



Mid-term evaluation of the cultural heritage sector under the EEA Grants 2009-2014

Evaluation report 2/2015

MID-TERM EVALUATION OF THE SECTOR CULTURAL HERITAGE UNDER THE EEA GRANTS 2009-2014

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Executive Summary

EEA Grants for Cultural Heritage and Diversity

With the signing of the European Economic Area (EEA) agreement in 1992, a financial mechanism was established so that three of the EEA states¹ – Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein – could contribute to the strengthened cohesion in the EEA. The EEA and Norway Grants aim to reduce economic and social disparities in the EEA and to strengthen bilateral relations with the 16 beneficiary states in Central and Southern Europe. 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 cooperation with a Donor Programme Partner (DPP). Programme Operators also organise calls for proposals for projects which serve as basis for their selection.

The EEA Grants provide support to cultural heritage and diversity in culture and arts in fourteen countries: Bulgaria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia and Spain. Around €204 million has been set aside for the 2009-2014 funding period alone for support in two Programme Areas:

- PA16: Conservation and revitalisation of cultural and natural heritage (in all 14 countries); and
- PA17: Promotion of diversity in culture and arts within European cultural heritage supports activities in 10 countries (in all countries, except Cyprus, Estonia, Malta and Slovenia).

In each of the programmes, 1.5% of the budget is allocated to measures to promote bilateral co-operation. Measure A supports the search for project partners and the development of joint project applications; both project applicants in the beneficiary states and potential project partners from the donor states can apply for this funding. Measure B supports networking and exchange between project promoters and entities in the donor countries.

By March 2015, nearly €134m of funds had been allocated to 244 projects, i.e. only around 66% of the funds available for cultural heritage.² No projects in Bulgaria, Hungary or Slovenia had been approved for funding. In the case of Hungary, this was because all payments under the EEA and Norway Grants were suspended on 9 May 2014.

Overall, the allocation of funds to projects has been considerably delayed. As well as the one-third of funds not yet allocated, it must also be noted that many projects were only approved in late 2014 or early 2015. These delays reflect the long time required to negotiate the EEA-EU agreement and the Memoranda of Understanding and to prepare open calls for proposals.

The total budget for all approved projects was just less than €194m. Of this, funding from the EEA Grants represented 69% (€134m). Co-financing at programme level accounted for 11%, whilst co-financing at project level accounted for 20%. In total, 19 projects were pre-defined, mostly under PA16, accounting for 19% of EEA Grant funding, i.e. €25.8m. A total of 144 projects involved donor project partners. Nearly three quarters of PA17 projects (92 out of 129) involved donor project partners, whilst fewer than half of PA16 projects (i.e. 52 out of 115) did.

¹ The EEA states also include Switzerland, but which runs a separate funding scheme.

² All data relating to the award of funding reflect the situation as of 30.3.2015 (source: FMO).

The allocation of funds under PA16 is in line with the overall aim of “Conservation and revitalisation of cultural and natural heritage”. Indeed, the vast majority of funds under PA16 (i.e. 91%) have been allocated to the preservation, restoration and renovation of various cultural heritage sites. The largest share of funds is allocated to museums and libraries, accounting for nearly one-half of funds under PA16 (i.e. 49%). Similarly, the allocation of funds under PA17 is in line with the overall aim of “Promotion of diversity in culture and arts within European cultural heritage”. Funds have been allocated to a range of artistic disciplines: music (16%), theatre and opera (13%), visual arts (11%), dance (8%) and film (8%), whilst cultural and natural heritage is also supported (16%) under PA17.

The aim of protecting and promoting the cultural heritage of minorities is supported by the allocation of funds across both PA16 and PA17. Support is offered under PA16 for the restoration of synagogues, as well as for the preservation of intangible cultural heritage of minorities including Jews and Roma. In addition, more than €8m is specifically allocated to “Multicultural awareness”, representing 6% of all EEA funds for cultural heritage. This is divided almost equally between the two programme areas (i.e. €4m under each), accounting for 3% of all funds under PA16 and 26% of PA17 funds. A specific Roma concern is identified in the MoUs for Romania and Bulgaria. This has been respected in Romania, where 55% of EEA funds allocated to date treat Roma as a “fundamental” or “significant issues” against a target of 10%. In Bulgaria, the target is for 10% of the total allocation (across all programme areas) to go towards improvement of the situation for the Roma population. However, no projects had been approved in Bulgaria (whether related to the Roma or not) by March 2015.

Efficiency of management

The EEA Grants in the current period have been allocated to programmes defined at national level, instead of to individual projects. These 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. However, there is broad support for the programme-based approach, as it could further improve the strategic focus and simplify the management arrangements.

Given the time and effort that has been expended in setting up the **programme-based approach**, consideration should be given as to whether this approach should be retained for the next period. Stakeholders from the donor and beneficiary countries should consider whether negotiations can be concluded much more easily the second time round and whether programme management capacity can be retained. Where this is the case, the programme-based approach should be continued. There would be potential benefits from extending the end-date for completing expenditure and/or extending the programme period from 5 to 7 years. **Monitoring indicators** are appropriate, although many outcomes do not easily lend themselves to measurement and quantification. Qualitative reporting therefore remains important alongside monitoring of quantitative outputs.

Where appropriate, **pre-defined projects** have been an efficient way to allocate funds to high quality projects at an early stage and avoid the administrative burden associated with open calls. Donor country organisations have helped the beneficiary countries to improve the **application and selection process**. Reflecting that, there is a high level of demand relative to the funding available and a high level of satisfaction with the application process. Although there is a reasonable level of satisfaction with feedback given to applicants, there remains some scope for improvements. Other improvements in the application process might also be possible by reconsidering the complementarity/overlap with EU funds and in making the Grants easier to access by small organisations. Most applicants, whether successful or unsuccessful, consider the EEA Grants for Cultural Heritage and Diversity to be fairly or very visible in their countries. Since the demand for funding generally exceeds the funds available, it would seem that the communication activities are achieving sufficient reach amongst cultural operators.

Aside from the lengthy time taken to conclude negotiations regarding the Memoranda of Understanding and Programmes Agreements, the **management at European level** is generally satisfactory. NFPs and POs are generally satisfied with the support they receive from FMO and report that good working relationships have been established. However, there is a need to reduce the time taken by the FMO to provide formal responses to questions submitted by the NFPs and POs. POs report some concerns about the regularity, volume of monitoring information that is required to be submitted and the potential overlap between different reports. There may be scope to address this issue through training for POs at European level. Programme management could also be improved through the provision of templates for the POs to use, for example, relating to the text of open calls, partnership contracts or project reports.

Stakeholders are confident that **the quality of projects** will be high. In part, this is a reflection of the high demand for funding, which has tended to raise the quality of applications selected. The quality of projects has also been improved by actions taken by the POs, such as use of external experts, support for projects at the application stage and requiring pre-approval of applications. Risks to project management can be minimised by ensuring the involvement of bodies experienced in heritage preservation and in handling grant funds, e.g. EU Structural Funds.

Promoters of PA16 projects are generally confident that the effects of their projects will endure beyond the life of EEA funding. **Sustainability** is expected to come from increased commercial revenue, as well as continued public subsidy from existing sources. PA17 projects are by nature short-term projects but offer the potential to generate sustainable impacts for the participants, including sustained collaborations and networks and learning effects (for cultural operators and target groups).

Effectiveness of activities (PA16)

The programmes are funding a broad range of projects to **conserve, restore, renovate and improve public access to heritage sites** in the beneficiary countries. These include:

- Museums; at least 13 museums have been restored or renovated. The museums in question typically have immense architectural value in their own right, as well as housing important exhibitions. Many will enjoy an expansion in their exhibition space, as a result of the restoration works.
- Ethnographic villages; several restorations concern ethnographic villages or open air/living museums. These are real or artificial settlements which portray the historical and ethnographic characteristics of life of particular periods in history and/or ethnic groups. The restorations of usually include the provision of training, given the general lack of traditional skills.
- Palaces, castles and fortifications; around 12 such sites have been restored in some way. As well as being attractions in their own right, many of these sites serve a wider cultural purpose, for example, housing museums or libraries. Some projects also include the creation of new cultural or leisure facilities within the restored sites. Restoration of sites often includes improvements to surrounding parks and gardens and the creation of trails and cycle paths.
- Manor houses or halls; at least 11 manor houses have been restored, most serving as attractions in their own right and as venues for cultural activities.
- Churches; at least 12 projects concern the restoration of churches, covering at least 18 sites across most of the beneficiary countries. Most of these sites have been in continuous use as places of worship. Once restored, most if not all will (continue to) serve as places of worship and as attractions for tourists.
- Synagogues; at least 6 synagogues and 13 Jewish cultural heritage sites are being restored. Some of the synagogues in question have been damaged by being used for purposes other than worship or by remaining vacant. Most of the synagogues in question, once restored, are to be

use for cultural purposes rather than as places of worship. In some but not all cases, these purposes relate to raising awareness of Jewish culture.

- Works within churches and synagogues; as well as having architectural merit in their own right, several of the churches and some of the synagogues also house important cultural artefacts. These include, in particular, painting and other artworks which will be restored, thus improving the local cultural offer and helping to attract tourists.
- Theatres: 4 theatres in Poland have been restored or renovated. As well as restoring the fabric of the building, these renovations have enabled the installation of technical facilities that widen the type of performances that can take place, e.g. involving multi-media presentations.
- New venues: around 8 projects involve the creation of new venues, including through the conversion of historic buildings. The creation of these new venues will also include the creation of new exhibitions to be housed therein.

Investments in sites typically include different forms of **modernisation**, including installation of better ICT facilities and improvements in wheelchair access, fire safety and energy efficiency. Many also include new exhibitions about the site, new spaces or facilities serving educational or cultural purposes, promotional activities and capacity-building activities, such as training.

The late approval of projects and the long timescales required for physical investments has created a real risk that the desired objectives, outcomes and outputs expected will not be achieved. The FMO and other representatives of the donor states should therefore consider what remedial action might be necessary, for example, an extension of the timescale for completing projects.

A small number of projects have been primarily focussed on the **documentation, digitisation and/or dissemination of cultural history of works**. Some of the small development projects have also shared this focus. Many of the restoration projects also involve the documentation and digitisation of works in order to facilitate their on-line dissemination. The main types of activity include the preservation of intangible cultural heritage, digitisation of works and the creation of new exhibitions. Some projects have specifically aimed to preserve the intangible heritage and folklore of minority cultures, including Jewish and Roma culture.

Projects supported by the EEA Grants have **built capacity** either through specific large projects or through small grant schemes or through capacity-building activities within wider restoration projects. Effects of the large projects include new centres of expertise and/or research, a new monitoring system, training and strategy development, promotional activities and sharing knowledge and experience. Capacity-building within wider restoration projects or small dedicated projects has included training of those undertaking restorations, an increase in staffing, training and awareness-raising for a wider set of heritage stakeholders and the development of strategies and plans. Organisations involved in bilateral co-operation under PA16 report new or better international links, which offers the potential for accelerated learning.

The **promotion of tourism** is the primary focus of only a small number of projects. However, all the beneficiary countries recognise the potential for cultural heritage to attract tourists and thus create wider economic benefits for the localities that host heritage sites. Whilst the emphasis of most PA16 projects is on physical restoration of heritage sites, there is recognition that tourists often constitute an important “audience” for restored sites and thus also a source of funds for continued operation and ongoing maintenance. Activity to attract and cater for tourists has included the creation of tourist trails and pilgrimage routes, developing new facilities for tourists and tourism promotion activities. The potential contribution of heritage to tourism is underlined by the fact that many of the restored buildings are at the heart of town or city centres and thus significantly affect the attractiveness of those places to tourists and other visitors.

Effectiveness of activities (PA17)

PA17 projects are implementing a wide diversity of **cultural events** involving different art forms and artistic disciplines. Most have undertaken a series of related events rather than one-off events. Nearly all the projects have been collaborative, involving co-operation with other organisations, even if not as formal project partners. Many of the projects have also included an important social dimension and attempted to convey a message beyond the core artistic performance. In many cases, this involves targeting specific groups, as creators, performers or audiences. Some have also specifically focussed on gender equality, either through promoting female artists or through exploring themes related to gender equality. Project promoters are confident that audience numbers will match their expectations. Most events are likely to be visited by 50-500 people, although a significant number of events will have larger audiences. Most PA17 projects have targeted specific groups, including children and young people, visitors from other countries, minority ethnic groups and people from disadvantaged groups. Some projects and events have specifically promoted Roma culture and/or targeted Roma people as creators, performers or audiences. Regarding **capacity-building**, PA17 projects have provided opportunities for collaboration across countries and cultures, which offers the potential to build capacity of operators to internationalise their operations and to work across cultural and linguistic boundaries.

Potential for impact

In general, economic and social effects tend to be perceived by project promoters as by-products of investments in heritage preservation or cultural events, rather than the main intended effects. However, it is likely that the investments in heritage, once completed, will generate desirable **economic and social effects**. These include:

- Making cultural heritage accessible; many of the PA16 projects will improve physical access to sites, such as new visitor facilities, better wheelchair access and improvements in fire safety. They will also improve visitor experience, such as through better use of ICT and new spaces or facilities serving educational or cultural purposes. Within PA17, cultural events organised have reached out to a large number of target groups, particularly, children, young people, Roma and disadvantaged groups. Projects across PA16 and PA17 have also involved promotional activities to reach wider audiences and raise awareness of cultural heritage and diversity.
- Increase in employment and revenues enjoyed by (local) contractors undertaking works, albeit one-off in nature. Indeed, heritage restorations tend to be more labour-intensive than other construction activities. Restoration also tends to require higher value services, given its reliance on specialist or craft-based skills.
- Creating new employment; the establishment of new venues or an expansion in amenities and services at existing venues creates a need for additional members of staff. However, the direct employment impact from the restored sites and from cultural events is expected to be modest.
- Increase in tourism; many projects have improved facilities for tourists (and other visitors) at restored sites and undertaken promotional activities aimed at tourists. Around one third of promoters believe that their projects will improve the local tourist offer and attract more tourists to the local area.
- Improvements in image or self-perception of local communities; since many of the restored buildings are at the heart of town or city centres, their restoration has a considerable effect on the overall attractiveness of those localities.
- Skills and competences; several projects involve training for those undertaking restorations or those working within cultural heritage bodies. A small number of projects are developing facilities that will provide training on an ongoing basis, including three new centres of expertise

and research. Two projects specifically focus on developing training and competences within the heritage sector.

- Education; some projects have enhanced the role of museums by providing new educational facilities at heritage sites or through organising, events, exhibitions, workshops and conferences. However, provision of education within PA16 projects has tended to be a complement to restoration works or a follow-on activity. Some PA17 projects have promoted arts education and/or worked with schools.
- Social cohesion; some projects have focussed on preserving and promoting the heritage and folklore of minority cultures, notably Jewish and Roma, in some cases reflecting the prioritisation of this objective at the programme level (for example, where a proportion of PA16 funds have been set aside for projects related to the heritage of the Roma). All projects have been required to ensure gender equality in their implementation, whilst 17 projects under PA17 have specifically promoted gender equality as the main focus of their activity.

The economic and social impacts of investments are likely to be localised, rather than permeating the wider heritage sector in the beneficiary countries. This reflects the fact that the funds available are modest in relation to the size of the beneficiary countries and the needs of their cultural and heritage sectors. Moreover, 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, where programmes have prioritised certain forms of cultural heritage (e.g. manor houses, wooden heritage, Jewish or Roma culture) and/or funded strategic projects (e.g. centres of expertise or capacity building for those priority areas), there is the potential for a wider impact to be realised on those priority areas.

In the next programme period, there may be the potential for investments to be made more strategic and thus deliver greater impact, albeit on a narrower field. This could be done in two ways: first, funding clusters of projects that prioritise certain forms of heritage or specifically promote certain economic or social objectives through cultural heritage and diversity; second, funding strategic projects that support those clusters and/or a wider set of cultural operators – those projects might support modernisation of the sector, capacity-building, promotion of heritage, etc. Estonia provides an example here, where all the projects relate to the restoration of manor houses that will serve as schools and where a strategic project is building capacity across all manor houses.

The current period has seen a substantial increase in the extent of **bilateral co-operation at project level**, even though the inclusion of donor project partners was not obligatory in all programmes. Bilateral co-operation within PA16 projects tends to be an add-on to the main work of site restoration; it has typically consisted of exchanges of experience, teaching and informal co-operation. In contrast, bilateral co-operation is more integral to the design and implementation of PA17 projects; it has included co-productions, artistic residencies, translation of works and performance of such works, education and tuition provided in the beneficiary countries by experts, teachers and instructors from the donor countries, and activities to raise awareness of cultures and promote intercultural dialogue.

The most prominent benefits of bilateral co-operation at project level will be greater artistic capacity, better international links and an improved capacity for management and administration. New sources of revenues are one of the least commonly expected benefits. However, the extent of bilateral co-operation has been hindered by many a number of factors. These include difficulties faced by project promoters in finding bilateral partners in the donor countries and, in some cases, a relatively short timescale for finding partners and developing meaningful joint project proposals. Given these difficulties, it is clear that the development of bilateral partnerships is often dependent on support offered in advance of the publication of calls for proposals. Indeed, where co-operation has taken place, it has often been facilitated by specific initiatives of the POs, such as calls under Measures A and B or by

initiatives of Donor Programme Partners. For example, Arts Council Norway has played an important role in providing information and in facilitating contacts between potential project partners. Some bilateral partnerships have also been formed by partners that already knew each other. There is potential for bilateral co-operation to continue beyond the life of EEA funding, although this is only likely to be possible with support from EU programmes, such as Creative Europe.

Donor Programme Partners (DPPs) have made a positive impact on the design and management of the programmes. This has included promoting the programmes in Norway, 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. The role of DPPs has been strengthened by some of the co-operation at European level. However, the contribution of DPPs might have been greater if their role had been clearer at the outset and if they had a formal remit and appropriate resources to promote all the programmes to potential project partners in their own countries.

Bilateral co-operation at programme level has also helped to increase the international experience and contacts of the bodies and individuals involved in programme management. This has arisen from bilateral co-operation with the DPP and networking between POs at European level, including through the meetings of DPPs and POs in Oslo and in Kraków. Interactions between the POs and DPPs have considered general issues of culture and cultural governance, as well as issues of programme management. In this way, bilateral co-operation has facilitated knowledge exchange and accelerated learning, which has the potential to bring about systemic change. For their part, DPPs report that their participation has helped them to internationalise their operation and to enjoy learning benefits.

Recommendations

1. 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 round 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.
2. The number of programmes should perhaps be reduced given the relative modest funds available in some countries. For example, the PA16 and PA17 areas could be merged into a single programme area (perhaps even with other programme areas) in the next period, albeit with different calls for different types of projects.
3. Beneficiary countries, particularly those receiving modest amounts of funding, should be encouraged to focus their programmes on more specific areas, e.g. those that can benefit most from bilateral co-operation, those prioritised by national policy or those for which there is limited other funding available. The focus of the Estonian programme on the restoration of manor houses provides an example here. This will reduce the level of disappointed applicants and also increase impact and synergy between different projects.
4. The donors should consider how to provide more in-depth support for the NFPs and POs in the process of developing programmes, so that strong programme proposals are submitted at the outset.
5. POs should be encouraged or perhaps even required to ensure that all assessors of project applications have specific expertise in the field of culture, rather than only in the management of funding programmes.
6. The role of DPPs should be continued in the new period. Consideration should be given as to whether/how to give DPPs a role in all programmes and beneficiary countries. This might

include communicating information about all the programmes and attracting donor project partners for all programmes. The extent of such a role would vary between different beneficiary countries as necessary.

7. 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.
8. The possibility to pre-define projects should be retained, particularly for countries receiving small amounts of funding where open calls are not merited.
9. The FMC should consider whether the delays to the agreement and implementation of the programmes constitute exceptional cases that justify an extension of the period of eligibility of expenditure to 30 April 2017, as allowed for under Article 7.14 of the Regulation. Such an extension would significantly increase the likelihood of achieving the desired level of effects and reduce risks in delivery by allowing proper timescales for implementation.
10. 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.
11. Given the long timescales required for complex heritage restoration projects, there might be merit in defining a longer period of eligibility of expenditure in future programmes or, indeed, in having programmes of seven years rather than five years duration. In that case, there would be advantages and disadvantages in operating programmes over the same time-scale as EU programmes, i.e. whether to “bridge the gap” caused by the end/start of EU programmes or whether to exploit the synergies offered by having the same timescale.
12. In the design of future programmes, consideration should be given as to how to make more strategic investments with the potential to deliver greater economic and social impact. This could be done in two ways: first, funding clusters of projects that specifically promote certain economic or social objectives through cultural heritage; second, funding strategic projects that support those clusters and/or a wider set of cultural operators – those projects might support modernisation of the sector, capacity-building, promotion of heritage, etc.

Contents

	Executive Summary	i
1.0	Introduction	1
2.0	Research Framework	2
2.1	Objectives of the EEA Grants for Cultural Heritage and Diversity	2
2.2	Expected effects	4
2.3	Research Questions	5
2.4	Work Packages	7
3.0	EEA Grants for Cultural Heritage & Diversity	8
3.1	The EEA and Norway Grants	8
3.2	Rationale for the grants	9
3.3	Programme areas	12
3.4	Allocations of funds	14
4.0	Efficiency of Management	20
4.1	Summary of programme management arrangements	21
4.2	Design and set-up of the programme	23
4.3	Programme management	25
4.4	Management at European level	28
4.5	Project management, quality and sustainability	29
4.6	Efficiency of communication	33
4.7	Programme standards	34
5.0	Effectiveness of activities	36
5.1	Physical investments in sites, monuments and artefacts (PA16)	36
5.2	Documentation, digitisation and dissemination of cultural history or works (PA16)	40
5.3	Capacity building (PA16 & PA17)	41
5.4	Support for tourism (PA16)	44
5.5	Artistic events organised (PA17)	46
5.6	Accessibility of events (PA17)	49
6.0	Potential for impact	52
6.1	Reducing economic and social disparities	52
6.2	Strengthening bilateral relations through co-operation at project level	56
6.3	Strengthening bilateral relations through co-operation at programme level	61

6.4	Unplanned results	65
7.0	Conclusions and Recommendations	66
7.1	Conclusions	66
7.2	Recommendations.....	70
	 Annex One: Country overviews PA16	 72
	 Annex Two: Country overviews PA17	 80
	 Annex Three: Terms of Reference	 83
	 Annex Four: On-line survey response	 91
	 Annex Five: Bibliography	 93
	 Annex Six: Recommendations from the 2004-09 evaluation.....	 96

List of tables

Table 2.1: Objectives of the EEA Cultural Grants	3
Table 2.2: Expected effects of the EEA Cultural Grants	4
Table 2.3: Research Questions	6
Table 2.4: Work Packages	7
Table 3.1: Programmes support by Programme Areas 16 and 17	14
Table 3.2: Total projects grants awarded by beneficiary country (PA16 and PA17).....	16
Table 3.3: Total projects grants awarded by beneficiary country (PA 16)	17
Table 3.4: Total projects grants awarded by beneficiary country (PA 17)	18
Table 3.5: Total projects grants awarded by sectors code.....	20
Table 6.1: Donor Programme Partners by beneficiary state.....	62

List of figures

Figure 4.1: Programme management structure	22
Figure 4.2: Visibility of the EEA Grants for Cultural Heritage and Diversity.....	34
Figure 5.1: Expected event attendance	49
Figure 6.1: Potential for impact	53
Figure 6.2: Types of benefits for individuals and organisations participating	59

Glossary

AA	Audit Authority
ACN	Arts Council Norway
CA	Certifying Authority
DCH	Directorate for Cultural Heritage, Norway
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
MC	Monitoring Committee
NFP	National Focal Point
PA	Programme Area
PO	Programme Operator
PP	Project Promoter
RF	Research Finding
RQ	Research Question
ToR	Terms of Reference
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
WP	Work Package

1.0 Introduction

This report presents findings from the “Mid-term Evaluation of the Sector Cultural Heritage Under the EEA Grants 2009-14”. The report contains an analysis of the EEA Grants for Cultural Heritage and Diversity, which has been developed using the findings from the data collection undertaken. It is structured as follows:

- **Section 2 Research Framework** outlines the approach and data collection tools (desk research, an online survey, consultations and case studied) used to reach the study’s findings, conclusions and recommendations.
- **Section 3 EEA Grants for Cultural Heritage and Diversity.** This section summarises the origin, context and rationale for the Grants. It then describes the Programme Areas under support can be awarded and summarises the allocation of funds up to the end of March 2015.
- **Sections 4-6** present the study findings according to **Efficiency of Management (4), Effectiveness of activities (5) and Potential for impact (6).**
- **Section 7** presents the study’s **Conclusions and recommendations** for the future.
- **Appendices** include country overviews for PA16 and PA17, the Terms of Reference, the online survey response breakdown, a bibliography and a list of interviewees.

2.0 Research Framework

The purpose of the contract was to “provide an expert independent mid-term evaluation of the contribution of the EEA Grants 2009-14 to the objective of the grants within the cultural heritage sector in the beneficiary states operating Programmes”. With that in mind, we present here our Research Framework consisting of the programme objectives, a typology of expected effects and a set of research questions (RQs). We also present the methodology that was followed, in the form of different Work Packages.

2.1 Objectives of the EEA Grants for Cultural Heritage and Diversity

Table 2.1 below restates the objectives of the EEA Grants for Cultural Heritage and Diversity, drawn directly from the programme documentation. These have guided our overall approach, including the typology of expected effects, research questions and methodology. The objectives are presented as a hierarchy: general, specific and operational.

We have used the overall objective of the EEA as the general objective for this evaluation, namely to *“reduce economic and social disparities and strengthening bilateral relations between donor and beneficiary countries”*. This objective places the EEA Grants for Cultural Heritage and Diversity in their wider context, namely the wider commitment of EEA to cohesion. It also serves as a reminder that the EEA Grants for Cultural Heritage and Diversity are just one of the areas of support and should complement other priority sectors, programme areas and programmes.

Two of the specific objectives are the stated objectives of Programme Areas 16 and 17, relating to *cultural heritage* in the case of the former and *cultural diversity* in the case of the later. Whilst each of these objectives relates to one or other of the programmes, it should be noted that the two are complementary and that each programme can make some contribution to the achievement of the objective of the other programme. For example, contemporary artistic events might draw on, and thus help preserve, the artistic heritage of beneficiary countries (or communities therein); similarly, the restoration and preservation of cultural heritage sites and monuments can raise awareness of cultural diversity and strengthen citizens’ cultural identity. To those specific objectives, we have added a third, that of strengthening cultural co-operation between donor and beneficiary countries.

The operational objectives relate directly to the activities undertaken. Under both Programme Area 16 and Programme Area 17, there is a list of six “suggested activities” (twelve in all), which can be grouped under three objectives for each Programme Area (six in all). We have anticipated that any project would relate to at least one of the proposed operational objectives.

The hierarchy of objectives leads logically to a set of expected effects, which are presented next.

Table 2.1: Objectives of the EEA Grants for Cultural Heritage and Diversity

Objectives					
General objective					
Reduce economic and social disparities and strengthening bilateral relations between donor and beneficiary countries					
Specific objectives					
Safeguard and conserve cultural and natural heritage for future generations and make it publicly accessible					
Increase cultural dialogue and foster European identity through the understanding of cultural diversity					
Strengthen cultural co-operation between donor and beneficiary countries					
Operational objectives (activities supported)					
Physical investment in sites, monuments and artefacts	Develop capacity via: - Policies/strategies - Training/competence	Support sustainable and eco-tourism	Support culturally diverse artistic events	Develop capacity via: - Co-operation - Exchanges of experience	Documentation, digitisation and dissemination of works

2.2 Expected effects

The objectives presented in the table above led us to propose three types of expected effects that the programme could be expected to produce. They are presented in the table that follows.

