

# *COMBINED STRATEGIC AND ANNUAL PROGRAMME REPORT FM14-21*

Slovenia

2022

## A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### SI-CLIMATE Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation

The 2022 Combined Strategic and Annual Report for the EEA and Norway Grants for the period 2014-2021 in Slovenia has been prepared in accordance with Article 2.6 of the Regulation on the implementation of the EEA Financial Mechanism 2014-2021 and Article 2.6 of the Regulation on the implementation of the Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2014-2021 by the Ministry of Cohesion and Regional Development of Slovenia that acts as the National Focal Point and Programme Operator. It reflects the progress made in the implementation of the programme Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation.

2022 was a very challenging year. Yet, it was marked by a **breakthrough in the programme implementation** as the programme was effectively launched on the project level. In addition, in 2022, the whole programme budget was committed, resulting in 17 projects which will make a contribution to the green transition of Slovenia in the field of renewable energy, e-mobility, circular economy and management of ecosystems.

Europeans looked in horror and disbelief at the **outbreak of war** on European soil on 28 February 2022. As other like-minded countries, Slovenia condemned this unprovoked and illegal act of war against the independent and sovereign state of Ukraine. The war triggered an energy crisis and a supply chain crisis, creating a shortage and a price increase of many construction materials. This led to **new risk factors** which might have adverse effects on the implementation of projects, especially those with an investment component.

In addition, 2022 was also the so-called **super election year in Slovenia** that gave Slovenian citizens the opportunity to vote in parliamentary, presidential, and local elections. On 3 June 2022, a new Slovenian government was established, however, the opposition asked for a referendum on the government act which foresaw three additional ministries and transformation of two government offices into a ministry. On 27 November 2022, a referendum on the changes to the government act took place. The referendum had a major impact on the future organisation of the Government Office for Development and Cohesion Policy which hosted the NFP and the PO. Following the referendum outcome, the Government Office was transformed into the **Ministry of Cohesion and Regional Development** on 24 January 2023.

After the confirmed government reshuffle, the final decision on the pending allocation of the EEA and NOR reserves was taken. **The programme budget thus increased to EUR 15,659,500**, which opened the door to the approval of **16 projects under the Call for Proposals, one pre-defined project, and one bilateral initiative**. Except for the bilateral initiative, all projects started mostly in June and July 2022, all contracts have been signed and all advance payments disbursed. The majority of projects already submitted their first interim progress report by the end of November 2022.

In the frame of outcome B.1 Increased renewable energy production, only three projects were approved but all of them are very relevant on a national scale, particularly in current challenging times when Slovenia is seeking for new sources of renewable energy that may help

the country cut dependence on Russian gas and oil and speed up green transition towards climate neutrality.

The pre-defined project **INFO-GEOTHERMAL** aims at improving the availability of official information that support the development of projects with efficient cascade use of deeper geothermal energy resources. An official website will enable the local authorities who provide spatial framework for investors, and biggest players in exploration of deep geothermal potential to use technical and content-related tools as well as clear protocols for promoting future investments based on a one-stop shop approach. Another objective of this project is to increase knowledge of potentials of deep geothermal energy in cooperation with the Iceland School of Energy.

Among the projects selected through the Call for Proposals it is worth mentioning the project **Geo-SI Electricity** under which a pilot geothermal power plant exploiting the geothermal energy of an abandoned well will be installed. The first of its kind in Slovenia, the geothermal power plant will be used for testing the operation of the power plant based on a patent developed in Slovenia for the use of a completely new method of electricity generation with a geothermal gravitational heat pipe. A successful test operation of the pilot geothermal power plant could lead to the installation of several new geothermal power plants on already existing wells with a sufficient thermal potential.

Another project that is expected to have a large impact is the **SOPOREM** project. The project will support the construction of the second largest photovoltaic power plant in Slovenia. It will also contribute to higher energy self-sufficiency of the only Slovenian cargo port, minimizing its dependence on fluctuations in electricity prices on the market. In cooperation with the Norwegian partner, the Project Promotor will explore the best possible solutions for the use of renewable energy sources, formulating views and directions for the future.

Most of the projects were selected under outcome B.3 Increased application of circular economy principles, namely six. Slovenia is a frontrunner in the field of circular economy. The project **StudioKrog**, which was presented to DPPs at the last Cooperation Committee meeting, aims at reducing the pressure on virgin material needs and cutting GHG emissions by increasing the re-use and use of waste/used materials in the new designs. A holistic view of the circular economy will be adopted to set up a circular economy studio using discarded shipping containers which will - with new, exciting and compelling content – be used to show how re-use of waste in the design increases reusability options. As part of project activities, a showroom was created at the premises of the Ministry of Cohesion and Regional Development; it is decorated with products that can be recycled/re-used/repared to raise awareness and foster a behavioural change. Thus, promoting the application of circular economy principles thanks to the EEA and Norway Grants, the Ministry itself became an ambassador of circular economy ideas and benefits.

Just before Christmas holidays, **State Secretary, mag. Marko Koprivc** and **Director of the Project Promoter, Mr Štefan Čelan** opened the showroom showcasing reused objects at the premises of the Ministry. Sitting on restored old chairs of a famous Slovenian designer around the 'Table of Solutions' they discussed the opportunities that may arise through such initiatives for the every day life of individuals as well as for the society.



## SI-EDUCATION Education, Scholarships, Apprenticeship and Youth Entrepreneurship

The 2022 Combined Strategic and Annual Report for the EEA and Norway Grants for the period 2014-2021 in Slovenia reflects also the progress made in the implementation of the programme Education, Scholarships, Apprenticeship and Youth Entrepreneurship.

The finalization of the selection of projects and conclusion of contracts for **22 selected projects** were the landmark achievements that marked the implementation of the programme in 2022. The selection process took longer than expected, particularly because of the parliamentary elections and the consequent change in the responsible person, i.e. the Minister in the Government Office for Development and European Cohesion Policy. Moreover, the new government reshuffled the state budget during the summer, which prolonged the contracting process.

By the end of 2022, the contracting process was finalized, leading to the commitment of all funds available under the Education programme. All advance payments were disbursed to all eligible Project Promoters by the end of 2022.

Most of the projects were selected under Outcome 1: Improved institutional cooperation at all levels of formal and informal education, namely 11. The **project Designing for Enhanced Competence through Active Participation in Higher Education (DECAP-HE)** aims to improve the quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning in higher education and to empower individuals and institutions in higher education to respond actively to the challenges of preparing students for work and life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, in collaboration with other stakeholders and through the exchange of good practice.

Both pre-defined projects under the programme, i.e. BlendVET and Children's House (Barnahus), were further implemented according to the plan foreseen for 2022.

The **project Children's House (Barnahus)** should be highlighted as an example of best practice. In 2022, the Project Promoter mainly focused on the implementation of activities related to the renovation and equipping of the premises of the Children's House. Following the establishment and inclusion of a new partner (public institution the Children's House) in the project implementation, the pilot operation of Barnahus kicked off.

The Icelandic Barnahus model has inspired and guided the work of the Slovenian counterpart. The role of the Norway Grants in the project was comprehensive - beside renovating the building used as the Barnahus, a series of training courses for the staff who are social workers, psychologists and teachers with experience in working with children and victims of crime were carried out.

The premises of the Children's House in Ljubljana were officially inaugurated on 27 May 2022. The event received a lot of media attention, also thanks to the presence of high-level guests.

The premises were officially opened by Her Excellency, the Ambassador of the Royal Norwegian Embassy in Budapest responsible for Slovenia, Mrs. Trine Skymoen, the President of the Republic of Slovenia, Mr. Borut Pahor, the Minister of Justice, Mr. Marjan Dikaučič, and the Director of the Children's House, Mrs. Simona Mikec.



In October 2022, the PO conducted an online workshop on reporting for Slovenian beneficiaries that was focused on the steps of the reporting process for Slovenian beneficiaries in the electronic monitoring system eMS and the reporting procedure for the Norwegian project partners.

Bilateral cooperation with the Donor States took place in the form of regular meetings with their representatives and through their involvement in the project selection process.

Bilateral relations were additionally strengthened through the involvement of the Donor Project Partners in **22 projects** implemented under the programme (21 projects selected under the Call for Proposals and one pre-defined project). Very efficient project-level bilateral cooperation can be found under the **project Blended Learning in Vocational Education and Training (BlendVET)**, which brings together five project partners from Donor States, i.e. three from Norway and two from Iceland.

The main constraint currently affecting the programme implementation is the very tight deadline for project implementation and completion. In order to avoid such situations in the future, efforts should be made to publish the calls for proposals much earlier to leave enough time for project implementation.

## B. PERFORMANCE

### SI-CLIMATE Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation

#### 1. Programme context

When the Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation programme was designed a few years ago, its main objective was to address Slovenia's lagging behind the leading European countries in terms of the use of renewable energy sources and low-carbon energy supply. Ensuring a reliable and competitive energy supply in a sustainable manner while facilitating the transition to a low-carbon society is the primary aim of Slovenia's energy policy and one of the strategic objectives of the Slovenian Development Strategy 2030.

Slovenia depends significantly on fossil fuels and nuclear energy. The most important renewable energy source is biomass, followed by hydro energy. In the last few years, dynamic increase in the use of solar and biogas energy has been observed. The potential to exploit shallow geothermal energy exists all over the country, while the more cost effective deep geothermal potential is limited to north-eastern Slovenia.

The importance of the shift from fossil fuels to low-carbon energy became even more evident after the Ukrainian crisis. The war in Ukraine also resulted in significant increases in energy prices. The dependence on Russian gas and unstable supply of energy threatened to have severe consequences for the economy and the population. The diversification of energy sources and use of renewable sources suddenly became of utmost importance. This can be observed also in relation to the programme Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation. Even though there are only three projects in the area of geothermal and solar energy, they all became crucial and the government shifted the spotlight of attention on them.

The consequences of the Ukrainian crisis that affect the implementation of projects under the programme are also felt, for example in longer delivery times, lack of raw materials and disrupted supply chains, increase in prices in construction works and equipment. These are all external factors with potential severe consequences and are therefore considered very seriously.

In light of the energy crisis and having in mind the strategic long-term objectives for promoting the economic and social development of Slovenia while not harming the environment, the EAA

and NO Financial Mechanisms reserves were added to the Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation programme leading to a considerable increase of the programme budget.

### SI-CLIMATE Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation

The finalization of the Call for Proposals, the selection of projects and conclusion of contracts were the landmark achievements that marked the implementation of the programme in 2022. By the end of 2022, the contracting process was finalized, leading to the commitment of nearly all funds available under the programme following the revision of the MoUs which entailed the allocation of the EEA and Norway Grants reserve in the amount of EUR 1,809,500 to the programme.

The key milestone in 2022 was the selection of projects under the Call for Proposals. A total of **16 projects** were selected for co-financing and **EUR 15,579,759.71** were allocated in the following manner:

- Outcome 1: EUR 2,861,197.28 allocated to two selected projects;
- Outcome 2: EUR 5,440,626.32 allocated to five selected projects;
- Outcome 3: EUR 3,738,864.07 allocated to six selected projects;
- Outcome 4: EUR 3,539,072.04 allocated to three selected projects.

The selected projects aim to increase renewable energy production (Outcome 1), enhance sustainable mobility management (Outcome 2), increase application of circular economy principles (Outcome 3), and improve management of ecosystems under climate change pressure (Outcome 4).

**One pre-defined project**, namely Supporting Efficient Cascade Use of Geothermal Energy by Unlocking Official and Public Information (INFO-GEOTHERMAL) is implemented under Outcome 1 and will be further presented under programme results.

Bilateral cooperation with the Donor States was reflected in regular meetings with their representatives (Annual Meeting, Cooperation Committee meetings, etc.) and through their involvement in the project selection process.

Bilateral relations were additionally strengthened through the involvement of the Donor Project Partners in 17 projects implemented under the programme (altogether 15 Donor Project Partners participating in 17 projects), to which they contribute their knowledge and expertise through exchange of good practices, study visits, active participation in training and conferences, etc.

Overview of key milestones and activities in 2022:

January to July	Assessment and selection of project proposals under the Call for Proposals: quality assessment, Selection Committee meetings – 31 March (online meeting), 23 May and 1 July (written procedure),
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	decisions on rejection or selection of projects and notifications of inclusion on the reserve list
22 February	3 <sup>rd</sup> Cooperation Committee Meeting (current status on the Call for Proposals, implementation of bilateral initiatives, information related to the proposal of pre-defined project)
April to July	Online face-to-face meetings with the Project Promoters
29 June	4 <sup>th</sup> Cooperation Committee Meeting (update on contracting, consultation on the allocation of the remaining funds, proposal of bilateral initiative)
1 May	Start of the 12 projects selected under the Call for Proposals
16 August	Approval of the modification of the Programme Agreement – Annex I (allocation of the EEA and NOR FM reserve funds to the programme and reallocation between outcomes in line with the Selection Committee decisions)
1 September	Start of the pre-defined project and two projects selected under the Call for Proposals
1 October	Start of the two project selected under the Call for Proposals
11 October	Online workshop on reporting for Slovenian beneficiaries
6 December	Approval of the modification of the Programme Agreement – Annex I (change of the amount of funds for programme management and the amount funds for Outcome 1 )
14 December	5 <sup>th</sup> Cooperation Committee Meeting (structural changes in the GODC, current status of the Programme, state play of the projects implementation and risk management, presentation and decision on the new bilateral initiative, discussion on the main contents of the Terms of Reference for the Outcome and Result Evaluation of the programme, presentation of the projects StudioKROG and SmartMOVE)

After submission of the decisions on the selection of projects, the PO organised individual online face-to-face meetings with the Project Promoters to give and gain further clarifications regarding the project implementation, activities, expenditure and timeline.

The conclusion of contracts for the majority of projects was finalized in May and June, whereas for the projects which depended on the revised MoUs and the revised Programme Agreement contracts were for the most part concluded in early autumn 2022.



On 11 October, the PO conducted an online workshop on reporting for Slovenian beneficiaries. The workshop focused on the steps of the reporting process for Slovenian beneficiaries in the electronic monitoring system eMS and the reporting procedure for the Norwegian project partners. The PO also provided basic information about potential project changes and answered the beneficiaries' questions regarding reporting. The control unit answered the beneficiaries' questions regarding the eligibility of expenditures and supporting documents.

The implementation of the projects is also affected by the situation on global markets over which none of the stakeholders has any influence, i.e. the war in Ukraine and the related rise in the price of raw materials. Price increases affect all projects, but not to the same extent. Investment projects (Outcome 1) are more subject to this, since a large part of the costs are related to the supply of building materials and the construction itself. However, price increases also affect labour costs, which are also higher, but do not have such a significant impact on the performance of the selected projects.

## 2. Programme results

### *Outcome 1: Increased renewable energy production*

#### *Description and analysis of results*

The selection process ended as follows:

- two projects were selected for co-financing,
- one project was rejected,
- one project rejected the grant offer.

Both selected projects under this outcome focus mostly on:

- reducing greenhouse gas emissions,
- increasing the use of renewable resources,
- maintaining a clean and pristine environment.

The project **SI-Geo-Electricity** is designed to increase the production of renewable electricity by exploiting the geothermal potential available in Slovenia. In this context, an innovative pilot project which foresees **the construction of the first geothermal power plant in Slovenia** that should serve as a pilot to test the operation of such a geothermal power plant and as a demonstration project of good practice is carried out. The pilot is based on the use of a completely new method of electricity generation with a geothermal gravitational heat pipe (Slovenian patent SI 23618 A). The pilot geothermal power plant with a capacity of 50 kW will be able to produce 400 MWh per year and will contribute to the reduction of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 400.8 t/year thanks to zero-carbon footprint. After the successful test operation of the pilot geothermal power plant, the construction of several new geothermal power plants on the already existing wells with sufficient thermal potential is planned.

### *Pre-defined project(s)*

The pre-defined project **INFO-GEOTHERMAL** is also implemented under Outcome 1. The project was eligible for an advance payment that was made in December 2022 (see Point 3 Implementation, Financial status). Project activities started on 1 September 2022. The project is considered **relevant on the national level and it aims to map deep geothermal potential for direct use of thermal water and geothermal energy**, organize and publish data as grounds for future “one-stop-shop” in geothermal energy, support train authorities, research organizations and project developers from Slovenia and Iceland, create a national geothermal network, and establish a business-attractive environment.

The Programme Operator cannot report on the achievements under Outcome 1 at this point, however, according to the current state of play and available data, the PO estimates that all target values of the outcome and output indicators will be achieved according to the plan.

### *Outcome 2: Enhanced sustainable mobility management*

#### *Description and analysis of results*

The project selection process ended as follows:

- five projects were selected for co-financing (one from the reserve list),
- four projects were rejected.

Projects selected under this outcome focus mostly on:

- establishing regional mobility centres,
- creating mobility plans,
- increasing travel using sustainable forms of mobility,
- training experts for planning and managing sustainable mobility on regional and inter-municipal level.

