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COUNTRY FICHE

MALTA [MT]

In 2014-20, only one Territorial Delivery Mechanism strategy was implemented in Malta, given the country's small territory. A single Sustainable Urban Development strategy implemented through an Operational Programme's Priority Axis (SUD PrAx) was deployed within the capital city of Valletta.

POPULATION	STATE TYPE
0.46 million	Centralised

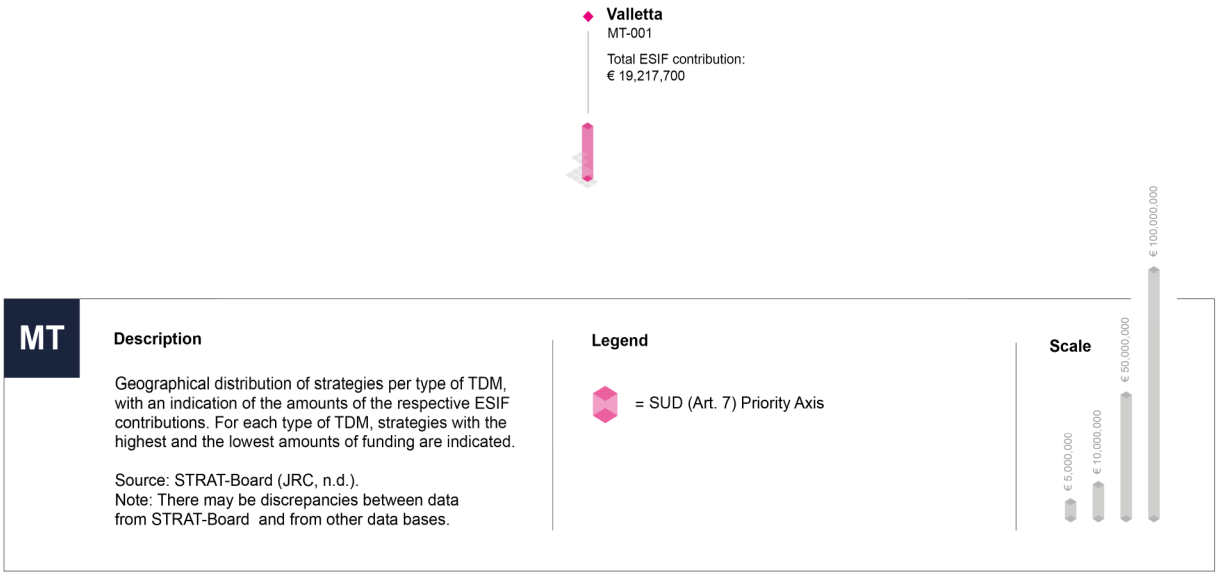
NATIONAL ESIF BUDGET	
EU Contribution (EUR)	€ 1,002,239,416
National Contribution (EUR)	€ 204,453,515
Total Contribution (EUR)	€ 1,206,692,931

Note: including all ESIF - ERDF, ESF, EAFRD, YEI, EMFF
Source: Cohesion Open Data Platform (European Commission, n.d.)

Territorial Delivery Mechanism type	No.	ESIF type	Share of ERDF /CF allocation	Share of decided allocations spent (end 2022)
SUD (Art. 7) Operational Programme	0	-	-	-
SUD (Art. 7) Priority Axis	1	ERDF	4.9%	72%
Integrated Territorial Investment (ITI; SUD)	0	-	-	-
Integrated Territorial Investment (ITI; non-SUD)	0	-	-	-
Community-led Local Development (CLLD)	0	-	-	-
TOTAL	**1**	**-**	**4.9%**	**-**

Source: allocations and spending based on Cohesion Open Data Platform (European Commission, n.d.), remaining items on STRAT-Board (JRC, n.d.).
Note: STRAT-Board data is self-reported by strategy holders. There may be inconsistencies between the data reported in STRAT-Board and other databases, such as the Cohesion Open Data Platform. ERDF/CF funding was invested in non-SUD ITI and SUD ITI strategies in Malta, as indicated in the Open Data Platform. These were not included in this research, which focused only on the SUD PrAx strategy in Valetta.

Figure 1: Geographical distribution of Territorial Delivery Mechanism (TDM) strategies