Table 2.2: Expected effects of the EEA Grants for Cultural Heritage and Diversity

Type of effects	Expected effects / success criteria
Project activities	
Quality of projects	• Relevant to need • Well-designed • Cost-effective • High levels of participation • Completed on time • High quality of activity • Operationally sustainable, e.g. publicly accessible, stored digitally • Financially sustainable (commercial revenue and/or public subsidy)
Project effects	
Project outputs (PA16)	• Sites, monuments and artefacts restored • Sites, monuments and artefacts made accessible • Old/abandoned buildings renovated • New/better policies or strategies developed • Individuals and organisations receiving training or capacity building • Tourism initiatives or promotional campaigns • Cultural works documented, digitised or disseminated
Project outputs (PA17)	• Cultural works documented, digitised or disseminated (PA16) • New methodologies or tools for documentation, digitisation or dissemination (PA16) • Individuals and organisations receiving training or capacity building • Cultural or artistic events taking place • New/improved mechanisms for co-operation and exchange of experience/information
Effects on participants and audiences	• Attraction of visitors/audiences • Financial revenue (if relevant) • Development of capacity of operators, including transnational links • Increased interest in culture/cultural heritage • Greater intercultural awareness, sense of identity, etc. amongst operators and audiences
Effects on local/regional communities	• Greater awareness about importance of good heritage management • Improved tourist offer and attraction of tourists • Improved external image and self-perception of host localities • Spill-overs, e.g. skills development, stimulating

	enterprise & innovation • Economic multiplier effects, e.g. employment generation, additional investment • Greater social cohesion, inclusion and understanding of cultural diversity
Programme effects	
Programme standards	• Meeting standards on human rights • Good governance • Sustainable development • Respect for gender equality • Respect for cultural diversity (including minorities and vulnerable groups)
Effects on cultural sectors	• Better skills/more knowledge/ greater capacity • Greater focus on local/regional needs/challenges • More innovative operators and activities • More diverse cultural offering • Greater internationalisation of operators & activities
Broader effects at national and European level	• Positive influence on policies and policymakers/cultural governance strengthened • Wider awareness of (issues around) cultural heritage and its potential and greater focus on cultural diversity as a tool for social cohesion • Broader trend toward transnational co-operation • Synergy with other transnational interventions, e.g. EU Structural Funds, Cohesion Funds, Creative Europe

2.3 Research Questions

The objectives and expected effects presented above, as well as our understanding of the background to the assignment, led us to propose a number of Research Questions (RQs) related to the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability of the Grants and the activities they support. We present the RQs in Table 2.3 below. These include the questions listed in the ToR, as well as some others that we believed merited consideration by the evaluation.

Table 2.3: Research Questions

Research Questions	
Efficiency	
RQ1	How appropriate is the current design and set-up of the programmes? How efficient was the process of negotiating the programmes?
RQ2	How efficient is the management of the programmes at national level, particularly the operation of the application process
RQ3	How efficient is the management at European level?
RQ4	How efficient is the management of projects?
RQ5	What has been the quality of projects?
RQ6	Will project activities be sustained beyond the life of the funding?
RQ7	What is the visibility of the activities at national and local levels?
RQ8	Are programme standards being respected, e.g. with respect to human rights, sustainable development?
Effectiveness	
RQ9	To what extent and in what ways have programmes enabled physical investment in sites, monuments and artefacts?
RQ10	To what extent and in what ways have programmes supported the documentation, digitisation and dissemination of cultural history of works?
RQ11	To what extent and in what ways have programmes built the capacity of operators involved in projects?
RQ12	To what extent and in what ways have PA16 programmes supported the role of cultural heritage in the promotion of tourism?
RQ13	To what extent and in what ways have programmes enabled the production of culturally diverse artistic events?
RQ14	What have been the audiences for events?
RQ15	To what extent and in what ways is cultural heritage being made more accessible?
Impact	
RQ16	What is the potential for the EEA Grants to contribute to the reduction in economic and social disparities between the beneficiary countries and other European countries?
RQ17	What is the potential for the EEA Grants to strengthen bilateral relations between donor and beneficiary countries through cultural co-operation at project level?
RQ18	What is the potential for the EEA Grants to strengthen bilateral relations between donor and beneficiary countries through cultural co-operation at programme level?
RQ19	Have the programmes generated any unplanned results?

2.4 Work Packages

The evaluation was implemented through seven Work Packages (WPs), as summarised in the table below.

Table 2.4: Work Packages

Work Packages	Purpose	Tasks
WP1 Inception	Gain better view of client expectations; receive client comments on our understanding and approach; discuss methodology, tools and data sources; explore the client's expectations concerning benchmarks and good practice; revise research approach	Client meeting Desk research Initial consultations (FMO) Develop research tools Refined methodology and workplan
WP2 Document review	Deepen understanding of the study context, identify common issues across beneficiary countries; highlight interesting examples	Review programme documentation Review policy literature Review other relevant studies Internet research
WP3 Data analysis	Identify level/patterns of grant allocations, expenditure, co-financing and achievement of outputs	Analyse quantitative programme data Summary note
WP4 Consultations	Explore contextual or programme issues at European level and at national level in the donor and beneficiary countries; identify common issues across beneficiary countries; highlight interesting examples	Interview stakeholders at European, national and programme level
WP5 On-line survey	Gather the views of successful and unsuccessful applicants regarding the relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of the programmes; gather evidence regarding activities undertaken and effects achieved by selected projects	Design and launch on-line survey Analysis of results
WP6 Country cases	Analyse a selection of programmes and projects in more depth in order to refine and deepen research findings, identify key success factors and highlight good practice examples	Collate information on countries gathered from previous research tasks Select projects for in-depth analysis Review project documentation Interview project managers Project visits Programme case study reports
WP7 Final analysis and reporting	Analyse evidence from all WP; formulate conclusions and recommendations; report to client; present results	Data analysis Draft Final Report & Client meeting Final Report PowerPoint presentation

3.0 EEA Grants for Cultural Heritage & Diversity

In this section, we describe the origin of the EEA Grants and their rationale, with reference both to the wider policy context and current challenges facing cultural operators. We then describe the two Programme Areas and their objectives, before describing the allocation of funds to projects.

3.1 The EEA and Norway Grants

With the signing of the EEA agreement in 1992, a financial mechanism was established so that three of the EEA states³ – Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein – could contribute to the strengthened cohesion in the European Economic Area. The EEA 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. They were formulated in a Decision of the Council of the European Union⁴ and by a Regulation adopted by the EEA Financial Mechanism Committee.⁵ The EEA Grants are jointly financed by Iceland (3%), Liechtenstein (1.2%) and Norway (95.8%).

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. The support provided for cultural heritage and diversity in culture and arts is through the EEA Grants.

The Grants offer opportunities for the three EEA 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 cooperation 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 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. For Slovakia, the donors recommended that a minimum of 5% of the funding available under the open call under PA16 be set aside for Jewish cultural heritage.

³ The EEA states also include Switzerland, but which runs a separate funding scheme.

⁴ Council Decision on the signing and provisional application of an Agreement between the EU, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway on an EEA Financial Mechanism 2009-2014, an Agreement between the European Union and Norway on a Norwegian Financial Mechanism for the period 2009-2014 (9899/10)

⁵ Regulation on the implementation of the European Economic Area (EEA) Financial Mechanism 2009-2014

3.2 Rationale for the grants

The EEA Grants for Cultural Heritage and Diversity reflect the wider European and international policy context, as well as some practical challenges facing the cultural sectors of the beneficiary countries.

3.2.1 Policy context for the grants

The importance that both the donors and the beneficiary countries place on conserving and revitalising cultural heritage and on promoting intercultural dialogue and diversity is signified by the fact that they are all Parties to the **European Cultural Convention**, which aims to develop mutual understanding among the peoples of Europe and reciprocal appreciation of their cultural diversity, to safeguard European culture, to promote national contributions to Europe's common cultural heritage respecting the same fundamental values and to encourage in particular the study of the languages, history and civilisation of the Parties to the Convention.

Most of the donors and beneficiaries are also Parties to the **United Nations Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions**, which entered into force on 18 March 2007.⁶ The Convention enshrines cultural diversity as a “defining characteristic of humanity” and posits the “distinctive nature of cultural activities”, beyond their economic value. The objectives of the Convention (set out in Article 1) include the creation of the condition for *cultures to flourish*, the encouragement of *intercultural dialogue* and *interculturality*, raising awareness of the value of the diversity of cultural expression and of the link between *culture and development*, and strengthening *international co-operation*. As Parties to the Convention, the donors and beneficiary countries endeavour to take measures to promote and protect cultural expressions, as well as to promote the understanding of such measures through education and public awareness programmes. They also endeavour to encourage the participation of civil society in their efforts to strengthen international co-operation in this field (including with developing countries).

The beneficiary countries also recognise the importance of cultural heritage and cultural diversity as Members of the EU. **Article 167 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union** states that the EU “shall contribute to the flowering of the cultures of the Member States, while respecting their national and regional diversity and at the same time bringing the common cultural heritage to the fore”. The Treaty gives the EU the mandate to “encourage co-operation between Member States and, if necessary, to support and supplement their action” in the field of culture. It also encourages the EU to “foster co-operation with third countries and the competent international organisations in the sphere of culture”. Furthermore, Article 3(3) of the Treaty recognises that the internal market and economic growth must be accompanied by respect for the EU’s cultural and linguistic diversity and by the safeguarding and enhancement of Europe’s cultural heritage.⁷

This commitment to cultural heritage and cultural diversity is reflected in the policies and programmes of the EU. The **Europe 2020 Strategy**⁸ has emphasized the importance of creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship which are central to the cultural sector. A 2012 Communication from the Commission further highlighted the potential of strategic investments in the cultural and creative sectors at local and regional level to generate significant economic benefits, as well as test approaches to audience development and greater citizen participation.⁹ Another Commission Communication highlights the opportunities for Member States and other stakeholders in the heritage sector to work more closely across borders and calls for stronger cooperation at EU level to share ideas and best practice, which can feed into national heritage policies and governance.¹⁰ The **European Agenda for culture in a globalizing**

⁶ The European Union is also a Party to the Convention in its own right.

⁷ Consolidated Version of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

⁸ COM(2010) 2020, Europe 2020. A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth

⁹ COM(2012)537, Promoting cultural and creative sectors for growth and jobs in the EU

¹⁰ COM(2014)477, Towards an integrated approach to cultural heritage for Europe

world sets out new ways of working to take cultural co-operation within Europe to a new level. It defines a number of objectives to guide EU action in the future, namely:

- Promotion of cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue;
- Promotion of culture as a catalyst for creativity in the framework of the Lisbon Strategy for growth and jobs; and
- Promotion of culture as a vital element in the Union's international relations.

With the aim of strengthening "the contribution of culture to local and regional development", the Council of the European Union adopted in 2010, with specific reference to the "Europe 2020 strategy" for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, the following priorities for action of both the Commission and the Member States:

- mainstream culture in local and regional development policies;
- stimulate a favourable environment at local and regional level for a better development of cultural and creative industries, in particular SMEs;
- deepen the contribution of culture to sustainable tourism;
- promote creativity in education and training with a view to developing new skills, improving human capital and fostering social cohesion;
- reinforce cross-border, transnational and interregional cultural co-operation.¹¹

In addition, culture has also been supported through other policy instruments such as the Structural Funds (e.g. investment in cultural sites, infrastructure and enterprises through ERDF, skills training through ESF), 7th Framework Programme (i.e. research) and external co-operation instruments. For example, it has been estimated that the ERDF provided support to culture, heritage and tourism of €14bn during the 2007-13 period.¹² However, expenditure on heritage, restoration and renovation of cultural heritage sites, although eligible under the ERDF Regulation (depending on the precise nature of the project),¹³ tends not be prioritised in many ERDF Operational Programmes; only around €6bn or 1.7% of the total Structural Funds budget was explicitly ring-fenced for heritage and cultural projects.

At the same time, the **Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union** commits the EU and its Member States to respecting the diversity of the cultures and traditions of the peoples of Europe. Specifically, Article 22 states that the Union shall respect cultural, religious and linguistic diversity, whilst Article 25 asserts the rights of the elderly to participate in cultural life.¹⁴

3.2.2 Challenges facing cultural operators

In this context, we can identify the main challenges that the grants can be seen as addressing.

First, there is the legacy of under-investment in cultural heritage preservation, which reflects both a lack of resources (particularly during the era in which nine of the beneficiary countries were communist

¹¹ Council conclusions of 10 May 2010 on the contribution of culture to local and regional development (2010/C 135/05)

¹² According to data provided by DG REGIO, €12 billion was earmarked for priority themes 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, and €2 billion for the classification on economic code for restaurants and hotels – 14 (excluding priority themes 55-60, in order to avoid double-counting). See http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/impact/evaluation/data_en.cfm.

¹³ Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 July 2006 on the European Regional Development Fund and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1783/1999

¹⁴ Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (2010/C 83/02)

states), as well as **limited capacity within the cultural heritage sector**. For example, UNESCO notes that co-operation between different (often small) operators across Europe is required, including:

- Efforts to address the lack of documentation, loss of institutional memory, and the need for capacity-building relating to administrative provisions, management of heritage, and conservation techniques, particularly in Eastern and South-Eastern Europe and drawing on European networks and specialised institutions and foundations;
- Systematic transnational dissemination of information and documentation, as well as the transnational sharing of experiences in the field of heritage conservation; and
- Addressing the imbalance in the availability and application of scientific and professional expertise between, on the one hand, Western European countries and, other hand, some countries in Central, South-Eastern and Eastern Europe.¹⁵

Second, cultural operators need support to exploit the opportunities offered by the **digital shift**. Digitisation is making it easier for cultural content and services to flow across borders and for cultural operators to reach massive new audiences. At the same time, digitisation can be a costly process, which requires heavy investment. This is particularly true in the case of cultural works that predate the digital era, because their digitisation is more expensive than that of contemporary works. The digital shift can also pose a threat to traditional business models of cultural operators. Indeed, digitisation is changing the value propositions that prevailed in the analogue era, dramatically changing the way the cultural needs to approach its audience. This necessitates cultural operators to develop new competences and to develop new strategic partnerships with operators in other sectors, such as ICT, retail and media.

Third, there is the need to protect and promote **cultural diversity** in the context of increased globalisation. According to UNESCO, globalisation is “giving rise to new forms of cultural diversity and linguistic practices particularly due to advances in digital technology”. At the same time, globalisation is also seen to create risks; some 53% of respondents to a Eurobarometer survey reported that they believe globalisation to be a threat to European culture and that measures should be taken to counter this.¹⁶ Moreover, UNESCO notes the need to enable vulnerable populations to manage change more effectively. For this reason, there is the need to enable the recognition, articulation and celebration of the cultures of vulnerable or marginalised groups.¹⁷

Last, there is the need to exploit the potential for culture to help **reduce economic and social disparities** between different European territories. As well as accounting for a significant and growing proportion of GDP and jobs in the beneficiary countries, culture has the potential to stimulate local and regional development more generally. Previous research by CSES has found that culture-based development can take many forms, starting with the “classic” interventions, such as the rehabilitation of heritage sites and associated tourism promotion, through to promotion of entrepreneurship, exploitation of cultural resources, intellectual assets and property to aspects of value creation, through image creation and the development of human capital.¹⁸ Such culture-based development can also be particularly effective where it accommodates and makes use of cultural diversity. Indeed, a feature of the renaissance of many of Europe’s urban areas has been the new ventures in the performing arts, the restaurant and food sector, media activities and revitalisation of cultural heritage that draw on the multi-ethnic and multi-cultural natures of those cities. Such developments not only enable a new pool of entrepreneurial talent to be tapped but also create a new “story” and image for such places.

¹⁵ UNESCO World Heritage Reports: Periodic Report and Action Plan Europe 2005-06.

¹⁶ European Cultural Values, Summary Report; Special Eurobarometer 278 / Wave 67.1

¹⁷ UNESCO World Report Investing in Cultural Diversity and Intercultural Dialogue, 2009

¹⁸ CSES (2010), Study on the Contribution of Culture to Local and Regional Economic Development; Study for the European Commission DG Education and Culture.

3.3 Programme areas

It should be noted that with the inclusion of cultural diversity as a specific programme area, funding to the cultural heritage sector under the EEA Grants has taken on a more holistic approach in line with the EU's European Agenda for Culture.¹⁹ Indeed, the promotion of cultural diversity also implies the promotion of diverse forms of art. It is thus in this context that the EEA Grants for the 2009-2014 period are to fund a wide range of activities relating to contemporary and live arts, including music, dance, theatre and opera. The overarching goal is to reach out to broader audiences and to promote tolerance and anti-discrimination through an increased awareness of cultural diversity. In the longer-term, the EEA Grants for Cultural Heritage and Diversity should also achieve wider impacts, e.g. on employment, local and regional development and tourism and thus help reduce economic and social disparities. They should also strengthen bilateral relations between donor and beneficiary countries, both at project level and at national level.

Just over €204 million has been set aside for the 2009-2014 funding period alone for support in two Programme Areas.

PA16: Conservation and revitalisation of cultural and natural heritage operates in 14 out of the 16 beneficiary countries: Bulgaria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia and Spain. It covers activities such as: Support measures to conserve, restore and improve public access to monuments/sites and items of movable cultural heritage; Support revitalisation of cultural heritage by supporting new and innovative uses of old and/or abandoned buildings; Support training and competence building programmes: methodology, approach, management, traditional skills; Support development of eco-tourism and other sustainable tourism initiatives both in and close to selected natural and cultural areas, e.g. protected areas and monuments; Support measures to protect cultural and natural heritage sites from degradation as a result of unsustainable commercial development; and Support development of national strategies and practices for management of the cultural heritage sector.

The aim of PA16 is to safeguard the cultural and natural heritage of local communities and to enhance its public accessibility. The rehabilitation and restoration of monuments and sites has a considerable potential for creating new jobs in both central and remote areas. Greater demand for nature and cultural tourism may create new niche markets for tourism based on cultural heritage and natural heritage sites. The grants also place an emphasis on promoting the cultural heritage of minorities. For example, at least 10% of the funds in Bulgaria and Romania have been set aside for projects related to the heritage of the Roma. Portugal's entire allocation of funding is devoted to one pre-defined project related to Jewish culture.

PA17: Promotion of diversity in culture and arts within European cultural heritage supports activities in 10 countries, either as:

- a separate programme (Lithuania, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Spain); or as
- part of a combined programme with PA16 (Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Latvia, Slovakia).

It promotes the understanding of cultural diversity as a way to foster an all-inclusive European identity. This particular strand is very relevant to the EU's Agenda for Culture which emphasises the importance of promoting intercultural dialogue in increasingly multicultural societies. Furthermore, this strand responds to the EU Agenda for Culture's call for the improved mobility of artists and works of art to facilitate a wider access to culture. For this programming period, special attention has been given to promoting the culture of minority groups such as the Roma as a way of facilitating and enhancing their

¹⁹ COM/2007/242 final: Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on a European agenda for culture in a globalizing world

socio-economic integration. For example, at least 10% of the funds in Bulgaria have been set aside for projects related to Roma culture, whilst the Roma are also prioritised in Romania and in Hungary via a Small Grants scheme. Activities should focus on: Support to exhibitions of unfamiliar and untold stories in museums and other venues; Support to documentation projects, including film/video documentation of contemporary culture and cultural history, and projects on the collection and dissemination of museum and archive material; Support to activities linked to the role of culture in the information society, such as digitisation of library and archive material, exchange of expertise and technical solutions for retrieval systems and long term preservation, and development of methodologies for digital presentation; Support of minorities' cultural expressions/cultural history at cultural events; Support measures to improve cooperation between experts and cultural operators; Support to competence-building through exchange of information on cultural practices; Support to cultural awareness and audience development.

Funding is provided to projects through programmes in each beneficiary country, as shown in the table below.

Table 3.1: Programmes support by Programme Areas 16 and 17

Programmes supported by PA16 and PA17				
Country	Programme codes	Funding for PA16 (€)	Funding for PA17 (€)	Total funding
Bulgaria	BG08	13 260 573	739 427	14 000 000
Cyprus	CY02*	623 000		623 000
Czech Republic	CZ06	18 704 057	2 785 943	21 490 000
Estonia	EE05	4 510 000		4 510 000
Hungary	HU07	9 790 616	2 827 384	12 618 000
Latvia	LV04	9 455 010	564 490	10 019 500
Lithuania	LT06 / LT07	9 000 000	1 000 000	9 000 000
Malta*	MT02*	801 677		801 677
Poland	PL08 / PL09	70 200 000	11 000 000	81 200 000
Portugal	PT08 / PT09	4 000 000	1 000 000	5 000 000
Romania	RO12 / RO13	15 683 601	6 818 750	22 502 351
Slovakia	SK05	10 658 677	1 263 823	11 922 500
Slovenia	SI02*	4 948 303		4 948 303
Spain	ES05 / ES06	4 085 000	500 000	5 000 000
TOTALS		175 720 514	28 499 817	204 220 331

*Programmes in Cyprus, Malta and Slovenia combine funding from PA16 and other programme areas outside the field of cultural heritage.

In each of the programmes, 1.5% of the budget is allocated to measures to promote bilateral co-operation. Measure A supports the search for project partners and the development of joint project applications; both project applicants in the beneficiary states and potential project partners from the donor states can apply for this funding. Measure B supports networking and exchange between project promoters and entities in the donor countries.

3.4 Allocations of funds

Table 3.2 below shows the total allocation of funds by country, whilst Table 3.3 and Table 3.4 show the breakdown between the two programme areas. The figures presented here reflect the situation as of 30 March 2015, based on data provided by the FMO. However, it appears that some approved projects were not yet registered in the FMO database and details were not therefore made available to the evaluator. In those cases, we add explanatory footnotes.

From the table, it can be seen that just less than €134m of funds had been allocated to projects by March 2015, i.e. only around 66% of the funds available for cultural heritage. According to data provided by the FMO, no projects in Bulgaria, Hungary or Slovenia had been approved for funding by March 2015 as open calls had not been completed or the contracts had not been signed yet.²⁰ In the case of Hungary, this was because all payments under the EEA and Norway Grants were suspended on 9 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.²¹

²⁰ In the months following the period covered by the evaluation (i.e. from April 2015 onwards), 32 projects were approved in Bulgaria.

²¹ See: <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/topics/european-policy/norwaygrants/diverse-saker/Suspension-of-funds-to-Hungary/id2008980/>

Overall, the allocation of funds to projects has been considerably delayed. As well as the one-third of funds not yet allocated, it must also be noted that many projects were only approved in late 2014 or early 2015. These delays reflect the long time required to negotiate the EEA-EU agreement, the Memoranda of Understanding and the Programme Agreements, as well as to prepare open calls for proposals. The shift from a project-based approach to one based on programmes has required the development of expertise and new working methods.

Total EEA Grants formed 69% of the total budget of approved projects. Co-financing at programme level accounted for 11%, whilst co-financing at project level accounted for 20%. EEA Grants accounted for a slightly higher percentage of the total budget of approved projects under PA17 (73%) than under PA16 (69%). The proportion of project budgets accounted for by co-financing at programme level was broadly similar under both programme areas, i.e. 11% under PA16 and 10% under PA17. In contrast, co-financing at project level was more important under PA16, accounting for 20% of project budgets, than under PA17 where it accounted for only 17%.

Only 8% of projects (19 in total) were pre-defined, all under PA16, although these accounted for 19% of funding, i.e. €25.8m. A total of 144 projects involved donor project partners. Of these, around two-thirds were in PA17 projects, whilst one-third were in PA16 projects. Nearly three quarters of PA17 projects (71%) involved donor project partners, whilst fewer than half of PA16 projects (45%) did.²²

In total, 40 approved projects addressed Roma inclusion as a “significant issue” or as a “fundamental issue”. Of these, 39 were in Romania out of 58 projects approved in total in that country. They accounted for €9.9m, representing 55% of total grants awarded under PA16 and PA17. The other project was one of 29 projects under PA17 in Spain and accounted for €32,500, representing 8% of total grants awarded under PA17 in Spain.

²² All data relating to the award of funding reflect the situation as of 30.3.2015 (source: FMO).

Table 3.2: Total projects grants awarded by beneficiary country (PA16 and PA17)

<i>Project grants awarded as of 30.3.2015</i>							
Country ²³	Number of Projects	Total Project cost (€)	Grant Award (EEA FM) (€)	Co-financing programme level (€)	Co-financing project level (€)	Number of pre-defined projects	Number of projects with donor project partner
Bulgaria	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cyprus	1	2 590 000	613 648	0	1 976 351	1	0
Czech Republic	4	8 456 948	6 208 245	0	2 248 700	2	2
Estonia	19	5 456 405	3 958 112	87 372	1 410 893	1	3
Hungary	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Latvia	18	10 926 340	8 450 718	1 491 297	984 307	6	16
Lithuania	19	10 999 162	7 990 668	1 410 111	1 598 352	0	10
Malta	1	880 500	636 161	112 263	132 075	1	0
Poland	72	112 112 591	73 556 546	11 855 281	26 700 669	4	60
Portugal	6	6 061 652	4 331 768	764 426	965 448	1	5
Romania	58	22 523 217	18 119 371	3 197 515	1 206 256	1	30
Slovakia	16	8 491 341	6 284 032	1 108 940	1 098 343	1	6
Slovenia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Spain	30	5 152 643	3 706 261	579 487	866 875	1	12
TOTALS	244	193 650 799	133 855 530	20 606 692	39 188 269	19	144

Source: Financial Mechanism Office²⁴

²³ This table is based on the official data available in the FMO's management information system (DORIS). The Programme Operator for the Czech Republic reported that another 40 projects were approved by the end of 2014. However, data about those projects was not provided and was not available in DORIS. Similarly, the Programme Operators for Poland and Latvia reported figures that differed slightly from those available in DORIS. In the absence of further information and as agreed with the FMO, this report uses the official data available in DORIS.

²⁴ The data reflect the situation as of 30.3.2015 (source: FMO).

Table 3.3: Total projects grants awarded by beneficiary country (PA 16)

Project grants awarded as of 30.3.2015							
Country	Number of Projects	Total Project cost (€)	Grant Award (EEA FM) (€)	Co-financing programme level (€)	Co-financing project level (€)	Number of pre-defined projects	Number of projects with dpp
Bulgaria	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cyprus	1	2 590 000	613 648	0	1 976 351	1	0
Czech Republic	4	8 456 948	6 208 245	0	2 248 700	2	2
Estonia	19	5 456 405	3 958 112	87 372	1 410 893	1	3
Hungary	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Latvia	10	10 225 633	7 911 656	1 396 171	917 797	5	8
Lithuania	19	10 999 162	7 990 668	1 410 111	1 598 352	0	10
Malta	1	880 500	636 161	112 263	132 075	1	0
Poland	23	99 217 899	64 223 792	10 818 328	24 175 749	3	12
Portugal	1	5 041 176	3 642 249	642 749	756 176	1	0
Romania	20	16 183 708	13 332 479	2 352 783	498 421	1	11
Slovakia	16	8 491 341	6 284 032	1 108 940	1 098 343	1	6
Slovenia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Spain	1	4 545 000	3 283 762	579 487	681 750	1	0
TOTALS	115	172 087 772	118 084 804	18 508 204	35 494 607	17	52

Source: Financial Mechanism Office²⁵

²⁵ The data reflect the situation as of 30.3.2015 (source: FMO).

Table 3.4: Total projects grants awarded by beneficiary country (PA 17)

Project grants awarded as of 30.3.2015							
Country	Number of Projects	Total Project cost (€)	Grant Award (EEA FM) (€)	Co-financing programme level (€)	Co-financing project level (€)	Number of pre-defined projects	Number of projects with dpp
Bulgaria	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cyprus	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Czech Republic	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Estonia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hungary	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Latvia	8	700 707	539 062	95 126	66 510	1	8
Lithuania	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Malta	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Poland	49	12 894 692	9 332 754	1 036 953	2 524 920	1	48
Portugal	5	1 020 476	689 519	121 677	209 272	0	5
Romania	38	6 339 509	4 786 892	844 732	707 835	0	19
Slovakia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Slovenia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Spain	29	607 643	422 499	0	185 125	0	12
TOTALS	129	21 563 027	15 770 726	2 098 488	3 693 662	2	92

Source: Financial Mechanism Office²⁶

²⁶ The data reflect the situation as of 30.3.2015 (source: FMO).