The project **Predjama Sustainable** is aimed at improving management of sustainable mobility by transferring good experiences of Norwegian partners to Slovenia. Municipality of Postojna aims to reduce motorized traffic in the wider area of municipality to contribute to the mitigation of climate change. Predjama, **a very popular tourist location around the Postojna Cave** which has seen a threefold increase in visits in the last 10 years is one of the targeted areas that will benefit from a traffic solution. Due to the insufficient number of parking spaces, expanded tourist offer, and larger numbers of visitors, the area usually faces a parking in the peak season. The project aims at incorporating sustainable, feasible, attractive and adapted forms of mobility into **mobility plan** without undue interference with nature, and at involving local residents and their needs in the preparation of the mobility plan.

The Programme Operator cannot report on the achievements under Outcome 2 at this point, however, according to the current state of play and available data, the PO estimates that all target values of the outcome and output indicators will be achieved according to the plan.

### *Outcome 3: Increased application of Circular Economy principles*

#### *Description and analysis of results*

The project selection process ended as follows:

- six projects were selected for co-financing (two from the reserve list),
- one project was put on the reserve list,
- one project was rejected.

Six projects selected under this outcome focus mostly on:

- reusing discarded materials for developing new products,
- applying circular economy principles in the processes of public administration and industry.

The project **REWINUUSE** will deal with two main areas to implement circular economy and enforce the principles of the circular economy in the wood processing industry and beyond. The first strand of the project covers the development of a new model of wooden window design featuring dry bonding solutions (elimination of the use of adhesives and silicones), which allows easy disassembly of the window to basic components and reuse of these components after the end of the product's lifecycle. The second strand focuses on finding an alternative wood species to replace spruce and on recovering wood for reuse. The size of spruce forest is expected to shrink due to climate change in the coming decades. The project aims to introduce sustainable and **circular principles in the design of wooden products, in production processes and woodworking practice.**

The Programme Operator cannot report on the achievements under Outcome 3 at this point, however, according to the current state of play and available data, the PO estimates that all target values of the outcome and output indicators will be achieved according to the plan.

### *Outcome 4: Improved management of ecosystems under climate change pressure*

#### *Description and analysis of results*

The project selection process ended as follows:

- three projects were selected for co-financing (one from the reserve list),
- one project was put on the reserve list.

Three projects selected under this outcome focus mostly on:

- improving ecosystems by restoring natural habitats and introducing new management models.

The **JeloviZA** project is needed to rehabilitate, restore and provide efficient ecosystem services to the damaged mountain forest ecosystem at Jelovica as soon as possible. Jelovica is one of the largest concentrated areas of preserved nature in Slovenia, and most of the area has Natura 2000 site status. Climate change has had a major impact on the area of Jelovica in the past years (extreme weather events, bark beetles), which has reduced its ability to sequester carbon and has put at risk the habitats of sensitive qualified species. Up to 34% of the total timber cover at Jelovica has been cut down in the last 10 years due to climate change. The project will tackle these challenges by **ensuring better climate resilience of Jelovica through ecosystem restoration**. The project activities will be aimed at restoring 20 ha of affected forest areas with more climate-resistant species and developing a Jelovica Management Model (JMM). It is crucial to introduce the JMM into the strategic development documents of the municipalities in the Jelovica area through public involvement, strategic communication and education. Moreover, a support network in the local area will be built by providing training and education to experts as hunters, district foresters, and local community representatives who will carry out the activities of JMM in the future.

The Programme Operator cannot report on the achievements under Outcome 4 at this point, however, according to the current state of play and available data, the PO estimates that target values of the outcome and output indicators will be achieved according to the plan. Exception is outcome indicator “Total surface of rehabilitated land (in hectares)” where we expect the final achieved value to be slightly below the target value.

### ***Pre-defined project (per programme)***

The pre-defined project Info Geothermal kicked off in September 2022. The first knowledge-exchange workshop and training was organized at the very start of the project. The Iceland School of Energy at Reykjavik hosted representatives from Geological Survey of Slovenia, Ministry of Infrastructure, Ministry of the Environment and Spatial Planning and Association of Municipalities and Towns of Slovenia, and invited experts from industry, municipalities and research for two weeks. Results of the training were disseminated also among the hydrogeological community. The Project Promoter and the project partners prepared dissemination materials and after the kick-off conference, the event was covered widely by many print and online media. The information about the project and the contribution of the EEA Grants was always evident.

### ***Bilateral Outcome: Enhanced collaboration between Slovene and Donor State institutions involved in the programme***

#### ***Analysis of bilateral relations and achievements***

Norwegian Environment Agency (NEA) participates in the programme as the Donor Programme Partner (DPP).

DPP had an important and active role in the phase of project selection under the Call for Proposals. DPP members were invited to participate in the Selection Committee as members without voting rights in line with Annex II of the Programme Agreement. Members participated in the Selection Committee meetings and, thanks to their knowledge and expertise, made an important contribution to the selection of best projects.

Moreover, the DPP and the PO strengthened bilateral relations through several meetings, including the Cooperation Committee meeting. The meeting was an excellent opportunity to discuss open issues regarding the implementation of the programme and to exchange experience and opinion.

The bilateral component is well represented also on the project level:

- the pre-defined project INFO-GEOTHERMAL includes one Donor Project Partner from Iceland.
- 14 out of 16 projects selected under the Call for Proposals involves a Donor Project Partner from Donor States, i.e. 12 from Norway and two from Liechtenstein. The DPP offered help in the phase of search for Donor Project Partners, but most Project Promoters and project partners established contact on their own, on the basis of past experience. The Project Promoters' experience with the Donor Project Partners in the first months of the project implementation is good. Additionally, some study visits to the Donor States were carried out in 2022.

The number of projects involving cooperation with a Donor Project Partner is also reported in Annex I of the programme, under Bilateral Output 1: Bilateral cooperation activities supported.

### 3. Implementation

#### *Financial status*

##### *a) Commitments and disbursements made by the programme*

#### **Programme management**

The management costs incurred and reported between the implementation start in 2018 and end of June 2022 stand at EUR 323,484.24. As reported in the 6<sup>th</sup> Interim Financial Report for the reporting period between 1 January and 30 June 2022, management costs amounted to EUR 57,832.08. Approximately 55,000 EUR of management costs for the period from 1 July to 31 December 2022 will be included in the 7<sup>th</sup> Interim Financial Report. By March 2023, this report must be submitted via GrACE.

#### **Projects**

In 2022, a total of EUR 2,572,792.02 were allocated to eight projects (one pre-defined project and seven projects selected under the Call for Proposals) as follows:

- Under Outcome 1, pre-defined project eligible for advanced payment received the advanced payment totalling EUR 260,213.22 in December 2022. The amount allocated to the project will be reported in the 7<sup>th</sup> Interim Financial Report for the period 1 July to 31 December 2022 submitted via GrACE.
- Under Outcome 2, two projects selected under the Call for Proposals eligible for advanced payments received the advanced payments in the amount of EUR 1,043,139.76. The amounts allocated to these projects will be reported in the 7<sup>th</sup> Interim Financial Report for the period 1 July to 31 December 2022 submitted via GrACE.
- Under Outcome 3, three projects selected under the Call for Proposals eligible for advanced payments received the advanced payments in the amount of EUR 567,534.13. The amounts allocated to these projects will be reported in the 7<sup>th</sup> Interim Financial Report for the period 1 July to 31 December 2022 submitted via GrACE.
- Under Outcome 4, two projects selected under the Call for Proposals eligible for advanced payments received the advanced payments in the amount of EUR 701,904.91. The amounts allocated to these projects will be reported in the 7<sup>th</sup> Interim Financial Report for the period 1 July to 31 December 2022 submitted via GrACE.

#### **Resources of the Fund for Bilateral Relations allocated to the programme Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation**

EUR 100,000 were allocated to the programme in accordance with both MoUs.

At the last Cooperation Committee meeting in December, the PO presented a possible new bilateral initiative in the area of circular economy that was submitted by the Regional Development Agency of Ljubljana Urban Region. The bilateral project includes partners from Norway and Iceland. The Cooperation Committee members approved the new bilateral initiative amounting to EUR 100,000.

#### *b) Problems related to absorption and/or disbursements, with suggested solutions.*

There were no specific problems related to disbursements in 2022. Advance payments were disbursed to all Project Promoters who were eligible to obtain an advance payment. However, the PO is well aware of potential absorption issues which might arise from delays in project implementation or specific issues related to the key risks which have been identified. Ongoing close monitoring and a pro-active and flexible approach in supporting the selected projects during the implementation stage will be crucial. This has been taken into account in the Monitoring Plan attached to this Report as Annex 5.

#### *Conformity with specific requirements*

Special concerns have been mentioned in both MoUs under the programme.

In the Memorandum of Understanding on the Implementation of the Norwegian Financial Mechanism, the special concerns refer to the content of projects supported under the programme and the involvement of Norwegian entities on the project level. All concerns have

been taken into account and are addressed through the projects selected under the Call for Proposals.

In the Memorandum of Understanding on the Implementation of the EEA Financial Mechanism, the special concerns refer to the content of projects supported under the programme and the involvement of Donor State entities on the project level. All concerns have been taken into account and are addressed through the projects selected under the Call for Proposals.

## **SI-EDUCATION Education, Scholarships, Apprenticeship and Youth Entrepreneurship**

### **1. Programme context**

The responsiveness of society to current challenges at home and around the world depends to a large extent on the ability of the education system to support citizens in developing key competences for life from an early age. The education system is therefore the backbone of society, the foundation on which we as a society build our present and our future.

Education programme primarily addresses challenges and needs related to developing the knowledge and skills for a high quality of life and work, the objective set in the Slovenian Development Strategy 2030. Learning for and through life is the central strategic orientation of the strategy.

Additionally, reconciliation of work and life responsibilities is closely related to the quality of life and participation of women and men in the labour market. The Resolution on the National Programme for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men 2015–2020 aims at increasing social responsibility and providing support services to facilitate work-life balance.

Work-life balance in Slovenia remains a challenge in particular for employed women and men who are responsible for caring for children and/or elderly relatives, especially in view of the population ageing, shrinking of the workforce and longer working age. This objective has become even more important after the covid-19 crisis which put an additional burden especially on women.

### **SI-EDUCATION Education, Scholarships, Apprenticeship and Young Entrepreneurship**

In the first half of 2022, the PO devoted effort and resources to the selection of projects under the Call for Proposals. The selection process took longer than predicted, particularly because of the parliamentary elections and the consequent change in the responsible person, i.e. the Minister in the Government Office for Development and European Cohesion Policy. Moreover, the new government reshuffled the state budget during the summer, which prolonged the contracting process. Yet, none of this negatively affected the projects that all started even before the contracts had been signed.

As mentioned above, the key milestone in 2022 was the selection of projects under the Call for Proposals which made a total of EUR 11,299,156.00 available for co-financing of the

projects. With **22 projects selected under the Call for Proposals, EUR 11,296,417.00** were allocated to these projects as follows:

- Outcome 1: EUR 6,063,862.00 available for co-financing, EUR 6,063,862.00 allocated to 11 selected projects;
- Outcome 3: EUR 3,235,294.00 available for co-financing, EUR 3,235,293.99 allocated to 7 selected projects;
- Outcome 4: EUR 2,000,000.00 available for co-financing, EUR 1,997,261.01 allocated to 4 selected projects.

The selected projects aim to promote institutional cooperation at all levels of formal and informal education (Outcome 1), improve the supportive environment for targeted disadvantaged groups (Outcome 3) and improve work-life balance (Outcome 4).

Under Outcomes 2 and 5, two pre-defined projects, namely Children's House (Barnahus) and Blended Learning in Vocational Education and Training (BlendVET), are already implemented according to the plan and will be further presented under programme results.

Bilateral cooperation with the Donor States took place in the form of regular meetings with their representatives (annual meeting, Cooperation Committee meetings, etc.) and also through their involvement in the project selection process.

Bilateral relations were additionally strengthened through the involvement of the Donor Project Partners in 22 projects implemented under the programme (21 projects selected under the Call for Proposals and one pre-defined project) to which they contribute their knowledge and expertise through exchange of good practices, study visits, active participation in training and conferences, etc.

#### Key milestones and activities in 2022

January to June	Assessment and selection of project proposals under the Call for Proposals: quality assessment, Selection Committee meetings – 25 April (online meeting) and 25 May (written procedure), decisions on the rejection or selection of the projects and notifications of inclusion on the reserve list
24 February	3 <sup>rd</sup> Cooperation Committee Meeting: current status of the Call for Proposals, implementation of bilateral initiatives, information related to the pre-defined projects
June to July	Online face-to-face meetings with the Project Promoters
1 June	Start of the 12 projects selected under the Call for Proposals
15 June	Start of the two projects selected under the Call for Proposals
1 July	Start of the seven projects selected under the Call for Proposals
1 September	Start of one project selected under the Call for Proposals



19 October 2022	Technical meeting between the FMO and the PO (state of play of the programme, current status of projects implementation, possible bilateral initiatives)
25 October	Online workshop on reporting for Slovenian beneficiaries
6 December	Approval of the modification of the Programme Agreement – Annex I (change of the amount of funds for the management of the programme)
13 December	4 <sup>th</sup> Cooperation Committee Meeting: organisational changes in the GODC, presentation of the PDPs BlendVET and Barnahus (on site), current state of play of the programme, status of the project implementation and risk management, presentation of and decision on the new bilateral initiative, discussion on the main contents of the Terms of Reference for the Outcome and Result Evaluation of the programme

After submission of the decisions on the selection of projects, the PO organised individual online face-to-face meetings with the Project Promoters to give and gain further clarifications regarding the project implementation, activities, expenditure, and timeline.

On 25 October, the PO conducted an online workshop on reporting for Slovenian beneficiaries that was focused on the steps of the reporting process for Slovenian beneficiaries in the electronic monitoring system eMS and the reporting procedure for the Norwegian project partners. The PO also provided basic information about potential project changes and answered the beneficiaries' questions regarding reporting. The control unit answered the beneficiaries' questions regarding the eligibility of expenditures and supporting documents.

For the majority of projects, contracts were concluded in the autumn, whereas the last contract was signed in December. Nevertheless, all advance payments were disbursed to all eligible Project Promoters by the end of 2022.

## 2. Programme results

### *Outcome 1: Improved institutional cooperation at all levels of education (formal and informal)*

#### *Description and analysis of results*

The selection process ended as follows:

- 11 projects were selected for co-financing,
- eight projects were rejected,
- two projects were put on the reserve list.

The 11 projects selected under this outcome focus mostly on:

- improving different competences of educational staff to improve education and training of different target groups on different levels and in different fields of education;
- improving or developing new methodologies, models, training and learning practices to be used on different levels and fields of education;
- improving different competences of students on different levels of education.

The project **Designing for Enhanced Competence through Active Participation in Higher Education (DECAP-HE)** received the highest score under the Call for Proposals under this outcome. The project aims to improve the quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning in higher education and to empower individuals and institutions in higher education to respond actively to the challenges of preparing students for work and life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, in collaboration with other stakeholders and through the exchange of good practice. It aims to develop and use new learning approaches, teaching and training models and strategies, and materials and resources for teaching and learning that provide academic staff and other stakeholders with a solid pedagogical knowledge base for improving the existing and developing new advanced pedagogical practices that actively involve students in the learning process and take into account the requirements for knowledge and key competences in society.

The PO cannot report on the achievements at this point as the projects started as late as June or July 2022 and have not yet reported on any results achieved. However, according to the current state of play and available data, the PO estimates that all target values of the outcome and output indicators will be achieved according to the plan.

### *Outcome 2: Improved skills and competencies of staff and students involved in blended learning*

#### *Description and analysis of results of Pre-defined project*

The pre-defined project **BlendVET** was further implemented according to the plan in 2022. The activities included regular partner (online) meetings for effective project management, a study visit to Norway, coordination of self-evaluation and strategies for schools and training series for school teams. The Project Promoter reported on several results achieved under Outcome 2, Output 2.2. The results are included in Annex 1 of this report under the programme Education, Scholarships, Apprenticeship and Youth Entrepreneurship. Under this output, the pre-defined project is expected to exceed certain target values.

The achievements reported in Annex I include the results submitted by the Project Promoter for the implementation period until 30 April 2022. For the period from May to December 2022, the Project Promoter has not yet reported on the achievements to the PO, since the first phase of reporting includes verification of the expenditures carried out by the Control Unit.

In October, the pre-defined project BlendVET received payment for eligible expenditure incurred in the first reporting period, which will be reported in the 7th Interim Financial Report for the period 1 July-31 December 2022 (see Point 3 Implementation, Financial status).

### *Outcome 3: Education and social environment to support disadvantaged groups improved*

#### *Description and analysis of results*

The selection process ended as follows:

- seven projects were selected for co-financing,
- two projects were rejected,
- two projects were put on the reserve list.

Seven projects selected under this outcome focus mostly on:

- empowering and fostering social activation of youth and NEETs (young people not in employment, education, or training) through equal accessibility and their active inclusion in new services, training and counselling, and reinforcing their soft skills for successful integration in the labour market;
- improving the existing mentoring schemes for people working and cooperating with disadvantaged groups;
- presenting specifics of youth employment and work opportunities in local environments.

