

Mid-Term Review of the EEA and Norway Grants 2009-14

Final Report

Report for the FMO

October 2016

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Executive Summary

Purpose and focus of the Mid-Term Review

The main purpose of this mid-term review has been to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of the EEA Grants and Norway Grants at the current stage of implementation. In particular, the review has:

- **Assessed effectiveness** in terms of results and progress towards overall objectives; and
- **Assessed to what extent the current programme model is efficient**, given the transition to a programme model between the 2004-09 and 2009-14 periods.

The Mid-Term Review has included an initial review of evidence for all programmes in all 16 countries with which the Donors have signed MoUs for the EEA/Norway Grants. The main research effort has then been on activities within certain “priority sectors” in seven case study countries (Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal and Romania). This sample of countries accounts for the majority of funds committed and is diverse in terms of size, geographical location, governance and socio-economic context.

Overview of the EEA Grants and Norway Grants

With the signing of the European Economic Area (EEA) agreement in 1992, a financial mechanism was established so that three of the EEA states – Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway – could contribute to strengthening cohesion in the EEA. The EEA Grants and Norway Grants aim to reduce economic and social disparities in the EEA and to strengthen bilateral relations with 16 countries covered by the EU’s Cohesion Fund: Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia and Spain; these are EU Member States whose Gross National Income (GNI) per inhabitant is less than 90% of the EU average. The current Grants, covering the years 2009-14, were determined following negotiations between Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway and the EU and were formulated in a Decision of the Council of the European Union. The EEA Grants are jointly financed by Iceland (3%), Liechtenstein (1.2%) and Norway (95.8%) and are implemented under the terms of a Regulation adopted by the EEA Financial Mechanism Committee.¹ The Norway Grants are financed entirely by Norway and are implemented under the terms of a Regulation adopted by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.²

The objectives of the EEA Grants and Norway Grants are pursued through 150 programmes that support activity in a range of programme areas (PAs), which are grouped into “priority sectors”: Environmental Protection and Management, Climate Change and Renewable Energy, Civil Society, Human and Social Development, Protecting Cultural Heritage, Research and Scholarship, Carbon Capture and Storage, Green Industry Innovation, Decent Work and Tripartite Dialogue, and Justice and Home Affairs. Within each programme, support is given to projects that are either pre-defined or selected via open calls for proposals. Collectively, the projects within any programme should enable the overall objectives and intended effects of the programme to be achieved. In addition, three cross-cutting issues (“programme standards”) have to be integrated into the design and implementation of programmes: good governance, sustainable development and gender equality. There are also 15 programmes providing technical assistance and bilateral funds at national level.

In total, nearly €1.8bn is available with the allocation to each beneficiary state taking into account population size and the extent of disparity with the rest of the EU. Poland (population 38m) is the

¹ Regulation on the implementation of the European Economic Area (EEA) Financial Mechanism 2009-2014

² Regulation on the implementation of the Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2009-2014

largest recipient, receiving nearly one-third of all funds, whilst Romania (population 21m) receives just less than one-fifth. Funding has been awarded to more than 6,000 projects. Nearly half of the projects are in the priority sector of Civil Society. These are mostly small projects with an average grant award of just under €50k. In contrast, the average grant awarded to projects has been nearly €400k across the other priority sectors. Under the terms of the Regulations, beneficiary countries have the possibility to “pre-define” projects, either in the MoU or in the Annex to the programme proposal. Pre-defined projects tend not to feature within Civil Society, Research and Scholarship and Tripartite Dialogue. Across the other priority sectors, about 10% of projects have been pre-defined.

Bilateral co-operation is integral to the operation of the grants and takes place at programme level and at project level. Donor Programme Partners (DPPs) are public entities in the donor states or intergovernmental organisations that advise on the preparation and/or implementation of a programme. The Norwegian Embassies or Consulates in the beneficiary states also support programme management. Donor project partners are organisations in the donor states or border states or inter-governmental bodies that contribute to the implementation of projects.³

Effectiveness of the Grants

Overall effectiveness

There has been considerable delay in the allocation of funds and in the disbursement of allocated funds. Indeed, by May 2016, only 68% of allocated funds had been disbursed (€1.1bn). Levels of disbursement vary widely between beneficiary states. They are particularly low in Hungary, in part due to the difficulties faced in governance of the Grants in that country and also in Malta because of delays in gaining planning permission for projects involving infrastructure developments.

The most important factor influencing the achievement of programme objectives has been the severe delays in setting up the programmes. Many projects did not start until 2014 or even later and most have not been completed. Most of the desired effects have therefore not yet been achieved and many will only be achieved towards the end of the implementation period, i.e. towards April 2017. Given that, there remain significant risks of under-achievement, although such risks have been significantly reduced by extensions to project timescales. At this stage in the programme period, it is not realistic to launch new projects, particularly any which involve physical investments. However, through monitoring, it may be possible to identify projects that are likely to underspend as well as projects that have the potential to expand their activities. This may create opportunities to reallocate funds and thus increase the potential for achievement of intended effects.

Given the short time available for implementation, it is unlikely that any further delays (e.g. due to delays in procurement or carrying out of construction works or new suspensions in payments) would be made good in the short time available. Moreover, since so much expenditure is “back-loaded” to the end of the implementation period, there is a risk of underspends of EEA Grants and Norway Grants funding beyond what would usually be expected in any grant funding programme. In the next period, the risks of underspend will be greatly reduced if programmes can be approved at an earlier stage, if current programme management arrangements continue to improve and if the implementation period is extended from five to seven years. However, careful monitoring will still be required in order to identify any potential underspends and reduce the risk of back-loading.

³ This Mid-Term Review did not give extensive consideration to the effectiveness of bilateral co-operation, as this forms the subject of a separate study commissioned by the FMO. However, the report does include some findings about bilateral co-operation that were highlighted by the research.

If most projects are successfully implemented on time, there remains the potential for most or perhaps all of the intended effects to be achieved. Indeed, POs and DPPs generally remain confident that this will happen, now that programme management arrangements have been established (i.e. staff, procedures and processes in place to oversee calls for projects, selection, contracting, monitoring, payments, etc.) and most funding allocated.

One major factor that has substantially increased the potential to fulfil programme objectives and achieve the desired effects has been the possibility to allow extensions of the timescales for completing projects. For many projects, the timescale for implementation has been doubled by such extensions. Linked to this, one of the major factors that influences achievement of effects are the potential for delays in procurement and contracting, particularly in the case of infrastructure investments. In the case of physical developments, such delays compound the risks that already exist due to factors such as the adverse weather or the need to gain planning permission.

There is evidence of progress towards most of the targets for aggregated results by priority sector. Some have already been exceeded, whilst others have been achieved to the level of 50% or more. Achievement to date against output and outcome indicators is generally highest for “soft” interventions, such as training, capacity building and strategy development, as well as numbers of people benefitting from new services. Achievement against targets relating to physical investments or commercial viability of new products and processes will tend to arise towards the end of the implementation period.

The nature of many activities means that they will produce long-term impacts without further intervention. These include, amongst other things, investments in the energy efficiency of buildings (particularly in Bulgaria and Poland), which will ensure permanent reductions in emissions of greenhouse gases. Achievement of other intended long-term impacts will usually require additional intervention. This will be in two forms. First, there is a need for new policy frameworks, strategies, action plans and so on to be adopted and acted on by national government and other relevant stakeholders. Second, the various preparatory works, feasibility studies, pilot projects, etc. need to be followed by additional substantial investments from EU Structural Funds or national funding.

There is considerable difference in the progress made by different countries and different programmes in implementing activities and achieving the desired effects. However, it does appear that the biggest differences in programmes’ progress tend to arise between countries rather than within the same country; more progress has been made in those countries where programmes made a relatively early start and management arrangements have been more efficient. As shown below, programme implementation has been most advanced in Estonia and Poland and most delayed in the Czech Republic, Lithuania and Romania (albeit with some exceptions). Moreover, it does not appear that any programme areas are inherently more difficult to implement than others (except where the focus is mostly on physical investments, where there are more risks of delay and where the outputs tend to arise only towards the end of the programme period).

The analysis of the case study countries and case study programmes highlights the differences in progress made, achievements to date and the likelihood of achieving intended effects:

- Cyprus: although the MoU was one of the last to be signed, the programmes were approved more quickly than in most other countries. A high proportion of the net allocation of funds has been disbursed (80%). Only 4 of 28 eligible projects have required an extension. Some projects have faced delays, but are generally making good progress. There has been good achievement of “soft” outputs (e.g. training) and physical investments are expected to be successfully completed by the end of the period.
- Czech Republic: the programmes made a late start, with the first one not approved until February 2013 and the last one approved in January 2014. Implementation has been delayed with very few

projects starting before 2015, although disbursement of the net allocation of funds (80%) is above the average for all countries (67%). There had been limited achievement against most targets by the end of 2015, although there were exceptions: the gender equality (CZ12) and Schengen programmes (CZ14) had achieved most or all of their output targets by end 2015. Achievement of targets in other programmes will mostly arise only towards the end of the period, with 71% of eligible projects requiring extensions. The late implementation of projects implies a higher risk of some targets not being achieved within the programme timescale, although the extensions obviously reduce that risk. In a few cases, targets will not be achieved as projects relevant to those targets have not been selected. The key project within the children and youth at risk programme (CZ04) has been discontinued, meaning that the overall impact of this programme will be much less than intended.

- Estonia: the process of agreeing the MoU and preparing the programmes took less time than in most of the beneficiary states. A very high percentage of the net allocation of funds has been disbursed (91%) compared to the average for all beneficiary states (67%). Within the case study programmes, most projects started in 2013, 2014 or very early in 2015. Only 5% of eligible projects have requested extensions. There is good progress across all the case study programmes, with high achievement against many/most output targets by the end of the 2015 and the potential for most or all targets to be achieved by the end of the period.
- Lithuania: although the MoU was signed and the programmes approved relatively early in comparison to other countries, delays in implementing projects were reported across most case study programmes. Where outputs have been achieved by the end of 2015, these were mostly for soft interventions, such as training (e.g. LT05, LT13, LT14). All but one of the 142 eligible projects had requested extensions. These extensions are essential to the fulfilment of targets, particularly those for investments in physical investments and equipment, which will only arise towards the end of the period. Although POs were generally confident that most programme objectives and targets would be achieved, the late implementation clearly increases the risks of under achievement.
- Poland: the process of agreeing the MoU and preparing some of the programmes took less time than in most countries. Within the case study programmes, most projects started in 2013 or 2014, except for the green industry innovation programme, where projects did not start until 2015 and PL04 where a third of projects did not start until 2015. By the end of 2015, there was high achievement across the case study programmes, with many or most output targets achieved. Some 59% of eligible projects have been extended (compared to the average of 63% across all countries). This will be essential to the achievement of some targets, particularly those related to physical investments which will mostly arise towards the end of the period, e.g. for example, physical investments in the energy efficiency of public buildings (PL04).
- Portugal: although Portugal was one of the last countries to complete the MoU negotiation process and have a first programme approved, the process of gaining programme approval was shorter than in other countries. As a result, the launch of the first project was in line with other countries. The programmes have also been relatively efficient in disbursing funds with 80% disbursed (compared to the average of 67%). This has been helped by allocating a high proportion of funds to large projects and pre-defined projects. Progress varies widely across the case study programmes. By the end of 2015, there was high achievement against targets within the climate change (PT04) and gender equality (PT07) programmes. There was limited achievement by end 2015 against targets within the marine and coastal management (PT02) and public health (PT06) programmes. Within the renewable energy programme, all targets had been met for capacity-building but achievement of the other targets were dependent on successful completion of the geothermal energy plant in Terceira, which had faced some delays but was expected to be brought to a successful conclusion.

- Romania: the programmes faced a late start, as the MoU was one of the last to be signed and only the two programmes managed by non-state bodies (i.e. the NGO and green industry innovation programmes) were approved before late May 2013. The percentage of the net allocation of funds (75%) that has been disbursed is above the average for all countries (67%). Most programmes have faced delays, although there are exceptions. In most of the case study programmes (environmental protection and management (RO02, RO03, RO04), renewable energy (RO06), children and youth at risk and initiatives to reduce inequalities (RO10), gender equality (RO11), domestic and gender-based violence (RO20), very few projects started before 2015 and achievement against targets in those programmes was thus quite limited by the end of 2015. The climate change (RO07), public health (RO19) and green industry (RO17) programmes had made better progress, with all projects starting in 2014 and good achievement against targets by the end of 2015. Projects within three of the justice and home affairs programmes had all started in 2014 and made good progress by the end of 2015, particularly against targets for “soft” activities, such as training. Overall, 98% of all eligible projects have requested extensions and many of the most important effects, particularly those relating to physical investments, will only be achieved at the end of the funding period. The delayed implementation of programmes thus increases the risk of under-achievement and underspend for the country as a whole.

Potential for impact

Regarding the potential to reduce disparities, the Grants deliver short-term economic benefits in localities hosting projects (very often in poorer territories) through the expenditure of funds and the consequent multiplier effects. Beyond that, the Grants offer the potential to deliver long-term economic benefit as a by-product of improvements in environmental protection, energy efficiency, public health, etc., i.e. through a healthier population, lower energy bills, reduced costs of dealing with pollution, attraction of tourists, etc. They also contribute to reducing social disparities where disadvantaged groups are specifically targeted by activities.

The potential for impact is perhaps greater in those programmes that have a specific focus rather than attempting to address the full breadth of issues within a programme area. Having such a focus means that the selected projects can constitute a “critical mass” of interventions that generate tangible and visible impact. The alignment of programmes with national policy objectives means that activities are more strategic and more likely to be sustained beyond the life of the funding. Where activities are less aligned with national policy objectives, they can still offer the potential to stimulate innovative projects with positive effects but the risk is that they do not generate wider and sustained impact.

There has been a substantial increase in bilateral co-operation compared to the previous period. Nearly two-thirds (92) of the 150 programmes feature Donor Programme Partners (DPPs), whereas this role did not exist under the project-based approach of the previous period. The main exception is the 17 civil society programmes, none of which feature DPPs. The consensus amongst stakeholders is that DPPs have had a positive impact on the design and implementation of programmes. More than 1,600 projects have donor project partners, representing about 25% of all projects, a much higher total and proportion than in the previous period, although there has been a shortage of potential partners in the donor states. In fact, donor project partners feature in more than 40% of projects outside the civil society programmes, where only 10% of projects involve a donor project partner.

Efficiency

On average, it has taken more than three years to negotiate Memoranda of Understanding, agree and approve programmes and launch the first projects. This has delayed the commencement of projects in all the beneficiary states and meant that implementation has been condensed into the final few years of the programme period.

The programme-based approach has improved the efficiency and the potential effectiveness of the Grants compared to the previous period. It has also enabled the Grants to be targeted in a more strategic way. The programmes are generally considered to be strategic, focused, customised to the needs and priorities of each country and in line with national policy.

The programme-based approach has allowed the FMO to focus on strategic issues and avoid the administrative burden associated with directly overseeing a large number of projects. Balanced against this benefit, is the fact that establishing programme management arrangements has proved problematic and/or time-consuming in the beneficiary states and has required more bodies to be involved in managing the Grants.

Each beneficiary country has adopted its own model of programme management. Whilst these should be and have been customised to the circumstances of each country, there is usually merit in aligning or co-ordinating programme management of the EEA Grants and Norway Grants with that of the EU Structural Funds. Similarly, there is merit in making use of the management arrangements and processes used for EU Structural Funds (with appropriate customisation to the requirements of the EEA Regulation), as these are familiar to programme management bodies and applicants alike. The benefits of such an approach are multiple: the processes have been accepted by EU bodies, they are established by or compliant with the national law of the beneficiary states, they are understood by applicants, and staff of the NFPs or POs are experienced in applying them.

The programme management arrangements of some countries have given the donors cause for concern, resulting in temporary suspensions of payments (e.g. in Bulgaria, Greece, Hungary). Whilst necessary to ensure accountability in the use of donor funds, such suspensions inevitably reduce the time available for implementation with the risk that intended effects might not be achieved in some countries, e.g. Hungary.

In countries receiving small amounts of funding, it is efficient for the NFP to perform the role of PO, as this can reduce the costs of programme management. However, the evidence suggests that it may be beneficial to separate these roles in other countries, depending on the governance context of each country. There is otherwise an increased risk that programme management becomes unnecessarily centralised and, where the NFP/PO lack sufficient capacity to perform all roles, inefficient with a consequent impact on timeliness of programme implementation. There is also the risk that programme management becomes overly focused on compliance rather than performance against programme objectives, since the bodies with the necessary policy expertise (e.g. Ministries or DPPs) are less directly involved. Indeed, a Ministry of Finance will typically be less able than other Ministries to address risks related to achievement of programme objectives, for example, through monitoring changes in legislation or engaging relevant stakeholders. Linked to that, there is also the risk that synergies and operational links to the EU Structural Funds programmes are weakened if the NFP/PO is not also responsible for those programmes.

The EEA Grants and Norway Grants do not by themselves prescribe a specific approach to programme standards (good governance, sustainable development and gender equality). Instead, the approach taken to adherence with programme standards and the extent of adherence depends largely on the legislative framework and governance arrangements of the beneficiary states. Working in their own contexts, POs have promoted adherence through formal processes and procedures at programme

level, criteria used to select projects, ongoing monitoring, engagement of stakeholders and information and advice given to projects.

Additionality has been ensured by the specification of some programme areas that are not usually supported by EU Structural Funds, by support for organisations that would typically struggle to access EU funds (particularly small NGOs) and by focusing EEA Grants and Norway Grants on areas and types of activities that are not well served by relevant Structural Funds programmes of each beneficiary state. Investments made by the Grants can also be seen as additional as they come at a time of significant reductions in public expenditure by some beneficiary states due to the continuing financial crisis.

Pre-defined projects have been an efficient way to allocate funds in certain circumstances, particularly in countries receiving relatively small allocations of funds where it would not be worthwhile to operate open calls. They are often large projects of strategic significance and where there may only be one organisation with the capacity and/or authority to intervene. Pre-defining such projects can allow an early start to be made for complex interventions that require lengthy procurement, planning, risk assessment, etc. They are also useful where the funds address very specific issues and where there is only one organisation with the capacity or authority to intervene. However, it has still been necessary to extend the timescale for 72% of pre-defined projects because such projects tend to be larger and more complex than other projects.

Open calls can be more beneficial than pre-defined projects where there is sufficient funding to justify them and where there is the potential for competition between applicants. They can offer equal access to funding for all potential applicants and more transparency in decision-making. They allow the possibility for strong but “unexpected” projects to emerge, as well as projects that are strategic and/or in line with national priorities.

National requirements on public procurement can help provide transparency and equal treatment of potential contractors. At the same time, public procurement processes can prove time-consuming and adversely affect timescales of implementation, particularly where programmes operate more than one public procurement process.

Simplifications and other support measures have served to improve the “service” offered by POs to applicants and project promoters. Indeed, there is a high level of satisfaction amongst project promoters in most countries regarding processes for application, reporting and claims, as well as regarding advice and guidance provided by POs.

NFPs are explicitly required by the Regulations to assess risks to implementation and take any necessary actions, including verifying documents that are submitted to the donors. Risks are therefore routinely reported on an annual basis at national level in annual strategic reports and at programme level in annual programme reports. Actions taken vary by country and by programme, but common actions include additional or enhanced monitoring, extension of eligibility period for projects, support for project promoters to improve the compliance with contractual requirements, support related to public procurement and facilitating contacts with potential donor project partners. Whilst it is difficult to establish a direct correlation between the effectiveness of risk assessment and the performance of programmes, it is clear that some countries have been able to mitigate the risks of delayed implementation more successfully than others (as evidenced by the analysis of “overall effectiveness” above).

There is strong case for extending the programme period from 5 to 7 years, given the time taken to negotiate, approve and set-up programmes and given the fact that nearly two-thirds of projects within eligible programmes have required extensions. There is also a strong case for reducing the number of programmes, given the time taken to negotiate and approve programmes and the “fixed cost”

associated with programme management and administration. In some cases, a reduction in the number of programmes should also be associated with a tighter focus.

Response to the OAG Report

Progress has been made in establishing the results-based management approach in the beneficiary states. NFPs and POs are virtually unanimous in reporting that they understand it and have made considerable efforts to apply it. Indeed, many have made adjustments to their programmes on the basis of (lack of) progress against objectives. At the same time, some areas remain problematic or under-developed, e.g. use of credible and workable indicators.

Safeguarding donor control requirements and ensuring achievement of results has been facilitated by aligning programme management arrangements of the Grants with those of the EU Structural Funds in some countries. They have also been facilitated by the change in the role of the FMO, i.e. monitoring at programme level rather than project level and also providing more advice and guidance, including on sector issues. Involvement of DPPs has also helped promote the fulfilment of donor priorities.

The programme-based approach implies a “fixed cost” for management and administration, which limits the potential for further savings on administration-related and technical assistance funds, particularly in countries receiving small amounts of funding. Most NFPs and POs report that technical assistance funds allowed under the Regulation are sufficient and some have made savings. However, the extension of the timescale for implementation inevitably limits the potential for such savings as costs are incurred over a longer period.

Recommendations

Recommendations of the Mid-Term Review

Focus and objectives of the EEA Grants

1. Strengthen the logic for intervening in different policy fields in order to increase the focus on stimulating economic growth and improve competitiveness.
2. Focus programmes on more specific themes in order to create a “critical mass” of projects that can produce tangible impact on those themes.
3. Fund projects that perform a strategic role in each programme, e.g. by supporting policy and strategy development, capacity-building, information and awareness-raising, etc.
4. Merge some programme areas.
5. Consider transnational programmes and projects that can address challenges of transnational nature.

Design and structure of programmes

6. Retain the programme-based approach.
7. Increase the programming period from five to seven years.
8. Consider the advantages and disadvantages in operating programmes over the same time-scale as EU programmes.
9. Reduce the number of programmes in the next period, provided that specific themes can be prioritised by open calls and by pre-defined projects.
10. Retain the possibility of pre-defined projects.
11. Ensure an appropriate balance between pre-defined projects and open calls.

Programme management requirements

12. Consider revising the EEA Grants and Norway Grants Regulations so that their requirements are more closely aligned with those of EU Structural Funds.
13. Consider the circumstances under the same body can act as NFP and PO for the same programme(s).

Recommendations of the Mid-Term Review

- 14.** Align national management and administrative processes for the EEA Grants and Norway Grants with those used for the EU Structural Funds as far as possible.
- 15.** Expand the role of DPPs to include communicating information in their home country and attracting donor project partners in respect of all programmes in given programme areas.
- 16.** Allow funding in the next period for projects approved in the current period but which were not completed before the deadline for eligibility of expenditure (with those projects being pre-defined).

Support for programme management

- 17.** Provide more in-depth support for the NFPs and POs in the process of developing programme.
- 18.** Expand the opportunities for NFPs and POs to receive training, exchange experience and network at European level.
- 19.** Explore ways to reduce delays and administrative burden associated with public procurement processes.
- 20.** Introduce electronic submission of project applications in all countries and programmes.
- 21.** Undertake research into the extent to which programmes effects have been mainstreamed into national policy and practice and/or have stimulated additional investments by EU or national funding.

1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the Mid-Term Review

This final report presents findings for the Mid-Term Review of the EEA and Norway Grants 2009-14.

The main purpose of the mid-term review has been to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of the Grants at the current stage of implementation. This mid-term review should provide the Donors and the FMO, the DPPs and the beneficiary states with information that is relevant for the implementation of the current Grants and for future programming.

In particular, the review aims to:

- **Assess effectiveness** in terms of results and progress towards overall programme objectives; and
- **Assess to what extent the current programme model is efficient**, since there has been substantial effort to make the transition to a programme model between the former Financial Mechanisms 04-09 and the current 09-14).

The aims of the review have informed a series of research questions that are presented in Section 1.2. The research tasks described in section 1.4 have enabled us to gather and analyse the necessary data to answer the research questions and generate the findings presented in sections 3 to 6. We have also drawn on data gathered in the context of our recent evaluation of the EEA Grants support for cultural heritage and diversity.⁴ Moreover, some of the findings of that evaluation have been confirmed and reinforced by this Mid-Term Review and therefore feature in this report.

1.2 Main Review Questions

In order to satisfy these aims, research has been undertaken to answer a series of Main Review Questions set out in the Terms of Reference for the Mid-Term Review.

Table 1.1 Main Review Questions

1 Appraise the progress, results and effects of supported programmes in the beneficiary states
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What progress are the Financial Mechanisms (FMs) making towards their planned objectives via the programmes (objectives, outcomes, etc.), including horizontal concerns? What are the main results and effects thus far in the beneficiary states / priority sectors? Are these results complementary with EU priorities? Are the FMs likely to achieve their planned objectives upon completion? What are the main constraints, problems and areas in need of further attention? • What are the major factors influencing the achievement/non-achievement of programme objectives (on time)? • To what extent are the programme activities and/or funding expected to continue after the donor funding will cease?
2 Assess how the design and implementation of the mechanisms have supported or hindered progress and results
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent are the principles of additionality and proportionality applied to the implementation of the Grants in such areas as Governance, compliance, simplification, risk management? How does this function within the model design (comparison across countries and country set-ups, involvement of international organisations, levels (see Figure 1) and types of implementation (e.g. calls for proposals,

⁴ CSES (2015), Mid-Term Evaluation of the Sector Cultural Heritage Under the EEA Grants 2009-14.

directly contracted programmes or pre-defined projects)?

- What does timeline analysis suggest regarding the different phases of preparation and implementation? Have programme and project funds been made available and have activities been implemented in a timely manner?

3 Assess how the recommendations from the report of the Office of the Audit General has been followed up

- How is results-based management understood and how effectively are performance and results monitored and reported on, including horizontal concerns. What improvements have been made and may still be needed to strengthen the ongoing work on results-based management of the EEA and Norway Grants 2009-2014, thereby enabling greater reporting of outcomes and long-term effects of programmes and projects?
- To what degree does the management model design with the many actors involved fulfil the Donors control requirements and ensure good achievement of results?
- To what extent is administration-related and technical assistance funds used in a manner that ensures that the highest possible share of the funds goes to programmes and projects in the beneficiary states?

1.3 Focus of the Mid-Term Review

The Mid-Term Review has included an initial review of evidence for all programmes in all 16 countries with which the Donors have signed MoUs for the EEA Grants and Norway Grants. The main research effort has then been on activities within certain “priority sectors” in seven case study countries. This sample of countries accounts for the majority of funds committed and is diverse in terms of size, geographical location, governance and socio-economic context. In adopting this focus, we have also sought to avoid undue overlap with other studies undertaken recently on behalf of the FMO, including those on bilateral co-operation, cultural heritage and diversity, support for NGOs and Roma inclusion.

The table below lists the priority sectors and countries covered by the in-depth research.

Table 1.2 Focus of case study research

Case study priority sectors and countries	
Priority Sectors (Programme areas)	Countries
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Protection and Management (PA01, PA2, PA03, PA04) • Climate Change and Renewable Energy (PA05, PA06, PA07, PA09) • Carbon Capture and Storage (PA20) • Green Industry Innovation (PA 21) • Human and social development (PA11, PA12, PA14, PA15, PA28) • Health (PA13, PA27) • Justice & Home Affairs (PA29, PA30, PA31, PA32) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cyprus • Czech Republic • Estonia • Lithuania • Poland • Portugal • Romania

Within the priority sectors, the Mid-Term Review has focused on a sample of 56 programmes, as listed in the table that follows.

Table 1.3 Sample of programmes covered by the Mid-Term Review

Sample of programmes		
	Programmes	Programme areas
1	CY02 EEA Programme	Biodiversity and ecosystem services Children and youth at risk Conservation and revitalisation of cultural and natural heritage
2	CY04 Norwegian Financial Mechanism	Public health initiatives (Norway Grants) Domestic and Gender-based violence Justice and Home Affairs Civil Society Support
3	CZ02 Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services & Environmental Monitoring and Integrated Planning Control & Adaptation to Climate Change	Biodiversity and ecosystem services Environmental monitoring and integrated planning and control Adaptation to climate change
4	CZ04 Children and Youth at Risk	Children and youth at risk
5	CZ05 National, Regional, Local Initiatives to Reduce Inter-Group Inequalities and to Promote Social Inclusion	Local and regional initiatives to reduce national inequalities and to promote social inclusion (EEA Grants)
6	CZ08 Pilot studies and surveys on Carbon Capture and Storage technology	Carbon capture and storage (CCS)
7	CZ11 Public Health Initiatives	Public health initiatives (Norway Grants)
8	CZ12 Mainstreaming Gender Equality and Promoting Work-Life Balance & Domestic and Gender-based Violence; Let's give (wo)men a chance	Mainstreaming gender equality and promoting work-life balance (Norway Grants) Domestic and Gender-based violence
9	CZ13 Domestic and Gender-based Violence & Mainstreaming Gender Equality and Promoting Work-Life Balance	Mainstreaming gender equality and promoting work-life balance (Norway Grants) Domestic and Gender-based violence
10	CZ14 Schengen Co-operation and Combating Cross-border and Organised Crime, including Trafficking and Itinerant Criminal Groups	Schengen co-operation and combating cross-border and organised crime, including trafficking and itinerant criminal groups
11	CZ15 Judicial Capacity-building Co-operation and Correctional Services, including Non-Custodial Sanctions	Judicial capacity-building and co-operation Correctional services, including non-custodial sanctions
12	EE02 Integrated marine and inland water management	Integrated marine and inland water management Environmental monitoring and integrated planning and control Adaptation to climate change
13	EE04 Children and youth at risk	Children and youth at risk
14	EE07 Green Industry Innovation	Green Industry Innovation

Sample of programmes		
	Programmes	Programme areas
15	EE08 Public Health Initiatives	Public health initiatives (Norway Grants)
16	EE09 Mainstreaming Gender Equality and Promoting Work-Life Balance	Mainstreaming gender equality and promoting work-life balance (Norway Grants)
17	EE11 Domestic and Gender-based Violence	Domestic and Gender-based violence
18	LT02 Integrated marine and inland water management	Integrated marine and inland water management Environmental monitoring and integrated planning and control
19	LT03 Biodiversity and ecosystem services	Biodiversity and ecosystem services Adaptation to climate change
20	LT05 Children and Youth at risk	Children and youth at risk
21	LT09 Green Industry Innovation	Green Industry Innovation
22	LT11 Public Health Initiatives	Public health initiatives (Norway Grants)
23	LT12 Schengen Co-operation and Combating Cross-Border and Organised Crime, including Trafficking and Itinerant Criminal Groups	Schengen co-operation and combating cross-border and organised crime, including trafficking and itinerant criminal groups
24	LT13 Efficiency, quality and transparency in Lithuanian courts	Judicial capacity-building and co-operation
25	LT14 Correctional Services including Non-Custodial Sanctions	Correctional services, including non-custodial sanctions
26	PL02 Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services	Biodiversity and ecosystem services
27	PL03 Improving environmental monitoring and inspection	Environmental monitoring and integrated planning and control
28	PL04 Saving energy and promoting renewable energy source	Energy efficiency Renewable energy Energy efficiency (Norway)
29	PL06 Urban development by strengthening the competence of self-government units, social dialogue and co-operation with civil society representatives	Local and regional initiatives to reduce national inequalities and to promote social inclusion (EEA Grants)
30	PL07 Development and better adaptation of health care to demographic and epidemiological trends	Public health initiatives (EEA Grants) Public health initiatives (Norway Grants)
31	PL13 Reducing social inequalities in health	Public health initiatives (Norway Grants)
32	PL14 Domestic and Gender-based Violence	Domestic and Gender-based violence
33	PL15 Schengen Co-operation and Combating Cross-border and Organised Crime, including Trafficking and Itinerant Criminal Groups	Schengen co-operation and combating cross-border and organised crime, including trafficking and itinerant criminal groups

Sample of programmes		
	Programmes	Programme areas
34	PL16 Judicial Capacity Building and Co-operation/Improvement of the efficiency of justice	Judicial capacity-building and co-operation
35	PL17 Correctional Services including Non-Custodial Sanctions	Correctional services, including non-custodial sanctions
36	PL18 Green Industry Innovation	Green Industry Innovation
37	PT02 Integrated Marine and Coastal Management	Integrated marine and inland water management
38	PT03 Renewable Energy	Renewable energy
39	PT04 Adaptation to Climate Change	Adaptation to climate change
40	PT06 Public Health Initiatives	Public health initiatives (EEA Grants)
41	PT07 Mainstreaming Gender Equality and Promoting Work-Life Balance	Mainstreaming gender equality and promoting work-life balance (EEA Grants)
42	RO02 Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services	Biodiversity and ecosystem services
43	RO03 Environmental Monitoring and Integrated Planning and Control	Environmental monitoring and integrated planning and control
44	RO04 Reduction of Hazardous Substances	Reduction of hazardous substances
45	RO06 Renewable Energy	Renewable energy
46	RO07 Adaptation to Climate Change	Energy efficiency Adaptation to climate change
47	RO09 Funds for Non-Governmental Organisations ⁵	Funds for non-governmental organisations
48	RO10 Children and Youth at Risk and Local and Regional Initiatives to Reduce National Inequalities and to Promote Social Inclusion	Children and youth at risk Local and regional initiatives to reduce national inequalities and to promote social inclusion (EEA Grants)
49	RO11 Mainstreaming Gender Equality and Promoting Work-Life Balance	Mainstreaming gender equality and promoting work-life balance (EEA Grants)
50	RO17 Green Industry Innovation	Green Industry Innovation
51	RO19 Public Health Initiatives	Public health initiatives (Norway Grants)
52	RO20 Domestic and Gender-based Violence	Domestic and Gender-based violence
53	RO21 Schengen Co-operation and Combating Cross-border and Organised Crime, including Trafficking and Itinerant Criminal Groups	Schengen co-operation and combating cross-border and organised crime, including trafficking and itinerant criminal groups
54	RO23 Correctional Services, including Non-Custodial Sanctions	Correctional services, including non-custodial sanctions

⁵ Desk-based review only, as this programme is not within the programme areas covered by the in-depth analysis.

Sample of programmes		
	Programmes	Programme areas
55	RO24 Judicial Capacity-building and Co-operation	Judicial capacity-building and co-operation
56	RO25 Poverty alleviation	Local and regional initiatives to reduce national inequalities and to promote social inclusion (Norway Grants)

1.4 Research undertaken

We have used thirteen Work Packages (WPs) to deliver the objectives of the Mid-Term Review. The table below provides a summary. The WPs enabled sufficient data to be gathered to fulfil the objectives of the Mid-Term Review.

More specifically, the FMO allowed access to its “Documentation, Reporting and Information System” (DORIS); this enabled access to programme data on the allocation, award and disbursement of funds and achievement against indicators. Nearly all the stakeholders (FMO, donor representatives, NFPs, POs, DPPs) that were approached agreed to be interviewed or to provide comments in writing. There was a reasonable response to the on-line surveys of POs and project promoters. The main difficulty in undertaking the research was in identifying concrete effects, as the majority of projects had not been completed; indeed, many were still at an early stage of implementation at the time the fieldwork was undertaken. It has also proved difficult to aggregate data on effects across all programmes because of the diversity of activity and of outputs and outcomes. Finally, the financial data, although accessible, was subject to continual change as additional projects were awarded funding during the period of the Mid-Term Review, meaning that summaries tables soon became out-of-date. Similarly, FMO data on outputs and outcomes did not always represent the situation “on the ground”, given the inevitable time lag between the achievement of those effects and the updating of the FMO database.

Table 1.4 Work Packages

Work Package	Purpose	Tasks
Inception phase		
WP1 Inception	Gain better view of client expectations; receive client comments on our understanding and approach; discuss methodology, tools and data sources; agree the sample of countries and programmes; revise research approach	Client meetings Initial consultations (FMO) Desk research Develop research tools, methodology and workplan Inception Report
European-level research (all programmes)		
WP2 Document review	Deepen understanding of the study context, identify common issues across beneficiary countries; highlight interesting examples	Review programme documentation Review other relevant studies Internet research
WP3 Analysis of programme data	Identify the extent to which funds have been awarded and timeliness of agreeing programmes and launching calls	Analyse programme data and documents provided by the FMO
WP4 Interviews at European level	Explore the Main Review Questions; explore contextual issues at European and national levels; identify common issues across beneficiary countries.	Interview stakeholders at European level (FMO, NFPs, donor state representatives)
WP5 On-line survey of programme management bodies	Gather evidence and opinions of POs and FOs on the Main Review Questions	Design and launch survey Analyse results

Work Package	Purpose	Tasks
WP6 Summary report	Present an overview of progress and timeliness in approving programmes, awarding funds and implementing programmes Present initial findings on efficiency of implementation mechanisms and response to OAG report.	Data analysis Draft summary report
National-level research (sample of programmes)		
WP7 National interviews	Explore the Main Review Questions in detail for the selected programme; explore contextual issues at national level; identify specific issues, barriers, key success factor and lessons learned in beneficiary countries.	Interview stakeholders for selected programmes (POs, FOs, DPPs, Embassies)
WP8 Analyse data on selected projects	Identify level/patterns of grant disbursements, expenditure, co-financing and achievement of outputs and outcomes	Analyse quantitative programme data Summary note
WP9 On-line survey of projects in selected programmes	Gather evidence of projects' progress towards objectives, issues, barriers and key success factors. Gather opinions on efficiency of implementation mechanisms	Design and launch survey. Analyse results
WP10 Project case studies	Analyse a selection of projects in more depth in order to refine and deepen research findings, identify key success factors and highlight good practice examples	Select projects for in-depth analysis Review project documentation Interview project managers Project visits Project case study reports
WP11 Focus groups	Explore, verify and refine emerging research findings for each country relating to the Main Review Questions	Identify and recruit participants Facilitate focus group Summary notes
WP12 Country summary fiches	Analyse evidence from WP7 to WP11 and draw conclusions for the selected programmes in each country	Analysis Reporting
Reporting phase		
WP13 Final analysis and reporting	Analyse evidence from all WP; formulate conclusions and recommendations; report to client; present results	Data analysis Draft Final Report Client meetings Final Report PowerPoint presentation

2. Overview of the EEA Grants and Norway Grants

In this section, we describe the origin and rationale of the EEA Grants and Norway Grants. We then list the priority sectors and programme areas, before presenting data on the allocation of funds to projects.

2.1 The EEA Grants and Norway Grants

With the signing of the EEA agreement in 1992, a financial mechanism was established so that three of the EEA states – Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein – could contribute to the strengthened cohesion in the European Economic Area. The EEA Grants and Norway Grants aim to reduce economic and social disparities in the EEA and to strengthen bilateral relations with 16 countries covered by the EU's Cohesion Fund: Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia and Spain; these are Member States whose Gross National Income (GNI) per inhabitant is less than 90% of the EU average. The current Grants, covering the years 2009-14, were determined following negotiations between Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein and the European Union and were formulated in a Decision of the Council of the European Union. The EEA Grants are jointly financed by Iceland (3%), Liechtenstein (1.2%) and Norway (95.8%) and are implemented under the terms of a Regulation adopted by the EEA Financial Mechanism Committee.⁶ The Norway Grants are financed entirely by Norway and are implemented under the terms of a Regulation adopted by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.⁷

In contributing to social and economic cohesion in the European Economic Area, the EEA and Norway Grants target a wide range of areas in which beneficiary Member States are in need of support, such as environmental protection and climate change, civil society, children and health, cultural heritage, research and scholarships, decent work and justice and home affairs. In that way, the Grants are intended to contribute to the Europe 2020 Strategy for smart, sustainable, inclusive growth.⁸

The EEA Grants and Norway Grants offer opportunities for the three donor states to support developments in the beneficiary states. The sectors for support are determined in the negotiations on the size of the contributions. Decisions on which areas to prioritise are taken bilaterally through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). MoUs for 2009-14 have been agreed between the three donor countries (acting collectively) and each of the beneficiary countries.

A National Focal Point (NFP) is responsible for the overall management of programmes in each beneficiary Member State whilst Programme Operators (POs) develop and manage the programmes, often in co-operation with a Donor Programme Partner (DPP). Programme Operators also organise calls for proposals for projects which serve as basis for their selection.

Three cross-cutting issues ("programme standards") have to be integrated into the design of programmes: good governance, sustainable development and gender equality. Programme Operators are required to define procedures for ensuring that the cross-cutting issues are taken into account at the project level. MoUs also specify special concerns for individual programmes. For example, specific concern for the Roma is identified in the MoUs for Romania and Bulgaria. For Bulgaria, the target is for 10% of the allocation (across all programmes) to go towards improving the situation for the Roma population. For Romania, the MoU specifies that at least 10% of the total funding for 13 relevant programme areas shall target the improvement of the situation for the Roma population.

⁶ Regulation on the implementation of the European Economic Area (EEA) Financial Mechanism 2009-2014

⁷ Regulation on the implementation of the Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2009-2014

⁸ COM(2010) 2020 final, Communication from the Commission: Europe 2020 - A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth

2.2 Programme Areas

EEA Grants and Norway Grants are available to support activity in a range of programme areas (PAs), which are grouped into “priority sectors”. The tables below provide a list.

Table 2.1 List of Programme Areas (EEA Grants)

EEA Grants
Environmental Protection and Management
PA01: Integrated Marine and Inland Water Management
PA02: Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services
PA03: Environmental Monitoring and Integrated Planning and Control
PA04: Reduction of Hazardous Substances
Climate Change and Renewable Energy
PA05: Energy Efficiency
PA06: Renewable Energy
PA07: Adaptation to Climate Change
PA08: Maritime Sector
PA09: Environmental and Climate Change-related Research and Technology
Civil Society
PA10: Funds for Non-Governmental Organisations
Human and Social Development
PA11: Children and Youth at Risk
PA12: Local and Regional Initiatives to Reduce National Inequalities and to Promote Social Inclusion
PA13: Public Health Initiatives
PA14: Mainstreaming Gender Equality and Promoting Work-Life Balance
PA15: Institutional Framework in the Asylum and Migration Sector
Protecting Cultural Heritage
PA16: Conservation and Revitalisation of Cultural and Natural Heritage
PA17: Promotion of Diversity in Culture and Arts within European Cultural Heritage
Research and Scholarship
PA18: Research within Priority Sectors
PA19: Scholarships

Table 2.2 List of Programme Areas (Norway Grants)

Norway Grants
Carbon Capture and Storage
PA20: Carbon Capture and Storage
Green Industry Innovation
PA21: Green Industry Innovation
Decent Work and Tripartite Dialogue
PA22: Global Fund for Decent Work and Tripartite Dialogue
Research and Scholarship
PA23: Bilateral Research Co-operation
PA24: Bilateral Scholarship Programme
Human and Social Development
PA25: Capacity-building and Institutional Co-operation between Beneficiary State and Norwegian Public Institutions, Local and Regional Authorities
PA26: Cross-border Co-operation
PA27: Public Health Initiatives
PA28: Mainstreaming Gender Equality and Promoting Work-Life Balance
PA40: Local and Regional Initiatives to Reduce National Inequalities and to Promote Social Inclusion
Justice and Home Affairs
PA29: Domestic and Gender-based Violence
PA30: Schengen Co-operation and Combating Cross-border and Organised Crime, including Trafficking and Itinerant Criminal Groups
PA31: Judicial Capacity-building and Co-operation
PA32: Correctional Services, including Non-Custodial Sanctions
PA37: Justice and Home Affairs
Civil Society
PA38: Civil Society Support
Climate Change and Renewable Energy
PA41: Energy Efficiency

2.3 Funds allocated

In total, nearly €1.8bn is available through the EEA Grants and Norway Grants. Table 2.3 below shows the allocation to each beneficiary state, which takes into account population size and the extent of disparity with the rest of the EU. Poland (population 38m) is the largest recipient, receiving nearly one-third of all funds, whilst Romania (population 21m) receives just less than one-fifth.

The Grants are allocated to 165 programmes (of which 15 are for technical assistance) in the 16 countries. Each programme supports activity in one or more of the 32 programme areas listed above. In total, 113 of the programmes are co-financed, in that they are financed by the EEA Grants and Norway Grants (at a rate of 85% or more) and by other sources received at programme level or level.

The other 53 programmes are fully funded by the EEA/Norway Grants (i.e. receive no funding from other sources). Some 23 programmes receive funding from both the EEA Grants and the Norway Grants.