Table 3.5 below shows the allocation of funds to projects by sector.

The allocation of funds under PA16 is in line with the overall aim of “Conservation and revitalisation of cultural and natural heritage”. From the table, we can see that the vast majority of funds under PA16 (i.e. 91%) have been allocated to the preservation, restoration and renovation of various cultural heritage sites. The largest share of funds is allocated to museums and libraries, accounting for nearly one-half of funds under PA16 (i.e. 49%). Other funding for heritage preservation and restoration is divided between religious buildings (16%), castles and fortifications (5%) and other (21%).

Similarly, the allocation of funds under PA17 is in line with the overall aim of “Promotion of diversity in culture and arts within European cultural heritage”. Funds have been allocated to a range of artistic disciplines: music (16%), theatre and opera (13%), visual arts (11%), dance (8%) and film (8%), whilst cultural and natural heritage is also supported (16%) under PA17.

The aim of protecting and promoting the cultural heritage of minorities is supported by the allocation of funds across both PA16 and PA17. As we discuss in section 5, support is offered under PA16 for the restoration of synagogues, as well as for the preservation of intangible cultural heritage of minorities including Jews and Roma. In addition, more than €8m is specifically allocated to “Multicultural awareness”, representing 6% of all EEA funds for cultural heritage and diversity. This is divided almost equally between the two programme areas (i.e. €4m under each), accounting for 3% of all funds under PA16 and 26% of PA17 funds.

Only a small amount of funding is specifically allocated to the digitisation of cultural heritage, i.e. less than 1% of EEA funds. However, this figure understates the overall level of attention given to digitisation, as activity is taking place within projects categorised under other headings. As we explain in section 5.2, four large projects have focussed primarily on the digitisation of works, whilst many of the restoration projects also include the digitisation of works.

Measures to build capacity tend to form part of wider projects focussed on heritage restoration (under PA16) or cultural and artistic events (under PA17) rather than projects in their own right. Projects focussed on “Management and administration of culture and art” received less than €6m (4% of EEA funds), whilst only one project specifically focusses on support for “Craftsmanship and restoration techniques”, receiving €300k. However, as we explain in section 5.3, three large PA16 projects involve the development of new centres of expertise and research, education and training, another is developing a new monitoring system, two are providing training and strategy development or promotional activities, whilst the last is concerned with sharing knowledge and experience. In addition, separate calls for proposals in some countries have supported small projects that help build capacity in the heritage sector.

Table 3.5: Total projects grants awarded by sectors code

Sector code	Sector	Number of projects (PA16)	Grant Award (PA16)	Number of projects (PA17)	Grant Award (PA17)	Total Grant Award
1516020	Multicultural awareness	4	€ 4,018,560	26	€ 4,121,408	€ 8,139,968
1606101	Management and administration of culture and art	10	€ 5,587,094	2	€ 195,552	€ 5,782,646
1606102	Cultural heritage sites: Castles and fortifications	15	€ 6,128,141	0	€ 0	€ 6,128,141
1606103	Cultural heritage sites: Religious buildings	18	€ 18,372,200	0	€ 0	€ 18,372,200
1606104	Cultural heritage sites: Museums and libraries	29	€ 57,770,017	0	€ 0	€ 57,770,017
1606105	Cultural heritage sites: Other	35	€ 25,027,371	9	€ 2,512,727	€ 27,540,098
1606106	Natural heritage sites	0	€ 0	1	€ 65,297	€ 65,297
1606108	Digitisation	2	€ 844,842	0	€ 0	€ 844,842
1606109	Craftsmanship and restoration techniques	1	€ 300,302	0	€ 0	€ 300,302
1606010	Crafts	1	€ 36,277	0	€ 0	€ 36,277
1606111	Theatre, opera	0	€ 0	17	€ 1,972,382	€ 1,972,382
1606112	Visual arts	0	€ 0	35	€ 1,793,519	€ 1,793,519
1606113	Music	0	€ 0	22	€ 2,507,083	€ 2,507,083
1606114	Dance	0	€ 0	7	€ 1,323,764	€ 1,323,764
1606115	Film	0	€ 0	10	€ 1,278,004	€ 1,278,004

4.0 Efficiency of Management

4.1 Summary of programme management arrangements

Before presenting our research findings on the efficiency of the EEA 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.²⁸

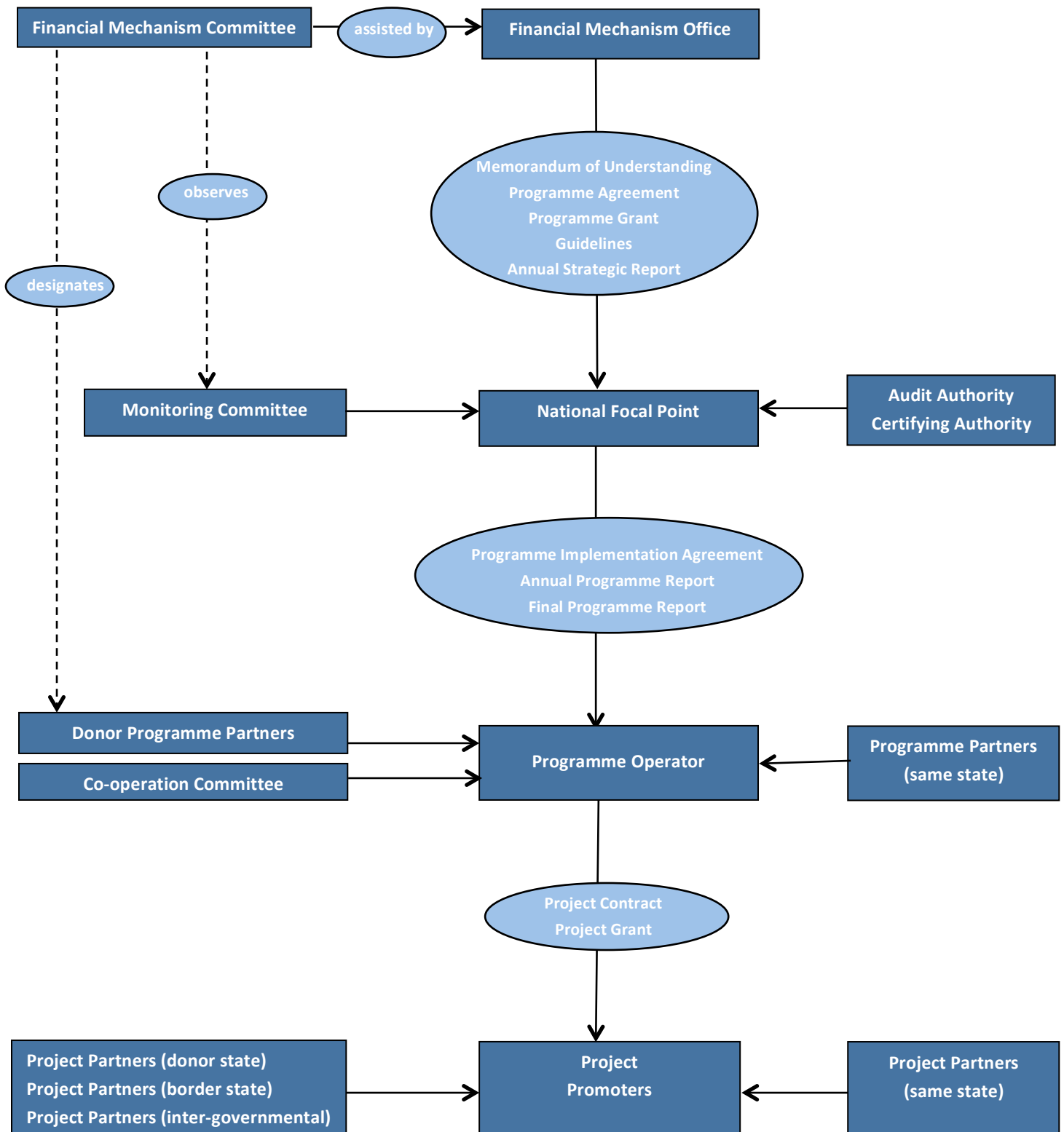
The key elements are as follows:

- **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.

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²⁸ Regulation on the implementation of the European Economic Area (EEA) Financial Mechanism 2009-14.

Figure 4.1: Programme management structure



4.2 Design and set-up of the programme

RQ1	How appropriate is the current design and set-up of the programmes? How efficient was the process of negotiating the programmes?
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The EEA Grants in the current period have been allocated to programmes defined at national level, instead of to individual projects. These programmes have been implemented according to the Regulation and after a process of negotiation between the donors and the beneficiary countries. This negotiation has concerned, first, the Memorandum of Understanding and, second, the specific Programme Agreements.

Overall, there is broad (although not universal) support for the programme-based approach both from beneficiary countries and donor countries. The programme-based approach has enabled the articulation of strategic objectives, which can guide the selection of projects and provide a focus for monitoring impact and demonstrating progress. Moreover, both the Regulation and the programme-based approach have the potential to be interpreted in different ways in different countries. This allows for an appropriate degree of customisation to national circumstances. For example, in the two smallest beneficiary countries, Cyprus and Malta, the heritage programme area (PA16) is combined with non-heritage areas (PA02, PA11 in Cyprus; PA06, PA07 in Malta). In these two countries, the focus remains very much on individual projects (since they are so few in number). Another country (Slovakia) reported that the programme-based approach allows appropriate refinements (to requirements and indicators) within the parameters set by the Programme Agreement; such refinements enable the PO to ensure the selection of projects that are of better quality and that better meet the overall objectives of the programme. The process of negotiating the Memorandum of Understanding also allows the beneficiary countries some choice in the balance of emphasis given to different programme areas. For example, in Latvia, a choice was made to prioritise areas that are not well covered by EU funds.

From the donor perspective, the programme approach has allowed reporting from the beneficiary countries to be streamlined, i.e. only one report is required to be submitted to the donors for each programme, not for each project. 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.

In the beneficiary countries, there were divergent views about the difficulties involved in setting up the programme-based approach and the programme management bodies (NFPs and POs). For example, one country (Latvia) reported that it already had POs 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). However, those beneficiary countries that offered a view reported that working relationships between the NFP and PO were effective. 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, at

least five countries reported that staff shortages in the initial stages had delayed the implementation of the programmes.

One question to consider for the next period would be whether to reduce the number of programmes, which the FMO has suggested is too large in some countries. As one PO pointed out, there is a certain “fixed” cost in establishing programme management arrangements regardless of the size of a programme; large programmes would need less than 10% of the programme funds for management, whilst small programmes might need more. One possibility might be to merge the two culture programmes areas (PA16 and PA17), which might reduce the cost of programme administration. Another possibility would be to merge these two programme areas with other programme areas, for example, as has been done in the current period in Cyprus, Malta and Slovenia.

Representatives (i.e. NFPs or POs) of nine of the beneficiary countries offered comments on the process of negotiating the Memorandum of Understanding and the Programme Agreement. Generally, the negotiations were reported to have worked well. The process appears to have worked best where the beneficiary countries had taken the initiative to develop a longlist of potential projects in advance (as was the case in Cyprus and Latvia) and to gain support from the necessary “internal” stakeholders, such as different government ministries (Latvia). In one country (Spain), the involvement of the Norwegian embassy in the process was reported as a key success factor, with the embassy then becoming the PO for one of the programmes (ES06) in that country.

The main concern around the process of negotiating the Memorandum of Understanding and the Programme Agreement relates to the time taken to get final approval; seven of the nine countries reported that it took longer than expected. Some of this is explained by the negotiation process itself, which took up to two years in some cases (e.g. Malta). According to some national stakeholders, once the negotiations were complete, it then took some time (e.g. 2-4 months) to receive final approval of the Programme Agreement. Some beneficiary countries did not seem to understand the reasons for this delay, although approval was reported to be delayed until after the Maltese general election of 2013. At the same time, it was reported by one DPP that some of the POs had not submitted strong programme proposals. Given these concerns, it may therefore be advisable for the donor states to consider how to provide more in-depth support for the NFPs and POs in the process of developing programmes.

Due to the long time required to agree the Memorandum of Understanding and gain approval of Programme Agreements, the timescale for delivery has been significantly reduced in most countries. Where the projects involve capital expenditure requiring a long lead-in time, e.g. restoration of heritage sites, this can have a significant impact on the capacity to deliver. Some consultees therefore suggested that there needed to be flexibility in the end-date of 30.4.2016 for expending funds.²⁹ Some also suggested that the next programme period should be extended from 5 to 7 years, given the need for more time for delivery.

Monitoring indicators are specified in the Programme Agreements. They guide the monitoring activities of the NFP, the results of which are reported in the Strategic Report to the FMC. Monitoring indicators tend to inform the selection criteria used in the calls for proposals. For example, in Hungary, the “involvement of local communities” was a requirement in the calls for proposals and one of the scoring criterion, which ensured that it was one of the main focuses of the programme. In that way, one of the recommendations of the 2004-09 evaluation has thus been addressed.³⁰ In general, the NFPs and POs

²⁹ By FMO letter of 26 May 2015, conditions for the exceptional extension of the final date of eligibility of selected projects have been set out.

³⁰ In order to measure impacts of a more social nature, the evaluation recommended the use of key indicators relating to the involvement of local communities and the integration of minorities and other vulnerable groups.

reported that the output indicators were appropriate, albeit too numerous in some countries. However, they expressed two main concerns. The first was about the timing: the project activities had mostly not yet delivered outputs at the time of the interviews and most outcomes would be unlikely to arise during the life of the programme. Second, they reported concerns about the measurement and quantification of outcome indicators. In that context, they highlighted the need for continued qualitative reporting alongside quantified monitoring.

Summary

It is too early to conclude definitively as to the appropriateness of the current design and set-up of the programmes. Clearly, the process of agreeing Memoranda of Understanding and Programmes Agreement 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. However, there is broad support for the programme-based approach, as it could further improve the strategic focus and simplify the management arrangements.

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 round and that programme management capacity can be retained. Where this is the case, the programme-based approach should be retained. There would be potential benefits from extending the end-date for completing expenditure and/or extending the programme period from 5 to 7 years.

Monitoring indicators are appropriate, although many outcomes do not easily lend themselves to measurement and quantification. Qualitative reporting therefore remains important alongside monitoring of quantitative outputs.

4.3 Programme management

RQ2	How efficient is the management of the programmes at national level, particularly the operation of the application process?
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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 for with the project promoter. As shown in Table 3.2, of the 244 projects that had been approved by March 2015, 19 were pre-defined. Of these, 6 were from Latvia, 4 from Poland, 2 from the Czech Republic and one each from Cyprus, Estonia, Malta, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia and Spain. In general, POs have been able to commit funds to pre-defined projects much earlier than to projects selected via open calls. Pre-defined projects still face pressure to complete by April 2016, but are in a better position than they would have been with a later start. For example, in Latvia, the pre-defined projects were approved more than six months before any of the other projects, whilst in Estonia, the one pre-defined project was approved more than eight months before the others. In Cyprus and Malta, the very small volume of funds available made it efficient to pre-define one project under PA16 rather than organise calls for projects. At the same time, one of the DPPs has emphasised the potential advantages that open calls offer, namely equal access to funding for all potential applicants and more transparency in decision-making.

POs are required to organise calls for proposals in compliance with the requirements of the Regulation, i.e. they should be widely publicised, include reasonable deadlines, clearly specify eligible applicants and selection criteria, and state funding available as well as co-financing requirements. More than 90% of respondents to the survey (N=250) considered the **quality of the information** about the EEA Grants

provided on the website of the Programme Operator to be “good” (57%) or “acceptable” (36%). Only a small number of applicants (fewer than 6%) were unhappy with the quality of the information, considering it to be “poor”. The quality of the information contained in the **programme guide** received similar feedback, with 51% respondents finding it of “good quality”, 44% finding it “acceptable” and only 5% finding it “poor”.

As well as satisfying the basic requirement to publish calls on their websites and use media, POs have taken pro-active steps to provide **information about funding opportunities and support to applicants**. In at least nine countries (Bulgaria, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia and Slovenia), this has included events of various forms that provide information to potential applicants. For example, two information days were held in Sofia and five in other Bulgarian cities. Slovakia held an “InfoDay” seminar for potential applicants in Bratislava on 12 March 2014 with the participation of the Norwegian Institute for Cultural Heritage Research. Workshops in Slovenia comprised two parts: the first involved presentations about the programme and the imminent calls; the second involved discussions in smaller groups, which allowed potential applicants to discuss specific questions in more depth. Latvia organised a “matchmaking” seminar, which allowed around 55 potential applicants from to meet 22 potential donor project partners from Norway. Similarly, Poland organised workshops in co-operation with the Donor Programme Partner. Support in Lithuania has perhaps been most extensive, where it was recognised that many potential applicants lack the skills required to prepare high quality applications. POs have typically offered support via telephone and/or email. In Hungary, such support was provided by an agency that was independent of the NFP and the PO. The efforts of POs have been complemented by the activities of DPPs to promote the programmes to potential project partners in Norway.

Data was not available on the number of participants in information events that had gone on to submit successful applications. However, activities to promote the calls appear to have been success as there has been a **high demand relative to the funding available**. Indeed, in several countries, the demand was up five times greater than the funding available. For example, one call in Slovenia attracted 21 applications, of which only 4 could be funded. In Lithuania, a call for cultural heritage projects under PA16 attracted 112 applications, of which only 19 were funded, whilst another call under PA17 attracted 36 applications of which only 11 were funded. Bulgaria was able to fund only 206 projects out of 372 applications for small grants. Given the high level of unsatisfied demand, it would not seem necessary to make extra efforts to attract yet more applications that cannot be funded. In some countries, it might be worthwhile to focus the Grants more closely on particular themes or activities, as a way of reducing demand that cannot be satisfied and also as a means of increasing impact.

The NFPs and POs, often advised by the DPPs, have taken **steps to improve the application process**, although there may be scope for further improvements, drawing on best practice elsewhere; one of the DPPs reported that the text of the calls needed to be made shorter and easier to understand. Another suggestion was that the administrative checks and the expert assessment could be undertaken simultaneously (albeit the first by the POs and the second by the experts) in order to reduce the total time taken. Some countries have made it possible for electronic applications to be made for some calls, e.g. development projects worth €20-60k in Estonia, some calls in Hungary. However, there are limits to the extent to which application processes can be simplified and done on-line, where the applications concern large restoration projects. For example, in Estonia, applications for restoration projects have to be submitted in paper format as they include design plans. However, the need for pre-approval of applications by the Estonian National Heritage Board had reduced the possibility of weak applications.

There is evidence of donor country organisations helping to improve the application and selection process. For example, the DPPs have given advice on the content of calls and the selection of projects, and have provided independent Norwegian cultural experts to help select projects. These experts were

reported to have helped ensure that good quality projects were selected, given their cultural expertise and their knowledge of the cultural sector in Norway (where applications concerned bilateral co-operation). The experts had also provided useful advice to the POs on an ad hoc basis. The Norwegian embassies were reported to have made a positive contribution in some countries. For example, the embassy had provided advice on calls in Latvia. In Bulgaria, the embassy had helped to solve difficulties relating to the guidelines for applicants. In Spain, the Royal Norwegian Embassy to Spain has served as the PO and therefore been able to play a key role in facilitating bilateral co-operation. As the current EEA Grants programme comes to an end, the embassy is also encouraging the newly-formed bilateral partnerships to prepare applications for appropriate EU programmes, such as Horizon2020, and Creative Europe.

Overall, there is a **high level of satisfaction with the application process**, though a greater number of applicants were dissatisfied with the application process than with the provision of information about funding. The overwhelming majority (i.e. 89%) of all applicants offered a positive view of the application process: 41% respondents to the survey considered it to be “good” whilst another 48% considered it to be “acceptable”. Fewer than 10% of applicants thought the application process was “poor”.³¹ One respondent raised the issue of having the application process submitted in the national language of the country, which means that international partners could not contribute to the application process and writing. Dissatisfaction about the application process and feedback is slightly lower (18% of respondents) when taking into account advice and guidance received from the Programme Operator, and respondents indicating the process was Good (45%) or Acceptable (34%) is also slightly lower at 79%. Overall, specific comments appeared to wish for a process and eligibility which was better suited to small organisations. For example organising more calls and possibilities to participate, and awarding a higher number of smaller grants.

There is some scope to improve the provision of **feedback to applicants**. Most survey respondents had received feedback on their application, however at least 12 respondents (4.8%) indicated they had not. Of the respondents that had received feedback (written or verbal), 54 applicants – just over one-fifth – were dissatisfied with the feedback received, believing it to be “poor”. A majority, (102) respondents indicated the feedback was of “good quality”, while another 78 believed it to be “acceptable”.

According to the evaluation’s survey respondents (N=105), more than half (52%) of funded project beneficiaries had not yet submitted an interim or final project report. Forty-two respondents indicated a report was submitted, while eight respondents did not know. Out of the (fairly small) number of respondents (N=40) who had used the templates for submitting interim or final project reports, only seven (18%) indicated they considered the templates to be “good”, while another 28 thought them “acceptable” (70%). Five respondents believed they were “poor” (13%). All 40 respondents who have used the template also appear to have received guidance, which was generally considered useful (Good=13, Acceptable=10). Only three respondents considered the guidance from the Programme Operator to be “poor”.

Only around half of the beneficiaries responding to the survey had claimed grant funding at the time of the survey. Of these, 27% considered the process of claiming the funding to be “very clear”, whilst another 47% felt that it was “quite clear”. Only five respondents (9%) believed it to be “unclear”. The time between claiming and receiving the funding was considered a somewhat bigger concern as 15 (27%) of grant beneficiaries believed the time lag to be “poor”, yet most respondents (70%) found the time lag “good” or “acceptable”.

³¹ Four respondents indicated they did not know, i.e. were likely not involved in the application process.

Summary

It is too early to assess the overall efficiency of programme management, given the late start in most beneficiary countries. However, evidence is available regarding certain aspects, notably the application process:

- where appropriate, pre-defined projects have been an efficient way to allocate funds to high quality projects at an early stage and avoid the administrative burden associated with open calls; at the same time, these benefits must be weighed against the advantages offered by open calls in terms of equal access to funding and transparency in decision-making;
- there is a high level of demand relative to the funding available;
- there is a high level of satisfaction with the application process;
- donor country organisations have helped to improve the application and selection process;
- although there is a reasonable level of satisfaction with feedback given to applicants, there remains some scope for improvements; and
- other improvements might also be possible by reconsidering the complementarity/overlap with EU funds and in making the Grants easier to access by small organisations.

4.4 Management at European level

RQ3 How efficient is the management at European level?

The Financial Mechanism Committee (FMC) has been established by the Standing Committee of the EFTA States to manage the EEA Financial Mechanism 2009-2014. The FMC agrees the Programme Agreement with the National Focal Point regulating the implementation of the programme in question. Management costs of the FMC are covered by the financial contribution from the EEA Grants. The Financial Mechanism Office (FMO) is responsible for the day-to-day implementation of the Grants on behalf of the FMC. In that role, the FMO serves as the contact point for the NFPs and receives the Annual Strategic Reports and the Annual Programme Reports from each country.

The NFPs and POs commented on various aspects of the management arrangements at European level. In general, they reported **good working relationships with the FMO**, which some described as professional, supportive and helpful. For example, the PO in Spain reported that the FMO had proved very supportive in helping to establish itself, particularly in relation to the financing of staff posts; one staff post at the PO was co-funded by the Ministry of Culture and by the EEA Grants. However, concerns were raised by NFPs or POs in six countries about the time taken for formal responses to questions submitted in writing or by e-mail – though one NFP reported receiving quick responses. In some cases, this was reported to result from shortages or changes in staff, particularly in the early years of the programme. The NFPs and POs were, in contrast, very positive about the various face-to-face meetings that had taken place, where questions could be discussed and clarifications of the guidelines received.

A number of concerns were raised about different elements of the **administrative processes**. A key concern, raised by six countries, was the reporting process – the regularity, volume of information required and the potential overlap between different reports. The FMO has taken a practical approach in the case of Malta, by allowing the Strategic Report to be combined with the Annual Programme Report, since there is only project in each of the three programme areas. In other countries, there was a call for more streamlining, e.g. of the different financial reports that POs submit to NFPs and to the

FMO. One possible solution, suggested by two countries, would be for more formal training to be provided at European level for staff of NFPs and/or POs. Such training could cover issues such as setting up processes for application, evaluation, approval, monitoring and making payments. If provided at European level, this could increase consistency of approaches between different beneficiary countries and allow opportunities for exchanging experience. Whilst the Regulation contains templates for reporting at programme level, it might also be useful to develop templates for the POs to use in managing the relationships with projects, for example, relating to the text of open calls, partnership contracts or project reports. This might then raise the percentage of projects that consider the templates to be “good” (from its current level of 18%, as noted above).

At the same time, it has to be noted that there have been problems in the **management of the programme on the beneficiary side**. In Bulgaria, the situation had been unstable due to the resignation of the Oresharski government on 23 July 2014 (after little more than one year in power), which was followed by a caretaker government and another parliamentary election on 5 October 2014. In Hungary, payments to the entire EEA Grants programme were suspended before any grants were awarded under PA16 or PA17. 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.³² In that context, it is clear that any lightening of administrative requirements would not be without risk in some countries.

Summary

Aside from the lengthy time taken to conclude negotiations regarding the Memoranda of Understanding and Programmes Agreements, the management at European level is generally satisfactory. NFPs and POs are generally satisfied with the support they receive from FMO and report that good working relationships have been established.

Some further improvements in efficiency might be possible. For example, there is a need to reduce the time taken by the FMO to provide formal responses to questions submitted by the NFPs and POs. POs report some concerns about the regularity, volume of monitoring information that is required to be submitted and the potential overlap between different reports. There may be scope to address this issue through training for POs at European level. Programme management could also be improved through the provision of templates relating to the text of open calls, or partnership contracts or project reports.

4.5 Project management, quality and sustainability

RQ4

How efficient is the management of projects?

The responsibilities of project promoters are set out in the Project Contract, which must include provisions to ensure compliance with the legal framework of the EEA Grants. Where a project is implemented in partnership, an agreement is signed between the project promoter and the project partner(s) which sets out the roles and responsibilities of each, as well as provision on financial arrangements.

³² <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/topics/european-policy/norwaygrants/diverse-saker/Suspension-of-funds-to-Hungary/id2008980/>

The NFPs and POs were asked to offer their opinion on the efficiency of project management. Most felt that it was **too early for them to offer a view**; at that stage, projects had not been selected or were only in the very early stages of implementation in some countries. In three of the countries where implementation was more advanced, (Estonia, Malta and Poland) the POs reported no significant concerns in project management. In Estonia, good project management was reported to result from the involvement of bodies experienced in heritage management at key stages: the Estonian National Heritage Board in pre-approval of applications; the municipalities as project promoters (and as the owners of the manor houses that are the subject of restoration); and the Ministry of Culture as PO. In one of the few instances where risks were reported, these tended to relate either to the use of inexperienced staff within project promoters (Lithuania). Overall, there was a consensus that project management required experience in two areas: heritage management and administration of grant funding. Where project promoters already had experience of handling EU funds, there was less likelihood of weak project management.

Summary

It is too early to assess the quality of project management, since most are in the early or mid-stages of implementation and few are yet complete.

Any risks to project management can be minimised by ensuring the involvement of bodies experienced in heritage preservation and in handling grant funds, e.g. EU Structural Funds.

RQ5	What has been the quality of projects?
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There is an overall agreement among those responsible for overseeing the project implementation (National Focal Points – but most notably, the Programme Operators, who are the closest to the projects) that the quality of projects is likely to be high. This builds on the achievements of the previous period, when some projects were recipients of the European Union Prize for Cultural Heritage / Europa Nostra Awards.³³ Although a number of projects have of been pre-defined, the open calls have seen the competition for this funding to have been extremely high. Most, if not all, calls for proposals were substantially oversubscribed. For example, the BG08 calls for proposals received a total of 165 applications and Slovenia received 21 applications, while the programme is funding only 2-4 projects. Strong competition was also reported to have been a main contributing factor to the high quality of projects in Poland as well as Romania.