The project **Development of Innovative Support Environment 'Career Center Posavje' in the Posavje Region** (Career Center Posavje) received the highest score under the Call for Proposals under this outcome. The project aims to create a knowledge and an information base, train consultants for better content delivery, and improve the offer of services for young people.

The PO cannot report on the achievements at this point as the projects started being implemented as late as June, July, or September 2022 and have not yet reported on any results achieved. However, according to the current state of play and available data, the PO estimates that all target values of the outcome and output indicators will be achieved according to the plan. The only exception is under Output 3.3: Support environment for precarious workers provided, where indicators will not be achieved since no project was selected for co-financing.

### *Outcome 4: Improved work-life balance (WLB)*

#### *Description and analysis of results*

The selection process ended as follows:

- four projects were selected for co-financing,
- two projects were put on the reserve list.

Four projects selected under this outcome focus mostly on:

- developing new models and/or education and training of different target groups to promote work-life with balance;
- increasing awareness on work-life balance and gender equality of different target groups and improving understanding of gender stereotypes and traditional gender roles.

The project **Transfer and Implementation of Good Practices for Improving Work-life Balance through Training and Education of Employees and Managers, with the Aim of Establishing an Organizational Structure and Culture of Companies, Based on Gender Equality (PROMETHEUS)** received the highest score under the Call for Proposals under this outcome. The project aims to improve knowledge and understanding of employees of the challenges of work-life balance, to empower employees and business managers to facilitate the reconciliation of professional and personal life, to increase awareness of the impact of the covid-19 pandemic and various personal circumstances of an employee on the possibility of balancing a person's professional and personal life, to explore scientific correlation between the challenges of balancing professional and personal life of employees and employee satisfaction, and to increase awareness of the importance of gender equality in the workplace among the national stakeholders, decision-makers and general public.

The PO cannot report on the achievements at this point as the projects started as late as June or July 2022 and have not yet reported on any results achieved. However, according to the current state of play and available data, the PO estimates that all target values of the outcome and output indicators will be achieved according to the plan.

#### *Outcome 5: Improved skills for good governance and cooperation in the provision of child victim services*

##### *Description and analysis of results of Pre-defined project*

The pre-defined project **Children's House (Barnahus)** was further implemented in 2022, mainly according to the plan. The main focus of the Project Promoter was on the implementation of activities related to the renovation and equipping of the premises of the Children's House. Following the establishment and inclusion of a new partner (public institution the Children's House) in the project implementation, the pilot operation of Barnahus kicked off. Additionally, 10 workshops were held in primary schools under the auspices of the Association for Non-Violent Communication on the theme "My body, my limits, my safety".

The Project Promoter reported on the results achieved under Outcome 5, Output 5.2. The results are included in Annex 1 of this report under the programme Education, Scholarships, Apprenticeship and Youth Entrepreneurship.

The achievements reported in Annex I include the results submitted by the Project Promoter for the implementation period until 30 January 2022. For the period from February to July 2022, the Project Promoter has not yet reported on the achievements to the PO, since the first phase of reporting includes verification of the expenditures carried out by the Control Unit.

In January, the pre-defined project Children's House (Barnahus) received payment for eligible expenditure incurred in the first reporting period. The payment was included in the 6<sup>th</sup> Interim Financial Report for the period 1 January-30 June 2022. The pre-defined project Children's House (Barnahus) also received payment in September for eligible expenditure incurred in the second reporting period, which will be reported in the 7<sup>th</sup> Interim Financial Report for the period 1 July-31 December 2022 (see Point 3 Implementation, Financial status).

*Bilateral Outcome: Enhanced collaboration between the Slovene and Donor States institutions involved in the programme*

*Analysis of bilateral relations and achievements*

Norwegian Directorate for Higher Education and Skills – HK-dir and National Agency for International Education Affairs – AIBA from Liechtenstein participate in the programme as Donor Programme Partners (DPPs).

Both DPPs had an important and active role in the phase of project selection under the Call for Proposals. DPP members were invited to participate in the Selection Committee as members with voting rights in line with Annex II of the Programme Agreement. Members participated in Selection Committee meetings and, thanks to their knowledge and expertise, made an important contribution to the selection of best projects.

Moreover, the DPPs and the PO strengthened bilateral relations through several meetings, namely Cooperation Committee Meetings. An excellent opportunity to exchange experience and opinions was the PO seminar held in Bergen, Norway, in May. The participants exchanged lessons learned and experience across programmes and discussed the next steps of the implementation of current mechanisms and possible improvement for the next potential mechanism. Individual meeting between the PO and the DPPs in Bergen was an opportunity to discuss open issues relating to the implementation of the programme.

The bilateral component is well represented also on the project level:

- the pre-defined project BlendVET includes five Donor Project Partners, namely three from Norway and two from Iceland. So far, the project has seen effective cooperation, active involvement and good responsiveness of DPPs.
- 21 out of 22 projects selected under the Call for Proposals involve a Donor Project Partner from Norway. The DPPs offered help in the phase of search for Donor Project Partners, but most Project Promoters and project partners established contact on their own, on the basis of past experience. The Project Promoters' experience with the Donor Project Partners in the first months of the project implementation is mostly good. In only a few cases the Project Promoters reported having cooperation issues, such as the Donor Project Partners making their own demands (even passing the rules) and conditioning the activity performance with the payment of money before the activities are carried out. The PO offered additional support with a more detailed explanation of the rules and legislation, obligations of each party, irregularities and possible consequences. In one case, direct communication with the Norwegian Donor Project Partner was necessary to explain them

in detail the process of the project implementation, payment flows and consequences of delays and breach of rules.

The number of projects involving cooperation with a Donor Project Partner is reported in Annex I of the programme, under Bilateral Output 1: Bilateral cooperation activities supported.

### 3. Implementation

#### *Financial status*

##### *a) Commitments and disbursements made by the programme*

#### **Programme management**

The management costs incurred and reported between the start of implementation in 2018 and end of June 2022 stand at EUR 378,740.37.

As reported in the 6<sup>th</sup> Interim Financial Report for the reporting period between 1 January and 30 June 2022, management costs amounted to EUR 56,388.03. Approximately EUR 43,000 of management costs for the period from 1 July to 31 December 2022 will be included in the 7<sup>th</sup> Interim Financial Report. By March 2023, this report must be submitted via GrACE.

#### **Projects**

In 2022, a total of EUR 3,188,984.86 were allocated to 19 projects (two pre-defined projects and 17 projects selected under the Call for Proposals) as follows:

- Under Outcome 1, eight projects selected under the Call for Proposals eligible for advance payments received the advance payments in November and December in the amount of EUR 1,147,811.83. The amounts allocated to these projects will be reported in the 7<sup>th</sup> Interim Financial Report for the period 1 July-31 December 2022 submitted via GrACE.
- Under Outcome 2, the pre-defined project BlendVET received payment amounting to EUR 256,931.86 in October for eligible expenditure incurred in the first reporting period, which will be reported in the 7<sup>th</sup> Interim Financial Report for the period 1 July-31 December 2022 submitted via GrACE.
- Under Outcome 3, six projects selected under the Call for Proposals eligible for advance payments received the advance payments in the amount of EUR 847,604.55 in December. The amounts allocated to these projects will be reported in the 7<sup>th</sup> Interim Financial Report for the period 1 July-31 December 2022 submitted via GrACE.
- Under Outcome 4, three projects selected under the Call for Proposals eligible for advance payments received the advance payments in the amount of EUR 449,818.19 in December. The amounts allocated to these projects will be reported in the 7<sup>th</sup> Interim Financial Report for the period 1 July-31 December 2022 submitted via GrACE.
- Under Outcome 5, the pre-defined project Children's House (Barnahus) received payment amounting to EUR 17,696.42 in January for eligible expenditure incurred in the first

reporting period. The payment has been included in the 6<sup>th</sup> Interim Financial Report for the period 1 January-30 June 2022 submitted via GrACE. The project also received payment in the amount of EUR 469,122.01 in September for eligible expenditure incurred in the second reporting period, which will be reported in the 7<sup>th</sup> Interim Financial Report for the period 1 July-31 December 2022 submitted via GrACE.

#### **Resources of the Fund for Bilateral Relations allocated to the programme Education, Scholarships, Apprenticeship and Youth Entrepreneurship**

EUR 100,000 were allocated to the programme in accordance with both MoUs. Approximately EUR 72,000 still remain available for the implementation of bilateral activities since no bilateral initiative has been implemented in 2022.

At the last Cooperation Committee meeting in December, the PO presented a possible new bilateral initiative proposed by the Ministry of Justice related to the exchange of experience with Children's House (Barnahus). The Cooperation Committee members approved the new bilateral initiative amounting to at least EUR 35,000, which means that once the contract for this bilateral initiative is signed, the funding still available for potential bilateral initiatives under the programme will amount to about EUR 37,000.

#### *b) Problems related to absorption and/or disbursements, with suggested solutions.*

The change in government in the spring and the late adoption of the reshuffled state budget (at the end of September) led to a late disbursement of advance payments to 17 projects. The PO prepared all the necessary documentation in advance for the successful completion of the procedures, but still had to comply with all mandatory procedural steps and legislative requirements.

#### *Conformity with specific requirements*

Special concerns have been mentioned in both MoUs under the programme.

In the Memorandum of Understanding on the Implementation of the Norwegian Financial Mechanism, the special concerns refer to the content of the projects supported under the programme and the inclusion of Norwegian entities on the project level. All concerns have been taken into account and are addressed through the projects selected under the Call for Proposal.

In the Memorandum of Understanding on the Implementation of the EEA Financial Mechanism, the special concern refers to the activities related to the blended learning in vocational education and training to be included in the programme. This is taken into account and addressed through the pre-defined project BlendvET which has been implemented according to the plan.

## Progress by the Joint Committee on Bilateral Funds

The purpose of the Fund for Bilateral Relations is to provide financial support to the activities that have a clear bilateral profile and contribute to strengthening bilateral relations between the Donor States and Slovenia. The Bilateral Fund Agreement worth a total of EUR 754,000 was signed on 13 September 2018. The amendments to the MoU on the EEA Grants and the MoU on the Norway Grants resulted in additional EUR 300,000 allocated to the Fund for Bilateral Relations. The increase was made to enable the launch of an open call for the selection of bilateral initiatives and to boost the spending of available funds. Modification of the Programme Agreement that will reflect the changes of the MoUs is currently under way. The total amount of funds available under the Fund for Bilateral Relations will stand at EUR 1,054,000 once the modification is completed.

### Progress related to the work of the Joint Committee for Bilateral Funds

The Joint Committee for Bilateral Funds (hereinafter JCBF) was established and held its first meeting on 10 April 2019. In 2022, one written procedure and two meetings of the JCBF took place.

On 26 April 2022, the JCBF approved the initiative “Basic integration assistance for the displaced persons from Ukraine with temporary protection in Slovenia” by written procedure due to the urgency of the matter. The purpose of the initiative was to provide the displaced persons with the information on their rights and duties and offer them a brief orientation course to facilitate their integration in Slovenian society. Basic literacy in Slovenian language and assistance with the learning process was provided to schoolchildren with the status of temporary protection who enrolled in Slovenian public schools.

The 4<sup>th</sup> JCBF meeting was held online on 6 July 2022. At the meeting, the JCBF members discussed two newly proposed bilateral initiatives and looked into ways to speed up the absorption of funds under the Fund for Bilateral Cooperation. The JCBF members approved the amended Work Plan which included three bilateral initiatives, i.e. “Basic integration assistance for the displaced persons from Ukraine with temporary protection in Slovenia”, “Supporting the green start-ups of tomorrow”, and “Study visit of Slovenian delegation to donor countries on the agenda of regional innovation ecosystems and projects”.

The JCBF members also agreed on and expressed support for the combined approach to the future implementation of the Bilateral Fund (i.e. pre-defined initiatives and the call for proposals).

The 5<sup>th</sup> JCBF meeting was held online on 29 November 2022. Since the initiative “Basic integration assistance for the displaced persons from Ukraine with temporary protection in Slovenia” proved successful, the promoter of the initiative (Slovenian Government Office for the Support and Integration of Migrants) proposed to continue implementing similar activities to further address the needs of displaced persons. The new initiative would focus on psychosocial support and empowerment of displaced persons in order to speed up their integration into Slovenian society and prevent social exclusion. All the activities, the relevant



information, and updates on the changes of legislation regarding the rights of people with temporary protection will be provided in different locations across Slovenia.

The main elements for the preparation of the call for proposals were presented and discussed at the meeting. The idea behind the call is to facilitate exploration of bilateral potentials for the next funding period of the EEA and Norway Grants and look for solutions how to spend the potential funds remaining unused under the Fund for Bilateral Relations or other programmes. The indicative amount that will be made available through the open call is EUR 356,400, but the figure could end up being higher considering potential unused funds. The minimum grant to be applied for would stand at EUR 15,000 and the maximum grant to be applied for would be EUR 50,000 unless duly justified. Potential areas of support would be green and smart cooperation, but the matter needs to be discussed and approved by the JCBF members first.

The type of the open call will give the applicants the possibility to submit project applications on a rolling basis (within several deadlines) until the closing deadline or as long as funds are available.

However, certain necessary preconditions for launching the call will have to be met beforehand:

- the signature of the Agreement on the Fund for Bilateral Relations that makes additional EUR 300,000 available;
- the approval of the amended Work Plan for the Fund for Bilateral Relations by the JCBF;
- the amendment of the national decree (the current national decree does not foresee a call for proposals under the Fund for Bilateral Relations nor staff or equipment costs);
- the amendment of the National Focal Point guidelines for the Fund for Bilateral Relations (the current guidelines do not categorise staff costs and equipment costs as eligible expenditures).

Only after that, can the open call, the application package and the description of the assessment procedure be prepared.

The following conclusions were taken at the 5<sup>th</sup> JCBF meeting:

- JCBF members approved the postponement of the two bilateral initiatives BI - 1 Bi-annual consultations and expert event on women, peace and security, and BI - 3 Consultations and expert event on modalities of financing for development to 2023.
- JCBF members approved the bilateral initiative "Basic integration assistance for the displaced persons from Ukraine with temporary protection in Slovenia - II".
- JCBF members approved the amended Work Plan.

The budget breakdown of the Fund for Bilateral Relations and the implementation status of approved bilateral initiatives is as follows:

Title	Budget	Implementation status
<b>Activities carried out by the NFP</b>	<b>EUR 0</b>	To be defined if required at a later stage
<b>Call for proposals</b>	<b>EUR 0</b>	Indicative amount is EUR 356,400 Final amount to be defined by JCBF in 2023
<b>Pre-defined activities</b>	<b>EUR 397,600</b>	
<u>Initiative 1:</u>  <i>Bi-annual consultations and expert event on women, peace and security</i>	EUR 34,000	To be implemented in first half of 2023
<u>Initiative 2:</u>  <i>Conference on adaptation to extreme weather and climate events</i>		Cancelled
<u>Initiative 3:</u>  <i>Consultations and expert event on modalities of financing for development</i>	EUR 20,000	To be implemented in first half of 2023
<u>Initiative 4:</u>  <i>Research on equal opportunities in national diplomacies</i>	EUR 30,000	Completed in December 2020; EUR 28,978.24 disbursed
<u>Initiative 5:</u>  <i>Study visit for the Norway delegation on the agenda of artificial intelligence in the Slovenian Digital Centre – Technology for the people</i>	EUR 5,250	Completed in November 2021; EUR 2,908.75 disbursed
<u>Initiative 6:</u>  <i>Basic integration assistance for the displaced persons from Ukraine with temporary protection in Slovenia</i>	EUR 101,000	Completed by 31 December 2022; final report to be submitted by 28 February 2023

Title	Budget	Implementation status
<u>Initiative 7:</u>  <i>Supporting the green start-ups of Tomorrow</i>	EUR 48,500	To be implemented by October 2023
<u>Initiative 8:</u>  <i>Study visit of Slovenian delegation (Ljubljana urban region) to donor countries (Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein) on the agenda of regional innovation ecosystems and projects</i>	EUR 58,850	To be implemented by September 2023
<u>Initiative 9:</u>  <i>Basic integration assistance for the displaced persons from Ukraine with temporary protection in Slovenia II</i>	EUR 100,000	To be implemented by end of June 2023
<b>Bilateral funds allocated to the programme Enhancing Human Capital in accordance with the signed MoUs</b>	<b>EUR 100,000</b>	Under implementation;  EUR 27,633.97 disbursed by 29 November 2022
<b>Bilateral funds allocated to the programme Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation in accordance with the signed MoUs</b>	<b>EUR 100,000</b>	Bilateral initiative in the area of circular economy under preparation
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>EUR 597,600</b>	
<b>TOTAL BILATERAL FUND</b>	<b>EUR 1,054,000</b>	
<b>Remaining amount</b>	<b>EUR 456,400</b>	

Main activities carried out in 2022:

The 6<sup>th</sup> Interim Financial Report for the Fund for Bilateral Relations for the reporting period from 1 July 2021 to 31 December 2021 was submitted to the FMO in March 2022. There were no reported expenditures since the start of the planned bilateral initiatives was postponed to 2022 or 2023.