Table 2.3 Allocation of funds to beneficiary states

Country	Gross allocation	Net allocation	% of net allocation
Bulgaria	€ 126,600,000	€ 117,105,000	7
Croatia	€ 9,600,000	€ 8,880,000	1
Cyprus	€ 7,850,000	€ 7,261,250	<1
Czech Republic	€ 131,800,000	€ 121,915,000	7
Estonia	€ 48,600,000	€ 44,955,000	3
Greece	€ 63,400,000	€ 58,645,000	4
Hungary	€ 153,300,000	€ 141,802,500	9
Latvia	€ 72,950,000	€ 67,478,750	4
Lithuania	€ 84,000,000	€ 77,700,000	5
Malta	€ 4,500,000	€ 4,162,500	<1
Poland	€ 578,100,000	€ 534,742,500	32
Portugal	€ 57,950,000	€ 53,603,750	3
Romania	€ 305,950,000	€ 283,003,750	17
Slovakia	€ 80,750,000	€ 74,693,750	4
Slovenia	€ 26,900,000	€ 24,882,500	1
Spain	€ 45,850,000	€ 42,411,250	3
Innovation Norway	€ 0	€ 0	0
Total	€ 1,798,100,000	€ 1,663,242,500	100

Source: FMO Documentation, Reporting and Information System (DORIS) (Report 03)

The allocation of funds in each country is then committed to projects that are pre-defined or selected via an open call and disbursed under the terms of a project contract. Table 2.4 shows the extent to which funds have been committed and disbursed in each country. As can be seen, this varies considerably (as we discuss later in section 4.5).

Table 2.4 Progress in disbursing and committing funds

Country	Gross allocation	Net allocation	Committed	Disbursed
Bulgaria	€ 126,600,000	€ 117,105,000	€ 116,042,359	€ 85,150,921
Croatia	€ 9,600,000	€ 8,880,000	€ 8,780,001	€ 4,759,011
Cyprus	€ 7,850,000	€ 7,261,250	€ 7,221,250	€ 5,798,851
Czech Republic	€ 131,800,000	€ 121,915,000	€ 121,211,000	€ 98,531,766
Estonia	€ 48,600,000	€ 44,955,000	€ 44,698,962	€ 41,132,105
Greece	€ 63,400,000	€ 58,645,000	€ 54,597,157	€ 28,160,222
Hungary	€ 153,300,000	€ 141,802,500	€ 131,630,466	€ 22,170,876
Latvia	€ 72,950,000	€ 67,478,750	€ 67,094,750	€ 28,376,358
Lithuania	€ 84,000,000	€ 77,700,000	€ 77,244,001	€ 52,659,344
Malta	€ 4,500,000	€ 4,162,500	€ 4,146,501	€ 764,532
Poland	€ 578,100,000	€ 534,742,500	€ 531,630,437	€ 389,314,233
Portugal	€ 57,950,000	€ 53,603,750	€ 53,603,749	€ 43,038,100
Romania	€ 305,950,000	€ 283,003,750	€ 272,863,040	€ 211,780,833
Slovakia	€ 80,750,000	€ 74,693,750	€ 74,269,750	€ 54,309,496
Slovenia	€ 26,900,000	€ 24,882,500	€ 24,738,500	€ 13,497,830
Spain	€ 45,850,000	€ 42,411,250	€ 42,410,911	€ 34,142,881
Innovation Norway	€ 0	€ 0	€ 8,100,000	€ 8,000,000
Total	€ 1,798,100,000	€ 1,663,242,500	€ 1,640,282,833	€ 1,121,587,361

Source: FMO Documentation, Reporting and Information System (DORIS); extracted 26.05.2016

Table 2.5 below provides a summary of total project grants awarded by PA in all 16 beneficiary states. The two subsequent tables (Table 2.6 and Table 2.7) then give the number of projects by priority sector and by country.

From the tables, we can see that funding has been awarded to more than 6,000 projects. There is a balance across priority sectors, with more than €300m awarded in the field of Climate Change and in the field of Human and Social Development (including public health). Cultural heritage projects have been awarded around €200m, whilst the other main priority sectors (except Decent Work and Tripartite Dialogue) have each received around €150m.

Nearly half of the projects are in the field of Civil Society. These are mostly small projects with an average grant award of just under €50k. In contrast, the average grant awarded to projects has been nearly €400k across the other priority sectors.

About one quarter of projects involve a donor project partner. Within Civil Society, only 10% of projects involve a donor project partner. Across the other priority sectors, donor project partners feature in more than 40% of projects.

Pre-defined projects tend not to feature within Civil Society, Research and Scholarship and Tripartite Dialogue. Across the other priority sectors, about 10% of projects have been pre-defined.

Table 2.5 Total grants awarded by country and programme area

PA/country	BG	CY	CZ	EE	EL	ES	HR	HU	LV	LT	MT	PL	PT	RO	SK	SI	TOTAL
PA01	8.2			1.6	9.2					1.6	0.9		19.1				40.6
PA02	6.1	1.2	11.2							7.0		20.0		16.0		2.0	63.5
PA03			1.6	4.5					2.1	3.3		14.1		9.0		2.1	36.7
PA04														10.7			10.7
PA05/PL41	11.1											***126.2					137.3
PA06	3.0				12.8				5.0			1.3	4.5	13.0			39.6
PA07			3.9	1.1				6.0	3.1		0.5		3.1	4.5	13.2		35.4
PA08																	0.0
PA09						18.2											18.2
PA10/PA38	9.9	*1.9	9.7	1.9	6.2	4.6	**0.8	10.8	9.3	4.5	0.4	36.2	7.7	31.6	6.0	1.6	141.2
PA11	8.8	0.4	2.2	7.0						6.5				17.6			42.5
PA12			1.2		3.9		3.0					10.4		20	0.9		39.4
PA13	3.7											17.0	10.4				31.1
PA14						10.2							2.5	3.8			16.5
PA15					16.3												16.3
PA16	14.1	0.6	15.4	4.0		4.1			9.8	9.4	0.9	76.6	4.3	17.8	11.0	5.3	173.3
PA17	0.8		2.9			0.5			0.8	1.0		12.5	1.0	6.9	0.3		26.7
PA18					3.3									21.5			24.8
PA19	0.8		1.3	0.6		3.9		1.8	0.5	0.4		2.2		4.2	1.3	0.8	17.8
PA20			4.3														4.3
PA21	11.3			6.1				19.4	10.4	7.0		17.2		26.5	15.6		113.5
PA22																0.1	0.1
PA23			15.3	2.9					3.9			71.1					93.2
PA24			1.8	0.9					0.5			8.1					11.3
PA25	2.2		1.7					3.4	5.1	6.2	0.3			6.6			25.5
PA26															8.6		8.6
PA27	9.9	1.2	16.5	9.8				5.5		6.1		59.5		25.4		10.8	144.7
PA28			2.4	2.0												1.6	6.0
PA29	2.1	0.7	4.0	2.0								3.2		4.0	7.7		23.7
PA30	6.5	0.9	5.6							3.6		9.3		6.1			32.0
PA31	3.2		2.2				0.03			8.2		14.8		8.7			37.1
PA32	9.2		2.2						14.0	7.9	1.3	14.5		8.8			57.9
Total	110.90	6.90	105.40	44.40	51.70	41.50	3.83	46.9	64.5	72.7	4.3	514.2	52.6	262.7	64.6	24.3	1,471.3

* divided between: €1.2m under PA10 and €0.7m under PA38; ** divided between €0.5m under PA10 and €0.3m under PA38; ***divided between: €68.6m under PA05 and €57.7m under PA41. Source: FMO Documentation, Reporting and Information System (DORIS); extracted 20.05.2016

Table 2.6 Total projects grants awarded by priority sector

<i>Project grants awarded</i>					
Priority sector	Number of Projects	Planned Project cost (€)	Grant Award (€)	Pre-defined projects	Projects with donor project partner
Environmental protection and management (PA01, PA02, PA03, PA04)	298	€ 167.1	€ 151.6	28	77
Climate change, CCS and Green industry (PA05, PA06, PA07, PA08, PA09, PA20, PA21)	776	€ 982.1	€ 343.9	34	234
Civil society support (PA10)	2,875	€ 158.0	€ 137.6	66	299
Human and Social Development (PA11, PA12, PA13, PA14, PA15, PA25, PA26, PA27, PA28)	718	€ 356.3	€ 318.2	76	77
Protecting cultural heritage (PA16, PA17)	440	€ 240.3	€ 199.4	19	240
Research and scholarship (PA18, PA19, PA23, PA24)	804	€ 152.6	€ 140.4	0	618
Tripartite Dialogue (PA22)	53	€ 8.6	€ 7.1	1	29
Justice and Home Affairs (PA29, PA30, PA31, PA32)	238	€ 161.8	€ 150.8	85	79
TOTAL	6,202	€ 2,226.6	€ 1,449.0	309	1,653

Source: FMO Documentation, Reporting and Information System (DORIS); extracted 16.01.2016

Table 2.7 Total projects grants awarded by country

<i>Project grants awarded</i>					
Country	Number of Projects	Planned Project cost (€)	Grant Award (€)	Pre-defined projects	Projects with donor project partner
Bulgaria	712	€ 126.7	€ 110.3	29	124
Croatia	46	€ 8.3	€ 3.6	4	2
Cyprus	28	€ 9.5	€ 6.3	7	4
Czech Republic	753	€ 126.4	€ 101.8	26	314
Estonia	298	€ 54.9	€ 44.5	16	87
Greece	127	€ 54.1	€ 51.7	7	23
Hungary	466	€ 62.3	€ 39.1	55	44
Latvia	346	€ 81.6	€ 61.5	16	125
Lithuania	207	€ 87.7	€ 72.9	25	65
Malta	18	€ 5.9	€ 4.3	5	2
Poland	1233	€ 989.3	€ 513.0	47	330
Portugal	212	€ 60.1	€ 52.5	10	38
Romania	851	€ 308.8	€ 262.1	44	208
Slovenia	341	€ 88.4	€ 67.6	7	70
Slovakia	119	€ 23.0	€ 21.2	2	50
Spain	445	€ 139.5	€ 36.7	9	167
Total	6,202	€ 2,226.6	€ 1,449.0	309	1,653

Source: FMO Documentation, Reporting and Information System (DORIS); extracted 16.01.2016

3. Effectiveness

3.1 Introduction

As described in Section 2, the overall aim of the EEA/Norway Grants is to reduce economic and social disparities in the EEA and to strengthen bilateral relations between the three donor states and the 16 beneficiary states. This aim is pursued through 150 programmes related to themes such as environmental protection and climate change, civil society, children and health, cultural heritage, research and scholarships, decent work and justice and home affairs. Within each programme, support is given to projects that are either pre-defined or selected via open calls for proposals. Those projects should generate outputs that relate to indicators in Programme Implementation Agreements. Collectively, the projects within any programme should enable the overall objectives and intended effects of the programme to be achieved. There are also 15 programmes providing technical assistance and bilateral funds at national level.

In this section, we therefore consider the progress made towards their planned objectives of the two Financial Mechanisms (FMs). For the programme areas that have been given special consideration by the study, we examine the allocation of resources, the nature of the activities funded, the type of project effects that are likely to arise and the effects that can be expected at national level in the seven case study countries. Systems are in place to gather evidence of effects at programme level and collate it at European level using a number of quantified indicators. As with any funding programme of this nature, it has been necessary to “standardise” indicators across all the programmes to a certain extent in order to allow the aggregation of data on achievement and to keep the number of indicators to a manageable level. Such indicators can never capture the full diversity of effects and it is therefore necessary to go beyond merely reporting achievement against the formal indicators.

3.2 Environmental Protection and Management

3.2.1 Funds awarded

The priority sector “Environmental Protection and Management” addresses a range of environmental challenges facing the beneficiary states, including the poor status of marine and inland waters in some places (PA01), the loss of biodiversity (PA02), the need for improved compliance with environmental legislation (PA03) and the prevention of injury and adverse environmental effects caused by chemicals and hazardous waste (PA04). Whilst the severity and the precise nature of these challenges varies from country to country, they all have a European dimension; failure to address a problem in one country very often results in adverse effects being experienced in other countries. Very often, activity in these programme areas supports the beneficiary states in their implementation of EU strategies and their compliance with EU legislation.

The tables below summarise the allocation of EEA Grants to these programme areas. Nearly 300 projects across 13 of the 16 beneficiary states have received more than €150m of EEA Grants funding. Of these, about one quarter have included a donor project partner. Most funds have been committed in Romania (€36m) and Poland (€34), followed by Portugal (€19m), Bulgaria (€14m), the Czech Republic (€14) and Lithuania (€12m). Nearly half the projects have been in just two countries – the Czech Republic and Poland – where the average project cost has been around €500k. In contrast, Romania has tended to fund projects with an average cost exceeding €1m.

Nearly one-third of EEA Grants funding awarded has been for the 132 projects (45% of all projects within this priority sector) that support Bio-Diversity although these tend to be below the average in terms of the grant received per project. Support for Hazardous or Environmental Policy and Administrative Management has been significant with 80 projects receiving €55m, with the average

grant per project higher (€1.5m) significantly higher than for other projects. Another significant area of support is Marine and Inland Water Management, with €39m has been awarded to 68 projects. A large number of projects are focused on protection of Red-list species, although these are quite small: only €2m for 49 projects.

3. Effectiveness

Table 3.1 Projects grants awarded by country: Environmental protection and management

Country	Number of projects	Planned project cost	Grant award	Number of pre-defined projects	Number of projects with dpp
Bulgaria	38	€29,225,150	€14,369,019	3	14
Croatia	0	€0	€0	0	0
Cyprus	1	€1,350,000	€1,138,050	1	0
Czech Republic	77	€30,840,594	€12,734,050	1	13
Estonia	9	€6,421,552	€6,106,843	3	7
Greece	14	€18,337,908	€9,167,834	1	6
Hungary	0	€0	€0	0	0
Latvia	2	€2,070,079	€2,056,848	1	1
Lithuania	16	€12,006,497	€11,941,782	6	5
Malta	1	€1,779,841	€948,573	1	0
Poland	71	€40,470,374	€34,156,784	5	6
Portugal	37	€22,693,165	€19,141,105	2	7
Romania	27	€35,914,068	€35,691,265	3	16
Slovakia	5	€5,179,531	€4,098,697	1	2
Slovenia	0	€0	€0	0	0
Spain	0	€0	€0	0	0
TOTAL	298	€206,288,759	€151,550,850	28	77

Source: FMO Documentation, Reporting and Information System (DORIS); extracted 16.01.2016

3. Effectiveness

Table 3.2 Projects grants awarded by sector code: Environmental protection and management

Sector code	Sector	Number of projects	Total grant Award
1133000	Vocational training	1	€265,277
1401001	Hazardous waste policy and administrative management	12	€15,575,207
2307000	Biomass	2	€932,917
4102001	Air pollution control	2	€1,629,486
4103000	Bio-diversity	132	€52,848,691
4101000	Environmental policy and administrative management	31	€38,575,915
4101001	Marine and inland water management	68	€39,131,998
4103001	Red list species	49	€2,290,358
4308200	Research/scientific institutions general	1	€301,001
TOTALS		298	€151,550,850

Source: FMO Documentation, Reporting and Information System (DORIS); extracted 16.01.2016

3.2.2 Integrated Marine and Inland Waterway Management (PA01)

Specific objective

- Improve environmental status in the European marine and inland waters.

According to the EU, more than half of the lakes in the beneficiary states are classified as having bad, poor or moderate water status. In this context, the EEA Grants contribute to the efforts of these countries to achieve a good environmental status of their waters and meet European targets on water protection and management. At EU level, the EU Water Framework Directive defines a number of objectives in the areas of preventing and reducing pollution, promoting sustainable water usage, improving aquatic ecosystems and mitigating the effects of floods and droughts in order to achieve a so-called “good ecological status”. In this context, monitoring and assessing the environmental status and trends provide the necessary background for appropriate plans and activities to protect ecosystems and the services they provide.

The EEA Grants have co-financed PA01 activities through dedicated programmes in 3 countries (BG, EL, PT) or as part of wider programmes (EE, LT, MT). These programmes have supported 69 projects with combined eligible expenditure of €42m (of which €29.5m from the EEA Grants), an average of €590k per project. Most of the money under this policy area has been allocated in PT (€19.1m). In addition, under this programme area, almost half of the money (€19.7m) has been allocated to 7 pre-defined projects. Notwithstanding this, we can highlight some broad types of activity:

Activities related to infrastructure development and acquisition of specialised and equipment have been supported in almost 20 projects. In Bulgaria, activities include improving the monitoring capacity to comply with EU commitments, developing a flood early warning information system and creating an integrated information system for water management. In Greece, several projects focused on the expansion or modernisation of water supply systems and acquisition desalination units to improve the quality of drinking water as well as integrating datasets to facilitate implementation of EU strategies, e.g. EU Marine Strategy Framework. In Portugal, the most relevant project allowed the acquisition of a new research vessel with marine surveying equipment was bought in order to improve the management of marine and coastal waters.

Building capacity activities to support decision-making processes has been supported in 18 projects. Most of these projects have developed specific capacity to support decision-making processes and enhance the monitoring tools already available. These activities have defined targets and indicators to better define what is meant for “good” status of inland and marine environment and to facilitate compliance with EU legislation, such as the Marine Strategy Framework Directive⁹ and the Water Framework Directive.¹⁰ Decision-making processes have also been supported through the integration and development of databases and datasets which allow the integration of information from different sources and enhance the effectiveness of management. In this context an interesting project in Estonia developed a new integrated database system to provide information on marine and inland waters and link these sources of information to other relevant registers. The new system is going to support policy-makers to understand the potential impact of the implementation of specific measures.

Education and awareness-raising activities have been identified in more than half of the projects. Education and training included a wide range of beneficiaries, from primary schools to government administrators. Awareness raising activities focused to spread knowledge on different policy fields

⁹ Directive 2008/56/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 June 2008 establishing a framework for community action in the field of marine environmental policy

¹⁰ Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2000 establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy

including on coastal and ocean areas, with the aim to change attitudes and behaviours towards sustainability of ecosystems.

Research activities are usually aimed at developing better integrated management of marine and inland water resources, new methodologies to assess and predict environmental status as well as developing new methodologies to improve monitoring activities.

None of the projects implemented under this policy area has been completed or terminated. However, evidence collected suggest that positive effects can be expected. In several countries capacity building and other soft measures created a basic knowledge that is likely to have an important impact in terms of policy development in this policy area, i.e. development of strategies, action plans or investments. At the same time, investment in equipment and infrastructures for the provision of specific services has been particularly important in certain beneficiary states, such as Portugal.

Given that some projects are making strategic investments in infrastructure and equipment, there is the potential to create multiplier effects and contribute to the strategic objective of improving environmental status in the European marine and inland waters. In particular a range of projects included the implementation of new methods to monitor the environmental status of marine and inland waters.

Case study: Development of data-modelling system and the decision support tool for the Integrated Marine and Inland Water Management (EE02-0003)

This project developed a modelling system as a decision-making support tool for water planning and implementing for inland water and coastal water management. This was done by developing a data-modelling system which aggregates all the fragmented datasets available on water management, i.e. use of interoperable databases and datasets, and elaborated user-friendly models to assess the impact of potential policy measures. Therefore, the model is able to determine the impact on this field of different measures at national, regional and local level. This is particularly relevant since in Estonia water management policies are not developed and measures implemented in this field are mainly based on national or regional priorities rather than on water management needs.

The activities funded through the EEA Grants are expected to have long-term effects: the new data-modelling system is likely to enhance the management of water protection at national level and improve the availability of data related to water bodies (including their status and measures). A wide range of institutions are likely to benefit from the project, including Ministries (Ministry of Environment) public authorities (Environmental Board, Estonian Environmental Agency, Environmental Inspectorate), research centres (Estonian Environmental Research Centre, Health Board), water companies, public and others who need water-related information.

The main **programme-level effects** in the case study countries are likely to be as follows.

In **Estonia**, four projects are supporting the country's compliance with the Marine Strategy Framework Directive. The largest project is developing and implementing the national strategy and includes a monitoring programme and other measures to protect and improve Estonia's marine waters, for example, a feasibility study and environmental impact study of using LNG as a ship fuel. Two other projects are developing monitoring systems whilst a third involve studies or impact assessments, whilst a third is compiling a data model on the environmental state of the seabed of the Gulf of Finland. These "soft" activities were seen as the most urgent in order to establish national policy and create the framework for other, long-term, investments. Bilateral co-operation at programme level was described as productive, both by the PO and by the DPP, the Norwegian Environment Agency. Targets against indicators are likely to be achieved, although these were set at a relatively modest level, since it was not certain what projects would emerge from the open call for proposals. For example, two habitats have been restored compared to the target of one.

In **Portugal**, the programme (PT02) accounts for 38% of all EEA/Norway Grants awarded to projects across the country, i.e. a total of €18.1m. It is based on the National Ocean Strategy (20013-2020) and has been specifically designed to help Portugal to respond to the Marine Strategy Framework Directive. It aims to address any shortfalls in Portugal's capacity to comply with the Directive, particularly the limited information and knowledge about Portugal's national maritime space. In particular, the programme is implementing the environmental axis of the Strategy: "Preservation – Living with the Ocean", i.e. a set of measures focused on safeguarding the marine environment and ensuring its sustainability. Activity within this programme offers the potential for Portugal to become one of the first Member States to comply with all of the requirements of the Directive, which would not have been possible without support from the EEA Grants. The PO and DPP expect that the main effects will endure and some of the activities will be continued by the government within the context of its National Ocean Strategy (see below). Indeed, the programme is expected to provide much of the necessary technical skills for the government and other stakeholders to ensure compliance with the EU's Marine Strategy Framework Directive. For example, the Programme has already guaranteed the continuation of training activities aimed at young people in higher education.

3.2.3 Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (PA02)

Specific objective

- Halt the loss of biodiversity

The loss of biodiversity and the degradation of ecosystem services is an increasingly important challenge in Europe. In 2010, the EU Ministers of Environment acknowledged that EU measures implemented were not able to halt the decline of biodiversity and that the biodiversity loss continued to decline at an unacceptable rate. As a result, in 2011 a new strategy was developed with the aim to halt the loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services in the EU by 2020. In this context the programmes developed under this programme area contributed to enhance the capacity to manage and monitor Natura 2000 sites effectively and protect native ecosystems against alien species. In addition, under this programme education, capacity building and training activities were developed at all levels to increase awareness and understanding of biodiversity and ecosystem services and to improve the integration of biodiversity considerations in policy and legislative development.

The EEA Grants have co-financed dedicated programmes in the field of biodiversity in 3 countries (BG, PL, RO) or projects within wider programmes in 4 countries (CY, CZ, LT, SI). All the programmes share the same overall objective in the field of biodiversity, i.e. halt the loss of biodiversity, but are implemented according to national needs. Special attention was paid in Bulgaria and Romania, which present the most intact biodiversity systems in Europe and report delays in the way ecosystems are mapped and evaluated. The programmes have supported 195 projects with combined eligible expenditure of €65.5m, an average of €325,000 per project. The most relevant activities carried out are:

Developing tools to effectively manage and monitor Natura 2000 sites account for 27 projects mainly implemented in Poland (9) and Lithuania (9).¹¹ Activities focused on the protection and conservation of particularly valuable areas and on the development of tools to improve the management of Natura 2000 sites. The type of activities focused on "soft" measures such as studies, evaluations or management tools to enhance the conservation status of species, endangered species of animals and habitats. Activities mainly included awareness-raising and training on biodiversity and ecosystem services for policy makers and local communities. A limited number of projects focused on infrastructure development and provision of equipment: in Cyprus, activities focused on the

¹¹ Additional projects were also funded in Poland under a Small Grants Scheme. However, data on those projects were not available in the FMO database (DORIS).

reforesting and revitalising of a closed asbestos mine (see below), while in Lithuania projects provided local communities equipment for late mowing of grass to protect bird species as well as for the preparation of grass biomass used for the compost preparation in the nursery of the state forestry.

Case study: Biodiversity Conservation in Restoration and Management of the Amiantos Asbestos Mine in Troodos National Forest Park (CY02-0001)

- PA02 Biodiversity and ecosystem services
- Project promoter: Department of Forests, Ministry Agriculture, Rural Development and Environment
- Donor project partner: None
- EEA Grants funding: €1.1m (84%)

The Amiantos asbestos mine closed in 1992 while restoration works through state funding of the area started in 1996. The overall objective of the project is to contribute to halting loss of biodiversity through improvement of restoration, and management practices. This is particularly important as the Amiantos Asbestos mine area, is part of the Troodos National Forest Park – a popular tourist location, a habitat for many native plant and animal species, a Natura 2000 site and a major part of the most valuable mountain landscape of Cyprus. The ultimate aim is to improve restoration practices, in terms of efficiency and conformity to European Directives and to broaden their scope to sufficiently address biodiversity conservation and landscape improvement considerations.

Activity funded by the EEA Grants includes:

- Evaluation and improvement of mine restoration techniques, capacity building and staff training in mine restoration, hydro-seeding and invasive species control, biodiversity and conservation;
- Landscaping of the mine core, including creation of an artificial pond with a capacity of 30,000-40,000 m³ to meet irrigation, aesthetic and wildlife needs. Hygrophilous vegetation will be planted at the pond edges and a perimeter a circular walkway will be constructed with basic visitor facilities;
- Wildlife conservation, including installation of artificial bird nests, provision of water and feeding points, improvement of bat refuges and construction of stonewalls;
- Restoration of an area of 14ha around the mine core, including stabilisation/reshaping of wastes, transport, and covering with natural topsoil, ground preparation, planting and sowing, hydro seeding or thatching and tending;
- Publicity activities, including information events, creation of a documentary, project website, billboards and commemorative plaque, posters and leaflets; and
- Recruitment of a forester, biologist and project Manager and other supporting staff.

Some challenges have been faced in the implementation of the project, particularly related to the construction of the pond. The abandoned mine lies on a slope of Troodos mountain, which is an important rainfall catchment area causing problems to its construction during adverse weather conditions at any time of the year. The lack of vegetation in the core of the abandoned mine intensifies the flow of rainfall there. Due to the resulting delays, it was necessary to request an extension to the deadline for completing the project. Another challenge was the lack of awareness concerning biosecurity issues when introducing, testing, and managing exotic forest plants and also the problem of invasive plants.

Once the project is completed, the site will remain the responsibility of the Department of Forests (DF) within the Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development and Environment. The DF will continue to maintain the site using national funds. The capacity of the DF to fulfil this role has been enhanced, primarily through the staff training provided, which also offers the potential for further restorations of other abandoned mines and quarries elsewhere in Cyprus. Staff have gained knowledge and expertise from the foreign experts who worked on the project. This role was originally to be undertaken by a Norwegian donor project partner. However, it did not prove possible for the project promoter and the partner to come to an agreement on the financing of this role.

Activities to stop fragmentation of ecosystems have been implemented in 15 projects, in particular in Romania and the Czech Republic. In both countries activities focused on information and awareness raising activities, advocacy, research and capacity-building. In the Czech Republic, activities have been concentrated on the assessment and evaluation of activities implemented in wetlands and developing a monitoring system for wetlands. In Romania, mainly capacity-building activities have been implemented, i.e. new methodologies for data collection in specific fields have been developed, new integrated approaches to identify corridors and tools for identification, assessment, monitoring and management activities.

Activities to protect eco-systems from alien species have been developed in 4 projects in Poland (3) and in Bulgaria (1).¹² This includes strengthening networking and partnership activities to support the management of alien species (BG) as well as information and awareness raising campaigns (PL).

Awareness and education activities in biodiversity and ecosystem services have been developed in 44 projects with combined eligible expenditure of €16m. The highest number of projects has been implemented in Poland (16), followed by Bulgaria (13), Czech Republic (10) and Romania (5).¹³ The vast majority of the projects involve awareness raising or education and training activities. Only a few projects provide equipment, which is usually directly related to the development of soft measures: for example, a training centre for the study of dynamics of biology was developed in the Czech Republic, while in Poland the construction of a modern lecture room in a visitor centre and the development of computer games aimed at creating the basis for ecological education. Bulgaria and Czech Republic tend to fund a large number of small projects while the size of projects implemented in Romania (and Poland) is considerably higher.

Integration of biodiversity considerations in sectoral policies and legislation has been funded with approximately €11m through a large number of projects (71). Most of the activities have been carried out in the Czech Republic (52). However, the most important activities have been implemented through pre-defined projects in Bulgaria and Romania: both projects developing approaches to map ecosystem services and provide suggestions to enhance ecosystem and biodiversity into sectoral policies. Both countries did not map their ecosystems as required by the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020, therefore these activities are considered extremely important and strategic to measure the biodiversity impact of projects.

Within this programme area, **bilateral co-operation** at programme level has featured in four countries where the Norwegian Environmental Agency has served as the DPP (BG03, CZ02, LT03, RO02) after an invitation from its parent ministry, the Ministry for Climate and the Environment and from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This builds on co-operation in the previous period, during which the Agency served as a partner in several projects. The Agency supported the design of the programmes and reports a positive collaboration with the POs. Activities have focused on technology and know-how transfer as well as support in the development of policies on biodiversity. This co-operation was reported by both sides to be mutually beneficial and to have led to a two-way exchange of experience.

Bilateral co-operation at project level has featured in 33 out of 195 projects. Donor project partners have featured in projects in six of the seven countries receiving support within this programme area, i.e. Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Lithuania, Poland, Romania and Slovenia. The only country not reporting any co-operation at project level is Cyprus, where only one project has been implemented. Bilateral co-operation at project level might have been more extensive but some project promoters were

¹² Additional projects were also funded in Poland under a Small Grants Scheme. However, data on those projects were not available in the FMO database (DORIS).

¹³ Additional projects were also funded in Poland under a Small Grants Scheme. However, data on those projects were not available in the FMO database (DORIS).

unable to identify donor project partners. For example, the Norwegian Environmental Agency had to turn down several invitations to serve as a project partner, given its role as the DPP.

3.2.4 Environmental Monitoring and Integrated Planning and Control (PA03)

Specific objective

- Improve compliance with environmental legislation

In order to implement effectively environmental strategies, it is essential to develop sound monitoring, control and analysis of the available information. For example, there are currently substantial differences between Member States in the implementation of environmental legislation. In this context the programmes implemented under this programme area strengthen the capacity of environmental authorities to enhance the quality of information to better measure environmental trends and impacts.

The EEA and Norway Grants co-financed dedicated programmes for environmental monitoring and integrated planning and control in 2 countries (PL, RO) or as part of wider programmes in 5 countries (CZ, EE, LT, LV, SI). These programmes supported 24 projects with an eligible expenditure of €37.7m, an average of roughly €1.5m per project. Most of the money (€32m) has been allocated to 10 pre-defined projects. In Romania, the programme was based only on one pre-defined project. Similarly, in Lithuania and Slovenia, only one pre-defined project was implemented under this policy area. Broadly, the type of activities carried out under this policy area are:

Increasing the capacity of environmental authorities have been implemented in six projects, one in Romania and five in Poland. In Romania the whole programme is implemented through one pre-defined project. The project objective to enhance the capacity of the Romanian Agency for Cadastre and Land Registration through the production of terrain model, the development of efficient database to improve public access to geographical information and implementing capacity-building activities related to knowledge transfer and staff training on the production and management of specific geographical information. In Poland, activities focused on public awareness in the area of air quality. Activities also included the implementation of new testing procedures and the acquisition of specialised new equipment to increase the reliability of air monitoring methods.

Information on impact, status and trend of environment: Most of the projects (18) have implemented such activities for a total budget of approximately €22.5m. Activities have been implemented in Czech Republic, Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia and Poland. In all the beneficiary states, activities have focused on soft measures such as information and awareness raising campaigns and capacity building activities. The only exception is Poland, where €6.7m have been used to develop infrastructure and provide special equipment: the most relevant project aimed at strengthen technical capacities of the Chief Inspectorate of Environmental Protection through the establishment of a network for monitoring air quality

Information exchange on environmental impact have been developed under one programme in Slovenia, for a total amount of approximately €2m. The project implemented activities to modernise the infrastructure for spatial information to support water management and reduce impact of floods as well as increasing the consistency of data as required by the EU INSPIRE Directive. These activities have been implemented through networking and exchange of good practices, technology and experience among project promoters and project partners.

Within these PAs, **bilateral co-operation** has been implemented in 16 out of 24 projects. Donor project partners have featured in projects in the Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia, Poland, Romania and Slovenia.

Bilateral co-operation was mainly implemented for the implementation of pre-defined projects, showing that the co-operation at project level tended to feature activities building capacity and implementing training activities. Hence it suggests that the type of co-operation tended to be mainly based in transfer know-how in areas where the donor countries had specific expertise.

3.2.5 Reduction of Hazardous Substances (PA04)

Specific objective

- Prevent injury and adverse environmental effects caused by chemicals and hazardous waste.

Under this programme area only one programme in Romania has been implemented, which funded 8 projects for a total amount of €8.2m. The programme (RO04) offers the potential to overcome the problem of insufficient capacity and expertise to enforce and implement EU legislation. With respect to EU chemicals and hazardous waste legislation, the intended effects will include new decision-making tools and the training of experts from the relevant ministries. With respect to the EU's Water Framework Directive,¹⁴ the intended effects include better data on surface waters and groundwater and measures to be included in the third River Basin Management Plan (2015-2021). One third of the budget was used for the implementation of a pre-defined project, which implemented education and awareness activities to expand monitoring of the water policy. Some risks to fulfilling the programme's potential have arisen from delays in implementing the pre-defined project where the first procurement process had to be cancelled and restarted at a later date. Projects selected via open calls were reported to be making better progress.

Activities have helped in the following ways:

Improved capacity to enforce and implement the EU legislation related to hazardous chemical waste by 7 public entities;

Improved knowledge and capacity of more than 160 experts and professionals in hazardous substances, by means of professional training; and

Improved monitoring of hazardous substances in surface and underground waters: the current reference level of the surface and underground waters national monitoring network according to the legislation in force includes 88 hazardous substances / priority for surface waters and 67 hazardous substances / priority for underground waters.

The Norwegian Environment Agency acts as DPP of the programme and all the projects are implemented with a donor project partner. Support from bilateral partners has been of considerable assistance. Plans for sustainability included further exchange visits with the Norwegian DPP and possibly a memorandum between the Ministry of Environment and the DPP. The Ministry is also planning further actions to support compliance with EU legislation

3.2.6 Main results

Within this priority sector, most of the POs that responded to the survey expected their programmes to achieve their intended effects. In the Czech Republic (CZ02), Estonia (EE02) and Greece (GR02), the POs expected the effects to be achieved as originally planned. In Cyprus (CY02), Latvia (LV02), Malta (MT02), Poland (PL03, PL04) and Slovenia (SI02), the POs expected their programmes to achieve the intended effects, as a result of minor programme modifications (including project extensions). Project extensions have been required to implement projects that included building construction, e.g. Poland

¹⁴ Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2000 establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy

and Cyprus, or for projects susceptible to adverse weather conditions. Despite the slight delays, all these programmes are likely to achieve their intended effects. In Romania, the programme dedicated to environmental protection and management (RO03) required substantial modifications but is still expected to achieve the intended effects.

At project level, more than 75% of project promoters responding to the survey reported that their projects were likely to achieve the intended effects whether implemented as planned or as a result of minor modifications. Projects experienced some difficulties but were able to achieve their intended effects in Portugal (PT02), Poland (PL02) and Romania (RO04) while substantial modification to achieve the intended effects occurred in Czech Republic (CZ02) and Poland (PL03, PL04). The vast majority of the project promoters reported that most/some of the project effects will continue after the funding period. In most cases, the project promoters responding to the survey reported that the Grants generated an added value in terms of activities implemented (EE02, PT02, PL02, PL03, RO04). However, in the Czech Republic (CZ02) and Poland (PL04), the survey evidence was less concrete on this point.

As shown in the previous sub-sections, projects within this priority sector are implementing a broad range of activity, which will generate a diversity of effects. These cannot all be captured by the quantitative indicators. However, some of the most important results are systematically recorded by the POs and collated at European level. The two tables that follow provide a summary.

From Table 3.3, we can see that performance against those indicators that can be aggregated across programmes remains some way below the target. The targets for two results have been exceeded: i) Number of environmental and marine monitoring plans and programmes developed and/or implemented; and ii) Number of protective measures against Invasive Alien Species. Otherwise, achievement is at less than 50% of the target for all indicators. Whilst the POs are generally confident that most, if not all, of those targets will be achieved, it is clear that such achievement will come at the end of the period of implementation, i.e. towards April 2017.

Table 3.3 Aggregated results: Environmental Protection and Management

Indicator	Baseline	Achievement	Target
Number of ecosystems (including protected areas) restored	0	1	7
Number of electronic tools increasing spatial data access/exchange	3	8	34
Number of environmental and marine monitoring plans and programmes developed and/or implemented	3	113	67
Number of marine and inland water management training and awareness initiatives implemented	0	4	49
Number of measures implemented in support of more sustainable marine and in-land water management	0	0	3
Number of Natura 2000 management and monitoring plans developed and/or implemented	109	188	453
Number of persons trained	2	1,325	5,318
Number of protective measures against Invasive Alien Species	7	33	24
Number of sectors where reporting on biodiversity and ecosystem services indicators has been integrated	0	0	9
Number of systems and databases improved or developed for environmental monitoring	50	0	103

Source: FMO Documentation, Reporting and Information System (DORIS); extracted 26.05.2016

The picture is more positive in respect of achievement against target for selected results within particular programmes – and which are considered most important by the donors. As shown in Table 3.4, three-quarters of the targets have been achieved (or very nearly).

Looking at the performance of the individual countries against these selected result targets:

- The programmes in **Poland** (PL02) and **Slovenia** (SI02) have achieved their targets;
- The **Lithuanian** programme (LT03) has achieved its target for “soft” investment (relating to analysis of data on species). Progress has been made against the target for physical investment in restoration/reclamation of habitat areas, but more remains to be done;
- Similarly, **Cyprus** has achieved about one third of its target for physical investment in reshaping landscapes;
- **Estonia** has achieved about one third of its target for inventories of marine habitats and species;
- **Portugal** has exceeded the target for hits on the new website, although there was limited achievement against most other targets for Environmental Protection and Management (not shown in Table 3.4; see the Portugal summary); and
- Last, none of the selected results have yet been achieved in the **Czech Republic**, perhaps reflecting the wider delay in implementation within that country.

Table 3.4 Selected results: Environmental Protection and Management

Indicator	Programme	Baseline	Achievement	Target
Aggregated area of wetlands restored/reclaimed and of open habitat areas for which mechanisms to maintain their good status involving local communities developed, km ²	LT03	0	19	100
Area reshaped in m ²	CY02	0	45,000	140,000
Km2 area of inventories conducted of marine habitats and species	EE02	9,000	3,000	11,500
Number of action and management plans for endangered species created or implemented within the programme	CZ02	0	0	6
Number of hits on the Ocean Literacy Website 2013-2016	PT02	0	40,105	25,000
Number of invasive alien species catalogued or monitored. (item)	PL02	0	14	10
Number of Natura 2000 species / habitat types monitored and the share of their population / range covered by monitoring	SI02	110	118	116
Number of people participated in educational activities and activities promoting protection of biodiversity.	PL02	0	6,349,105	1,900,000
Number of species covered by preservation aimed at achieving the output (item).	PL02	0	15	14
Number of species of Community interest for which data on conservation status at national scale evaluated	LT03	0	101	101
Surface area (ha) of measures targeting grassland and /or forest species / habitat types	SI02	19,600	20,122	20,180
Surface area (ha) of measures targeting wetland species / habitat types	SI02	670	673	700

Source: FMO Documentation, Reporting and Information System (DORIS); extracted 26.05.2016

3.2.7 Summary of case study countries

Within this priority sector, we can see that the case study countries have used the EEA Grants funding in different ways and thus have the potential to generate different effects.

- **Czech Republic:** the programme made a late start, with most projects not starting until 2015 and just a few in late 2014. A diversity of activity is supporting protection of or improvements in biodiversity and ecosystems, particularly in relation to water management. These are mostly “soft” investments which will improve and exchange knowledge, including through impact assessment, monitoring, collection of data, awareness-raising and so on. Whilst most projects are formally within PA02, those within PA03 complement them by supporting environmental monitoring related to biodiversity and ecosystems. By the end of 2015, there had been good progress against some targets (e.g. habitats, restored, monitoring of Natura 2000 sites, surveys and studies undertaken) but very limited progress against other targets. Moreover, some targets will not be achieved because no relevant projects have been selected (e.g. geoparks monitored, increased capacity to manage and monitor Natura 2000 sites, developed systems for information exchange on climate change adaptation). The potential for long-term impact will depend on the results of this programme (CZ02) leading to future activities funded by the EU Structural Funds or other sources.
- **Cyprus:** one project is supporting the rehabilitation of the redundant Amiantos asbestos mine by enhancing capacity and know-how in relation to mine restoration and by facilitating better mine restoration techniques. The project had achieved about one third of its target for “km² reshaped” by the end of 2015 and was expected to achieve all targets despite some delays. This project, once completed, will have the potential to restore the Amiantos site as well as other mines and quarries. The fulfilment of this potential is likely to depend on funds being available (e.g. from EU Structural Funds) for the large-scale investments required.
- **Estonia:** has nine projects within a programme that also covers Adaptation to Climate Change. These essentially relate to strengthening the national policy framework to satisfy obligations deriving from EU marine and inland water legislation (as well as other international commitments) and putting in place the capacity to implement that framework. Most projects started within 2013 or 2014, with the last projects starting by 1.1.2015. There had been reasonable progress against targets by the end of 2015, with most or all targets likely to be reached by the end of the period. These investments offer the potential for wide-ranging and long-term strategic impact, provided that the policy framework is ultimately adopted and acted upon, i.e. with support from national and/or EU funds.
- **Lithuania:** one of the programmes (LT02, covering PA01 and PA03) supports better decision-making, planning and monitoring related to the status of Lithuania’s marine and inland waters. As in Estonia, these investments offer the potential for impact, provided that the results are fed into policy implementation in the future. The biodiversity programme (LT03) has achieved its targets for the analysis of data on species; the challenge is now for such data to be used. The same programme offers the potential for tangible and visible improvements in biodiversity, provided that the proposed restoration/reclamation of wetlands is completed. Both programmes faced delays and thus the need for extensions to project timescales. There had been some achievement against targets by the end of 2015 (e.g. “Species of community interest for which data on conservation status at national scale evaluated”). The two projects within LT02 having started in June 2014 then faced some delay but were reported to be making good progress and thus expected to achieve their targets by the end of the period.

- Poland:** the biodiversity programme (PL02) offers the potential to improve the management of Poland's Natura 2000 areas and to raise awareness of their importance. It has mobilised many local communities and small organisations through their involvement in projects of relatively small size; indeed, 6m people have been involved. For those small organisations (particularly NGOs), their continued participation in activity will depend mostly on the availability of external grants. The larger projects led by public institutions will mostly be continued provided that national or EU funding remains available. The other programme (PL03) offers potential for strategic and long-term impact through its considerable investment (€14m) in the capacity and skills relating to environmental inspection both on the national and regional level, as well as in the number and quality of databases concerning spatial data. Both programmes made an early start with nearly all projects approved in 2013 or 2014. As a result, most targets had been exceeded by the end of 2015.
- Portugal:** activity in this area is entirely devoted to ensuring good environmental status of Portugal's marine and inland waters (PA01) and accounts for more than one-third of EEA/Norway Grants funding in Portugal: 37 projects have received €19.1m of funding (of which €18.1m from the EEA Grants and €1m in programme-level co-financing). Two large pre-defined projects have provided a Marine Spatial Data Infrastructure (MSDI) database and an ocean-going vessel equipped with Dynamic Positioning and able to perform multidisciplinary marine research. These strategic projects are complemented by 35 projects of varying sizes that involve provision of equipment, research, training for professional and educational activities, including the involvement of schools. By supporting the roll-out of the Marine Environmental Management System (MEMS) to all four Portuguese sub-regions, the programme comprises a comprehensive and strategic approach to the issue and particularly lends itself to bilateral co-operation – with the Norwegian Institute for Marine Research (HI/IMR) and the Norwegian Mapping Authority. The two projects had recorded few results by the end of 2015 (except experts trained) but were still expected to achieve their targets.
- Romania:** the programmes offer the potential to help Romania improve/ensure its compliance with EU legislation in three fields. Regarding biodiversity, the investment of €16m in 16 large projects has the potential to create a more coherent and unified national approach and thus support Romania's compliance with relevant EU legislation. Regarding environmental monitoring, the programme (RO03) will potentially have a very specific impact on the capacity of the Romanian National Agency for Cadastre and Land registration to preparing geographic information needed for environmental monitoring and reporting. This increased capacity should directly improve Romania's ability to comply with the EU's Directive on Infrastructure for Spatial Information (INSPIRE). Regarding the reduction of hazardous substances, the programme (RO04) offers the potential to overcome the problem of insufficient capacity and expertise to enforce and implement EU chemicals and hazardous waste legislation. Some risks to fulfilling this potential have arisen from delays in starting and implementing projects, however, support from DPPs has been of considerable assistance. The programmes made a late start, with very few projects starting before May 2015. Many have then faced delays in procurement. As a result, there had been limited progress against most targets by the end of 2015 and thus the risk of under-achievement.¹⁵

¹⁵ Data on achievement against targets sourced from the FMO's Documentation, Reporting and Information System, Report 21 Programme Results.