The popularity of the scheme has also led to high levels of co-operation within projects, as proposals without a partner were unlikely to be selected, good partners and sound collaboration have become a very important criterion for a successful application.

In contrast to PA16, nearly all projects under PA17 have been funded following competitive calls for proposals. The scope and content of PA17 lends itself more naturally to collaborations (between different kinds of arts as well as cultures), so the bilateral aspects have become even more prominent. For at least one programme (Lithuania, LT07) partner involvement was obligatory.

³³ For example: Atjaro (Passage) Project, Hungary (Grand Prix 2014); Home For Cooperation, Cyprus (Conservation category 2014), Route of Torres Vedras, Portugal (Conservation category 2014), Restoration of Liubavas watermill, Lithuania (Conservation category 2012)

Overall, the beneficiary countries have ensured high quality in the projects funded through the specific organisation of the selection process, for which the use of external experts was compulsory. For example:

- Latvia considers that the use of external experts in the application evaluation process was of a considerable help and contributed to the high quality of all the five cultural heritage projects selected. One project is made up of a partnership that is a continuation of a previous initiative. It is hoped that the partnerships will also continue their cooperation after implementation of the current project.
- In Portugal, quality was an identified risk at ex-ante stage and has been mitigated e.g. through support at the project application stage and the quality of applications submitted was generally high. The DPP (the Norwegian Arts Council) also provided information on the legal status of the Norwegian project partners during the selection process.
- In Estonia, applications received in the first round were not generally of high quality and 14 of the 2 prospective beneficiaries were therefore rejected but invited to re-apply. The projects now being implemented are considered to be progressing well.
- In Spain, the Norwegian Embassy took on the role of Programme Operator and was also in charge of the project selection.

Summary

It is too early to make firm judgements regarding the quality of projects, given the early stage of implementation. However, stakeholders are confident that, on the whole, those projects selected to date will be of high quality. In part, this is a reflection of the high demand for funding, which has tended to raise the quality of applications selected. The quality of projects has also been improved by actions taken by the POs, such as use of external experts, support for projects at the application stage and requiring pre-approval of applications.

RQ6	Will project activities be sustained beyond the life of the funding?
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Over 90% of projects responding to the on-line survey (N=95) believe that the activities and effects of their project will continue beyond the life of the Grants funding³⁴, with only one project promoter indicating they will not.

Many of the restoration projects under PA16 anticipate an increase in commercial revenue from an increase in visitors and/or an expansion in revenue-generating facilities, such as new exhibition space, conference facilities or cafés. Many of the same projects are already in receipt of public subsidy for their running costs and generally expect such subsidy to continue. The sustainability of activities and effects of is also supported by enhanced capacity and accelerated learning of organisations involved in projects (as discussed in section 5.3).

In terms of the sustainability of effects, we can identify several illustrative examples from projects within PA16:

- In Spain the pre-defined project the Garcia Lorca centre is planning a range of activities. There will be exchanges between Spanish and Scandinavian literature (e.g. Ibsen and connections with Icelandic literature). A total of 2,000 objects have been received from the Garcia Lorca family that

³⁴ Yes – at a greater level 31 respondents / Yes – at same level 39 respondents / Yes – at lower level 17 respondents.

belonged to the writer and are now kept by the centre. It is expected that around 100,000 visitors will visit the centre each year, which offers the potential for sustainability based on commercial revenues.

- The manor houses in Estonia being funded by the EEA's PA16 are open to the public and to visitors. The restoration involves expanding their potential to serve the local community and visitors/tourists. For example, there has been training for tour guides. Some restoration projects involve creating local cultural or community centres within the manor houses. The use of the manor houses as schools brings young people and local communities into deeper contact with this heritage. The Museum of Estonian Architecture is providing support and training for the marketing of manor house schools, which will increase their profile and thus their accessibility. Such activity is expected to make it easier for people to understand the manor houses and their history.
- The pre-defined Polish Cultural Heritage project, and which is carried out at the POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews in the collaboration with the HL-Centre – Centre for Studies of the Holocaust and Religious Minorities, is a large-scale initiative to reconstruct the knowledge about Polish Jews and their culture and to pass it on to the next generation. The project will therefore help to regain the identity of Polish Jews. The project is targeted at schoolchildren, young people, including those from socially disadvantaged groups and those with disabilities. A strong accent has been put on these groups having difficult access to culture (e.g. to the museum collections) and to educational programmes. It also has inspired the project team to apply innovative technological solutions as well as interactive communication platforms. The project counteracts social exclusion and encourages its beneficiaries to participate actively in culture. The benefits of encouraging children and young people to become involved in education by playing include the deepening of their knowledge and also shaping civic attitudes which relate to the values of tolerance, rights, freedom, respect for the others, and dialogue of cultures. The project's design is focused on building an open and tolerant society, combating intolerance, anti-Semitism, exclusion and negative stereotypes.

Although the activities and events organised under the PA17 remit are by nature short-term projects, we can nevertheless highlight the potential for a number of sustainable impacts on project promoters and audiences alike.

- **Creation of collaborations and networks.** As the majority (118 out of 123 projects announced so far) have included at least one partner organisation. There are examples of projects involving three countries (e.g. Spain, Norway, Iceland and Poland, Lithuania and Liechtenstein). Hence the PA17 initiatives have been an important platform for building cultural and artistic platforms in many European countries.
- **Artistic and organisational learning.** As project partners have collaborated extensively, PA17 activities have also allowed for the exchange of good practice and cultural knowledge among the beneficiary organisations themselves. Artists have gained experience not just from other cultures and countries but also from other artistic and cultural genres.
- **Educational impacts and increased inclusiveness of underrepresented groups.** PA17 activities are very inclusive and have targeted a wide range of groups, many of which are under-represented as participants in and audiences for culture. Projects have not only organised events for such groups but also sought to engage them in activities, which have been designed to educate as well as to entertain.

- **Benefits derived from increased cultural exchanges.** This impact is particularly noticeable in countries which have collaborated closely with EEA partners. In Spain, where the Norwegian Embassy took on the role of Programme Operator, the PA17 activities supported have provided a good outreach opportunity, which has increased the interest in Norwegian-Spanish cultural links. The embassy can now draw on a much wider cultural scope than it could before the programme. The bilateral projects sponsored have created solid networks between Spanish and Norwegian partners and have been undertaken throughout Spain.

Summary

It is too early to draw firm conclusions about the sustainability of projects, since most have not finished. However, promoters of PA16 projects are generally confident that the effects of their projects will endure beyond the life of EEA funding. Sustainability is expected to come from increased commercial revenue, as well as continued public subsidy from existing sources.

PA17 projects are by nature short-term projects but offer the potential to generate sustainable impacts for the participants, including sustained collaborations and networks and learning effects (for cultural operators and target groups).

4.6 Efficiency of communication

RQ7

What is the visibility of the activities at national and local levels?

The volume of funding available from the EEA Grants – and thus the volume of activity - is relatively modest in relation to the EU Structural Funds and expenditure on culture by the public authorities in the beneficiary countries. For that reason, it is not realistic to expect the EEA Grants to be very visible with the general public. Instead, the priority is to ensure visibility: i) of opportunities for grant funding amongst cultural operators; ii) of restored sites amongst local people and other potential visitors.

All beneficiary countries, most commonly through the Programme Operators, have organised information campaigns in some shape or form. In Bulgaria, an information campaign was organised throughout the country. Two information days were held in Sofia and five in other cities. These have included “question and answer” sessions, and prospective applicants have also been able to post questions on the website.³⁵ When the call opened, an announcement was published (advertised) in a national newspaper. The communication around the Programme is outlined in the communications plan developed by the PO and annexed to the programme proposal.

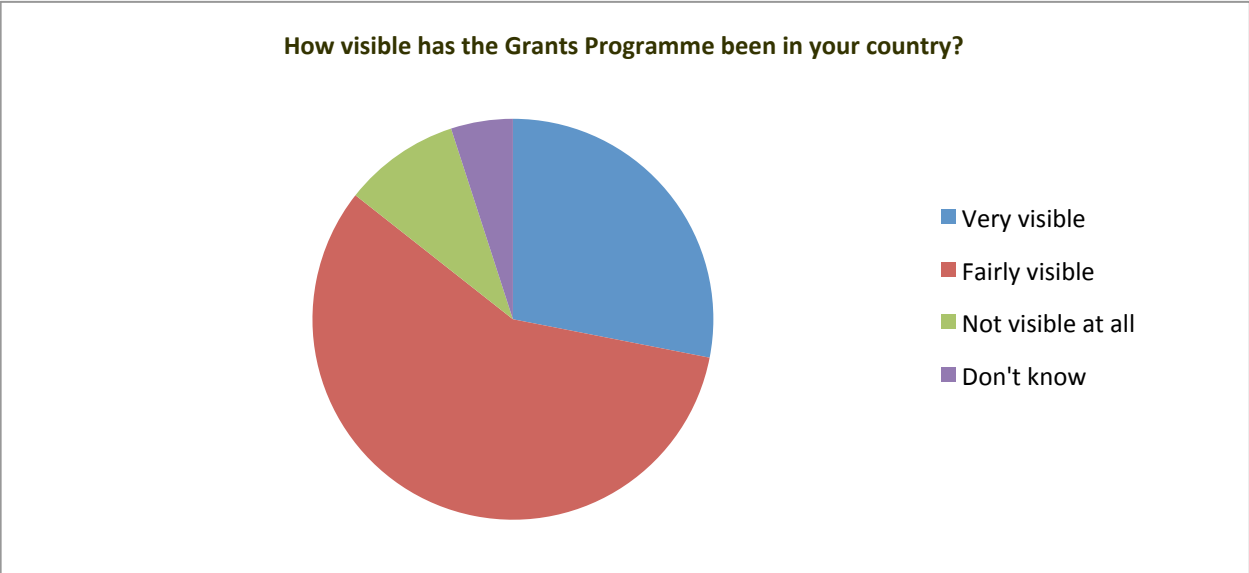
Communication plans must also be developed at project level. In Slovenia, project promoters are requested to describe how visibility is to be taken into account and describe the activities the project foresees. At least three events per project need to be organised. In Spain, the programmes were reported to have attracted a lot of media interest, including at the national level. This interest had reportedly benefitted the projects and also presented a more informed and more nuanced picture of Norway than had previously been the case.

As a result of these efforts, the majority of applicants responding to the survey consider the EEA Grants for Cultural Heritage and Diversity to be fairly visible (58%), or very visible (25%). Moreover, since the demand for funding generally exceeds the funds available, it would seem that the communication activities are achieving sufficient reach amongst cultural operators. Specific comments pertaining to

³⁵ <http://culture-eea-bg.org/en>

Slovakia suggest the programme was very visible. However, it can also be expected that visibility is perceived as high, as all survey respondents are involved or at least aware of the details of the programme. Only 12% disagreed, saying the Grants scheme was not visible at all. One specific comment specified that *the visibility was practically non-existent. The results of the grant application process were not announced to the public; the winning projects were not publicly discussed. Furthermore, unsuccessful bids had no means (feedback) to help them learn from their mistakes.*

Figure 4.2: Visibility of the EEA Grants for Cultural Heritage and Diversity



Source: On-line survey. N= 226

Opinions regarding the visibility of programmes do not differ between PA16 and PA17 and the Programme Operators have ensured that communication strategies are in place, both at programme as well as project level. However, the funds are less visible than EU Programmes such as the Structural Funds, reflecting the much lower level of resources available. At this stage, it is too early to assess the visibility of completed restorations; this question should therefore be considered by the final evaluation.

Summary

Most applicants, whether successful or unsuccessful consider the EEA Grants for Cultural Heritage and Diversity to be fairly or very visible in their countries. Since the demand for funding generally exceeds the funds available, it would seem that the communication activities are achieving sufficient reach amongst cultural operators.

4.7 Programme standards

RQ8	Are programme standards being respected, e.g. with respect to human rights, sustainable development?
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According to the consultations done as part of this study, the beneficiary countries have incorporated the programme standards in their project selection criteria, i.e. applications have been scored on their incorporation of the programme standards. In Slovenia, applicants need to demonstrate in the proposal how they intend to measure the outputs at project stage. Latvia incorporated two horizontal standards – cultural diversity and sustainability with funded projects focusing on Jewish culture. The latter led to

three projects being approved, two involving the restoration of synagogues and the other a bilateral project involving exhibitions and workshops that highlighted Jewish art and culture.

Programme Operators and project promoters have generally followed the standards highlighted in the rules for the PO, guidelines for applicants, and project implementation agreements. Lithuanian feedback suggests that the selection of projects is significantly based on how well the projects match standards (e.g. equal possibilities for both sexes, conditions for people with disabilities, etc.).

Although the programme standards are respected there are some practical issues in adhering to them. Practically, isolating the programme standards as objectives and measuring them in project applications, in particular if they relate to horizontal issues and are not directly an objective of a programme or proposal, has proven difficult.

Within PA17, the programme standards are incorporated into the application process. In particular, the standards of minority inclusion and human rights (Romani, Jewish heritage) appear have had a wide uptake, as we explain in sections 5 and 6 below. Although the programme standards are well integrated, achievements at programme level are difficult to measure, as there is little data to use as a basis for measuring such achievement.

In the Lithuanian programme, the project assessment awarded higher ratings to projects that aim to improve access to culture for disadvantaged groups (i.e. recipients of social benefits, large families, senior citizens, the unemployed etc.) and for people facing social exclusion (disabled persons, prisoners, patients, etc.). Higher ratings were also assigned to projects that include activities aimed at young people under 25 years old, as well as to those projects that involve organisations registered and conducting their main activities in the regions. One strand of the programme priority focused on supporting institutions that do not have international projects experience.

Summary

Programme standards are respected, although there are some practical issues in isolating them as objectives and assessing them in project applications.

5.0 Effectiveness of activities

The stated objective of PA16 is “Cultural and natural heritage for future generations safeguarded and conserved and made publicly accessible” and the stated objective of PA17 is “Increase cultural dialogue and foster European identity through the understanding of cultural diversity”. These objectives are pursued by five main types of activities:

- Physical investments in sites, monuments and artefacts (PA16);
- Documentation, digitisation and dissemination of cultural history of works (mostly PA16);
- Support for sustainable and eco-tourism (PA16);
- Support culturally diverse artistic events (PA17); and
- Development of capacity via policies and strategies, training and competence-building measures, co-operation and exchanges of experience (PA16 and PA17).

In the rest of this section, we consider the progress made in implementing these types of activities. In Annexes One and Two, we also offer an overview of progress within each of the 14 countries covered by PA16 and the ten countries covered by PA17.

5.1 Physical investments in sites, monuments and artefacts (PA16)

RQ9	To what extent and in what ways have programmes enabled physical investment in sites, monuments and artefacts?
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The renovation, restoration and preservation of sites, monuments and artefacts tend to be expensive and require longer timescales compared to the other types of activities (capacity development, support for tourism, documentation, and digitisation of cultural works). Such physical investments are often also prerequisites for the other activities; sites cannot usually serve as tourist attractions if they are in a poor state of repair. The investments funded to date have usually received in excess of €200k and very often in excess of €1m. Only one of the projects was due to be complete by the end of 2014.³⁶ Three more were due to be complete in April, August and September of 2015.³⁷ The rest were due to be completed at the very end of 2015 or in 2016.

Given these timescales, there remains a real risk that the desired objectives, outcomes and outputs expected will not be achieved. Given the late approval of projects in some countries, some considerable pressure has been placed on project promoters to complete their activities by the end of April 2016. This compression of the timescale inevitably raises difficulties and risks in delivery: non-completion of projects, ineligible expenditure (i.e. beyond 30 April) and adverse impact on quality if works are rushed. The project promoters did report that they were making efforts to minimise these risks, for example by including penalty clauses for late delivery in their contracts they award. However, several reported that

³⁶ PL08-0002 - The Eastern Slavic Cultural Heritage - Maintenance, Renovation, Digitalization of Historic Churches

³⁷ CY02-0002 - Centre for Visual Arts and Research; EE05-0010 - Development of Olustvere manor complex into community center, preserving the cultural heritage and expansion of use for ensuring the sustainability; PL08-0010 - Construction of the Nowy Teatr International Centre of Culture

a certain minimum timescale for implementation was necessary, for example, in the award of contracts where rules on public procurement require certain (time-consuming) procedures to be followed.

Since the overwhelming majority of projects were still in the early or mid-term stages of implementation, it has not been possible to consider their successes or their effects in any substantial way. Instead, the focus of the research has inevitably been on the activities that are to take place within approved projects. Looking across the 11 countries that had made investments to date, we can identify around 69 major restoration projects. Although all the projects are different, we can identify some features that are present in many or most:

- Installation of improved ICT, such as digital technologies, interactive kiosks, audio-visual systems, etc.;
- Improvements in wheelchair access, including ramps or lifts and in facilities for those with hearing difficulties, e.g. induction loop systems;
- Improvements in fire safety, e.g. through the use of fire-resistant materials and the installation of fire-doors and creation of better emergency exits;
- Improvements in energy efficiency;
- New exhibitions about the site;
- New spaces or facilities serving educational or cultural purposes; and
- Promotional activities to publicise the renovations and the sites once restored.

We can group the restoration projects into a number of types, although there is can be considerable overlap between these types; for example, palaces, castles or manor houses very often house museums or theatres. The main activities and effects for these groups of projects are as follows.

Museums: at least 13 museums have been restored or renovated. The museums in question typically have immense architectural value in their own right, as well as housing important exhibitions. For example, the Old Orangery within the Royal Łazienki Museum, Poland, serves as a theatre, gallery and an orangery but is also a noted architectural example of the classicism and enlightenment epoch. Many of the museums will enjoy an expansion in their exhibition space, as a result of the restoration works. For example, the Museum of Literature and Music in Riga, Latvia, will benefit from three new exhibition areas, as well as new educational and meeting space. Similarly, two new exhibition halls (with a combined area of 562m²) will be developed as part of the Museum of Papermaking, Poland. The Museum of Warsaw in the Old Town Square will renovate eleven historic tenement houses, which will house new exhibitions.

Ethnographic villages: several of the restorations mentioned above have concerned ethnographic villages or open air/living museums. These are real or artificial settlements which portray the historical and ethnographic characteristics of life of particular periods in history and/or ethnic groups. Such restorations have been a particular feature of the programme in Lithuania, where the conservation of wooden heritage has been a priority. The restoration of ethnographic villages usually includes the provision of training, given the general lack of traditional skills. For example, one of the buildings at the Musteika ethnographic village, Lithuania, will be converted into a traditional craft centre for the provision of training in carpentry and the repair of wooden architecture. Similarly, training for craftsmen and house owners will be provided at Salos ethnographic village, as part of the project to restore six wooden buildings.

Palaces, castles and fortifications: around 12 such sites have been restored or renovated in some way. As well as being attractions in their own right, many of these sites serve a wider cultural purpose. For example, the 17th century baroque Krasinski Palace houses part of the National Library of Poland. Similarly, the Karol Poznański Palace, Poland, the subject of a €4.3m restoration, is the home of the Grażyna and Kiejstut Bacewicz Academy of Music. Some of the projects also include the creation of new cultural or leisure facilities within the restored buildings. For example, restoration of the chapel in Budatin Castle, Slovakia, will include the creation of a new educational trail and cycle path. Similarly, the restoration of the fortifications of Štiavnické Bane, Slovakia, will feature a historic nature trail. Restoration of these sites often also includes improvements to surrounding parks and gardens. For example, the restoration of Holíč Castle, Slovakia, features the planting of original wood species and greenery. Restoration of Sered' Castle, Slovakia also includes works to regenerate the castle's parkland.

Manor houses or halls: at least 11 manor houses have been restored, four each in Estonia and Lithuania and one each in Latvia, Romania and Slovakia. Most of these sites serve as attractions in their own right and as venues for cultural activities. For example, the baroque hall of Modrý Kameň Castle, Slovakia, which has been closed to the public for some time, will feature space for workshops, as well as a new exhibition about the history of the region. The Estonian programme has been entirely devoted to the restoration of the country's manor houses; all those being restored serve as schools primarily, but also as local community or cultural centres or tourist attractions.

Churches: 12 projects have concerned restoration of churches, concerning at least 18 separate sites. These projects are located across all the beneficiary countries, except Estonia and the countries with only one project or with no projects at all. Most of these sites have been in continuous use as places of worship. One exception, however, is the Bernardines Monastery and the Church of St. George the Martyr in Kaunas, Lithuania; during the mid-20th century, this church was used as a warehouse and its windows were bricked in. Once restored, it is proposed that most, if not all, of the churches will (continue to) serve as places of worship and as attractions for tourists (see below). For example, like many churches, the baroque Virgin Mary of Snows Church in Velké Karlovice, Czech Republic has a prominent position in the historic town centre, thus making its restoration essential to the local tourist sector.

Synagogues: 6 synagogues are being restored, two each in Latvia, Lithuania and Slovakia. The Portuguese project is also restoring 13 Jewish cultural heritage sites, including some synagogues. Some of the synagogues in question have been particularly affected by being used for other purposes or remaining vacant. For example, the Pakruojis Synagogue in Lithuania was empty for a period in the early to mid-20th century before being adapted for use as a cinema and then closed. In contrast to the churches that are being restored, most of the synagogues in question, once restored, are to be used for cultural purposes rather than as places of worship.³⁸ In some cases, these purposes relate to Jewish culture. For example, the Pakruojis Synagogue and the White Synagogue in Joniskis District, Lithuania, as well as the Rezekne Green Synagogue in Latvia, are to host exhibits and/or events that raise awareness of Jewish culture. However, in most cases use of the synagogues will not be limited to Jewish culture. For example, the Pakruojis Synagogue will host the children's literature section of the municipal library and as well as events. Similarly, the Suburbium of Bardejov, Slovakia, will serve as a multicultural space hosting a range of concerts, seminars, theatrical performances, etc.

Works within churches and synagogues: As well as having architectural merit in their own right, several of the churches (and some of the synagogues) also house important cultural artefacts. These include, in particular, painting and other artworks. For example, authentic wall-paintings (recounting important

³⁸ This reflects, in part, the fact that the current Jewish population of countries such as Lithuania is very much smaller (in absolute terms and as a percentage of the population) than it was before the Second World War.

elements of Jewish history) in the Pakruojis Synagogue will be recreated as an integral part of the building. Similar restoration of wall paintings of new-baroque style will take place in the Bernardines Monastery and the Church of St. George the Martyr in Kaunas, Lithuania. Another project concerns the restoration of the organs of Peace Church in Świdnica, Poland; once restored, the organs will be used for performances and cultural events, thus improving the local cultural offer and helping to attract tourists.

Theatres: 4 theatres in Poland have been restored or renovated. As well as restoring the fabric of the building, these renovations have enabled the installation of technical facilities that widen the type of performances that can take place, e.g. involving multi-media presentations. For example, the former Bajka Cinema in Warsaw, Poland, has been used by the Edward Dzierżyński Kwadrat Theatre since 2012. However, the venue was very limited, for example, having no curtains and lacking the necessary theatre technologies. It also suffered from various structural difficulties related to the sewage, ventilation and electrical systems. The project will also include restoration of socialist realist wall paintings and mosaics. Modernisation of the building will allow a much wider theatre programme to be offered, with audiences expected to reach 200,000 per year once the restoration is complete. Another project will renovate the warehouse storage of Słowacki Theatre in Kraków; this will provide increased space for rehearsals, exhibitions, storage and educational activities. The renovation of Stanislavian Theatre will improve the performance space and also allow the installation of two new permanent exhibitions of sculptures.

New venues: around 8 projects involve the creation of new venues, including through the conversion of historic buildings. Of these, 5 are in Poland. They include the restoration of Warsaw's historical Municipal Garage dating from 1927 and its adaptation into the Nowy Teatr International Centre of Culture. The creation of these new venues will also include the creation of new exhibitions to be housed therein. For example, the National Museum in Kraków is creating a new exhibition pavilion dedicated to the 20th century painter, writer and intellectual, Józef Czapski. A new Shipwreck Conservation Centre with Studio Warehouse will be created in Tczew, Poland. The Centre for Visual Arts and Research in Cyprus has developed a new gallery and research centre.

Summary

The programmes are funding a broad range of projects to conserve, restore, renovate and improve public access to heritage sites in the beneficiary countries, including museums and ethnographic villages, palaces, castles and fortifications, manor houses or halls, churches and synagogues, and theatres. A small number of projects are creating new venues, including through the conversion of historic buildings.

Investments in sites typically include different forms of modernisation, including installation of better ICT facilities and improvements in wheelchair access, fire safety and energy efficiency. Many also include new exhibitions about the site, new spaces or facilities serving educational or cultural purposes, promotional activities and capacity-building activities, such as training.

The late approval of projects and the long timescales required for physical investments has created a real risk that the desired objectives, outcomes and outputs expected will not be achieved. The FMO and other representatives of the donor states should therefore consider what remedial action might be necessary, for example, an extension of the timescale for completing projects.

5.2 Documentation, digitisation and dissemination of cultural history or works (PA16)

RQ10	To what extent and in what ways have programmes supported the documentation, digitisation and dissemination of cultural history or works?
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Whilst most of the large projects funded under PA16 focus on physical investments, a small number have been primarily focussed on the documentation, digitisation and/or dissemination of cultural history or works. A number of the small development projects have shared this focus. Many of the restoration projects also involve the documentation and digitisation of works in order to facilitate their on-line dissemination. According to the survey, around one-tenth (11.2%) of all projects (including PA17) are largely concerned with the documentation, digitisation or dissemination of cultural works. The main types of activity have been as follows.

Preservation of intangible cultural heritage: some projects have very specifically aimed to preserve the intangible heritage and folklore of minority cultures through a range of activities, including digitisation, audio and audio-visual recording, education, and awareness-raising.

- The Museum of the History of Polish Jews is implementing educational activities to preserve the culture of Poland's Jews and to ensure its dissemination to the next generation. This is a multi-faceted project ranging from educational activities to new exhibitions and the preservation of Jewish artefacts and memories (experiences) of Polish Jews. The project aims to combat intolerance, anti-Semitism, exclusion, and entrenching of negative stereotyping. The main focus groups of the project are children and young people, including those from disadvantaged backgrounds, and disabled persons. There is also cooperation in place with a donor partner (the Norwegian Centre for Studies of the Holocaust and Religious Minorities), which aims to develop stronger ties between the Jewish communities in Poland and Norway. The project has had an enormous impact on enhancing the attractiveness of the museum among its visitors. Additionally, the project has strengthened the perception of Warsaw, of the Museum itself among tourists from Poland and abroad. It also has helped to present Jewish history in an innovative way, to attract new visitors to this place and to advocate for open and tolerant society.
- The Arman Community from Romania has €56k of development funding to preserve and disseminate the Aromanian language, an eastern romance language spoken in south-eastern Europe. Members of the Aromanian community and others will be taught to read and write in Aromanian.
- Another development project will promote the conservation of traditional handicrafts of Roma in Harghita, Romania.

Digitisation of works: The digitisation of works provides an effective way by which to document them and disseminate them to a wider public. Four large projects have focussed primarily on the digitisation of works.

- The Riga Art Nouveau Museum, which opened in 2009, is creating a new Virtual Museum through the digitisation of its collections, since at present only 1,000 of its 5,000 works can be displayed. In preparation, research is being undertaken into 22 topics. This is informing the creation of a database of digitised works: 1,000 works will be described, 700 will be photographed digitally and digital copies of 300 will be made. A dedicated digital exhibition will

then be created within the Museum, including 10 different thematic content programmes in three rooms, featuring touch-screen displays, photo studios, holograms and an interactive kiosk.