The contract between the project promoter of the initiative “Basic integration assistance for the displaced persons from Ukraine with temporary protection in Slovenia”, i.e. the Government Office for the Support and Integration of Migrants and the National Focal Point was signed on 6 May 2022.

The contracts between the project promoters and the National Focal Point relating to the implementation of bilateral initiatives “Supporting the green start-ups of tomorrow” and “Study visit of Slovenian delegation (Ljubljana urban region) to donor countries (Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein) on the agenda of regional innovation ecosystems and projects” were signed in July 2022. Both project promoters immediately started implementing the planned activities which have to be finalized by October and September 2023 respectfully.

The 7<sup>th</sup> Interim Financial Report for the Fund for Bilateral Relations for the reporting period from 1 January 2022 to 30 June 2022 was submitted to the FMO in August 2022. The reported expenditure amounting to EUR 2,908.25 related to the study visit of the Norwegian delegation (Institute Sintef) at the Slovenian Digital Innovation Hub. In order to get more familiar with the best Slovenian artificial intelligence practices, the Norwegian partners visited several institutions and companies: Yaskawa in Kočevje, XLAB (high-tech company in Technology Park Ljubljana), Iskra showroom in Ljubljana, Institute Jožef Stefan in Ljubljana, FRI - Faculty of Computer and Information Science at the University of Ljubljana, FERI —Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science at the University of Maribor, Institute IZUM (supercomputer VEGA - one of the 50 supercomputers in the world). The Norwegian partners also participated in the event on the agenda of trustworthy use of artificial intelligence which was organized in the framework of the Slovenian Presidency of the Council of the EU.

The first implementation phase of bilateral initiative “Supporting the green start-ups of tomorrow” kicked off with a study visit that was carried out from 1 to 5 November 2022 in Norway. The purpose of the study visit was to bring together all project partners (Primorska Technology Park – PTP, Vrtojba, Oslo Science Park – SARTUPLAB, Insj UIO, Oslo and Park Hamar – Learning Hub) and to exchange information, experiences and good practices. The study visit also served as an introduction to the second and third study visit that will concentrate on the development and improvement of entrepreneurial knowledge of younger generations. The first report focusing on the implementation of the bilateral initiative in the period from 20 July to 31 December 2022 was submitted to the National Focal Point on 5 January 2023.

The bilateral initiative “Study visit of Slovenian delegation (Ljubljana urban region) to donor countries (Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein) on the agenda of regional innovation ecosystems and projects” also kicked off in the autumn of 2022. However, the first report related to the progress of the bilateral initiative is due on 31 January 2023.

The bilateral activity “Basic integration assistance for the displaced persons from Ukraine with temporary protection in Slovenia” was successfully completed by 31 December 2022. The purpose of this initiative was to assist the Ukrainian refugees with the status of temporary protection as displaced persons and to help them integrate more easily in Slovenian society. The initiative was implemented by the Government Office for the Support and Integration of Migrants. The assistance was provided in the refugee facilities and online. Also, basic literacy in Slovenian language, assistance with the learning process, and free time activities for school children that continue education in Slovenian school system was provided. The relevant information about the rights of temporarily displaced persons and other related content is widely spread and available on several internet sites also in the Ukrainian language (<https://www.gov.si/uk/temi/dopomoga-yaku-slovenya-nada-gromadyanam-ukrani/>). The final report related to this bilateral initiative is due on 28 February 2023.

The 8<sup>th</sup> Interim Financial Report for the Fund for Bilateral Relations for the reporting period from 1 July 2022 to 31 December 2022 will be submitted to the FMO in March 2023.

The main activities planned to be implemented in 2023 are as follows:

- Initiative 1: Bi-annual consultations and expert event on women, peace and security (to be completed in the first half of 2023)
- Initiative 3: Consultations and expert event on modalities of financing for development (to be completed in the first half of 2023)
- Initiative 7: Supporting the green start-ups of tomorrow (to be completed by 31 October 2023)
- Initiative 8: Study visit of Slovenian delegation (Ljubljana urban region) to donor countries (Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein) on the agenda of regional innovation ecosystems and projects (to be completed by 30 September 2023)
- Initiative 9: Basic integration assistance for the displaced persons from Ukraine with temporary protection in Slovenia II (to be completed by 30 June 2023)
- Open call for proposals (to be published in the first half of 2023).

Additionally, several potential pre-defined bilateral initiatives are in the pipeline (e.g. organization of a workshop on environmental data and management, promotion of digital skills).

## Management and control system

In September 2022, the Audit Authority issued a report on the follow-up audit of the management and control system at the National Focal Point and the Programme Operator of Education, Scholarships, Apprenticeship and Youth Entrepreneurship Programme and Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Programme. The audit report did not identify any major issues. The opinion of the Audit Authority was that the system works, but some improvements are needed. The Audit Authority recommended that a Results and Evaluation Officer is employed and that appropriate measures are taken to mitigate the risks associated with timely

implementation of projects and programmes. The first recommendation was implemented by employing a new half-time employee with previous experience in evaluation and assigning them the tasks of the Results and Evaluation Officer. The second recommendation was partially implemented by appointing contract managers for each approved project and by organizing workshops for project promoters and project partners focusing on reporting and on the rules of eligibility of expenditures.

In October 2022, the Audit Authority issued a report on the system audit at the Certifying Authority and the Irregularities Authority. The recommendation concerning uploading evidence of Certifying Authority's review of eligible expenditure of "Technical Assistance / Interim Financial Report No. 6" was implemented during the audit. The opinion of the Audit Authority was that the system works well.

On 27 November 2022, a referendum on the changes to the government act took place. The referendum outcome will have a major impact on the future organisation of the Government Office for Development and Cohesion Policy that hosts the NFP and the PO. The Government Office will be transformed into the Ministry of Cohesion and Regional Development in early 2023 upon finalisation of all procedures relating to the government reshuffle.

On 1 December 2022, a major internal organisational change affecting the internal units of the Government Office for Development and Cohesion Policy took place. As a result, the National Focal Point and Programme Operators underwent certain changes that affect the Description of the Management and Control System (DMCS). In this context, the European Territorial Cooperation and Financial Mechanisms Division was transformed into the Interreg and Financial Mechanisms Office, whereas the former European Territorial Cooperation and Financial Mechanisms Section was split into two organisational units, namely the Financial Mechanisms Division and the Interreg Division. The Head of NFP was appointed by the Minister with the authorisation no. 1001-109/2014/106 of 8 December 2022, whereas the position of the Head of PO remained vacant.

The NFP team within the Financial Mechanisms Division has expanded and consists of six employees, i.e. Head of NFP, NFP Coordinator, Evaluation Officer, Bilateral Officer, NFP Communication Officer and Junior NFP Communication Officer.

The PO team has also expanded with additional contract managers. Since the projects were selected as late as 2022, there was no need for several contract managers until then. In 2022, a recruitment process was launched to expand the team of contract managers in order for the PO to be able to effectively manage the heavy workload during the implementation peaks. It was estimated that four full-time equivalent (FTE) contract managers would be sufficient to administer 22 contracts under the Education Programme (without the PDPs) and 17 contracts under the Climate Change Programme (including the PDP). Currently, there is one contract manager working for the Education Programme and two contract managers working half-time for the Climate Change Programme. The PO has already submitted a proposal to the Human Resources Section to engage an additional contract manager that would be employed and paid from the programme management costs.

Considering that the bulk of the work will shift now to the project level, there will be only one Programme Manager for both Programmes who will manage the two Programmes in close cooperation with the Head of PO and contract managers.

Both the NFP and the PO are assisted by other organisational units within GODC (e.g. Human Resources Section and Financial Operations, Legal and General Affairs Section).

Apart from that, the name of the organisational unit within the Budget Supervision Office that is responsible for performing audits of the EEA and Norway Grants has been changed into Other European Funds and Mechanisms Audit Division. The change was necessary in order to better describe the scope of work of this division.

The amended version of the national DMCS has been submitted to the Budget Supervision Office on 28 December 2022.

## C. LEARNING

### SI-CLIMATE Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation

#### 1. Monitoring carried out

It is the responsibility of the PO to monitor the implementation of all projects under the programme. The eMS monitoring system is used by the PO to monitor project implementation as well as to report on the project implementation and on the expenditure incurred.

Project monitoring is carried out by the PO using the following methods during the implementation of the programme:

- administrative monitoring and verifications of projects,
- on-the-spot verifications of projects and on-site monitoring visits,
- regular monitoring of project implementation.

In 2022, the PO mainly carried out compliance-based (partner reports reviewed by controllers) monitoring activities in accordance with the monitoring plan. The PO performed administrative monitoring and verification of projects and regular monitoring of project implementation and progress.

The first periodic partner reports were received by the end of November 2022. Thus, no reports were approved in 2022.

Furthermore, PO contract managers were responsible for regular monitoring of the project implementation and progress. Each Project Promoter of the projects selected under the Call for Proposals was invited to a face-to-face meeting with the PO contract manager prior to the project contract signing to openly discuss the project implementation, activities, expenditure, timeline and identify all potential project risks that could result in project delay while outlining the respective mitigation measures. Due to the short implementation period, the Project Promoters were informed that no project prolongation was available and were urged to keep

a high level of focus on the implementation. All risks were discussed with the Project Promoters, especially with those whose projects involve any kind of investment.

The PO thoroughly monitors project implementation by contacting the Project Promoters on a monthly basis via e-mail or phone. On several occasions, the PO already attended or will attend the events in person to have a closer look at the project performance, especially for the projects which mostly involve intangible results.

## **2. Evaluation carried out**

Two evaluations, i.e. Operational Evaluation and Outcome and Result Evaluation are foreseen to be designed and conducted by independent external experts for the Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Programme in line with the updated Evaluation Plan that was prepared in September 2022.

The Operational Evaluation, which will be carried out in 2023, will consist of a systematic, objective and independent evaluation of the efficiency and effectiveness of the programme implementation processes, providing recommendations for the improvement of programme management in the future. The Outcome and Result Evaluation is expected to provide a systematic, objective and independent assessment on how the support from the EEA and Norway Grants has contributed to the implementation and achievements of the projects/programmes. The evaluation will be finalised by the end of 2024 when projects results will be available. The relevant data, information and findings will be included in the final report and used for the preparation of the next funding period of the EEA and Norway Grants in Slovenia.

Draft Terms of Reference (ToR) for the selection of external experts for the two evaluations was prepared and harmonised with the FMO Result and Evaluation Officer, Donor Programme Partners, and the representatives of line ministries in 2022.

## **3. Lessons learned from monitoring, evaluation and implementation**

The main constraint currently affecting the programme implementation is the very tight deadline for project implementation and completion. In order to avoid such situations in the future, efforts should be made to publish the calls for proposals much earlier to leave enough time for project implementation and additional actions aimed at using the unspent funds by the programme itself.

Moreover, the selection procedure should be shortened as much as possible. As the selection process was time-consuming, the signing of contracts with the selected Project Promoters took place much later than foreseen. While the eligibility of cost starts from the date when the decision to award grant to a certain project is issued, this improves the time constraints for projects to some extent. However, due to this problem, the absorption of funds on the level of the programme is very low at the moment.

We have noticed that some Project Promoters are inexperienced and require strong support by the PO contract managers on a weekly, sometimes even on a daily basis. Very detailed guidelines for Project Promoters published on the website do not help since Project Promoters



prefer direct contact and advice from the contract managers. The PO staff finds it hard to assure such daily support while performing all other regular tasks, in particular in light of the persistent understaffing issue it is facing even though there are funds available for hiring additional employees. The problem was solved by guaranteeing maximum flexibility of staff working also on other programmes, however this is only a temporary solution. At least one additional contract manager is needed in order to be able to manage properly the workload ahead.

## SI-EDUCATION Education, Scholarships, Apprenticeship and Youth Entrepreneurship

### 1. Monitoring carried out

It is the responsibility of the PO to monitor the implementation of the projects under the programme. The PO uses the eMS monitoring system to monitor project implementation, and report on the project implementation and the expenditure incurred.

During the programme implementation, the PO uses the following methods to carry out project monitoring:

- administrative monitoring and verifications of projects,
- on-the-spot verifications of projects and on site-monitoring visits,
- regular monitoring of project implementation.

In 2022, the PO mainly carried out compliance-based (partner reports reviewed by controllers) and result-based (project reports reviewed by contract managers) monitoring activities. The PO performed administrative monitoring and verification of projects and regular monitoring of project implementation and progress.

The PO carried out regular verifications of periodic partner reports and project reports submitted within the reporting periods for both pre-defined projects. Reporting on project progress is done in two stages. At the end of an individual 6-month reporting period, each project partner (including the Project Promoter) prepares a partner report in the eMS and submits it to the Control Unit. The Control Unit verifies the eligibility of expenditures declared by the Project Promoter and Slovenian project partners, and checks the compliance with the project application, the project contract, the partnership agreement, the programme agreement, the Regulations, public procurement law and other applicable national law. After receiving all certificates for all project partner reports, the Project Promoter prepares a joint project report and submits it to the Programme Operator. The contract manager of the PO checks the project reports, verifying in particular the compliance of implementation of project activities with the project application and the project contract as well as the project progress towards the agreed project outputs, outcomes and objectives.

In 2022, reports relating to the implementation of two pre-defined projects were reviewed and approved. Two project reports were approved for the Barnahus project. Additionally, one project report was approved for the BlendVET project.

Furthermore, PO contract managers were responsible for regular monitoring of the project implementation and progress. Each Project Promoter of the projects selected under the Call for Proposals was invited to face-to-face meetings with the PO contract manager prior to the project contract signing to openly discuss the project implementation, activities, expenditure, timeline, and identify all potential project risks that could result in project delay while outlining the respective mitigation measures. The PO prepared the minutes of the meeting with the PO outlining all of the discussed possible risks and the measures taken to address them.

Regular communication was established between the PO project contract managers and Project Promoters. They communicated mainly by phone or e-mail. Whenever need arises, either an online meeting or a face-to-face meeting is organized.

As the projects are still in the early stages of implementation, no on-the spot verifications were carried out in 2022. However, the PO did carry out several visits to Project Promoters in 2022 as the PO staff attended several projects launch events.

## **2. Evaluation carried out**

The Outcome and Result Evaluation for the Education, Scholarships, Apprenticeship and Youth Entrepreneurship Programme is foreseen to be designed and conducted by an independent external expert by the end of 2024 when projects results will be available in line with the updated Evaluation Plan that was prepared in September 2022.

The evaluation will provide a systematic, objective and independent assessment on how the support from the EEA and Norway Grants has contributed to the implementation and achievements of the projects/programmes. The relevant data will be included in the final report and used for the preparation of the next funding period of the EEA and Norway Grants in Slovenia.

Draft Terms of Reference (ToR) for the selection of external expert for the evaluation was prepared and harmonised with the FMO Result and Evaluation Officer, Donor Programme Partners, and the representatives of line ministries in 2022.

## **3. Lessons learned from monitoring, evaluation and implementation**

The main constraint currently affecting the programme implementation is the very tight deadline for project implementation and completion. In order to avoid such situations in the future, efforts should be made to publish the calls for proposals much earlier to leave enough time for project implementation and additional actions aimed at using the unspent funds by the programme itself.

Moreover, the selection procedure should be shortened as much as possible. As the selection process was time-consuming, the signing of contracts with the selected Project Promoters took place much later than foreseen. While the eligibility of cost starts from the date when the

decision to award grant to a certain project is issued, this improves the time constraints for projects to some extent. However, due to this problem, the absorption of funds on the level of the programme is very low at the moment.

We have noticed that some Project Promoters are inexperienced and require strong support by the PO contract managers on a weekly, sometimes even on a daily basis. Very detailed guidelines for Project Promoters published on the website do not help since Project Promoters prefer direct contact and advice from the contract managers. The PO staff finds it hard to assure such daily support while performing all other regular tasks, in particular in light of the persistent understaffing issue it is facing even though there are funds available for hiring additional employees. The problem was solved by guaranteeing maximum flexibility of staff working also on other programmes, however this is only a temporary solution. At least one additional contract manager is needed in order to be able to manage properly the workload ahead.

