

Funding 4 y EU

Issue 9

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Making Your Way Through the EU Funding Maze: Proposals, Evaluation and Project Management

Following the overwhelming response to the first session, which was fully booked after 4 days, Maria Rauch was invited to repeat the training session for the benefit of the large number of interested parties whose requests for participation regrettably had to be turned to due seating restrictions. Maria Rauch is an independent, international consultant with extensive experience in EU funding, with particular focus on the fields of Local Development, Employment and Vocational Training. She has advised several organisations including the European Commission (DG Employment and Social Affairs, DG Education and Culture and DG Information Society) and the Portuguese Labour Ministry. has also published extensively.

The seminar was of particular interest to voluntary and community organisations, Local Councils, NGOs, managers of EU funded projects, Programme Managers, representatives of trade unions and employer bodies, as well as members of the business community.

The event was once again a great success and was attended by close to 150 participants. It was organized by *Forum Malta fl-Ewropa* and the European Parliament Information Office in

Valletta and was held on the 5th March at the Westin Dragonara



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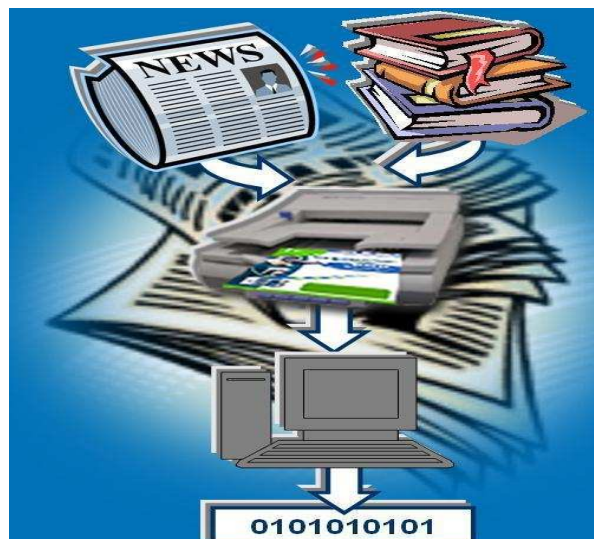
Seminar on EU Funding: The eContentplus Programme

The eContentplus Programme (2005–08) has a budget of €149 million to tackle organisational barriers and promote the take up of leading-edge technical solutions to improve accessibility and use of digital material in a multilingual environment.

A central Information Day on eContentplus, presenting the objectives of the target areas for 2008 and providing details on how to submit a proposal, was recently held in Luxembourg. A call for proposals has just been published with a deadline for submission set for 12 June 2008. In view of the opportunities offered by this programme, *Forum Malta Fl-Ewropa* will be organising a funding information seminar on this programme. The main speaker will be Mark Roeder from the European Commission's DG Information society and Media Digital Content & Cognitive Systems. The programme includes a Project Gallery during which Maltese projects funded by the eContent Programme will be presented.

This funding information seminar will be held on 23 April 2008 at the Coastline Hotel, Salina Bay and commences at 9.15am. This seminar should be of particular interest to: Content creators or owners in the public and private sector; local authorities; Corporations; University and Schools; Libraries; Archives and

Museums; as well as to SMEs. For a seminar programme and registration form, kindly email our offices on forumfunding@gov.mt.



St James Cavalier opens theatre doors for adults with learning disabilities

St. James Cavalier Centre for Creativity has obtained funding from the educational and cultural arm of the European Union, through the lifelong learning programme Grundtvig, for its project entitled *Opening Doors: Developing learning disabled people's participation in the arts across Europe*.

The project, which involves a collaboration between Belgian arts centre Leopoldsborg, and Headway Theatre Company from the United Kingdom, seeks to facilitate the growth of a theatre group for adults with learning disabilities. The project will entail sharing of professional practice and training, as well as performance exchanges between the theatre groups based in Malta, Brussels, and UK.