3.3 Climate Change and Renewable Energy

3.3.1 Funds awarded

Two priority sectors contribute progress towards the EU's commitment to reducing the emission of greenhouse gases and facilitating adaptation to climate change: "Climate change and Renewable Energy" (PA05, PA06, PA07, PA08, PA09, PA41) and "Carbon Capture and Storage" (PA20).¹⁶ Support under these priority sectors has three main objectives: to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases (GHG) and air pollutants, promote the use of renewable energy and facilitate adaptation to climate change.

The tables below summarise the allocation of EEA Grants to these programme areas (not including PA41). Table 3.5 shows that nearly 500 project grants have been awarded in these priority sectors.

Poland has awarded the largest number of project grants (114) and the largest amount of EEA Grants funding (€70m): more than 40% of the total for this priority sector. Spain is implementing the largest number of projects (189) although the average grant award is less than 14% of total project costs; these are all within the programme area of Environmental and Climate Change-related Research and Technology (PA09). Slovakia is implementing 69 projects, of which most (64) are projects related to Adaptation to Climate Change (PA07). At the time of the mid-term review, no projects had been funded that focus on the reducing GHG and air pollutants from the Maritime Sector (PA08).

The projects cover a diversity of sector codes.

- Nearly half (232) relate to **energy saving**; of these, nearly two-thirds (145) concern energy efficiency in Bulgaria and Poland (PA05), about one-third (81) concern research and technology (PA09) in Spain and the others (6) concern renewable energy in Latvia and Poland (PA06).
- **Flood prevention and control** is the subject of 68 projects; of these, four are large projects in Slovakia (3) and Hungary (1), whilst the other 64 are small projects in schools in Slovakia.
- Support for **policy management and administration** concerns about 10% of projects, of which most concern environmental policy.
- Another 10% of projects (46) concern **green technological development** in Spain (PA09).
- The other projects cover a broad spread of **energy sources**, including biomass, geo-thermal, hydro-electric, nuclear, ocean, solar and wind
- A small number (3) relate to **education and research** in general.

¹⁶ Support under PA41 was not included within the case study programme analysis.

3. Effectiveness

Table 3.5 Projects grants awarded by country: Climate change

Country	Number of projects	Planned project cost	Grant award	Number of pre-defined projects	Number of projects with dpp
Bulgaria	50	€14,954,979	€13,910,413	1	47
Croatia	0	€0	€0	0	0
Cyprus	0	€0	€0	0	0
Czech Republic	12	€9,165,401	€7,391,748	0	8
Estonia	4	€1,278,275	€1,149,214	1	15
Greece	10	€12,777,600	€12,777,600	0	0
Hungary	2	€2,190,809	€1,987,652	1	12
Latvia	25	€11,700,810	€8,120,631	1	28
Lithuania	0	€0	€0	0	0
Malta	1	€613,881	€520,238	1	1
Poland	114	€97,168,118	€69,864,135	1	0
Portugal	12	€7,578,479	€7,563,404	2	8
Romania	10	€24,612,309	€17,538,957	5	38
Slovakia	69	€15,068,675	€13,172,179	0	17
Slovenia	0	€0	€0	0	0
Spain	189	€114,052,380	€15,618,719	0	48
TOTAL	498	€311,161,716	€169,614,890	13	222

Source: FMO Documentation, Reporting and Information System (DORIS); extracted 16.01.2016. Does not include projects funded under PA41.

3. Effectiveness

Table 3.6 Projects grants awarded by sector code: Climate change

Sector code	Sector	Number of projects	Total grant Award
1132000	Secondary education	1	€ 166,035
1142000	Higher education	1	€ 73,875
1601001	Gender policy, management and administration	1	€ 70,439
2307000	Biomass	18	€ 2,558,749
2304000	Electrical transmission/ distribution	6	€ 556,259
2301000	Energy policy and administrative management	7	€ 1,935,729
2303001	Energy saving	232	€ 89,316,116
2306600	Geothermal energy	14	€ 14,373,480
2307001	Heat pumps	3	€ 2,172,894
2306500	Hydro-electric power plants	4	€ 6,638,238
2306400	Nuclear power plants	2	€ 207,763
2306900	Ocean power	5	€ 124,158
2306700	Solar energy	19	€ 9,352,473
2306800	Wind power	25	€ 2,748,301
3218201	Green technological development	46	€ 3,699,500
4103000	Bio-diversity	1	€ 296,749
4101000	Environmental policy and administrative management	38	€ 22,037,421
4105000	Flood prevention/control	68	€ 8,341,445
4102004	Greenhouse gas reduction	6	€ 4,495,003
4308200	Research/scientific institutions general	1	€ 450,263
TOTAL		498	€ 169,614,890

Source: FMO Documentation, Reporting and Information System (DORIS); extracted 16.01.2016. Does not include projects funded under PA41

3.3.2 Energy Efficiency, Renewable Energy and Carbon Capture and Storage (PA05, PA06, PA20)

Specific objective

- Reduce emissions of greenhouse gases and air pollutants (PA05/PA41)
- Increase share of renewable energy in energy use (PA06)
- Mitigate climate change (PA20)

Reducing greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) and increasing the share of renewable energy in energy use is crucial if EU and national policy objectives on energy and climate change are to be achieved. One of the most efficient ways to reduce GHG emissions is through improving the energy efficiency of buildings and of shipping. Moreover, improving energy efficiency also offers the potential for economic benefits in the form of lower fuel costs and social benefits, for example, when schools and hospitals other public buildings are renovated. Similarly, stimulating the generation of renewable energy and carbon capture can both reduce GHG and provide economic and social benefits.

The EEA and Norway Grants have funded programmes in pursuit of these objectives in seven countries across three programme areas (PAs):

- **Energy Efficiency** (PA05): the EEA Grants have co-financed dedicated programmes in 2 countries (BG, PL). These programmes have provided grants of €80m to 153 projects, an average of €520,000 per project. All but one of the projects were selected via open calls. In addition, 26 projects in Poland received project grants of €58m for energy efficiency measures under PA41.¹⁷
- **Renewable Energy** (PA06): the EEA Grants have co-financed 41 projects in 6 countries (BG, EL, LV, PL, PT, RO). These programmes have provided grants of €39m, an average of €960,000 per project. All but 6 of the projects were selected via open calls.
- **Carbon Capture and Storage** (PA20): activities have only been supported in the Czech Republic. Four projects have received a total of €4.3m, an average of €1.1m per project.

Projects within these programmes have implemented the following broad types of activity:

Energy efficiency measures in public buildings account for 113 projects in Poland (all but one of the projects funded in that country under PA05 and PA06), which have received more than €67m of EEA Grants funding. At least 19 of these projects have been focused on hospitals, whilst at least another 20 have focused on schools. In addition, two projects under PA06 have combined energy efficiency improvements with the generation of renewable energy: one in a hospital, the other in a swimming pool. About 25 projects in Bulgaria under PA05 have involved energy efficiency measures in schools, nurseries or other educational facilities. The other PA05 projects in Poland and Bulgaria have mostly concerned other public buildings, such as those of public authorities. Five projects in Latvia are introducing renewable energy measures into a library, education facilities and sports halls. In addition, the Science and Technology Museum Kurzeme Demo Centre in Ventspils is constructing a low energy consumption house in order to demonstrate the use of renewable energy to its visitors.

Investments in generation of renewable energy account for the bulk of the investment under PA06 (€34.5m). At least 25 projects in six countries are developing small-scale generation facilities, using different forms of technology: biomass (8 projects in Bulgaria, 1 in Latvia), hydro-electric (3 projects in Romania), geo-thermal (2 projects in Romania, 1 in Portugal). In addition, Greece has 10

¹⁷ Support under PA41 was not included within the case study programme analysis.

“demonstrative projects” that are piloting new approaches at local level, covering photovoltaics and solar power, wind turbines, geothermal and biomass.

Market development: Bulgaria has implemented one project with €1.5m funding under PA06 to redesign its market for renewable energy and integrate it with the markets of neighbouring countries, namely Romania and Serbia.

Capacity-building: a suite of 5 projects within Bulgaria under PA05 have built the capacity of public administration at all levels to improve energy efficiency.

Pilot studies and surveys: three projects in the Czech Republic have explored the options for the geological storage of CO₂ which will inform the position that the Government will adopt towards this technology.

Education and training has been the primary focus of only a small number of projects. This includes, in particular, four projects implemented in partnership with the United Nations University Geothermal Training Programme (UNU-GTP) in Iceland, of which 3 in the Azores (Portugal) and 1 in Romania.

Information and awareness: only a small number of such projects have been funded, but they have been important complements to other activities. In two cases, they have complemented major investments in energy efficiency: one in Bulgaria (PA05) has developed new education and training courses, complemented by a public awareness campaign; one pre-defined project in Poland has implemented a national public awareness campaign via different media including TV and internet. In another case (CZ), a public awareness campaign has complemented the pilot studies into carbon capture.

Within these PAs, **bilateral co-operation** has been limited to only about 40 out of about 200 projects. Moreover, donor project partners have only featured in projects in Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Latvia, Portugal and Romania; there were none in the 114 projects in Poland or the 10 projects in Greece. In Poland, the bilateral dimension has instead been through the involvement of the Norwegian Water Resources and Energy Directorate as a donor project partner.

Bilateral co-operation has tended not to feature in projects investing in infrastructure or technology. Instead, bilateral co-operation has tended to feature in projects that build capacity, provide education or undertake studies. For example, 3 of the pilot studies into carbon capture in the Czech Republic featured partnership with Norwegian research or higher education institutions.

In terms of the **project effects**, it is clear that investments in thermal modernisation of buildings will reduce GHG, increase use of renewable energy sources and provide economic and social benefits. Moreover, such benefits will endure for years beyond the life of the projects, as long as the new or improved facilities remain in use. However, it is likely that investments in the energy efficiency of certain types of industrial building might have produced greater reductions in GHG than investments in public buildings. In that sense, there is a clear trade-off between economic, social and environmental objectives, i.e. reduction in GHG versus improvements in public service provision and savings to public bodies (including schools and hospitals).

In terms of **programme-level effects**, we can see some differences between the case study countries.

The programme in the **Czech Republic** is expected to achieve its intended outputs, although the impacts will be modest and indirect. All the studies into the possible application of CCS technology (including mapping of geological structures suitable for CO₂ storage potential) will be completed, as will the education and public awareness campaign. These have the potential to contribute to the compliance of the Czech Republic with the 2009 EU directive on the geological storage of CO₂. However, the fulfilment of that potential depends on follow-on activities to implement the findings of the research, which had yet to be identified at the time of writing. The key factor here will be the

extent to which the Ministry of Environment prioritises support for storage of CO₂, but it was reported that changes of personnel would potentially hinder any follow-on.

In **Poland** – the largest recipient of funds – the investment of around €70m will generate lasting benefits through thermal modernisation of buildings and increased use of renewable energy sources in a large number of public buildings.¹⁸ In that way, the programme directly supports the objectives of key national policy documents, notably the National Programme of Air Protection and the National Strategy for Energy Safety and Environment. Demand has been high, with only about one third of applications funded. Complementarity to investments made by the European Structural Funds has been ensured through the eligibility criteria that have been applied to the selection of projects. For example, some of the supported projects were selected from the reserve list of the projects which did not receive from the ERDF programme ‘Infrastructure and Environment’, taking into account the expected level of carbon dioxide reduction – a key concern of the donors (as reflected in the targets set in the programme agreement). The NFP reports that investments of around €57m were planned to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases in the industrial sector. However, implementation of this part of the programme has been extremely challenging due to a considerable number of beneficiaries failing to complete projects. Overall, it is likely that all the output and outcome indicators will be exceeded except for that related to the number of desulphurisation, denitrification and dust reduction installations, due to the withdrawal of some beneficiaries from their projects.

In **Portugal**, the programme (PT03) is likely to have a major impact on energy production in the Azores and thus also its energy security and independence. It is estimated that the pilot Geothermal Power Plant on the island of Terceira will generate sufficient renewable energy to replace 10% of the energy that is currently sourced from imported diesel (saving 14,400 tons of CO₂ emissions p.a.). Concerns were raised about the expense and risk associated with the technology, which was deemed to be fairly experimental and whether a more mature technology should have been used instead. However, these risks do not seem to have derailed the project and both the PO and the DPP were positive about the likelihood of its success. In the words of the DPP: “this type of investments should last at least a generation”. A key success factor has been the co-operation with partners in Iceland, where similar investments have transformed the country’s energy mix in the last ten years. Such co-operation already involved companies from Iceland, but the project allowed an increase in co-operation between universities in Portugal and Iceland, most notably the UNU-GTP.

In **Romania**, where the programme (RO06) has invested funding of €11.1m in 9 projects from the EEA Grants, some risk was reported to the likely achievement of intended effects. At the time of writing, the two projects to develop new sources of geothermal energy had started and were expected to be completed. However, the situation was much less certain for the three small hydro-power plants. Three obstacles were reported here: first, much of the impetus may have come from the donors rather than from national stakeholders; second, there was a possible lack of expertise and for such developments and it took some time to identify a suitable body (Environmental Fund Administration) to take forward this area of work; third, as private bodies, the three project promoters received a much lower level of EEA co-financing than did the public bodies implemented the geo-thermal projects and thus struggled to secure the 40% co-financing from private sources, such as bank loans. If the projects can be completed successfully, there is potential for measurable increases in generation of renewable energy; for example, four of the projects will offer increases of 13,500MW, 10,800MW, 5,300MW, 2,700MW in renewable energy produced per year. Moreover, the use of renewable energy can be increased if the intelligent management system is completed. There is also scope for future increases in generation of renewable energy, provided that the two pre-feasibility studies lead to

¹⁸ The NFP reported that the eventual investment funds by the programme will be around €140m, of which around €80m for thermal modernisation of buildings and increased use of renewable energy sources in public buildings.

future investments in geo-thermal power. In addition, the training provided by co-operation with the UNU-GTP can help overcome the lack of expertise within Romania.

3.3.3 Climate change (PA07, PA09)

Specific objective
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce vulnerability to climate change (PA07) • Strengthen knowledge base on the environment and climate change and increase application of environmental technology (PA09)

The EEA and Norway Grants have funded programmes in pursuit of these objectives in nine countries across two programme areas (PAs):

- **Adaptation to Climate Change** (PA07) has been supported in 8 countries (CZ, EE, HU, LV, MT, PT, RO, SK). These programmes have provided grants of €31m to +110 projects, an average of €280,000 per project. Around two-thirds of the projects have been in Slovakia.
- **Environment and Climate Change-Related Research and Technology** (PA09) has only been supported in Spain, where the programme has provided grants of €16m to around 190 projects, an average of €80,000 per project.

The main types of activity implemented by projects have been the following:

Infrastructure development related to management of water resources and flood prevention is being undertaken in 6 projects (€11m), of which 5 in Slovakia and 1 in Hungary. For example, in Hungary, this includes the modernisation of a pumping station and development of a 1.8km irrigation channel.

Information, research, strategy development and capacity-building: around 40 projects under PA07 are implementing a diversity of activity, including needs analysis, information gathering and strategy development, related to a range of climate change issues.

Strategy development: Estonia is using EEA funds to develop a National Climate Change Adaptation Strategy and Action Plan, whilst Portugal is developing Municipal Adaptation Strategies (EMAAC) and providing training and tools for municipal officers regarding climate change adaptation.

Schools projects: in Slovakia, 64 projects (under PA07) are receiving €2m (an average of just less than €40,000) to implement rainwater retention and harvesting systems in at schools, e.g. green roofs, rain gardens and rainwater recycling. Three schools projects (PA07) in Latvia and 1 in Portugal are also raising awareness of climate change.

Within these PAs, **bilateral co-operation** has been very important, as adaptation to climate change is a high priority of the donor countries. All the programmes have DPPs and three-quarters have donor project partners (excluding the small projects for schools in Slovakia). Within the case study countries, the bilateral co-operation is working well at programme level. For example, the POs in Estonian PO and the Norwegian Environment Agency both expressed satisfaction with the bilateral co-operation, whilst the Portuguese PO expressed satisfaction with support received from the Norwegian Directorate for Civil Protection. The large project in Romania has benefitted from the working relationship that already existing between the project promoter (Environmental Protection Agency Sibiu) and the dpp (Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities). It was also reported in Estonia that the projects had been able to find very good donor project partners and that there was scope for the co-operation to continue beyond the life of the projects.

In terms of **programme-level effects**, we can see some differences between the case study countries.

In the **Czech Republic**, eight projects have received €3.9m. All of them are in essence preparatory measures, such as research, mapping, risk analysis, and impact assessments, preparation of adaptation measures and strategies and development of information systems. They concern a range of geographies, including cities, buildings, forests, agricultural land and river basins. Importantly, these activities do not overlap with the priorities of the operational programmes supported by the EU Structural Funds. At this stage, it is not possible to know the effects of the projects, as they remain in the early stages of implementation.

Case study: Adaptation of the settlements to the climate change - practical solutions and sharing experience (CZ02-0016)

- PA07 Adaptation to climate change
- Project promoter: Civitas per Populi
- Donor project partner: None
- EEA Grants funding: €335k (90%)

The main aim of the Project is to help settlements (cities and towns) in Czech Republic with collecting and exchanging knowledge and adaptation models. Goal of the Project is to provide municipalities with the practical tools, so called “road maps to adaptation” – specific strategies for adaptation to climate change. This includes actions like analysis of the impact of climate change on a local level and preparing and adjusting relevant case-studies in particular towns and cities including specific recommendations. The Project pays a large attention to the promotion of adaptation tools among local governments. The project also involves the creation of “Knowledge Base” and includes an internet application and social networks as a main tool of knowledge exchange and series of workshops and seminars for public authorities. The Project pays special attention to environmental education: a series of educational programmes will be implemented at all school levels.

Three case studies have been conducted in the Project, which can be further used as a guideline for other municipalities to prepare their own adaptation strategies and roadmaps. Municipalities can also draw on methodical guide that describes all necessary steps and database with all required information and materials concerning the topic (practical examples of adaptation to climate change, action plans, documents and scientific articles). Therefore, municipalities are equipped with all necessary information and materials to conduct their own adaptation strategies. Another effect of the Project is improved awareness of this topic among municipalities and general public. Last but not least there are educational materials for use in schools at different level that help to understand the topic among young people and future experts.

In **Estonia**, only four projects have been supported, receiving a total of €1.1m of EEA Grants funding. The main effect will be a strengthened policy framework and strategy for adaptation to climate change, which will guide future policy, legislation and public investments. Previously, there was no national strategy for adaptation to climate change and the EEA Grants have therefore facilitated the development of one (as a pre-defined project supported by three other projects). The strategy has the potential for a very wide impact as it concerns several sectors, including health, transport, energy and bio-industry, and sub-sectors therein. It is supported by research undertaken by the Estonian University of Life Sciences and the Agricultural University of Iceland. Targets against indicators are likely to be achieved, although these were set at a relatively modest level, since it was not certain what projects would emerge from the open call for proposals. For example, one target is for research to cover at least two “Insufficiently studied areas affected by climate change”; studies supported by the Grants have already covered six areas.

In **Portugal**, there is a dedicated programme (PT04), which was developed by the coordinating group of ENAAC, the National Strategy for Adaptation to Climate Change. The programme has allocated €2.6m of EEA Grants funding to eight projects to develop and disseminate practical adaptation tools,

increase awareness and/or fill information gaps. One pre-defined project is creating a “Local Warming Website” to disseminate information on past trends, develop local level climate change information, using the latest IPCC climate scenarios, and develop climate indicators for specific sectors. Another project is developing Municipal Adaptation Strategies (EMAAC) and a network of municipal officers responsible for adaptation. The intention is that the programme will lay foundations for the EU Structural Funds programmes in the 2014-2020 period. Although all projects were underway at the time of the evaluation, all but one were due to be completed after mid-2016 and into 2017. The PO expected the intended effects to be achieved. However, some of the indicators do not necessarily reflect the precise effects, as they were developed before the projects were selected. For the programme to achieve its intended long-term impact, it will be necessary for further actions to be funded by the EU Structural Funds in 2014-2020. The PO reports that such funding will be provided to implement more Municipal Adaptation plans, which will benefit significantly from the practical tools developed by the ClimAdaPT.Local project, as well as the “Adaptation Platform” on the Local Warming Website.

In **Romania**, the entire programme (RO07) consists of one pre-defined project receiving €4.5m of funding (of which €3.8m from the EEA Grants): “A green way to sustainable development” (RO07-0001). The project responds to the problems of drought and flooding faced by Romania in recent years and is in line with the National Strategy on Climate Change (2013-2020). Activities include the development of strategies, action plans and guidelines on climate change for three municipalities in the Central Region of Romania (Sibiu, Braşov and Târgu Mures), development of guidelines for climate change adaption in vulnerable sectors at local level, development of a training module, education and training of 300 staff, development of meteorological studies supporting climate change, pilot measures in three vulnerable sectors: transport, energy and construction, installing underground electric and communication cables in Sibiu, planting 30 trees in bus stations, a study for efficient traffic in Sibiu, adapting the office of the Agency for Environmental Protection Sibiu and energy efficiency studies covering three public buildings. The intention is that once the project is completed, the new approaches, tools and guidelines will be applied in other municipalities in the next funding period.

3.3.4 Main results

Within this priority sector most of the POs that responded to the survey expected their programmes to achieve their intended results. The only exception was a programme implemented in the area of energy efficiency in Romania: the programme faced a wide range of challenges, including the lack of interest from potential project promoters as well as mismanagement, which resulted in the termination of the programme. With regard to the other programmes, POs expected to achieve their intended results as originally planned in Greece (GR03) and in Slovakia (SK02). According to the POs of programmes in Spain (ES02) and Portugal (PT04), some extensions were needed to achieve the intended effects in the area of environment-related research and technology and renewable energy respectively. The POs of two cross-sectoral programmes in Latvia (LV02) and Malta (MT02) also expected their climate change activities to achieve their intended results. Finally, substantial changes were required in Poland to implement a programme aimed at improving energy efficiency and supporting the use of renewable energy sources in building (PL04).

At the project level, almost 50% of the promoters responding to the survey reported that their project is likely to achieve its intended effects as a result of minor modifications to the project. Substantial modifications to achieve the intended effects have been reported by a number of project promoters in Poland. Despite the modifications implemented, most of the project activities have been carried out. Difficulties in the implementation of activities and achievement of intended effects were reported by only one project (in the Czech Republic) due to a lack of experience and competence of the staff involved which resulted in an anticipated termination of the project.

The majority of the project effects are likely to continue after the end of funding. For a few projects in the Czech Republic, Poland and Portugal, the effects will only partially continue after the funding period. Most of these projects report that the EEA Grants increased the number and level of activities beyond that which would have otherwise been implemented, suggesting that these activities will be reduced again after the funding period. There is evidence of added value, as almost one out of two project promoters reported that none of the activities would have been carried out without the support of the Grants. Only a few project promoters in Poland (under PL04) reported that the Grants have been used as an alternative source of funding to carry out a project that would have been implemented anyway.

As shown in the previous sub-sections, projects within this priority sector are implementing a broad range of activity, which will generate a diversity of effects. These cannot all be captured by the quantitative indicators. However, some of the most important results are systematically recorded by the POs and collated by the FMO across the EEA Grants. Table 3.7 provides a summary. Whilst the POs are generally confident that most, if not all, of those targets will be achieved, it is clear that such achievement will come at the end of the period of implementation, i.e. towards April 2017.

The table shows that there are two main types of results:

- **Concrete reductions in energy consumption and GHG emissions or increases in renewable energy production;** these results will mostly be achieved once physical investments are completed, i.e. mostly in 2017. Consequently, achievement to date against these targets is very limited and has occurred only in Poland (plus one building in Romania); and
- **“Soft” investments in human and institutional capacity and awareness;** two of these targets have already been exceeded: Hungary has exceeded its target for institutions and sectors strengthened, whilst Portugal and Romania have exceeded their targets for persons trained. There is progress of 13-16% against the other three targets. Achievement of these targets is very dependent on the performance of the Hungarian programme and its ability to make good the delays in implementation.

Table 3.7 Aggregated results: Climate Change

Indicator	Baseline	Achievement	Target
Estimated CO ² reduction and/or avoidance in tonnes/year	166,309	354	402,048
Estimated energy saved in MWh/year	931,000	0	831,560
Estimated renewable energy production in MWh/year	0	0	85,284
Number of buildings with reduced energy consumption	0	38	273
Number of climate change adaptation strategies developed	0	33	118
Number of institutions and sectors with strengthened capacity in climate change adaptation	0	30	26
Number of persons trained	0	869	742
Number of trained staff with improved capacity on renewable energy and energy efficiency	0	24	189
Number of training and awareness measures implemented	0	19	118

Source: FMO Documentation, Reporting and Information System (DORIS); extracted 26.05.2016

3.3.5 Summary of case study countries

Within this priority sector, we can see that the case study countries have used the EEA Grants funding in different ways and thus have the potential to generate different effects.

- **Czech Republic:** the carbon capture and storage projects (CZ08) were due to be completed in 2016 or 2017. The climate change projects (CZ02) did not start until 2015 and there was limited achievement against output targets by the end of 2015, except for “New systems for information exchange on climate change”, “Data from species habits monitoring” and “Habitats/ecosystems established, restored or improved” which had been exceeded. The projects were expected to achieve their effects. Activities are essentially preparatory (research, mapping, risk analysis, strategy development, etc.). Any impact will thus be dependent on follow-on activities that make use of the findings of research (particularly into carbon capture and storage) and that implement measures and strategies. Such activities will require additional funding, either from the next generation of EEA/Norway Grants or the EU Structural Funds or other sources.
- **Estonia:** only a small amount of funding (€1.1m) has been invested, which is entirely focused on strengthening the policy framework for adaptation to climate change, including through research. Three of the four projects started early in 2014, with the fourth at the start of 2015. Progress has been good, with some targets achieved by end 2015. All targets are likely to be achieved once the national strategy is developed. This offers the potential for strategic and sustained impact through shaping future actions, provided that the new National Climate Change Adaptation Strategy and Action Plan are adopted by the Ministry of the Environment (and other relevant bodies) and properly resourced.
- **Poland** has used the funding for “hard” investments in improving the energy efficiency of a large number of public buildings (113 projects under PA05, 1 project under PA06, 26 projects under PA41). The emphasis is not particularly on developing innovative approaches or on raising awareness of climate change issues (although one project is implementing a national information campaign on energy efficiency). Moreover, there are no donor project partners – indeed, no project partners - meaning that the projects will essentially rely on expertise already available in Poland and will not learn from the experience of the donor states. Most projects started in 2013 or 2014. Some targets were achieved by the end of 2015 (e.g. boilers replaced/modernised) and there was good progress against several others. The achievement of some important targets (e.g. improved energy efficiency of buildings) will arise towards the end of the period, as and when physical investments are completed. One target will not be reached as relevant projects were not funded, i.e. “De-sulphurisation, de-nitrification or dust reduction installations”. The main effects will be reduced emissions of GHG from public buildings, through application of existing technologies. This will also generate economic benefits (reduced energy bills for public bodies) and social benefits (better facilities, such as schools and hospitals). However, improvements in the energy efficiency of some types of industrial building might have produced greater reductions in GHG, as these tend to be the greatest polluters.
- **Portugal** will experience two quite different forms of impact. First, there will be a substantial but very localised impact in Terceira; the new geothermal power plant (and the associated training in geothermal energy utilisation) will greatly increase the share of renewable energy in the island’s energy use. Within this programme (PT03), all targets relating to capacity at local, regional and national level have been exceeded. Achievement of the targets relating to increased production of renewable energy depends on the successful completion of the new geothermal plant; this has faced some difficulties and delays but was expected to be completed successfully. Second, the various forms of preparatory work related to adaptation to climate change offers the potential for strategic and sustained impact through shaping future actions, provided that they are disseminated and mainstreamed and followed by actions funded by other sources, such as the EU Structural Funds. The programme (PT04) had faced some delays, but there was good progress

against many targets by the end of 2015 with some exceeded and the potential to achieve most or all of them by the end of the period.

- **Romania:** projects within the renewable energy programme (RO06) did not start until April-September 2015, which meant that there was no recorded achievement against targets at the end of 2015. The two geothermal projects were expected to be completed successfully but there remained risks that the three hydro-power projects would not be completed. There will be measurable increases in the generation of renewable energy (hydro-electric and geo-thermal), provided that challenges are overcome and the projects brought to a successful conclusion. There is also scope for further increases, if future actions build on the pre-feasibility studies, training and intelligent management system funded by the EEA Grants. The one project within the adaptation to climate change programme (RO07) had made progress against several targets by the end of 2015 and was continuing to good progress towards achieving all targets by the end of the period. The programme thus has the potential to demonstrate how the National Strategy on Climate Change 2013-2020 can be implemented at regional and local level, including through an integrated 360° approach combining different dimensions (awareness-raising, strategy-development, planning, implementation). For this potential to be fully realised, it will be necessary for this approach to be replicated elsewhere and mainstreamed, e.g. into EU Structural Funds programmes.

3.4 Human and Social Development

3.4.1 Funds awarded

Reduction of social disparities is part of the overall aim of the EEA/Norway Grants. Such social disparities are both a cause and an effect of economic disparities and reducing them is essential if the beneficiary states are to fulfil their potential contribution to the Europe 2020 Strategy for smart, sustainable, inclusive growth. Within and between the beneficiary states, there is considerable variation in the nature and severity of social challenges. However, many if not most of those challenges broadly relate either to children and young people, gender equality or health. These themes thus provide the focus for most of the support for human and social development provided by the EEA/Norway Grants. Social disparities typically have a geographical dimension, with social challenges tending to be more pronounced in certain territories. The EEA Grants therefore provide support for local and regional initiatives to reduce inequalities and promote inclusion. Migration is another challenge of European dimension, although its effects particularly manifest themselves in Greece. For that reason, support is provided for the national migration management system in that country, as a means of supporting a better functioning system for Europe as a whole.

The tables below summarise the allocation of EEA/Norway Grants to these programme areas. More than €318m of EEA/Norway Grants funding has been awarded to more than 700 projects with a total cost of €356m. Two countries account for about half of all EEA/Norway Grants funding awarded: Poland (€87m) and Romania (€73m). In Poland, most of the funding (88%) is for public health projects, whereas in Romania less than one-third is for public health projects (i.e. 29%). Cyprus, Portugal and Slovenia have also awarded more than three quarters of their human and social development EEA/Norway Grants funding to public health, whilst Croatia, Greece, Latvia, Malta, Slovakia, Spain have awarded none. Most EEA/Norway Grants funding for human and social development in Greece (€16m out of €20m) is allocated to projects related to the national migration management system (PA15).

A broad range of activities have been supported within the priority sector human and social development. One of the most important is support for projects defined by the sector code of “policy and administrative management”; EEA/Norway Grants funding of €56m has been provided to 143 projects, particularly covering public sector in general, but also health, employment, gender, social/welfare, migration and education. Another major area of activity is “poverty and exclusion”, where 113 projects under this sector code have received EEA/Norway Grants funding of €42m. Around one quarter of projects involve a donor project partner.

3. Effectiveness

Table 3.8 Projects grants awarded by country: Human and Social Development

Country	Number of projects	Planned project cost	Grant award	Number of pre-defined projects	Number of projects with dpp
Bulgaria	48	€24,775,510	€24,538,727	8	13
Croatia	2	€3,819,412	€3,019,103	2	0
Cyprus	3	€2,120,194	€1,552,746	3	0
Czech Republic	136	€28,298,681	€22,777,656	7	26
Estonia	54	€22,699,528	€18,570,519	7	12
Greece	9	€21,880,680	€20,196,201	6	0
Hungary*	0	€0	€0	0	0
Latvia	4	€5,061,510	€5,061,510	4	4
Lithuania	72	€20,293,937	€18,862,772	6	31
Malta	1	€371,461	€321,976	1	1
Poland	84	€102,894,004	€86,875,420	2	3
Portugal	39	€14,853,813	€12,889,682	4	29
Romania	133	€75,059,071	€73,389,980	17	14
Slovakia	37	€10,003,217	€8,803,969	1	13
Slovenia	26	€13,052,718	€12,378,053	2	20
Spain	70	€11,077,755	€8,979,587	6	17
TOTALS	718	€356,261,491	€318,217,901	76	183

Source: FMO Documentation, Reporting and Information System (DORIS); extracted 16.01.2016

* Since the extraction of this data, €5.5m of funding from Norway Grants has been awarded to 2 projects in Hungary.

3. Effectiveness

Table 3.9 Projects grants awarded by sector code: Human and Social Development

Sector code	Sector	Number of projects	Total grant Award
1112000	Education and training facilities	5	€641,130
1111000	Education policy and administrative management	1	€1,010,000
1118100	Education sector personnel training	1	€111,678
1113000	Teacher training	1	€575,487
1123000	Basic life skills for youth and adults	34	€10,597,834
1124000	Early childhood education	13	€3,254,378
1133000	Vocational training	3	€1,267,298
1219102	Cancer services	11	€20,394,839
1211001	Food safety	7	€3,113,335
1218201	Health data systems	10	€8,038,855
1211000	Health policy and administrative management	10	€11,389,693
1218100	Medical education/training	5	€2,263,770
1219100	Medical services	38	€26,777,754
1219101	Mental health services	98	€30,817,340
1229103	Rare diseases	2	€1,138,682
1226300	Tuberculosis control	2	€10,972,820
1222000	Basic health care	13	€17,341,365
1223000	Basic health infrastructure	4	€3,813,331
1226100	Health education and promotion	65	€17,666,021
1302000	Reproductive health care	6	€10,489,455
1304000	STD control including HIV/AIDS	8	€3,351,093
1513004	Alternative dispute resolution	2	€102,652
1513006	Border management	1	€971,848
1513009	Crime prevention	10	€1,512,579
1511200	Decentralisation and support to subnational government	5	€4,442,150
1516001	Domestic violence	1	€606,942
1516003	Exploitation and abuse	1	€865,394
1517000	Gender equality organisations and institutions	31	€4,317,243
1516000	Human rights	3	€500,098
1513000	Legal and judicial development	1	€1,046,445
1515300	Media and free flow of information	1	€121,342
1516020	Multicultural awareness	30	€4,874,880

3. Effectiveness

Sector code	Sector	Number of projects	Total grant Award
1511000	Public sector policy and administrative management	67	€31,579,801
1606103	Cultural heritage sites: Religious buildings	1	€166,749
1602000	Employment policy and administrative management	29	€2,472,945
1602001	Equity in employment	40	€3,360,628
1601001	Gender policy, management and administration	18	€4,644,400
1606106	Natural heritage sites	2	€1,232,646
1605000	Poverty and exclusion	113	€42,214,421
1601000	Social/ welfare policy and administrative management	11	€6,694,080
1606200	Statistical capacity building	1	€1,076,471
1606111	Theatre, opera	1	€440,933
2501000	Business support services	1	€873,779
3218201	Green technological development	1	€1,719,103
4308200	Research/scientific institutions general	3	€1,088,013
9301001	Migration policy and administrative management system	7	€16,266,201
TOTALS		718	€318,217,901

Source: FMO Documentation, Reporting and Information System (DORIS); extracted 16.01.2016

3.4.2 Children and Youth at Risk (PA11)

Specific objective

- Improved well-being of children and young people at risk (PA11)

Children and youth face major challenges related to quality education, proper health and social care and should be protected from child labour, abuse, diseases, violence and harmful practices. They may also face marginalisation and exclusion. PA11 hence seeks to support measures in the field of children's and youth rights (especially in the justice system), improve child welfare systems, protect vulnerable groups of children, and improve health and social care services.

The EEA Grants have co-financed dedicated programmes in 4 countries (BG, CZ, EE, LT) and activities within wider programmes in 2 beneficiary states (CY, RO). These programme supported 152 projects with an eligible expenditure of €57.6m, an average of approximately €280,000 per project.

In terms of **project effects**, it is clear that activities contributed to improve well-being of children and young people at risk, contributing to develop child welfare and ensure equal access of children and young people to health and social care. Most of the activities aimed to have long-term effects and raise the standards of intervention at national level. Good examples in this respect are the Day Care Centre for Children and Youth with multiple disabilities built in Cyprus (see the paragraph on Cyprus below) and the provision of new social services aimed at supporting the gaps in child-care centres and youth centres in Latvia. However, given the multiple dimension of the issues addressed the projects need to be included within a wider national strategy. In that sense, there is a clear relationship between the ability of the projects to have a multiple and long-term effect and the ability to create links with other national and international programmes. A lack of co-ordination might reduce project-level effects considerably.

In terms of **programme-level** effects, we can see some differences between the case study countries.

In **Cyprus**, the programme is expected to achieve its intended outputs and the impact is expected to be mainly visible at sector level. A new Day Care Centre for Children and Youth with multiple disabilities which is being built, which will focus on deinstitutionalisation, i.e. the transition from institutional to community-based care. The construction of the Day Care Centre will be completed in line with the extended deadlines approved by the donor countries, as will the soft measures implemented to improve the standards of care. These activities have the potential to contribute to combating social exclusion for vulnerable groups and re-integrate them into the communities.

In the **Czech Republic**, the purpose of the programme (CZ04) was to review and update the legislation of the care system for children and youth and also to improve the quality and de-institutionalisation of the current Czech system of care for children and youth at risk. The pre-defined project focused on the development of a unifying law on family support and to foster care and protection of children's rights. Although initially supported, political pressures led to the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs officially withdrawing from it. The programme is likely to achieve only limited effects as a result of the failure in the development and implementation of the new legislation. More positively, two projects focusing on transformation plans to foster facilities at regional level have achieved their intended effects. These two projects are serving the process of "de-institutionalisation" by helping the transition towards community based services and alternative care forms for vulnerable children and youth. The projects supported by the one open call under the small grant scheme are also expected to achieve their intended effects.

In **Estonia**, the programme is intended to contribute to the implementation of a new national policy. The programme is expected to have a substantial impact on the quality of the child welfare system at national level. All the programme activities are likely to achieve their results, i.e. contributing to the

development of a child care system based on “prevention” rather than a system where the intervention is implemented only once a problem occurred. More than 43% of the funding has been allocated to a pre-defined project, as described below.

Case study: Developing relevant judicial and organisational framework and support system for implementing measures for children and families (EE04-0001)

- PA11 Children and youth at risk
- Project promoter: Civitas per Populi
- Donor project partner: Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs
- EEA Grants funding: €2.6m (73%)

The project responds to the weakness of cooperation and coordination (in the field of children and families) at state level and between different sectors (social, education, justice, health). Children, young people and families often have multiple problems which require systematic treatment and services on a cross-sector basis (e.g., a child’s problem is detected within the education sector but requires a medical intervention). There are weaknesses in the communication and coordination between stakeholders responsible for ensuring the wellbeing of children and youth. Essential sharing of information often takes place too late between relevant specialists (e.g. social workers, teachers, medical employees, police officers). The situation is further complicated by the fragmentation of services offered by different authorities and the limited co-ordination of services. Situations arise where systems belonging under different ministries are not consistent with each other, either duplicating or contradicting each other. Therefore, there has been a clear need for harmonised principles and system on state level for cooperation between relevant specialists of different sectors in order to better address children and youth at risk.

The main objective of the project is to develop the relevant judicial and organisational framework and cross-sector support system for implementing measures for children and families in order to alleviate the risks affecting children and youth and to improve their wellbeing. The project promotes cross-sectoral co-operation and preventive work, as well as the implementation of evidence-based interventions. The need for a well-established vertical structure comes from the understanding that it allows to implement evidence-based interventions in the best way and helps to ensure their sustainability.

The project introduces systems and policies to better assess and reduce risks to the welfare of children and youth. At the local level, the project assesses the efficiency and readiness of local authorities to support children and youth at risk and ensure their safety. It is also planned to establish regional support units to coordinate cross-sectoral cooperation and empower local authorities as the main service providers for children and families, in evidence-based policy planning. On the practical side, evidence-based interventions for youth with behavioural problems and for supporting positive parenting will be implemented.

The project is carried out by the Ministry of Social Affairs as the project promoter and its partners: Ministry of Justice, National Institute for Health Development (partner in adapting, developing and implementing evidence based interventions) and the Estonian Social Insurance Board (partner in piloting and implementing the functions of regional support units). Other relevant institutions are also involved: Ministry of Education and Research (stakeholder in the field of children and youth at risk), Ministry of Interior (stakeholder in prevention of risk behaviour of children and youth).

Activities include:

- Preparing the concept paper of regional cross-sectoral support system and support units
- Assessing the capacity of the municipalities for supporting children and youth at risk
- Evaluating the psychiatric, health, educational and criminogenic needs of children and youth in various institutions
- Analyses to identify which evidence-based interventions would best meet Estonian needs in supporting positive parenting and in reducing behavioural problems of youth
- Adapting and implementing an evidence-based positive parenting intervention
- Adapting and implementing an evidence-based intervention for youth with behavioural problems and delinquency
- Establishing regional support units

Some difficulties were related to procurements as one of the contracts had to be terminated (due to the inability of the contractor to meet the expected conditions). In addition, communication with the owner of the parenting programme in the USA was quite challenging; it was difficult to explain to them why they are obliged to take part in the procurement procedure (with negotiations) although they are the sole owner of the programme. Therefore, when an additional sub-part of the programme was decided to acquire, it was not possible as the programme owner refused to go through the procurement procedure once again.

Several activities and problematic issues brought out by the concept paper of regional cross-sectorial support system and support units have already been included in the application plans of relevant ministries or will be addressed on the state level. The implementation of the evidence-based intervention (parenting programme) is already included also in the state budget of 2016. The extent of the resources allocated for the intervention does not completely cover the actual need, but the proposal to include both interventions (parenting programme and MDFT) in the state budget of 2017 has already been submitted.

The activities (e.g. counselling) aimed at local governments are now partially included in the new Child Protection Act meaning that the Estonian Social Insurance Board is obligated to council local governments on issues related to children and family welfare.

The sustainability of the parenting programme is strengthened by the fact that several local governments who have already participated in the programme have trained their own interested officials so that in the future they would be able to implement the programmes themselves in their region.

In **Lithuania**, the programme (LT05) improves the provision of services for vulnerable or disadvantaged children and youth, particularly those that have been victims of sexual abuse and/or exploitation. It is providing a mix of physical investments in day-care centres, youth centres and centres for victims of abuse, as well as investments in training for professionals and investments in new or better services (e.g. family empowerment service, rehabilitation services for victims of abuse. Some initial delays were experienced in several projects, in part because of difficulties in procurement. Despite this, the PO reports good progress expected all projects to be complete and all targets to be achieved by the end of 2016 (except for one project which was extended to April 2017). Some of the targets at project level have already been achieved, including new day-care centres for children and new youth centres, as well as a centre for child victims of sexual abuse. Other important project effects include better integrated services for children and their family members and the development of family empowerment services. In addition, the programme already achieved the number of specialists to be trained.