GOVERNANCE CONTEXT

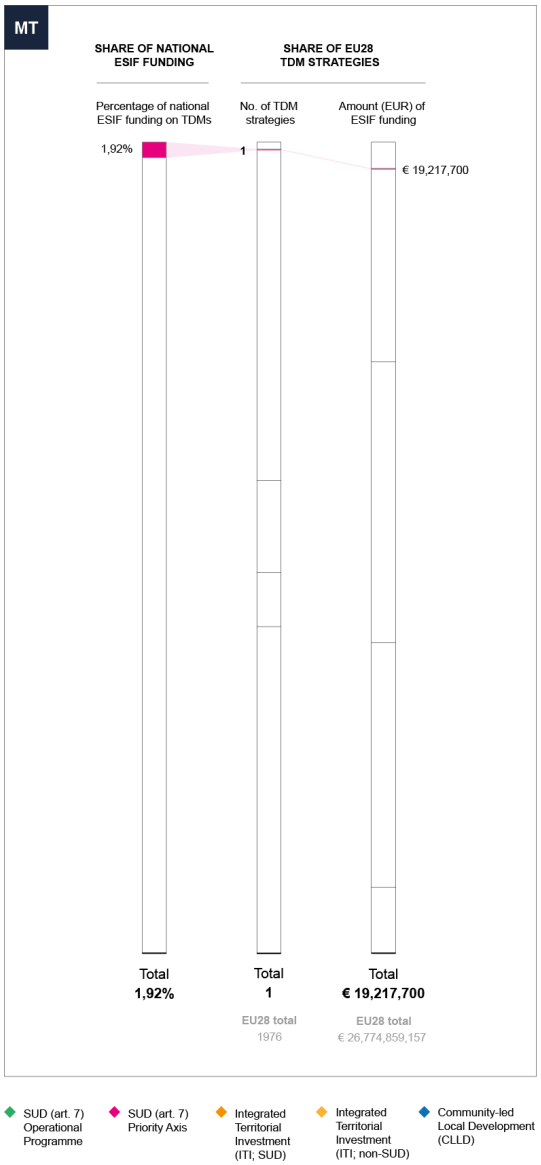
Malta's territorial administration system is highly centralised, given the country's small size and population. The government operates at two primary levels: the national government and local councils. There is no intermediate level of government. The central government in Malta holds the majority of administrative and legislative powers, overseeing areas such as health, education, and infrastructure. At the local level, there are 68 councils, including 54 on the main island of Malta and 14 on the island of Gozo. The councils are responsible for local public services such as waste management, urban planning, the maintenance of public spaces, and local cultural activities, but the national government retains a significant degree of control over most public policies, including the country's territorial development. Since 2015, guidance on spatial development has been provided by the Strategic Plan for the Environment and Development (SPED). The document lays the basis for an integrated planning system, including governance and implementation arrangements, with measures specifically focusing on urban areas. Urban policy in Malta is mainly the responsibility of the Planning Authority, the national planning entity operating as part of the Ministry for Gozo and Planning.

COHESION POLICY CONTEXT

There were two main Cohesion Policy Operational Programmes (OP) implemented in Malta, both managed by the Planning and Priorities Coordination Division of the Ministry for European Affairs. First, the Fostering a Competitive and Sustainable Economy to Meet our Challenges OP combined funding from the ERDF and Cohesion Fund (CF). It aimed to promote economic growth in Malta and pursue the Europe 2020 targets for smart, sustainable, and inclusive growth. More specifically, the thematic scope of the programme was broad. It included themes ranging from strengthening research, technological development and innovation, promoting the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT), competitiveness of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), the shift towards a low-carbon economy, environmental protection and resource efficiency, sustainable transport, to social inclusion and investment in education and vocational training. The identification of Valletta as the supported area for the

FEATURES OF THE TERRITORIAL DELIVERY MECHANISMS

Figure 2: Types of Territorial Delivery Mechanisms (TDMs) used, amount of strategies and the corresponding shares of ESIF* contributions



Source: STRAT-Board (JRC, n.d.). Notes: On the first vertical bar from the left, the percentage of all ESIF funding for that country allocated to TDM strategies is indicated with colour. The whole bar represents all ESIF funding for that country. On the second bar (middle), the number of each type of TDM strategy implemented in this country is indicated with the corresponding colour, with the whole bar representing all TDM strategies implemented across the EU28 (1976 strategies, as indicated in grey below the bar). On the bar on the right side, the amounts of ESIF funding for the TDM strategies are indicated with the corresponding colour. The bar represents the total allocation of ESIF for TDMs in the EU28. Please note that there may be inconsistencies between the data reported in STRAT-Board and Cohesion Open Data Platform.

Sustainable Urban Development (Art. 7) Priority Axis

Malta was the only Member State where the sustainable urban development strategy was designed by the national government, rather than by the city in question. The single SUD PrAx strategy was deployed in Valletta and was solely supported by the ERDF. The Ministry for European Affairs and Equality (MEAE), assisted by a Coordination Committee for Sustainable Urban Development (COCOSUD), acted as the Managing Authority (MA) and was responsible for the selection of operations as part of the strategy. COCOSUD was chaired by the MEAE and comprised high-level representatives from key entities such as the Valletta Local Council, ministries, the Planning Authority, and the Managing Authority for the ERDF.

The development of the SUD PrAx strategy involved conducting a needs assessment through consultations with various stakeholders. The strategy supported a community-led regeneration approach for the capital city, providing affordable housing and improving public spaces to make them more accessible. The territorial focus of the strategy was limited – it included the urban regeneration priority area of the Grand Harbour. According to the Cohesion Policy Open Data Platform, the thematic focus of the strategy was limited to supporting SMEs. By the end of 2022, 72% of the allocated ERDF funding had been used, slightly under-performing when compared to mainstream Cohesion Policy funding (76% absorbed by the same time).

The key role of COCOSUD in the formulation and implementation of Valletta's SUD strategy.

The formation of COCOSUD, along with the significant amount of preliminary work conducted prior to the launch of the call, facilitated the process of strategy design and allowed the interventions to align well with the social, economic, and environmental needs of the Grand Harbour area of Valletta. Having a lead coordinator to steer a number of initiatives within the same area helped to accelerate the submission of funding applications and improved the efficiency of implementation. COCOSUD served as a direct contact point between the beneficiaries and the Managing Authority.

* In order to reflect the contribution of various funds to TDMs, this graph includes all ESIF funds (ERDF, ESF, CF, EAFRD, EMFF).

IN SUM

During 2014-20, Malta's experience with Territorial Delivery Mechanisms was limited to a single strategy implemented in part of the capital city. There is limited data on the strategy's impacts and added value. The strategy focused on a relatively small area within the city, which meant it did not create opportunities for strengthening functional linkages. Nevertheless, the strategy's formulation mobilised stakeholder input to address local needs and led to the creation of a new coordination body, acting as an intermediary between funding beneficiaries and the Managing Authority.

References

European Commission. (n.d.). Cohesion Open Data Platform. DG Regio. https://cohesiondata.ec.europa.eu/

JRC. (n.d.). STRAT-Board. Joint Research Centre. https://urban.jrc.ec.europa.eu/strat-board/

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