## D. WORK PLAN

### *National Focal Point*

#### **1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2023:**

- Submission of the 8<sup>th</sup> Interim Financial Report for Technical Assistance and Bilateral Fund
- Changes to the MoUs (organisational changes)
- Organization of the Annual Meeting with the donors
- Promotional activities (posting content to the webpage [www.eeagrants/norwaygrants.si](http://www.eeagrants/norwaygrants.si), posting on social media)
- Preparation of the call for proposals under the Fund for Bilateral Relations
- Monitoring of the implementation of the programmes Education, Scholarships, Apprenticeship and Youth Entrepreneurship and Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation (regular meetings with the POs, use of eMS for monitoring purposes ...)
- Participation in the Cooperation Committee meetings (as observers/if necessary)
- Participation in the meeting(s) organized by the FMO

#### **2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2023:**

- Organization of the meeting of the Joint Committee of Bilateral Fund
- Launch of the call for proposals under the Fund for Bilateral Relations
- Promotional activities (posting content to the webpage [www.eeagrants/norwaygrants.si](http://www.eeagrants/norwaygrants.si), posting on social media)

- Monitoring of the implementation of the programmes Education, Scholarships, Apprenticeship and Youth Entrepreneurship and Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation (regular meetings with the POs, use of eMS for monitoring purposes ...)
- Participation in the Cooperation Committee meetings (as observers/if necessary)
- Participation in the meeting(s) organized by the FMO

#### **3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of 2023:**

- Submission of the 9<sup>th</sup> Interim Financial Report for Technical Assistance and Bilateral Fund
- Promotional activities (posting content to the webpage [www.eeagrants/norwaygrants.si](http://www.eeagrants/norwaygrants.si), posting on social media; Facebook, IG)
- Assessment of project applications received in the frame of the call for proposals under the Fund for Bilateral Relations
- Organization of the meeting of the Joint Committee of Bilateral Fund
- Monitoring of the implementation of the programmes Education, Scholarships, Apprenticeship and Youth Entrepreneurship and Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation (regular meetings with the POs, use of eMS for monitoring purposes ...)
- Participation in the Cooperation Committee meetings (as observers/if necessary)
- Participation in the meeting(s) organized by the FMO

#### **4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2023:**

- Promotional activities (posting content to the webpage [www.eeagrants/norwaygrants.si](http://www.eeagrants/norwaygrants.si), posting on social media; Facebook, IG)
- Monitoring of the implementation of the programmes Education, Scholarships, Apprenticeship and Youth Entrepreneurship and Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation (regular meetings with the POs, use of eMS for monitoring purposes ...)
- Participation in the Cooperation Committee meetings (as observers/if necessary)
- Participation in the meeting(s) organized by the FMO.

#### **SI-CLIMATE Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation**

##### **1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2023:**

- Submission of the 7<sup>th</sup> Interim Financial Report for the Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation programme

- Participation in the Annual Meeting with the Donor States
- Monitoring of projects under the programme (verification of projects reports, use of eMS for monitoring purposes, regular online or face-to-face meetings with the Project Promoters, on-site visits in accordance with the plan)
- Promotional activities (posting content to the webpage [www.eeagrants/norwaygrants.si](http://www.eeagrants/norwaygrants.si), posting on social media)
- Participation in the meeting(s) organized by the FMO
- Changes to the Partnership Agreement (organizational changes)

**2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2023:**

- Monitoring of projects under the programme (verification of project reports, use of eMS for monitoring purposes, regular online or face-to-face meetings with the Project Promoters, on-site visits in accordance with the plan)
- Promotional activities (posting content to the webpage [www.eeagrants/norwaygrants.si](http://www.eeagrants/norwaygrants.si), posting on social media)
- Organization of the meeting of the Cooperation Committee (if necessary)
- Participation in the meeting(s) organized by the FMO or the DPPs

**3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of 2023:**

- Submission of the 8<sup>th</sup> Interim Financial Report for the Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation programme
- Monitoring of projects under the programme (verification of project reports, use of eMS for monitoring purposes, regular online or face-to-face meetings with the Project Promoters, on-site visits in accordance with the plan)
- Promotional activities (posting content to the webpage [www.eeagrants/norwaygrants.si](http://www.eeagrants/norwaygrants.si), posting on social media; Facebook, IG)
- Participation in the meeting(s) organized by the FMO or the DPPs

**4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2023:**

- Monitoring of projects under the programme (verification of project reports, use of eMS for monitoring purposes, regular online or face-to-face meetings with the Project Promoters, on-site visits in accordance with the plan)
- Promotional activities (posting content to the webpage [www.eeagrants/norwaygrants.si](http://www.eeagrants/norwaygrants.si), posting on social media; Facebook, IG)
- Organization of a conference (experience sharing event with the aim of showcasing innovative approaches in the projects)

- Organization of the meeting of the Cooperation Committee
- Participation in the meeting(s) organized by the FMO or the DPPs.

### **SI-EDUCATION Education, Scholarships, Apprenticeship and Youth Entrepreneurship**

#### **1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2023:**

- Submission of the 7<sup>th</sup> Interim Financial Report for the Education programme
- Participation in the Annual Meeting with the Donor States
- Monitoring of projects under the programme (verification of project reports, use of eMS for monitoring purposes, regular online or face-to-face meetings with the Project Promoters, on-site visits in accordance with plan)
- Promotional activities (posting content to the webpage [www.eeagrants/norwaygrants.si](http://www.eeagrants/norwaygrants.si), posting on social media)
- Participation in the meeting(s) organized by the FMO
- Changes of the PA (organisational changes)

#### **2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2023:**

- Monitoring of projects under the programme (verification of project reports, use of eMS for monitoring purposes, regular online or face-to-face meetings with the Project Promoters, on-site visits in accordance with plan)
- Promotional activities (posting content to the webpage [www.eeagrants/norwaygrants.si](http://www.eeagrants/norwaygrants.si), posting on social media)
- Organization of the meeting of the Cooperation Committee (if necessary)
- Participation in the meeting(s) organized by the FMO or the DPPs

#### **3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of 2023:**

- Submission of the 8<sup>th</sup> Interim Financial Report for the Education programme
- Monitoring of projects under the programme (verification of project reports, use of eMS for monitoring purposes, regular online or face-to-face meetings with the Project Promoters, on-site visits in accordance with plan)
- Promotional activities (posting content to the webpage [www.eeagrants/norwaygrants.si](http://www.eeagrants/norwaygrants.si), posting on social media; Facebook, IG)
- Participation in the meeting(s) organized by the FMO or the DPPs

**4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2023:**

- Monitoring of projects under the programme (verification of project reports, use of eMS for monitoring purposes, regular online or face-to-face meetings with the Project Promoters, on-site visits in accordance with plan)
- Promotional activities (posting content to the webpage [www.eeagrants/norwaygrants.si](http://www.eeagrants/norwaygrants.si), posting on social media; Facebook, IG)
- Organization of the meeting of the Cooperation Committee
- Participation in the meeting(s) organized by the FMO or the DPPs.

**E. ANNEXES**

- 1. Updated achievements in the results framework**
- 2. Communication summary**
- 3. Overview of contracted projects**
- 4. Risk management**
- 5. Monitoring plan**
- 6. Evaluation plan**
- 7. Evaluation report**
- 8. Technical assistance report**
- 9. Agreement conditions**

## Annex 1: Updated achievements in the results framework

### SI-CLIMATE Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation

Objective: Climate change mitigated and vulnerability to climate change reduced								
Outcome 1: Increased renewable energy production								
Indicator	Unit of measurement	Baseline value	Previous achievement value	Achievements until end of December 2022			Target value	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Achievement value		
Estimated annual CO2 emissions reductions (in tonnes)	Annual number	0	-	-	-	0	1,726, Estimation based on the targets achieved by comparable project, Source: the Ministry of Infrastructure.	/
Estimated production of renewable energy (in MWh/ year)	Annual number	0, Total contribution (final energy consumption) of all RES technologies amounted 647.7 ktoe in 2016 (of which 43,9 ktoe geothermal energy without low temperature pumps). Baseline calculated from ktoe to MWh. Source: Report on the progress of the Republic of Slovenia further to the Directive 2009/28/EC, the Ministry of Infrastructure, 2017, Table 1c. <a href="http://www.energetika-portal.si/fileadmin/dokumenti/publikacije/an_ove/porocilo_si_ove_2017.pdf">http://www.energetika-portal.si/fileadmin/dokumenti/publikacije/an_ove/porocilo_si_ove_2017.pdf</a>	-	Reported 2024			3,997	-
Number of national policies and laws influenced	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	0	1	/
Output 1.1: Improved capacity to develop less established renewable energy sources								



Indicator	Unit of measurement	Baseline value	Previous achievement value	Achievements until end of December 2022			Target value	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Achievement value		
Mapping of technical potential of deep geothermal energy carried out	Binary	No	No (IFR 2020)	-	-	No	Yes	/
Report on necessary legislative amendments of subsidy schemes for the accelerated use of geothermal energy prepared	Binary	No	No (IFR 2020)	-	-	No	Yes	/
Number of experts trained in geothermal technologies	Cumulative number	0	0 (IFR 2020)	-	-	0	40	/
<i>Gender</i>								
<i>Female</i>	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Male</i>	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Not specified</i>	-	-	0	-	-	0	-	-
Number of staff from beneficiary states in exchanges	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	0	10	/
<i>Gender</i>								
<i>Female</i>	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Male</i>	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Not specified</i>	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Type of exchange</i>								
<i>Online</i>	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Physical</i>	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Not specified</i>	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-

Number of staff from donor states in exchanges	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	0	3	/
<i>Gender</i>								
<i>Female</i>	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Male</i>	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Not specified</i>	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Donor State</i>								
<i>Norway</i>	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Iceland</i>	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Liechtenstein</i>	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Not specified</i>	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Type of exchange</i>								
<i>Online</i>	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Physical</i>	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Not specified</i>	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
<b>Output 1.2: Energy production from less established renewable sources installed</b>								
Indicator	Unit of measurement	Baseline value	Previous achievement value	Achievements until end of December 2022			Target value	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Achievement value		
Installed capacity of less established RES (in MW)	Cumulative number	0	0 (IFR 2020)	-	-	0	2.40, Calculated from the CO2 target: 2,300 t CO2=0.8505 66 ktoe. Such target contributes 21 % to the NERAP 2020 targets for increase of	/

							installed geothermal energy increase from 17 ktoe in 2017 to 21 ktoe by 2020, Table 22, of revised 2017 NERAP 2010-2020.	
<b>Outcome 2: Enhanced sustainable mobility management</b>								
Indicator	Unit of measurement	Baseline value	Previous achievement value	Achievements until end of December 2022			Target value	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Achievement value		
Number of sustainable mobility policy measures/tools at regional level introduced	Cumulative number	0	0 (IFR 2020)	-	-	0	2, 1. Regional Sustainable Mobility Centre, 2. Regional Sustainable Mobility Plan.	/
Average annual increase of trips made by sustainable means of transport in the areas supported by the programme	Percentage	0.00 %	-	0	0	-	4.00 %	/
<b>Output 2.1: Measures to improve regional sustainable mobility implemented</b>								

Indicator	Unit of measurement	Baseline value	Previous achievement value	Achievements until end of December 2022			Target value	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Achievement value		
Number of regional mobility centres piloted	Cumulative number	0	0 (IFR 2020)	-	-	0	5	/
Regional mobility management model developed	Binary	No	No (IFR 2020)	-	-	No	Yes	/
Number of people reached by awareness raising campaigns	Cumulative number	0	0 (IFR 2020)	-	-	0	150,000, Estimated 50% of households in participating regions	/
Number of awareness campaigns carried out	Cumulative number	0	0 (IFR 2020)	-	-	0	3	/
Number of professionals trained in sustainable regional and inter-municipal mobility planning and management	Cumulative number	0	0 (IFR 2020)	-	-	0	60	/
<i>Gender</i>								
<i>Female</i>	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Male</i>	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Not specified</i>	-	-	0	-	-	0	-	-
<b>Output 2.2: Plans for sustainable mobility management at high-volume traffic locations developed</b>								
Indicator	Unit of measurement	Baseline value	Previous achievement value	Achievements until end of December 2022			Target value	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Achievement value		

Number of sustainable mobility plans for high volume traffic generating locations developed	Cumulative number	0	0 (IFR 2020)	-	-	0	10	/
Number of pilot actions from sustainable mobility plans for high volume traffic generating locations implemented	Cumulative number	0	0 (IFR 2020)	-	-	0	10	/
<b>Outcome 3: Increased application of Circular Economy principles</b>								
Indicator	Unit of measurement	Baseline value	Previous achievement value	Achievements until end of December 2022			Target value	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Achievement value		
Share of targeted population who self-report increased understanding of Circular Economy	Percentage	0.00 %	0 (IFR 2020)	0	0	-	5.00 %	/
Number of innovative green technologies/processes/solutions applied	Cumulative number	0	0 (IFR 2020)	-	-	0	12	/
<b>Output 3.1: Measures for Circular Economy implemented</b>								
Indicator	Unit of measurement	Baseline value	Previous achievement value	Achievements until end of December 2022			Target value	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Achievement value		
Number of circular economy demonstration / pilot projects implemented	Cumulative number	0	0 (IFR 2020)	-	-	0	19	/
Number of intervention areas related to Low-	Cumulative number	0	0 (IFR 2020)	-	-	0	9, Slovenia Development	/

carbon circular economy objectives of Slovenia Development Strategy 2030 addressed							<p>t Strategy 2030, Objective 8 Low-carbon circular economy (pg. 39) sets five intervention areas of which two/ three are addressed by this programme:</p> <p>a) breaking the link between economic growth and growth in consumption of resources and GHG emissions through education and including various stakeholders in the transition to a circular economy</p>	
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							(Action Plan), b) promoting innovation, the use of design and information and communications technologies to develop new business models and products which use raw materials and energy more efficiently and through adaptation to climate change.	
<b>Outcome 4: Improved management of ecosystems under climate change pressure</b>								
Indicator	Unit of measurement	Baseline value	Previous achievement value	Achievements until end of December 2022			Target value	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Achievement value		
<b>Total surface of rehabilitated land (in hectares)</b>	Cumulative number	0	0 (IFR 2020)	-	-	0	100	/

Number of governance models integrating ecosystem services into the decision-making processes for targeted ecosystems in actual use	Cumulative number	0	0 (IFR 2020)	-	-	0	3	/
<b>Output 4.1: Improved capacity for ecosystems management</b>								
Indicator	Unit of measurement	Baseline value	Previous achievement value	Achievements until end of December 2022			Target value	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Achievement value		
Number of restored ecosystems with ecosystem services mapped	Cumulative number	0	0 (IFR 2020)	-	-	0	3	/
Number of proposed governance models	Cumulative number	0	0 (IFR 2020)	-	-	0	3	/
Number of professional staff trained	Cumulative number	0	0 (IFR 2020)	-	-	0	45	/
<i>Gender</i>								
<i>Female</i>	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Male</i>	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Not specified</i>	-	-	0	-	-	0	-	-
Number of people reached by awareness raising and education campaigns	Cumulative number	0	0 (IFR 2020)	-	-	0	600	/
Number of awareness and education campaigns carried out	Cumulative number	0	0 (IFR 2020)	-	-	0	3	/
<b>Bilateral Outcome: Enhanced collaboration between Slovene and Donor State institutions involved in the programme</b>								
Indicator		Baseline value		Achievements until end of December 2022			Target value	Comment



	Unit of measurement		Previous achievement value	Numerator	Denominator	Achievement value		
Level of trust between cooperating entities in the Beneficiary state and Donor States	Scale 1-7	TBD, Survey to be carried out by the FMO	-	-	-	1	4.50, Target is ≥4.5, and an increase on the baseline value	/
Level of satisfaction with the partnership	Scale 1-7	TBD, Survey to be carried out by the FMO	-	-	-	1	4.50, Target is ≥4.5, and an increase on the baseline value	/
Share of cooperating organisations that apply the knowledge acquired from bilateral partnership	Percentage	0.00 %	-	0	0	-	50.00 %	/
<b>Bilateral Output 1: Bilateral cooperation activities</b>								
Indicator	Unit of measurement	Baseline value	Previous achievement value	Achievements until end of December 2022			Target value	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Achievement value		
Number of projects involving cooperation with a donor project partner	Cumulative number	0	11 (IFR 2022)	-	-	15	TBD, Target is minimum 25% of selected projects	/

SI-EDUCATION Education, Scholarships, Apprenticeship and Youth Entrepreneurship

Objective: Enhanced human capital and knowledge base								
Outcome 1: Improved institutional cooperation at all levels of education (formal and informal)								
Indicator	Unit of measurement	Baseline value	Previous achievement value	Achievements until end of December 2022			Target value	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Achievement value		
Number of intellectual outputs generated by institutional cooperation	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	0	30	/
Share of cooperating education and training institutions applying new teaching and learning practices	Percentage	-	-	0	0	-	85.00 %	/
Level of satisfaction with the institutional cooperation	Scale 1-5	4.22	-	-	-	4.22	3.50, Target is minimum 3.5	/
Number of institutions which are using the new teaching models, methods and strategies	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	0	10	/
Output 1.1: New teaching and learning practices for work and life developed								
Indicator	Unit of measurement	Baseline value	Previous achievement value	Achievements until end of December 2022			Target value	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Achievement value		
Number of staff participating in developing and testing teaching models	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	0	200	/
Number of staff trained (providing training for educators on the use of teaching models and methods),	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	0	15	/
Gender								
Female	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
Male	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
Not specified	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
Output 1.2: Knowledge and good practices shared on advancing skills and competencies in education								