In **Romania**, 69 projects have received about €20m from the EEA Grants. Most of the projects are targeted on Roma children or young people and their parents. Some calls have required projects to include community participation. The majority of the projects focus on soft measures, ranging from the provision of specific services to the implementation of education and training activities, including for staff working in this field. At local level, activities included development of local plans, methodologies and measures which aimed at providing the basis for the development of public policy initiatives on social inclusion and anti-discrimination at local level. The main focus has not been on the formal educational system, in order to avoid overlapping or double-funding with the activities of the Sectoral Operational Programme Human Resources Development 2007-2013. Therefore, the programme is mainly focused on complementary actions and non-formal models of education, including school, after school and remedial activities, second chance courses, etc. Some of the projects are medium-sized and target a larger area, thus serving more localities within the county or region. The PO reported that projects were making good progress and were expected to complete their activities.

3.4.3 Local and Regional Initiatives to Reduce National Inequalities and to Promote Social Inclusion (PA12)

Specific objective

- Reduce economic and social disparities and promote social inclusion (PA12)

Presently, ethnic minorities and immigrants are disadvantaged and vulnerable to exclusion in most of the EU's Member States, as expressed in lower employment rates, lower incomes, higher school drop-out rates, homelessness, financial exclusion and criminal propensity. Programmes funded under this PA hence support measures promoting regional co-operation to improve accessibility to public and welfare services, employment, and promote inclusion of vulnerable groups.

Under this PA, the EEA Grants have co-financed dedicated programmes in five countries (CZ, EL, HR, PL, SK) and activities within wider programmes in 1 beneficiary state (RO). Overall, the funds have supported 81 projects with an eligible expenditure of €45.3m.¹⁹ Within this programme area, most of the projects have been carried out in Romania (33) and Poland (17).

In **Romania**, the projects mainly implemented measures to strengthen anti-discriminatory measures for vulnerable groups, including measures to improve access for children to formal and non-formal education by establishing day care centres, training staff on specific skills and support services for parents and tutors of children and young people. In contrast, activities in **Poland** focused on enhancing co-operation between private and public services to stimulate social and economic development at local level. Also in this case one pre-defined project was implemented to support capacity-building and training activities among local authorities to support inter-municipal and inter-sectoral co-operation. **Slovakia** features 19 projects, including one pre-defined project to increase the intercultural competences primary school teachers with regard to Roma pupils. The three other countries (CZ, EL, HR) have each supported one or two pre-defined projects.

In terms of **project effects**, activities will strengthen anti-discriminatory measures and increase the effectiveness of co-operation between local authorities and civil society in order to strengthen social and economic cohesion. In addition, the implementation of part of the activities, focused on the development of strategies and policies at local and national level, will endure for years beyond the life of the projects. However, the global financial crisis and the consequent reduction in public spending has also resulted in funds being used to address immediate material needs experienced at local level, such as the municipal solidarity system developed in Greece. In that respect a trade-off between immediate needs and the need to achieve long-term objectives has been experienced in certain countries.

Programme-level effects can be differentiated as follows:

In **Croatia**, the programme was implemented through two pre-defined projects. As a result, the overall impact is likely to be different for each project. The first pre-defined project is going to have a clear impact in terms of economic development at local level by improving the quality of higher education and increasing the offer of university programmes in the County of Šibenik–Knin. The project is also likely to increase the potential of the area to create new jobs in the long term. The second pre-defined project was implemented in an area where children of different backgrounds are exposed to unsolved issues related to the war as well as to historical heritage. The project contributes to enhance social cohesion of the local community through a range of activities, including the establishment of an integrated school.

¹⁹ This is the sum of PA11 and PA40. PA11 accounts for 75 projects and a total eligible expenditure of €26.7m; while PA40 accounts for 6 projects and a total eligible expenditure of €18.6m

In the **Czech Republic**, the programme is implementing a national campaign to tackle extremism and racism among young people. It features one large pre-defined project involving a range of soft measures including a nationwide media campaign, regional and educational activities in schools and police places and transfer of successful social inclusion measures. The programme is likely to achieve its intended results and enhance social cohesion at national level.

In **Greece**, two pre-defined projects are implementing a range of measures to provide immediate relief for marginalised and deprived social groups in Athens. The activities included the development of a solidarity hub in Athens which provides free health care, legal aid, and assistance, expansion of a network of solidarity hubs, and provision of shelter and basic healthcare to vulnerable people. The programme has been implemented through two pre-defined projects which achieved the overall goal of creating a single entry point for beneficiaries. Since it is operating in a field where funds and assistance are currently needed it is going to have an extensive impact on society, especially on the target populations.

In **Poland**, the programme was based on the need to enhance co-operation between local and regional authorities in relation to big investment projects (usually financed through EU funds) and other urban activities in the areas around big cities. In particular, the programme was implemented in the context of the National Urban Policy and the National Spatial Development Concept 2030 which are going to be implemented through partnerships and co-operation at national, regional and local level. In this respect the programme is likely to contribute substantially to the co-operation between urban and rural areas to identify common assets and develop joint strategies. In addition, the programme will contribute to enhance territorial cohesion.

In **Romania**, the programme was designed in line with national legislation and policies, especially with regard to the Roma minority and contributes to the improvement of the situation of the children and youth at risk at the country level. The 34 projects mainly implement measures to strengthen anti-discriminatory measures for vulnerable groups by developing tools to address the needs of disadvantaged groups and by facilitating the transfer of knowledge, experience and best practice between decision-makers and practitioners from public and non-for-profit entities acting in the field. The one pre-defined project defines a new policy framework for anti-discrimination and develops the National Anti-Discrimination Strategy 2014-2020. At local level, the projects' activities include the development of local plans, methodologies, tools and measures providing the basis for the development of public policy initiatives on social inclusion and anti-discrimination, including piloting some of the measures and tools. Overall, the programme is expected to achieve and in some cases exceed its targets, hence the impact at sector level is likely to be significant. The most successful under this programme are those implemented by NGOs (18 of the 33 projects) with relevant experience in this programme area and in the implementation of projects: as a result, the programme is likely to contribute to strengthening the co-operation between local authorities and the civil society.

In **Slovakia**, the pre-defined project will increase the intercultural competences of primary school teachers with regard to Roma pupils. The other 18 projects were selected via an open call for small grants ranging from €5k to €40k to support Roma inclusion and inter-cultural projects by primary and secondary schools. However, the overall impact of the programme will be limited by the fact that another pre-defined project related to the use of the Romani language in education was cancelled.

3.4.4 Public Health Initiatives (PA13, PA27)

Specific objective

- Improve public health performance and reduce health inequalities between user groups

Gaps in healthcare provision in Europe are significant. The economic crisis and ensuing cuts in public health expenditure have compounded inequalities. A rise in lifestyle-related diseases and ageing populations present particular healthcare challenges. More than half the population in Europe is overweight, one in ten EU citizens suffers from mental health disorders, and the maximum gap in life expectancy at birth between EU countries was 11.8 years for males and 7.5 years for females in 2013. PA13 and PA27 contribute to fostering dynamic health systems and reducing health inequalities by enabling the beneficiary countries to develop national strategies for effective disease prevention, strengthen public health monitoring, improve access to healthcare for vulnerable groups such as Roma and improve health surveillance and information systems.

The EEA and Norway Grants have funded programmes in pursuit of these objectives in ten countries across two programme areas (PAs):

- **Public Health (PA13):** the EEA Grants have co-financed dedicated programmes in 3 countries (BG, PL, PT); benefitting 57 projects. These programmes have provided grants of €31m to 57 projects, an average of €546,000 per project. All but four projects were selected via open calls.
- **Public Health (PA27):** the Norway Grants have co-financed 226 projects in 9 countries (BG, CY, CZ, EE, HU, LT, PL, RO, SI). Bulgaria and Poland are the only countries receiving funding under both PA13 and PA27. The programmes funded under PA27 have provided grants of €145.6m, an average of €644,000 per project. All but 24 of the projects were selected via open calls.

Projects within these programmes have implemented the following broad types of activity – the figures provided are not mutually exclusive but rather there may be overlaps between categories (e.g. the same project may be classified as containing a capacity-building element and infrastructure-related):

Improving access to healthcare (services): is promoted in general and in particular for vulnerable groups, including Roma, children, young people, and the elderly. Nine projects were identified as targeting Roma (in Bulgaria, Romania and Slovenia). One hundred projects in 8 countries explicitly target children, whereas 71 projects in 9 countries target young adults, and 36 projects in 4 countries benefit the elderly. Roma projects in Romania focused on those regions with a particularly high Roma population and used Roma “mediators” to engage with the Roma population to facilitate communication. The Roma-related projects in Bulgaria all focused on reproductive health, whereas the Slovenian project relates to integration of Roma people into the healthcare system more generally. Measures were undertaken to secure future financing at an early stage.

Promoting sustainability and equality of health financing systems: 11 projects supported health policy and administrative management in 7 countries with a funding of €11.4m. These projects often took a holistic approach to improving health care services, e.g. in Estonia where a concept for integrated services to improve children’s mental health was developed, or in Lithuania where capacities were built up to identify and reduce health inequalities. In Poland and Slovenia, too, a project focused on reducing social inequalities in health. Other examples of sustainable projects are a network of Estonian mental health centres which in the future will be financed by the national insurance fund, and in Lithuania and Romania where successful projects have been used to persuade political decision-makers to ensure future funding.

Developing capacity training and technical competence activities through staff development and infrastructure: a capacity-building element has been identified in 60 projects in 8 countries, accounting for €37.6m overall. Infrastructure-related projects amount to 113 in 9 countries, accounting for €99.5m. Such investments often helped set up new healthcare centres.

Improving health surveillance and information systems such as national health registries; research was funded under 32 projects in 6 countries, whereas information and awareness-raising played a role in case of 138 projects in 9 countries with a total value of €61m. Health data systems were funded specifically in 10 projects in 6 countries – these projects received a total of €8m in funding. For instance, in Bulgaria, a national register of rare diseases was established to provide accurate epidemiological and bio-statistical data. In Portugal, first ever national health survey was conducted, supporting evidence-based policies and allowing for more targeted future interventions.

Supporting co-operation between social and healthcare services: social infrastructure and services were the explicit focus of one project in Slovenia worth €565,000 funding a Centre for Health and Development. Generally, this element did not feature prominently in the projects reviewed.

Implementing strategies and awareness-raising campaigns for healthy lifestyles, and on mental health suffering, communicable diseases and ill-health among children: information and awareness-raising played a role in case of 138 projects in 9 countries. The total value of these projects was €61m. Awareness-raising measures can target the public, e.g. when it comes to the promotion of healthy lifestyles, but also healthcare professionals when it comes to the use of new diagnostics methods, for example.

Within these PAs, **bilateral co-operation** has featured in 66 out of 283 projects in 8 countries. In Cyprus and Hungary, no projects had a donor project partner. The relatively low number of projects with a bilateral dimension may be explained by there not being many potential dpps in the donor countries. For instance, the Norwegian Institute of Public Health may have been the most suitable dpp on many occasions, but was not allowed to enter such a relationship due to already being the donor programme partner. Overall, there were 45 dpps involved in 66 projects (some being involved in more than one project), including from academia and the NGO sector.

The Institute sought to promote its understanding of public health which puts the emphasis on policies, soft measures and disease prevention, whereas the understanding in many beneficiary countries was that public health should focus on providing services, treatment, and rehabilitation. The bilateral co-operation brought about a paradigm shift in several countries (e.g. in the Czech Republic) and led them to adopt a more holistic approach to public health issues.

In terms of the **project effects**, it should be noted that only 9 projects finished by end of 2015, meaning that actual effects may not yet have materialised. At the same time, many indicators such as regarding the number of people trained can easily be verified. In many instances, indicators have already been achieved, and sometimes even exceeded.

In terms of **programme-level effects**, we can see some differences between the case study countries.

Cyprus has implemented 2 predefined public health projects with funding of €1.2m from the Norway Grants. One of these projects has set up a bone marrow donor registry which also helped close the communication gap between the Turkish and Greek communities on the island. The other project has established a translational facility at the Cyprus Institute of Neurology and Genetics. The bone marrow facility project can be regarded as a good practice example of how to present results since it received wide media coverage.

While initially allocated a total grant amount of €19m, by the end of 2015, the **Czech Republic** had funded 91 projects worth just over €15m, an average of only €167,620 per project much lower than the average across all participating countries (€600,000). The projects tackled three priority areas:

mental health services, injuries affecting children and young people, and diagnosis of rare diseases. A transfer to community-based psychiatric care reflects changes in attitude resulting at least in part from bilateral co-operation with the Norwegian Institute of Public Health, the donor programme partner. However, the donors have reported frustration that “modernisation” of psychiatric care has sometimes been interpreted as the refurbishment of buildings and not as deinstitutionalisation. Sustainability of project effects is ensured by incorporating these areas in the new programming period for the EU Structural Funds. Despite delays in the implementation of the programme, the PO expected indicators to be achieved or even exceeded, especially in the area of psychiatric care.

Estonia funded 15 projects with a relatively high average of €686,000 per project, a total of €9.6m. The programme focus is on mental health-related problems, reproductive health and HIV and Tuberculosis, as well as service provision for children and young people. Besides establishing a new mental health centre in the capital, the programme funded development of an integrated system of prevention and early detection services, as well as several information and awareness campaigns and online platforms. Since mental health has been underfunded and did not receive any support from EU funds to date, there is a clear added value in prioritising this under the Norway Grants. The DPP was very satisfied with the co-operation and implementation of the programme. All targets except for one (related to web-based counselling of boys due to low take-up) have already been achieved. Some targets may be exceeded by a factor of 5 or 6.

In **Lithuania**, 24 projects received total funding of €6.1m, a relatively low average of 254,000 per project. The programme addresses child and youth health care through the development of a national child health monitoring information system, and development and implementation of a model for the provision of youth-friendly health care services, as well as by upgrading the health infrastructure in schools and pre-school institutions and aims to strengthen administrative capacities to reduce health inequalities. Besides 2 predefined projects, the programme identified suitable projects through calls for proposals. Bilateral co-operation with Norwegian organisations were improved despite there not being a formal DPP on the programme. The set of target outcome indicators within the programme LT11 are likely to be achieved at the end of the projects’ implementation.

Poland received funding in the order of €76.5m – out of a total of €168.74 available to all participating countries under PA13 and PA27 combined. This was allocated to 66 projects, an average of €1.2m per project, considerable higher than the average across all participating countries. Poland’s public health initiatives were divided between two programmes: PL07 focusing on development and better adaptation of healthcare to demographic and epidemiological trends (total grant amount: €58m), and PL13 focusing on reducing social inequalities in health (total grant amount: €18m). While the former seeks to tackle challenges related to an ageing population, cancer and perinatal care, the latter seeks to address causes of health inequality such as unequal income distribution, living conditions, healthcare services, as well as differences in nutrition, alcohol and substance abuse. Sustainability should be achieved by using the most successful projects to persuade political decision makers to ensure funding in the future. The project allocation has also been coordinated with the EU Structural Funds to make sure there was no overlap.

Portugal received €10m in funding distributed across 27 projects – an average of €386,000 per project. Only one project dealing with the improvement of epidemiological health information was predefined. The programme overall focused on the effects of poverty on health inequality by focusing on mental health, infectious diseases, health information systems, nutrition and improve the availability of health information. As for other programmes in Portugal, delays in agreeing the MoU meant that there was late to the implementation. Since the programme’s objectives are aligned with the National Health Plan, it is expected that similar initiatives will continue in the future.

In **Romania**, 8 pre-defined projects received €25.4m, of which €22.6m from the Norway Grants and €3.8m in co-financing at programme level, an average of €3.2m. The reason for the high amount per project is that these were mostly rolled out at national level. The priorities were identified taking into account the health status of the Romanian population based on the European Core Health Indicators (ECHI) and include rare and communicable diseases, non-communicable diseases, pregnancy, and cardiovascular diseases. The programme sought to strengthen primary / community and ambulatory care and avoid over-utilisation of specialised care.

3.4.5 Mainstreaming Gender Equality and Work-Life Balance (PA14, PA28)

Specific objective

- Promote gender equality and work-life balance

EU Member States still face considerable challenges regarding equal access to employment, reconciliation of work and family life, gender pay gap, participation in decision-making and multiple forms of discrimination against ethnic minorities. PA14 and PA28 support activities ensuring gender mainstreaming, and tackling these challenges.

The EEA and Norway Grants have funded programmes in pursuit of these objectives in six countries across two programme areas (PAs):

- Gender Equality and Work-Life Balance** (PA14/28): the EEA and Norway Grants have co-financed 147 projects in 6 countries (CZ, EE, ES, PT, RO, SI). The programmes funded under the two Pas have provided grants of €21.4m, an average of €145,000 per project. All but 12 of the projects were selected via open calls.

The total amount spent on both PAs as of end of 2015 was €21.4m, an average of €145,000 across 147 projects. Eighteen projects in three countries (Czech Republic, Romania, Spain) targeted Roma people.

Projects within these programmes have implemented the following broad types of activity:

Gender mainstreaming in policymaking and development of national strategies (PA14/28). These activities relate to mainstreaming gender in policy design and implementation, at various levels of government, as well as devising national strategies accordingly. Fifty-nine projects worth €10m specifically involve government and civil society. Projects in the Czech Republic focused on researching the potential effects on women of gender mainstreaming and enforcing it at various levels and regions. In Estonia, the focus of one project was one gender mainstreaming in higher education. In Portugal, gender mainstreaming projects addressed deficiencies both at national and local levels.

Awareness-raising (PA14/28) through data collection, educational programmes and campaigns targeting both women and men on issues of gender equality and anti-discrimination. One hundred nine projects in 5 countries include awareness-raising activities, worth €14m. Five projects in the Czech Republic worth €439,000 specifically cover multicultural awareness. In Portugal, the lack of data affects the public debate on gender equality (see box below). Some awareness-raising projects in the Czech Republic and Romania target the Roma population in particular.

Co-operation in law enforcement and support services (PA14/28) with a particular focus on gender-based violence and trafficking. In 40 projects in 5 countries, the provision of services played a role. These projects amount to €6.6m. In Spain, a range of projects specifically aimed to improve the treatment of victims of gender-based violence. In other countries, no such projects were identified under these PAs.

Between the two programme areas, only 42 out of a total of 147 projects involved a donor project partner. All participating countries except for Romania have at least one project involving bilateral co-operation.

In terms of the **project effects**, it should be noted that 86 projects had a project completion date of end of 2015, whereas the remaining projects will finish in 2016 or 2017, meaning that the actual effects may not yet have materialised. Generally, impacts can be expected particularly in the area of human rights and equal opportunities. At the same time, awareness-raising, educational activities and policy developments may not trigger the most tangible effects. There are however some projects supporting women's shelters or crisis centres (in Estonia), which are more tangible. In case of some projects (e.g. in the Czech Republic), not all indicators have yet been met, but project extensions should ensure that this will be the case once projects conclude.

With regard to **bilateral relations**, the donor programme partners included the Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth & Family Affairs, shelter movements, and the Council of Europe which has passed a number of conventions on women's rights and addressing violence against women. The involvement of the Council of Europe was at times questioned by beneficiaries (e.g. in Poland). Moreover, negotiations at times took a while due to different opinions on programme focus, with the donors emphasising soft measures and the beneficiaries emphasising hard measures.

In terms of programme-level effects, we can see some differences between the case study countries.

In the **Czech Republic**, support for mainstreaming gender equality and promoting work-life balance (PA28) is part of a programme (CZ12) which also addresses domestic and gender-based violence (PA29). The programme is managed by the Open Society Fund Prague and has awarded grants of €2.4m to 28 projects relating to mainstreaming gender equality and work-life balance. Projects should help to extend flexible working hours and other forms of flexible working hours for parents of preschool children, ensure the availability of care services for children aged 0-6 years and raise awareness of gender issues and the auditing of public policies from the perspective of gender equality. Some projects were reported to be hindered by strict rules on contracting, public aid and procurement, which affected their implementation. The most successful projects should be the ones receiving the largest budgets. The programme was a success overall, but due to a high number of projects, the support is thinly spread.

Estonia funded 17 projects with an average of €118,000 per project, a total of €2m. The programme focuses on awareness raising and promotion of gender research, as well as reconciling work, private and family life and strengthening relevant NGOs. The Norway Grants added value in this regard in Estonia due to the longevity of funding relative to any other public funding for gender equality available in the country. By setting systems in place, the programme should build the foundation for future activities in the area. Most projects will be completed in the first half of 2016, with most objectives being achieved. Impact will depend on take-up of material and systems developed by society. Some of the indicators set were quite general, meaning that they could be influenced by factors outside the programme.

Portugal received €2.5m in funding distributed across 12 projects – an average of €206,000 per project. The programme's focus lies on with a focus on work-life balance, sexual and moral harassment in the workplace, and women's participation in decision making bodies. Three pre-defined projects deal with deal with a national survey on the use of time by men and women, research into men's role from a gender perspective, and sexual harassment at the workplace. Open projects promote gender equality for companies and at the local level. The initial targets set for projects have been met and exceeded, whilst some results are more intangible, with projects forming the basis for more solid policy measures in the future.

Case study: Moral and sexual harassment in the workplace (PT07-0001)

- PA14 Mainstreaming Gender Equality and Work-life Balance
- Project promoter: Commission for Equality in Labour and Employment (CITE)
- Donor project partner: Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities (KS)
- EEA Grants funding: €400k (100%)

In Portugal, the lack of data collection activities on moral and sexual harassment is resulting in a lack of awareness about issues encountered by women in the workplace. The only survey held in Portugal at national level was carried out in 1989. As a result, public policies in this area have been driven by EU-wide studies which are unable to fully represent the situation Portuguese. This well-known issue is related to several factors, including problems in the different definitions of harassment at European level, as well as the limited scope of the surveys carried out in EU studies (mostly large companies are consulted that represent a tiny proportion of Portuguese companies).

The main activity of this project has been to update the first and only national survey about sexual harassment in the labour market in Portugal that was undertaken in 1989. The lack credible information in this area was considered a major constraint for the definition of public policies in Portugal. More specifically, the activity includes:

- Updated diagnosis and characterization of the Portuguese situation concerning moral and sexual harassment in the labour market;
- Raising awareness of victims or potential victims and relevant stakeholders such as labour inspectors, public prosecutors, judges, employers and workers' representatives;
- Training for those stakeholders
- Exchange of experience and mutual learning between Portugal and Norway; and
- Development of recommendations for public policy.

Romania received €3.8m in funding, an average of €275,000 for each of the 14 open call projects. The programme design takes into account the national equal opportunities strategy, with the main goal to increase labour participation of women by improving access to early education for children and assisting vulnerable groups, including Roma. Fourteen educational centres and day care centres were supported, 420 new places were supposed to be created in pre-school education, and 14 workshops held to raise awareness of work-life balance issues. Overall, the projects are well on track although the number of Roma children benefiting may fall short of targets. However, the overall number of people benefitting is low compared to the problems faced in society and projects mostly have value in demonstrating positive effects for the future. The involvement of civil society organisations in implementation of the programme RO20 could have been better.

3.4.6 Main results

Within this priority sector, all the POs that responded to the survey expected their programmes to achieve their intended effects. In Bulgaria (BG06), Greece (GR08) and Portugal (PT07), all the interviewees expected the effects to be achieved as planned. In Bulgaria (BG11), Estonia (EE04, EE09), Lithuania (LT11), Latvia (LT07) Spain (ES04), Poland (PL06 and PL07) and Romania (RO10, RO18, RO24), the POs expected to achieve the intended results thanks to minor changes to the programmes. The modifications were usually related to the extension of the programme. For example, in Latvia three out of four project promoters asked for a project extension. At the same time, some requests for modification included additional activities, e.g. EE08. In Slovakia (SK04) and Greece (GR06), the POs reported the need to make substantial modifications to the programme to achieve their intended effects. Finally, in the Czech Republic (CZ04) and Lithuania (LT05), the POs expected to achieve programme effects despite difficulties in the implementation of the programme.

Almost three out of four project promoters responding to the survey report that activities are likely to be achieved as planned or as a result of minor changes in the project. In addition, a high number of project promoters reported the implementation of substantial changes to achieve project level results: usually changes allowed to fine-tune activities and results and to align them with challenges encountered by external factors such as issues encountered in public procurement or lack of clarity of the financing system. The Grants seem to have played a pivotal role in the ability of the project promoters to implement the projects: a large number of respondents (60) report that without the Grants, none of the activities implemented would have been carried out. In addition, 50 respondents report that the Grants enhanced/increased the level of activities carried out during the project. The only exception was in the Czech Republic where two project promoters, in the field of gender equality and public health respectively, reported that the activities would have been carried out anyway without the support of the Grants.

Table 3.10 below lists the most important results that are systematically recorded by the POs and collated across the EEA/Norway Grants. These reinforce the view of the POs that the programmes should achieve most of the intended results.

- **Users benefitting from improved health, youth and children's services;** in respect of health services, the target has been greatly exceeded, largely due to the very large numbers benefiting in Poland and Romania and with the target already exceeded in the Czech Republic, although no achievement was yet recorded in Bulgaria against its target of 73,000. In respect of youth and children's services, achievement is about 50% of the target, with good performance in Bulgaria and Estonia and some progress in Lithuania. Achieving the target for youth and children's services will depend on further progress in Lithuania (where only 550 children and youth have directly benefitted from services, against a target of 9,240). However, the planned activity will not take place in Hungary, where the target had been for 1,700 children and youth to benefit.
- **Staff trained;** three of the four targets have been exceeded, due to good performance in Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Lithuania and Slovenia. Achieving the target for "trained staff with improved skills" (currently at 50%) will depend on progress being made in Hungary, where no results were yet recorded.
- **New services;** some progress has been made but achievement is only around one-quarter of the targets for new childcare services and new services for vulnerable children and young people. Achieving the target for childcare services will depend on progress in Romania, whilst the target for services for children and young people will particularly depend on further progress in Bulgaria, Estonia, Lithuania and Romania, where no results were yet recorded. Impact against this target will be limited by the fact that none of the proposed 40 new services or measures that were originally planned for Hungary will be implemented.
- **Development of strategies and policy tools;** there is good progress for strategies or laws related to domestic and gender-based violence, gender policies mainstreamed and gender equality organisations supported. Achievement of the target for policies on work-life balance depends on further progress in the Czech Republic and Spain.
- **Better governance in Croatia;** there has so far been no achievement of results related to strengthening of organisations and provision of human rights support. Since Croatia's programme for "Strengthened social and economic cohesion at national, regional and local levels" (HR03) was only approved in April 2014, most results will be achieved only towards the end of 2016 or in 2017.

Table 3.10 Aggregated results: Human and Social Development

Indicator	Baseline	Achievement	Target
Number of beneficiaries of human rights support provided by NGOs	0	0	50
Number of childcare services and facilities provided	0	7	24
Number of children and youth directly benefitting from services	7,984	5,589	11,932
Number of gender equality organisations supported	0	24	35
Number of interventions to reduce inequalities in health through increased access	0	47	87
Number of national strategies or laws developed on domestic/gender based violence	0	34	25
Number of organisations able to evidence good governance and management procedures	0	0	0
Number of organisations demonstrating to have robust financial procedures in place and diversify their funding sources	0	0	0
Number of organisations regularly consulting with users, beneficiaries and other stakeholders	0	0	0
Number of persons benefitting from improved health services	139,554	668,478	395,435
Number of policies and practices that are gender mainstreamed	3	18	25
Number of policies implemented aimed at promoting work/life balance	10	5	35
Number of services and measures for vulnerable groups of children and young people	194	73	376
Number of trained persons in support of children and youth	212	4,256	1,277
Number of trained professionals and students in the health sector	0	5,073	4,879
Number of trained staff	0	1,328	650
Number of trained staff with improved skills	0	331	1,650

Source: FMO Documentation, Reporting and Information System (DORIS); extracted 26.05.2016

Table 3.11 highlights achievement against target for selected results within particular programmes:

- Some programmes show no achievement against these selected results targets: MT04, LT10, LV07;
- **Slovakia's** programme for cross-border co-operation (SK08) shows some progress in terms of people/visitors attending events and awareness-raising activities but has not yet achieved results related to establishing cooperative structures functioning cross-border measures; and
- The two programmes related to management of migration and asylum in **Greece** (GR05, GR06) have exceeded the target for accommodating, informing and screening 3rd country nationals and some progress in accommodating vulnerable groups and in taking decisions on international protection claims. The programme data records no third-country nationals returned to their country of origin.²⁰

²⁰ We understand that the FMO is undertaking in-depth research into the performance of these two programmes, given the severity and urgency of the migration situation.

Table 3.11 Selected results: Human and Social Development

Indicator	Programme Identifier	Baseline	Achievement	Target
Attitudes towards gender roles (survey)	CZ12	0	9	10
	PT07	0	1	1
Attitudes towards gender roles changed	SI05	0	39	60
Change in attitudes towards gender roles (survey)	EE09	59	64	70
Increased satisfaction of customer/recipient/counterparty of targeted institutions (%)	LV07	0	0	10
Number of clients/customers served by the institutions benefitting from the programme	SK08	0	0	5,000
Number of decisions on international protection claims taken at first instance	GR06	0	13,446	48,000
Number of Norwegian partners (institutions) involved in the projects	SK08	0	1	6
Number of people attending the events or activities organized by project promoters	SK08	0	308	912
Number of sustainable cooperative structures established	SK08	0	0	50
Number of tested and successfully functioning measures taken on board and adapted from Norwegian-Russian CBC	SK08	0	0	6
Number of third country nationals accommodated in, informed and screened in FRC	GR06	0	7,874	3,737
Number of third-country nationals returned to their country of origin as part of an EEA-supported AVR-programme	GR05	0	0	700
Number of visitors attending the awareness raising activities /events organized by the project promoters	SK08	0	22	500
Number of vulnerable groups with particular emphasis to Ums who are accommodated pending their return or other long-term solution.	GR06	0	188	500
Satisfaction with co-operation, quality of co-operation, perceived synergies (survey)	MT04	0	0	75
Survey indicator (Satisfaction with co-operation, quality of co-operation, perceived synergies)	LT10	0	0	75
Users' satisfaction with local governments services increased (%)	LV07	0	0	10

Source: FMO Documentation, Reporting and Information System (DORIS); extracted 26.05.2016

3.4.7 Summary of case study countries

- **Cyprus** supports 3 projects in this priority sector funding a day care centre for children and youth with disabilities, and two public health initiatives. The combined value of these ongoing predefined projects is €1.5m and these are being implemented without donor project partners. The children and youth at risk project was making good progress with all training outputs achieved by the end of 2015 and the physical investments in the day-care centre expected to be completed by the end of the period. The two public health projects had made good progress having achieved all targets by the end of 2015 except for one ("List of newly discovered biomarkers/ genes"). The target for new donor recruitment had been massively exceeded.
- The **Czech Republic** has 136 projects in this sector, out of which 91 concern public health initiative, 28 gender equality activities and 15 children and youth at risk. The total value of project grants is €23m. Eight of the projects should have come to an end in 2015 with the other expected to be

completed until 2017 the latest. Within children and youth at risk (CZ04) only one of the 14 projects started before 2015 and there was limited achievement against targets by the end of 2015, except relating to the exchange of experience and good practice. Crucially, the key project - to develop new legislation and national policies – has been discontinued, meaning that the programme's impact will be limited. The one project within the programme for initiatives to reduce inequalities and promote social inclusion (CZ05) had proved problematic and faced delays, e.g. due to procurement and few targets had been met by end 2015. Few of the public health projects started before 2015, although there was good progress against several targets by the end of 2015, with some achieved, and the programme was likely to achieve all or most targets by the end of the period. The gender equality programme (CZ12) has made good progress with many of the output targets already exceeded, although some programme-level indicators might not be achieved as they do not reflect the actual content of selected projects.

- **Estonia** has 54 projects in this priority area – a large number given the small size of the country. Out of these, 23 focus on children and youth at risk, while 17 support gender equality mainstreaming and a further 14 are public health initiatives. The overall value of all projects in the sector is a considerable €19m. While 18 projects should have been completed by 2015, the remaining ones are expected to conclude by 2017 the latest. Most of the projects benefitting children and gender equality consist of soft measures such as developing support systems, analyses and strategies, whereas the public health projects also included infrastructure investments such as a mental healthcare centre. Within children and youth at risk (EE04), public health (EE08) and gender equality (EE09) nearly all projects started in 2013 or 2014 and virtually all the targets had been achieved or exceeded by end 2015.
- **Lithuania** implements 73 ongoing projects in this sector worth €19m, of which 6 are pre-defined. Children and youth are the focus of 27 projects while 24 are public health initiatives with the remainder concerning capacity-building at local and regional levels with a very varied thematic focus. Activities include the construction of a network of child day care and support centre professional training, as well as capacity-building in the health sector, again with a focus on children and youth. Nearly all children and youth at risk projects (LT05) started in 2014 and there was good achievement against targets for developing competences by end 2015. Given some initial delays, project extensions (for two-thirds of projects) are essential to the achievement of the targets for opening or developing centres. Most of the public health projects did not start until 2015 and very few outputs had been achieved by end 2015. However, most activities are underway or completed and most targets are expected by the PO to be met by the end of the period.
- **Poland** runs 85 projects in this sector, a comparatively small number given the size of the country. Poland put a clear emphasis on health-related projects in this sector: Almost half of the projects (37) are public health initiatives, and 27 projects aim to reduce social inequalities in health, with the remaining 18 projects supporting urban development by strengthening the competence of self-government units, social dialogue and co-operation with civil society representatives. The total value of grants is €87m. a mere 2 projects – one on local and regional development tools and one to develop a strategy on social inequality in health – are pre-defined. None of the projects have been completed so far. The urban development projects (PL06) made a relatively early start, i.e. between July 2012 and February 2014 and thus had made good progress against all targets by end 2015 with several met or exceeded. Nearly all of the health projects (PL07, PL13) were started in 2014 and most targets had been met or exceeded by the end of 2015.
- **Portugal**: 39 projects – 27 on public health and 12 on mainstreaming gender equality – with a total value of close to €13m are supported. Four pre-defined projects tackle gender equality through surveys and awareness-raising campaigns and improve health information. Only one project should have come to an end in 2015. Delays to the public health programme (PT06) meant that

26 of 27 projects did not start until 2015. There was limited or no achievement against most targets by the end of 2015 and most projects have required extensions. Although 7 of the 12 gender equality projects did not start until June 2015, the initial targets have been met and some have been exceeded

- **Romania** has 133 projects in this area with a total value of €73m. These cover a wide range of topics from children and youth over gender equality, and local and regional development to public health. Romania also runs 6 projects worth €14m related to poverty alleviation in this priority sector. Thirty-six out of 133 projects were pre-defined. Given the size of the Roma population in the country, it is perhaps not surprising that this ethnic minority is an explicit target group in 57 projects, mainly benefitting children and youth. Nearly all of the projects focused on children and youth and initiatives to reduce inequalities and promote inclusion (RO10) did not start until November 2014 or later. Despite this, there was good achievement against all output targets by the end of 2015, with some exceeded and thus the potential to achieve all targets by the end of the period. The gender equality projects (RO11) did not start until February-September 2015 and had recorded very few outputs by the end of 2015. Although most projects are now making progress, the targets related to provision for Roma people will not be met. All but one of the 8 public health projects (R19) were started in 2014 and there was good progress by the end of 2015, with many output and outcome targets met or exceeded. It was expected that most or all targets would be achieved by the end of the period.

3.5 Green Industry Innovation

3.5.1 Funds awarded

Specific objective

- Increased competitiveness of green enterprises, including greening of existing enterprises, green innovation and green entrepreneurship

The Europe 2020 Strategy emphasises the need for greener and more innovative economies. Green innovations have the potential to reduce emissions and energy whilst also improving the competitiveness of enterprises in the beneficiary states. There is a particular need for green innovations to be commercialised, so that they are taken up more widely.

To respond to this need, the Norway Grants have supported Green Industry Innovation (PA21) through dedicated programmes in eight countries (BG, EE, HU, LT, LV, PL, RO, SK). The programmes have provided grants of €116m to +250 projects, an average of €460,000 per project. The table below presents a summary of funding allocated to projects within this programme area.

3. Effectiveness

Table 3.12 Projects grants awarded by country: Green Industry and Innovation

Country	Number of projects	Planned project cost	Grant award	Number of pre-defined projects	Number of projects with dpp
Bulgaria	31	€24,231,067	€11,251,814	0	47
Croatia	0	€0	€0	0	0
Cyprus	0	€0	€0	0	0
Czech Republic	0	€0	€0	0	8
Estonia	55	€9,506,777	€6,151,352	0	15
Greece	0	€0	€0	0	0
Hungary	29	€44,393,748	€23,761,553	0	12
Latvia	40	€20,363,856	€10,449,989	1	28
Lithuania	13	€17,645,386	€7,041,994	0	5
Malta	0	€0	€0	0	1
Poland	26	€42,093,834	€16,831,974	0	7
Portugal	0	€0	€0	0	8
Romania	52	€54,941,085	€25,607,361	0	38
Slovakia	6	€28,043,159	€15,551,540	1	17
Slovenia	0	€0	€0	0	0
Spain	0	€0	€0	0	48
TOTALS	252	€241,218,912	€116,647,577	2	234

Source: FMO Documentation, Reporting and Information System (DORIS); extracted 16.01.2016

3.5.2 Activities and effects

The main types of activity implemented by projects have included the following.

Energy saving measures for industry: 22 projects have received €8m in seven countries (BG, EE, HU, LT, LV, PL, RO). These are primarily supporting the introduction of new and improved technology (including IT systems, software and internet platforms) and methods in order to reduce energy use and promote use of renewable energies.

Development of green SMEs has been undertaken by 68 projects in five countries (BG, EE, LV, PL, RO) with support of €17m from Norway Grants. Within this, most funding (€11m) has been for infrastructure development: 25 projects in four countries (BG, EE, PL, RO).

Promotion of green fuels and technologies has been supported by 36 projects receiving €38m of Norway Grants funding. Some projects are promoting green energy sources, including biomass, geothermal, solar and wind, whilst others are addressing air pollution and waste disposal.

Bilateral co-operation at programme level has been essential to this PA. Innovation Norway is involved in all programmes, either as PO (BG, PL, RO) or as DPP (EE, HU, LV, LT, SK). In performing these roles, Innovation Norway is building on its previous co-operation with these beneficiary countries, which predates the Norway Grants. It is also making use of its local offices, e.g. in Tallinn, Warsaw. In Estonia, Innovation Norway (the DPP) provided strong support in establishing contacts, finding experts, arranging events, inviting people and generating ideas; the utility of this support is reflected in the fact that each project had a donor project partner. Innovation Norway has also taken steps to promote green innovation more generally in the beneficiary countries, including through promotional workshops and seminars. In Poland, this includes bilateral co-operation with a counterpoint organisation, which involves developing clusters of innovation.

The expected **project effects** will primarily be new products and process that are more environmentally-friendly and that are commercially viable. Indeed, funding from the Norway Grants accounts for only 24% of total planned project costs; for many projects, the rest of the funding comes from company resources or bank loans (and the fact that the bank gives a company a loan is perceived as a sign of reliability). For example, in Poland the amount of Norway Grants funding provided is based on the project's expected return on investment. Where innovations are placed on the market, there is the potential for wide impact; for example, one project in Poland is developing new sensors to increase energy savings in factories, which will be applied in multiple locations. Sustainability of the effects of research and development projects tends to be less certain, as it depends on the ability of the project promoters to find a market for the new product/technology.

3.5.3 Main results

Within this priority sector, all the POs that responded to the survey expected their programmes to achieve their intended effects. In Poland (PL18), the PO expected the intended effects to be achieved thanks to an effective selection of project promoters. In Slovakia (SK07) and Romania (RO17), the POs expected their programmes to achieve the intended effects after making minor programme changes in the form of extensions to project timescales. Finally, in Latvia the programme dedicated to green industry innovation (LV06) required substantial modifications but is still expected to achieve the intended effects.

Of the promoters responding to the survey, nine out of ten reported that their project had achieved the intended effects as planned or due to a few modifications. Only in Romania (under RO17) did any project promoters report severe difficulties in achieving effects and a substantial delay in the implementation of project activities. Promoters expected that most of the effects would be sustainable and that the activities were likely to produce effects beyond the funding period. According to the project promoters most of the activities would have been carried out in the absence of Norway

Grants funding, but at a lower level. In Estonia, Romania and Poland a good number of project promoters reported that activities supported by the Grants would have not been implemented: this might be related to the fact that in these countries the green industry sector is not perceived as a priority at national level.

The data on aggregated results mostly supports the view of the POs that the programmes will achieve their intended effects. There is good progress against the targets for developing or adapting technologies, for developing or improving new services and for creating new jobs. More progress is required against the targets for renewable energy production and for commercialisation of new environmental technologies. However, those two results would usually arise only at the end of project implementation and therefore one could expect these targets to be achieved.

Table 3.13 Aggregated results: Green Industry Innovation

Indicator	Baseline	Achievement	Target
Estimated renewable energy production in MWh/year	0	125,000	555,555
Number of environmental technologies adapted for use	0	31	41
Number of green jobs created	0	305	393
Number of new environmental technologies commercialized	0	7	21
Number of new environmental technologies developed	0	38	54
Number of new green services developed or improved	0	25	22

Source: FMO Documentation, Reporting and Information System (DORIS); extracted 26.05.2016

In terms of **programme-level effects**, a key issue will be the extent to which, once the current programming period ends, national policies build on the achievements of the programmes by prioritizing ongoing support for green innovation – since this theme is primarily a priority of the donor states rather than the beneficiary states. We can see some differences between the case study countries.

3.5.4 Summary of case study countries

- In **Estonia**, the green industry programme (PA21) is devoted to the provision of services, with 15 projects receiving €5.5m under PA21 (there is also a small grants scheme). The programme was developed on the basis of a preliminary study which identified the priority sectors (e-health, transport and logistics, energetics, manufacturing and trade) where environmentally-friendly products and services could be developed using smart solutions. This analysis appears to have been effective, as the fields covered have not been served by other funding and demand support was therefore high. The small projects were started in 2013 and the large projects in 2013 or 2014. By end 2015, each of the output targets had been achieved to about 50% (except “Improvement of processes and smart solutions with ICT”, which had been exceeded). It is expected that the targets will be mostly be reached, as and when the projects are completed. Whilst only 3 projects were completed at the time of this mid-term review, it is expected that the target related to the development of processes will be exceeded. The most important effects of the projects - new green services and products – are likely to be sustained on a commercial basis by the companies involved in the projects. Looking ahead, the potential for wider impact will depend very much on whether national policy remains/becomes receptive to green industry innovations. In that context, it is promising to note that that smart specialisation will be prioritised by the new generation of EU structural funds programmes in Estonia.

- In **Lithuania**, the programme (LT09) was open to legal entities of any size but large companies did not apply and the activity has therefore mostly focused on SMEs, which may reflect the limited alternative sources of funding available to them. Thirteen projects have received €7m to support SMEs wanting to develop and commercialise new and innovative eco-friendly technologies. Most projects did not start until 2015 and few outputs were recorded by the end of 2015. Eleven of the thirteen projects were not due to finish until April 2017. However, the programme is on track to achieve some of the most important outcome indicators: i) three out of 5 new environmental technologies were already successfully adapted for use in new areas by January 2016; ii) 13 projects developing, improving or implementing environmental technologies have been funded against the target of 7. Since this field of activity remains under-developed in Lithuania, the PO has disseminated information on the potential for businesses to develop green innovations (technologies and products) in order to encourage positive spillovers into other sectors.
- In **Poland**, the programme (PL19) addresses SMEs' lack of financial capacity and insufficient national funding to promote green innovation. Demand has exceeded the funding available: of 73 eligible applications submitted, only 26 were financed, receiving €16.8m. They are developing innovative, environmentally-friendly technologies to manage pollution as well as innovative green products or service with low environmental impacts. Four of the projects are developing new technologies and/or processes for recycling of waste, including plastic. The projects did not start until 2015, although there was good progress by the end of 2015 with two out of four output targets achieved and progress against the other two. Overall, the programme was expected to achieve its targets for i) reduction of emissions, (ii) energy savings and (iii) adoption of new technologies. Only seven of the projects have a donor project partner and in four cases, the partner is TOMRA Sorting Solutions, a Norwegian company specialising in technology for sensor-based sorting in the food, recycling, mining and other industries.
- **Romania** has one of the most energy- and resource-intensive economies in the EU and offers limited funding opportunities for businesses to develop green innovation. The Norway Grants programme (RO17) thus one of the few financial instruments for greening the production system. All the participants of in programme are private companies (mix of large and SMEs) and it is unlikely that these companies would have invested in green technologies without this support. Of the 52 projects supported, 7 relate to hazardous waste, including recycling Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (W.E.E.E.), clothes and cardboard. Five projects relate to green energy generation, including solar, wind and geo-thermal energy. The other projects develop a diversity of innovate green products and processes. Just over half the projects started in 2014 and half in 2015. Very good progress had been made by the end of 2015, with nearly all targets exceeded.