- The National Archives of Romania will digitise its collection of medieval documents dating from before 1600. These will be made available in an online-accessible database, which is particularly targeted at teachers and scholars of medieval history.
- The Technical University of Cluj Napoca is digitising 500 artefacts relating to the Dacian fortresses in Romania's Orăștie Mountains, a World Heritage Site. This process will allow the virtual reconstruction of Dacian architectural vestiges from Orăștie Mountains and their dissemination on-line.
- The National Film Archive of the Czech Republic is restoring and digitising its collection of Czech cinematographic works, with a view to making it accessible to the general public via new technologies, such as Blu-ray media, high-definition television and digital cinemas.

Many of the restoration projects also include the digitisation of works. For example, part of the collection of the works of Józef Czapski at the National Museum in Kraków will be digitised, in order to widen public access. The Eastern Slavic Cultural Heritage project (Poland) will make digital photos and 3D videos of restored Orthodox churches and their contents, including polychromy, iconostases, icons, liturgical insignia and pheretrans (procession floats).

New exhibitions: many of the sites, once restored, will feature new exhibitions. For example, the Old Orangery within the Royal Łazienki Museum will feature a new exposition of sculptures and plaster casts from the Royal Collection, including the uncovered polychromies by Johann Christian Kammsetzer, the 18th century architect. The restoration of the Museums of Rainis and Aspazija will include a development of the content of the exhibitions about these two Latvia poets and playwrights.

Summary

A small number of projects have been primarily focussed on the documentation, digitisation and/or dissemination of cultural history of works. Some of the small development projects have also shared this focus. Many of the restoration projects also involve the documentation and digitisation of works in order to facilitate their on-line dissemination. The main types of activity include the preservation of intangible cultural heritage, digitisation of works and the creation of new exhibitions.

5.3 Capacity building (PA16 & PA17)

RQ11

To what extent and in what ways have programmes built the capacity of operators involved in projects?

One of the reasons for the deterioration of some of the cultural heritage in the beneficiary countries has been a lack of capacity for restoration and preservation. The projects supported by the EEA Grants have built capacity either through **specific large projects** or through **small grant schemes** or through capacity-building **activities within wider restoration projects**.

The research identified seven large projects within PA16 that specifically focus on developing capacity for cultural heritage restoration and preservation. Three involve the development of new centres of expertise and research, education and training, another is developing a new monitoring system, two are

providing training and strategy development or promotional activities, whilst the last is concerned with sharing knowledge and experience.

- ***New centre of expertise and research.*** Centre for Applied Research and Conservation of Cultural Heritage, Lithuania. The strategic plan of Telšiai municipality 2004-2020 has identified the need for additional capacity to undertake restoration and research into heritage; of 80,000 artefacts owned by museums in the in north-west region, more than 13,000 are in need of restoration or preservation. However, the region lacks the necessary infrastructure, facilities, equipment and expertise to meet this need. The Vilnius Academy of Arts is therefore renovating its building in the centre of Telšiai (a registered site), which will then house the Centre. As well as restoring a historic building, the project will develop a wider range of restoration services through the establishment of the Centre. This will include the installation of new equipment, laboratories, workshops and a new exhibition space. These physical investments will be complemented by a training programme for staff and students of the Academy and other heritage specialists regarding the use of the new equipment. Four new members of staff will be trained and employed to undertake 225 consultations for external organisations regarding the restoration or preservation of individual objects. Some 60 research projects will be also be undertaken as part of the project. An external programme of 39 educational events will serve other heritage stakeholders (museums, site owners, local authorities) in Telšiai and across the Samogitia and neighbouring regions. It is proposed that the Centre will continue to offer training in specialist fields, such as metal and stone restoration beyond the life of the project.
- ***New centre of expertise and research.*** The Open-Air Museum of Lithuania is developing a wooden architectural heritage, research and training centre. The new centre will be furnished with the necessary equipment and provide training to staff of the Museum. It will also provide research and training services to other heritage organisations. The project will also raise public awareness of the value of preserving wooden heritage.
- ***New centre of expertise and research.*** The Federico Garcia Lorca Centre, Spain, is creating a new Lorca Studies Institute to undertake research (100 projects in the first instance), organise events and exhibitions, hold workshops and conferences and organise pedagogical activities.
- ***New monitoring system.*** The Pro Monumenta project in Slovakia is developing a monitoring system for immovable items listed in the Central Register of Monuments. This will involve creating news team of specialists in three different locations across the country with the necessary expertise, equipment and organisational support to monitor monuments, identify needs and prompt preventive or remedial works.
- ***Training and strategy development.*** HoME (Heritage of My Environment. Cultural heritage values in local communities) project in Poland is building capacity for heritage management in co-operation with project partners in Norway. Its activities include the analysis of planning and strategy systems, training, workshops, study tours, surveys and development of manuals and publications. Themes covered include social participation, local development, funding, rural sociology, spatial planning and heritage protection.
- ***Training and promotional activities.*** As a complement to the physical restoration of manor houses in Estonia, the Museum of Estonian Architecture is implementing a project with €270k grant funding to support the owners of manor houses in their restoration efforts. This includes a training programme regarding the development of manor house schools into open visitor centres for head-teachers of the schools, municipalities, NGOs and entrepreneurs. It also includes a conference for 200 participants, an exhibition on the manor house schools, the

development of common visual identity for the schools and a marketing campaign. Since the project was pre-defined project, it has started in advance of the restoration projects (despite some initial delays) and thus been able to support their development. Through collaboration with Enterprise Estonia and the Ministry of Culture, it is intended that the project will contribute to a growth in tourist visits to the manor houses.

- ***Sharing knowledge and experience:*** The Industrial Heritage project in the Czech Republic is focused on sharing knowledge and exchange of experience in the care of industrial heritage in the Czech Republic and Norway. It involves two study tours in each country, focusing on common themes and national specifics.

Capacity building has been a feature of many, if not most of the large restoration projects described earlier. Such capacity building has taken many forms and has been undertaken either through the restoration process or as a complement to it. In some countries, separate calls for proposals have supported small projects that help build capacity in the heritage sector. We highlight here some of the main types of activity funded under PA16.

- ***Training of those undertaking restorations.*** Some of the organisations undertaking projects may lack the necessary expertise and/or wish to take advantage of the restoration process to develop the capacity of their staff or others undertaking restorations. For example, the restoration of the Museums of Rainis and Aspazija in Latvia includes building the knowledge of restorers and architects regarding the reconstruction of traditional wooden buildings, drawing on the experience of the Norwegian project partner. Similarly, the Open Air Museum of Lithuania is providing training for Lithuanian and Norwegian craftsmen in the restoration of old buildings, as part of the restoration of Salos ethnographic village. One of the small grant projects in Romania will provide training in traditional handicrafts for Roma people in Harghita.
- ***Increase in staffing.*** The creation of new facilities or an expansion in the services and exhibitions provided will create new jobs at some sites. However, these are likely to be relatively modest in the long-term (i.e. not including any temporary boost to employment from the restoration process itself). Indirect employment impacts will perhaps be more significant, i.e. through an increase in the number of tourists to localities hosting restored sites. However, there are instances of projects taking on additional staff and providing training for those staff. For example, the Musteika ethnographic village, Lithuania, will recruit and train two unemployed people as new craftsmen specialising in carpentry and repair of wooden heritage. Vodja manor school, Estonia, is providing training in equine therapy for three members of staff to integrate equine-based psychotherapy into the school's educational programme, as a complement to the renovation of the stables.
- ***Training and awareness-raising for a wider set of heritage stakeholders.*** Many project promoters take the opportunity of a restoration project to raise awareness of and expertise in heritage restoration for a wider set of stakeholders in their locality and beyond. This is typically through training, workshops and information activities. For example, the renovation of Skaudvilė Church, Lithuania, will involve training and awareness-raising activities for owners of heritage sites regarding the value of heritage and methods and technologies for restoration. Similarly, the restoration and adaptation of the former Kintai Lutheran Evangelical Church, Lithuania, is being complemented by training and seminars for the local community related to cultural heritage management.
- ***Development of strategies and plans.*** Some sites have received small amounts of funding (i.e. less than €100k) to develop strategies and plans for future or ongoing restoration activities. For

example, Turda, Romania has received small grant funding to develop its strategies and plans regarding, first preservation and restoration of architecture in the historic town centre and, second, the heritage-driven regeneration of the town centre. Similarly, Tammistu Manor, Estonia, is receiving €59k to develop plans for the restoration of other buildings in the manor complex and their conversion to community use.

Within PA17, the projects have above all provided opportunities for collaboration across countries and cultures. The projects are largely interdisciplinary and often do not need large amounts of funding to achieve their objectives. Although we have not been able to judge the sustainability of the collaborations and networks created under PA17, a very high number of collaborations have been forged (118 so far), which is promising in itself.

For example, in Spain, there has been extended co-operation and partnering between artists in Spain and the donor countries in the contemporary arts. There has particularly been success in the integration between countries through the artistic performances, e.g. integration of Norwegian Jazz and flamenco, and of theatre taking up stories from Iceland and Spain alike. Shows organised as part of the projects have been performed in Iceland, Norway and Spain. The impact of the Spanish events organised is currently being measured through self-evaluation. One likely positive impact is on cultural tourism between Spain and Norway, as the bilateral events have been successful in creating interest in both countries' culture and arts. Similar effects have been found through case study of Polish projects, which have included collaborations between Polish and Icelandic artists. The Blue Planet project is aiming to continue performances at international festivals after the EEA funding.

The programme also appears to have balanced projects well across the various regions of the beneficiary country. Similarly, Spain and Portugal have made particular efforts to spread the projects geographically. Bulgaria and Romania have also worked with information and outreach across the country.

Summary

Projects supported by PA16 have built capacity either through specific large projects or through small grant schemes or through capacity-building activities within wider restoration projects. Effects of the large projects include new centres of expertise and/or research, a new monitoring system, training and strategy development, promotional activities and sharing knowledge and experience. Capacity-building within wider restoration projects or small dedicated projects has included training of those undertaking restorations, an increase in staffing, training and awareness-raising for a wider set of heritage stakeholders and the development of strategies and plans. Within PA17, projects have provided opportunities for collaboration across countries and cultures, which offers the potential to build capacity of operators to internationalise their operations and to work across cultural and linguistic boundaries.

5.4 Support for tourism (PA16)

RQ12

To what extent and in what ways have PA16 programmes supported the role of cultural heritage in the promotion of tourism?

The primary focus of the PA16 programmes is the conservation and revitalisation of heritage for its own sake. Reflecting this, the promotion of sustainable tourism was reported to be the main objective of only 5% of project promoters (across PA16 and PA17) responding to the survey.

However, all the beneficiary countries recognise the potential for cultural and heritage to attract tourists and thus create wider economic benefits for the localities that host heritage sites. Indeed, many of the restored buildings are at the heart of town or city centres; their restoration thus has an impact on tourism that goes beyond being attractions in their own right. For example, the Pakruojis Synagogue in Lithuania is situated in a prominent position in the town, on the banks of the river; its renovation will thus improve the overall attractiveness of the town centre. Similarly, Latvia's Museum of Literature and Music is situated opposite Riga Castle in the old town.

This focus is reflected in most, if not all, of the projects; whilst the emphasis is on physical restoration of heritage sites, there is recognition that tourists often constitute an important "audience" for restored sites and thus also a source of funds for continued operation and ongoing maintenance. With that in mind, many projects feature some kind of activity to attract and cater for tourists. This has taken a diversity of forms.

Tourist trails and pilgrimage routes: some of the projects very explicitly focus on tourism by creating or forming part of tourist trails and pilgrimage routes. For example:

- The Portuguese project will create a new tourist trail based on Jewish cultural heritage: the "Routes of Sephard". The 13 sites that are being restored will form the basis for the trail and will be complemented by signposting across 27 different municipalities. The tourist "offer" will be strengthened by training courses for those involved in its operation.
- The seven churches restored within the Eastern Slavic Cultural Heritage project in Poland will form part of a tourist route called "Vestiges of Orthodox Faith".
- The restoration of Bernardines Monastery and the Church of St. George the Martyr in Kaunas, Lithuania, will lead to specific new staff roles relating to the service of tourists following the John Paul II pilgrimage route.

Tourist facilities: as well as renovating the sites themselves, projects typically incorporate the installation of facilities that can serve tourists and other visitors more effectively. These often include the creation of exhibitions and exhibition space that attracts a wide public. In many cases, very specific facilities are installed, including new visitor centres, cafés, etc. Indeed, this is a very explicit aim of the restoration of Estonia's manor houses. For example, the restoration of Tõstamaa Manor will incorporate a new café. The restoration of Ruila Manor, Estonia will allow it to offer new opportunities for horse-riding, canoeing and snowshoeing that will help attract tourists

Tourism promotion activities: many project promoters are developing new marketing strategies to promote the sites more widely and more effectively, including to tourists. For example, Rogosi Manor, Estonia, has not been restored by EEA funding but is using development funding of €39k to undertake product development training; this will lead to a new development concept for the manor and new promotional activities. Similarly, Tõstamaa Manor is using development funding to create a strategy for handicraft tourism. Kilti Manor, Estonia, is using development funding to "reinvent" itself as "Kilti Map Castle". This rebranding will involve the development of map exhibitions about Adam Johann Ritter von Krusenstern, the former owner and Baltic German explorer, who led the first Russian circumnavigation of the globe. It will be complemented by the creation of a guided tour and training of pupils from the manor school to become tour guides, as well as on-line and printed publications.

Summary

The promotion of tourism is the primary focus of only a small number of projects. However, all the beneficiary countries recognise the potential for cultural and heritage to attract tourists and thus

create wider economic benefits for the localities that host heritage sites. Whilst the emphasis of most PA16 projects is on physical restoration of heritage sites, there is recognition that tourists often constitute an important “audience” for restored sites and thus also a source of funds for continued operation and ongoing maintenance. Activity to attract and cater for tourists has included the creation of tourist trails and pilgrimage routes, developing new facilities for tourists and tourism promotion activities. The potential contribution of heritage to tourism is underlined by the fact that many of the restored buildings are at the heart of town or city centres and thus significantly affect the attractiveness of those places to tourists and other visitors.

5.5 Artistic events organised (PA17)

RQ13	To what extent and in what ways have programmes enabled the production of culturally diverse artistic events?
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The artistic events organised as part of the grants have predominantly been undertaken within PA17. PA17 requires activities to focus on:

- Support to exhibitions of unfamiliar and untold stories in museums and other venues;
- Support to documentation projects, including film/video documentation of contemporary culture and cultural history, and projects on the collection and dissemination of museum and archive material;
- Support to activities linked to the role of culture in the information society, such as digitisation of library and archive material, exchange of expertise and technical solutions for retrieval systems and long term preservation, and development of methodologies for digital presentation;
- Support of minorities’ cultural expressions/cultural history at cultural events;
- Support measures to improve cooperation between experts and cultural operators;
- Support to competence-building through exchange of information on cultural practices; and
- Promoting the culture of minority groups such as the Roma as a way of facilitating and enhancing their socio-economic integration.

Evidence gathered during the evaluation, has highlighted the main characteristics of the events organised under PA17, as follows.

Types of events: According to our survey results, the most commonly-organised cultural or artistic events are “Music concerts or performances” or “Art exhibitions” (36% of events). “Street art events” or “Theatrical performances” are also common events (30% and 24% of events respectively). Fewer than one-in-ten events are “Cinematic showings or festivals” (9%) or “Culinary events or festivals” (7%). Respondents also gave examples of ‘Other’ activities being undertaken, most of which look as if they overlap to some extent with the named categories of activities:

- Theatrical workshops
- Promotional vintage train journeys and live presentation of the cultural heritage of the region.

- Photo exhibitions
- Church and pilgrimage related activities, including some music concerts or performances
- Workshops, professional conferences, exhibitions
- Celebrative or memorial evening programmes, children's programmes, programmes for older people, artists' parade
- Fencing festivals, Knight tournaments
- Storytelling (old millers and smelters who worked in the former smelting plant area, sharing their experiences and preserving memories)
- Contemporary circus, workshops, training, artistic residences
- Artist presentations, artist talks, presentation of cultural periodicals, dance performances, activities for children

Number of events: PA17 projects have generally undertaken a series of related events rather than one-off events. For example, the project “Her/Story” was a Spanish-Norwegian collaboration, which worked with women in prison in Barcelona and Oslo on self-portraiture. The project aimed at helping the inmates develop a creative process and raising the women’s self-esteem through self-portrait workshops. The works created, with the help of artist Cristina Núñez, were exhibited to the public in Barcelona and Oslo.

Multifaceted nature of events: An illustration of the multifaceted nature of the PA17 activities undertaken is the “Blue Planet” project, which was an artistic project developed by the Miniatura City Theatre in Gdańsk, the only puppet theatre in the Pomerania region, in cooperation with the Association of Independent Theatres (Sjálfstæðu Leikhúsin) in Iceland. The project was an answer to the need to stage Andri Snær Magnason's novel “The Story of the Blue Planet”. The book deals with current social issues in a way that is easily understood by children. The aim of the project was cultural exchange between Polish and Icelandic artists, establishing long-term bilateral cooperation, broadening intercultural dialogue and creating a joint artistic event: a programme promoting Icelandic culture in Poland in order to strengthen bilateral relations and a theatre performance directed by Erling Jóhannesson. The event was staged in Poland and Iceland six times between May and October 2014.

Collaborative nature of events: Overall, the PA17 projects have been collaborative in nature. Compared with the PA16 Cultural heritage scheme, PA17 lends itself more naturally to collaboration and partnering. Another important factor is the high demand for funding, thus selecting good partners has often been a key element in order to secure funding. However, the higher number of partners, the more complex the project team becomes, requiring experienced project managers to lead.

Social dimension: Overall, the projects have also managed to convey a message beyond the core artistic performance, i.e. the activities have led to artistic performances but have also included an additional social theme and have been aimed at specific target groups. For example, Circus Lab, which commenced in September 2014 and is running until the end of 2015 is a Portuguese-Norwegian project, is looking to support arts education in schools. The project is influenced by Cirkus Xanti and Teatro Viriato's work with school communities and the methodology applied in Norway concerning the availability of artistic activities in schools. The project mixes dance, theatre, music, and imagery. Ultimately the project would like to promote arts education in building a creative and culturally aware society. Other projects have fused education and arts through different approaches and with different aims. The Portuguese-

Norwegian project WASO – Write A Science Opera– is an established creative process for academic proficiency in sciences, using research in music teaching and music pedagogy. This project is creating four science operas in Portugal and two science operas in Norway. The operas’ theme will be the “Earth” and will reach out to schoolchildren studying science from fifth to eighth grade.

Gender equality: whilst projects are required to ensure gender equality in their implementation, a number of projects have organised artistic events with a specific focus on the promotion of gender equality. Of the projects selected, 26 were categorised as having gender equality as an issue of fundamental or significance importance. They included the following.

- In Spain, three mobility grants were provided to enable an all-female Norwegian punk rock band to undertake a tour of twelve concerts in Spain 2014. The objective of the band and its tour has been to inspire free expression by women through the performance of songs with a feminist perspective and political action by young Spanish women.
- In Spain, the Her/Story project was very well-received by the national media, achieving visibility beyond the initial expectations. Her/Story was a Spanish-Norwegian collaboration, which worked with women in prison in Barcelona and Oslo on self-portraiture. The project aimed at helping the inmates develop a creative process and raising the women’s self-esteem through self-portrait workshops. The works created, with the help of artist Cristina Núñez, were exhibited to the public in Barcelona and Oslo.
- The Mothers project in Portugal is a theatrical project aimed at children and young people and their teachers. It explores themes related to gender equality, environmental issues and sustainable development through training and the creation of visual or digital products.
- In Romania, the project “Positive Aspects of Migration: Roma Women and Roma Craftsmen as Agents of Change” has explored the role of Roma women as “emancipators” in their families and communities. This has been undertaken through research, an interactive photo exhibition, festivals, thematic workshops and press conferences.

Summary

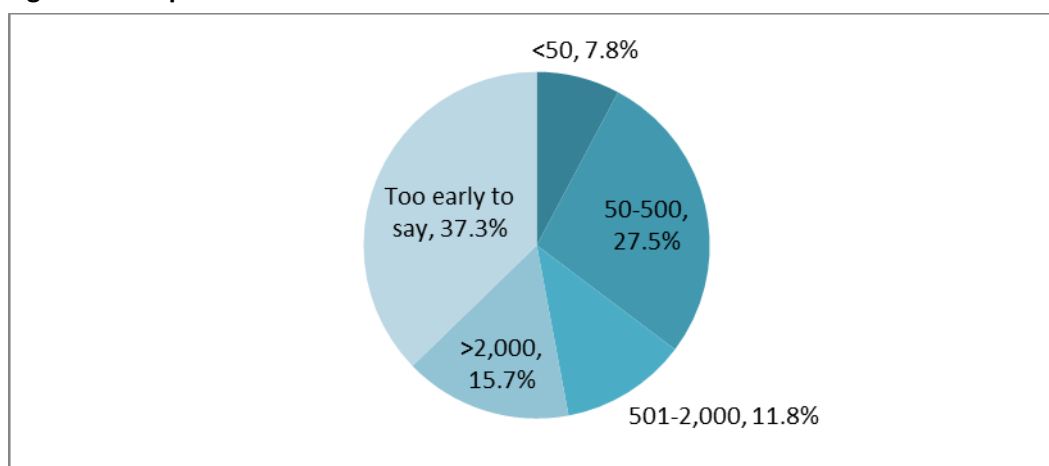
PA17 projects are implementing a wide diversity of cultural events involving different art forms and artistic disciplines. Most have undertaken a series of related events rather than one-off events. Nearly all the projects have been collaborative, involving co-operation with other organisations, even if not as formal project partners. Many of the projects have also included an important social dimension and attempted to convey a message beyond the core artistic performance. In many cases, this involves targeting specific groups, as creators, performers or audiences. Some have also specifically focussed on gender equality, either through promoting female artists or through exploring themes related to gender equality.

RQ14

What have been the audiences for events?

As the figure below suggests, project promoters were mostly unable to estimate event attendance at the time of our survey, as events were yet to take place. When an estimate was available, most events tend to be visited by 50-500 people, although a significant number of events are larger than this: with 12% of events expecting 501-2,000 visitors and just under 16% expecting more than 2,000 attendees.

Figure 5.1: Expected event attendance



Source: Questionnaire responses

Although a significant number of respondents indicated it was too early to say if event(s) organised had been “successful”, more than 60% did consider the event(s) to have been “very successful” (22.6%) or “fairly successful” (38%). Only two respondents said the event(s) had “not been successful at all”.

A good number of PA17 organised events were often undertaken in more than one location, thus reaching a greater number of people. For example, the Spanish-Norwegian project Princess Kristina of Norway aimed to develop greater awareness of Europe’s cultural diversity throughout the continent’s history. The story of Princess Kristina of Norway, who travelled from Norway to Spain in 1257, represents a link between Iceland, Norway and Spain and the project offers the audience to rediscover history through her travel. The objective of the project was to strengthen cultural relations between Iceland, Norway and Spain through the promotion of cultural heritage. Princess Kristina and the Goblin was performed once in Covarrubias (Spain), three times in Madrid (Spain) and twice in Reykjavik (Iceland). A DVD covering the development of the six performances was produced as a part of didactic material for educational purposes. The aim of the project was to develop a flexible and adaptable format which can be used in other countries in the future. The project promoter reached out to approximately 2,000 persons directly through the play.

Summary

Most projects are not yet able to estimate event attendances, in part because many events had not taken place at the time of the survey. However, most project promoters are confident that audience numbers will match their expectations. Most events are likely to be visited by 50-500 people, although a significant number of events will have larger audiences.

5.6 Accessibility of events (PA17)

RQ15	To what extent and in what ways is cultural heritage being made more accessible?
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Evidence gathered during the research has highlighted the focus of events on making culture accessible to a wider audience, including particular groups. Although most of the PA17 projects have targeted specific groups, more than half of the events put on (54 out of 97 responses) have reached out to ‘audiences in general’. A significant number (40%) have aimed at reaching out to young people, and around one-fifth of events have aimed to reach visitors from other countries. Another significant theme

is outreach to minority ethnic groups (just under one-fifth of events). Some 12% of events have reached out to people from disadvantaged groups. A few respondents specified that their events were aimed at families with children, experts in the field education, or people with an interest in history.

Target groups: within the PA17 programme scope, the activities undertaken have reached out to a large number of target groups – 21 groups in total, with the most frequently targeted groups covering:

- Children, students and/or young adults have been targeted in 102 of the projects across all five countries.
- Minorities including the Roma have been the target audience of 21 projects in Romania.
- Seventeen projects (in Poland and Romania) have reached to students, higher education institutions and researchers/scientists.
- Vulnerable groups such as the elderly, people with communicable diseases, people with disabilities, and people with drug or alcohol addictions have been targeted by 7 projects (Poland, Romania, Spain).
- A smaller number of projects (1-2 each) have reached out to other specific groups, including entrepreneurs, teachers, managers, the LGBT community, and prison population.

Multiple target groups: Often projects have included a combination of target groups. The Romanian project Art Education Programme for Roma Children has aimed to increase the access of Roma children from Sacele (especially Garcini neighbourhood), Brasov County to educational and cultural programmes in the visual arts areas. It has involved Roma children as well as educators. Starting in December 2014, the project is undertaking four different types of activity:

- Training of 16 socio-cultural animators through national accredited course, practical work and mentorship
- Training of 16 professionals from education and culture in competences of cultural expression, through accredited course, practical work and mentorship
- Involving 400 Roma children from Sacele in six visual arts camps and three workshops of visual art, during six months, with the support of 16 socio-cultural animators and 16 professionals from educational and cultural fields
- Promoting education through art and culture as a way of social inclusion and multicultural empowerment, through a street exhibition, a site, a short movie and an online brochure.

Reaching wide audiences: there are examples of projects which have been able to reach out to thousands of members of the local community. For example, the Polish-Norwegian project, Opera's Divertimento on the Stages of Cracow and Trondheim, is being carried out (until December 2015) as a series of workshops and master classes for young opera artists from Poland and Norway. In the workshop 16 young artists took part to develop the opera "Mefistofele" by Arrigo Boito. The workshop and master classes were complimentary to the artists' education, focusing on practical skills. The results also include opera performances carried out jointly by Krakow Opera and the Norwegian partner Trondheim Symphony Orchestra (TSO) under the artistic supervision of renowned opera artists. Four events are planned in Krakow and four in Trondheim, which will bring around 7,000 spectators in total. The admission to the performances will only consist of a symbolic entrance fee, to ensure that no visitor is excluded on the grounds of their socioeconomic status. The cooperation between Krakow Opera and

TSO is expected to be well regarded by the local community of Trondheim, which consists of the very active group of several thousand Polish people. The partnership enables the project partners to organise and perform the world-class opera, with the participation of Polish and Norwegian outstanding soloists. In addition, the group will perform on one of the biggest cultural arenas of Norway Olavshallen (with capacity of up to 1,200 visitors). The project has also had a great impact on enhancing the attractiveness of the Krakow Opera's offer among its visitors.

Summary

Most PA17 projects have targeted specific groups, including children and young people, visitors from other countries, minority ethnic groups and people from disadvantaged groups. Some projects and events have specifically promoted Roma culture and/or targeted Roma people as creators, performers or audiences. There are also instances of projects reaching very large audiences in particular localities.