Headway Theatre Company, which already hosts a theatre group of learning disabled actors, Seven Stars, invited the project partners to Blyth, Northumberland, this December for its annually hosted theatre festival for actors with learning disabilities. A training programme is set to take place in Malta, and in September participants will return to Malta for an exchange of performances developed through the project, which they will then take to Blyth in December

2008. This project has been allocated € 23,000 to finance the eligible expenditure .



Record Year for Cohesion Policy Payments

2007 was a record year for the European Commission with regard to the budget execution of the Cohesion Policy. In 2007, payments amounting to more than EUR 41 billion were made against EUR 33 billion in 2006. The amount for 2007 comprises payments totalling EUR 34 billion that were made for 2000-2006 and also the first payments for 2007-2013 which amount to EUR 7 billion.

The payments of the previous programme, namely for the 2000-2006 period (EUR 223 billion), can continue until the end of 2008. This was the first time that the ten new Member States handled EU funds since funding began in May 2004. But statistics clearly show that they have been doing a good job. The ten new Member States had reached an average of 75% absorption of their financial allocations. These vary from Hungary that utilised 82% of the funds and Cyprus 62%. Malta had performed impressively well, since 81% of the financial allocation was executed. The average execution reached by the EU-15 countries amounts to 84%, varying between 65 % for the Netherlands and 91 % for Ireland.

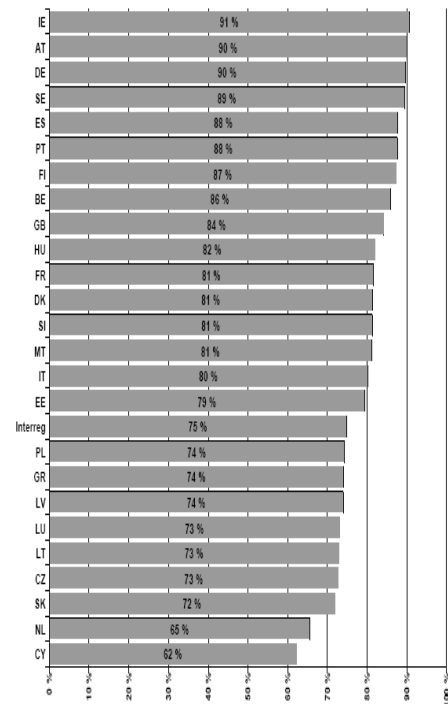
The European Commission has approved nearly all the operational programmes for the 2007-2013 cycle. These programmes amount to over 400. Malta's operational programmes were the first programmes to be adopted by the Commission. This meant that Malta could start spending the money at an earlier stage, thus ensuring that the best usage of these funds would be made.



Programming period 2000-2006

as at: 05 Feb 2008
Last print date: 07 Feb 2008

4 Structural Funds: Payments against decisions (1)



(1) The EU10 reference period is 2004-2006.

EU Opting for Training to Improve Employment

The implementation of the ESF 2004-2006 Programme in Malta has been marked with a number of successes. The main focus of Malta's ESF priorities were employability and adaptability, equal opportunities, social inclusion, life-long learning and human resource development in Gozo.

In terms of implementation systems, the ESF in Malta was subject to the same implementation system as all the other structural funds. Two calls for project applications were issued, one in February 2004 and in January 2006. At the end of 2006 there were 38 projects under implementation. The main beneficiary of these funds was the Public Sector with the Ministry for Education, Youth and Employment particularly MCAST, ETC and the Education Division.

Some of the projects carried out with the assistance of these funds include the Craft courses for sustainable careers in Gozo. In this project 192 people attended for the courses being offered such as in glass, metal, wood works, lace, ceramics, silver-smith, fashion design and other crafts. These people managed to enhance their skills and exposed themselves to the latest equipment and work practices.

Another project was TEES that stands for Training and Employment Exposure Schemes. The objective of this project was to offer a re-training programme for unemployed people aged 40, thereby facilitating their reintegration in the labour market. A total of 460 people attended for this training and 285 found employment following participation in the scheme.

Another project that was carried out through the ESF Funds was the project managed by Razzett tal-Hbiberija. The objective of this project was to offer support to enhance ICT assisted training for disabled persons (for further details re this project see www.forummalta.gov.mt). This training was necessary in order to help these people develop specialised



skills and improve chances of further education and employment.