3.6 Justice and Home Affairs

3.6.1 Funds awarded

Justice and Home Affairs is a priority of EU policy, given that its Member States are parties to a number of international conventions in this field, including the Council of Europe's Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings and the European Convention on Human Rights. The EU Member States are also committed to action in support of the Stockholm Programme – the EU's five-year plan on justice and home affairs. Action within the beneficiary countries is necessary to help address challenges that are transnational in nature, particularly those relating to the secure operation of the Schengen area and to combatting human trafficking. Action is also needed to address other challenges within the beneficiary states which are a cause of disparities, such as strengthening the judicial system and improving correctional services.

From a programme area perspective, the largest area was support for the development of correctional services (PA32), which received some €50m grants (34% of the total), followed by judicial capacity building (PA31) (25%) and Schengen co-operation and measures to combat cross-border crime (PA30) (21%).

A total of 11 EU Member States benefited from the Norway Grants in the justice and home affairs field. Poland was the largest single beneficiary with grants amounting to €41m (27% of the total) followed by Romania (25%), Bulgaria (19%) and Lithuania (18%).

Specifically, in relation to Judicial Capacity Building (PA31) and Correctional Services (PA32), five of the 11 countries benefited. Taking the two programme areas together, Poland and Romania were the largest beneficiaries but Latvia also received a significant amount of funding under the second of these areas. Most projects focus on capacity-building measures to improve judicial and correctional standards but in some countries (e.g. Czech Republic) there was more of an emphasis on more tangible intervention, specifically to improve physical infrastructure of prisons (e.g. investment in new buildings to reduce over-crowding) and the IT systems used in courts for case management.

Whereas some countries are implementing a small number of projects with relatively large budgets (e.g. the Czech Republic's investment in prisons), in other cases the opposite was adopted (e.g. Bulgaria's correctional services programme). There is less of a variation in the field of judicial capacity building where the size of projects was broadly similar. The degree of concentration to some extent reflects the nature of the interventions with generally "softer" measures in the judicial capacity building programme (the exception being the modernisation of court IT systems) with the development of physical infrastructure being more emphasised in the case of the correctional services programme.

There have been a range of donor organisations including the Council of Europe, Norwegian Courts Administration, Directorate of Norwegian Correctional Service, Norwegian National Police Directorate and the Norwegian Directorate of Health. One of the advantages of Norway Grants compared with EU schemes is the role of donor partners in transferring know-how to their counterparts in beneficiary countries. This feature is perhaps especially important in the field of judicial capacity-building where the degree of specialist (legal) expertise required to produce effective outcomes in some beneficiary countries (e.g. helping to devise new laws) is relatively high and only likely to be available from external sources.

3. Effectiveness

Table 3.14 Projects grants awarded by country: Justice and Home Affairs

Country	Number of projects	Planned project cost	Grant award	Number of pre-defined projects	Number of projects with dpp
Bulgaria	53	€21,359,371	€21,067,730	15	16
Croatia	1	€3,829,663	€32,299	1	1
Cyprus	2	€1,920,084	€1,677,947	2	1
Czech Republic	41	€17,070,584	€13,992,111	14	12
Estonia	10	€2,230,766	€1,986,812	3	3
Greece	0	€0	€0	0	0
Hungary	0	€0	€0	0	0
Latvia	3	€13,997,758	€13,997,758	3	3
Lithuania	11	€19,737,056	€19,735,442	10	6
Malta	1	€1,516,953	€1,285,552	1	1
Poland	61	€44,153,122	€41,733,123	18	12
Portugal	0	€0	€0	0	0
Romania	30	€27,674,245	€27,585,561	17	14
Slovakia	25	€8,279,730	€7,675,430	1	10
Slovenia	0	€0	€0	0	0
Spain	0	€0	€0	0	0
TOTALS	238	€161,769,332	€150,769,765	85	79

Source: FMO Documentation, Reporting and Information System (DORIS); extracted 16.01.2016

3. Effectiveness

Table 3.15 Projects grants awarded by sector code: Justice and Home Affairs

Sector code	Sector	Number of projects	Total grant Award
1513004	Alternative dispute resolution	2	€1,121,419
1513006	Border management	7	€8,362,308
1513007	Countering organized crime	21	€11,823,863
1513008	Countering trafficking	12	€4,081,781
1513009	Crime prevention	7	€8,368,795
1516001	Domestic violence	68	€10,727,810
1516003	Exploitation and abuse	1	€28,843
1516002	Gender based violence	47	€11,939,762
1516000	Human rights	3	€2,370,000
1513005	Legal aid, counsel, treatment and shelters	1	€243,866
1513000	Legal and judicial development	47	€79,142,170
1516020	Multicultural awareness	9	€1,639,493
1513003	Probation services	10	€10,753,855
1601001	Gender policy, management and administration	2	€124,137
1601000	Social/ welfare policy and administrative management	1	€41,663
TOTALS		238	€150,769,765

Source: FMO Documentation, Reporting and Information System (DORIS); extracted 16.01.2016

3.6.2 Domestic and Gender-Based Violence (PA29)

Specific objective

- Prevent and combat violence against women and protect and support victims.

Domestic and gender-based violence represent a major obstacle to the achievement of full equality between men and women. Evidence shows that domestic and gender based violence is an issue that cuts across all levels of society leading to huge social and financial cost. According to a survey carried out in 2014 by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 13 million women in the EU experienced physical violence in the course of the previous 12 months and approximately 3.7 million women had experienced sexual violence. Some 12% of women had experienced some form of sexual abuse or incident by an adult before the age of 15 years.²¹ In addition, another challenge related to gender violence is trafficking: every year hundreds of thousands of women, men and children are trafficked across the EU. In this context the Council of Europe and the European Union have implemented strategies and action plans to address issues related to domestic and gender-based violence, as well as trafficking.

During this programming period, the Norway Grants have supported these strategies providing roughly €27m divided between dedicated programmes in six countries (BG, CZ, EE, PL, RO, SK), and specific activities within wider programmes (CY, LT, PT, SI, ES). In addition, seven NGO programmes included action to prevent violence against women as a specific area of support.

The programmes specifically dedicated to this programme area have supported 120 projects with combined eligible expenditure of approximately €25m, an average of almost €200,000 per project. A relevant amount of money (€8.5m) has been allocated to 12 pre-defined projects. Projects usually address a range of issues and different aspects of domestic and gender-based violence and human trafficking. Despite that, a range of broad type of activities can be identified:

Establishing specialised services to protect victims such as shelters and crisis centres, phone helplines and other practical support services to help victims rebuild their live. These types of services have been developed in more than 50% of projects and usually included the construction of a specific infrastructure or department together with the provision of specific services for victims of domestic and gender-based violence. Overall, 29 projects report activities related to the development of specialised infrastructures or the provision of equipment. This includes the construction of a new shelter in Cyprus, which will double the capacity for accommodation for victims of violence. In Romania, a project is developing integrated services within existing shelters and counselling centres for victims of domestic violence, by implementing a new case management technique and developing integrated support services (psychological, social, medical, legal).

Capacity-building, counselling and education and training activities of professionals and policymakers have also been implemented in approximately 50 projects. A relevant amount of funding has also been channelled through “soft” measures such as capacity-building activities. For example, in Estonia specific capacity-building activities have been implemented in order to create a multi-sectoral network to improve the help of victims of sexual violence.

Awareness-raising campaigns, is also a common activity funded through the Norway Grants. Tailored awareness-raising campaigns have been implemented at all levels in circa 60 projects. A very innovative campaign was implemented in Czech Republic against violence on the internet, i.e. cyber-violence. The campaign aims to open up a debate about cyber bullying in the society and how to address it through specific measures and legislations.

²¹ European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (2014), Violence against women: an EU-wide survey

Advocacy and research, mapping and data collection are implemented across countries however less than expected (10 projects envisage advocacy activities while 14 projects include research activities). Advocacy activities have been implemented in Bulgaria, Czech Republic and Slovakia to increase the effectiveness of law enforcements, improve access to legal aid for vulnerable groups and support other type of activities such as provision of practical services or capacity building activities.

Of the 120 projects, only 3 were complete at the time of analysis. However, evidence collected at project and programme level suggests that the overall effects in terms of reduction of domestic gender-based violence as well as with regard to support of victims of trafficking are likely to be achieved. At programme level, intended effects were expected to be achieved thanks to minor modifications or extension of the deadline (CZ13, CY04, RO20, PL14) or as a result of substantial modifications of the programme (SK09).

The projects thus offer the potential for impact against the overall objective of preventing and combating violence against women and protect and support victims of violence.

3.6.3 Schengen Co-operation and Combating Cross-border and Organised Crime (PA30)

Specific objective

- Improve co-operation between law enforcement authorities in the Schengen Member States in fighting organised crime, including human trafficking.

Challenges relating to ensuring security and combating crime increasingly take on a European dimension given the reality of borderless travel within the Schengen Area – which encompasses the donor states and twelve of the beneficiary states (with the other four committed to joining, i.e. Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Romania). In this context, there is a need to strengthen national capacity in the beneficiary states for tackling organised, cross-border crime and also to strengthen co-operation at national level. Such measures are particularly important since many of the beneficiary states are transit countries for migrants and human trafficking en route to Western Europe and Scandinavia (including Norway). Moreover, organised criminal groups operating in the donor states often originate in the beneficiary states, including Lithuania and Romania.²²

The Norway Grants have co-financed **PA30** activities through dedicated programmes in five countries (BG, CY, CZ, LT, PL, RO). These programmes have supported 47 projects with combined eligible expenditure of €31m, an average of €660,000 per project. Most of the money (€22.5m) has been allocated to 22 pre-defined projects. Projects tend to be multi-faceted in that they include a range of activities and address different aspects of Schengen co-operation and combating crime. We can highlight some broad types of activity.

Improvements in IT, technical equipment and other infrastructure: at least 4 projects. This includes the construction of a Terrestrial Trunked Radio (TETRA) network along the Bulgaria-Greece border; e-gate and full page documents scanners at Czech airports; consolidation of Czech police information systems; improved GIS for the Czech police working in the field.

Building systemic capacity and strengthening networks: whilst nearly all the projects could be said to build capacity in some way, a few have done so in a strategic or systemic way. This includes the establishment of a National Control Authorities for the inspection of travel documents (CZ); building capacity to use Schengen instruments (CZ); building the capacity of the State Agency for National Security and enhancing co-operation between law enforcement authorities (BG); improved national

²² For example, see: https://www.politi.no/vedlegg/lokale_vedlegg/kripos/vedlegg_3188/; <http://www.newsenglish.no/2015/05/25/140-charged-in-lithuanian-drug-deals/>; <http://www.norwaypost.no/news-politics/27191--lithuanian-criminals-pose-a-threat-to-norway-27191>

co-operation structures to prevent trafficking (LT); building capacity of the Lithuanian Police Forensic Science Centre; regional co-operation structures to prevent human trafficking (PL); creating a national network of NGOs working on prevention of human trafficking (PL).

Support for victims of human trafficking: most action to address trafficking has been through training and capacity building but two projects have very directly supported the victims of trafficking: improved services for the referral, support, protection and reintegration of victims (BG); development of a national approach to compensation and legal aid for victims of trafficking (RO).

Training and skills development: Poland has prioritised support for training, as the funding available for PA30 (€10m) quite modest given the size of the country. At least 20 projects have provided training and networking for professionals including border guards, police, staff of the judicial authority and public prosecutor's office and other law enforcement officers. Such training has covered a range of issues related to tackling organised crime and human trafficking, victim support, migration and human rights, as well as technical issues such as use of the Schengen Information System. Training projects have also been implemented in Bulgaria covering asset recovery, trafficking, human rights and Roma issues.

Support for Roma: some projects have had a specific focus on the Roma. These include a training and awareness for police and other professionals on Roma issues (Bulgaria, Romania) and creation of specialist police units to serve Roma communities at risk of being victims of crime.

Bilateral co-operation: seven projects include partners from Norway. They have facilitated co-operation between police and law enforcement bodies in Norway and the beneficiary states. One project has taken measures to curb the activities of Romanian criminal groups operating in Norway, through the deployment of Romanian police officers in Norway and enhancing the investigative and information verification and transfer capabilities of the Romanian police. The Council of Europe has been a partner in three projects addressing human rights (BG), asset recovery (BG) and human trafficking (PL).

Evidence of project effects is limited as only 3 of the 47 projects were complete at the time of analysis (i.e. by end 2015). However, the evidence suggests that a range of positive effects can be expected. These include professionals trained and new curricula developed and that can be re-used. They also include organisational capacity built and new infrastructure/equipment installed, which will provide positive impacts beyond the life of the projects.

The projects thus offer the potential for impact against the overall objective of improving co-operation between law enforcement authorities in the Schengen area, both within the beneficiary states and transnationally (including with the donor states). It is perhaps the case that the impact in Poland would have been greater still if a Norwegian DPP had been nominated, as many projects were unable to secure Norwegian project partners.

At the European level, the impact of the Norway Grants has been limited by the fact that projects have only been implemented in five beneficiary states. Given the transnational and cross-border nature of the challenges faced, it might be more effective to take a more strategic approach with some of the funds addressing this PA reserved for projects with a transnational reach (i.e. covering more than on beneficiary state). For example, there may be scope for projects that take action along the routes taken by migrants and human traffickers which typically cross several countries.

3.6.4 Judicial Capacity-building (PA31)

Specific objective

- A fairer and more efficient judicial system

PA 31 had a number of specific objectives:

- **Improved access to justice**, including for vulnerable groups (victims, minors, etc.);
- **Development of alternative dispute resolutions** (e.g. mediation services);
- **Improved efficiency of the court systems** (e.g. case management systems);
- **Increased competence of actors within the judiciary** (e.g. skills development).

During the 2009-15 period, a total of 20 projects received €31.9m from the Norway Grants. All the projects were pre-defined. All the projects, apart from one (BG14) are still in progress.

The types of judicial capacity building interventions that have been supported include improving court registries, training for legal professionals, assistance to victims and witnesses during court procedures and systems for resolving disputes out of court.

In **Bulgaria**, five pre-defined projects have received funding of €2.8m from the Norway Grants. Several projects were implemented to strengthen the capacity of the Bulgarian judicial system to uphold human rights. This included training for judges in the application of the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (where the Council of Europe was one of the two donor partners, the other being the Norwegian Court Administration). One project has sought to improve access to legal aid for disadvantaged citizens by helping improve the overall effectiveness of the legal aid system. Another project is producing a law handbook for minors over 12 years old where the target was to distribute 45,000 copies to children.

The **Czech Republic** two projects have received a total of €2.2m from the Norway Grants. The first of these focused on strengthen the probation service through strengthening the professional training for officials, promoting alternatives to prison, and strengthening quality of the provision of restorative justice programmes. The second project involved upgrading the video-conferencing facilities of the 123 judicial institutions in the Czech Republic.

Three projects were supported in **Lithuania** with funding from the Norway Grants of €7m. One of these was aimed at improving the functioning of the judicial system, including the National Courts Administration (NCA), through training programmes and internships, thereby enhancing public trust in the judicial system. Another project provided support for the Lithuanian courts information system (LITEKO), specifically upgrading the case administration system. The third project helped to improve witnesses support services. The box below provides case studies of two of the projects within this programme.

Case studies: Judicial Capacity Building in Lithuania

- PA31 - Judicial capacity-building and cooperation
- Project: Improved support to witnesses and crime victims during the court procedure including strengthening of security in court buildings (LT13-0003)
- Project promoter: National Courts Administration
- Donor project partner: Norwegian Courts Administration
- Norway Grants funding: €1.5m (85%)

In Lithuania, the Norwegian Courts Administration financed a study to assess witness support needs in the period before appearing in court. According to the Donor, this programme was very successful with the results of the study now being incorporated into Lithuania's court procedures. In Norway, Red Cross volunteers are available in the court waiting rooms before a witness goes into the court to make a statement to help the person concerned remain calm and to provide information on procedures. This has helped to improve the quality of witness statements and the hope is that there will be similar benefits in Lithuania.

- PA31 - Judicial capacity-building and cooperation
- Project: Modernization of the courts information system (system for case handling and audio recording for courts hearing (LT13-0002)
- Project promoter: National Courts Administration
- Donor project partner: Norwegian Courts Administration
- Norway Grants funding: €4.35m (85%)

Some of the main problems hindering the operation of the Lithuanian courts include a complicated case administration system, limited use of the system by other relevant institutions, poor functionality and limited tailoring of the system to users' needs. Key players in the judiciary are limited by outdated equipment with limited technical capacities used in court processes (technical capabilities to preserve, archive, restore and listen to audio recordings were limited), protracted processes for document collection and exchange needed for court proceedings, and limited access to information related to their cases. The existing courts information system (LITEKO) is more than 10 years old and has limited functionality. There was a pressing need for its modernisation, integration and interoperability with other informational systems. As a result, the limited technical capacities of the judicial system have led to court cases becoming protracted causing public dissatisfaction and lack of confidence in the judicial system and courts.

To address these problems, this project is upgrading the courts information system and increasing the efficiency of court proceedings through better use of information and electronic communication. More specifically, the project is undertaking two main areas of activity: 1) structuring court procedural documentation, modernisation of case processing events, integration of the existing information system (LITEKO) with other institutional systems; (2) installation of audio recording system equipment in Lithuanian courts. The steps taken by the project include:

- Five representatives from the National Courts Administration and Courts visited the Norwegian Courts Administration in March-April 2014 to explore the Norwegian courts information system and exchange best practice. After the visit, these persons have contributed to the development of a technical specification for the feasibility study on modernisation of the existing system;
- A feasibility study and technical specifications related to modernisation of the information system were developed. During this activity, meetings with representatives of the Lithuanian courts and other governmental institutions were organised to determine the needs for improvement of LITEKO system performance. The technical possibilities to improve the LITEKO system were also identified.
- Installation of audio recording and sound system equipment in Lithuanian courtrooms will be completed in all 335 courtrooms in 2016. After the installation, 610 court representatives will be trained to use the new equipment.
- The technical equipment of the Central Storage Room of the National Courts Administration has been extended. As a result, 55 courts were supplied with servers for storage of audio records of court hearings.

In addition, the National Courts Administration's central storage room was extended and equipped with technical equipment needed for central storage of court hearings.

- Based on the recommendation of the feasibility study, LITEKO will be modernised and integrated with 13 other institutional information systems.

The project has faced a number of challenges including a relatively short implementation period (29 months, which was extended by 12 months), protracted public procurement procedures and additional needs for improvements in the information systems identified in the feasibility study. Once implemented, the project is expected to help increase the efficiency and reduce the costs of the court system through accelerated processing of cases and thus improve public confidence in Lithuania's judicial system.

Poland was the largest beneficiary of the judicial capacity building programme with funding of €14.8m (of which €12.6m from the Norway Grants) for six projects. The projects included: a scheme to provide victims of crime with psychological and legal support (e.g. funding for 20 new child-friendly hearing rooms); an initiative aimed at minors to raise their awareness of victims' rights; and a project to help develop alternative methods of dispute resolution. The largest project (€4.7m) involved investment in the IT systems of 90 courts to upgrade the systems used for case handling.

There were three projects in **Romania** with a total of €7.4m funding from the Norway Grants. Support was provided to modernize the Electronic Court Register Informational System (ECRIS) which is used by the judiciary for the management of cases (this was the largest project with €4m funding, of which €3.6m from the Norway Grants). The project benefited from the involvement of IT experts from the Norwegian Courts Administration and from the Council of Europe who brought in other best practices and perspectives from the European level (e.g. from the Netherlands). However, the project could not be implemented as planned due to difficulties related to the public procurement procedures. It was therefore modified to take a more strategic scope, aimed at paving the way for future developments of the system, including providing the authorities with recommendations on the development needs of the ECRIS. Another relatively large project (€3.7m, of which €3.2m from the Norway Grants) was aimed at increasing the capacity of the judiciary to better implement the new legislative Codes (Civil Code, Civil Procedure Code, Criminal Code, Criminal Procedure Code). There was also an initiative targeted specifically at the Roma to raise awareness of access to justice.

3.6.5 Correctional Services, including Non-Custodial Sanctions (PA32)

Specific objective

- Improved correctional services system in compliance with relevant international human rights instruments

PA 32 had a number of specific objectives:

- **Tackling prison overcrowding** (e.g. investment in prisons);
- **Increased application of alternatives to prison** (e.g. improved probationary services, electronic tagging);
- **Increased focus on vulnerable groups** (e.g. schemes to raise awareness of access to justice);
- **Improved prison conditions and improved competences of inmates and prison staff.**

A total of 50 projects were supported in the 2009-14 period with funding totalling €58m (of which €49m from the Norway Grants, making this the largest justice and home affairs programme area.

Support was provided to improve correctional services through a variety of interventions - renovating prisons, training for staff as well as offering drug rehabilitation and psychiatric support to prisoners. Increasing the use of alternative forms of sentencing such as probation, electronic monitoring and community service has also been promoted.

Bulgaria obtained funding from the Norway Grants of €7.8m for 22 projects. By far the largest of these projects (€7m, including €1m co-financing at programme level) involved an investment in the physical infrastructure of prisons to address the acute shortage of buildings, a high degree of prison overcrowding and deteriorating conditions that present a risk to the physical and psychological health of prisoners and detainees. The Council of Europe is involved in the project and provides expert advice to ensure that the international standards are met. Another relatively large project (€0.6m) sought to help reduce prison over-crowding through the promotion of alternatives to imprisonment such as electronic tagging. The other projects mostly involved training and capacity building for the prison management system.

A total of five projects were supported in the **Czech Republic** with funding of €2.1m from the Norway Grants. All the projects involved expanding the physical infrastructure of prisons to help reduce overcrowding and to improve conditions generally. Examples include an investment of €0.5m (of which €0.4m from the Norway Grants) in the Kuřim prison to build a new unit providing accommodation and other educational activities for 32 young adult prisoners; and another scheme sought to improve conditions in Nové Sedlo prison by creation of space for education and work.

In **Lithuania**, a total of six projects were supported with funding of €6.7m from the Norway Grants. Examples of the projects are: a grant to refurbish four new “halfway house” correctional institutions (with capacity of 80 places in total) for inmates serving the last months of their sentences, training programmes for prison service personnel and a scheme to promote non-custodial sentences and probationary measures. The largest project is receiving €2.9m (of which €2.4m from the Norway Grants) to improve living conditions and the rehabilitation of inmates in Pravieniskes Prison. All six projects requested extensions beyond April 2016, which will be necessary to achieve all the intended effects.

In **Malta**, one project received funding of €1.1m from the Norway Grants. The main aim of the pre-defined project is the extension of the Centre of Residential Restorative Services (CoRRs) housing Malta’s young offenders away from the main prison, and the subsequent restructuring of the internal running of the Unit.

Seven projects were supported in **Poland** with funding of €12.3m from the Norway Grants. The largest project (€3.9m, of which €3.3m from the Norway Grants) involved raising the competences of prison staff by making available professional development training programmes, specialist courses and postgraduate studies in the operation of IT systems for the documents circulation and human resources management. Amongst other activities, it was envisaged that 250 trainers would be used to give training to 10,000 users of the system for electronic distribution of documents. Other projects promoted e-learning and b-learning to help increase the competence of the prison staff; and various types of vocational training for prison staff. Five of the projects focus on the competence-building of the prison staff through training and improvement of the correctional services, and one project focuses on increasing the use of alternatives to imprisonment. Another project aims to strengthen the knowledge and social skills of prisoners through various training courses, as well as establishment of visiting rooms to allow prisoners to meet their families. Of the seven projects to improve the skills of personnel in the prison system and to develop alternatives to imprisonment, five had been completed by December 2015 with indicators showing 100% achievements. Moreover, the view was that the other projects would be just as successful.

In **Romania**, six projects were assisted with funding of €8.8m (of which €7.5m from the Norway Grants). The projects included a scheme to help promote the reintegration of ex-prisoners, focusing specifically on the Roma; another project to strengthen the capacity of Bacau Prison to assist the educational and psycho-social recovery of young inmates through improving the educational, social and physical support services in the prison; establishing a therapeutic community centre for women in Gherla Prison; strengthening the capacity of the penitentiary system in the area of human capital development; strengthening the capacity of the pre-trial detention system to comply with the relevant international human rights instruments; and two projects to promote capacity-building for the probation service, including its role in providing alternatives to prison.

3.6.6 Main results

Within this priority sector, all the POs that responded to the survey expected their programmes to achieve their intended effects. In Estonia (EE11), the PO expected the effects to be achieved as planned.²³ In Bulgaria (BG14), Czech Republic (CZ13, CZ14), Cyprus (CY04), Romania (RO20), Poland (PL14) and Slovakia (SK09) the POs expected to achieve the intended effects as a result of minor modifications to the programme. Most of these POs have been implementing activities in the area of domestic and gender-based violence (CZ13, PL14, RO20, SK09): for these programmes, changes were related to the extension of the programming period as a result of reallocation of funds (e.g. RO20) or to increase the amount of time available to complete the projects (e.g. CZ13). At the same time, the POs in Bulgaria (BG13) and Romania (RO21, RO23) reported the implementation of substantial modifications of the programme to achieve the intended effects. These include corrective management actions, such as modification of project objectives and extension of programme implementation. Finally, in Lithuania (LT14) the PO expected to achieve the programme results despite some difficulties in the implementation of the programme.

Of the promoters responding to the survey, two thirds expected their projects to achieve the intended effects by implementing activities as planned or after minor modifications. At the same time, substantial changes were necessary to achieve the intended effects for about 15% of respondents, mainly in the programme areas of gender and domestic violence (PA29) and correctional services (PA32). Substantial changes occurred mainly in Romania, but also for a few projects in Lithuania and Poland. Most promoters reported that most/some of the project effects would continue after the funding period. A considerable number of the project promoters reported that the Grants have enhanced/increased the level of activities implemented. Similarly, they reported that the Grants have supported new activities that would have not otherwise have been implemented.

Looking ahead, the various interventions in the justice and home affairs field should contribute to the common overall aim of Norway Grants of promoting fundamental human rights. In many of the beneficiary, the legacy of the communist or Soviet period means that judicial systems and prison conditions risk falling short of EU standards. Steps to improve the efficiency of court systems – and thereby speeding up access to justice – and to tackle prison overcrowding, together with capacity building measures across both programme areas, will over time help to ensure effective enforcement of the EU's standards of fundamental human rights.

Table 3.16 below lists the most important results that are systematically recorded by the POs and collated at European level. These show a very mixed performance against the different targets, with some exceeded but others at risk of not being achieved.

- **Training of justice professionals and prisoners;** all the targets for training individuals and for developing training programmes and curricula have been exceeded or are on track to be achieved (except for training related to gender-based violence).

²³ It has to be noted that only one PO working in the programme area of correctional services completed the Programme Operator Survey.

- **Individuals supported;** the target for people following alternatives to prison has been exceeded, whilst about one-third of the target for individuals receiving legal assistance has been met;
- **Use of ICT in the judiciary;** there is very low achievement here, perhaps reflecting the fact that such results would usually arise once investments in ICT infrastructure have been completed. As yet, there are no result for use of electronic communication between courts and parties in all three countries for which this is a results target (Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Lithuania). There are few results for ICT systems for case management (relevant to the Czech Republic, Lithuania, Poland, Romania).
- **Improvements in correctional facilities;** the result indicator related to service provision (people following alternatives to prison) has been exceeded. However, there are important differences in the way in which the beneficiary states record achievements against this indicator. In particular, the figure of 68,000 people following alternatives to prison in Romania includes all people on probation, not just those directly served by the programme. There is very limited achievement against the targets related to physical investments in prisons, although these may arise towards the end of the implementation period.
- **Gender-based violence;** there is progress against all indicators for this programme area. The target for new services is almost achieved, but other results are less than half way towards the target. Performance against the target for training professionals is particularly low, due to the lack of results in Poland (target: 3,000) and Bulgaria (target: 550).

Table 3.16 Aggregated results: Justice and Home Affairs

Indicator	Baseline	Achievement	Target
Frequency of using electronic communication between courts and parties	200	0	107,000
ICT systems for the registration and management of cases	72	7	1,001
Levels of awareness raised on gender based violence	61	7	181
Number of awareness raising campaigns on gender based violence	1	12	25
Number of individuals receiving assistance or legal advice	34	26,037	86,100
Number of national strategies or laws developed on domestic/gender based violence	0	27	50
Number of people following alternatives to prison	16,383	69,384	19,580
Number of prison places in line with CPT standards	41	2	772
Number of prisons or detention centres with improved conditions	3	11	116
Number of services provided or improved on gender based violence	2	61	69
Number of specialised programmes or services for vulnerable groups developed	4	4	18
Number of trained inmates/prisoners	0	16,381	7,311
Number of trained law enforcement professionals	2	793	1,679
Number of trained legal professionals and staff for a fairer and more efficient judicial system	1,384	33,804	39,931
Number of trained legal professionals and staff for improved correctional services systems	0	18,647	20,721
Number of trained professionals on reducing gender based violence	45	640	4,565
Number of training curricula, programmes or courses developed	5	5,866	4,052

Indicator	Baseline	Achievement	Target
Number of training programmes or courses provided for staff	0	532	313
Number of women's shelters or crisis centres supported	67	37	115

Source: FMO Documentation, Reporting and Information System (DORIS); extracted 26.05.2016

There is also very mixed performance against those selected result indicators of particular interest to the donors, as shown in the table below.

Table 3.17 Selected results: Justice and Home Affairs

Indicator	Programme Identifier	Baseline	Achievement	Target
Number of cases referred to mediation	PL16	8,437	16,569	11,000
Number of cases which have been examined for a period of more than 6 months (per year)	LT13	19,600	0	14,300
Number of DNA analysis made (per year)	LT12	6,000	0	8,500
Number of national and regional specialized structures established to counteract trafficking in human beings.	PL15	0	0	2
Number of travellers (individual border crossings) controlled by the electronic gates (per year).	CZ14	140,000	600,000	340,000
The average length of specific procedures (divorce, dismissal, expropriation, criminal trial etc.)	BG14	0	0	25

Source: FMO Documentation, Reporting and Information System (DORIS); extracted 26.05.2016

3.6.7 Summary of case study countries

The case study countries have used the Norway Grants funding in different ways and thus have the potential to generate different effects.

- **Cyprus** carried out only two activities in this priority sector – the construction of a shelter for victims of domestic violence and one to build capacities at a national agency to detect money laundering which contributed to the overarching themes of gender equality and anti-corruption. Both projects are still in progress. The project to construct a new shelter) started in May 2014 and had exceeded its output targets for training staff by end 2015. It is on track to achieve the target for one “purpose-build shelter constructed”.
- **Czech Republic:** a majority of the 41 activities carried out relate to gender equality issues, all of which are still in progress. Awareness-raising activities played a role in case of 27 of the projects, whereas education and training (24) and capacity-building were elements in case of just over half the projects (22). Awareness-raising has been particularly important within CZ13, where all the funding awarded to date has been for a predefined project featuring media campaigns, analyses and studies relating to domestic violence. This points to the importance of soft measures in the justice and home affairs priority area. The education-related activities can be assumed to be particularly sustainable given that these contribute to the modernisation of public bodies in this area. Some hard measures relate to the upgrading of correctional facilities. Six projects addressing Schengen co-operation (CZ14) started between October 2014 and January 2015. Good progress has been made with all output targets achieved by end 2015 except for “Establishment of the National Control Authority” and “Enforcement officers trained”. All outcome indicators had been achieved or exceeded, except for “Analysis of laws, strategies and action plans relevant to policing minorities”. Within judicial capacity-building and correctional services (CZ15), all seven projects began in 2014. There was limited achievement against targets by the end of 2015. Two projects had been delayed and all the projects had been extended beyond April 2016, which will be essential for the programme’s targets to be achieved.
- **Estonia:** all 10 projects (worth almost €2m) take place under the domestic and gender-based

violence PA, with a focus on trafficking, victim support and awareness-raising. The programme consists of three pre-defined projects, two calls for proposals and a small grants scheme, and funds victim support services, training for 150 specialists, as well as awareness-raising campaigns. The projects started in 2013 and 2014. Very good progress has been made, with virtually all the output targets had been met by the end of 2015. Outcome targets had also been met except those relating to “Awareness raised among general population”.

- Lithuania:** the 11 projects focus on capacity-building for Schengen co-operation and in the judicial system, as well as in correctional facilities. The total value of grants is €1.8m and all projects are still in progress and expected to conclude in 2017 only. The total volume of grants amounts to €19.7m, with one project already completed and one funding police training terminated. The two Schengen projects (LT12) started early in 2015 but there was no achievement against output targets and very limited achievement against outcome targets by the end of 2015. Both projects experienced delays and required extensions. Although all the projects were reported to be progressing well, there is the risk that all the projects’ outputs will not be achieved. Within judicial capacity-building (LT13), all three projects started in 2013. By the end of 2015, the output targets had mostly been met for “soft” activities (increased competence of staff, persons trained, victims and witnesses receiving assistance, etc.). There was no achievement against targets related to investments in infrastructure and equipment with all three projects requesting extensions. Within correctional services (LT14), all six projects had started by October 2014. There was good achievement for soft activities (competences of staff and inmates, mediation programmes) by end 2015 but no achievement against targets related to investments in infrastructure and equipment related to protecting vulnerable groups in prison” and addressing growing prison populations and overcrowding.
- Poland:** Projects tackle gender-based violence, Schengen co-operation, judicial capacity building and improve correctional services. Many projects have focused on training public officials such as border guards, police, and the judiciary - 41 out of 59 projects included education and training elements. Capacity-building was a focus in 34 out of 59 projects. There was also investment in equipment, e.g. in courts’ IT systems. A particular focus lies on the development of correctional services. Only 11 projects had a donor project partner, with 18 projects being pre-defined. Most projects on domestic and gender-based violence (PL14) started in 2013 and 2014 and most output targets had been achieved by end 2015. Within the Schengen programme (PL15), just under half of projects started in 2013 and the rest in 2014. By the end of 2015, some output targets had been met (relating to “Increased knowledge of law enforcement officers”) but there was not recorded achievement against output targets related to “Improved cooperation between the authorities and relevant stakeholders”. Within judicial capacity-building (PL16), the six large projects started in 2013 or early 2014. Three of the projects have made good progress and are completed, whilst the other three requested extensions. Reflecting this, the output targets related to “Improved access to justice” had been met and there was progress against the target for training court managers. But there was no progress against the output targets related to “Alternative dispute resolution” and “Improved efficiency of the court system”. Within correctional services (PL17), six of the projects were started in 2013 and the other one in 2014. Five of the projects were completed by the end of 2015 and virtually all the output targets had been met by then.
- Romania:** the 30 mostly still ongoing projects are receiving grant support of over €27m. Schengen-related investments have a particular importance in Romania since it is yet to join the Schengen area, although the country already meets the technical criteria to do so. Roma-support also plays a particular prominent role due to the country’s sizeable Roma population. Project effects relate to supporting victims of gender-based violence, strengthening transnational police co-operation and fighting cross-border crime and trafficking, tackle prison overcrowding and promote

alternatives to prison, improved access to justice and increased competences of actors in the judiciary. The projects on preventing domestic and gender-based violence (RO20) did not start until 2015. By the end of 2015, there has been some good progress against “soft” output targets (e.g. professionals trained, promotional campaigns, services for vulnerable groups), but little achievement against targets for new centres opened. The other three programmes (RO21, RO23, RO24) consist of pre-defined projects, which all started in 2014. By the end of 2015, all three had performed well against output targets for soft activities (mostly training) but there was limited achievement against targets for investments in infrastructure (e.g. improved prisons) or equipment with extensions required for all projects within the programmes for correctional services (RO23) and judicial capacity-building (RO24).

3.7 Potential for impact

3.7.1 Reducing social and economic disparities

At this mid-term stage and particularly given the late start to many projects, it is possible only to talk about the potential for impact against the objective of contributing to the reduction of economic and social disparities. The evidence analysed to date allows us to highlight what that potential might be.

The EEA and Norway Grants represent a considerable investment by the donors in the beneficiary countries. The projects supported by the Grants have the potential to deliver a wide range of positive economic and social effects across a range of policy fields. At the same time, the funds are very modest in relation to the size of those countries and the challenges they face.

They are also modest in relation to investments made by the EU Structural Funds and by the beneficiary countries themselves. Given this limitation, it is clear that the Grants are prioritising support for many activities that are not well-supported (or perhaps not even eligible for support) under the Structural Funds. For example, less than 3% of EU Structural Funds have been allocated to the theme of “Culture, heritage and tourism” in the 2007-13 period.²⁴ Similarly, justice and home affairs has not been specifically supported in the 2007-13 period and will not be in the 2014-2020 period, except under the general thematic objective of “Improving the efficiency of public administration”. Civil society organisations are eligible to receive EU funds, for example, in order to provide training co-financed by the European Social Fund or to implement projects related to democratic engagement and civic participation within the Europe for Citizens programme. However, unlike the EEA/Norway Grants, the EU provides no funding specifically to develop this sector.

In all cases, there are short-term economic benefits through the expenditure of funds and the consequent multiplier effects on the local economy. Depending on the project, such effects very often arise in poorer territories. For example, many projects take place in localities that have suffered industrial decline and associated environmental degradation or are relatively remote or are home to a significant Roma population. Where local contractors are appointed or local people employed by projects, the mere act of expenditure provides important local economic effects in addition to the main intended effects of projects, although this positive impact is rarely captured in the programme monitoring data or its indicators.

Beyond that, the contribution of the Grants to reducing economic disparities in the long-term is often likely to be indirect. This is because, in contrast to the EU Structural Funds, the Grants are not specifically focused on raising the competitiveness of the economies of the beneficiary countries. Instead, the Grants invest in a range of policy priorities that are not first and foremost economic. In that context, economic benefits tend to arise as a by-product of investments, rather than a direct effect. For example, investments in environmental protection, public health or cultural heritage initially and primarily bring about positive environmental, health or cultural impacts. Economic

²⁴ COM(2013) 210 final, Cohesion policy: Strategic report 2013 on programme implementation 2007-2013.

benefits then arise indirectly, e.g. through a healthier workforce, reduced costs of dealing with pollution or the attraction of tourists and investors. Whilst these indirect economic effects are important, the donors may wish to strengthen the logic for intervening in particular policy fields if the main priority is to stimulate economic growth and improve competitiveness.

The evidence gathered suggests that the structure and scope of the programmes has an important influence on the potential for impact. Some programmes have defined objectives and eligible activities that are quite broad in scope. The risk is that the supported projects, whilst very worthwhile in their own right and creating a positive impact locally, are too diverse and disparate to achieve the critical mass necessary for a wider impact. However, there are examples of programmes that have adopted a specific focus within the overall scope of the programme area in question rather than attempting to address the full breadth of issues within the programme area. These programmes have then funded a suite of projects addressing a common issue or target group, which constitute a “critical mass” of interventions and thus generate a tangible and visible impact. The effectiveness of such projects can be enhanced by the implementation of strategic projects (usually pre-defined) which can build the capacity of project partners, raise the visibility of activities, communicate successes or provide a national policy framework for action. Examples of such programmes include the Polish programme supporting improvements in territorial governance (PL06), Slovakia’s support for the education of Roma children (SK04), the Portuguese programme for integrated marine and coastal management (PT02) and the renovation of Estonian manor houses (EE05).

3.7.2 Strengthening bilateral relations

In terms of the contribution to the objective of strengthening bilateral relations, we can identify a considerable increase in the scale and diversity of bilateral co-operation in the current period which has the potential to lead to improved relations in the long-term. Indeed, 86% of POs reported that that the Grants will strengthen bilateral relations with the donor countries to a moderate or great extent and 27% to a great extent.

At the European level, there are now deeper and more strategic links between different national players in the donor and beneficiary countries. Those links have been enhanced by various networking events, e.g. for POs and DPPs within specific priority programme areas.

The programme-based approach has created the opportunity for Donor Programme Partners to have a positive impact on the design and implementation of programmes. There is strong support for the role of DPPs across the beneficiary countries and appreciation for their role in promoting the programmes in the donor countries, identifying potential donor project partners and supporting them in the implementation of projects, contributing to the work of Programme Co-operation Committees, commenting on eligibility criteria and helping with the selection of projects. There is scope for the DPPs to have a wider role in promoting all relevant programmes to potential partners in their own country, rather than only a subset as at present. Several stakeholders also highlighted a need to clarify the role of DPPs in the Regulation.

At the project level, there has been a substantial increase in the number of donor project partners compared to the last period. Comprehensive data were not available on the extent bilateral co-operation in the previous period. However, in the priority sector Protecting Cultural Heritage some 59% of projects included a donor project partner in 2009-14 period compared to only 16% in 2004-09.²⁵ The nature of bilateral co-operation varies from project to project. In some cases, the bilateral co-operation is integral to the implementation of the project, whereas in other cases, it is more of a complement, for example, where it involves an exchange of experience. Project promoters were generally satisfied with the bilateral co-operation. Of those responding to the survey and who had a

²⁵ CSES (2015), Mid-Term Evaluation of the Sector Cultural Heritage Under the EEA Grants 2009-14.

donor project partner, 74% described the support received by the donor project partner was “good”, whilst another 22% described it as “acceptable” and only 4% describing it as “poor”.²⁶

In the future, the impact of such co-operation could be enhanced by greater support for project promoters in finding partners in the donor countries, particularly in advance of the publication of calls for proposals. A longer timescale for developing joint project proposals would also be beneficial and should be possible provided that the MoUs and programme agreements can be approved at an earlier stage than was the case for the current programmes. At the same time, there is a limit to the number of potential donor project partners, given the relatively small size of the donor countries; this was reported to be particularly relevant in certain priority sectors such as environmental protection and management.

For the EEA/Norway Grants as a whole, the donors monitor the achievement of a number of aggregated bilateral indicator results, as shown in the table below. The achievement already exceeds the target for two indicators and is at three-quarters against the third.

Table 3.18 Aggregated bilateral indicator results

Indicator	Total		
	Baseline	Achievement	Target
Number of articles published in one country about the other partner country	0	187	251
Number of project partnership agreements	45	1,849	1,071
Number of projects with expected shared results	0	216	162

Source: FMO Documentation, Reporting and Information System (DORIS); extracted 26.05.2016

²⁶ Percentage of respondents excludes those responding “Don’t know”, “Not relevant (no donor project partner)” or “We did not need support”.