6.0 Potential for impact

In the previous section, we have evaluated the effectiveness of projects in terms of their activities and immediate effects. In this section, we now consider the potential for the EEA Grants for Cultural Heritage and Diversity to achieve the higher-level objectives set for them, namely to:

- **Reduce economic and social disparities;** and
- **Strengthening bilateral relations through cultural co-operation.**

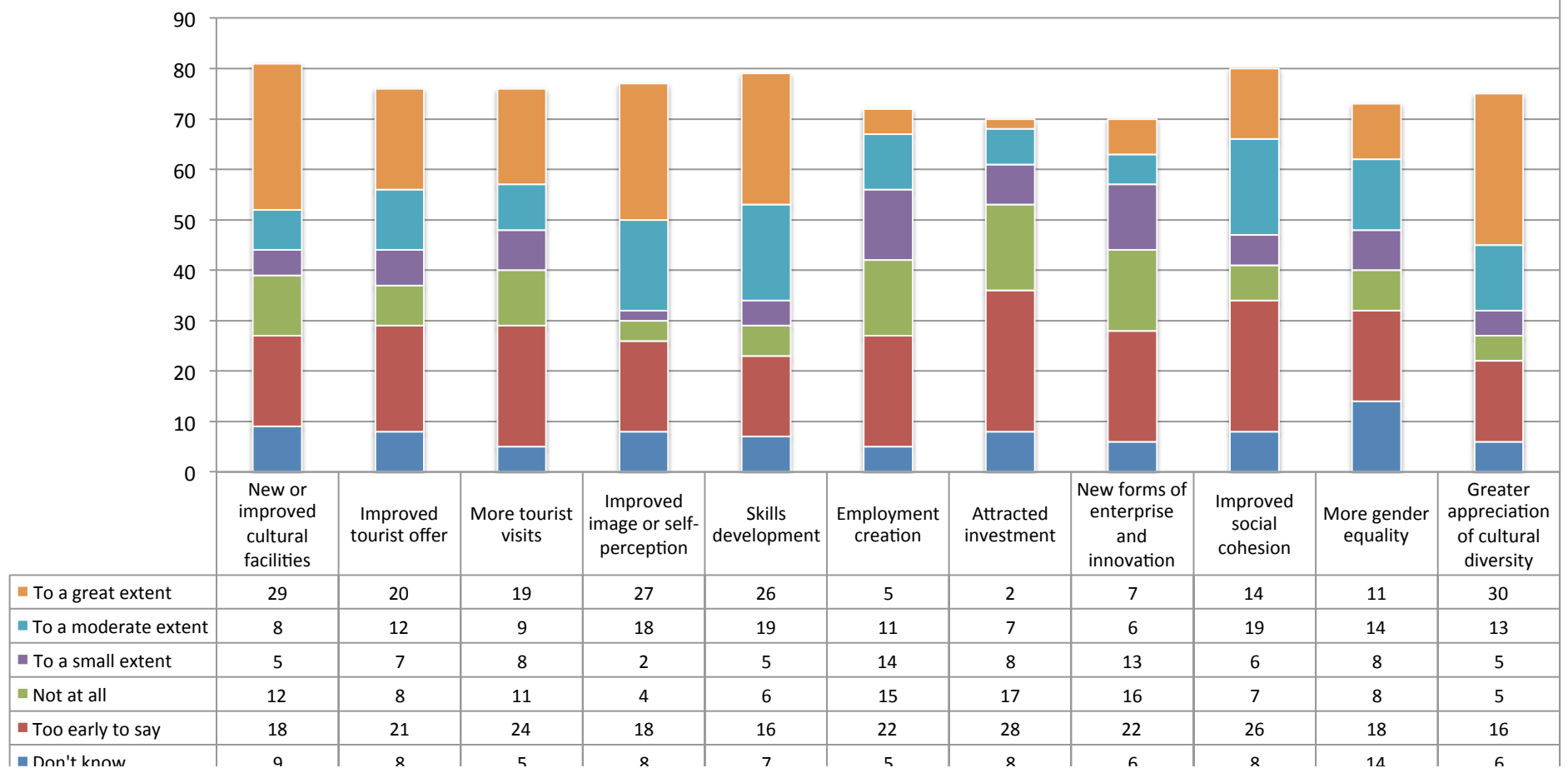
In presenting these findings, however, we must highlight the limitations of the evidence available. First, this is an interim evaluation and evidence of impact is necessarily limited. Second, as we have discussed earlier, there have been significant delays in the approval of Programme Agreements and thus also in the approval of projects. Under PA16, no projects had been approved in three countries and only 30-35% of funds had been committed in another two. As a result, only one large project was due to be complete by the end of 2014 and only another three by September 2015. The rest were due to be completed at the very end of 2015 or in 2016. Within PA17, only five of the ten countries had approved projects, the majority of which were not yet complete. For that reason, we have been unable to evaluate the effects of completed projects and their potential to reduce economic and social disparities impacts on local communities. Instead, we have gathered and analysed the views of stakeholders and project promoters, as well as reviewing documentation that describes the activities of approved projects.

6.1 Reducing economic and social disparities

RQ16	What is the potential for the EEA Grants to contribute to the reduction in economic and social disparities between the beneficiary countries and other European countries?
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One of the overall objectives of the EEA Grants is to contribute to the reduction of economic and social disparities in the EEA. In the design of the EEA Grants programmes, the logic for identifying, protecting and increasing this value has not been explicitly articulated; it has been assumed that investments in the preservation and renovation of heritage will generate economic benefit for the beneficiary countries. In drawing conclusions about the potential economic impact of the EEA Grants, we therefore have to adopt, ex-post, our own suggestion of the types of effects that could be expected. This is not without its risks, given the debate in policy and academic circles about the nature of the economic value of cultural heritage and how such value can be measured. These risks notwithstanding, we consider here the different forms of economic and social value that the cultural heritage programmes have the potential to offer. The extent to which the project promoters expect such benefits to arise is demonstrated by the findings of our survey, as illustrated in the figure below. In the text that follows, we consider findings emerging from the survey and from the analysis of evidence gathered from other sources.

Figure 6.1: Potential for impact



Based on the evidence provided by the survey and by other sources, we can offer some findings about the potential impact of the EEA Grants for Cultural Heritage and Diversity.

First, the **cultural value of investments has tended to outweigh economic and social considerations** in the design and implementation of projects. From the survey, we can see that the potential impacts most commonly reported by project promoters were “greater appreciation of cultural diversity” and “new or improved cultural facilities”; culture heritage has been supported as an end in itself. This finding is supported by the data on the allocation of funding to projects; only about 1% of funding has been allocated to projects categorised as supporting the objective of “Local communities further developed and economically sustainable livelihoods established through the revitalisation of cultural and natural heritage”.³⁹ Twenty-two projects have been categorised against this intended outcome, of which fifteen in Estonia and seven in Romania. Moreover, very few respondents to the survey anticipate that they will contribute to attracting new investment into their localities or to new forms of enterprise and innovation.

Second, in line with this, a strong emphasis has been placed on **making cultural heritage accessible** to the public. This is the category against which the largest volume of funding has been allocated: €71m to 35 projects under PA16, although this has also been a feature PA17 projects categorised under other headings. As we have noted in section 5.1, many of the PA16 projects will improve physical access to sites, such as new visitor facilities, better wheelchair access and improvements in fire safety. They also include improvements to visitor experience, such as better use of ICT (e.g. interactive kiosks, audio-visual systems) and new spaces or facilities serving educational or cultural purposes. Within PA17, cultural events organised have reached out to a large number of target groups, particularly, children, young people, Roma and disadvantaged groups. In the case of Lithuania, this was specifically prioritised through the selection process. Projects across PA16 and PA17 have also involved promotional activities to reach wider audiences and raise awareness of cultural heritage.

Third, the main direct economic impact for communities hosting heritage sites arises from the **increase in employment and revenues enjoyed by contractors** undertaking works and, via multiplier effects, by the wider economy. Whilst most of this expenditure is one-off in nature, it does offer potential for significant, albeit temporary, employment impacts. Indeed, heritage restorations tend to be more labour-intensive than other construction activities. Restoration also tends to require higher value services, given its reliance on specialist or craft-based skills. Moreover, such investments have taken place at a time when levels of construction activity have been lower than in previous years in some places, particularly before the financial crash of 2008.

Fourth, some investments under PA16 will create **new employment**, although overall the direct employment impact from the restored sites and from cultural events is expected to be modest. Indeed, relatively few project promoters expected their projects to create employment to a great extent compared to the other types of possible impact. As we see from the analysis of activities in section 5, some of the PA16 projects involve the creation of new venues or an expansion in amenities and services provided at existing venues; such activities will create new employment, as and when additional members of staff are needed. However,

³⁹ Categorised as objective PA1603

overall, the emphasis in PA16 is on physical investments rather than an expansion in ongoing cultural activities at sites.

Fifth, there is the potential for indirect economic impacts through an **increase in tourism**. As we have noted, the promotion of sustainable tourism was reported to be the main objective of only 5% of project promoters (across PA16 and PA17) responding to the survey. However, as we have discussed in section 5.4, many projects have incorporated a tourist dimension in their activities, such as improvements in the facilities for tourists (and other visitors) at restored sites and promotional activities aimed at tourists. As a result, 35% of promoters believe that their projects will improve the local tourist offer to a great or moderate extent and 30% believe that their projects will attract more tourists to the area.

Linked to the tourism benefits are the **improvements in the image or self-perception of local communities** that host sites. This was the impact most often reported by project promoters as likely to arise to a great or to a moderate extent, i.e. nearly half of all respondents to the survey. As we have noted in section 5.4, many of the restored buildings are at the heart of town or city centres; their restoration thus has a considerable effect on the overall attractiveness of those localities.

Seventh, the process of restoring sites and organising artistic events has developed **skills and competences** – with the potential for ongoing activities to continue such development. As shown by the table above, this is a common feature of many projects: 29% of promoters reported that their projects would develop skills to a great extent and another 18% to a moderate extent. Such training is mostly provided for those undertaking restorations or those working within cultural heritage bodies, rather than for local people in general. A small number of projects focus very specifically on developing facilities that will provide training on an ongoing basis, most notably the three new centres of expertise and research highlighted in section 5.3. Similarly, two projects specifically focus on developing training and competences within the heritage sector (the HoME project in Poland and the project implemented by the Museum of Estonian Architecture).⁴⁰

Eighth, some of the supported projects have made specific contributions to **education**. Of course, one key role of museums is to inform and educate those that visit. With support from the EEA Grants, some projects have enhanced this role either through providing new educational facilities at heritage sites or through organising, events, exhibitions, workshops and conferences. Project in Estonia are making a particularly important contribution to education, where all the projects relate to the restoration and renovation of manor houses, which will then (re-)open as local schools. On the whole, however, provision of education within PA16 projects has tended to be a complement to restoration works or a follow-on activity (once the project is complete) rather than the main focus. Within PA17, a number of projects have promoted arts education and/or worked with schools, although these have been a minority.

Last, some of the supported projects have made a contribution to **social cohesion**. A number of projects have specifically focussed on preserving and promoting the heritage and folklore of minority cultures, notably Jewish and Roma. This has either been through prioritisation at the programme level (for example, in Bulgaria and Romania where at least 10% of funds available under PA16 have been set aside for projects related to the heritage of the Roma) or through

⁴⁰ See section 5.3

the choices made by project applicants themselves (for example, the six synagogues restored in Latvia, Lithuania and Slovakia). All projects have been required to ensure gender equality in their implementation, whilst 17 projects under PA17 have specifically promoted gender equality as the main focus of their activity. For 24 projects, gender equality has been a “significant issue”, whilst for two it has been a “fundamental issue”.

Summary

Taken together, these findings suggest that the investments in heritage will generate desirable economic and social effects. But such effects tend to be perceived by project promoters as by-products of investments in heritage preservation or cultural events, rather than the main intended effects. Moreover, the economic and social impacts are likely to be localised, rather than permeating the wider heritage sector in the beneficiary countries. This reflects the fact that the funds available are modest in relation to the size of the beneficiary countries and the needs of their cultural and heritage sectors. Moreover, 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, where programmes have prioritised certain forms of cultural heritage (e.g. manor houses, wooden heritage, Jewish or Roma culture) and/or funded strategic projects (e.g. centres of expertise or capacity building for those priority areas), there is the potential for a wider impact to be realised on those priority areas.

In the next programme period, there may be the potential for investments to be made more strategic and thus deliver greater impact albeit on a narrower field. This could be done in two ways: first, funding clusters of projects that prioritise certain forms of heritage or promote certain economic or social objectives through cultural heritage; second, funding strategic projects that support those clusters and/or a wider set of cultural operators – those projects might support modernisation of the sector, capacity-building, promotion of heritage, etc. Estonia provides an example here, where all the projects relate to the restoration of manor houses that will serve as schools and where a strategic project is building capacity across all manor houses.

6.2 Strengthening bilateral relations through co-operation at project level

RQ17

What is the potential for the EEA Grants to strengthen bilateral relations between donor and beneficiary countries through cultural co-operation at project level?

6.2.1 Extent of co-operation

For the 2004–2009 period, only 16% of the projects of the Grants involved a donor state partner – usually from Norway.⁴¹ In contrast, the current period has seen a substantial increase in the extent of bilateral co-operation at project level, even though the inclusion of donor project partners was not obligatory in all programmes. At least one project included

⁴¹ Pitija (2012), Evaluation of the Sector Cultural Heritage Under the EEA and Norway Grants 2004-09

project partners from all three donor countries: the “Transgressions - international narratives exchange” project which involved authors from Poland, Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein in readings and festivals. Such co-operation has been particularly encouraged by the Directorate for Cultural Heritage, Norway and the Arts Council Norway; both organisations have played an important role in establishing contacts for project development between cultural players in donor and beneficiary countries.

Based on data from the FMO from March 2015, we can identify that the inclusion of donor project partners was more common within PA17 projects than within PA16 projects:

- 52 out of 115 projects (45%) funded under PA16 include donor project partners; and
- 92 out of 129 projects (73%) funded under PA17 include donor project partners.

Most donor project partners are involved in just one project, although there are some exceptions. The Norwegian Institute for Cultural Heritage Research (NIKU) is a partner in three projects that concern the restoration of manor houses or similar sites in Latvia, Lithuania and Romania. The Directorate for Cultural Heritage, Norway, as well as being a Donor Programme Partner in some countries, is also a partner in two projects, one concerned with the exchange of experience between Norway and the Czech Republic in the field of industrial heritage and the other with the establishment of a preventive monitoring system for immovable national monuments in Slovakia. The Norwegian University College of Agriculture and Rural Development is a partner in two restoration projects in Lithuania.

On the beneficiary side, the four countries with only one PA16 project (Cyprus, Malta, Portugal, Spain) do not feature donor project partners in those projects. Estonia features only three donor project partners, none of which are in the large restoration projects. The other countries include a mix of projects with and without donor project partners.

Within PA17, all projects in Latvia, Poland and Portugal feature donor project partners. Around half the PA17 projects in Romania and slightly fewer than half in Spain feature donor project partners.

6.2.2 Nature of co-operation (PA16)

Bilateral co-operation within PA16 project has consisted of the following.

Exchanges of experience: within some restoration projects, collaboration has been an additional to the main work of restoration rather than an integral part of it. For example, the restoration of the Stanislavian Theatre, Poland, has featured an exchange of experience with the Østfold Museum Foundation in Norway. Similarly, the Riga Art Nouveau Centre and the Norwegian National Art Nouveau Centre have visited each other to exchange experience.

Teaching: experts from the donor countries have visited the beneficiary countries to provide tuition. For example, Norwegian experts in the restoration of wooden heritage visited the Museum of Rainis and Aspazija, Latvia, to lead seminars on the restoration process and to demonstrate specific skills and techniques. Experts from Sam Eyde upper secondary school in Norway have led seminars as part of the restoration of Rezekne Green Synagogue, Latvia.

Informal co-operation: some bilateral co-operation has taken place without a formal partnership agreement being in place. For example, the Museum of Literature and Music in Latvia visited museums in Norway to exchange experience regarding museum management, conservation and restoration of musical instruments and the digitisation of works and exhibitions.

6.2.3 Nature of co-operation (PA17)

Within PA17, bilateral co-operation tends to be more integral to the design and implementation of projects, reflecting the focus of the programmes on promoting cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue and the internationalisation of cultural operators. Bilateral co-operation within PA17 has most commonly featured the following main types of activities.

Co-productions: for example, the Remnants of Prayers project is a collaboration between the National Museum in Gdańsk, Poland and 3 partners in Iceland and 5 in Norway. It aims to raise awareness of religious objects as a response to the poor knowledge of religious practices in European societies. Activity has included ethnographic and photographic documentation of the 1500 Polish Pomerania shrines and Icelandic and Norwegian churches, as well as co-production of a promotional film, a musical composition inspired by the countries' folklore, exhibitions and educational seminars.

Artistic residencies: in Spain, such residencies have very often been facilitated by mobility grants. For example, the Norwegian artist Anders Grønlien undertook a residency at La Fragua in Cordoba (Spain) from November 2013 until September 2014. Artists from Iceland and Norway have undertaken residences in the Upper Silesia conurbation, culminating in an exhibition presented in six towns.

Translation of works and performance of such works: for example, co-operation between the Meine Seele Theatre company in Spain and Norway's Dramatikkens Hus (House of Drama) featured the translation of plays from Norwegian into Spanish and vice versa, as well as performances of those plays, once translated.

Education and tuition: experts, teachers and instructors from the donor countries have visited the beneficiary countries to provide tuition and/or master classes, particularly for young people and emerging artists. For example, the Recognizing through dance project in Poland has collaborated with the Norwegian National Opera & Ballet to create a dance performance with choreography designed by talented young generation artists.

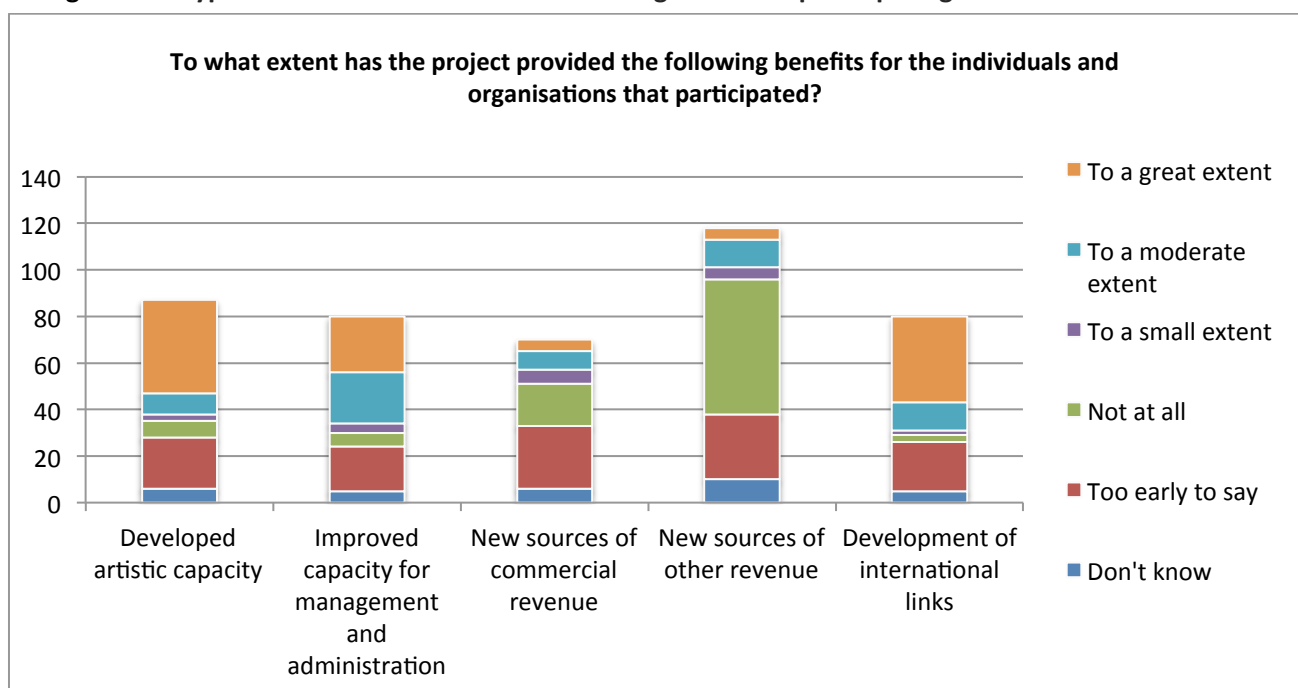
Raise awareness of cultures and promote intercultural dialogue: by presenting exhibitions and performances of artists from the donor countries in the beneficiary countries (and vice versa), some projects are hoping to raise awareness of other cultures. In a few cases, the co-operation has attempted to raise awareness of a shared minority culture. For example, the Yidish far ale ("Yiddish for all") project has been a collaboration between Jewish cultural organisations in Norway and Poland that has promoted knowledge about Yiddish language and culture in both those countries.

6.2.4 Effects of co-operation

The survey included a number of questions relating to the expected results and impacts of bilateral co-operation at project level. As few projects are yet complete, it has not been possible to extract detailed information. Nevertheless respondents have been able to indicate to what extent the projects can be expected to lead to various benefits.

Figure 6.2 below shows the extent to which survey respondents reported that individuals and the organisations had derived benefits from their participation in projects. It indicates that the most prominent benefits include “**developing artistic capacity**” (45% stated that this has occurred to a great extent), “**developing international links**” (42%) and an “**improved capacity for management and administration**” (27%). The least commonly reported benefits include “new sources of revenues”, perhaps reflecting the fact that few projects had yet been completed. It should also be noted that on average a quarter of respondents indicate it is too soon to measure the types of benefits derived.

Figure 6.2: Types of benefits for individuals and organisations participating



Source: Questionnaire responses; (N=89)

Given that many, if not most projects, were in the early stages of development, it is too early to make definitive statements about the impact of including partners from the donor countries in projects. However, there is some evidence about the potential for increased capacity and thus also increased activities in the future, as well as the barriers to such positive effects.

First, as noted above, the individuals and the organisations that have participated in grant activities are developing new or better **international links** through the bilateral dimension of the programmes. This is particularly true where partner search activities have been organised by the POs, as many project promoters have not previously had partners in the donor countries. In general, the bilateral co-operation was reported to be more relevant and useful on the cultural diversity projects under PA17 rather than under the heritage projects under PA16. For example, there was a stronger rationale for cultural events that involve artists from donor and beneficiary countries and that draw on and exhibit a diversity of cultures. Such

international links offer the potential for accelerated learning and enhancement of intercultural competences.

Some successful bilateral partnerships have been formed by partners that already knew each other. However, many project promoters have faced **difficulties in finding bilateral partners in the donor countries**. One obvious difficulty expressed by several stakeholders was that the three donor countries are, of course, relatively small in terms of population size. The number of cultural operators that might therefore be willing and able to participate is naturally limited. Another reported difficulty in some cases was the relatively short timescale for finding partners and developing meaningful joint project proposals once a call for proposals had been published.

Given these difficulties, it is clear that the development of bilateral partnerships is often dependent on support offered in advance of the publication of calls for proposals. Indeed, where co-operation has taken place, it has often been facilitated by **specific initiatives of the POs**, such as calls under Measures A and B, or by **initiatives of Donor Programme Partners**. For example, Arts Council Norway has played an important role in providing information and in facilitating contacts between potential project partners. These have typically enabled a wider set of operators to participate in bilateral co-operation and develop stronger international links. For example, this was the case in Malta, where the projects had not otherwise included donor project partners. In other countries, bilateral working has been facilitated by partner search activities supported by the POs. For example, the Lithuanian PO used the bilateral relations funds under PA16 and PA17 to support project partner search activities in 2013. The PO is then organising two further events in 2015 under PA16 (a study trip to Norway and a mid-term conference) that aim to strengthen networks and enable an exchange of experience. Similarly, Estonia had organised a study trip to Norway for Estonian heritage professionals, e.g. County Inspectors, and a return visit for heritage professionals; this bilateral co-operation was reported to be making local operators (e.g. municipalities, manor houses, schools) more international in their outlook.

The consultations indicate that POs and DPPs are actively encouraging sustainable partnerships which would have a potential to continue collaboration through EU programmes, such as Creative Europe. Several countries (e.g. Romania, Spain and Cyprus) report seeing the potential for longer-term collaborations developing as part of Cultural heritage project cooperation, albeit not (yet) at the stage of preparing a proposal for EU funding. In the future, support for transnational networks among projects with similar aims that benefit from EEA Grants may further enhance co-operation activity as well as the visibility of these projects. However, there is a very real difficulty of sustaining bilateral partnerships without continued funding.

Summary

The current period has seen a substantial increase in the extent of bilateral co-operation at project level, even though the inclusion of donor project partners was not obligatory in all programmes. Bilateral co-operation within PA16 projects tends to be an add-on to the main work of site restoration; it has typically consisted of exchanges of experience, teaching and informal co-operation. In contrast, bilateral co-operation is more integral to the design and implementation of PA17 projects; it has included co-productions, artistic residencies, translation of works and performance of such works, education and tuition provided in the

beneficiary countries by experts, teachers and instructors from the donor countries, and activities to raise awareness of cultures and promote intercultural dialogue.

As few projects are yet complete, it is not possible to specify the effects of such bilateral co-operation. However, the evidence available suggests that the most prominent benefits will be greater artistic capacity, better international links, accelerated learning and an improved capacity for management and administration. New sources of revenues are one of the least commonly expected benefits. However, the extent of bilateral co-operation has been hindered by many difficulties faced by project promoters in finding bilateral partners in the donor countries and, in some cases, a relatively short timescale for finding partners and developing meaningful joint project proposals. Given these difficulties, it is clear that the development of bilateral partnerships is often dependent on support offered in advance of the publication of calls for proposals. Indeed, where co-operation has taken place, it has often been facilitated by specific initiatives of the POs, such as calls under Measures A and B, or by initiatives of Donor Programme Partners. There is potential for bilateral co-operation to continue beyond the life of EEA funding, although this is only likely to be possible with support from EU programmes, such as Creative Europe.

6.3 Strengthening bilateral relations through co-operation at programme level

RQ18	What is the potential for the EEA Grants to strengthen bilateral relations between donor and beneficiary countries through cultural co-operation at programme level?
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Donor Programme Partners (DPPs) are public entities in a Donor State or inter-governmental organisations designated by the FMC to advise on the preparation and/or implementation of a programme. DPPs are designated for each programme area by the Donor States in the MoU or through an exchange of letters between the FMC and the NFPs. They serve on the Co-operation Committees that also include representatives of the PO, with the NFP and FMC invited to attend as observers.

Two Norwegian organisations have been designated as DPPs for Programme Areas 16 and 17:

- The Directorate for Cultural Heritage (DCH) is responsible for the practical implementation of the Norwegian Cultural Heritage Act. This includes the protection and conservation of historic buildings, monuments and sites and institutional co-operation, for example with international organisations and institutions in third countries across the world. The DCH provided professional advice during the previous programming period (2004-09) under contract to the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA). The DCH is the DPP for PA16 programmes in five countries.
- Arts Council Norway (ACN) is the main public body responsible for implementation of Norwegian cultural policy. Its role includes providing advice to the government on cultural affairs and managing grant programmes in the field of culture. The ACN is DPP for one PA 16 programme (a small grant scheme) and for five PA17 programmes (of which, one small grants scheme).

One or both the DDPs are specified in eight of the fourteen MoU, as shown in the table below. Six beneficiary countries do not have DPPs. No DPPs have been designated from Iceland or Liechtenstein.

Table 6.1: Donor Programme Partners by beneficiary state

Beneficiary State	Programme Area	Donor Programme Partner
Bulgaria	PA16 / PA17	• None
Cyprus	PA16	• None
Czech Republic	PA16 / PA17	• Arts Council Norway (for small grants scheme)
Estonia	PA16	• Directorate for Cultural Heritage, Norway
Hungary	PA16	• Directorate for Cultural Heritage, Norway
Latvia	PA16	• Directorate for Cultural Heritage, Norway • Arts Council Norway (for small grants scheme)
Lithuania	PA16	• Norwegian Directorate for Cultural Heritage
Lithuania	PA17	• Arts Council Norway
Malta	PA16	• None
Poland	PA16	• None
Poland	PA17	• Arts Council Norway (with support from the Directorate for Cultural Heritage)
Portugal	PA16	• None
Portugal	PA17	• Arts Council Norway
Romania	PA16	• Directorate for Cultural Heritage, Norway
Romania	PA17	• Arts Council Norway
Slovakia	PA16 / PA17	• None
Slovenia	PA16	• None
Spain	PA16 / PA17	• None

Source: Memoranda of Understanding between the Donor States and Beneficiary States

In the current period, the DCH supported the MFA in the negotiation of the programmes, for example, helping to define priorities in advance of negotiations and helping to pre-define projects. As well as serving as a DPP, the DCH has also acted as a partner in pre-defined projects in three countries (Czech Republic, Poland, Slovakia). Within Norway, the DCH has disseminated information about the EEA Grants to the cultural sector.