Indicator	Unit of measurement	Baseline value	Previous achievement value	Achievements until end of December 2022			Target value	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Achievement value		
Number of peer learning activities carried out	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	0	16	/
Number of participants in peer learning (educators, staff, other education stakeholders)	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	0	300	/
Number of professional staff trained	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	0	60	/
<i>Gender</i>								
<i>Female</i>	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Male</i>	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Not specified</i>	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
<b>Outcome 2: Improved skills and competencies of staff and students involved in blended learning</b>								
Indicator	Unit of measurement	Baseline value	Previous achievement value	Achievements until end of December 2022			Target value	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Achievement value		
Level of satisfaction with the institutional cooperation	Scale 1-5	3.73, Baseline value to be submitted by the PO	-	-	-	3.73	3.50, Target is minimum 3.5	/
Number of institutions which are using intellectual outputs created	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	0	15	/
Share of educational staff who declare improved skills and competencies through involvement in blended learning	Percentage	N/A	-	0	0	-	90.00 %	/
Number of institutions that have implemented a satisfactory strategic framework for offering blended learning	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	0	7	/
<b>Output 2.1: Teaching and learning practices in blended learning improved</b>								

Indicator	Unit of measurement	Baseline value	Previous achievement value	Achievements until end of December 2022			Target value	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Achievement value		
<b>Number of students that participated in blended learning</b>	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	0	260	/
<i>Gender</i>								
<i>Female</i>	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Male</i>	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Not specified</i>	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
<i>State type</i>								
<i>Beneficiary State</i>	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Donor State</i>	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Not specified</i>	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
<b>Number of joint intellectual outputs created</b>	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	0	4	/
<b>Number of staff trained in blended learning methods</b>	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	0	62	/
<i>Gender</i>								
<i>Female</i>	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Male</i>	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Not specified</i>	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
<i>State type</i>								
<i>Beneficiary State</i>	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Donor State</i>	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Not specified</i>	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
<b>Share of students who declare improved skills and competences through involvement in blended learning</b>	Percentage	N/A	-	0	0	-	90.00 %	/
<b>Output 2.2: Knowledge and best practices shared with donor states institutions</b>								
Indicator	Unit of measurement	Baseline value	Previous achievement value	Achievements until end of December 2022			Target value	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Achievement value		

Number of joint events (peer learning visits)	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	1	3	/
Number of staff from beneficiary state in exchanges	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	22	24	/
<i>Gender</i>								
<i>Female</i>	-	-	-	-	-	11	-	-
<i>Male</i>	-	-	-	-	-	11	-	-
<i>Not specified</i>	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Type of exchange</i>								
<i>Online</i>	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Physical</i>	-	-	-	-	-	22	-	-
<i>Not specified</i>	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
Number of staff from donor states in exchanges	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	6	14	-
<i>Donor State</i>								
<i>Norway</i>	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Iceland</i>	-	-	-	-	-	6	-	-
<i>Liechtenstein</i>	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Not specified</i>	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Gender</i>								
<i>Female</i>	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	-
<i>Male</i>	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-
<i>Not specified</i>	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Type of exchange</i>								
<i>Online</i>	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Physical</i>	-	-	-	-	-	6	-	-
<i>Not specified</i>	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
<b>Outcome 3: Education and social environment to support disadvantaged groups improved</b>								
Indicator	Unit of measurement	Baseline value	Previous achievement value	Achievements until end of December 2022			Target value	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Achievement value		

Share of involved service providers who declare improved skills	Percentage	-	-	0	0	-	95.00 %	/
Number of beneficiaries of services provided or improved	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	0	350	/
<i>Gender</i>								
Female	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
Male	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
Not specified	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Age</i>								
Children and youth (0-17)	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
Young adults (18-29)	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
Adults (30-64)	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
Elderly (65+)	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
Not specified	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
<b>Output 3.1: Support services for the NEET (not in employment, education or training) established</b>								
Indicator	Unit of measurement	Baseline value	Previous achievement value	Achievements until end of December 2022			Target value	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Achievement value		
Number of new or upgraded services developed and tested in local environment	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	0	2	/
Number of staff trained to work with NEET	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	0	20	/
<i>Gender</i>								
Female	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
Male	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
Not specified	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
Number of inclusive activities (events, workshops, trainings)	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	0	20	/
<b>Output 3.2: Support to youth provided</b>								
Indicator	Unit of measurement	Baseline value	Previous achievement value	Achievements until end of December 2022			Target value	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Achievement value		

Number of new or upgraded services	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	0	3	/
Number of staff trained	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	0	15	/
<i>Gender</i>								
<i>Female</i>	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Male</i>	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Not specified</i>	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
Number of networking, trainings or advisory activities for the young	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	0	15	/
<b>Output 3.3: Support environment for precarious workers provided</b>								
Indicator	Unit of measurement	Baseline value	Previous achievement value	Achievements until end of December 2022			Target value	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Achievement value		
Number of support services developed (advisory, information, training, etc.)	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	0	3	/
Number of intellectual outputs produced (analyses, information materials, learning materials, etc.)	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	0	5	/
Number of support activities (information events, workshops, etc.)	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	0	10	/
Number of participants reached by awareness raising events (round tables, public debates, conferences, etc.)	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	0	200	/
<b>Outcome 4: Improved work-life balance (WLB)</b>								
Indicator	Unit of measurement	Baseline value	Previous achievement value	Achievements until end of December 2022			Target value	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Achievement value		
Number of beneficiaries of services provided or improved	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	0	150	/
<i>Gender</i>								
<i>Female</i>	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-

Male	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
Not specified	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
Number of institutions applying gender equality instruments (or WLB instruments)	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	0	3	/
Share of participants with improved understanding of WLB and gender policies	Percentage	-	-	0	0	-	90.00 %	/
<b>Output 4.1: Local systems established supporting WLB</b>								
Indicator	Unit of measurement	Baseline value	Previous achievement value	Achievements until end of December 2022			Target value	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Achievement value		
Number of measures improved or introduced at local level (new or upgraded services, products, tools)	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	0	3	/
Number of professional staff trained (coordinators, mentors, informal carers, animators, etc.)	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	0	20	/
<b>Gender</b>								
Female	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
Male	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
Not specified	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
<b>Output 4.2: Organisational culture of work-life balance and gender equality generated</b>								
Indicator	Unit of measurement	Baseline value	Previous achievement value	Achievements until end of December 2022			Target value	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Achievement value		
Number of participants reached by awareness raising and capacity building activities in organisations (disaggregated by gender)	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	0	100	/
Number of measures adopted in organisations (tools, guidelines etc.)	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	0	4	/
<b>Outcome 5: Improved skills for good governance and cooperation in the provision of child victim services</b>								
Indicator				Achievements until end of December 2022				Comment



	Unit of measurement	Baseline value	Previous achievement value	Numerator	Denominator	Achievement value	Target value	
<b>Number of beneficiaries of services provided or improved</b>	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	0	80	/
<i>Gender</i>								
<i>Female</i>	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Male</i>	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Not specified</i>	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
<b>Share of professional staff who declared improved skills and competences</b>	Percentage	-	-	0	0	-	90.00 %	/
<b>Number of institutions using the "Barnahus/Children's House" model</b>	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	0	1	/
<b>Output 5.1: New or improved cooperation models piloted for child victim services</b>								
Indicator	Unit of measurement	Baseline value	Previous achievement value	Achievements until end of December 2022			Target value	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Achievement value		
<b>Number of improved/new services supported</b>	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	0	1	/
<b>Number of pilot projects implemented for child victim services</b>	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	0	1	/
<b>Number of professional staff trained</b>	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	0	120	/
<i>Gender</i>								
<i>Female</i>	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Male</i>	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Not specified</i>	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
<b>Number of training courses organised</b>	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	0	14	/
<b>Evaluation report on the pilot implementation</b>	Binary	No	-	-	-	No	Yes	/
<b>Plan for evaluation and expansion</b>	Binary	No	-	-	-	No	Yes	/
<b>Output 5.2: Awareness raising activities carried out</b>								

Indicator	Unit of measurement	Baseline value	Previous achievement value	Achievements until end of December 2022			Target value	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Achievement value		
Number of awareness raising campaigns	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	0	3	/
Number of people reached by awareness raising campaigns	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	0	100,000	/
Number of schools included in awareness raising workshops	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	10	20	/
<b>Bilateral Outcome: Enhanced collaboration between the Slovene and Donor States institutions involved in the programme</b>								
Indicator	Unit of measurement	Baseline value	Previous achievement value	Achievements until end of December 2022			Target value	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Achievement value		
Level of trust between cooperating entities in Beneficiary States and Donor States	Scale 1-7	TBD, Survey to be carried out by the FMO	-	-	-	1	4.50, Target is ≥4.5, and an increase on the baseline value	/
Level of satisfaction with the partnership	Scale 1-7	TBD, Survey to be carried out by the FMO	-	-	-	1	4.50, Target is ≥4.5, and an increase on the baseline value	/
Share of cooperating organisations that apply the knowledge acquired from bilateral partnership	Percentage	0.00 %	-	0	0	-	50.00 %	/
<b>Bilateral Output 1: Bilateral cooperation activities supported</b>								

Indicator	Unit of measurement	Baseline value	Previous achievement value	Achievements until end of December 2022			Target value	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Achievement value		
Number of projects involving cooperation with a donor project partner	Cumulative number	0	1 (IFR 2022)	-	-	22	7	/

## Annex 2: Communication summary

### A. COMMUNICATION ABOUT THE EEA AND NORWAY GRANTS

#### 1. Summary of communication achievements this year

Implementation of the EEA and Norway Grants in 2022 was mostly marked by the long-awaited selection of projects under the programmes Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation and Education, Scholarships, Apprenticeship and Youth Entrepreneurship along with the start of project implementation. Regarding the indicators of the specific communication objective set out in the Communication Strategy, the cumulative values remained unchanged.

The launch of the redesigned website of the EEA and Norway Grants in Slovenia ([norwaygrants.si](http://norwaygrants.si) and [eeagrants.si](http://eeagrants.si)) in January 2022 was a landmark achievement. The website follows the red thread of websites of other beneficiary states; it looks fresh, more transparent, and user friendly.

In April 2022, the National Focal Point organized the fourth Annual Meeting to discuss implementation progress and achievements of the Grants in Slovenia. The 2022 Annual Meeting took place in Ljubljana on 5 and 6 April 2022. A number of daily news items were prepared and published on the social media channels, together with a short video summarizing the event. The news item about the meeting was published on the [dedicated website](#). On the sidelines of the meeting, a short video address by Her Excellency, the Ambassador of the Kingdom of Norway, Ms Trine Skymoene was posted on the social networks.

In October, the National Focal Point hosted the two-day Technical meeting of the EEA and Norway Grants 2014–2021. Apart from taking stock of the progress made in the implementation of the EEA and Norway Grants in Slovenia, the discussion with the FMO also focused on the review of the Education programme and the Fund for Bilateral Relations.

The National Focal Point attended the opening of the Children's House/Barnahus, a safe space providing effective and comprehensive professional treatment of child victims of crimes, which took place on 27 May 2022. The premises were established within the framework of the pre-defined project Barnahus that is implemented under the Education programme.

The news item about the Technical meeting and the event was published on the dedicated [website](#) and [social media](#).

The National Focal Point participated in two Annual Communication Workshops organized by the Financial Mechanism Office. The [first one](#) took place on 9 and 10 June in Athens, Greece. The [second one](#) was carried out on 2 and 3 November 2022 at the EFTA House in Brussels. The workshop was, like the one held the previous summer, based on the storytelling and the presentation of new trends in the field of integrated communication, and featured the presentation of a new campaign of the Grants. The National Focal Point and the Financial Mechanism Office also held quite a few regular online monthly meetings.

Two social media campaigns with a lighter note were carried out in 2022: the summer campaign called "Something Salty" and the holiday season campaign "Advent Calendar". The main goal of these activities was to promote the EEA and Norway Grants and to emphasize the role of the Donor States in a more informal and entertaining way.

## 2. Summary of activities to promote bilateral cooperation opportunities this year

News about the bilateral activity to support the integration of displaced persons from Ukraine with temporary protection in Slovenia that was implemented with support from the Fund for Bilateral Relations was posted on the [dedicated website](#) and [social media](#).

In December, the call for proposals for bilateral activities under the Fund for Bilateral Relations within the Active Citizens Fund in Slovenia was published on the dedicated [website](#).

## 3. Events

No organised events.

## 4. Best practices

Activity description	Audience reached (type and size)	Contribution to communication objectives
Redesigned website of the EEA and Norway Grants in Slovenia (norwaygrants.si and eeagrants.si)	All	The redesigned website contributes to consistency with the overall visual identity of the EEA and Norway Grants. The aim was to create a better user experience and improve usability.

## 5. Media coverage

### Example 1

Coverage	Type	National
Description	In 2022, the EEA and Norway Grants were mentioned in over 120 articles in various local, regional, and national media outlets. For example, the reallocation of available funds in the amount of EUR 500,000 EUR to the Active Citizens Fund was covered by several media outlets ( <a href="#">STA</a> , <a href="#">Dnevnik</a> , <a href="#">Siol</a> , 19 July 2022). Similarly, the news about the bilateral activity to support the integration of displaced persons from Ukraine with temporary protection in Slovenia that was funded under the Fund for Bilateral Relations also received media attention ( <a href="#">STA</a> , <a href="#">Primorske novice</a> , 6 May 2022).	
Relevant links	-	

### Example 2

Coverage	Type	National
<b>Description</b>	For the most part media coverage related to the projects that were launched in mid-2022 under the programmes Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation and Education, Scholarships, Apprenticeship and Youth Entrepreneurship. The EEA and Norway Grants were also mentioned in relation to the closing conference of the project Decent work for all that was implemented under the framework of the programme Social Dialogue – Decent Work and operated by Innovation Norway ( <a href="#">STA</a> , <a href="#">Primorske novice</a> , <a href="#">Svet24.si</a> , 14 June 2022).	
<b>Relevant links</b>	-	

### Example 3

Coverage	Type	National
<b>Description</b>	Certain projects from the previous funding period still resonate. For example, the project Ljubljana which was financed under the EEA Financial Mechanism Programme 2009–2014 and is known for an important underwater archeologic achievement that was also acknowledged by UNESCO was featured in a news article published after the project completion ( <a href="#">Dnevnik</a> , 19 September 2022). The project Incredible years – for every child which was financed under the Norwegian Financial Mechanism Programme 2009–2014 and aimed to introduce parent training with a positive impact on the mental health of parents was mentioned in two media outlets ( <a href="#">STA</a> , <a href="#">Koroške novice</a> , 10 October 2022).	
<b>Relevant links</b>	-	

## 6. Website and social media

### 6.a. Links to the website and social media accounts

Link to the website			
<a href="http://www.eeagrants.si">http://www.eeagrants.si</a>			
Total number of page views in the reporting year	Change in number of (page views) compared to the previous year	Total number of unique visitors in the reporting year	Change in number of (page visitors) compared to the previous year
45777	-7432	7382	-585

Specific link or handle for the account	Posts published in the reporting year	Total likes in the reporting year	Total comments in the reporting year	Total shares/Retweets etc. in the reporting year	Followers gained since programme launch

Facebook	facebook.com/NorwayGrantsSlovenia				
	95	550	23	30	270
Instagram	instagram.com/EEANorwayGrantsSlovenia				
	86	204	2	0	70

#### 6.b. Results of website and social media activities

By the end of 2022, 34 news items were published on the website, 95 posts on Facebook and 86 posts on Instagram. The statistical data record 1,462 Facebook page likes, 1,589 followers on Facebook and 308 followers on Instagram. Lower traffic on the website in 2022 compared to 2021 can be attributed to the closing of Calls for Proposals for both programmes. This is also the reason for the lower number of Facebook posts in 2022 compared to the preceding year.

Attention to the EEA and Norway Grants was drawn with posts on various international and European days that relate to the content of the Grants, for example the [World Bee Day post](#) in connection with the BeeConSel project implemented under the Fund for Regional Cooperation.

Two comprehensive campaigns with a lighter note were carried out in 2022 by the National Focal Point. In the summer campaign called "Something Salty", the followers were invited to discover the salty joys of summer. As part of the posts and stories on the Facebook and Instagram page, a video prize draw was prepared and livestreamed on our social media channels.

## 7. Visuals

Every article published on the dedicated website and every post on social networks features a tailor-made graphics with the relevant EEA and Norway Grants logo.

The following visuals are highlighted:

- [video](#) announcement of the Annual Meeting by the Head of the Department for European Territorial Cooperation and Financial Mechanisms,
- Annual Meeting [video](#),
- [video](#) address by Her Excellency, the Ambassador of the Kingdom of Norway, Ms Trine Skymo.

## B. COMMUNICATION ABOUT THE PROGRAMME

### SI-CLIMATE Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation

#### 1. Best practice examples

[Studio of Circular Economy \(studioKroG\)](#) project is one of the most visible projects under the programme. The project plays an important role in addressing the challenges posed by the lack of understanding of the possibility of circular resource use. The project fosters a comprehensive approach to re-use and design of waste and industrial symbiosis by repurposing discarded shipping containers with functionally and thematically equipped rooms in accordance with the principle "reduce, repair, design and reuse" = studio of circular economy. One of the highlighted activities of the project was the opening of the Reuse Showroom. In December, the Programme Operator, the

Project Promoter and the project partners jointly organized the **Reuse Showroom opening event at the premises of the Government Office for Development and European Cohesion Policy (GODC)**. The showroom showcases how various resources, in this case furniture and design, can be reused in the frame of circular resource use, while also making an important contribution to understanding the circular concept and reducing waste in everyday life. Government Office itself therefore acts as the circular economy ambassador as it fosters the advancement of circular economy principles in the state administration.