4. Efficiency of Programme Management

4.1 Overview of programme management arrangements

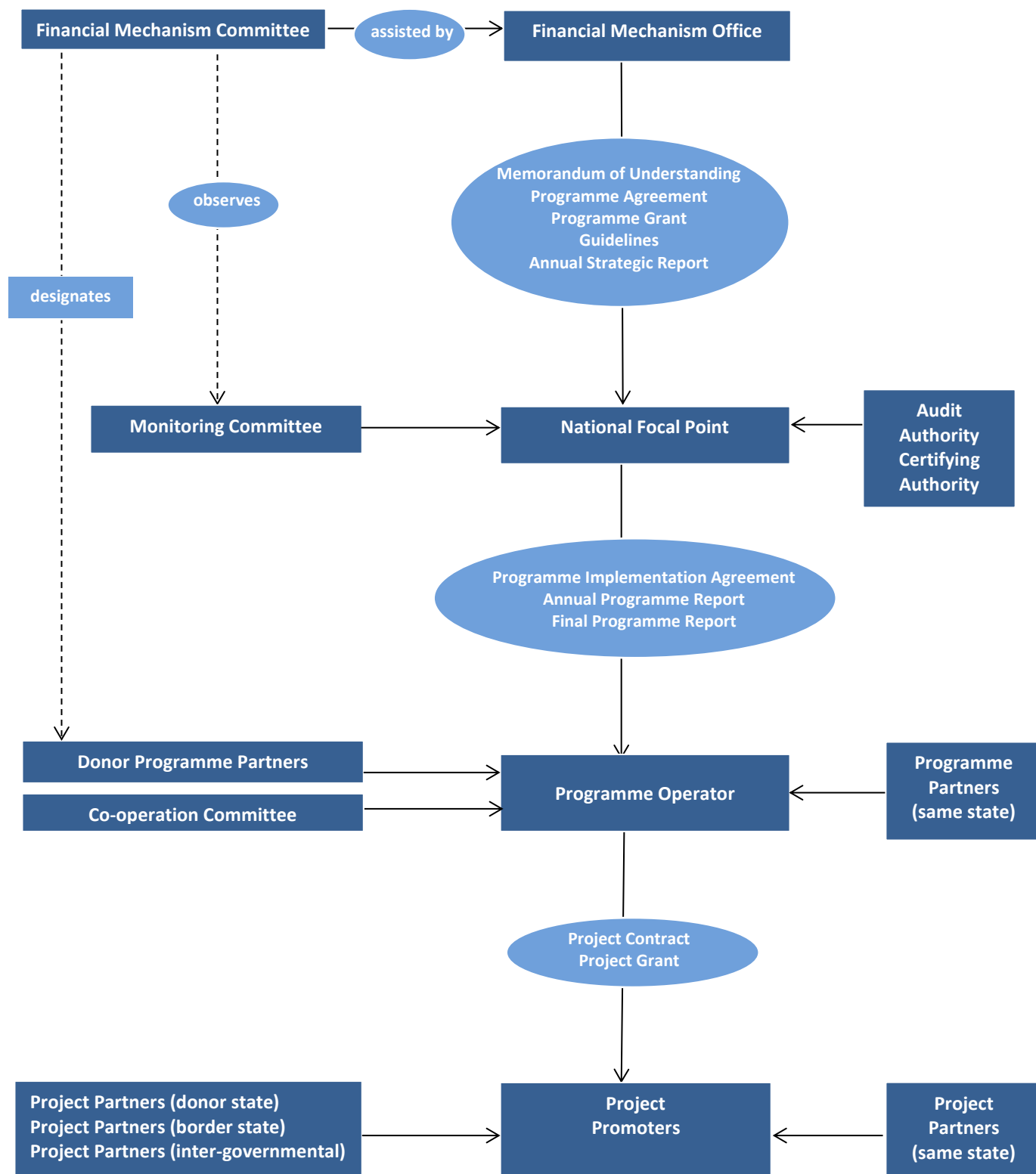
Before presenting our research findings on the efficiency of the EEA/Norway Grants, we summarise here the programme management arrangements, drawing on the Regulation. The Regulation lays down general rules governing the EEA Financial Mechanism. It specifies objectives, principles of implementation and financial contributions. General rules relate to bilateral relations, management and control systems, preparation, appraisal and approval of programmes, selection of projects, eligibility of expenditure, financial management, evaluations and external monitoring and audit.

The key elements are as follows:

- **EEA Financial Mechanism Committee (FMC)** is established by the EFTA States to manage the EEA Financial Mechanism on their behalf.
- **Financial Mechanism Office (FMO)** is responsible for day-to-day administration on behalf of the FMC.
- **National Focal Points (NFP)** are national public entities designated by the beneficiary states to have overall responsibility of the EEA Grants in each country.
- **Monitoring Committees (MC)** are established by the NFP in each country to review progress. They include representatives of the NFP, relevant ministries, local and regional authorities, civil society, the social partners and, where relevant, the private sector.
- **Audit Authorities (AA)** are designated by the beneficiary states to verify effective functioning of the management and control systems.
- **Certifying Authorities (CA)** are designated by the beneficiary states to certify financial information.
- **Programme Operators (PO)** have responsibility for preparing and implementing the programmes.
- **Donor Programme Partners (DPP)** are public entities or inter-governmental organisations designated by the FMC to advise on the preparation and/or implementation of programmes.
- **Programme Partners (PP)** contribute to the implementation of programmes.
- **Project Promoters** have responsibility for initiating, preparing and implementing projects.
- **Project Partners** are organisations in the donor state, border state or same state or inter-governmental bodies that contribute to the implementation of programmes.

The figure below provides a visual illustration.

Figure 4.1 Programme management structure



4.2 Programme-based approach

In contrast to the 2004-09 period, the Grants in the current period have been allocated to about 180 national programmes covering one or more programme areas (PAs), instead of to individual projects. Each country has more than one programme, ranging from 5 each in Croatia, Cyprus and Malta to 23 in Romania.

There is a consensus amongst stakeholders in the donor states and the beneficiary states that **the programme-based approach has improved the efficiency and effectiveness of the Grants** compared to the previous period, although not without some difficulties. The advantages and disadvantages of the programme-based approach are as follows.

The programme-based approach has **enabled the Grants to be targeted in a much more strategic way**. Each programme includes strategic objectives that guide the selection of projects and that provide a focus for monitoring impact and demonstrating progress. Project activities and effects are seen as not merely beneficial in their own right but as collectively contributing to the achievement of the overall objectives and targets of each programme. This shifts the focus of monitoring away from the achievement of project outputs (although that remains important) and towards the achievement of programme outcomes and results.

Indeed, the overwhelming majority of POs responding to the survey supported this point:

- 82% of POs reported that their **programmes are in line with national policy**. In Bulgaria, Croatia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovenia and Spain all POs described the programme as very relevant/relevant (i.e. giving 4 out of 5 or 5 out of 5). Only a few POs in Czech Republic (CZ09), Greece (GR03), Poland (PL05), Portugal (PT05) and Slovakia (SK09, SK10) reported that their programmes were not in line with national policies (7% of total respondents). As we show in section 3 and in the separate country summaries, this varies from programme to programme. For example, within the priority sector of “Environmental Protection and Management”, it includes supporting national activity to comply with EU legislation (e.g. in PA01), or national strategies to promote adaptation to climate change, protect air quality or ensure energy safety. However, in other priority sectors, such as Green Industry Innovation, the programmes are less specifically focused on promoting the objectives of national policy.
- 84% of POs reported that their **programmes are focused**. In Bulgaria, Croatia, Estonia, Latvia, Portugal, Romania and Slovenia, all POs described their programmes as “very relevant” or “relevant” (i.e. giving 4 out of 5 or 5 out of 5). Only 8% of POs reported that the programme is not focused (i.e. giving 1 or 2 out of 5). This happened in Cyprus (CY02, CY04) Czech Republic (CZ02, CZ06, CZ09), Greece (GR03), Poland (PL05), Portugal (PT05), Slovakia (SK09). In the priority sector of Environmental protection and management, 100% of POs report that their programmes are focused (i.e. giving 4 or 5 out of 5). Evidence from our review of programme data and documentation and from the interviews supports this assertion in some cases where a critical mass of projects focuses on specific issues or territories (e.g. geo-thermal energy in the Azores). But in Romania the evidence suggests that some programmes have a focus that is too broad, meaning that a very diverse selection of projects is supported, which makes it difficult to have a tangible and visible impact on specific issues.
- 76% of POs reported that their **programmes are strategic**. In Croatia, Estonia, Latvia, Portugal, Romania (92%) and Spain 100% of respondents described the programme as very relevant/relevant (i.e. giving 4 out of 5 or 5 out of 5). Less than 10% of respondents judged the programmes as not strategic. This happened in Cyprus (CY02), Czech Republic (CZ06), Greece (GR02, GR03), Poland (PL05, PL07, PL12), Slovakia (SK09) and Slovenia (SI03). In terms of thematic areas, strategic programmes have been developed mainly under the priority area Human and Social Development, including public health (35 respondents reported that their programmes

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were strategic). This is supported by the review of programme documentation and by the interviews that confirmed that the public health programmes were undertaking strategic interventions, including the development of national strategies for effective disease prevention, and strengthening public health monitoring. Cross-sectoral programmes are perceived as less strategic compared to programmes focusing on a specific thematic area.

In line with that, **the Grants have been customised in line with the needs and priorities of each beneficiary state**. In short, the programme-based approach allows the Grants to pursue a more comprehensive strategy (or strategies) in each country. For example, Poland has been able to prioritise improvements in the energy efficiency of its public buildings (distributing Grants of €68.6m), whilst Greece has invested a considerable proportion of its funds (€16.3m) in strengthening its migration management system. Moreover, the Regulation and programme-based approach has enabled appropriate variation in size and coverage of programmes in different countries. For example, those beneficiary states receiving relatively small amounts of funding have been able to have a small number of programmes, each of which covers multiple programme areas. Other beneficiary states have been able to allocate to programme areas that are of particular interest to them, even if those PAs are not supported in other countries, for example, support for carbon capture and storage in the Czech Republic.

Customisation by country is also reflected in the **extent to which programmes are shaped by demand to open calls** i.e. the precise activities taking place depend on which project applications are submitted and selected rather than being specified in advance. Three-quarters of POs in the sector of climate change, renewable energy and green industry innovation reported that their programmes were shaped by open calls, followed by 50% of POs in the area of environmental protection and management. In the area of Human and Social Development less than 50% of POs perceived that programmes are shaped by demand to open calls, with the exception of public health where this perception is considerably higher. Finally, in the sector of Justice and Home Affairs approximately two-thirds of POs do not think that demand to open calls is relevant.

The programme approach has reduced the administrative burden of the FMO and allowed it to focus more on strategic issues. The FMO is no longer required to assess all project applications and issue grant agreements, which is now undertaken by POs. Instead, the FMO checks compliance against the Regulation and Programme Agreements, monitors progress against objectives and provides advice and support on programme management and sector issues. In addition, reporting from the beneficiary countries has also been streamlined, i.e. reports are required to be submitted to the donors for each programme, not for each project.²⁷ In Croatia, Cyprus, Malta and Slovenia, it has also been possible to combine the Strategic Report with the Annual Report, given the small sums of money involved. For the DPPs, it is easier to establish bilateral relations under a programme-based approach. This is in contrast to the previous period, when it was harder to establish bilateral relations across a large number of projects. At the same time, DPPs must be aware of and take into account variations in the application and management processes in different countries.

Balanced against this benefit is the fact that **establishing programme management arrangements has proved problematic and/or time-consuming in the beneficiary states**. As one NFP said “A programme-based approach means more responsibility is left to the beneficiary countries; this is positive but it has required more work”. Indeed, in one sense, there are now more bodies involved in programme management both in the donor and beneficiary states. As highlighted in our recent evaluation of the EEA Grants for the cultural sector (PA16, PA17), the process of putting in place programme management arrangements has been more difficult in some countries than in others. For example, stakeholders in Latvia (interviewed as part of the cultural sector evaluation) reported that

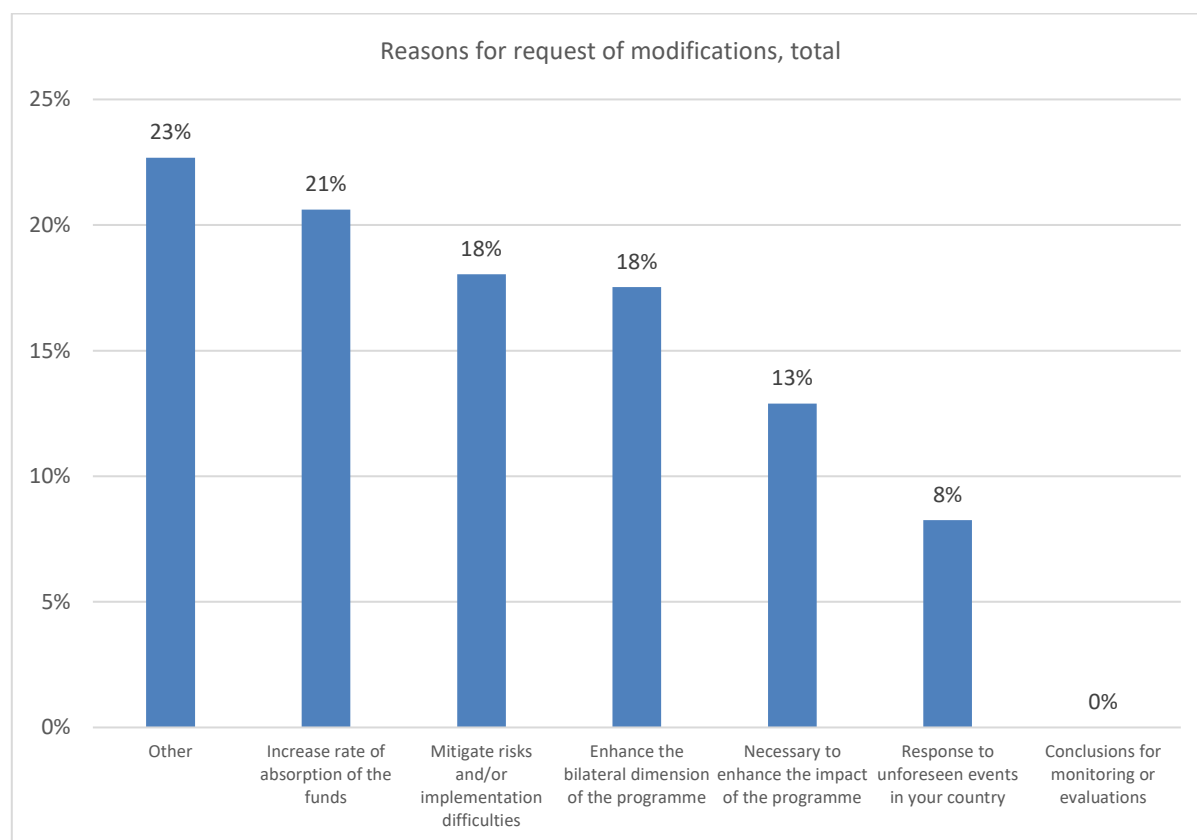
²⁷ Evidence from this mid-term review confirmed and reinforced this finding from the recent Mid-Term Evaluation of the Sector Cultural Heritage Under the EEA Grants 2009-14 (completed in 2015).

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POs were already in place from the last period and that it was not difficult to appoint a Certifying Authority or Audit Authority. However, in other countries, the introduction of the programme-based approach has required a considerable effort on the part of national authorities. For example, in Romania, it has been necessary to introduce national legislation to appoint the POs and authorise them to handle funds; in that country, the PO is also the Managing Authority for EU Structural Funds. Difficulties were reported (Czech Republic), where further negotiation with the FMO and clarification (e.g. over roles and responsibilities) was necessary during the implementation phase (i.e. after approval of the Programme Agreement). A determinant of effectiveness in setting up the programme-based approach has been the availability of experienced staff and the speed at which such individuals can be deployed. Indeed, some countries interviewed reported that staff shortages in the initial stages had delayed the implementation of the programmes.²⁸

Programme management has been assisted by the possibility to make modifications. According to the POs that responded to the survey, the majority of the programmes required a modification which has been usually approved. Overall, 21% of the POs reported that requests for modification were due to the increase rate of the absorption of the funds. Another reason for modification provided was the need to mitigate risks or address implementation difficulties (18%) as well as to enhance the bilateral dimension of the programme (18%). Less relevant seem to be modifications to enhance the impact of the programme or due to respond to unforeseen events. According to the POs, these modifications usually had a positive impact: almost three-quarters of the respondents report that the programme became much more or slightly more effective, whereas only 7% reported that the modifications made no difference.

Figure 4.2 Reasons for programme modifications



Source: CSES survey of POs

²⁸ CSES (2015), Mid-Term Evaluation of the Sector Cultural Heritage Under the EEA Grants 2009-14.

There are benefits from the **potential of the programme-based approach of the EEA/Norway Grants to mirror that of the EU Structural Funds**. All of the beneficiary states (except Croatia) now have a decade's experience in implementing EU Structural Funds programmes, plus the experience of implementing pre-accession programmes (in the case of those that joined in 2004 and 2007). Many of the ministries that perform the role of NFP or PO are also involved in management of EU Structural Funds programmes. They have established programme management systems and are steadily increasing their expertise and experience, which is being (or has the potential to be) put at the service of the EEA/Norway Grants programmes. Whilst there is a need for the EEA/Norway Grants to retain a focus that is distinct from the EU Structural Funds, there is clear merit in having management and administrative processes that are broadly similar.

The reallocation of unspent funds has been facilitated by the programme-based approach. Where funds remain unspent for whatever reason (e.g. low response to calls, under-spends by projects, failure of projects to commence), the relevant programme bodies have been given discretion (within the parameters set by the EEA Regulation and the respective Programme Agreements) to reallocate funds in a way that promotes the achievement of the overall objectives of the programmes. This not only reduces the administrative burden associated with the Grants but also increases the potential for impact.

It might be beneficial to reduce the number of programmes in the next period, given the administrative and management effort that is required to negotiate Programme Agreements, establish POs, prepare Strategic Reports and Annual Reports and so on. Moreover, the average value of funds provided to each programme by the EEA/Norway Grants is much less than for the EU Structural Funds. Here a balance needs to be struck between reducing administration and retaining a clear focus on priorities. In those countries that receive only a small amount of funding (in absolute terms) from the EEA/Norway Grants, it is inevitable that programmes will be small. However, elsewhere there may be scope to reduce the number of programmes in two ways. First, in the next period, the beneficiary states could be encouraged to propose more programmes that cover more than one PA. Second, it might be possible to merge some PAs. In both cases, it would still be possible to target resources on specific fields by having dedicated calls. This would also reduce the potential for confusion on the part of applicants, in those cases where activities in different programmes can sometimes be similar, e.g. under PA10 (Funds for NGOs) and PA11 (Children and Youth at Risk). There might also be scope to create programmes that cover more than one, and perhaps even all, beneficiary states, where there is less need to customise activity to national circumstances and where the money available is modest.

4.3 Programme management

4.3.1 Models of programme management

Each of the beneficiary countries has adopted its own **model of programme management** within the parameters set by the Regulation and as agreed with the FMO. These naturally reflect the size of the funds available and the prevailing governance arrangements in each country. It does not appear that any one model of management is inherently more efficient across all 16 beneficiary countries; instead, any variations in efficiency tend to reflect specific national circumstances and/or the complexity or riskiness of individual programmes.

In most countries, either the Ministry of Finance or the Ministry of Regional Development or European Funds/Affairs has fulfilled the role of NFP, with different Ministries acting as PO. This model has been effective in some countries. Moreover, independent research into the risk of corruption in the EEA

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and Norway Grants has warned of the risks of limited separation of functions between the NFP and other actors.²⁹

In **Estonia**, the Ministry of Finance is the Managing Authority for EU Structural Funds and the NFP for the EEA/Norway Grants, whilst the role of PO is performed by different Ministries. This division of responsibilities was recognised by all the stakeholders interviewed (including representatives of the donor states) as being efficient and effective. The NFP has used the same administrative processes and information systems as for the EU Structural Funds, which reduces the costs of programme management. It has also sought to decentralise responsibility for performance and for the achievement of objectives to the Ministries (which it sees as having the necessary competence to fulfil their role as POs), whilst also maintaining a constructive and supportive role in its contacts with them, for example, in the context of programme monitoring committees and in day-to-day co-operation. Moreover, the POs were reported by different stakeholders (including donor representatives and POs) to be performing their roles effectively. Perhaps reflecting these positive findings, the MoU and programmes were approved at a relatively early stage, the proportion of funds disbursed has been high and the programmes were mostly on track to achieve the desired effects. This notwithstanding, it was reported that the NFP has tended to be understaffed and had experienced some changes in personnel; strengthening the capacity of the NFP might thus help it to perform even more effectively, e.g. in terms of facilitating greater co-ordination between POs and programmes.

Lithuania has a unique way of allocating programme management responsibilities. The role of NFP is performed by the Ministry of Finance's International Financial Assistance Coordination Division (IFACD). The Ministry of Finance is also responsible for EU Structural Funds, so there is some degree of co-ordination between these sources of funding, even if different units are responsible for each. In each programme (except those for NGOs and Decent Work), the PO responsibilities are divided between the relevant Ministry and the Central Project Management Agency (CPMA). The Ministries retain responsibility for the policy, strategic and/or bilateral aspects of the implementation of the programmes, whereas the CPMA fulfils administrative roles, including reviewing payment requests made by project promoters, verifying the eligibility of expenditure and undertaking on-the-spot checks. Responsibility for monitoring projects is shared between the Ministries and the CPMA. The rationale for this division of responsibilities is that the CPMA (with many years' experience of managing programmes) can provide the necessary technical expertise which tends to be lacking in the Ministries. It also provides consistency with the EU Structural Funds, for which the CPMA performs a similar role.

Stakeholders in Lithuania were generally supportive of this approach, despite occasional problems in communication and co-operation between the two bodies and the longer procedures required. It provides a degree of consistency in the contractual requirements placed on projects in different programmes. In their role as POs, the Ministries have contributed to the design of programmes; for example, the Ministry of the Social Security and Labour engaged external researchers to advise on the measures that would be the most effective in creating the desired long-term impact of the programme for children and youth at risk (LT05). The Ministries have also retained close contact with project promoters, are familiar with their activities and are able to monitor the achievement of project aims, outputs and outcomes. On that basis, they are able to link the outcomes of the programmes to national policy objectives and propose follow-on action. For example, the outcomes of the pilot projects funded by the EEA Grants (programme LT02) are informing the Ministry of the Environment in its preparation of the National Water Strategy and in planning environmental activities to be financed under the Rural Development Fund and the ERDF for 2014–2020.

²⁹ Transparency International (2015), Addressing Corruption Risk in the EEA and Norway Grants, p14

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In **Poland**, the Ministry for Infrastructure and Development serves as NFP, as well as the Managing Authority for all national EU Structural Funds programme (i.e. not those focused on specific Voivodeships). The role of PO is performed by the relevant national ministries (i.e. environment, health, justice, interior and administration, labour and social policy) or by other national public bodies (e.g. Central Board of Correctional Services), except for those programmes focused on NGOs, green industry, decent work, research and scholarships. Although Poland is the recipient of the largest volume of funds, it performed well in establishing its arrangements for programme management. The programming stage in 2011 was reported (in the 2011 Strategic Report) to have progressed smoothly and the timeliness of approving programmes, launching the first project and disbursing funds has been reasonable compared to other countries. In addition, the relevant Ministries have been able to design the programmes in light of identified needs and to draw on programme outcomes in the design of national policy for the post-2014 period. For example, the Ministry of Health ensured that programmes PL07 were based on the strategic priorities of health policy, including amelioration of perinatal care, adaptation of health care to the needs of a fast growing population of chronically ill people, and prevention of cancer. As a result, these programmes are testing new approaches and, provided that they are successful, these approaches will then be implemented them across Poland with mainstream national funding. Some difficulties were experienced due to the high turnover of staff in some POs. This was reduced at the end of 2014 when a 75% top-up for staff involved in projects financed by EU funds or other donors was approved.

In **Portugal**, the NFP is a separate body (Unidade Nacional de Gestão) that reports to the Ministry of Planning and Infrastructure - the only government Ministry involved in managing the EEA Grants in Portugal. This differs somewhat from the other beneficiary countries, where the NFP is usually located within the Ministries of Finance or equivalent and where the POs are often other ministries. As the NFP was a new body (created by Ministerial Council Resolution n. 26/2012 of 14 March), there was some lack of capacity in the early stages. However, this arrangement seems to work well and has allowed the programme management to be relatively streamlined, particularly since the Integrated and Coastal Management programme accounts for a large proportion of the funds. Indeed, there is a consensus amongst POs, DPPs and the Norwegian embassy regarding the positive role played by the NFP. POs reported instances of the NFP offering practical support to address problems faced, such as in the tendering process for the geothermal plant, in the monitoring of projects within PT04 and due to the failure of the electronic platform for applications within PT06.

In contrast to other countries, the NFP in the **Czech Republic** has served as PO for 10 of the 16 programmes (i.e. except for the programmes focused on NGOs, scholarships, research, gender equality and decent work). Within these programmes, the relevant Ministries provide support to the Ministry of Finance. In practice, this means that programme management roles are shared between the two ministries. Typically, the other ministries define priorities for support, establish selection criteria, appoint evaluators of applications and oversee the application process, whereas the Ministry of Finance oversees performance and implementation of projects and monitors the fulfilment of the objectives of the programme. According to the NFP, the rationale for this division of responsibilities is to draw on the Ministry of Finance's experience of administering grants in the previous period, learn lessons from the involvement of line ministries as PO in Swiss-Czech cooperation and to minimise the possibility for financial irregularities and potentially reduce the costs of programme management, as well as to reduce the potential for conflicts of interest, for example, where project promoters (such as hospitals) operate under the control of a Ministry that also acts as PO. However, independent research has suggested that the limited separation of functions in the grants management structure increases the risk of corruption in the Czech Republic.³⁰ Moreover, several of the stakeholders criticised this approach for being unnecessarily centralised, lacking coherence, hindering communication with DPPs

³⁰ Transparency International (2015), Addressing Corruption Risk in the EEA and Norway Grants, Annex 2: Czech Republic Country Report

and focusing overly on compliance rather than performance against programme objectives. It would also seem that the Ministry of Finance will typically be less able than other Ministries to address risks related to achievement of programme objectives, for example, through monitoring changes in legislation or engaging relevant stakeholders. This approach also seems to weaken the link to the EU Structural Funds programmes, which are managed by ministries other than the Ministry of Finance (e.g. Environment, Transport, Regional Development) although those Ministries are involved as programme partners in the EEA/Norway Grants.³¹ Moreover, the implementation of the programmes has been more delayed in the Czech Republic than in some other countries with the Programme Agreements approved fairly late and a very high proportion of projects requiring an extension; the situation was reported to have improved since a reorganisation of the roles and the staff within the Ministry of Finance.

Programme management in some countries has given cause for concern and required additional monitoring of risk by the FMO. Indeed, payments of EEA/Norway Grants relating to the 2004-09 period were suspended in **Bulgaria** (from 3.9.2008 to 10.6.2009) following the European Commission decision of to withdraw the accreditation of the Central Finance and Contracts Unit (CFCU). The situation in Bulgaria was made more unstable by the resignation of the Oresharski government in July 2014 (after little more than one year in power), which was followed by a caretaker government and another parliamentary election in October 2014. In Bulgaria, the EEA/Norway Grants are managed separately from the EU Structural Funds, which limits the opportunity for synergy. **Greece** also faced a suspension in payments (from 19.5.2011 to 8.8.2011) because of a failure to provide promised levels of co-funding to projects and a lack of documentation on payments already made.³² Similarly, payments to **Hungary** were suspended in May 2014. According to the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, this followed a unilateral decision by the Hungarian authorities to move the implementation and monitoring of the Grants scheme out of central government administration, in breach of the agreements governing the funding.³³

In the three countries receiving the smallest amounts of funding (**Croatia, Cyprus, Malta**), it has proved efficient for the NFPs to also perform the role of PO (except for support for NGOs and the Global Fund for Decent Work and Tripartite Dialogue) and for most or all of the funds to be allocated to pre-defined projects. Those three countries have gained approval of the MoUs and Programme Agreements relatively quickly and launched the first projects at a relatively early stage.³⁴ In **Cyprus**, the small size of the programme has meant that the NFP/PO can have a close working relationship with all project promoters. This includes nominating a designated contact officer within the NFP/PO for each project and having bi-monthly meetings with all project promoters to discuss progress, consider any risks and agree a set of actions to be taken over the next 2-6 months. This model of programme management appears to be effective; the main reported difficulties were reported to result from financial difficulties arising from the financial crisis, which manifested themselves in a shortage of staff within the NFP.

4.3.2 Adherence to programme standards

In the management of programmes, the beneficiary states must also adhere to **programme standards** relating to human rights, good governance, sustainable development and gender equality. The expectation is that the “modus operandi” of all programmes and projects will at least respect these standards, if not directly promote them. This is, of course, in addition to having programmes and

³¹ The NFP reported that the donors did not specify the need for any particular link to the management of the EU Structural Funds.

³² Report on irregularities in the EEA and Norway Grants 2004-09, 31 March 2015

³³ See: <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/topics/european-policy/norwaygrants/diverse-saker/Suspension-of-funds-to-Hungary/id2008980/>

³⁴ In the case of Croatia, the process of negotiating the MoU and programmes started at a later date, linked to Croatia’s accession to the EU.

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projects that specifically focus on these issues, for example, within PA14/PA28 “Mainstreaming Gender Equality and Promoting Work-Life Balance”.

Comprehensive information is not available on the approaches taken to ensuring adherence with programme standard or on the extent to which adherence has been ensured. For example, this is not covered in the national Strategic Reports on the implementation of the EEA/Norway Financial Mechanisms (FMs) or in the FMO Annual Reports. When asked about programme standards during the interviews, the different programme management bodies (FMO, NFPs, POs, DPPs) tended to refer to the specific programmes and projects that focus on these issues rather than the adherence to standards across all activities. However, the interviews did offer some insights.

At the programme level, the EEA/Norway FMs do not by themselves prescribe a specific approach to these issues but instead work through the existing legislative framework and governance arrangements of the beneficiary states. In that context, some POs highlighted their compliance with relevant national law as being the way in which they adhere to programme standards. For example, one PO referred to Estonia’s Public Procurement Act as a means of ensuring transparency and equal treatment of potential contractors. Another reported that the programme standard of gender equality was ensured through compliance with the Equal Opportunities Law of the Republic of Lithuania. National legislation can also ensure respect for sustainability through the requirement for an environmental impact assessment to be undertaken before certain activities can take place; for example, this was required under Portuguese law before the establishment of the geothermal plant in Terceira and in Romania in respect of certain investments in renewable energy (RO06). Adherence at the programme level can also be supported by formal processes and procedures. For example, in Lithuania the “programme internal procedures manual” outlines measures to prevent, identify and manage cases of corruption and mismanagement. POs also considered that engagement of a range of stakeholders (including NGOs) in the design and implementation of programmes had been a useful means of ensuring good governance and transparency.

At the project level, one the main means of adhering to programme standards has been to incorporate them into the criteria for selecting projects. POs for several of the Polish programmes reported that applicants were required to suggest the likely impact of their projects on these issues, which then determined the score given to the application. Companies applying to the Romanian programme for Green Industry Innovation (RO17) were required to show a balance between the proportions of men and women staff and also the extent to which disadvantaged groups were employed, such as Roma. Some POs also reported that adherence to the standards by projects featured in project implementation agreements and was the subject of ongoing monitoring during the implementation period. In the case of Romania (RO03), this included disaggregating into male/female those indicators that related to numbers of individual participants. To support adherence, information and advice about the standards is often included in guidelines for applicants. Beyond that, “soft” support is often given, for example, through encouraging project promoters to make use of environmentally-friendly practices.

4.4 Additionality and proportionality

4.4.1 Additionality

A concern of any donor providing assistance to other countries is that funds are additional, i.e. they do not substitute for or displace national funding and are complementary to activities funded by other donors. Within the EEA/Norway Grants, steps have been taken to ensure additionality at different levels.

A degree of **additionality at European level** has been ensured by the specification of programme areas that would not usually be supported by EU funds. This includes, in particular, activities in the field of public health (PA13, PA27), as well as justice and home affairs (PA29-32), for which the EU provides

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very little, if any, grant funding. Indeed, fields such as human rights, support for civil society and building capacity of democratic institutions, are very much donor priorities and would not receive the same level of support (whether from EU or national funding) in the absence of the EEA/Norway Grants. Moreover, some stakeholders also reported that the EEA/Norway Grants are more flexible than EU funding and that they allow more innovative projects (no stakeholders contradicted this view).

Some **additionality has been ensured through support for organisations that would typically struggle to access EU funds**. In particular, PA10 provides support for the development of civil society in the form of grants to NGOs. Whilst some international foundations provide similar support, no such support is available from the EU.³⁵ Moreover, some of the beneficiary countries have no particular tradition or current practice of supporting NGOs in this way and to this extent. In addition to the NGO programme, the EEA/Norway Grants have also operated small grant schemes that are easier for small organisations to access, including NGOs.

At national level, **some programmes have been designed to focus on areas that would not be covered by EU Structural Funds programmes** in the same country. This can be addressed in different ways, such as by defining the priorities of support within PAs and in calls for proposals, as well as in the processes of assessing applications.

Last, additionality has been ensured in some cases by **expending the EEA/Norway Grants on specific types of activities** that are not supported by the relevant Structural Funds programmes. Very often the EEA/Norway Grants, given their modest size relevant to the EU Structural Funds, are used to co-finance pilot projects, research, feasibility studies, preparatory works or capacity-building. Such activities are then followed and complemented by larger investments in infrastructure, service provision, etc. financed by the EU Structural Funds.

For example, in Estonia the programme covering PA01, PA03 and PA07 (EE02) has funded activities such as the preparation of a National Climate Change Adaptation Strategy and Action Plan, compilation of an inventory of bird habitats and the development methodology for evaluating the environmental state of coastal habitats. These “soft” investments will be followed by larger investments funded by the Operational Programme for Cohesion Policy, such as the physical restoration of habitats or the restoration and reconstruction of protected parks. Similarly, the Polish programme on Schengen co-operation (PL15) has funded training and networking, as a complement to EU investments in border infrastructure. Moreover, some of the participants in training funded by the Norway Grants, such as military police, would not be ineligible as beneficiaries of EU-funded support.

It is worth noting that some countries, notably **Greece**, face very severe reductions in total public expenditure, given their continuing debt crisis. In this context, one interviewee suggested that EEA/Norway Grants were essential in Greece but were acting as “emergency” funding rather than serving a comprehensive, additional strategy.

4.4.2 Alignment with EU funds processes

A consistent message from the stakeholders interviewed was the desirability of having the compliance and reporting requirements of EEA/Norway Grants funding closely aligned to those of the EU Structural Funds. There may be scope for this to increase, for example, in any revision of the Regulation. The reporting system and timelines of the EEA/Norway grants support the financial reporting cycle in the FMs ensuring proper information flow to the donors. But those systems and timelines differ to those used for EU funds. Also, financial forecasts for the EEA/Norway Grants are

³⁵ NGOs are eligible to access many EU funds, although this is not usually in order to build their own capacity. For example, some NGOs receive funding from the European Social Fund to provide training for unemployed people. Others might access funding from the Europe for Citizens programme to provide opportunities for citizens to participate in the EU policy-making process.

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based on 4 month periods (reflecting the national budgeting processes of the donor states) whereas for EU funding they are based on calendar quarters. It is worth noting that the EEA/Norway Grants offer some advantages for project promoters compared to EU funds, most notably the fact that they are based on pre-financing allowing advance payments whereas EU funds are based on reimbursement of incurred expenditure.

These differences notwithstanding, the evidence from this mid-term review suggests that a close alignment depends very much on the approaches taken at national level in the beneficiary states. As we have noted above in section 4.3, the role of NFPs and POs is performed by the same bodies responsible for EU funds in some countries. Those bodies very often apply the same administrative and management processes to the EEA/Norway Grants as they do to EU Structural Funds. The benefits of such an approach are multiple: the processes have been accepted by EU bodies, they are established by or compliant with the national law of the beneficiary states, they are understood by applicants, and staff of the NFPs or POs are experienced in applying them. In fact, some NFPs and POs suggested that these processes went beyond the requirements of the EEA Regulation because they the requirements of the EU Financial Regulation and/or of national legislation were seen as more demanding than the requirements of the EEA/Norway Grants.

It was reported that the processes for the EU Structural Funds had been used (with appropriate modifications) for the EEA/Norway Grants in countries including Cyprus, Estonia, Lithuania and Poland. In **Estonia**, for example, the EEA/Norway Grants use the same administrative processes and information systems as the EU Structural Funds; all the financial data from the Grants is entered into the same system, which allows the NFP to check that invoices are not double-paid (i.e. by both EU Structural Funds and the Grants). POs, including the Ministry of Social Affairs have also used similar application forms (including budget forms) to those used for the EU Structural Funds. In **Cyprus**, the same processes were used, although the EEA/Norway Grants and the EU Structural Funds are overseen by different Directorates within the Directorate General for European programmes, Co-ordination and Development. Within Poland, there is an internal committee combining interests from various ministries and services/agencies to coordinate activities to monitor the implementation of projects under EU & other funds. The committee decides what projects get financed and ensures that procedures are aligned across different funds.

In contrast, in other countries there may be scope to align the management processes of the EEA/Norway with those of the EU Structural Funds. For example, in the **Czech Republic** it was reported that there are few links between the management of the EEA/Norway Grants and the management of EU Structural Funds, except for the Certification Authority and the Audit Authority (within the Ministry of Finance), which are the same for both funds.

4.4.3 Simplifications

In order to strike an appropriate balance between efficient distribution of funds and ensuring accountability, a number of simplifications have been allowed within the EEA Regulation and/or introduced by NFPs and POs.

Pre-defined projects have been an efficient way to allocate funds in certain circumstances. Under the terms of the Regulation, beneficiary countries have the possibility to “pre-define” projects, either in the MoU or in the Annex to the programme proposal. POs are required to appraise pre-defined projects, prior to signing a contract with the project promoter. As shown in Table 3.2, more than 300 projects of the +6,000 have been pre-defined, i.e. around 5%. Pre-defined projects have been more common in those PAs that are most closely aligned with the national policy priorities of the beneficiary states, including justice and home affairs (where pre-defined projects account for more than one-third of all projects) and environmental protection and management (where pre-defined projects account for about 10% of all projects). In contrast, the PAs that are more “donor-driven” and/or that support smaller projects tend to involve a much smaller proportion of pre-defined projects, including Funds

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for NGOs (PA10), Decent Work and Tripartite Dialogue (PA22) and Research and scholarship (PA18, PA19, PA23, PA24).

According to the POs, pre-defined projects tend to be more in line with national policies and more strategic compared to projects implemented through calls for proposal: more than 90% of the PO responding to the survey say that pre-defined projects are strategic. Overall more than half of the POs report that pre-defined projects have been effective for all the projects or at least for some of them.

There are several reasons for the effectiveness of pre-defined projects. Pre-defining a project can allow an early start to be made for complex interventions that require lengthy procurement, planning, risk-assessment, etc. Indeed, such preparations can start prior to approval of the programme agreement. Pre-defined projects are also useful where the funds address very specific issues and where there is only one organisation with the capacity or authority to intervene, e.g. specialist interventions in marine conservation. It can also be appropriate to pre-define projects that serve as a strategic complement (e.g. by providing capacity building) to a portfolio of projects selected via open calls. Pre-defined projects have been particularly useful in countries with small countries receiving relatively small allocations of funds, e.g. Croatia, Cyprus, Malta; in these countries, the level of funds does not merit an open call and national policy priorities might be best served by a single project in each programme area. Pre-defined projects can also be an effective way to reallocate funds at short notice and where open calls for proposals would further reduce a timescale that is already short. For example, funds were reallocated to pre-defined projects within PL04 when the carbon capture and storage programme was withdrawn.

Whilst most pre-defined projects are expected to be effective, a small number are not. Of the POs responding to the survey, 11 reported that pre-defined projects had not been effective, although of those, only 2 were responsible for programmes that featured pre-defined projects. Another 23 POs reported that it was too early to say whether pre-defined projects had been effective (although some of those were responsible for programmes that did not feature pre-defined projects). Evidence from the interviews suggests that in some cases, it can be hard to gain donor approval for pre-defined projects if the projects do not reflect donor priorities. Beyond that, the interview evidence suggests that it is not the fact of being pre-defined that makes a project difficult to implement. Instead, it is the case that large and complex projects are more likely to be pre-defined. For such projects, the most commonly-reported problem was the long timescale and administrative burden associated with public procurement (e.g. in CZ, PL). For example, two calls for tenders failed to attract any bidders within one pre-defined project in Lithuania ('Preparation of national study on the distribution and state of the main ecosystems services on Lithuanian territory', No. LT03-0003); a contract was signed after a third call but was later cancelled due to the poor performance of the project. As already noted (in section 3.4.2), one pre-defined project in the Czech Republic's children and youth at risk programme (CZ04) was cancelled due to a change of government (and thus a lack of political support).

There was a consensus amongst the stakeholders interviewed that projects selected via open calls can be equally, if not more, effective under certain circumstances. Open calls can be more beneficial where there is sufficient funding to justify them and where there is the potential for competition between applicants. They can offer equal access to funding for all potential applicants and more transparency in decision-making. They also allow the possibility for strong but "unexpected" projects to emerge. At the same time, open calls need not mean any loss of focus: approximately two-thirds of POs responding to the survey agreed that projects implemented through calls for proposal are strategic and/or in line with national priorities.

Many POs have taken steps to introduce **simplifications and other support measures** that will facilitate the process of applying for funds and implementing projects. They routinely operate information days to promote calls for proposals and provide information about the requirements at application stage. Many also operate help-desks or the possibility of one-on-one meetings in advance

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of submission. Such direct contact with applicants is seen as essential, for example in explaining detailed requirements of the application process, such as calculations of expected returns on investment. One of the most important simplifications has been the gradual introduction of electronic submission of application forms (e.g. in Czech Republic, Portugal) or of claims (e.g. in Lithuania). The possibility for electronic submissions should be introduced in all countries and programmes, where not already in place. Some 10% of POs responding to the survey reported that they had used selection procedures different to those specified by the EEA Regulation (as permitted in exceptional circumstances).

These simplifications and support measures appear to have been effective. More than 80% of the project promoters responding to the survey considered that the quality of information provided on the POs' websites and in programme guides as "good" or "very good". Moreover, the application process is perceived as "clear" by almost 60% of the project promoters and "very clear" by another 25%. However, the application process was unclear for approximately 10% of respondents. A lack of clarity was most likely to be reported in by project promoters in the Czech Republic (particularly within CZ02, CZ08, CZ11, CZ12, CZ13) and Portugal (particularly within PT02, PT04, PT07). Project promoters report that support, advice and guidance received by POs was generally very satisfactory, with only a few project promoters reporting otherwise, mainly in Estonia (EE09, EE11) and Portugal (PT02, PT04).

According to the majority of project promoters responding to the survey, the quality of interim and final report templates was "good" or "very good". This positive outcome is likely to be related to the good level of guidance provided to project promoters on how to complete the interim and final report: four out of five respondents felt that they had been well supported. However, there were some differences between countries. For example, in Portugal 35% of respondents felt they had not been guided adequately. The process for claiming grant funding was reported by 75% of project promoters to be "clear". However, in the Czech Republic and Portugal project promoters reported challenges in the clarity of the claims process. In contrast, all respondents in Cyprus and Lithuania rated the clarity as "clear" or "very clear".

It does seem as though the selection procedures specified in the EEA Regulation are appropriate to the different contexts of the beneficiary states. Only 9 POs reported that they have used different selection procedures to those specified by the EEA Regulation, namely in Czech Republic (CZ04, CZ09), Latvia (LV06), Malta (MT02), Poland (PL10), Portugal (PT05) and Romania (RO14, RO19, RO23).

4.4.4 Risk assessment

An important part of safeguarding donor control requirements is to ensure effective **risk management**. This responsibility lies mainly with the NFPs, which are required by Article 4.3 of the EEA Grants Regulation and the Norway Grants Regulation to assess the risks to implementation and take any necessary actions, including verifying any documents provided to the FMC/NMFA. NFPs report the results of their risk management activities in their Annual Strategic Reports. Similarly, POs also report on their approach to risk management in the Annual Programme Reports. Both types of report include specific annexes that assess risks related to (non-)fulfilment of the cohesion and bilateral objectives and also to operational issues. Each risk is assessed in terms of its nature, likelihood and consequence of risk varies between countries and between programmes. The NFPs and POs then state what action is being or has been taken to mitigate each risk. The actions taken vary from country to country. However, the most common include:

- Additional or enhanced monitoring, particularly to identify and take action to minimise risks related to non-achievement of objectives. This includes risks of not contracting the full allocation of funds by POs, failing to meet all output indicators, changes to national legislation that affect implementation. For example, the PO for CZ02 in its 2015 risk assessment reports regular monitoring of possible changes in environmental legislation; this has identified that there are no planned legislative changes and therefore the likelihood is low.