Similarly, the ACN has supported the development of programmes in six countries and encouraged project partnerships between operators in Norway and in those six beneficiary states (Czech Republic, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal, Romania). The ACN has provided support to POs in the selection of projects. This has included the provision of expert advice and identifying independent Norwegian cultural experts to help with assessing applications and selecting projects. In the Czech Republic, this has included the ACN being represented in the selection committee. The ACN has also provided advice to the PO in Hungary on the small grants scheme for cultural exchanges. Like the DCH, the ACN has disseminated information about the EEA Grants to the cultural sector in Norway, including for those programmes where it is not a DPP.

Evidence from the interviews of representatives of donor states and beneficiary states demonstrates that the DPP have made a positive impact on the programmes. Indeed, those representatives of beneficiary states that offered an opinion were unanimous in their positive view of the impact of the DPPs.

The positive benefits of the DPP have included **better programme design**. For example, the PA17 programme in Portugal was reported to have been inspired in part by “The Cultural Rucksack” (“Den kulturelle skolesekken”), a Norwegian programme that helps school pupils to become acquainted with different forms of professional art and cultural expressions;⁴² the involvement of the ACN as DPP (as well as Norwegian project partners) was reported to have added experience and new perspectives to their Portuguese counterparts. Similarly, in Hungary, the DPP was reported to have made a positive contribution to the thematic focus of the programme; this was particularly true in areas such as culture in rural areas and contemporary performance arts, where Norway has relative strengths – it was reported to be less evident in relation to urban heritage or Roma integration. In Latvia, it was reported that the DPPs had helped shape the focus of the programmes, for example, by highlighting what would be interesting for Norwegian cultural operators (as potential donor project partners).

Representatives of beneficiary states report that DPPs have contributed to **better programme management**. This has included, for example, constructive contributions within Programme Co-operation Committees, as well as consulting project partners in Norway, commenting on eligibility criteria and helping with the selection of projects. For example, in the Czech Republic, it was reported that the ACN had been particularly helpful during a seminar for potential applicants. In Hungary, it was reported that the involvement of DPPs had helped to enhance the potential for positive externalities to arise from partnership working.

Whilst the overall experience of DPP involvement has been positive for donor and beneficiary states alike, there have been some challenges. First, the **role of DPP has not been entirely clear** to all parties. According to Articles 3.2 and 3.3 of the Regulation, the DPPs and the Co-operation Committee have advisory, rather than decision-making roles. However, it remains for those developing the programmes to specify the precise nature of this role and the extent to which the beneficiary states are required to act on the advice given. For example, it is not specified whether the DPP role should concern both strategic and operational matters, such as determining the selection criteria and involving Norwegian experts in selection in all countries. This requires a process of negotiation at the outset and at different points in the implementation process. For that reason, there may be scope for greater clarity, either in the Regulation or in advice given by the FMO. Exchanges of experience between different countries and different DPPs (perhaps including DPPs in other policy areas) might therefore be beneficial.

Although they have been involved in only some of the programmes, **DPPs have recognised the importance of promoting all the programmes to potential project partners in their own countries**. This has been despite the fact that their funding is specifically tied to the programmes for which they have been designated as DPPs. For example, ACN provided information about all programmes at its regional information seminars across Norway. Given the difficulties in forming bilateral project partnerships, there may be merit in giving the DPPs a formal remit and appropriate resources to promote all the programmes within the donor countries and to facilitate the involvement of donor project partners in all those programmes.

⁴² <http://www.kulturradet.no/english/the-cultural-rucksack>

The role of DPPs has been strengthened by some of the **co-operation at European level**, i.e. meetings of DPPs and POs from different countries that took place in Oslo and in Kraków (Poland). These were reported to have been useful in strengthening contacts, sharing best practice, etc. The second meeting was particularly useful as it built on the first and there had also been progress in establishing programme management arrangements in the beneficiary countries. One of the DPPs expressed an intention to link this network to the International Federation of Arts Councils and Culture Agencies (IFACCA) and to EU-sponsored networks in the field of culture.

As well as improving the operation of programmes, bilateral co-operation at programme level has also helped to increase the **international experience and contacts of the bodies and individuals involved in programme management**. All the NFPs and POs that expressed a view reported that they had gained from the **bilateral co-operation with the DPPs**. Relationships with the DPPs were consistently described as constructive and beneficial, with the potential for long-term co-operation to develop. Interactions between the POs and DPPs have considered general issues of culture and cultural governance, as well as issues of programme management. In this way, bilateral co-operation has facilitated knowledge exchange and accelerated learning, which has the potential to bring about systemic change. However, in countries whose programmes do not feature DPPs, the benefits of bilateral co-operation resulted mostly at project level or through specific exchange activities, rather than through co-operation at programme level. For example, Malta reported no contact with donor country bodies, except the FMO. There was one exception here, Bulgaria, where it was reported that contact with the ACN had been beneficial and that there was the potential for future co-operation.

Benefits have also arisen from the **networking between POs** at European level. As already mentioned, the meetings of DPPs and POs from different countries that took place in Oslo and in Kraków proved useful in strengthening contacts, sharing best practice, etc. The regular meetings of NFPs and POs in Brussels were also reported to be useful in exchanging good practice and experience.

On the donor side, there are significant **benefits for the DPPs**. Both the DPPs report that their involvement in the programmes has helped them to **internationalise their operations**, for example, through the working relationships established in Co-operation Committees, which can then lead to further co-operation. The DCH highlighted its involvement in Romania as an example of a country with which it had not previously co-operated to any significant extent. Similarly, the ACN reported that it had previously worked mostly only at the national level but that its involvement as a DPP had enabled it to develop internationally as an organisation. Indeed, the ACN had seen the programmes as a way, not only of providing support, but also of gaining more experience of international working and international exchanges. As a result, there had been a two-way exchange of experience between the ACN's national and its international work, to the benefit of both. The DPPs and NFPs/POs also highlighted the **learning benefits** from co-operation. Such learning arose, in part, from the differences in culture/cultural traditions and in working practices between the donor and beneficiary states, with each able to draw from the other. The DPPs also emphasised the increased experience of their own staff. They were reported to have benefited personally and professionally becoming more self-confident and internationally-focussed and had gained a different view on their own work, as a result of their involvement in the programmes.

Summary

There is wide recognition amongst programme management bodies in the beneficiary countries that the DPP have made a positive impact on the programmes. This contribution has been in the form of better programme design and better programme management. The role of DPPs has been strengthened by some of the co-operation at European level. However, the contribution of DPPs might have been greater if their role had been clearer at the outset and if they had a formal remit and appropriate resources to promote all the programmes within the donor countries and to facilitate the involvement of donor project partners in all those programmes.

Bilateral co-operation at programme level has also helped to increase the international experience and contacts of the bodies and individuals involved in programme management. It has also facilitated knowledge exchange and accelerated learning, which has the potential to bring about systemic change in cultural governance. This has arisen from bilateral co-operation with the DPP and networking between POs at European level, including through the meetings of DPPs and POs in Oslo and in Kraków. For their part, DPPs report that their participation has helped them to internationalise their operation and to enjoy learning benefits.

6.4 Unplanned results

RQ19

Have the programmes generated any unplanned results?

Given that few projects had been completed at the time of the evaluation and many had not yet started, the research identified little evidence of unplanned effects. Indeed, the representatives of donor and beneficiary states were almost unanimous in stating that it was too early to identify such results.

Summary

At this interim stage, with few projects yet complete, there is little evidence of unplanned results.

7.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

7.1 Conclusions

EEA Grants and the allocation of funds

- The EEA Grants for Cultural Heritage and Diversity offer a unique form of support that is largely additional to other funding programmes. For example, expenditure on heritage restoration and renovation, although eligible under the ERDF Regulation, tends not to be prioritised in many ERDF Operational Programmes.
- Although the EEA programme align well to EU programmes at a high policy level and there is generally good awareness at national policy level of the different roles of the programmes, project promoters appear much less aware of the potential complementarity between the EEA and EU support.
- There has been considerable delay in the allocation of funds: by the end of March 2015 only around 66% of the funds available had been allocated to projects and no funds had been allocated in Bulgaria, Hungary and Slovenia.
- The allocation of funds is in line with the overall aims of PA16, namely “Conservation and revitalisation of cultural and natural heritage” and of PA17, namely “Promotion of diversity in culture and arts within European cultural heritage”.
- The aim of protecting and promoting the cultural heritage of minorities, including the Roma, is supported by the allocation of funds across both PA16 and PA17.

Efficiency

- There have been substantial delays in setting up the programmes across most of the beneficiary states. This has delayed calls for projects and the award of funding. Implementation of project activities has therefore been condensed into the final few years of the programme.
- There is broad support for the move to the programme-based approach, as it provides better strategic focus and simplification of management arrangements. However, establishing the programme management arrangements has proved problematic and/or time-consuming in some countries, with consequent adverse effects on the capacity of the programmes to deliver the desired results on time.
- The FMO has established good working relationships with the majority of NFPs and POs and its support is valued by them. But there is a need to reduce the time taken to respond to questions and requests posed by the NFPs and POs.
- Pre-defined projects have served as an efficient way to allocate funds to high quality projects at an early stage and where there are clearly identifiable needs. They have been particularly beneficial in: small countries, where the volume of funds available

does not justify open calls; situations where the programmes have made a late start. At the same time, these benefits must be weighed against the advantages offered by open calls in terms of equal access to funding and transparency in decision-making.

- There is a high level of demand relative to the funding available. Were it not for the delays in setting up programmes, it is likely that all funds would have been committed and expended within the period of eligibility for expenditure.
- There is a high level of satisfaction with the application process, which has benefitted from the involvement of DPPs and other donor country organisations. The process could be strengthened further by ensuring that all assessors of project applications are cultural experts. Feedback given to applicants is mostly satisfactory, although there is some scope for improvement.
- It is too early to assess the efficiency of project management, although risks to project management have been minimised where projects involve organisations or individuals with expertise both in heritage preservation (in the case of PA16) and in handling grant funds.
- Although projects are mostly in the early stages of implementation, the programme management bodies are satisfied with the (potential) quality of selected projects. The potential for high quality projects has been assured through competitive open calls attracting a large number of projects and also through the use of external experts in the selection process.
- Project promoters are optimistic about the potential sustainability of their activities beyond the period of grant funding. In particular, the sites renovated or restored under PA16 will mostly remain open and operational in the long-run. Some projects expect to enjoy new sources of commercial or other revenue but few believe that this will enable them to become self-sufficient. This suggests that restored sites are likely to depend on existing levels of revenue from visitors and/or continued public subsidy. PA17 projects are by nature short-term projects but offer the potential for sustained collaborations and networks as well as learning benefits for the cultural operators and target groups involved.
- The EEA Grants programmes are reasonably visible in the beneficiary countries, given the modest volume of funds available. There may be scope for more extensive communication activities in beneficiary countries (around the outcomes of open calls and the results achieved by projects, when complete) and in donor countries (in order to attract more potential project partners).
- There is no evidence that programme standards (e.g. relating to human rights or sustainable development) have not been respected.

Effectiveness

- The effectiveness of the programmes has been severely affected by the delays in setting up the programmes. Many projects have only recently started and most have

not been completed. Most of the desired effects have therefore not yet been achieved. The shortened time for implementation (and the suspension of payments in Hungary) creates a risk that achievement of effects will be less than originally expected.

- The selected projects under PA16 have the potential (once implemented) to contribute substantial progress towards the objective of “Cultural and natural heritage for future generations safeguarded and conserved and made publicly accessible”. Most, if not all, projects selected under PA16 involve physical investment in sites, monuments and artefacts, whilst many also offer the potential for other benefits, i.e. developing capacity, supporting sustainable and eco-tourism and documentation, digitisation and dissemination of works.
- Within PA16, capacity of cultural operators has been built through a number of specific large projects, such as new centres of expertise and/or research. Capacity has also been built through small grants schemes or through capacity-building activities within wider restoration projects, which have included training for those undertaking restorations, increase staffing, training and awareness-raising for stakeholders and development of strategies and plans.
- Most, if not all, projects selected under PA17 support culturally diverse artistic events and many have also provided opportunities for collaboration across countries and cultures. This offers the potential to build capacity of operators to internationalise their operations and to work across cultural and linguistic boundaries.
- The projects offer the potential to reach wide audiences and make culture more accessible, although for a significant number of projects it is too early to say. These benefits mostly consist of restored/renovated sites becoming or remaining accessible and of cultural events attended. For example, many projects organising events expected them to attract more than 500 people. Many also target their events on specific groups, such as young or disadvantaged people.
- The promotion of tourism is the primary focus of only a small number of projects, although activity to attract and cater for tourists features in many, if not most, restoration projects.

Potential for impact

- Investments in cultural heritage have the potential to generate desirable economic and social effects. These include increased employment and revenue for contractors undertaking works, new jobs created at restored sites, increased revenue from tourism, improved image of localities hosting sites, new skills and competences, and contributions to education and social cohesion. Such effects tend to be perceived by project promoters as a by-product of investments in heritage preservation of cultural events, rather than the main intended effects.
- Economic and social impacts are likely to be localised rather than permeating the wider heritage sector in the beneficiary countries. This reflects the fact that the funds

available are modest in relation to the size of the beneficiary countries and the needs of their cultural and heritage sectors. Moreover, some programmes have defined objectives and eligible activities that are quite broad in scope. However, where programmes have prioritised certain forms of cultural heritage (e.g. manor houses, wooden heritage, Jewish or Roma culture) and/or funded strategic projects (e.g. centres of expertise or capacity building for those priority areas), there is the potential for a wider impact to be realised on those priority areas.

- A much higher proportion of projects involve partners from donor states in the current period than was the case in 2004-09, despite some difficulties in finding project partners in the donor states. Initiatives funded under Measures A and B and other partner-search activities organised by the POs and DPPs have played an important role here.
- The rationale for bilateral partnerships has been stronger under PA17 than PA16. Bilateral co-operation within PA16 tends to be an add-on to the main work of site restoration and typically consists of exchanges of experience, teaching and informal co-operation. Co-operation is more integral to the design and implementation of PA17 projects and has included co-productions, artistic residencies, translation of works and performance of such works, education and tuition, and activities to raise awareness of cultures and promote intercultural dialogue.
- Individuals and organisations involved in bilateral co-operation expect to gain long-term benefits from participation, particularly better artistic capacity, new or better international links and improved capacity for management and administration.
- Whilst project partners report positive benefits from the partnerships and wish them to continue, such partnerships are likely to require continued subsidy in order to continue at their current level, e.g. from EU programmes such as Creative Europe. The basis for future projects under programmes has been established in many cases. Under PA16, study visits and exchanges are a more appropriate mechanism for bilateral co-operation for many projects or cultural operators.
- DPPs have made a positive impact on the design of programmes and have contributed to better programme management, although their role has not been entirely clear to all parties in all countries. Although they have been involved in only some of the programmes, DPPs have taken steps to promote all the programmes to potential project partners in their own countries. Given the difficulties in forming bilateral project partnerships, there may be merit in giving the DPPs a formal remit and appropriate resources to continue and expand this activity.
- DPPs report that there has been a two-way exchange of experience and learning, with their national activities gaining from their involvement in international bilateral co-operation. Staff members have benefitted personally and professionally from their experience of partnership working.
- Programme management bodies, such as NFPs, POs and DPPs, report positive effects from their experience of international co-operation – within the context of Co-operation Committees, as well as networking events organised at European level.

- At this early stage of implementation, there is little evidence of unplanned results.

7.2 Recommendations

1. 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 round 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.
2. The number of programmes should perhaps be reduced given the relative modest funds available in some countries. For example, the PA16 and PA17 areas could be merged into a single programme area (perhaps even with other programme areas) in the next period, albeit with different calls for different types of projects.
3. Beneficiary countries, particularly those receiving modest amounts of funding, should be encouraged to focus their programmes on more specific areas, e.g. those that can benefit most from bilateral co-operation, those prioritised by national policy or those for which there is limited other funding available. The focus of the Estonian programme on the restoration of manor houses provides an example here. This will reduce the level of disappointed applicants and also increase impact and synergy between different projects.
4. The donors should consider how to provide more in-depth support for the NFPs and POs in the process of developing programmes, so that strong programme proposals are submitted at the outset.
5. POs should be encouraged or perhaps even required to ensure that all assessors of project applications have specific expertise in the field of culture, rather than only in the management of funding programmes.
6. The role of DPPs should be continued in the new period. Consideration should be given as to whether/how to give DPPs a role in all programmes and beneficiary countries. This might include communicating information about all the programmes and attracting donor project partners for all programmes. The extent of such a role would vary between different beneficiary countries as necessary.
7. 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.
8. The possibility to pre-define projects should be retained, particularly for countries receiving small amounts of funding where open calls are not merited.
9. The FMC should consider whether the delays to the agreement and implementation of the programmes constitute exceptional cases that justify an extension of the period of eligibility of expenditure to 30 April 2017, as allowed for under Article 7.14 of the Regulation. Such an extension would significantly increase the likelihood of

achieving the desired level of effects and reduce risks in delivery by allowing proper timescales for implementation.⁴³

10. 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 complete before the deadline for eligibility of expenditure. Such projects might be pre-defined in the new programme agreements.
11. Given the long timescales required for complex heritage restoration projects, there might be merit in defining a longer period of eligibility of expenditure in future programmes or, indeed, in having programmes of seven years rather than five years duration. In that case, there would be advantages and disadvantages in operating programmes over the same time-scale as EU programmes, i.e. whether to “bridge the gap” caused by the end/start of EU programmes or whether to exploit the synergies offered by having the same timescale.
12. In the design of future programmes, consideration should be given as to how to make more strategic investments with the potential to deliver greater economic and social impact. This could be done in two ways: first, funding clusters of projects that specifically promote certain economic or social objectives through cultural heritage; second, funding strategic projects that support those clusters and/or a wider set of cultural operators – those projects might support modernisation of the sector, capacity-building, promotion of heritage, etc.

⁴³ By FMO letter of 26 May 2015, conditions for the exceptional extension of the final date of eligibility of selected projects have been set out.

Annex One: Country overviews

PA16

Country overviews PA16

Looking across the 14 countries covered by PA16, we can place them in four main groups according to the number of projects funded to date:

- Several projects funded (80% or more of funds allocated): Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Poland;
- A few projects funded (30-35% of funds allocated): Czech Republic, Slovakia;
- One project funded (80% or more of funds allocated): Cyprus, Malta, Portugal, Spain; and
- No projects funded or data unavailable: Bulgaria, Hungary, Slovenia.

Since the priorities, funded activities and eligibility criteria vary by programme, we consider the activities and effects of each of the first and second groups of countries individually. We then consider the third group of four countries collectively, given the small number of projects in each country.⁴⁴

Estonia

The programme in Estonia is focussed on one very specific part of Estonia's cultural heritage: the restoration and renovation of manor houses. The manor houses were built by the mostly foreign nobility in the 18th and 19th centuries (or before) from whom they were acquired by the new Republic of Estonia in the 1920s, as part of land reforms. Initially used as schools, the manor houses were very often abandoned during the Soviet period and many fell into disrepair. Since Estonia became independent, 59 have re-opened as schools. Most of these are also operate as local community or cultural centres or tourist attractions.

Three types of projects have been selected:

- 4 major restoration projects; of these three have received nearly €1m each and the fourth received €142k (the remaining funds available under this call). The quality of these projects was ensured by restricting applications to proposed restorations already approved by the National Heritage Board;
- 1 pre-defined project, which has received €270k to provide training and other support for the manor schools to help turn them into visitor centres and to market their offer; and
- 14 development projects, each receiving €18k-€59k; these project have undertaken small-scale renovations, provided training for staff or local residents, created new exhibitions or exhibition space, installed multi-media equipment and developed plans for refurbishment or the development of tourism.

⁴⁴ All data relating to the award of funding reflect the situation as of 30.3.2015 (source: FMO).

The pre-defined project was approved in April 2013, whilst the 4 restoration projects were approved at the end of 2013 and the 14 development projects were approved at different points in 2014. All projects are due to be completed by the end of 2015 (except 2 development projects that will finish earlier).

Latvia

Latvia's programme reflects the priorities of the national strategy for culture "Heritage 2018". This emphasises four priorities: i) Cultural values and capital (including heritage conservation); ii) Cultural modernisation and education; iii) Competitiveness and creative industries; and iv) Accessibility of culture and cultural exchanges. On that basis, the programme has particularly focused on heritage conservation (infrastructure and buildings), particularly wooden buildings.

There were 5 pre-defined projects under PA16. Of these four were restoration projects; three which received large sums for restoration activities (€545k, €1.8m, €4.2m), whilst the fourth received much less (€170k). A call for heritage projects was also organised, attracting 27 applications. Of these, 5 were funded; each received slightly more than €200k.

The projects undertook the following activities:

- 4 museums restored, of which one ethnographic open-air museum and one wooden museum;
- 2 synagogues restored, of which one wooden;
- 3 other buildings restored (manor house, castle, old town hall; and
- 1 project involving the digitisation of Art Nouveau cultural works and heritage.

The pre-defined projects were approved at the end of 2013 or early in 2014, allowing more than 2¼ years for implementation. The projects selected by the call for proposals were approved between July and September 2014. This allowed a much shorter time, i.e. only around 1¼ years.

Lithuania

Lithuania's programme particularly focusses on the restoration and preservation of wooden cultural heritage, which numbers 1,700 buildings – around one-third of the country's cultural heritage objects. This focus reflects certain national policy priorities, as set out in the Inter-institutional Action Plan for Preserving Ethnographic Villages 2011-2013. The programme also aims to provide skills in heritage preservation and raise public awareness, including through the establishment of research and conservation centres; this reflects national policy priorities set out in the document "Benchmarks of Lithuanian Cultural Policy Change".

One call for proposals attracted 112 projects, of which only 19 were funded. The demand for funding (€50m) was more than five times the level of funding available (€9m). All the selected projects were for large-scale renovations, receiving between €200k and €600k of grant funding. They included:

- 5 churches (1 of which is wooden), chapels or monasteries restored or renovated;
- 2 synagogues restored (1 of which is wooden);

- 3 manors restored or renovated (1 of which is wooden);
- 3 wooden ethnographic villages restored;
- 1 wooden villa restored;
- 1 other wooden building restored;
- 1 castle restored;
- 1 fort restored; and
- 2 heritage centres developed.

Some of the projects have gone beyond the restoration of buildings. In some cases, the role of the buildings has been expanded to serve a wider community or cultural purpose than was the case prior to the restoration. For example, at least two have been converted into new museums (Salos village; Liubavas Manor Officine and Orangery), whilst another (Pakruojis Synagogue) features new exhibition space. Several have also incorporated some kind of training, either for the workers involved in the restoration or for local residents. Many have included public seminars to raise awareness of the sites and of heritage in general. Most, if not all, of the sites, are intended to attract tourists and other visitors.

All the projects were approved between June and September 2014 and are due for completion in April 2016. At the time of the evaluation, all were therefore in the early stages of implementation.

Poland

The rationale for Poland's programme is that some 42% of the 63,000 immovable objects listed in the national register are in need of renovation and conservation. At the same time, it is reported that there is insufficient funding for the maintenance and renovation of such objects. Whilst the European Structural Funds are providing some support, these are insufficient to meet the need. Moreover, the end of the EU programming period in 2013 has not been followed by a prompt start to the 2014-2020 programmes, meaning a gap in funding for renovation and conservation activities.

Within PA16, one call for proposal was held, from which 23 projects were selected. Grants of between €1m-€8m were allocated (and one of €250k) and averaging €3m were awarded, a total of €64m in all. Of these, 2 started in September 2013, whilst the rest started in 2014. All of the projects are due to be completed in late 2015 or in 2016.

Activities within the 23 projects included the following:

- 5 palaces or castles restored or renovated;
- 3 museums restored or renovated;

- 4 theatres restored or renovated, of which one now hosts the Centre for Theatre Education – Poland’s first Interactive Theatre Museum;
- 8 churches (of which 7 within the same project) restored or renovated;
- 2 other building (a music academy) restored or renovated;
- organs in one church renovated;
- 5 historical buildings converted into new cultural venues
- 2 new cultural venues built;
- 2 projects focussed on education, research and/or preservation of intangible cultural heritage.

Romania

Romania’s programme focusses on the restoration of cultural heritage and the conservation of moveable monuments and cultural works. This included support for knowledge development and exchanges of experience regarding good heritage care. The programme also aims to safeguard the cultural intangible heritage of ethnic and cultural minorities, with at least 10% of the funding intended for activities related to the cultural heritage of the Roma population.

One pre-defined project (new building for the Astra Museum) received nearly €3m. A call for proposals invited applications for between €200k and €2m. This led to 11 awards of grant funding for 9 major restoration projects (two projects each received two awards), each receiving between €700k and €1.6m. Aside from the pre-defined project, all the projects were approved at a very late stage, i.e. at the end of 2014 or early in 2015. This allowed a short period for implementation, i.e. less than 1½ years.

Activity supported includes:

- 2 churches restored (or artwork therein), one within an ethnographic museum, the other within a museum in former military barracks;
- 2 castles or fortifications restored;
- 3 other restoration projects: a military hospital, orangery and gardens, historical town centre buildings;
- 2 projects involving digitisation: artefacts and medieval documents;
- 1 new museum and open-air exhibition with a new exhibition and documentation of heritage.

The Small Grant Scheme has funded 7 projects (via 8 grants, one project receiving two grants), each of which has received between €25k and €85k. These projects were all approved in March 2015, allowing one year for delivery.

Activity supported includes:

- 2 projects developing heritage management strategies, one of which also is also developing an on-line database of historical monuments;
- 1 project digitising works of literature;
- 1 project providing better physical access to a cathedral; and
- 3 projects focussed on preserving and promoting the cultures of minorities within Romanian (Hungarian-speaking, Roma, Aromanian-speaking).

Czech Republic

The programme in the Czech Republic has supported two pre-defined projects. These were approved in June/July 2014 and have involved:

- Digital Restoration of Czech Film Heritage, with €800k funding; and
- Study tours and exchanges of experience for practitioners in the field of industrial heritage, supported by €116k of funding.

Aside from these, the programme was intended to restore and optimise the use of at least 12 buildings showcasing important cultural collections. It also aimed to give grants to digitise at least 13 important cultural (written and cinematographic) heritage collections. However, at the time of writing, the achievement of these objectives appeared unlikely. Two other approved projects were approved following a call for proposals that closed in June 2014. These concerned:

- Restoration of a church, supported by €5m of funding; and
- Restoration of ancient monument (rotunda), supported by €276k.

These two projects were not approved until early 2015, allowing a very short timescale for completion.

One call remains open until 30 April 2016 – the “Fund for bilateral relations measure B”. This will provide grants of between €2k-€20k (€281k in total) for one-off or short-term supplementary initiatives in approved projects, pre-defined projects. These initiatives include: study and work trips, work visits and bilateral working meetings, workshops, seminars; conferences; studies, analyses and documentation, data collection; and information and promotional initiatives

Slovakia

Slovakia’s programme is intended to support the priorities of the 2011 national policy document: “Conception of the protection on monuments and historic sites in Slovakia”. In total, 16 projects were funded, of which one was pre-defined and the others were approved following a call for proposals. The projects included:

- 4 castles or forts restored;
- 2 synagogues restored;
- 1 church restored;
- 1 baroque hall restored; and
- a national preventive monitoring system for immovable national monuments registered in the Central Register of Monuments, involving the creation of monitoring teams based in 3 different locations across the country (the pre-defined project).

The pre-defined project was approved in March 2014, whilst the other projects were not approved until November 2014, allowing only around 1½ years for implementation.