Another best practice example in times of energy crisis and climate change is the project [Pilot Geothermal Power Plant on an Existing Gas Well Pg-8, pilot project \(SI-Geo-Electricity\)](#). The main result of the project will be an innovative pilot geothermal power plant operating on the basis of a patented Slovenian technology of extraction of geothermal energy from unproductive oil and gas wells with the use of a geothermal gravity heat pipe. The [construction](#) has already begun, the Čentiba pilot geothermal power plants is thus scheduled to start trial operation in June 2023.

## 2. Best bilateral cooperation examples

Until now, bilateral cooperation took place mainly in the form of study visits to the Donor States. For example, as part of the studioKroG project [a study visit to Norway](#) took place in September 2023. The project partners had an opportunity to see what organisations do to encourage local communities to implement the circular economy principles in everyday life, and how the reuse centres work together with local authorities.

In October 2023, a workshop and a series of site-visits were held in Iceland within the framework of the INFO-GEOTHERMAL project. Project partners visited mainly Icelandic companies that work with geothermal energy and supervise it, as well as smaller and bigger geothermal power plants. Participants learned about different technologies in the field of thermal water utilization, principles of geothermal parks, schemes for risk insurance, project development and methods of managing space and natural resources. The knowledge transfer will contribute positively to the implementation of the project INFO-GEOTHERMAL.

## 3. The programme in a nutshell

Please insert a quote about this programme. Please add the name and the title of the person. You can add up to two quotes.	Quote 1	
	<i>"The NoviKroG Project is looking for opportunities to circulate materials, products, and services in the local environment and to close local material loops. /.../ We will try to prove that reusing materials and waste in our local environment is possible and meaningful. We will focus on what we have in our environment and the opportunities that our economy offers. /.../ In doing so, we will explore and find innovative solutions that will achieve a competitive advantage in the coming years when raw materials available today will no longer be taken for granted or will be very expensive."</i>	
	Author	Title
	Peter Geršič	Project Manager and Head of Development Project Office at the City Municipality of Novo



			mesto (Project Promoter of the NoviKroG project)
	<b>Quote 2</b>		
	<i>"The main purpose of the SmartMOVE project is to introduce and promote sustainable mobility in companies and organizations that employ a large number of people and consequently generate a lot of traffic. The project aims to offer concrete measures and incentives, while at the same time empowering and motivating both employees and employers for a shift towards sustainable mobility."</i>		
	<b>Author</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Title</b>
		Mag. Lilijana Madjar	Director of Regional Development Agency of Ljubljana Urban Region (Project Promoter of the SmartMOVE project)

#### 4. Visibility of the Grants and the Donors

The majority of the activities aiming to increase the visibility of the Grants and the Donors have been made online so far. News on every activity of the Programme Operator is shared on the dedicated website and social networks. The third meeting of the Cooperation Committee took place on 22 February 2022 in a virtual format ([website](#), [social media](#)). The fifth meeting of the Cooperation Committee was held in Ljubljana on 14 December 2022 ([website](#), [social media](#)). On 11 October 2022, the Programme Operator organized an online workshop for reporting for Slovenian beneficiaries ([website](#), [social media](#)).

The most efficient way to increase the visibility of the Grants and the Donors is to share the news about the project implementation on the dedicated website and social networks, for example, the news about project kick-offs, study visits to the Donor Project Partners and other interesting activities. Information about the projects is also published in the monthly newsletter of the Government Office for Development and European Cohesion Policy – Vizija Kohezija ("[Vision Cohesion](#)").

The EEA and Norway Grants, the programme and its projects were also made visible with posts on the occasion of various international and European days that relate to the content of the programme, for example the [European Mobility Week](#).

As regards the indicators of the specific communication objective set in the Communication Plan, we wish to stress that the achievement of the first indicator, i.e. "Number of factsheets" in relation to the project selection was first planned for 2022 and later postponed to 2023 as the project contract process was finalized only in the second half of the year. Thus, the review of indicators on the achievement of communication objectives in cumulative values is as follows:

Communication objective		Indicator	Unit of Measurement	Initial Value	Cumulative value at the end of				Target value at the end of period	Source	Frequency of reporting	Methodology
							2021	2022				
Specific objective	Inform (potential) beneficiaries / communicate the possibilities to use the EEA and Norway Grants	Number of factsheets	Number	0	1	1	2	2	3	PO	Annually	Cumulative number of information leaflets created
	and	Other information materials (e.g. brochures, etc.)	Number	0	0	0	0	0	1	PO	Annually	Cumulative number of other information materials created
	inform target audiences of the results, benefits and impact of the EEA and Norway Grants, its programmes and projects	Events performed	Number	0	0	0	1	1	2	PO	Annually	Cumulative number of events performed

## 5. Media coverage

### Example 1

Coverage	Type	National
Description	There were over 60 news articles about the programme in various local, regional, and national media in 2022. In addition to the news items about the selection of projects under the Call for Proposals ( <a href="#">STA</a> , <a href="#">Dnevnik</a> , 27 May 2022), media outlets covered launch of projects and their first activities.	
Relevant links	-	

### Example 2

Coverage	Type	National
Description	One of the most publicized projects of the programme Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation in various media is the <a href="#">studioKroG</a> project. It received attention of different national and local media outlets, such as <a href="#">STA</a> (29 September 2022), <a href="#">Sobota.info</a> (29 September 2022) and <a href="#">Večer</a> (6 October 2022). As a one-of-a-kind circular economy example, the project appeared on several radio stations, such as <a href="#">Radio Slovenia International (RTV SLO) in EU minuta show</a> (21 November 2022) or radio <a href="#">Štajerski val</a> (19 December 2022). StudioKroG was also hosted on the local <a href="#">TV Ormož</a> (19 December 2022). Two articles about the StudioKroG project were published in the ESG Magazine – Zelena Slovenija, specialized magazine for sustainable development in Slovenia ( <a href="#">13 September 2022</a> and <a href="#">27 October 2022</a> ). Media appearance is also listed on the <a href="#">website</a> of the Project Promoter.	
Relevant links	-	

### Example 3

Coverage	Type	National
Description	As part of the SmartMOVE project, the media and the public were presented with a three-month pilot test of a new mode of transport to work, the so-called dynamic group transport to work from the vicinity of Ljubljana to Ljubljana which is the main commuting destination. The news article was published in several high-profile national media outlets ( <a href="#">Finance</a> , 18 September 2022; <a href="#">STA</a> , 9 December 2022; <a href="#">Dnevnik</a> and <a href="#">Delo</a> , 10 December 2022), local media outlets ( <a href="#">Gorenjski Glas</a> , 12 December 2022; <a href="#">Ljubljana.info</a> , 19 December 2022), and specialized media ( <a href="#">Avto.info</a> , <a href="#">Avto-magazin</a> 20 December 2022).	
Relevant links	-	

#### Example 4

Coverage	Type	National
Description	Furthermore, the SI-Geo-Electricity project also received quite a lot of media attention for its construction of a geothermal power plant that will serve as a demonstration project of good practice ( <a href="#">STA</a> , <a href="#">Večer</a> , <a href="#">Sobota.info</a> , 18 May 2022; <a href="#">Lendava-net</a> 19 May 2022). The pre-defined project INFO-GEOTHERMAL kick-off also caught the attention of the media ( <a href="#">STA</a> , <a href="#">RTV SLO</a> , 30 November 2022; <a href="#">Ptujinfo.com</a> , 1 December 2022; <a href="#">Pomurec.com</a> , 2 December 2022; <a href="#">Energetika.net</a> , 6 December 2022; <a href="#">Maribor24.si</a> , 9 December 2022). The Slovenian Press Agency (STA) also published news articles on projects SOPOREM ( <a href="#">15 December 2022</a> ), SALOMON ( <a href="#">27 July 2022</a> ), Trata 2.1 ( <a href="#">11 September 2022</a> ), and NoviKroG ( <a href="#">7 July 2022</a> ).	
Relevant links	-	

## 6. Visuals

Every article published on the dedicated website and every post on social networks features a tailor-made graphics with the relevant EEA and Norway Grants logo.

The following visuals are highlighted:

- [video](#) of the opening of the Reuse Showroom under the project studioKroG,
- power plant construction [video](#) under the project SI-Geo-Electricity,
- educational and promotional [video](#) for the project JeloviZA.

## SI-EDUCATION Education, Scholarships, Apprenticeship and Youth Entrepreneurship

### 1. Best practice examples

The project [Children's House \(Barnahus\)](#) should be highlighted as an example of best practice. The specific objectives of the project are to establish the pilot location (premises), test a comprehensive treatment of child victims of crime in accordance with the Barnahus model, and provide effective inter-agency cooperation and service for the professional and comprehensive treatment of child victims of crime in one place. The project also seeks to establish a network of qualified experts and multidisciplinary teams, establish cooperation and enable the transfer of knowledge and experience on the treatment of abused children, improve the accessibility of assistance to children who are victims and witnesses of crime, and to raise awareness of the professionals and general public of the problem.

The premises of the Children's House in Ljubljana were officially opened on 27 May 2022. The event received a lot of media attention, also thanks to the presence of high-level guests. The premises were opened by the President of the Republic of Slovenia, Mr. Borut Pahor, Minister of Justice, Mr. Marjan Dikaučič, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Norway in Slovenia, Mrs. Trine Skymoene, and Director of the Children's House, Mrs. Simona Mikec.

A professional article telling the story of Barnahus was created in cooperation with the Office for Financial Mechanisms in Brussels and the representatives of the Children's House in Slovenia. The article is available on the website of the Financial Mechanisms (FMO).  
<https://eeagrants.org/news/new-slovenian-barnahus-supporting-victims-child-abuse>

## 2. Best bilateral cooperation examples

Example of the best project-level bilateral cooperation can be found under the project Blended Learning in Vocational Education and Training (BlendVET), which brings together five project partners from Donor States, i.e. three from Norway and two from Iceland. In April 2022, the first of the three study visits planned as part of the project took place in Norway. The study visit was aimed at exchanging experience and getting to know Norwegian practices in the field of combined learning. As part of the study visit, the partner schools Fagskolen i Viken and Åssiden viderenege skole presented their practices.

Visible bilateral cooperation took place in the form of study visits to the Donor States as well. For example, as part of the Prometheus project, the project partners paid [a visit to Norway](#) in November 2022. The study visit took place in a hybrid way, which enabled the partners who did not travel to Norway to follow the entire programme from Slovenia. Slovenian partners got to know the operation of five Norwegian companies and organizations with the aim of exchanging good practices and jointly addressing the contents of the project – gender equality, remote work, and organizational culture.

In November 2022, [a study visit to Norway](#) was also organized under the project PreseNEETi se, where Slovenian participants learned about examples of good practices in working with the NEET population in Norway.

## 3. The programme in a nutshell

<p><b>Please insert a quote about this programme.</b></p> <p><b>Please add the name and the title of the person.</b></p> <p><b>You can add up to two quotes.</b></p>	<b>Quote 1</b>	
	<i>"This project opens up new opportunities for Slovenian schools. It primarily includes enthusiasts who like to experiment with digital technology in the classroom. But it's not about technology; it's about the quality of education. We all want to improve education and the life of students, teachers, parents, and the society as a whole."</i>	
	<b>Author</b>	<b>Name</b>
		<b>Title</b>
	Mag. Janez Damjan	Director of Institute of the Republic of Slovenia for Vocational Education and Training (Project Promoter of the BlendVET project).
	<b>Quote 2</b>	
	<i>"The idea is to connect organizations and individuals working in the field of youth as closely as possible with users, the economy, and the wider local community. Only with systematic youth work and continuous cooperation, and better activation of young people in decision-making processes, it will be possible to overcome the structural problems that currently prevent young people from achieving a higher level of quality of life in the region."</i>	

	Author	Name	Title
		Aljaž Kitak	Associate at Slovenj Gradec Youth Culture Centre, Public Institute for Tourism, Sports, Youth and Social Programs SPOTUR Slovenj Gradec (Project Partner of the KOR-NET project)

#### 4. Visibility of the Grants and the Donors

The majority of the activities aiming to increase the visibility of the Grants and the Donors has been made online so far. News on every activity of the Programme Operator is shared on the dedicated website and social networks. The third meeting of the Cooperation Committee took place on 22 February 2022 in a virtual format ([website](#), [social media](#)). The fourth meeting of the Cooperation Committee was held in Ljubljana on 13 December 2022 ([website](#), [social media](#)). On 11 October 2022, the Programme Operator organized an online workshop for reporting for Slovenian beneficiaries ([website](#), [social media](#)).

In October, the Programme Operator and the National Focal Point jointly hosted the two-day Technical meeting of the EEA and Norway Grants 2014–2021 to review the programme Education, Scholarships, Apprenticeship and Youth Entrepreneurship. The news about the meeting was published on the dedicated [website](#) and [social media](#).

The most efficient way to increase the visibility of the Grants and the Donors is to share the news about the project implementation on the dedicated website and social networks, for example about the project kick-offs, study visits to the project partners from the Donor States, and other interesting activities. Some of the information about the projects is also published in the monthly newsletter of the Government Office for Development and European Cohesion Policy – Vizija Kohezija ([“Vision Cohesion”](#)).

The EEA and Norway Grants, the programme and its projects were also made visible with posts on the occasion of various international and European days that relate to the content of the programme, for example the [International Day of Education](#).

#### 5. Media coverage

##### Example 1

Coverage	Type	National
Description	The pre-defined project Children’s House was widely publicized and received great media attention when it started operating in May. The premises of the Children’s House were officially opened by high-level guests, the President of the Republic of Slovenia, Mr. Borut Pahor, the Ambassador of the Kingdom of Norway to Slovenia, Her Excellency, Mrs. Trine Skymoene, the Minister of Justice, Mr. Marjan Dikaučič, and the director of the Children’s House, Mrs. Simona Mikec. As a result, the event received great media coverage: <a href="#">STA</a> , <a href="#">RTV SLO</a> , <a href="#">Siol.net</a> , <a href="#">24ur.com</a> , <a href="#">Primorske novice</a> , 27 May 2022; <a href="#">Slovenske novice</a> , 1 June 2022; <a href="#">Nedeljski dnevnik</a> , 8 June 2022. The director of the Children’s House was hosted on	

	the <a href="#">Hot Microphone show on radio Val 202</a> (1 June 2022) and <a href="#">radio Štajerski Val</a> (9 June 2022). The project was also presented in the talk shows <a href="#">Dobro jutro</a> (6 June 2022) and <a href="#">Arena</a> on RTV SLO (10 July 2022).
Relevant links	-

### Example 2

Coverage	Type	National
Description	After a press conference which featured the overview of TERA project activities, and the presentation of the results of the national survey Gender Equality in Rural Areas, <a href="#">STA</a> reported about the project (11 December 2022) and a number of local media outlets, such as <a href="#">Posavski obzornik</a> (9 December 2022), <a href="#">Maribor24.si</a> , <a href="#">Radio Brežice</a> , <a href="#">Lokalno.si</a> (11 December 2022). <a href="#">Vaš kanal</a> , <a href="#">Dolenjska.eu</a> , <a href="#">Lokalno.si</a> (11 December 2022) reported about the study visit of all project partners to Norway.	
Relevant links	-	

### Example 3

Coverage	Type	Regional
Description	Development of Innovative Support Environment for youth under the project Career Center Posavje echoed in several local media outlets, such as <a href="#">Eposavje</a> , <a href="#">Posavski obzornik</a> (14 June 2022), <a href="#">Radio Krka</a> (25 June 2022), <a href="#">Eposavje</a> (6 October 2022) with an article featuring the project by the <a href="#">STA</a> (25 June 2022). The Slovenian Press Agency (STA) also published articles on projects Heritage School for the New Generations ( <a href="#">17 July 2022</a> ), PROMETEJ ( <a href="#">21 September 2022</a> ), DECAP-HE ( <a href="#">18 October 2022</a> ). Various local media portals covered the following projects: digi.komp ( <a href="#">Srcnotrbavlje.si</a> , 22 September 2022), KOR-NET ( <a href="#">Sglasnik.sg</a> , 11 October 2022), PreseNEETI se ( <a href="#">Celje.info</a> , 27 September 2022), BlendVET ( <a href="#">ACS</a> , 7 November 2022), TalentLAB ( <a href="#">Lendava.info</a> , 22 November 2022), TRIALOG ( <a href="#">Radio Prlek</a> , 20 August 2022) among others.	
Relevant links	-	

## 6. Visuals

Every article published on the dedicated website and every post on social networks features a tailor-made graphics with the Norway Grants logo.