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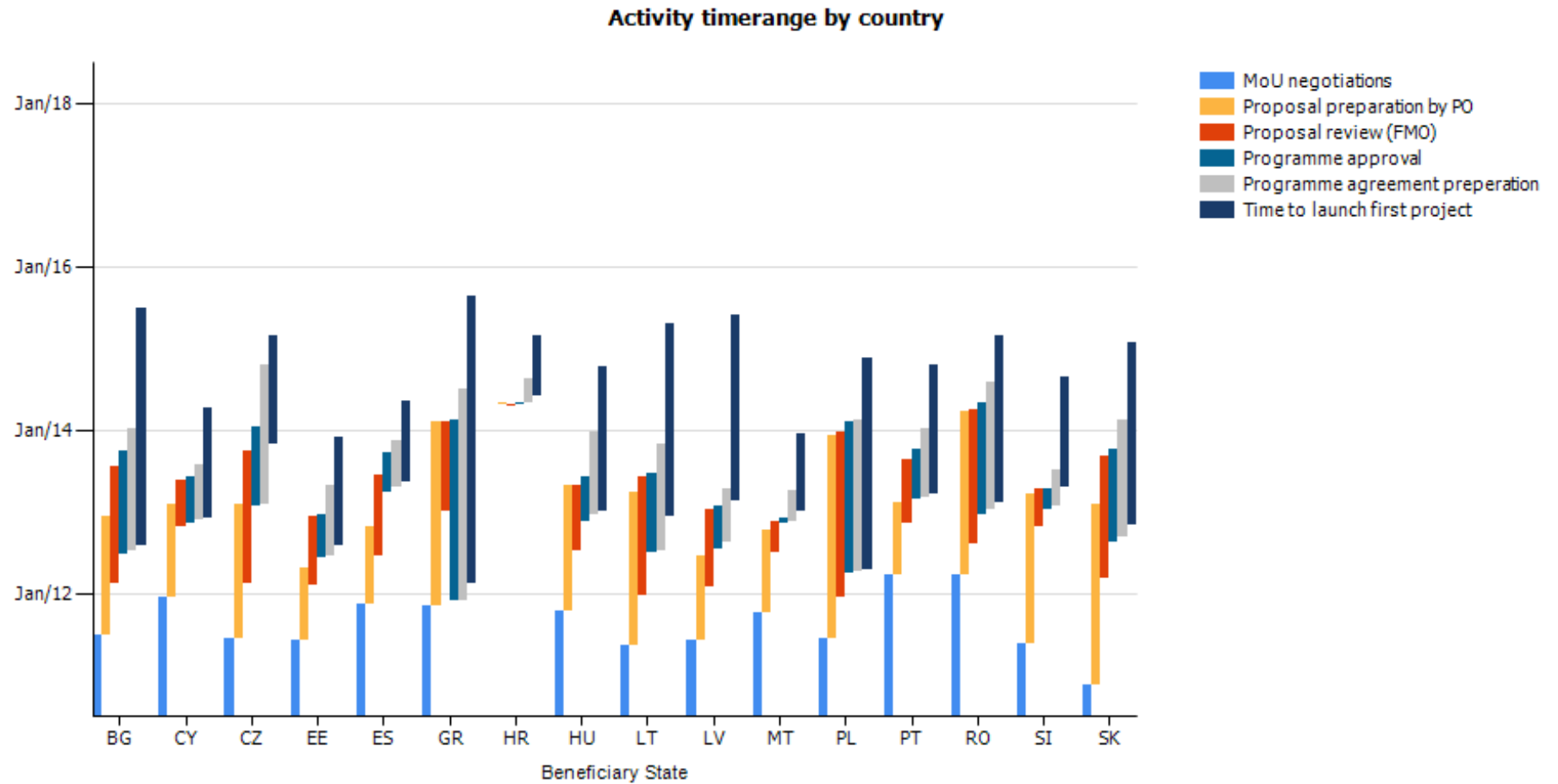
- Extension of eligibility period for implementing projects, which took place in all countries (except Croatia, which was not eligible for support until it joined the EU in 2013), as noted in section 4.5 below.
- Information, advice and training for project promoters in order to improve the compliance with contractual requirements. For example, in Poland the POs have provided training for project promoters related to changes to national legislation. In Estonia, seminars and manuals have provided advice for project promoters on compliance with state aid rules.
- Advice and training related to public procurement: for example, in Estonia, POs have used external experts to advise project promoters on procurement processes, whilst procurement specialists have reviewed all processes selected for procurement. The Romanian NFP reports that it has put clear guidelines in place to avoid irregularities in procurement procedures and undertakes 100% verification of procurement procedures.
- Facilitating contacts with potential donor project partners: this risk features in many of the national/programme risks assessments, reflecting the lack of experience of many project promoters in co-operating with partners in the donor states and the limited number of potential donor project partners. Most countries report taking actions to facilitate project partnerships, including face-to-face meetings.

4.5 Timeliness of preparation and implementation

The programmes have been implemented according to the Regulation and after a process of negotiation between the donors and the European Commission and then between the donors and the beneficiary countries. This negotiation has concerned, first, the Memorandum of Understanding and, second, the specific Programme Agreements. The **process of negotiation and of preparing open calls for proposals** has taken significantly longer than expected. This has led to severe delays in the allocation of funds and significantly reduced the time available to implement projects. Indeed, the limited time for programme implementation was the biggest management challenge reported by POs responding our on-line survey. The main cause for the delay has been the need to design – and gain donor approval of – programme management arrangements from scratch, where none existed before. The figure below provides an overview.

4. Efficiency of Programme Management

Figure 4.3 Time taken to launch programmes in each country



Source: FMO Documentation, Reporting and Information System (DORIS)

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As shown in the two tables that follow, the process of negotiating the **Memoranda of Understanding** took on average more than one year and was completed at a late stage in all countries. The earliest MoU was signed in November 2010, whilst the last was not signed until March 2012 (except for Croatia, which was not eligible for support until it joined the EU in 2013). It has then taken on average nearly one more year for proposals to be prepared by POs, six months for the proposal review by the FMO and 4.5 months for programme approval and programme agreement preparation. The process has been slightly quicker in countries with only 4-5 programmes, where the final Programme Agreement has been approved more quickly, i.e. Croatia, Malta, Slovenia. Encouragingly, it does seem that the process was much quicker for Croatia, where the MoU was signed within 10 months of Croatia's accession to the EU on 1 July 2013, with all four Programme Agreements ready for approval the next day.

The tables below provide a summary of the time taken to negotiate the MoUs and the Programme Agreements across the beneficiary countries.

Table 4.1 Schedule of programme approvals

Timeline activity	Duration		
	Minimum	Average	Maximum
MoU negotiations	0d	1y 6w	1y 38w
Proposal preparation by PO	20w 3d	49w 0d	2y 25w
Proposal review (FMO)	1d	26w 0d	1y 18w
Programme approval	0d	4w 1d	30w 3d
Programme agreement preparation	2d	15w 3d	49w 5d
Time to launch first project	0d	38w 1d	2y 6w
TOTAL		3y 35w	

NB: not including Croatia

Source: FMO Documentation, Reporting and Information System (DORIS)

Table 4.2 Schedule of programme approvals

Country	MoU signature ³⁶	1 st programme approved	Last programme approved	Number of programmes
BG	29/06/2011	06/09/2012	01/10/2013	15
CY	15/12/2011	28/11/2012	10/06/2013	4
CZ	18/06/2011	01/02/2013	13/01/2014	15
EE	11/06/2011	06/09/2012	22/12/2012	11
EL	7/11/2011	31/01/2013	12/02/2014	8
ES	18/11/2011	23/04/2013	23/09/2013	7
HR	29/04/2014	30/04/2014	30/04/2014	4
HU	14/10/2011	18/12/2012	06/06/2013	12
LT	19/05/2011	29/08/2012	25/06/2013	14
LV	09/06/2011	06/09/2012	23/01/2013	8
MT	10/10/2011	21/11/2012	05/12/2012	4
PL	17/06/2011	04/09/2012	05/02/2014	17
PT	29/03/2012	07/03/2013	07/10/2013	9
RO	23/03/2012	15/01/2013	30/04/2014	22
SI	21/05/2011	28/01/2013	15/04/2013	5
SK	16/11/2010	12/09/2012	07/10/2013	10
[Innovation Norway]	N/A	13/02/2014	13/02/2014	1

Source: FMO Documentation, Reporting and Information System (DORIS)

Clearly, the specific reasons for the lengthy procession of negotiation and approval vary from country to country in line with national circumstances and the size, scope and number of programmes. Of course, the main reason is the introduction of the programme-based approach and the fact that such negotiations were taking place for the first time. Beyond that, based on the interviews of stakeholders on both the beneficiary and the donor side, we can highlight some of the main factors and thus how improvements can be made in the future.

- **Preparatory negotiations within the beneficiary state:** given the wide range of programme areas and the modest size of the funding available, it is clear that negotiation needs to take place within the beneficiary states at early stage, so that priorities can be agreed and high quality proposals submitted as early as possible. As one NFP said: “Programme design should start before the formal MoU negotiation”. Such negotiation needs to consider and balance the competing claims of the

³⁶ Latest date for signature either by EEA or Norway.

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various Ministries responsible for these policy areas in order to determine priorities in advance of formal negotiation with the donor states. It was reported that Latvia concluded such internal negotiations at a relatively early stage and was thus able to propose a fairly detailed MoU setting out the proposed programmes, pre-defined projects, implementation bodies and DPPs. In contrast, it was reported that the internal negotiations in the Czech Republic and Lithuania had not narrowed the focus of their priorities, which meant that the Grants have ultimately had too broad a focus in those countries.

- **Capacity and stability within the beneficiary states:** despite the experience of managing EU Structural Funds and pre-accession support, this was the first time that the beneficiary states had specifically prepared programmes for the EEA/Norway Grants. In some countries, it seems that sufficient staff capacity was not put in place early enough to negotiate with the donors and prepare the programmes, e.g. Czech Republic, Greece, Spain. In Bulgaria and Romania, this was aggravated by high turnover of staff during the negotiation and preparation period with a consequent loss of knowledge. In Portugal, difficulties were caused by a reorganisation of government ministries (including those responsible for the EEA/Norway Grants) following the general election of 2011. Looking ahead, the beneficiary states might benefit from creating additional short-time capacity for the negotiation and preparation of programmes, for example, through the secondment of staff or the appointment of contractors.
- **Capacity within the FMO:** similarly, it was also necessary for the FMO to adapt to the demands of the negotiating with the beneficiary states and approving Programme Agreements. Some beneficiary stakeholders suggested that the FMO had taken too long to analyse programme proposals. Once Programme Agreements were sent to the donors, most were then approved within a one month, although a few took 2-4 months to be approved. Once approved, the time taken for signature agreement has typically been 3-4 months and as long as 10 months in some cases. Some beneficiary stakeholders suggested that the FMO had faced capacity constraints in that period, given the need to analyse and approve 150 programmes at the same time. Like the beneficiary states, the FMO might thus also benefit from creating additional short-time capacity for the negotiation and preparation of programmes.
- **Balancing priorities of donors and beneficiaries** has perhaps the most difficult part of the negotiations. As we have said above, the early determination of priorities by the beneficiary states can enable them to articulate those priorities earlier and more clearly to the donor states. Some difficulties have also been faced around programme areas (and field therein) that are considered a higher priority by the donors than by the beneficiaries, such as Green Industries, which some beneficiary stakeholders believed had been prioritised at the expense of programme areas of more interest to the beneficiaries. Clearly, the resolution of such differences will tend to make the negotiation and approval process longer in some countries. A degree of compromise may be needed on both sides.
- **Number of programmes:** there is a consensus amongst donor and beneficiary stakeholders that the number of programmes is too high. It is clear that there is a minimum “fixed” administrative burden associated with the negotiation and preparation of each programme, regardless of the level of funding available or the programme areas covered. For that reason, it would be beneficial to allocate the EEA/Norway Grants to fewer programmes in future, even if the same programme areas are covered.
- **Level of detail required:** there were divergent views about the most appropriate level of detail to be provided in programme proposals. On the one hand, a detailed programme proposal can provide the donors with more reassurance and can thus facilitate agreement. On the other hand, the approval of a very detailed Programme Agreement can require more formal revisions to be agreed at a later date. A few beneficiary stakeholders suggested that the provision of more extensive guidance and a more standardised template for the Programme Agreement might be

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helpful.

At the same time, the delay in programme implementation is not solely due to the length of the negotiations linked to the MoUs and PAs. Indeed, it has taken 8 months on average and in some countries (e.g. Bulgaria, Greece, Latvia, Poland) up to 1.5-2 years from the approval of Programme Agreements to the **launch of the first project**.³⁷ One of the main causes of this delay has been the need to put in place capacity for programme management, particularly staff. Indeed, this was highlighted by POs as one of the three biggest challenges to effective programme management. In at least one case, Romania, it was also necessary to introduce national legislation to appoint the POs and authorise them to handle funds. Another cause of delay is the difficulties related to national procurement processes (another of the three biggest challenges to effective programme management reported by POs).

The delays in setting up the programmes have led to delayed disbursement of funds. Data from the FMO shows that only 68% of committed funds had been disbursed by May 2016. Disbursement appears particularly problematic in Hungary, where less than €22m of €131m committed funds have been, disbursed (i.e. 17%); of the 12 programmes, seven had disbursed 0% funds, whilst three others had only disbursed 1%, 11% and 25% of funds committed (the two others have committed >98%). Similarly, in Malta, only 18% had been disbursed because of delays in gaining planning permission for projects involving infrastructure developments; extensions had been requested for all five of the large projects (accounting for 90% of funding from the EEA/Norway Grants). In contrast, Estonia has disbursed 92% of funds. Given these rates of disbursement, it would seem that there is a significant risk of non-commitment of funds within the time period, across for the EEA/Norway Grants as a whole.

Given the delays to implementation, the donors have taken the pragmatic approach of **extending the final deadline for completion of projects**, i.e. from 30.4.2016 to 30.4.2017 and in line with the requirements of the Regulations on the implementation of the EEA/Norwegian Financial Mechanisms. (Similar extensions were granted to some projects in the previous period). All programmes were considered eligible for extension requests, except those relating to NGOs (PA10), research and scholarships (PA18, PA19, PA23, PA24), green industry innovation (PA21) and decent work and tripartite dialogue (PA22).

The table below provides a summary of requests for project extensions. It shows that extension requests were made in respect of:

- 1,557 out of 2,471 projects within the eligible programmes (63% of all projects within those programmes);
- 163 pre-defined projects, representing 10% of extended projects and 72% of all pre-defined projects within those programmes;
- 940 projects for which contracts were signed in 2015 (60% of all requests);
- 583 projects for which contracts were signed in 2014 (37% of all requests); and
- 34 projects for which contracts were signed in 2013 or 2012 (3% of requests)
- 465 projects which had donor project partners (56% of all projects with donor project partners in the programmes eligible for extension).

³⁷ This period encompasses call preparation, consultation and approval, announcement (at least 2 months), formal and substantial appraisal (multilateral in many cases), appeal procedure in some countries and final decision-making.

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In terms of the extension requests by country, we can see the following:

- A large proportion of projects required an extension in Malta (100%), Lithuania (99%), Romania (98%), Greece (98%), Bulgaria (88%) and Slovenia (81%)
- A small proportion of projects required an extension in Estonia (5%), Cyprus (14%), Latvia (19%) and Slovakia (35%).

The main reason for extensions is the late approval of projects, following the late approval of Programme Agreements and/or delays in launching calls for proposals. In some cases, programmes savings or uncommitted funds have been recycled into new projects, which have been made possible by the extension, e.g. in Estonia, Lithuania and Romania. The extension of the timescale for completion has been universally welcomed by all stakeholders and is likely to increase the potential for impact quite considerably. Indeed, this was the “success factor” most often mentioned by stakeholders. For example, the time for implementation has effectively been more than doubled for those projects for which contracts were not signed until 2015. For some projects, the timing of the extension is particularly important; for example, in Poland a media campaign raising awareness of human trafficking will be more effective in the summer when more people are travelling. However, an extension of the timescale is not sufficient to offset all risks; for example, it was reported that some risks would remain for some hydro-electric projects within the Romania programme for Renewable Energy (RO06), in part due to difficulties experienced by projects in securing co-financing from private sources, such as bank loans.

In the next period, the time required to negotiate and approve programmes and put in place the management arrangements is likely to be substantially shorter than for the current period. There is also a case for extending the programme period from 5 to 7 years, which would greatly increase the potential for impact.

4. Efficiency of Programme Management

Table 4.3 Overview of project extension requests

All eligible programmes				Extension request					
Country	Programme eligible expenditure	Total project count*	Total project grant**	Project count	% of project count	Project cost	Project grant**	% of total project grant**	% of pgr. eligible exp.
Bulgaria	€102,372,656	225	€88,936,992	199	88%	€83,020,344	€81,243,893	91%	79%
Cyprus	€7,211,000	28	€6,880,455	4	14%	€3,564,210	€2,940,593	43%	41%
Czech Republic	€100,001,623	555	€86,935,508	394	71%	€100,867,775	€80,596,051	93%	81%
Estonia	€42,126,973	150	€38,183,832	8	5%	€15,656,019	€12,675,574	33%	30%
Greece	€25,901,542	42	€25,241,654	41	98%	€25,020,414	€24,979,904	99%	96%
Latvia	€67,496,027	301	€59,599,448	57	19%	€47,076,489	€39,830,328	67%	59%
Lithuania	€80,757,647	142	€67,983,518	141	99%	€81,154,805	€67,233,079	99%	83%
Malta	€4,210,588	5	€3,956,840	5	100%	€5,502,836	€3,956,840	100%	94%
Poland	€412,663,806	432	€379,327,969	256	59%	€549,378,419	€255,200,582	67%	62%
Portugal	€49,173,246	99	€44,831,153	65	66%	€45,981,290	€40,153,365	90%	82%
Romania	€194,933,504	312	€164,721,419	307	98%	€170,248,868	€160,437,511	97%	82%
Slovakia	€58,706,159	144	€48,623,493	51	35%	€52,092,745	€38,564,959	79%	66%
Slovenia	€24,094,706	36	€21,747,037	29	81%	€21,148,942	€18,804,580	86%	78%
Total	€1,169,649,477	2,471	€1,036,969,318	1,557	63%	€1,200,713,156	€826,617,258	80%	71%

* Excluding Terminated projects. ** Includes programme level co-financing

Source: FMO Documentation, Reporting and Information System (DORIS): Report 40 "Project Extension Request"; extracted 23.05.2016

5. Response to the OAG Report

In its 2013 report investigating the EEA and Norway Grants, the Office of the Auditor General of Norway (OAG) found that: the EEA and Norwegian Financial Mechanisms 2009–2014 facilitate a more concentrated effort than those of 2004–2009; while work on measuring results has improved, it is still challenging to measure the outcomes and long-term impacts of the support; the programme model introduces a new level of management and contributes to higher administration costs; challenges related to quality and capacity cause delays in the work on programmes and projects; and bilateral relations have been strengthened, but the work is not sufficiently planned and communicated. In response to these findings, the OAG recommended various actions to be taken by the NFMA (or by the FMO acting on behalf of the FMO).

The first recommendation of the OAG was to strengthen the **results-based management** (RBM) of the Grants, thereby enabling greater reporting of outcomes and long-term impacts of programmes and projects. In response, the FMO has taken steps to build RBM into the management of the Grants, for example, very explicit identification of programmes that are at risk of not achieving their objectives, followed by additional monitoring of those programmes. A number of NFPs and POs have also highlighted the importance of support from the FMO in applying the RBM approach, including training and information days. For their part, the NFPs and POs were virtually unanimous in reporting that they understood and had made considerable efforts to apply the RBM approach. In this, a key factor is the extent to which RBM already features in the implementation of national policy (e.g. in Cyprus and Estonia). Equally, where the Grants are managed by the same bodies that manage the EU Structural Funds, this has facilitated the adoption of the RBM approach (e.g. in Bulgaria).

Progress has been made in strengthening the RBM approach. Programme Agreements feature baselines both for outputs and outcomes and progress against these baselines is reported in Annual Programme Reports. However, some stakeholders reported a need for stronger baselines in the next generation of programmes. Many NFPs and POs have also taken steps to adjust their programmes, based on (lack of) progress against objectives; this has most commonly involved the reallocation of uncommitted funds to those activities that can contribute progress against the objectives in question. At the same time, some areas remain problematic or under-developed and require further attention. NFPs and POs consistently referred to the difficulties associated with developing and using credible and workable indicators, a view which was supported by the FMO. An initial cause of this problem was the number and diversity of indicators that were established across the different programmes at the outset. The FMO has rationalised the long list of indicators by creating a shorter list of around 80, which facilitates reporting at programme-level, national-level and European-level. The RBM approach has enabled a more strategic approach to evaluation; indeed, some beneficiary countries are in the process of undertaking their own evaluations. At the same time, evaluation remains under-developed in some countries, perhaps reflecting a weak culture of evaluation. It must also be noted that measuring high-level and long-term impacts of the Grants will remain inherently problematic, given the modest size of the Grants relative to the problems addressed, the size of the beneficiary countries and the existence of other interventions, notably the EU Structural Funds. The FMO recognises this difficulty and has therefore taken a sensible approach of monitoring broad national development trends in order to assess the relevance of interventions, without attempting to attribute impact to the Grants.

The second recommendation of the OAG was to ensure that the management model (with its many actors) **safeguards donor control requirements and ensure achievement of results**. As described earlier, the time taken to set up the programme-based approach was considerably longer than envisaged, which has severely reduced the time available for implementation and put the achievement of results at risk. This notwithstanding, there is wide agreement that the programme-

based approach has enabled a more strategic focus on objectives, which feeds through to the selection of projects (e.g. via selection criteria) and the monitoring of progress. For example, calls for projects can be specifically focused on programme areas (and priorities therein) than was possible before. Fulfilment of donor control requirements has been facilitated in some countries by aligning programme management arrangements under the Grants to those used for the EU Structural Funds. Where there is a risk of not fulfilling these requirements, this is very often caused by a lack of capacity or experience in NFPs or POs; whilst such capacity has been steadily built in most countries, a high turnover of staff (e.g. due to low pay or unfavourable terms and conditions) has put this at risk in some countries. It should also be noted that donor control requirements are complemented by national control requirements; some NFPs or POs reported that these could be more onerous than those of the donors and risked hindering the successful implementation of programmes. In this context, the role of the FMO has also changed, in terms of undertaking more monitoring at programme level rather than at project level. As a result, a key function of the FMO has been to give advice and guidance to NFPs and POs, which has tended to be well received. The involvement of DPPs, although not primarily intended to ensure fulfilment of donor control requirements, has also helped promote the fulfilment of donors' policy priorities. The NFPs and POs are also required to undertake risk assessments and to report on the results of those assessments, as discussed in section 4.4.4 above.

The third recommendation of the OAG was to follow-up the use of **administration-related and technical assistance funds**, so that the highest possible share of funds goes to programmes and projects. There was a variation in the views expressed by NFPs and POs regarding the sufficiency of funds for programme management, administration and technical assistance. The majority reported that the funds allowed under the Regulation were sufficient; this was consistently reported in Cyprus, Estonia, Lithuania, Poland and Romania. Some had been able to make savings, which had been reallocated to projects; this tended to occur where there was limited need to rely on external contractors, e.g. for IT support, communication services or external audit. However, it does appear that there is a fixed cost to programme management, regardless of the size of the programmes. This was highlighted by a number of NFPs and POs and might explain why the NFPs in both Croatia and Malta reported that the budget for programme management and technical assistance was too low. One specific difficulty faced by several POs has been the additional costs involved in managing programmes for which the end-date for completion has been extended; clearly, this involves additional programme management activities to be undertaken within the same budget.

6. Conclusions and Recommendations

6.1 Conclusions

6.1.1 EEA/Norway Grants and the allocation of funds

- The EEA/Norway Grants constitute an important investment of funds with the objective of reducing economic and social disparities in Europe and strengthening bilateral relations between the donor states and the beneficiary states.
- The Grants are targeted on a broad range of priority sectors, which reflect the priorities of the donor states and the beneficiary states to varying degrees. The balance in the award of total project grants across these sectors is broadly in line with donor expectations, i.e. in terms of the initial allocation.
- There has been considerable delay in the allocation of funds and in the disbursement of allocated funds. Indeed, by May 2016, only 68% of allocated funds had been disbursed (€1.1bn). Levels of disbursement vary widely between beneficiary states. They are particularly low in Hungary, in part due to the difficulties faced in governance of the Grants in that country and also in Malta because of delays in gaining planning permission for projects involving infrastructure developments.
- Within priority sectors, there is considerable diversity in the allocation of funds to specific programme areas, again reflecting the priorities of the donor states and the beneficiary states. As shown in section 3, the Grants have been allocated to a wide variety of activities within the different programme areas which will produce a rich diversity of effects for different target groups and across different sectors within the economy, within government at all levels, within civil society and within society in general.
- Evidence for some of these effects is captured by the FMO using standardised indicators across all the programmes. This allows the aggregation of data on achievement and keeps the number of indicators to a manageable level. However, it remains important to have additional means of capturing evidence of the achievement of the full diversity of effects.
- Within the priority sector of Environmental Protection and Management, support has been particularly focused on bio-diversity, hazardous waste/environmental policy and administrative management and marine and inland water management.
- Within the priority sector of Climate Change and Renewable Energy, support has been particularly focused on improvements in energy efficiency of public buildings in Bulgaria and Poland, investments in generation of renewable energy and environmental policy and administrative management.
- Within the priority sector of Human and Social Development, support has been particularly focused on policy and administrative management in different fields, tackling poverty and exclusion and improving health surveillance and information systems. Since mental health has been underfunded in most countries and has not received any support from EU funds to date, there is a clear added value in prioritising this under the EEA/Norway Grants.
- Within the priority sector of Green Industry Innovation, support has been particularly focused on the promotion of green fuels and technologies.
- Within the priority sector of Justice and Home Affairs, support has been particularly focused on legal and judicial development.

- Three cross-cutting issues (“programme standards”) have been integrated into the modus operandi of the programmes, namely good governance, sustainable development and gender equality. They have also been pursued through specific projects and programmes.

6.1.2 Effectiveness

- The most important factor influencing the achievement of programme objectives has been the severe delays in setting up the programmes. Many projects did not start until 2014 or even later and most have not been completed. Most of the desired effects have therefore not yet been achieved and many will only be achieved towards the end of the implementation period, i.e. towards April 2017. Given that, there remain significant risks of under-achievement.
- At the same time there has been considerable variation in the time taken to set up different programmes and thus in the timescales for implementation.
- Given the short time available for implementation, it is unlikely that any further delays (e.g. due to delays in procurement or carrying out of construction works or new suspensions in payments) would be made good in the short time available.
- Since so much expenditure is “back-loaded” to the end of the implementation period, there is a risk of underspends of EEA/Norway Grants funding beyond what would usually be expected in any grant funding programme.
- If most projects are successfully implemented on time, there remains the potential for most or perhaps all of the intended effects to be achieved. Indeed, POs and DPPs generally remain confident that this will happen, now that programme management arrangements have been established (i.e. staff, procedures and processes in place to oversee calls for projects, selection, contracting, monitoring, payments, etc.) and most funding allocated.
- One major factor that has substantially increased the potential to fulfil programme objectives and achieve the desired effects has been the possibility to allow extensions of the timescales for completing projects. For many projects, the timescale for implementation has been doubled by such extensions.
- Linked to this, one of the major factors that influences achievement of effects are the potential for delays in procurement and contracting, particularly in the case of infrastructure investments. In the case of physical developments, such delays compound the risks that already exist due to factors such as the adverse weather or the need to gain planning permission.
- There is evidence of progress towards most of the targets for aggregated results by priority sector. Some have already been exceeded, whilst others have been achieved to the level of 50% or more.
- It does not appear that any programme areas are inherently more difficult to implement than others (except where the focus is mostly on physical investments, where there are more risks of delay and where the outputs tend to arise only towards the end of the programme period).
- The biggest differences in programmes’ progress tend to arise between countries rather than within the same country). More progress has been made in those countries where programmes made a relatively early start and management arrangements have been more efficient. Programme implementation has thus been most advanced in Estonia and Poland and most delayed in the Czech Republic, Lithuania and Romania, albeit with some exceptions (see section 6.1.3 below).
- There are examples of programmes that have adopted a specific focus within the overall scope of the programme area in question rather than attempting to address the full breadth of issues within the programme area.
- Achievement to date against output and outcome indicators is generally highest for “soft” interventions, such as training, capacity building and strategy development, as well as numbers of

people benefitting from new services. Results relating to physical investments or commercial viability of new products and processes will tend to arise towards the end of the implementation period.

- The nature of many activities means that they will produce long-term impacts without further intervention. These include, amongst other things, investments in the energy efficiency of buildings (particularly in Bulgaria and Poland), which will ensure permanent reductions in emissions of greenhouse gases.
- Achievement of other intended long-term impacts will usually require additional intervention. This will be in two forms. First, there is a need for new policy frameworks, strategies, action plans and so on to be adopted and acted on by national government and other relevant stakeholders. Second, the various preparatory works, feasibility studies, pilot projects, etc. need to be followed by additional substantial investments from EU Structural Funds or national funding.

6.1.3 Effective programmes

At this mid-term stage, none of the programmes are still within the implementation phase. However, some offer the potential to produce systemic impact, concentrated impact on a territory or innovative effects. They include the following.

- **PL04 Saving energy and promoting renewable energy source:** the programme represents one of the largest allocations of EEA/Norway Grants (€144m) and will bring about tangible and measurable reductions in GHG emissions through thermal modernisations and increased use of renewable energy in more than 100 public buildings. Some targets were achieved by the end of 2015 (e.g. boilers replaced/modernised) and there was good progress against several others. The achievement of some important targets (e.g. improved energy efficiency of buildings) will arise towards the end of the period, as and when physical investments are completed. As well as the environmental impact, this investment will also generate economic benefits (reduced energy bills for public bodies) and social benefits (better facilities, such as schools and hospitals). The key success factors include a relatively early start (most projects started in 2013 or 2014), the link to national policy (National Programme of Air Protection, National Strategy for Energy Safety and Environment) and complementarity with EU Structural Funds (through eligibility criteria).
- **PT03 Renewable Energy:** the programme is likely to have a major impact on energy production the island of Terceira and thus also its energy security and independence. The pilot geothermal power plant, once established, will generate sufficient renewable energy to replace 10% of the energy that is currently sourced from imported diesel and thus save 14,400 tons of CO² emissions p.a. A key success factor has been the focus on the energy needs of a very specific territory. Another key success factor has been the co-operation between universities in Portugal and Iceland, most notably the UNU-GTP, which has successfully provided training in geothermal energy utilisation as a complement to the investment in physical infrastructure.
- **EE08 Public Health Initiatives:** a key success of the programme is that it focuses on health issues where provision has been under-developed, particularly mental health, reproductive health and HIV and tuberculosis, as well as service provision for children and young people. Like most programmes in Estonia, implementation started relatively early (compared to some countries), with all projects starting in 2013 or 2014. Virtually all the output and outcome targets had been exceeded by the end of 2015, including those of the “flagship” project to create a new mental healthcare centre in Tallinn, which received €3.5m of the total funding of €8m from the Norway Grants.

- **Green Industry Innovation:** the programmes are unique within the EEA/Norway Grants in that they promote the development and commercialisation of technological innovations, whilst also improving the competitiveness of enterprises, particularly SMEs. Moreover, the Norway Grants account for only 24% of project costs, with the balance mostly consisting of commercial investments or bank loans. Where innovations are placed on the market, there is the potential for wider and sustained impacts. The programmes in the case study countries (EE07, LT09, PL18, RO17) have mostly made good progress and have achieved their intended effects or are likely to do so. The involvement of Innovation Norway as PO or DPP in all programmes has also been a key factor in the timely and successful implementation of the programmes.
- **PL17 Correctional Services including Non-Custodial Sanctions:** the programme aims to raise the standards of support in prisons and the correctional services and increase the use of alternatives to imprisonment. Five of the seven projects were complete by end 2015 and virtually all targets had been achieved. Key success factors include: pre-defining projects based on needs analyses, thus ensuring that the most relevant projects were selected; a relatively early start to all projects; activities that involve a large and diverse cohort of professionals, including judges, prosecutors, probation officers and local government officers, thus creating the potential for wide and systemic impact; complementary to EU Structural Funds programmes and to the national development plan for 2007-13; effective co-operation with the DPP (Directorate of Norwegian Correctional Service) and with donor project partners in three projects.

6.1.4 Effectiveness of the case study countries and programmes

- **Cyprus:** although the MoU was one of the last to be signed, the programmes were approved more quickly than in most other countries. A high proportion of the net allocation of funds has been disbursed (80%). Only 4 of 28 eligible projects have required an extension. Some projects have faced delays, but are generally making good progress. There has been good achievement of “soft” outputs (e.g. training) and physical investments are expected to be successfully completed by the end of the period.
- **Czech Republic:** the programmes made a late start, with the first one not approved until February 2013 and the last one approved in January 2014. Implementation has been delayed with very few projects starting before 2015, although disbursement of the net allocation of funds (80%) is above the average for all countries (67%). There had been limited achievement against most targets by the end of 2015, although there were exceptions: gender equality (CZ12) and Schengen programmes (CZ14) had achieved most or all of their output targets by end 2015. Achievement of targets in other programmes will mostly arise only towards the end of the period, with 71% of eligible projects requiring extensions. This obviously implies a higher risk of some targets not being achieved. In a few cases, targets will not be achieved as projects relevant to those targets have not been selected. The key project within the children and youth at risk programme (CZ04) has been discontinued, meaning that the overall impact of this programme will be much less than intended.
- **Estonia:** the process of agreeing the MoU and preparing the programmes took less time than in most of the beneficiary states. A very high percentage of the net allocation of funds has been disbursed (91%) compared to the average for all beneficiary states (67%). Within the case study programmes, most projects started in 2013, 2014 or very early in 2015. Only 5% of eligible projects have requested extensions. There is good progress across all the case study programmes, with high achievement against many/most output targets by the end of the 2015 and the potential for most or all targets to be achieved by the end of the period.

- **Lithuania:** although the MoU was signed and the programmes approved relatively early in comparison to other countries, delays in implementing projects were reported across most case study programmes. Where outputs have been achieved by the end of 2015, these were mostly for soft interventions, such as training (e.g. LT05, LT13, LT14). All but one of the 142 eligible projects had requested extensions. These extensions are essential to the fulfilment of targets, particularly those for investments in physical investments and equipment, which will only arise towards the end of the period. Although POs were generally confident that most programme objectives and targets would be achieved, the late implementation clearly increases the risks of under achievement.
- **Poland:** the process of agreeing the MoU and preparing some of the programmes took less time than in most countries. Within the case study programmes, nearly all projects started in 2013 or 2014, except for the green industry innovation programme, where projects did not start until 2015. By the end of 2015, there was high achievement across the case study programmes, with many or most output targets achieved. Some 59% of eligible projects have been extended (compared to the average of 63% across all countries). This will be essential to the achievement of some targets, particularly those related to physical investments which will mostly arise towards the end of the period, e.g. for example, physical investments in the energy efficiency of public buildings (PL04).
- **Portugal:** although Portugal was one of the last countries to complete the MoU negotiation process and have a first programme approved, the process of gaining programme approval was shorter than in other countries. As a result, the launch of the first project was in line with other countries. The programmes have also been relatively efficient in disbursing funds with 80% disbursed (compared to the average of 67%). This has been helped by allocating a high proportion of funds to large projects and pre-defined projects. Progress varies widely across the case study programmes. By the end of 2015, there was high achievement against targets within the climate change (PT04) and gender equality (PT07) programmes. There was limited achievement by end 2015 against targets within the marine and coastal management (PT02) and public health (PT06) programmes. Within the renewable energy programme, all targets had been met for capacity-building but achievement of the other targets were dependent on successful completion of the geothermal energy plant in Terceira, which had faced some delays but was expected to be brought to a successful conclusion.
- **Romania:** the programmes faced a late start, as the MoU was one of the last to be signed and only the two programmes managed by non-state bodies (i.e. the NGO and green industry innovation programmes) were approved before late May 2013. The percentage of the net allocation of funds (75%) that has been disbursed is above the average for all countries (67%). Most programmes have faced delays, although there are exceptions. In most of the case study programmes (environmental protection and management (RO02, RO03, RO04), renewable energy (RO06), children and youth at risk and initiatives to reduce inequalities (RO10), gender equality (RO11), domestic and gender-based violence (RO20), very few projects started before 2015 and achievement against targets in those programmes was thus quite limited by the end of 2015. The climate change (RO07), public health (RO19) and green industry (RO17) programmes had made better progress, with all projects starting in 2014 and good achievement against targets by the end of 2015. Projects within three of the justice and home affairs programmes had all started in 2014 and made good progress by the end of 2015, particularly against targets for “soft” activities, such as training. Overall, 98% of all eligible projects have requested extensions and many of the most important effects, particularly those relating to physical investments, will only be achieved at the end of the funding period. The delayed implementation of programmes thus increases the risk of under-achievement and underspend for the country as a whole.

6.1.5 Potential for impact

- The size of the Grants is modest in relation to the size of the beneficiary states, the challenges they face and the investments made by EU Structural Funds. However, they are prioritising support for many activities that do not receive extensive support from the EU Structural Funds. This includes, in particular, investments in the fields of justice and home affairs, support for civil society organisations and cultural and natural heritage.
- The Grants deliver short-term economic benefits in localities hosting projects through the expenditure of funds and the consequent multiplier effects. These are very often in poorer territories, e.g. those that have suffered the effects of industrial decline, which thus increases the potential to reduce disparities.
- Beyond that, the Grants offer the potential to deliver long-term economic benefit as a by-product of improvements in environmental protection, energy efficiency, public health, etc., i.e. through a healthier population, lower energy bills, reduced costs of dealing with pollution, attraction of tourists, etc.
- The potential for impact is perhaps greater in those programmes that have a specific focus rather than attempting to address the full breadth of issues within a programme area. Having such a focus means that the selected projects can constitute a “critical mass” of interventions that generate tangible and visible impact.
- An important factor contributing to the potential for impact is the alignment of activities with wider national policy objectives. Such alignment means that activities are more strategic and are more likely to be sustained beyond the life of the funding. Where activities are less aligned with national policy objectives, e.g. in the field of Green Industry Innovation, they offer the potential to stimulate innovative projects with positive effects but the risk is that they do not generate wider and sustained impact.
- There has been a considerable increase in the scale and diversity of bilateral co-operation at project level compared to the previous period: more than 1,600 projects have donor project partners, representing about 25% of all projects, a much higher total and proportion than in the previous period.³⁸
- A major constraint on bilateral co-operation at project level is the shortage of potential partners in the donor states. On the whole, bilateral co-operation is not limited by the willingness of project promoters to work with donor project partners.
- The programme-based approach has created the opportunity for Donor Programme Partners to have a positive impact on the design and implementation of programmes. This has helped to create deeper and more strategic links between national players in the donor and beneficiary countries.
- There is some scope for the DPPs to have a wider role in promoting all relevant programmes to potential partners in their own country, rather than only a subset as at present.

6.1.6 Efficiency

- On average it has taken more than three years to negotiate Memoranda of Understanding, agree and approve programmes and launch the first projects. This has delayed the commencement of projects in all the beneficiary states and meant that implementation has been condensed into the final few years of the programme period.

³⁸ Comprehensive data were not available on the extent bilateral co-operation in the previous period.

- The programme-based approach has improved the efficiency and the potential effectiveness of the Grants compared to the previous period. Since management arrangements have now been established in all the beneficiary states, there is the potential for improvements in efficiency and effectiveness to be exploited in the next period.
- The programme-based approach has enabled the Grants to be targeted in a more strategic way. The programmes are generally considered to be strategic, focused, customised to the needs and priorities of each country and in line with national policy. It has also facilitated the reallocation of unspent funds to projects that can contribute progress towards programme objectives.
- The programme-based approach has allowed the FMO to focus on strategic issues and avoid the administrative burden associated with directly overseeing a large number of projects. Balanced against this benefit is the fact that establishing programme management arrangements has proved problematic and/or time-consuming in the beneficiary states and has required more bodies to be involved in managing the Grants.
- Each beneficiary country has adopted its own model of programme management. Whilst these should be and have been customised to the circumstances of each country, there is usually merit in aligning or co-ordinating programme management of the EEA/Norway Grants with that of the EU Structural Funds.
- Similarly, there is merit in making use of the management arrangements and processes used for EU Structural Funds (with appropriate customisation to the requirements of the EEA Regulation), as these are familiar to programme management bodies and applicants alike. The benefits of such an approach are multiple: the processes have been accepted by EU bodies, they are established by or compliant with the national law of the beneficiary states, they are understood by applicants, and staff of the NFPs or POs are experienced in applying them.
- The programme management arrangements of some countries have given the donors cause for concern, resulting in temporary suspensions of payments (e.g. in Bulgaria, Greece, Hungary). Whilst necessary to ensure accountability in the use of donor funds, such suspensions inevitably reduce the time available for implementation with the risk that intended effects might not be achieved in some countries, e.g. Hungary.
- In countries receiving small amounts of funding, it is efficient for the NFP to perform the role of PO. However, the evidence suggests that it is beneficial to separate these roles in other countries, given the need to draw on expertise that is specific to each programme area, avoid focusing overly on compliance rather than performance against programme objectives, involve DPPs and maintain effective links to the EU Structural Funds programmes.
- The EEA/Norway Grants do not by themselves prescribe a specific approach to programme standards (good governance, sustainable development and gender equality). Instead, the approach taken to adherence with programme standards and the extent of adherence depends largely on the legislative framework and governance arrangements of the beneficiary states. Working in their own contexts, POs have promoted adherence through formal processes and procedures at programme level, criteria used to select projects, ongoing monitoring, engagement of stakeholders and information and advice given to projects.
- Additionality has been ensured by the specification of some programme areas that are not usually supported by EU Structural Funds, by support for organisations that would typically struggle to access EU funds (particularly small NGOs) and by focusing EEA/Norway Grants on areas and types of activities that are not well served by relevant Structural Funds programmes of each beneficiary state. Investments made by the Grants can also be seen as additional as they come at a time of significant reductions in public expenditure by some beneficiary states due to the continuing financial crisis.

- Pre-defined projects have been an efficient way to allocate funds in certain circumstances, particularly in countries receiving relatively small allocations of funds where it would not be worthwhile to operate open calls. They are often large projects of strategic significance and where there may only be one organisation with the capacity and/or authority to intervene. Pre-defining such projects can allow an early start to be made for complex interventions that require lengthy procurement, planning, risk assessment, etc. They are also useful where the funds address very specific issues and where there is only one organisation with the capacity or authority to intervene. However, it has still been necessary to extend the timescale for 72% of pre-defined projects because such projects tend to be larger and more complex than other projects.
- Open calls can be more beneficial than pre-defined projects where there is sufficient funding to justify them and where there is the potential for competition between applicants. They can offer equal access to funding for all potential applicants and more transparency in decision-making. They allow the possibility for strong but “unexpected” projects to emerge, as well as projects that are strategic and/or in line with national priorities.
- National requirements on public procurement can help provide transparency and equal treatment of potential contractors. At the same time, public procurement processes can prove time-consuming and adversely affect timescales of implementation, particularly where programmes operate more than one public procurement process.
- Simplifications and other support measures have served to improve the “service” offered by POs to applicants and project promoters. Indeed, there is a high level of satisfaction amongst project promoters in most countries regarding processes for application, reporting and claims, as well as regarding advice and guidance provided by POs.
- Risk assessment is now an explicit requirement for NFPs and is routinely included in annual strategic reports and annual programme reports. NFPs and POs have taken a range of actions to mitigate risks, including additional or enhanced monitoring, extension of eligibility period for projects, support for project promoters to improve the compliance with contractual requirements, support related to public procurement and facilitating contacts with potential donor project partners.
- There is strong case for extending the programme period from 5 to 7 years, given the time taken to negotiate, approve and set-up programmes and given the fact that nearly two-thirds of projects within eligible programmes have required extensions.
- There is also a strong case for reducing the number of programmes, given the time taken to negotiate and approve programmes and the “fixed cost” associated with programme management and administration. In some cases, a reduction in the number of programmes should also be associated with a tighter focus.

6.1.7 Response to the OAG Report

- Progress has been made in establishing the results-based management approach in the beneficiary states. NFPs and POs are virtually unanimous in reporting that they understand it and have made considerable efforts to apply it. Indeed, many have made adjustments to their programmes on the basis of (lack of) progress against objectives. At the same time, some areas remain problematic or under-developed, e.g. use of credible and workable indicators.
- Safeguarding donor control requirements and ensuring achievement of results has been facilitated by aligning programme management arrangements of the Grants with those of the EU Structural Funds in some countries. They have also been facilitated by the change in the role of the FMO, i.e. monitoring at programme level rather than project level and also providing more advice and guidance, including on sector issues. Involvement of DPPs has also helped promote the fulfilment of donor priorities.

