF AMIF - Resettlement & Humanitarian admission (art.19)

DOCUMENTS

Document title	Document type	Document date	Local reference	Commission reference	Files	Sent date	Sent by
SEA Screening Report in relation to the AMIF Programme 2021-2027, appendix to SEA and SEA Focal Point Assessment	Supplementary Information	25-Jul-2022	MT_AMIF_SEA	Ares(2022)5642150	SEA Screening Report in relation to the AMIF Programme 2021-2027, appendix to SEA and SEA Focal Point Assessment	08-Aug-2022	Pace, Maria Pia
Covenant between the Managing Authorities and the Ministry responsible for Human Rights	Supplementary Information	13-Jun-2022	MT_AMIF_Covenant_EU Charter HR_G.3	Ares(2022)5642150	Covenant between the Managing Authorities and the Ministry responsible for Human Rights	08-Aug-2022	Pace, Maria Pia
Covenant between the Managing Authorities and the Commission for the Rights of Persons with Disability	Supplementary Information	13-Jun-2022	MT_AMIF_Covenant between MAs & CRPD_G.4	Ares(2022)5642150	Covenant between the Managing Authorities and the Commission for the Rights of Persons with Disability	08-Aug-2022	Pace, Maria Pia
Legal Notice 411 of 2011 Public Procurement of Contracting Authorities or Entities in the fields of Defence and Security Regulations	Supplementary Information	26-Jul-2022	MT_AMIF_LN 411 of 2011_G.1	Ares(2022)5642150	Legal Notice 411 of 2011 Public Procurement of Contracting Authorities or Entities in the fields of Defence and Security Regulations	08-Aug-2022	Pace, Maria Pia
List of AMIF Stakeholders	Supplementary Information	25-Jul-2022	MT_AMIF_List of Stakeholders	Ares(2022)5642150	List of AMIF Stakeholders	08-Aug-2022	Pace, Maria Pia
AMIF Performance Methodology	Supplementary Information	08-Aug-2022	MT_AMIF_PM	Ares(2022)5642150	AMIF Performance Methodology	08-Aug-2022	Pace, Maria Pia
MT replies to EC observations on AMIF	Supplementary Information	08-Aug-2022	MT_AMIF_MT replies to EC observations	Ares(2022)5642150	MT replies to EC observations on AMIF	08-Aug-2022	Pace, Maria Pia
Programme snapshot 2021MT65AMPR001 1.1	Snapshot of data before send	08-Aug-2022		Ares(2022)5642150	Programme_snapshot_2021MT65AMPR001_1.1_en.pdf	08-Aug-2022	Pace, Maria Pia