Other countries

Given the modest funding available in Cyprus, Malta, Portugal and Spain, it was not worthwhile to operate calls for proposals in these countries. Instead, one pre-defined project has been supported in each country. All four projects were approved in 2013, allowing more time for implementation than projects selected by open calls in other countries. They are as follows:

- Cyprus: the Centre for Visual Arts and Research has developed a new gallery and research centre to exhibit and document pictures, books, manuscripts and historical items related to the island's culture and particularly regarding the Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot cultures; supported by €613k.
- Malta: New Environmental Management System for the Hal Saflieni Hypogeum World Heritage Site – an underground prehistoric cemetery. The project has received €636k and was approved in July 2013, allowing 2¾ years for completion.
- Portugal: the project "Routes of Sepharad - Enhancement of the Portuguese Jewish Identity in an Intercultural Dialogue" intends to enable the restoration, conservation and preservation of 13 Jewish cultural heritage sites and buildings; supported by €3.6m of EEA grant funding.
- Spain: Equipment and Activity Plan for the Federico Garcia Lorca Centre, allowing the safeguarding of the archive of the Spanish poet, playwright, and theatre director; supported by €3.3m of EEA grant funding, out of a total cost of €4.5m.

Annex Two: Country overviews

PA17

Country overviews PA17

Of the 10 countries covered by PA17, five had not approved projects at the time of the evaluation, namely Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Lithuania and Slovakia. Following calls for proposals, the other five countries had approved projects, as described below.⁴⁵

Latvia

Latvia's activities are intended to address the challenges facing the contemporary arts and culture sectors regarding the mobility of cultural players, the development of their capacity and the promotion of intercultural dialogue. At the time of the evaluation, **8 projects** had been approved. They included:

- NORTH Creative Network for open innovation and cultural exchange (€76k of EEA funding); and
- 450 years together. Jewish culture in Latvian environment - arts, music, education (€65k of EEA funding).

The projects will operate from September 2014 to March 2016 and from January to December 2015 respectively.

Poland

Poland's programme aims to improve the ability of its cultural sector to adapt to current needs regarding new technological developments, audience development, cross-border cooperation, safeguarding cultural diversity in a globalising world and access to funding.

Following two calls for proposals, **49 projects** were approved in 2013 and 2014. The projects will be completed at different points in between 2013 and 2016. The projects vary considerably in the size of the grant awarded, i.e. from €25k to €748k.

Portugal

Portugal's programme aims to stimulate the supply of high quality artistic input for children through the school system in Portugal and it promotes a more evenly spread of artistic work for this purpose across the country.

Following a call for proposals, **5 projects** were approved between July and September 2014. They will operate until December 2015 or March 2016. The projects have each received between €136k and €140k in grant funding.

Romania

Measure 1 has supported large scale projects intended to raise awareness of cultural diversity, strengthen intercultural dialogue and document cultural history. Following a call for proposals, **38 projects** were selected and received grants between €43k and €300k. The projects were approved between December 2014 and April 2015.

⁴⁵ All data relating to the award of funding reflect the situation as of 30.3.2015 (source: FMO).

A second call was due to be held under Measure 2. This will support projects covering the same areas as Measure 1 but at smaller scale, i.e. between €5k and €15k. At the time of the evaluation, no information was available at the results of this call for proposal.

Spain

Spain's programme promotes international cooperation (for example through exchanges of best practices and knowledge-sharing), gearing up access to culture and promoting cultural diversity. This is to be supported through partnership projects with cultural organisations working in contemporary art and culture in the Donor States. After a call for proposals, **8 projects** received funding of between €20k and €55k. The projects were approved in September 2013 and were completed in late 2014 or early 2015.

Grants of up to €7,000 have also been provided through an open call for artists to undertake periods of mobility in the Donor States. In total, **21 mobility grants** were approved, although two were later terminated before completion. The 19 periods of mobility were undertaken between September 2013 and early 2015.

Annex Three: Terms of Reference



REDUCING DISPARITIES | STRENGTHENING COOPERATION

TERMS OF REFERENCE

MID-TERM EVALUATION OF THE SECTOR CULTURAL HERITAGE UNDER THE EEA GRANTS 2009-2014

1. Background

The Grants contribute to promoting social and economic cohesion in the European Economic Area (EEA). The funding is targeted at areas where there are demonstrable needs in the beneficiary countries and that are in line with national priorities and wider European shared interests and goals.

Support to protect cultural heritage is one of the priorities of the EEA and Norway Grants. In the 2009-2014 funding period around €201 million is set aside for support in two Programme Areas: conservation and revitalisation of cultural and natural heritage (Programme Area 16) in Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia and Spain and promotion of diversity in cultural and arts within European cultural heritage (Programme Area 17) in Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia and Spain.

Culture plays a crucial role in social and economic development across Europe. The EEA Grants aim at preserving and revitalising cultural and natural heritage in order to help promote the sustainability of local communities, stimulate social cohesion and encourage audience development/public accessibility.

The grants schemes take account of the role culture plays in promoting cultural diversity and developing mutual understanding; in this regard the grants also aim to promote the culture and heritage of minorities. Bilateral cooperation is strengthened through cooperation between cultural players in the beneficiary and donor states (through cultural heritage programmes and projects). The support for such cooperation contributes to the sharing of knowledge/best practices, the development of international partnerships and the capacity of cultural players to work internationally. In this regard the aim of the EEA Grants is in line with and complements the EU 2020 strategy and the EU Creative Europe framework programme.

The objective under Programme Area 16 is to safeguard and conserve cultural and natural heritage for future generations and make it publicly accessible. Each programme contributes to several of the following outcomes:

- Cultural heritage restored, renovated and protected

- Cultural history documented
- Local communities further developed and economically sustainable livelihoods established through the revitalisation of cultural and natural heritage
- Cultural heritage made accessible to the public.

The objective under Programme Area 17 is to increase cultural dialogue and foster European identity through the understanding of cultural diversity. Each programme contributes to several of the following outcomes:

- Contemporary art and culture presented and reaching a broader audience
- Awareness of cultural diversity raised and intercultural dialogue strengthened
- Individual citizens' cultural identity strengthened
- Cultural history documented

With the inclusion of cultural diversity as a specific programme area, funding to the cultural sector under the EEA Grants takes a holistic approach. The EEA Grants in this area support a wide range of activities related to contemporary and live arts, including music, dance, theatre, opera and also film and digital technologies. The support stimulates the reaching of broader audiences and the promotion of tolerance and anti-discrimination through increased awareness of cultural diversity.

2. Purpose of the Mid-term evaluation

The purpose is to provide an expert independent mid-term evaluation of the contribution of the EEA Grants 2009-2014 to the objective of the grants within the cultural heritage sector in the beneficiary states operating Programmes. Programmes are in the early phase of their implementation period.

This is primarily a formative evaluation that shall contribute to a learning process and inform future policy-making. It shall identify lessons learned at both the strategic and the operational levels. Additionally, it shall also assess progress so far in selected programmes.

More concretely, the major objectives of the mid-term evaluation are as follows:

- Assess progress towards planned results in the context of the overall objectives of the Grants and the EU priorities in this policy area – are the main objectives being met?
- Assess to what extent recommendations from the evaluation of the FMs 04—09 have been followed;
- Assess the expected achievements of the programmes related to specific outcomes
- What contributes to success (what are key factors)?
- Identify facilitating factors, challenges, bottlenecks and constraints in implementation of the programmes;
- Recommend how the promotion of bilateral cooperation could be structured (post 2014)
- Make recommendations both for improving current programmes and for the next

financial mechanism and identify key lessons learned.

The programmes will contribute to planned results among others regarding the following:

Cultural heritage restored, renovated and protected:

- Approximately *100 cultural heritage buildings restored/conserved* in 14 beneficiary countries;
- Approximately *215 objects of moveable heritage safeguarded*
- The development of innovative ways of taking care of heritage
- The culture of ethnic and cultural minorities safeguarded and made accessible

Cultural history documented:

- Projects focusing on the documentation of European cultural history

Cultural heritage made accessible to the public:

- The development of approximately *13 new exhibition spaces*
- The development of projects aiming to *raise awareness about democratic values* and contributing to a greater mutual understanding and social inclusion

Local communities further developed and economically sustainable livelihoods established through the revitalisation of cultural and natural heritage:

- The conservation and reuse of cultural heritage in local communities contributing to economic development, job development and social inclusion

Bilateral cooperation:

- In the area of cultural heritage bilateral exchanges will stimulate the development of the sector's capacity to protect heritage and gear up awareness about good heritage care

Cultural diversity and cultural exchange:

Contemporary art and culture presented and reaching a broader audience:

- The development of cultural events in the area of contemporary art;
- The development of projects aiming to raise awareness about democratic values and contributing to a greater mutual understanding and social inclusion
- Educational and audience development activities
- Capacity development contributing to greater job potential

Awareness of cultural diversity raised and intercultural dialogue strengthened:

- The promotion of cultural diversity and cultural exchange
- Increased public awareness of diversity aspects and increased mutual understanding

Documentation of cultural history:

- Projects focusing on documenting European cultural history

Bilateral cooperation:

- Strengthened bilateral cooperation in this area enables knowledge sharing and accelerated learning

This evaluation should go more in-depth into selected programmes to evaluate progress so far. The scope and depth of the evaluation in each country will be suggested by the evaluation team, and is subject to FMO approval.

It shall also review the set-up of the programmes at the different levels in the beneficiary states, review processes and also assess the relevance of selected outcomes. This review should provide recommendations for the next Financial Mechanism.

The primary users of the evaluation will be the three donors, relevant stakeholders in the beneficiary states and the FMO.

3. Scope of Work

The evaluation will provide a general assessment of the achievements of the two programmes within these areas across the countries covered and providing a more in-depth focus in 6-8 countries. The report shall include references to background information and existing analysis of the context and trends in the sector in each country; it will also reflect on EU priorities regarding this policy area.

3.1 Development of the Key Questions

The contractor will need to develop evaluation questions relevant at different levels:

- Overall Financial Mechanism level, EU and transnational level
- National/country and Programme level
- Project level

The suggested areas of inquiry of the mid-term evaluation are the following. The bidders are requested to expand on this in the Inception Report:

- To what extent and how are the selected outcomes responding to strategic priorities and needs - specifically the EU2020 strategy (for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth) - as well as to the development of the sector at national level?
- To what extent are the programme objectives, outcomes and outputs expected to be achieved?
- To what extent are bilateral relations and horizontal concerns being addressed?
- To the extent possible assess possible side-effects of the Grants to the cultural heritage sector regarding temporary and permanent employment
- Are there any unplanned results brought by the programme?

- How efficient is the current set-up and how could it be improved to increase the efficiency of the grants?
- To what extent are programmes contributing to increased capacities and innovative approaches, including increased knowledge and skills to work at the EU and international level?
- To what extent is cultural heritage being made more accessible? Have strategies been put in place to help people access heritage and understand cultural diversity (for example audience development/social inclusion strategies)?
- What is the visibility of the activities and contributions and activities at national/local levels?
- To what extent are the programmes contributing to learning and sharing of good practices, also considering bilateral projects and partnerships with other EEA countries? In this regard is the programme contributing to strengthening networks?

Following discussion with the Reference Group, changes may be suggested to the evaluation questions for in the Inception Report.

3.2 Coverage

The evaluation should provide an overview of all programmes in these areas and will provide a specific focus on selected Programmes in 6-8 countries. Countries should be selected among: Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia, Poland, Portugal, Spain and Romania (and/or Slovakia/Bulgaria), including on-site visits and more in-depth review.

4. Methodology

4.1 Types of data collection and analysis

- Document analysis (programme proposals, agreements, reports);
- Focus group discussions;
- Questionnaires;
- Semi-structured interviews/consultations with relevant stakeholders (list will be provided);
- Triangulation and validation of information.
- An in-depth and on-the-ground review of selected programmes;

4.2 Data Analysis

The evaluation team will analyse the collected data, and use the indicators and evaluation criteria to answer the evaluation questions, draw conclusions, identify lessons learned, examples of good practice (case studies) and make recommendations.

4.3 Reference Group

While the key stakeholders, including the National Focal Points and Programme Operators, will be fully informed and consulted throughout this evaluation, there will be a formal

Reference Group, consisting of representatives of the FMO and the Donors, which will advise the contractor on the execution of the evaluation, and will formally approve the ToR and other outputs such as the Inception report and draft evaluation report.

4.4 Reporting

An Inception Report will be prepared following the inception meeting and discussion with the Reference Group. A proposal for the structure of the draft evaluation report will be discussed at the first meeting of the Reference Group and will be finalised in the Inception Report. A draft of the evaluation report will first be prepared for discussion with the FMO, the Reference Group, and if required circulation to Intermediaries for comment. A final report will be developed based on comments on the draft report.

5. Evaluation Team

All members of the evaluation team are expected to have relevant academic qualifications and evaluation experience. The team should have a good knowledge of the sector in the relevant countries. The team leader should have experience from evaluating the sector and preferably experience in EU related evaluations. The use of senior and junior team members will be assessed.

Expected Profile of the Members of the Evaluation team

Team Leader:

- Experience in the sector
- At least 8 years of experience in conducting evaluations and assessments
- Experience in participatory evaluation
- Very good knowledge of Cultural Heritage context and issues in the EEA grants beneficiary countries

National experts:

- At least 5 years of experience in the sector in the given country
- Experience in evaluating projects/programmes
- In-depth knowledge of cultural heritage/cultural diversity and issues in the given country

5.1 Confidentiality

All information collected, whether from documents, questionnaires, or interviews will be kept strictly confidential. Sources of comment will not be disclosed, and questionnaires will not be attributed and will remain confidential to the team.

5.2 Quality

The Team Leader will oversee each step in the sequence of tasks, particularly the preparation of the evaluation plan, the Inception Report, and the draft and final report. As a pre-cursor, the Team Leader will first check quality of written outputs from the local experts. The Quality Control Manager will carry out an independent review of each of the steps.

6. Budget and Deliverables

The maximum budget for this evaluation is: **EUR 150,000**. The budget estimate includes allocations to national experts and travel.

The **deliverables** in the consultancy consist of the following outputs:

- Travel to Brussels for an inception meeting with the FMO/Donor representative, within 2 weeks of contract notification
- Draft Inception report – 1 week after inception meeting
- Final Inception report – 1 week after receiving comments on draft report
- Travel to selected Beneficiary States to attend focus group discussions;
- **Draft Final Report** for preliminary approval – by 18.09.2014 for feedback from donors, relevant stakeholders in the countries and FMO team. The feedback will include comments on structure, facts, content, and conclusions.
- **Final Evaluation Report** – 2 weeks after receiving comments from FMO.
- Power point presentation with main findings

The consultants may be requested to make additional presentations, in which case the cost will be covered by the FMO outside the tender budget.

All presentations and reports are to be submitted in electronic form in accordance with the deadlines set in the time-schedule to be specified. Selection will be made using criteria's based on price, experience, competences and proposed methodology. FMO retains the sole rights with respect to **distribution, dissemination and publication** of the deliverables.

Contact persons at the FMO:

Coordinator:	Ms. Trine Eriksen
Responsible Sector Officer:	Mr. Sheamus Cassidy
Head of Team:	Mr. Alex Stimpson

Annex Four: On-line survey response

On-line survey response

On-line survey response		
Country	Number of responses	%
Bulgaria	26	9.8
Cyprus	1	0.4
Czech Republic	98	37.1
Estonia	5	1.9
Hungary*	0	0.0
Latvia	11	4.2
Lithuania	6	2.3
Malta	1	0.4
Poland	43	16.3
Portugal	20	7.6
Romania*	0	0.0
Slovakia	13	4.9
Slovenia	7	2.7
Spain	31	11.7
Iceland	0	0.0
Liechtenstein	0	0.0
Norway	2	0.8
TOTAL	264	100.0

The majority of the total number of respondents (N=264) represented a voluntary, non-profit or non-governmental association (127) or a regional or local authority (75). Two respondents were a higher education institution, while 16 were a government ministry (10) or national agency (6). Thirteen responses were submitted by a professional association.

* The survey was not launched in Hungary and Romania as project details were not available at the time of the survey launch.

Annex Five: Bibliography

Bibliography

Bibliography
Legal documentation
Council Decision on the signing and provisional application of an Agreement between the EU, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway on an EEA Financial Mechanism 2009-2014, an Agreement between the European Union and Norway on a Norwegian Financial Mechanism for the period 2009-2014
Regulation on the implementation of the European Economic Area (EEA) Financial Mechanism 2009-2014
FMO documents
Statistical Manual 2013
Programme Operators Manual (Annex 9)
Guideline for strengthened bilateral relations
Annual Report 2012
Evaluation Report 2012
Memoranda of Understanding
Memoranda of Understanding: Bulgaria
Memoranda of Understanding: Cyprus
Memoranda of Understanding: Czech Republic
Memoranda of Understanding: Estonia
Memoranda of Understanding: Hungary
Memoranda of Understanding: Latvia
Memoranda of Understanding: Lithuania
Memoranda of Understanding: Malta
Memoranda of Understanding: Poland
Memoranda of Understanding: Portugal
Memoranda of Understanding: Romania
Memoranda of Understanding: Slovakia
Memoranda of Understanding: Slovenia
Memoranda of Understanding: Spain
Grant Decision Documents and Programme Agreements
BG08 Cultural Heritage and Contemporary Arts
CY02 EEA Programme
CZ08 Cultural Heritage and Contemporary Arts
EE05 Conservation and Revitalisation of Cultural and Natural Heritage
ES05 Conservation and Revitalisation of Cultural and Natural Heritage
ES06 Cultural diversity and Cultural exchange
HU07 Conservation and Revitalisation of Cultural and Natural Heritage
LT06 Conservation and Revitalisation of Cultural and Natural Heritage
LT07 Promotion of Diversity in Culture and Arts within European Cultural Heritage
LV04 Conservation and Revitalisation of Cultural and Natural Heritage
MT02 EEA Financial Mechanism Programme

PL08 Conservation and Revitalisation of Cultural and Natural Heritage
PL09 Annex I - Programme Decision
PT08 Conservation and Revitalisation of Cultural and Natural Heritage
PT09 Cultural diversity and Cultural exchange
RO12 Conservation and Revitalisation of Cultural and Natural Heritage
RO13 Promotion of Diversity in Culture and Arts within European Cultural Heritage
SI02 EEA Financial Mechanism Programme
SK05 Conservation and Revitalisation of Cultural and Natural Heritage (& Promotion of Diversity in Culture and Arts within European Cultural Heritage)

Annex Six: Recommendations from the 2004-09 evaluation

Recommendations from the 2004-09 evaluation

Recommendations from the 2004-09 evaluation	
Recommendation	Comment on action in the current period
1) Typology of impacts: Requirements for project proposals should encourage applicants to describe in detail the expected impact that their project would make in as many dimensions as possible.	All supported projects need to demonstrate at application state that they will contribute to achieving a set of clearly defined development results.
2) Indicators: A set of common indicators of achievement of results should be presented in all countries.	A common set of indicators has been developed at European level.
3) Avoidance of unnecessary implementation delays: NFP could consider incorporating a condition into the application for grants that the applicant should already be in possession of a building permit at the time of application or at least be able to provide proof that a building permit has been applied for. To avoid liquidity issues, applicants should prepare investment plans with an analysis of cash flows and identification of resources to finance project activities in cases of delay. The NFP could consider requesting applicants to provide statements from banks or other guarantors that the necessary funding would be available to a project promoter to overcome a temporary liquidity problem.	Similar conditions have been introduced in some countries, e.g. Estonia, where restoration projects under PA16 have to be pre-approved by the Estonian National Heritage Board. In the Czech Republic, heritage sites have to be assessed by a competent cultural heritage preservation authority which issues a binding statement pursuant to provisions specified in Act No. 20/1987 Coll., the State Cultural Heritage Conservation Act. It is also necessary to obtain a valid building permit or a statement of the respective planning and zoning authority was provided saying that a building permit is not required. [It is worth noting that the main of delays in implementation have occurred at programme level rather than at project level.]
4) Management plan and marketing strategy for sustainability: requirements for cultural heritage project proposals should encourage applicants to include in project activities the preparation of a management plan and marketing strategy in order to establish a long-term strategy for the maintenance, management and marketing of the cultural heritage.	Applicants are required to describe "Sustainability of the project results is described, it reaches the minimum time period specified in the PA16 Guidelines for Applicants and the method explaining how it will be achieved is also clearly described. The project addresses the relevant problems comprehensively while taking into account the efficiency and purpose of spent funds from a long-term point of view." [1st Open Call for applications – PA16; Czech Republic]
5) Cultural heritage expertise: It may be advisable for future EEA and Norway Grants in the cultural heritage sector to have cultural heritage expertise available within the programme that can be consulted by the project promoters, in addition to the usual administrative and financial consultations through the National Focal Point.	An increased level of cultural heritage expertise is now provided by the Programme Operators and by Donor Programme Partners (where applicable).
6) Importance of tourism: Where economic	Not required in all countries, except for a general

benefit of the proposed project is sought on the basis of tourism, one of the criteria for the award of a grant should be the presence in the implementation team of a recognised tourism expert, or a plan to cooperate with a tourist board.	requirement for applicants to prove they have the necessary expertise.
7) Conditions for successful partnerships: should be considered.	Bilateral partners are not required in all projects. NFPs and/or POs have operated partner search events. A Fund for Bilateral Relations at Programme Level has been established: A) to find partners for projects implemented in partnership with institutions from donor states for the period over which draft projects are prepared and these partnerships are developed during the preparatory period – “A” measure; and/or B) to establish and foster cooperation, and to exchange, pool and transfer knowledge, technology, experience and best practices between grant beneficiaries (project researchers) and entities in donor states during project implementation – “B” measure. Allocation under the Regulation: at least 1.5% of all eligible programme expenditure, indicative distribution between “A” and “B”.
8) Improvement of assessment process. It is advisable to include the Ministry of Culture in preparation of applications, defining selection criteria, providing technical support and guidance to applicants during the call for proposals, perhaps even to act as the Intermediary body during implementation. However whenever the role of the Ministry of Culture is closely linked to preparation of calls for proposals, they should not be given the possibility to act as project promoter, or to be involved in project appraisals. This is perceived as conflict of interest. To achieve the most transparent and objective assessment, external assessors should be involved, whose competence should be approved by the Steering Committee. External assessors would have to sign no conflict of interest forms and statements that they would act in objective manner. In order to avoid unnecessary pressure on assessors their names should not be publically announced. If national legislation requires a higher level of transparency then competences of assessors could be published.	Ministries of Culture typically serve as Programme Operators and are thus involved in preparation of calls for proposals, defining selection criteria, providing technical support and guidance to applicants during the call for proposals. Each application is evaluated by two external experts. The final score of points assigned through the external evaluation process depends on the arithmetic average of the scores awarded by experts. If the difference between the scores given by the two experts exceeds 30% of the higher score, a third expert shall evaluate the application. The final score shall be calculated as the arithmetic average of the two closest scores.
9) Costs of changing currency exchange. As cultural heritage encompasses national	Not considered by the current evaluation.

monuments of historic value at state level, national governments should consider covering the risks of unexpected costs caused by differences in exchange rates used at different times in the implementation cycle.	
10) End-of-project workshop. Beneficiary countries should follow the example of Slovakia and organise a workshop for all project promoters at the end of the funding period to exchange lessons learned in order to augment capacity building and sustainability.	Not relevant to the current mid-term evaluation.
11) Sustainable site management. To ensure sustainability of the benefits accrued to cultural heritage sites, it is important to ensure that there is adequate site management capacity with appropriate cultural heritage expertise. If the cultural heritage expertise is not in house, it is important that external contracted professionals work closely with the in-house staff.	Applicants must demonstrate that they have sufficient technical capacity to implement the project and, therefore, it may be assumed that the project will be successfully implemented. The Applicant must already have experience with management and successful completion of at least one similar project or the project plans and includes a contractually bound third-party which already possesses the necessary expertise and which already successfully implemented similar projects (qualification requirements).
12) Synergy with EU funds to enhance sustainability: The impact and sustainability of projects funded by EEA and Norway Grants could be enhanced if the grants included assistance and guidelines to help project promoters to take full advantage of money available from the EU (Europe for Citizens Programme), which is specifically intended to promote and support cross-border exchanges, meetings, and courses that could be used to fill the beds and meeting rooms created by the funded projects.	No specific guidelines were identified. However, the location of POs in the Ministry of Culture typically facilitates the provision of advice on EU funding under the Culture Programme / Creative Europe.

About the EEA and Norway Grants

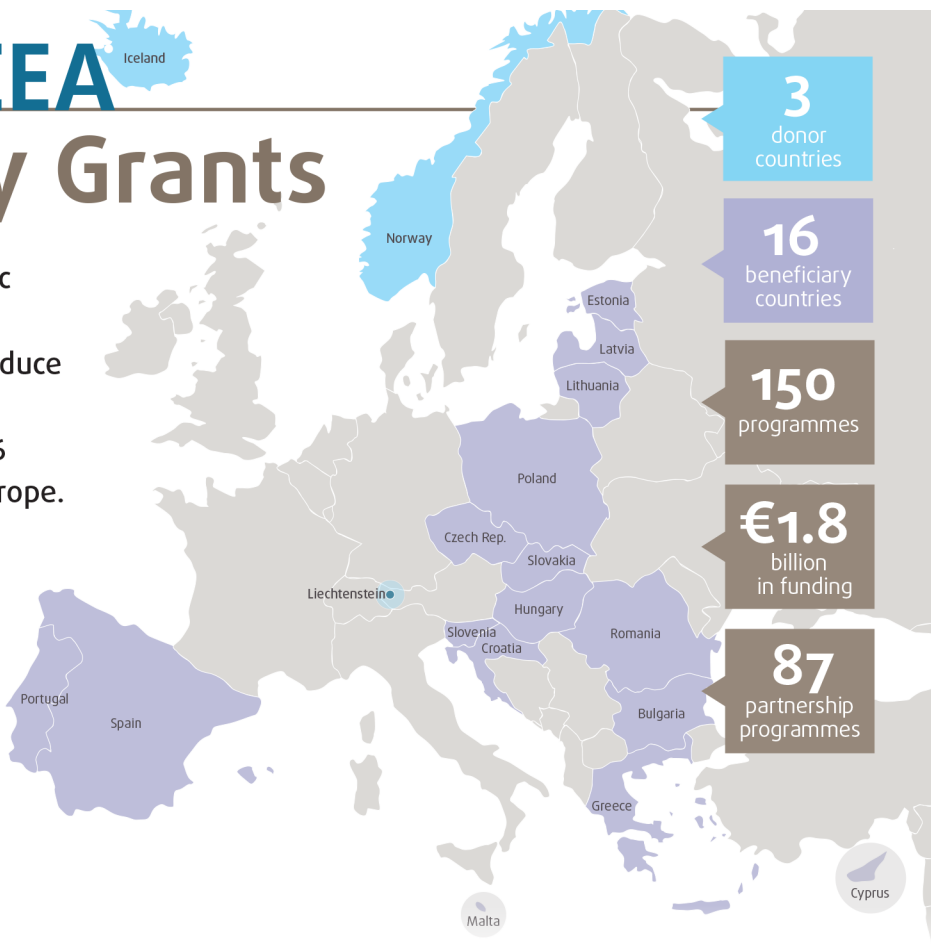
Through the EEA (European Economic Area) and Norway Grants, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway help to reduce economic and social disparities and strengthen bilateral relations with 16 countries in Central and Southern Europe.

EEA Grants:

€993.5 million (Norway: 95.8%,
Iceland: 3.0%, Liechtenstein: 1.2%)

Norway Grants:

€804.6 million (Norway: 100%)



Areas of support (€ million)



265.3

Climate change and
renewable energy



154.6

Environmental protection
and management



127.7

Green industry
innovation



160.8

Civil
society



379.9

Human and social
development



204.2

Cultural heritage
and diversity



171.8

Research and
scholarships



149.8

Justice and
home affairs



8.1

Decent work and
tripartite dialogue



5.0

Carbon capture
and storage

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