



Fondo Europeo di Sviluppo Regionale  
European Regional Development Fund

## PUBLIC SUMMARY –ANNUAL IMPLEMENTATION REPORT 2020

(pursuant to Article 50(9) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013)



In 2021, the action of the MA and the MNCA with the support of the JS supported the implementation of the axes of the programme, in the face of the complex situation caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.

### **1. Physical and financial implementation of the Programme**

With reference to the implementation of the projects financed under **the Public Notice 01/2016** during the year 2021 the activities were mainly focused on the start of the administrative closure of the projects and the Managing Authority and the Maltese National Coordinating Authority, have carried out an activity of constant support and accompaniment towards the beneficiaries of the projects in the closing phase, providing information about the requirements for the correct administrative and accounting conclusion of the initiatives.

At the end of 2021, 11 out of 15 operations financed were completed. In fact, in order to cope with some limitations that have arisen due to the COVID-19 pandemic and that have not allowed the closure of the interventions on schedule, the BYTHOS, ENISIE, SIMIT THARSY and ITAMA projects, whose conclusion was scheduled by 31/12/2021 have seen their completion date extended to 2022.

In 2021, for the JOB MATCH2020, BESS and NATFLIFE projects, the closing Report was drawn up by the JS, where the attainments completed in order to achieve the result objectives of the same interventions were consolidated and verified. Based on this Report, the MA formally adopted closure measures with the simultaneous balance payment for the three operations.

With reference to **Public Notice 02/2019**, following the definition of the Notice 2/2019 evaluation process, 9 projects admitted to funding at the end of 2020 during 2021 become in "implementation" mode and no significant misalignments and/or delays has been detected. In addition, following the implementing decision of the European Commission C(2021) 1351 of 23.2.2021 with which the amended version of the INTERREG V-A Italia-Malta program was adopted, it was possible to proceed with the scrolling of the ranking of Notice 02/2019. This shift allowed the admission to funding of two further projects: the CROSSWORK project, under IP 8.e-SO 2.2 and the GIFLUID project, under the PI 5.b-SO 3. 2. The projects started operations during June 2021 and are currently being implemented.

In the course of 2021, the Managing Authority supported by the Joint Secretariat took part in the national path of accompaniment to capitalization managed by the INTERACT program. This path has made it possible to understand the context and the needs to start a capitalization approach, to better identify the thematic areas on which to focus, to develop a capitalization approach based on the experience of the 2014-2020 programme and capable of developing systematically in the subsequent programming period and to support the draft of a capitalization strategy 2021-2027 to be approved further.

Following participation, a process of capitalization of the results of the Programme was launched, which led the programme authorities to start drafting a Public Notice for capitalization actions of the results of the projects to be published in the course of 2022.

The implementation, management, monitoring and surveillance activities of the programme ensured, as of 31/12/2021, the achievement of the N+3 disbursement target through the submission of a payment application of € 18,715,312.15 (ERDF) against an expected disbursement target of € 18,572,304.81 (ERDF).

## **2. Evaluation of the Programme**

Based on art. 114 of Reg. (EU) no. 1303/2013, the MA drafted the plan and, on the basis of the contents of the same, commissioned on 16 January 2020 (prot. 536) the Evaluation and Verification Unit of Public Investments (NVVIP) of the Sicilian Region, an independent technical structure to carry out the implementation evaluation (Part II). The report was released in June 2020.

The second phase of the implementation evaluation allowed an update of the first report with reference to the aspects related to the organization and functionality of the structures responsible for the implementation of the Program as well as the adequacy of the procedures adopted for the selection of operations and on the other hand an overview of the ability of the program to achieve the expected results by the year of 2023. In addition, the report examined the effects of the enlargement of the cooperation area, the degree of integration with other Union instruments and the first evidence on the effectiveness of the communication strategy.

During 2021, the preparatory activities for the assignment of the service linked to the implementation of the impact assessment of the programme were launched.

In particular, the evaluation will give an account of the Programme's contribution to the achievement of the Union's strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, with reference, for Axis 1, to the quality of life and health of citizens and cultural heritage; for Axis 2, to quality of life and health of citizens and protection of the environment; for Axis 3, to protect the environment and prevent risks.

More specifically, the evaluation will concern the results of the projects funded under the Programme both under Notice 1/2016 including the so-called "covid-oriented" actions adopted during the 2020 year, and in the context of Notice 2/2019.

In the consideration that the programme, during 2022 will publish a third notice for the selection of projects, the evaluation will also concern those project proposals that capitalize on the results achieved by the projects already financed in the previous Program Notices that have concluded the activities and / or achieved the expected results.

During the year 2021, the programme authorities continued to ensure the acceleration processes of all major administrative procedures. In view of the persistence of the emergency situation regarding the measures to combat and contain COVID 19 which has led to slowdowns in the planning and implementation of the operations eligible for funding, the programme authorities and the Joint Secretariat have held several meetings with the beneficiaries of Notices 01/2016 and 02/2019 in order to fully understand the main problems related to implementation.

During 2021, 29 technical coordination meetings were held with the lead partners and partners of the projects eligible for funding to identify, in a complete logic of accompaniment, the best

solutions to ensure the conclusion of operations while maintaining compliance with the main result and output indicators. The JS also sought to ensure its participation in the project steering committees to closely monitor the main implementation issues.

With reference to Notice 02/2019, the programme authorities in order to ensure complete harmonisation, transparency and equal treatment regarding the selection process of 236 mobility and in line with the provisions of the same notice 02/2019, have carried out the necessary activities to ensure the sharing and approval of the selection notices for the financing of "*labour mobility within the cross-border area*".

At the end of 2021, the MOVE ON project published the first selection notice for a total of 75 mobility.

The programme authorities ensured maximum assistance to communication and information actions through the programme's website and social media.

In relation to the ability of the Program to achieve the expected results, it can be said that at present there are no uncertainties about the achievement of what is planned even taking into account the program changes approved on February 23, 2021.

Compared to the Programme's strategy in terms of coordination with other EU instruments, the degree of integration of the Programme with the other Union instruments appears good in the light of the national capitalisation path carried out.