- The programme-based approach implies a “fixed cost” for management and administration, which limits the potential for further savings on administration-related and technical assistance funds, particularly in countries receiving small amounts of funding. Most NFPs and POs report that technical assistance funds allowed under the Regulation are sufficient and some have made savings. However, the extension of the timescale for implementation inevitably limits the potential for such savings.

6.2 Recommendations

Focus and objectives of the EEA Grants

1. The donors may wish to strengthen the logic for intervening in particular policy fields if the main priority is to stimulate economic growth and improve competitiveness. For example, this could include support that is more specifically targeted at businesses, including SMEs, as well as increased support for green industry innovations given their potential to successfully generate economic and environmental benefits.
2. Beneficiary countries, particularly those receiving modest amounts of funding, should be encouraged to focus their programmes on more specific themes. This would increase the possibility of tangible impact on those themes through the implementation of a “critical mass” of projects that are complementary and that reinforce each other.
3. In the design of future programmes, consideration should be given to funding strategic projects that can support the other projects in the programme and/or a wider set of operators working in the field; those projects might support policy and strategy development, capacity-building, information and awareness-raising, etc.
4. Consideration should be given to merging some programme areas (PAs) in order to reduce the total number and thus the overall complexity of the financial mechanisms. This need not mean that any themes receive less consideration, provided that there is the possibility for them to be prioritised by open calls and by pre-defined projects. Those PAs that are identical, except for being funded by different financial mechanisms, should be merged (i.e. PA13/PA27, PA14/28).
5. The donors should consider the possibility of transnational programmes and/or more opportunities for transnational projects that address challenges relevant to several beneficiary states. This would be particularly relevant in the fields of Schengen co-operation, tackling organised crime and human trafficking, and asylum and migration.

Design and structure of programmes

6. The programme-based approach should be retained in the next period, as long as there is confidence that negotiations can be concluded much more easily the second time around and that programme management capacity can be retained. Since the programme management arrangements are now established, there is every potential for those arrangements to operate more effectively in the next period, without the need for a substantial overhaul in most countries.
7. Given the long time required to negotiate and approve programmes, the programming period should be increased from 5 to 7 years. This would reduce the administrative burden and allow more time for implementation, thus increasing the likely impact of the Grants.
8. In defining programming periods, consideration should be given as to the advantages and disadvantages in operating programmes over the same time-scale as EU programmes, i.e. whether to “bridge the gap” between the end of one EU programme period and the start of another between the end of one EU programme period and the start of another or whether to exploit the synergies offered by having the same timescale.

9. The number of programmes should be reduced in the next period (with a higher average allocation of EEA/Norway Grants per programme) given the administrative burden associated with negotiating and managing programmes. This need not reduce the breadth of themes addressed by the EEA/Norway Grants in any country, provided that there is the possibility for specific themes to be prioritised by open calls and by pre-defined projects.
10. The possibility to pre-define projects should be retained, particularly for countries receiving small amounts of funding where open calls are not merited or where strategic or large and complex projects are deemed necessary to achieve programme objectives or where there is likely to be only one organisation with the authority or capacity to implement the desired activity.
11. In future programmes, an appropriate balance should be ensured between pre-defined projects and projects selected via open calls. This will vary from programme to programme according to the level of funding, the programme objectives, proposed activities, intended effects and the capacity of potential promoters.

Programme management requirements

12. The donors should consider whether and in what ways it is possible to revise the EEA/Norway Grants Regulations so that their requirements are more closely aligned with those of EU Structural Funds.
13. The donors should consider the circumstances under which they allow the same body to act as NFP and PO for the same programme(s). This will depend on the volume of funding available and the governance context of each country. For example, this option is preferable in countries receiving small amounts of funding but perhaps not suitable in all other cases.
14. The beneficiary states should be encouraged to align their management and administrative processes for the EEA/Norway Grants in line with those used for the EU Structural Funds as far as possible. It might be beneficial for the FMO to review in more depth the extent to which this is already taking place and whether further alignment can be incorporated into the arrangements set out in the MoUs for the next programming period.
15. The role of DPPs should be continued in the new period. Consideration should be given as to whether/how to give each DPP a more formal role in facilitating bilateral co-operation in all programmes covering a given programme area. This might include communicating information about all the programmes in their own country and attracting donor project partners for all programmes.
16. Consideration should be given to the possibility of allowing funding in the next period for projects approved in the current period but which were not completed before the deadline for eligibility of expenditure. Such projects might be pre-defined in the new programme agreements.

Support for programme management

17. The donors should consider how to provide more in-depth support for the NFPs and POs in the process of developing programmes, so that stronger programme proposals are submitted at the outset.
18. The FMO should continue and expand the opportunities for NFPs and POs to receive training, exchange experience and network at European level, building upon the existing experience.
19. The donors and the beneficiary states should explore ways to reduce the delays and administrative burden associated with public procurement processes. Where appropriate, the results of this exercise would be reflected in the detail of the Regulations, MoUs or programme agreements for the new period. The FMO might also be able to provide further guidance or encourage exchanges of experience between POs regarding this issue.

- 20.** The possibility for electronic submissions should be introduced in all countries and programmes, where not already in place.
- 21.** The FMO should undertake research at the appropriate time to identify the extent to which the effects of the programmes have been mainstreamed into national policy and practice or have stimulated larger investments by EU Structural Funds or national funding. This is particularly important for those EEA/Norway Grants programmes for whose effects primarily consist of “preparatory” activities, e.g. feasibility studies, impact assessments, strategy and policy development, pilot projects, capacity-building or information and awareness-raising.

Annex 1: List of abbreviations

AA	Audit Authority
CA	Certifying Authority
CO ²	Carbon Dioxide
DORIS	Documentation, Reporting and Information System
dpp	Donor project partner
DPP	Donor Programme Partner
EEA	European Economic Area
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
EU	European Union
FM	Fund Mechanism
FMC	Financial Mechanism Committee
FMO	Financial Mechanism Office
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
MC	Monitoring Committee
NFP	National Focal Point
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OAG	Office of the Auditor General of Norway
PA	Programme Area
PO	Programme Operator
PP	Project Promoter
RBM	Results-Based Management
ToR	Terms of Reference
WP	Work Package

Annex 2: Country abbreviations

BG	Bulgaria
CY	Cyprus
CZ	Czech Republic
EE	Estonia
EL	Greece
ES	Spain
HR	Croatia
HU	Hungary
LT	Lithuania
LV	Latvia
MT	Malta
PL	Poland
PT	Portugal
RO	Romania
SI	Slovenia
SK	Slovakia

Annex 3: Terms of Reference for the Mid-Term Review



Terms of Reference

for services related to a Mid-term review
of the EEA and Norway Grants

1 Introduction

Through the EEA and Norway Grants, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway help to reduce economic and social disparities and strengthen cooperation with 16 countries in Central and Southern Europe. For the period 2009-2014, €1.8 billion has been set aside under the Grants.

This document lays out the terms of reference for a mid-term review of the EEA and Norway Grants Financial Mechanisms 2009-2014.

2 Background and context

The history of the EEA (European Economic Area) and Norway Grants dates back to 1994 when the EEA Agreement entered into force. Since then, three five-year funding schemes have been agreed with the European Commission and three of the EEA EFTA States, Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein.¹ Over the years the funding schemes have increased both in size and geographical scope.

Funding for the Financial Mechanisms 2009-2014 is channelled through 150 programmes in 16 beneficiary countries. The Grants have two overall objectives:

1. To contribute to the reduction of economic and social disparities
2. To strengthen bilateral relations between the donor and beneficiary states.

Country allocations are based on a funding key which may take into account such variables as population size and GDP per capita, making Poland the largest beneficiary state, followed by Romania, Hungary and the Czech Republic.

Each beneficiary country agrees on a set of programmes with the donor countries, based on national needs and priorities and the scope for cooperation with the donor countries. All programmes must adhere to standards relating to human rights, good governance, sustainable development and gender equality.

In addition, the individual Memorandum of Understanding with each country lays down the guidelines and specifies any special concerns for individual programmes or for the grant scheme as a whole. Inclusion of minorities and improving the situation of the Roma are examples of special concerns. In the current period, environment and sustainable development is the largest sector, and includes substantial funding targeting climate change and green industry innovation. Other key areas of support are health, education, civil society, research and scholarships, justice and social dialogue. The MoUs can be found here: <http://eeagrants.org/Results-data/Results-overview/Documents/Legal-documents>.

Grants are available for non-governmental organisations, research and academic institutions and public and private sector bodies. Projects that are financed under the programmes may be implemented until 2016.

Making sure that the Grants achieve real results is a key aspect of managing the Grants. Therefore, a comprehensive results framework has been put in place. This includes going from project-based funding in the previous period (Financial Mechanism 2004-2009) to programme-based funding for the current one, implementing results-based management on all levels of the Grants and having mechanisms in place for monitoring and control.

¹ The agreements can be found here: <http://eeagrants.org/Results-data/Results-overview/Documents/Legal-documents>

The new programme model is designed to better focus efforts and to ensure more targeted support. Programme operators, mostly public institutions in the beneficiary states, have been tasked with awarding funding to projects under each programme area according to agreed criteria, and to follow-up on implementation. The donor countries through their secretariat for the Grants, the Financial Mechanism Office, monitor the implementation process.

In its 2013 report investigating the EEA and Norway Grants, the Office of the Auditor General of Norway² found i.a. that:

- The EEA and Norwegian Financial Mechanisms 2009–2014 facilitate a more concentrated effort than the financial mechanisms 2004–2009.
- While work on measuring results has improved, it is still challenging to measure the outcomes and long-term impacts of the support.
- The programme model introduces a new level of management and contributes to higher administration costs.
- Challenges related to quality and capacity cause delays in the work on programmes and projects.
- Bilateral relations have been strengthened, but the work is not sufficiently planned and communicated.

In the report the Office of the Audit General recommended that:

- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs should consider strengthening the ongoing work on results-based management of the EEA and Norway Grants 2009-2014, thereby enabling greater reporting of outcomes and long-term impacts of programmes and projects.
- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in cooperation with the donor states' secretariat for the EEA and Norwegian Financial Mechanisms, follow up the complex management model with many actors, in order to safeguard control requirements and ensure good achievement of results.
- The Ministry should also follow up the use of administration-related and technical assistance funds in a manner that ensures that the highest possible share of the funds goes to programmes and projects in the beneficiary states.

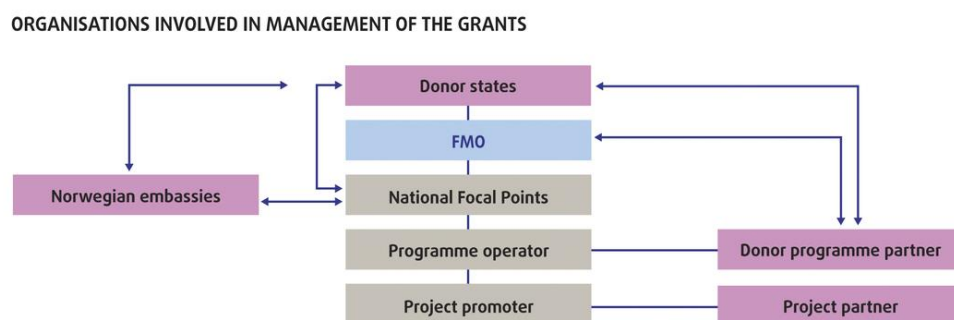
Organisation

The National Focal Points, most often ministries, have the overall responsibility of the Grant schemes. National Programme Operators are responsible for preparing and implementing the programme, making the funding available to applicants through calls for proposals, appraising applications, selecting and monitoring projects.

Entities from the donor states are partners in more than half of the programmes, contributing in the preparation and implementation of the programme, and in facilitating partnerships at project level. The donor states, through their secretariat for the Grants (the Financial Mechanism Office [FMO]), monitor the implementation process.

² See The Office of the Auditor General's Investigation of the EEA and Norway Grants
https://www.riksrevisjonen.no/en/Reports/Documents/Documentbase_3_15_2012_2013.pdf

Figure 1: organisations involved in managing the Grants



3 Main purpose of the review

With reference to the 2013 performance audit report by the Office of the Auditor General of Norway and recommendations contained therein, the review shall gather lessons learned and best practices in the implementation of the programme model and provide recommendations on how to make it more efficient and effective in the future.

The main purpose of the mid-term review is to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of the Grants at the current stage of implementation. This mid-term review should provide the Donors and the FMO, the DPPs and the beneficiary states with information that is relevant for the implementation of the current Grants and for future programming.

In particular, the review should:

1. Assess the **effectiveness** in terms of results and progress towards overall and programme objectives.
2. Assess to what extent the current programme model is **efficient** (there has been substantial effort to make the transition to a programme model between the former Financial Mechanisms 04-09 and the current 09-14).

4 Scope

This review will cover all 16 countries with which the Donors have signed MoUs for the EEA/Norway Grants. However, 4-5 countries of the suggested countries should be selected for more in-depth study: Czech Republic, Estonia, Lithuania, Poland, Cyprus or Portugal. The review will encompass a range of programme areas to ensure representativeness and should include programmes with pre-defined projects, horizontal concerns and directly contracted programmes. The following programme areas should be included as a minimum: Environment/Green Industry Innovation, Justice, Asylum and Migration.

5 Main review questions

With the purpose being to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of the mechanism in achieving results in the beneficiary countries, the following main questions should guide the review.

1 Appraise the progress, results and effects of supported programmes in the beneficiary states

- I. What progress are the Financial Mechanisms (FMs) making towards their planned objectives via the programmes (objectives, outcomes, etc), including horizontal concerns?³ What are the main results and effects thus far in the beneficiary states / priority sectors? Are these results complementary with EU priorities? Are the FMs likely to achieve their planned objectives upon completion? What are the main constraints, problems and areas in need of further attention?
- II. What are the major factors influencing the achievement/non-achievement of programme objectives (on time)?
- III. To what extent are the programme activities and/or funding expected to continue after the donor funding will cease?

2 Assess how the design and implementation of the mechanisms have supported or hindered progress and results

- I. To what extent are the principles of additionality and proportionality applied to the implementation of the Grants in such areas as Governance, compliance, simplification, risk management? How does this function within the model design (comparison across countries and country set-ups, involvement of international organisations, levels (see Figure 1) and types of implementation (e.g. calls for proposals, directly contracted programmes or pre-defined projects)?
- II. What does timeline analysis suggest regarding the different phases of preparation and implementation? Have programme and project funds been made available and have activities been implemented in a timely manner?

3 Assess how the recommendations from the report of the Office of the Audit General has been followed up:

- I. How is results based management understood and how effectively are performance and results monitored and reported on, including horizontal concerns. What improvements have been made and may still be needed to strengthen the ongoing work on results-based management of the EEA and Norway Grants 2009-2014, thereby enabling greater reporting of outcomes and long-term effects of programmes and projects?
- II. To what degree does the management model design with the many actors involved fulfill the Donors control requirements and ensure good achievement of results.
- III. To what extent is administration-related and technical assistance funds used in a manner that ensures that the highest possible share of the funds goes to programmes and projects in the beneficiary states.

³ Strengthening fundamental rights, democratic development and rule of law are key concerns in the Grants. Particular attention is paid to social inclusion for Roma, combating discrimination and hate speech as well as promoting tolerance and multicultural awareness.

The final set of review questions will be agreed at the inception meeting. The questions shall, in addition to shedding light on the specific issues, also assist evaluators to produce an overall assessment and provide detailed and operational recommendations for future programming.

6 Data collection and measurement

The review may incorporate a range of methods for data collection and analysis, and should draw on existing reviews and evaluations of the Grants.⁴

In the proposal please outline the suggested approach to be taken to respond to the main purpose of the review and to address the review questions. Methods might include:

- Desk review and assessment of key documents, quantitative and qualitative data for all 16 countries to provide an assessment of progress and challenges, to inform the next phases of the study and to refine, if necessary, the methods needed.⁵
- Review of existing relevant studies, reviews and evaluations concerning the Grants or aspects thereof.
- Survey to obtain information needed to address review questions.
- In-depth empirical study (country/project visits, interviews) for case studies within the 5 in-depth countries and programme areas.
- Interviews with the three Donors, a selection of Embassies, National Focal Points, Programme Operators, DPPs, project promoters, project partners and FMO staff.
- Project stories for communication purposes.

Bidders are expected to outline the methodological approach and provide suggestions for case studies within the in-depth countries and programme areas (see award criteria).

The proposal should link the data collection methods with relevant groups of review questions and propose other methods, if needed.

7 Team

All members of the team must have relevant research qualifications and evaluation experience. The team should consist of mainly senior researchers with higher relevant degrees with some support from more junior researchers. Research experience in relevant areas of social science research should be demonstrated. In addition, it is desirable that the evaluation team has in-depth knowledge of one or more of the suggested programme areas. The team should have knowledge about the countries and the EU and the team leader must have experience with leading multi country and disciplinary evaluations.

⁴ The following reviews and evaluations have been completed or are ongoing related to FM09-14: Mid-term evaluation of the NGO Fund, Mid-term review of Cultural Heritage, Roma Study, Review of Decent work and Tripartite dialogue, Review of communication good practices, Mid-term evaluation of progress towards strengthening bilateral relations.

⁵ Quantitative and qualitative data is stored in the Documentation, Reporting and Information System (DoRIS) and includes key information on the programmes and projects, financial information and progress reports. Further examples are provided in annex.

8 Budget and deliverables

The maximum budget for the review is EUR 200,000. The budget estimate should include all travel costs, including 3 trips to Brussels and 1 to Oslo.

Deliverables:

- Inception meeting at the FMO office in Brussels within 2 weeks of contract notification.
- Draft inception report within 3 weeks of inception meeting.
- Meeting at the FMO in Brussels to discuss Inception report.
- Final Inception report within 1 week of receiving comments from the FMO on draft report.
- Draft survey for comments by the FMO.
- Final survey to be sent to the NFPs, POs and Project promoters in the in-depth countries and to all relevant stakeholders in the three Donors countries.
- Draft report which includes a citizens' summary and examples of good case studies/project stories as well as country chapters outlining findings, lessons learned and recommendations.
- Final draft report within 2 weeks of receiving comments in writing from the FMO on the draft report.
- Final report within 1 week of receiving final comments from stakeholders.
- Presentation of findings and recommendations in the report in Brussels and in Oslo (please include approximate travel costs).

All reports and presentations are to be submitted electronically.

9 Timing

The period of execution of the contract will not exceed 8 months from the signature. A detailed timeline/work plan shall be provided with the offer.

10 Contact person

Alex Stimpson, Head of Results and Evaluations – ast@efta.int

Annex 1: Further references

THE OFFICE OF THE AUDITOR GENERAL'S INVESTIGATION OF THE EEA AND NORWAY GRANTS

https://www.riksrevisjonen.no/en/Reports/Documents/Documentbase_3_15_2012_2013.pdf

PROGRAMME AREA 09-14 BROCHURE (BLUE BOOK)

<http://eeagrants.org/Results-data/Results-overview/Documents/Publications/Brochures/Programme-Areas-2009-2014-brochure>

AGREEMENT WITH THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

<http://eeagrants.org/Results-data/Results-overview/Documents/Legal-documents/Agreements-on-the-EEA-and-Norway-Grants>

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

<http://eeagrants.org/Results-data/Results-overview/Documents/Legal-documents/Memoranda-of-Understanding>

EEA & NORWAY GRANTS REGULATIONS

<http://eeagrants.org/Results-data/Results-overview/Documents/Legal-documents/Regulations-with-annexes>

PROGRAMME OPERATORS MANUAL

<http://eeagrants.org/Media/Files/Programme-operators-manual-POM>

BILATERAL GUIDELINE

<http://eeagrants.org/Results-data/Results-overview/Documents/Legal-documents/Guidelines-mandates-and-strategy>

DONOR PROGRAMME PARTNERS

<http://eeagrants.org/Partnerships/Donor-programme-partners>

PUBLICATIONS ABOUT THE GRANTS

<http://eeagrants.org/Results-data/Results-overview/Documents/Publications>

PREVIOUS EVALUATIONS AND REVIEWS

<http://eeagrants.org/Results-data/Results-overview/Documents/Evaluations-and-reviews>

ONGOING EVALUATIONS

<http://eeagrants.org/News/2015/Invitation-to-bid-Communications-review>

<http://eeagrants.org/News/2015/Invitation-to-bid-Mid-term-evaluation-of-the-support-to-strengthened-bilateral-relations>

<http://eeagrants.org/News/2015/Invitation-to-bid-Review-of-Decent-work-and-Tripartite-dialogue>

<http://eeagrants.org/News/2014/Invitation-to-bid-Roma-inclusion-study>

<http://eeagrants.org/News/2014/Invitation-to-bid-mid-term-evaluation-of-funding-to-cultural-heritage>

Annex 2: List of relevant DoRIS reports/qualitative information

The Document, Reporting and Information System (DoRIS) is a web based system with users inputting data in all 16 beneficiary states. A number of reports can be exported from the system. Among these are:

- Financial overview

The report shows the amount allocated in the MoU to the Beneficiary State, by Priority Sector and Programme Areas.

- Interim Financial Reporting

The report shows net amount, committed and disbursed amount by Beneficiary States and Financial Mechanism.

- Results

The report shows programme indicator results; achievements by year and total in addition to baselines, targets and source of verification.

- Bilateral Relations/funding

The report shows Donor Programme Partners (DPP) by Beneficiary State, Donor State and Programmes. There is also a report that shows the bilateral fund financial overview.

- Projects

This report shows the list of projects per Beneficiary State, per Programme Area and per sector code

- Annual Programme Report

Each year Programme Operators report on annual achievements on indicators and submit an annual report.

- Management and Control System (national/programme level)

- Guidance documents/guidelines

Annex 4: On-line survey questionnaires

Survey of Programme Operators

Question	Response
1. Do you represent a Programme Operator (PO) or Fund Operator (FO) for the EEA Grants and/or Norway Grants?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes - Programme Operator • Yes - Fund Operator • No
2. Please state the name of your organisation	
3. Please state your name	
4. In which country are you located?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bulgaria • Croatia • Cyprus • Czech Republic • Estonia • Hungary • Latvia • Lithuania • Malta • Poland • Portugal • Romania • Slovakia • Slovenia • Spain • Iceland • Liechtenstein • Norway • Other (please state)
5. Which programmes are you involved in? Please tick all that apply.	
6. On a scale of 1 to 5, please state the extent to which these statements describe your programmes? 5 = Very relevant to our programme 1 = Not relevant to our programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programme is in line with national policy • Programme is focused • Programme is strategic • Programme is shaped by demand to open calls • Programme has a clear rationale • Programme indicators are easy to measure
7. Please explain your response.	
8. Do you have any other comments on the design of your programme(s)?	
9. Did you request any modifications of your programme?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No • Don't know
10. What was the reason for the request for modification? (tick all that apply)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase rate of absorption of the funds • Enhance the bilateral dimension of the programme

Question	Response
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Response to unforeseen events in your country • Necessary to enhance the impact of the programme • Mitigate risks and/or implementation difficulties • Conclusions from monitoring or evaluation • Other (please state)
11. Was the request for modifications approved?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No • Still waiting for approval
12. What has been the impact of these modifications?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The programme is much more effective • The programme is slightly more effective • No difference • The programme is less effective • Too early to say
13. Does your programme include pre-defined projects?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No
14. Has it proved effective to pre-define projects?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes – for all pre-defined projects • Yes – for some pre-defined projects • No • Too early to say
15. Does your programme include a small grants scheme?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No
16. Has the management of the small grants scheme(s) been sub-contracted to an external entity?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No
17. Has it proved effective to sub-contract the management of the small grant(s) scheme to an external entity?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No • Too early to say
18. Please explain your response about the effectiveness of management of the small grant scheme(s) by sub-contractors?	
19. Which tools have been most effective in communicating the programme to potential applicants: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website • Advertisements in newspapers • Advertisements on TV or radio • Publications • Social media • Information days/events • DPP events/matchmaking • Other (please state) 	For each tool, please state effectiveness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very effective • Fairly ineffective • Ineffective • Don't know / not relevant

Question	Response
20. Have you used selection procedures different to those specified by the EEA Regulation (as permitted by Article 6.5 in exceptional circumstances)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes – we have used different selection procedures • No – we have created selection procedures in line with Article 6.5 • Don't know
21. How easy is it to gather information for the Annual Programme Report?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4: Very easy • 3: Fairly easy • 2: Fairly difficult • 1: Very Difficult • Don't know
22. Has the opinion provided by the FMO or Donors regarding your Annual Programme Reports been useful?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very useful • Fairly useful • Not useful • Don't know
23. How often are project promoters required to send monitoring report to the FMO?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every 3 months (or more often) • Every 4-6 months • Every 7-12 months • Only at the end of the project • Other, please explain
24. What proportion of projects receives a site visit each year?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All projects • About 75% of projects • About 50% of projects • About 25% of projects • None • Other (please explain)
25. Has your programme been the focus of external monitoring undertaken by the FMC (as allowed under Article 10.1 of the Regulation)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No
26. Has the external monitoring been helpful to the management of your programme(s)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helpful • Neither helpful nor detrimental • Detrimental
27. Please comment on the usefulness of external monitoring.	
28. Regarding your plans for programme level evaluations, have you planned or carried out any of the following?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planned • Currently being undertaken • Completed • Not planned at all
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mid-term evaluation • Final evaluation 	
29. Does your programme agreement include special conditions (Section 2 of Annex I)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No
30. Have you reported on the compliance with these special conditions in Annual Programme Reports?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No • Not applicable (no special conditions)

Question	Response
31. Does your organisation have sufficient capacity to fulfil the responsibilities of POs/FOs (as listed in Article 4.7 of the Regulation)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes - we have sufficient capacity to fulfil the responsibilities of POs/FOs • No - we need further support to fulfil the responsibilities of POs/FOs
32. What are the top 3 challenges in respect of effective management of your programme(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procurement processes • Political involvement • Staffing levels at the PO • High turnover of staff • Limited time for implementation • High number of projects • Overseeing project promoters • FMO reporting requirements • Ease of using DORIS • Other (please state)
33. Does your programme include a Donor Programme Partner (DPP)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No
34. How would you rate the quality of the support provided by the DPP in respect of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advice on the preparation of the programme • Advice on the implementation of the programme • Advice provided to the Selection Committee • Promotion of the programme in the donor states • Helping identify donor project partners • Other (please state) 	<p>For each factor, please select one response:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very good • Good • Acceptable • Poor • Don't know / not relevant
35. What improvements could be made to the role of DPPs?	
36. How would you rate the quality of the support, advice and guidance that the PO receives from the FMO in respect of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interpretation of the Regulation and other legal issues • Using DORIS • Programme preparation • Ongoing advice regarding programme management • Expert advice on sector-specific issues • Agreeing modifications to the programme • Reporting (Annual Programme Report, Strategic Report, Interim Financial Report, etc.) 	<p>For each factor, please select one response:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very good • Good • Acceptable • Poor • Not applicable
37. How useful have you found the following tools:	<p>For each factor, please select one response:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very useful

Question	Response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulation • Information and Publicity Requirements (Annex 4) • Template for irregularities reports (Annex 5) • Technical Assistance Budget tool (Annex 6) • Programme Operators Manual (Annex 9) • Programme Agreement Template (Annex 10) • Interim Financial Report Template (Annex 11) • EEA Grants website • Guidance note for Programme Operators • Guidelines for strengthened bilateral relations • Guidelines for NGO programmes • Statistical Manual • List of standard indicators • Risk management strategy • Project level information template • Scholarship Import template • Communication Manual • Other (please state) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fairly useful • Not useful • Does not apply to my programme
38. What other improvements could be made to the support provided by the FMO to POs?	
39. How visible have the EEA Grants and Norway Grants been in your country?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very visible • Fairly visible • Not visible at all <p>Don't know</p>
40. How could they be made more visible?	
41. Which of the following statements best describes the progress of your programme and the likelihood of achieving the intended effects?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The programme is being implemented as planned and is likely to achieve the intended effects. • There have been a few minor modifications to the programme and/or some project extensions; as a result, the programme is likely to achieve the intended effects. • There have been some substantial modifications to the programme; as a result, the programme is likely to achieve the intended effects. • There have been some difficulties in implementation, but the programme is likely to achieve most of the intended effects. • Difficulties and/or delays in implementation mean that the programme is unlikely to achieve most of the intended effects. <p>Other (please state).</p>
42. Please explain your response about the likelihood of achieving the intended effects.	

Question	Response
43. To what extent are most of the positive effects of the programme likely to continue after the funding period?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most effects are not likely to continue beyond the funding period (e.g. continued funding is not foreseen or effects are not sustainable for other reasons) • Some effects will continue beyond the funding period <p>Most/all effects are sustainable and will continue in the long-term</p>
44. Overall, to what extent will the EEA Grants and Norway Grants strengthen bilateral relations between your country and the donor countries?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To a great extent • To a moderate extent • To a small extent • Not at all • Don't know
45. Would you like to offer more comments about the effects of the EEA Grants and Norway in your country?	
46. Are there any other issues you would like to raise and/or would like to be contacted about to speak to somebody in person?	

Survey of projects in case study programmes

Question	Response
1. In which country are you located?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cyprus • Czech Republic • Estonia • Lithuania • Poland • Portugal • Romania • Iceland • Liechtenstein • Norway • Other (please state)
2. To which EEA/Norway Grants Programme did you apply for support? (If you are implementing more than one project with support from the EEA/Norway Grants, please complete a separate survey response for each project.)	(Drop-down list of all programmes)
3. What is the legal status of your organisation?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government ministry • National agency • Regional or local authority • Educational institution • Professional association • Private company • Foundation • NGO / network of NGOs • Other (please state)
4. What was the quality of the information about the EEA/Norway Grants provided on the website of the Programme Operator?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good • Acceptable • Poor • Don't know
5. What was the quality of the information contained in the programme guide?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good • Acceptable • Poor • Don't know
6. Was the application process clear?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very clear • Quite clear • Unclear • Don't know
7. How would you rate the quality of the support, advice, guidance and feedback you received from the Programme Operator?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good • Acceptable • Poor • Don't know
8. How would you rate the quality of the support, you received at the application stage from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Donor Programme Partner • donor project partner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good • Acceptable • Poor • We did not need support • Not relevant (no Donor Programme Partner / donor project partner) • Don't know

Question	Response
9. Do you have any other comments about the project application process?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
10. Have you submitted an interim or final project report to the Programme Operator?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No • Don't know
11. How would you rate the quality of the templates for submitting interim or final project reports?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good • Acceptable • Poor • Don't know
12. Was any guidance provided on how to complete the interim or final report?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No • Don't know
13. If yes, how useful was the guidance?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good • Acceptable • Poor • Don't know
14. Do you have any other comments about the reporting process?	
15. Has your project claimed EEA/Norway Grant funding yet?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No • Don't know
16. How clear was the process of claiming money?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very clear • Quite clear • Unclear • Don't know
17. How do you consider the time it takes to receive EEA/Norway Grant money?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good • Acceptable • Poor • Don't know
18. Do you have any other comments about the process of claiming EEA/Norway Grant money?	
19. What is the current status of your project?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No activities have started • Some activities have started • Most activities have started but have not been completed • All activities have been completed
20. Which of the following statements best describes the progress of your project and the likelihood of achieving the intended effects?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project is being implemented as planned and is likely to achieve the intended effects. • There have been a few minor modifications to the project; as a result, the project is likely to achieve the intended effects. • There have been some substantial modifications to the project; as a result, the project is likely to achieve the intended effects. • There have been some difficulties in implementation, but the project is likely to achieve most of the intended effects. • Difficulties and/or delays in implementation mean that the project is unlikely to achieve most of the intended effects. • Too early to say

Question	Response
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other (please state).
21. Please explain your response about the likelihood of achieving the intended effects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">
22. Will the positive effects of the project continue after the funding period?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most effects are sustainable in the long-term Some effects will continue beyond the funding period Most effects are unlikely to continue beyond the funding period Too early to say
23. Would you have implemented the activity without EEA Grant funding?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes – same level of activities Yes – but a lower level of activities None of the activities Don't know
24. Do you have any other comments about the activities and effects of your project?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">
25. How visible has the EEA/Norway Grants Programme been in your country?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very visible Fairly visible Not visible at all Don't know
26. Would you like to explain your answer regarding the visibility of the Grants in your country?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">
27. Under which priority sector has your project been supported?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Management (PA1, PA2, PA3, PA4) Climate Change and Renewable Energies (PA5, PA6, PA7, PA8, PA9) Carbon Capture and Storage (PA20) Green Industry Innovation (PA21) Human and Social Development (PA11, PA12, PA13, PA14, PA15, PA27, PA28) Justice and Home Affairs (PA29, PA30, PA31, PA32) Other (please state)

FILTER: “Environmental Management”

Question	Response
47. Overall, to what extent has the EEA/Norway Grants Programme in your country been successful in improving the environmental status in EU marine and inland waters?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To a great extent To a moderate extent To a small extent Not at all Don't know
48. Overall, to what extent has the EEA/Norway Grants Programme in your country been successful in halting the loss of biodiversity?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To a great extent To a moderate extent To a small extent Not at all Don't know
49. Overall, to what extent has the EEA/Norway Grants Programme in your country been successful in improving compliance with environmental legislation?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To a great extent To a moderate extent To a small extent Not at all

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't know
50. Overall, to what extent has the EEA/Norway Grants Programme in your country been successful in preventing injury and adverse environmental effects caused by chemicals?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To a great extent • To a moderate extent • To a small extent • Not at all • Don't know
51. Overall, to what extent has the EEA/Norway Grants Programme in your country been successful in preventing injury and adverse environmental effects caused by hazardous waste?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To a great extent • To a moderate extent • To a small extent • Not at all • Don't know

FILTER: “Climate change and renewable energies, Carbon capture and storage, Green industry innovation”

Question	Response
52. Overall, to what extent has the EEA/Norway Grants Programme in your country been successful in reducing the emission of greenhouse gases also through the promotion of renewable energy and energy efficiency?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To a great extent • To a moderate extent • To a small extent • Not at all • Don't know
53. Overall, to what extent has the EEA/Norway Grants Programme in your country been successful in increasing public awareness on green technologies?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To a great extent • To a moderate extent • To a small extent • Not at all • Don't know
54. To what extent has the EEA/Norway Grants Programme in your country been successful in reducing human and ecosystem vulnerability to climate change?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To a great extent • To a moderate extent • To a small extent • Not at all • Don't know
55. To what extent has the EEA/Norway Grants Programme in your country been successful in supporting the development of mitigation measures through CCS?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To a great extent • To a moderate extent • To a small extent • Not at all • Don't know
56. To what extent has the EEA/Norway Grants Programme in your country been successful in promoting competitiveness of green enterprises and greening existing industries?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To a great extent • To a moderate extent • To a small extent • Not at all • Don't know
57. To what extent has the EEA/Norway Grants Programme in your country been successful in promoting green innovation and green entrepreneurship?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To a great extent • To a moderate extent • To a small extent • Not at all • Don't know

FILTER: “Human and social development”

Question	Response
58. To what extent has the EEA/Norway Grants Programme in your country been successful in improving well-being of children and youth at risk of social exclusion?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To a great extent • To a moderate extent • To a small extent • Not at all • Don't know
59. To what extent has the EEA/Norway Grants Programme in your country been successful in strengthening economic and social cohesion at national, regional and local level?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To a great extent • To a moderate extent • To a small extent • Not at all • Don't know
60. To what extent has the EEA/Norway Grants Programme in your country been successful in improving the public health performance?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To a great extent • To a moderate extent • To a small extent • Not at all • Don't know
61. To what extent has the EEA/Norway Grants Programme in your country been successful in reducing health inequalities between user groups?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To a great extent • To a moderate extent • To a small extent • Not at all • Don't know
62. To what extent has the EEA/Norway Grants Programme in your country been successful in mainstreaming gender equality?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To a great extent • To a moderate extent • To a small extent • Not at all • Don't know
63. To what extent has the EEA/Norway Grants Programme in your country been successful in improving the work-life balance?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To a great extent • To a moderate extent • To a small extent • Not at all • Don't know
64. To what extent has the EEA/Norway Grants Programme in your country been successful in ensuring a functional immigration management system?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To a great extent • To a moderate extent • To a small extent • Not at all • Don't know
65. To what extent has the EEA/Norway Grants Programme in your country been successful in mainstreaming gender equality at local, regional and national level?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To a great extent • To a moderate extent • To a small extent • Not at all • Don't know
66. To what extent has the EEA/Norway Grants Programme in your country been successful in promoting work-life balance initiatives?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To a great extent • To a moderate extent • To a small extent • Not at all • Don't know

FILTER: "Justice and Home Affairs"

Question	Response
67. To what extent has the EEA/Norway Grants Programme in your country been successful in tackling violence against women?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To a great extent • To a moderate extent • To a small extent • Not at all • Don't know
68. To what extent has the EEA/Norway Grants Programme in your country been successful in tackling domestic violence?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To a great extent • To a moderate extent • To a small extent • Not at all • Don't know
69. To what extent has the EEA/Norway Grants Programme in your country been successful in protecting and supporting victims of gender violence and trafficking?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To a great extent • To a moderate extent • To a small extent • Not at all • Don't know
70. To what extent has the EEA/Norway Grants Programme in your country been successful in improving cooperation between law enforcement authorities in the Schengen Member States in fighting organised crime?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To a great extent • To a moderate extent • To a small extent • Not at all • Don't know
71. To what extent has the EEA/Norway Grants Programme in your country been successful in ensuring fairer and more efficient judicial systems?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To a great extent • To a moderate extent • To a small extent • Not at all • Don't know
72. To what extent has the EEA/Norway Grants Programme in your country been successful in improving correctional services in compliance with international human rights standards?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To a great extent • To a moderate extent • To a small extent • Not at all • Don't know

ALL RESPONDENTS CONTINUE FROM HERE:

Question	Response
73. To what extent has the EEA/Norway Grants Programme complemented EU Structural programmes?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To a great extent • To a moderate extent • To a small extent • Not at all • Don't know
74. To what extent has the EEA/Norway Grants Programme complemented national and regional programmes?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To a great extent • To a moderate extent • To a small extent • Not at all • Don't know
75. Would you like to offer more comments about the effects of the EEA/Norway Grants Programme in your country?	

Annex 5: List of organisations consulted

Donor bodies

Organisation	Country
Financial Mechanism Office	EFTA
Icelandic Mission to the European Communities	Iceland
Mission of the Principality of Liechtenstein to the EU	Liechtenstein
Royal Norwegian embassy in Athens	Norway
Royal Norwegian embassy in Brussels	Norway
Royal Norwegian embassy in Bucharest	Norway
Royal Norwegian embassy in Lisbon	Norway
Royal Norwegian embassy in Prague	Norway
Royal Norwegian embassy in Tallinn	Norway
Royal Norwegian embassy in Vilnius	Norway
Royal Norwegian embassy in Warsaw	Norway

National Focal Points

Organisation	Country
Directorate General for European Programmes, Coordination and Development	Cyprus
Ministry of Finance	Czech Republic
Ministry of Finance	Estonia
Ministry of Economy, Infrastructure, Shipping & Tourism	Greece
Ministry of Finance and Public Administrations	Spain
Ministry of Regional Development and EU Funds	Croatia
Ministry of Finance	Lithuania
Ministry of Finance	Latvia
Ministry for European Affairs and Implementation of the Electoral Manifesto	Malta
Ministry of Infrastructure and Development	Poland
Ministry for Environment, Spatial Planning and Energy	Portugal
Ministry of European Funds	Romania
Government Office for Development and European Cohesion Policy	Slovenia
Government Office of the Slovak Republic	Slovakia

Programme Operators / Fund Operators

Organisation	Country
Directorate General for European Programmes, Coordination and Development	Cyprus
Ministry of Finance	Czech Republic
Open Society Fund Prague	Czech Republic
Ministry of the Environment	Estonia
Ministry of Education and Research	Estonia

Organisation	Country
Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications	Estonia
Ministry of Social Affairs	Estonia
Ministry of Environment	Lithuania
Ministry of Environment	Lithuania
Ministry of Social Security and Labour	Lithuania
Ministry of Economy	Lithuania
Ministry of Health	Lithuania
Ministry of the Interior	Lithuania
National Courts Administration	Lithuania
Ministry of Justice	Lithuania
Innovation Norway	Norway
Ministry of Environment	Poland
Ministry of Environment	Poland
Ministry of Environment	Poland
Ministry of Infrastructure and Development	Poland
Ministry of Health	Poland
Ministry of Health	Poland
Ministry of Labour and Social Policy	Poland
Ministry of the Interior	Poland
Ministry of Justice	Poland
Central Board of the Correctional Services	Poland
Directorate-General of Maritime Policy	Portugal
Electricity of the Azores	Portugal
Portuguese Environment Agency	Portugal
Central Administration of Health	Portugal
Commission for Citizenship and Gender Equality	Portugal
Ministry of Environment, Waters and Forests	Romania
Ministry of European Funds	Romania
Ministry of Environment, Waters and Forests	Romania
The Environment Fund Administration	Romania
Ministry of Environment, Waters and Forests	Romania
The Romanian Social Development Fund	Romania
Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Protection and the Elderly	Romania
Innovation Norway	Romania
Ministry of Health	Romania
Ministry of Justice	Romania
Ministry of Internal Affairs	Romania
Ministry of Justice	Romania
Ministry of Justice	Romania
Deloitte Consultanta S.R.L.	Romania

Donor Programme Partners

Organisation	Country
Directorate of Norwegian Correctional Service	Norway
Norwegian Court Administration	Norway
Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth & Family Affairs	Norway
Norwegian Directorate of Health	Norway
Norwegian Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion	Norway

Projects

Project	Country
CY02-0001 Biodiversity conservation in restoration and management of the amiantos asbestos mine in Troodos National Forest Park	Cyprus
CY04-0005 Construction of a new Shelter for the Victims of Domestic Violence	Cyprus
CZ02-0016 Adaptation of the settlements to the climate change - practical solutions and sharing experience	Czech Republic
CZ02-0035 Actual damage extend of forest and water ecosystems on the territory of Sac Krkonoše and harmonization of a basic monitoring network for observing their further development as fundamental data set for improving their management towards their higher stability and biodiversity.	Czech Republic
CZ11-0002 National Coordinating Centre for rare diseases at the Motol University hospitals	Czech Republic
CZ12-0016 Stop cyber-violence against women and men	Czech Republic
EE02-0003 Development of data-modelling system and the decision support tool for the integrated marine and inland water management	Estonia
EE04 0001 Developing relevant judicial and organisational framework and support system for implementing measures for children and families	Estonia
EE11-0006 Creating and enhancing a multi-sectoral network to help the victims of sexual violence	Estonia
LT09-0004: Green industry technological processes of cng production	Lithuania
LT11-0003: Development of the Model for the Provision of Youth-Friendly Health Care Services	Lithuania
LT13-0002 Modernization of the courts information system (system for case handling and audio recording for courts hearing)	Lithuania
PL03-0011 Integrated monitoring system of spatial data to improve air quality in Krakow.	Poland
PL02-0022 The protection of habitat grey seals and porpoises in the area of Slowinski National Park	Poland

Project	Country
PL06-0013 The Zagłębie Linear Park – revitalization of the functional area of the Przemsza and Brynica rivers	Poland
PL07-0004 Oncology in Wielkopolska - improving and adjusting diagnosis and treatment of cancer to the demographic and epidemiological trends in the region, together with optimizing procedures and prophylaxis	Poland
PL13-0016 Lodz vs liver disease	Poland
PT04-0001 Local Warming Website	Portugal
PT07-0001 Moral and sexual harassment in the workplace	Portugal
RO07-0001 A green way to sustainable development	Romania
RO11-0004 RAINBOW Early Education Centre	Romania
RO17-0001 Green innovation in professional laundry services	Romania
RO23-0002 Establishing a therapeutic Community centre for women in Gherla Prison	Romania
RO19-0001 Improving the health status of the Romanian population in Romania by increasing Tuberculosis control	Romania
RO25-0001 Social interventions for de-segregation and social inclusion of vulnerable groups in Cluj Metropolitan Area, including the disadvantaged Roma	Romania