Together with the implementation of the ESF 2004-2006, there was the Community Initiative Programme EQUAL (2004-2006). This Community Initiative took into account the developments in employment policy at European level. EQUAL sought to develop new means for combating discrimination and inequalities in relation to the labour market. It was intended to ensure that new approaches developed at local or sectorial level would have been disseminated and taken up on a larger scale. The strong emphasis on innovation and mainstreaming was the main difference between EQUAL and other labour market programmes at national as well as at European level.

EQUAL complements the general European Social Fund objectives through transnational cooperation, innovation and mainstreaming by pursuing a distinctive experimental approach towards removing inequalities and discrimination in relation to the labour market. EQUAL is part of a broad understanding of labour market policies, which is not yet common in all parts of Europe.

Malta's budget under EQUAL for the period 2004-2006 amounted to € 1,654,884. During the 2004-2006 period, Malta benefitted from € 1,241,163 (75%) from ESF. This was further complemented by national funds amounting to € 413,721 (25%). Further details regarding EQUAL are available on <http://www.equalmalta.org/mfssequal/home.aspx>. The main beneficiaries of the EQUAL Programme included both the Public Sector and the Civil Society that worked together through partnerships agreement in order to implement these

projects.

The challenges for the period 2007-2013 are addressed by Operational Programme II *Empowering People for More Jobs and a Better Quality of Life*. This Operational Programme has five priority axes :

- (a) Improving educational and skills
- (b) Investing in employability and adaptability of the work force
- (c) Promoting an equal and inclusive labour market
- (d) Strengthening of institutional and administrative capacity
- (e) Technical assistance

Each Priority has a general objective and a number of operational objectives that contribute towards implementing the national and European Strategy. A number of calls under this Operational Programme are currently being launched.

EQUAL
 European Social Fund Community Initiative Programme EQUAL



EU fighting against cancer

Cancer is a growing public health challenge in Europe, with distinct differences and inequalities in the burden and treatment of disease between and within Member States. It is expected that at least one in three EU citizens will suffer from cancer during his lifetime and one in four will die of cancer. At least one third of cancers can be prevented.



The Slovenian Presidency selected cancer as a priority since this is the second most important cause of death in developed countries. The objective of this initiative is how to reduce the burden of cancer. A project named FACT that stands for Fighting against Cancer Today, that is co-financed by the European Commission's Public Health Programme, will focus on best practice among the Member States and develop an EU-level strategy.

The following institutions are taking part in the project: the Institute of Public Health of Slovenia, the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, the Institute of Oncology in Slovenia, the Institute of Oncology in Slovenia and the European Observatory on Health Systems.

This project will include workshops in which experts will provide input for key topics related to the problem of cancer in the EU and a publication prepared by international recognized experts. Policy briefs will summarise the findings and recommendations thus providing the necessary information on the new development and policies about this disease in the EU. Finally an international conference will be organised in Slovenia.

Funding News

ERDF & ESF—Assessment of Applications Received

The Planning and Priorities Co-ordination Division (PPCD) announced that the project selection process relating to the 10th January 2008 Call for Project Proposals under the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the European Social Fund (ESF) 2007-2013 is expected to be concluded by June 2008. The Managing Authority will seek to inform all applicants of the outcome of the selection process by this date. Further information is available in the Guidance Notes to the Application, which have recently been updated. The Guidance Notes can be downloaded from: www.ppcd.gov.mt/english/downloads/callOPo8.zip. As explained therein, proposed projects must obtain at least 50% of the total marks during the project selection process to be considered for funding or put on the reserve list. Further queries can be forwarded to the PPCD through the Email Helpdesk: info.ppcd@gov.mt.



