



THE MALTA CHAMBER

## PRESS RELEASE

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### **New Action Plan Aims to Strengthen Malta's R&I in Energy and Climate Efforts**

The Energy & Water Agency, The Malta Chamber, and The Malta College of Arts, Science & Technology (MCAST), as part of the Mediterranean Island Cleantech Innovation Ecosystem (MICIE) project, have co-published a Research & Innovation Action Plan for Malta to help guide towards better coordination and growth of R&I in the face of local climate and energy challenges. This plan has been developed within the context of this project and shall now seek financial support and endorsement from the Maltese government. The MICIE Project was created with the aim of strengthening the contribution of R&I in achieving the climate and energy targets of Malta and Cyprus as defined in their National Energy and Climate Plans (NECP).

NECPs are long-term plans that outline how EU member states intend to meet the energy and climate targets for 2030. The plans cover areas such as energy efficiency, renewables, greenhouse gas emissions reductions, interconnections, and R&I. NECPs provide a level of planning that will ease public and private investment and require coordination across all government departments. An updated NECP for Malta is expected to be submitted in 2024.

The Malta R&I Action Plan presented today proposes three cross-cutting actions which were identified as a result of several stakeholder engagement workshops carried out on the theme of Energy and Climate. Participating stakeholders ranged from policy makers and implementors, civil society groups, education and research institutions, funding providers, businesses, and the public.

The first action being presented is the identification of R&I testing facilities. This involves the following core tasks; identifying suitable locations for onshore and offshore facilities for the testing of renewable technologies, assessing the necessary policy framework for the creation of these facilities, and evaluating the need for a regulatory sandbox. The latter is being proposed to be carried out jointly with Cyprus to tackle a common deficit and promote international collaboration within R&I.

The second action developed through the stakeholder workshops is the proposal for the development of an open science database. The first task under this action is to identify and engage potential data providers and users to identify database requirements, including hosting and infrastructure requirements. It is likewise considered necessary to study what structure for data warehousing is best suited for an open science database and any frameworks required for data sharing, integration, and maintenance. This will then be followed by the actual design and development of the database.

Strengthening the local researcher workforce is the final action being proposed within the Action Plan. This action primarily involves the strengthening of collaboration between public, academia, government and industry through dedicated events promoting R&I in energy and climate, and the

continuous assessment and improvement of existing schemes. The action also considers bolstering the local researcher workforce through collaborative programmes with other EU member states, supporting younger researchers in their studies, and assessing mechanisms to attract international researchers to collaborate locally on priority projects for Malta were also identified as key tasks under this action.

This MICIE project is funded by the Horizon Europe Framework Programme for Research and Innovation of the EU. It is a collaboration between the Cyprus Institute of Technology, the Cyprus Energy Agency, EIT Climate-KIC, the Deputy Ministry of Research, Innovation, and Digital Policy of Cyprus, the Cyprus Employers and Industrialists Federation, the Malta College of Arts, Science & Technology, the Energy & Water Agency, and The Malta Chamber.

For more information on the Action Plan and Guidebook please visit the project website [www.micie-project.eu](http://www.micie-project.eu)

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