The **Information Communication Technologies Policy Support Programme** is one of the main financial instruments of the i2010 strategy and aims to help to overcome the hurdles hindering the development of an information society for all. The major challenges in areas like health, inclusion, public administrations or energy efficiency include the unavailability of ICT-based services, the lack of interoperability of solutions across the Member States, as well as the market fragmentation of ICT-based solutions. The ICT PSP helps develop markets for innovative ICT-based solutions notably in areas of public interest and opens a wide range of new business opportunities in particular for innovative SMEs that provide ICT-based solutions. It does so by creating wider market opportunities and better services for SMEs rather than by providing direct subsidies to SMEs. The Programme is expected therefore to have an impact on a wide range of SMEs extending far beyond those that participate directly in the supported actions. The 2008

ICT-PSP Call for Proposals will open on 29 April 2008 and close on 9 September 2008. More information on the programme is available on http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/activities/ict_psp/index_en.htm

The **Eco-innovation Programme** supports the first application and further market uptake of some of the best eco-innovative products and services in Europe and helps overcome those critical barriers that still hamper their commercial success. Eco-innovation is a relatively new business and technology area which may be described as the production, assimilation or exploitation of a novelty in products, production processes, services or in management and business methods, which aims to prevent or substantially reduce environmental risk, pollution and other negative impacts of resources use (including energy use). The 2008 Call for Proposals is expected to be published on 21 April 2008 and is intended to fund some of the best eco-innovative projects and help them succeed in the market. This year's funding priorities are materials recycling, buildings, food & drink, greening business, and smart purchasing. This Call is open to all legal persons that are based in eligible countries (EU and EEA Member States) but the priority will be given to SMEs. Some € 28 million will be available, covering up to 60% of the eligible costs. More information on the Programme is available on http://ec.europa.eu/environment/etap/ecoinnovation/index_en.htm. The national contact point may be contacted on tel: 21497970 or email cip@mimcol.com



Some Open calls

CALL FOR PROPOSALS FOR PROJECTS UNDER THE EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND

A new Call for Project Proposals under the European Social Fund (ESF) 2007-2013 has been launched by the Planning and Priorities Co-ordination Division (PPCD) within the Office of the Prime Minister. The call has been issued specifically for Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and Social Partners **ONLY**, in relation to project proposals focusing on *Promoting an Equal and Inclusive Labour Market* (Priority Axis 3).

The project proposals submitted must be in line with Priority Axis 3 under Operational Programme II, 'Empowering People for More Jobs and a Better Quality of Life'. The financial threshold allocated to this call is €2.5 million. Eligible NGOs and Social Partners are invited to submit applications for projects relating to this specific Priority Axis. The call closes at **NOON** on Friday, 2nd May 2008.

INTELLIGENT ENERGY EUROPE (IEE) 2008 PROGRAMME

Call for proposals under the **Intelligent Energy Europe (IEE) 2008 Programme** is now open. Closing date for submission of applications (electronic submission only) is Thursday 26th June 2008 at 17:00 (local time). About € 45mil are available to co-finance European promotion and dissemination activities regarding energy efficiency and renewables. These activities can be undertaken through projects or the establishment of new local or regional energy management agencies. Projects must have at least 3 partner organisations from 3 different countries, whilst for new local/regional energy management agencies, applications must be submitted by only one legal person which must be a local or regional public authority established in one of the participating countries. Successful applicants can expect to receive financial support covering up to 75% of the eligible costs, for a maximum period of 3 years.

Further information on this programme may be obtained from the following website: http://ec.europa.eu/energy/intelligent/call_for_proposals/index_en.htm or MIMCOL on telephone 21497970.

IMPROVING THE PROCESSING AND MARKETING OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS

A Call for Proposals for Measure 3.2 (Improving the Processing and Marketing of Agricultural Products) is now open. The measure intends to give support to investments that improve or establish new outlets for agricultural produce and improve the return to the wholesaler or the processor as well as the farmer. To this end, the measure aims at identifying and exploiting new innovative marketing channels and outlets in both marketing and processing, leading to new patterns of cooperation and working relationships between producers and processors, while ensuring the improvement of quality of the product that is offered for sale to the consumer.

The maximum investment support under this measure, expressed as a percentage of the volume of eligible investment, is limited to a maximum of 50% with the other 50% being private contribution. The higher threshold for eligible projects has been set to € 250,000 per applicant, while the lower threshold for an eligible project will be of € 1,000 per applicant. This does not mean that project size cannot exceed € 250,000, however in such cases the excess costs must be borne solely by the applicant and the grant cannot exceed € 125,000.

Further information on this call may be obtained from the Rural Development Department. The standard application form and guidelines can be downloaded from www.agric.gov.mt.



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