The following visuals are highlighted:

- [Video](#) of the study visit to Norway under the project BlendVET
- [Video](#) of the study visit to Norway under the project BlendVET

### Annex 3: Overview of contracted projects

#### SI-CLIMATE Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation

Outcome	Projects	#	# of donor project partners	Amount contracted	% of outcome budget contracted
<b>Outcome 1: Increased renewable energy production</b>	Pre-defined	1	1	€ 1,073,529	25.32 %
	Contracted through open calls	2	1	€ 2,861,197	67.48 %
	Contracted through small grants scheme	0	0	€ 0	0.00 %
	<b>Total Outcome 1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>€ 3,934,727</b>	<b>92.79 %</b>
<b>Outcome 2: Enhanced sustainable mobility management</b>	Pre-defined	0	0	€ 0	0.00 %
	Contracted through open calls	5	5	€ 5,440,626	97.38 %
	Contracted through small grants scheme	0	0	€ 0	0.00 %
	<b>Total Outcome 2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>€ 5,440,626</b>	<b>97.38 %</b>
<b>Outcome 3: Increased application of Circular Economy principles</b>	Pre-defined	0	0	€ 0	0.00 %
	Contracted through open calls	6	5	€ 3,738,864	100.00 %
	Contracted through small grants scheme	0	0	€ 0	0.00 %
	<b>Total Outcome 3</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>€ 3,738,864</b>	<b>100.00 %</b>
<b>Outcome 4: Improved management of ecosystems under climate change pressure</b>	Pre-defined	0	0	€ 0	0.00 %
	Contracted through open calls	3	3	€ 3,539,072	100.00 %
	Contracted through small grants scheme	0	0	€ 0	0.00 %
	<b>Total Outcome 4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>€ 3,539,072</b>	<b>100.00 %</b>
<b>Programme</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>€ 16,653,289</b>	<b>97.36 %</b>



SI-EDUCATION Education, Scholarships, Apprenticeship and Youth Entrepreneurship

Outcome	Projects	#	# of donor project partners	Amount contracted	% of outcome budget contracted
<b>Outcome 1: Improved institutional cooperation at all levels of education (formal and informal)</b>	Pre-defined	0	0	€ 0	0.00 %
	Contracted through open calls	11	9	€ 6,063,862	100.00 %
	Contracted through small grants scheme	0	0	€ 0	0.00 %
	<b>Total Outcome 1</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>€ 6,063,862</b>	<b>100.00 %</b>
<b>Outcome 2: Improved skills and competencies of staff and students involved in blended learning</b>	Pre-defined	1	5	€ 1,607,844	100.00 %
	Contracted through open calls	0	0	€ 0	0.00 %
	Contracted through small grants scheme	0	0	€ 0	0.00 %
	<b>Total Outcome 2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>€ 1,607,844</b>	<b>100.00 %</b>
<b>Outcome 3: Education and social environment to support disadvantaged groups improved</b>	Pre-defined	0	0	€ 0	0.00 %
	Contracted through open calls	7	6	€ 3,235,294	100.00 %
	Contracted through small grants scheme	0	0	€ 0	0.00 %
	<b>Total Outcome 3</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>€ 3,235,294</b>	<b>100.00 %</b>
<b>Outcome 4: Improved work-life balance (WLB)</b>	Pre-defined	0	0	€ 0	0.00 %
	Contracted through open calls	4	4	€ 1,997,261	99.86 %
	Contracted through small grants scheme	0	0	€ 0	0.00 %
	<b>Total Outcome 4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>€ 1,997,261</b>	<b>99.86 %</b>
<b>Outcome 5: Improved skills for good governance and cooperation in the provision of child victim services</b>	Pre-defined	1	0	€ 1,563,588	100.00 %
	Contracted through open calls	0	0	€ 0	0.00 %
	Contracted through small grants scheme	0	0	€ 0	0.00 %
	<b>Total Outcome 5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>€ 1,563,588</b>	<b>100.00 %</b>
<b>Programme</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>€ 14,467,849</b>	<b>99.98 %</b>

## Annex 4: Risk management

### SI-CLIMATE Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation

Programmatic risks						
Risk description	Risk related to	Likelihood	Consequence	Risk score	Response type	Validity
Short period for carrying out all necessary administrative procedures and potential delay in approving the pre-defined project to be financed out of the reserve funds	Both objectives	1	2	1.41	Mitigate	
	Description of planned response	Not applicable - new risk.				
	Description of actual response	Action plan to ensure a hands-on monitoring of key steps and a timely implementation of all administrative procedures. Regular communication between all involved actors (PO, DPPs, NFP, FMO, donors) in order to ensure a smooth implementation of administrative procedures.				
	Planned future response	No future response needed because project started with implementation in September 2022				
Late signing of project contracts and slow start of project implementation (short period for project implementation)	Both objectives	2	3	2.45	Mitigate	New
	Description of planned response	Project expenditures eligibility from the decision on the award of grant.				
Operational risks						
Risk description	Risk related to	Likelihood	Consequence	Risk score	Response type	Validity
Shortage of staff, unforeseen institutional changes	Both objectives	2	4	2.83	Mitigate	

	<b>Description of planned response</b>	Comprehensive and regular communication on the progress of projects and importance of no further delays with the new Minister and the new Government after Parliamentary Elections in April 2022 in order to retain the existing staff and acquire new staff.				
	<b>Description of actual response</b>	Training of staff involved in the implementation of the Programme and other forms of motivation to retain experienced staff. Training of staff involved in the implementation of the Programme and other forms of motivation to retain experienced staff. 1 employee returned from maternity leave and will work as a contract manager (0,5 FTE) Request for one new employee in the role of Contract Manager for projects under both programmes				
	<b>Planned future response</b>	Request for one new employee in the role of Contract Manager for projects under both programmes Employment of new staff				
	Both objectives	2	3	2.45	Mitigate	
Possible delays in the award of public procurement due to formally or technically non-compliant offers received, appeals lodged against the decision to award a public procurement etc.	<b>Description of planned response</b>	Not applicable - new risk.				
	<b>Description of actual response</b>	PPs were encouraged to conduct an adequate market research before the launch of the public procurement. Projects are regularly monitored by PO Contract Managers in order to detect early possible bottlenecks in the public procurement procedures.				
	<b>Planned future response</b>	Regular monitoring of projects and on-site visits if delays occur.				
Rising prices due to the energy crisis and the war in Ukraine	Both objectives	2	3	2.45	Mitigate	New

Projects with significant budget	<b>Description of planned response</b>	Individual meetings between PO Contract Manager and the selected PP to detect eventual needs for project modifications and their quick approval.				
	Both objectives	2	2	2.00	Mitigate	New
	<b>Description of planned response</b>	PO contract managers will identify projects with significant budget.				

#### Overall risk of the programme

	Likelihood	Consequence	Risk score
OVERALL RISK OF THE PROGRAMME	2	4	2.83

#### SI-EDUCATION Education, Scholarships, Apprenticeship and Youth Entrepreneurship

##### Programmatic risks

Risk description	Risk related to	Likelihood	Consequence	Risk score	Response type	Validity
Late signing of project contracts and slow start of project implementation (short period for project implementation)	Both objectives	2	3	2.45	Mitigate	New
	<b>Description of planned response</b>	Project expenditures eligibility strts from the decision on the award of grant.				

##### Operational risks

Risk description	Risk related to	Likelihood	Consequence	Risk score	Response type	Validity
Shortage of staff, unforeseen institutional changes	Both objectives	2	4	2.83	Mitigate	
	<b>Description of planned response</b>	Comprehensive and regular communication on the progress of projects financed under the Education Programme with the new Minister and the new Government.				

		Training of staff involved in the implementation of the Programme and other forms of motivation to retain experienced staff.				
	<b>Description of actual response</b>	Training of staff involved in the implementation of the Programme and other forms of motivation to retain experienced staff. 1 employee returned from maternity leave and will work as a contract manager (0,5 FTE) Request for one new employee in the role of Contract Manager for projects under both programmes				
	<b>Planned future response</b>	Request for one new employee in the role of Contract Manager for projects under both programmes Employment of new staff				
	Both objectives	2	3	2.45	Mitigate	
Possible delays in the award of public procurement due to formally or technically non-compliant offers received, appeals lodged against the decision to award a public procurement etc.	<b>Description of planned response</b>	Not applicable - new risk.				
	<b>Description of actual response</b>	PPs were encouraged to conduct an adequate market research before the launch of the public procurement. Projects are regularly monitored by PO Contract Managers in order to detect early possible bottlenecks in the public procurement procedures.				
	<b>Planned future response</b>	Regular monitoring of projects and on site visits if delays occur.				
	Both objectives	2	1	1.41	Mitigate	New
Rising prices due to the energy crisis and the war in Ukraine	<b>Description of planned response</b>	Individual meetings between PO Contract Manager and the selected PP to detect eventual needs for project modifications and their quick approval				
	Both objectives	2	2	2.00	Mitigate	New
Less experienced project promoters and project partners						

**Description of  
planned  
response**

Organisation of a workshop for PP where the rules on eligibility of expenditure and other Programme requirements were explained in detail

**Overall risk of the programme**

	<b>Likelihood</b>	<b>Consequence</b>	<b>Risk score</b>
OVERALL RISK OF THE PROGRAMME	2	4	2.83

### **Annex 5: Monitoring plan**

Please note this Annex is uploaded separately and is not visible in this document. Please download and print separately if needed.

### **Annex 6: Evaluation plan**

Please note this Annex is uploaded separately and is not visible in this document. Please download and print separately if needed.

### **Annex 7: Evaluation report**

Not Available

## Annex 8: Technical assistance report

### Overview of main activities

#### National Focal Point

The following activities were performed in 2022:

- Submission of Interim Financial Reports;
- Preparation and submission of the Combined Strategic and Annual Programme Report for 2022;
- Organization of the Annual Meeting with the donors;
- Preparation, submission, and acceptance of the revised MoUs and PAs;
- Participation in Cooperation Committees of SI-CLIMATE and SI-EDUCATION;
- Participation in the Selection Committee of SI-CLIMATE and SI-EDUCATION in an observer capacity;
- Implementation of promotional activities (posting content, news items to the webpage [www.norwaygrants.si/www.eeagrants.si](http://www.norwaygrants.si/www.eeagrants.si) and on social media; Facebook, IG);
- Organization of the JCBF meetings on 6 July and 29 November 2022;
- Conclusion of contracts for new bilateral initiatives under the Bilateral Fund for Cooperation and provision of support to potential project promoters of pre-defined bilateral activities;
- Participation in the meetings and workshops organized by the FMO;
- Participation in the system audit at the Certifying Authority performed by the Audit Authority;
- Preparation of the modified national Description of the Management and Control System and its submission to the Audit Authority in December 2022.

#### Audit Authority

The following activities were performed in 2022:

- Preparation of the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Audit Report containing opinion on the implementation of the programmes supported by the Norwegian Financial Mechanism and the EEA Financial Mechanism in the period 2014-2021;
- Preparation of the updated Audit Strategy (version 3, August 2022);
- System audit of the Management and Control System at the National Focal Point and the Programme Operator for the programmes Education, Scholarships, Apprenticeship and Youth Entrepreneurship and Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation;
- System audit of the Management and Control System at the Certifying Authority and Irregularities Authority;



- Five audits of declared expenditures for projects under the two programmes, Technical Assistance and Fund for Bilateral Relations activities.

### **Certifying Authority**

The following activities were performed in 2022:

- Authorisation of all payment requests submitted to the Certifying Authority by the Programme Operators or the National Focal Point and reimbursement from the national budget;
- Management of the dedicated accounts;
- Taking into account all audit reports issued by the Audit Authority and other bodies;
- Certification of IFRs;
- Use of the eMS and GRACE IT systems, and of the server folders and local folders to maintain all the necessary documents and data records;
- Submission of forecasts of likely payments to the FMO;
- Planning and reporting on the use of Technical Assistance funds;
- Reporting for national purposes;
- Follow-up on the changes of new Guidelines of the National Focal Point and Programme Operators, updates of the FMO documents through the GrACE IT system, communication of open issues and keeping up with other relevant information;
- Participation in the meetings and workshops organized by the national bodies or the FMO;
- Participation in the system audit at the Certifying Authority performed by the Audit Authority.

### **Irregularities Authority**

The following activities were performed in 2022:

- Submission of irregularity reports to the FMO;
- Use of the eMS and GRACE IT systems, and of the server folders and local folders to maintain all the necessary documents and data records;
- Participation in the system audit at the Irregularities Authority performed by the Audit Authority;
- Participation in the meetings and workshops organized by the national bodies or the FMO.

### Budget overview

The implementation of the previous year's TA budget (actual expenditure vs. planned expenditure):

TA BUDGET	PLANNED EXPENDITURE 2022  in EUR	ACTUAL EXPENDITURE 2022  in EUR	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>122,616</b>	<b>92,615.67</b>	
		IFR 6 (March 2022)	IFR 7 (August 2022)
Total		40,388.20	52,227.47
<i>National Focal Point</i>		10,815.71	16,120.56
<i>Certifying Authority</i>		10,614.56	14,907.35
<i>Audit Authority</i>		17,696.98	19,624.90
<i>Irregularities Authority</i>		1,260.95	1,574.66

The actual expenditures incurred by the National Focal Point, the Certifying Authority, the Audit Authority and the Irregularities Authority in the period from 1 July to 31 December 2022 will be reported in the 8<sup>th</sup> Interim Financial Report by 15 March 2023.

**Disbursements to date (cumulative expenditure since the signature of the Agreement vs. total budget)**

TA BUDGET	TOTAL BUDGET  in EUR	CUMULATIVE EXPENDITURE  in EUR
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,131,000.00</b>	<b>329,263.30</b>
<i>National Focal Point</i>	591,000	144,512.97

<i>Certifying Authority(MF)*</i>	<i>231,000</i>	<i>44,521.91</i>
<i>Certifying Authority (SRDF)**</i>	<i>19,000</i>	
<i>Audit Authority</i>	<i>250,000</i>	<i>137,392.81</i>
<i>Irregularities Authority</i>	<i>40,000</i>	<i>2,835.61</i>

\*Ministry of Finance, CA from 18 June 2019

\*\*Public Fund for Regional Development and Development of Rural Areas, CA until 17 June 2019

#### Planned expenditure for 2023 - 2025

TA BUDGET	PLANNED EXPENDITURE 2023  in EUR	PLANNED EXPENDITURE 2024  in EUR	PLANNED EXPENDITURE 2025  in EUR
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>435,236</b>	<b>180,000</b>	<b>90,000</b>

#### Procurement

The National Focal Point carried out public procurement procedures related to the organization of various meetings with the FMO and the Donor States (e.g. Annual Meeting).

Other entities using the Technical Assistance funds did not carry out any public procurements.

#### Staffing

Certain staff changes took place at the NFP level in 2022. The relevant changes were included in the modified Description of the Management and Control System at the national level which was forwarded to the Audit Authority in December 2022.

The following staff members were involved in the implementation of the Grants (2022):

#### National Focal Point

Name of staff member	Official position	Main tasks	Workload (% of working time)	Funded through the Grants (Y/N)
Tanja Renner	Director of the Interreg and Financial Mechanisms Office acting under delegated authority	Head of NFP	20%	N
Nataša Babuder Rumpret	Secretary in the Financial Mechanisms Division	NFP Coordinator and Bilateral Fund Officer	50%	N
Gordana Stanišić	Undersecretary in the Financial Mechanisms Division	Evaluation Officer	50%	N
Dimitrij Kuzmič	Undersecretary in the Financial Mechanisms Division	Bilateral Officer	50%	N
Andreja Štravs	Senior Advisor within the Financial Mechanisms Division	NFP Communication Officer	60%	Y
Boštjan Vilhar	Advisor within the Financial Mechanisms Division	Junior NFP Communication Officer	48%	Y

#### Certifying Authority

Name of staff	Official position	Main tasks	Workload (% of working time)	Funded through the Grants (Y/N)
Evelyn Filip	Head of EU Funds Management Division / CA	Head of CA	10%	N

Robert Šircelj	EU Funds Management Division / CA	CA Coordinator/Finance Officer	50%	Y
Maks Pajek	EU Funds Management Division / CA	CA Finance Officer	20%	Y

#### Audit Authority

Name of staff	Official position	Main tasks	Workload (% of working time)	Funded through the Grants (Y/N)
Patricija Pergar	Acting Director of the Budget Supervision Office	Head of AA	/	N
Mirjam Novakovič	Head of Other European Funds and Mechanisms Audit Division	AA Coordinator	10%	N
Jure Mekinc	Other European Funds and Mechanisms Audit Division	Auditor	90%	Y

#### Irregularities Authority

Name of staff	Official position	Main tasks	Workload (% of working time)	Funded through the Grants (Y/N)
Evelyn Filip	EU Funds Management Division / CA	Head of IA	/	N
Maks Pajek	EU Funds Management Division / CA	IA Coordinator	10%	Y

## Annex 9: Agreement conditions

### SI-CLIMATE Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation

General	
Condition	Fulfilled status
1. The National Focal Point shall ensure that the Programme Operator ensures that any residual or extracted material from project activities is reused, recycled, treated and/or deposited in an environmentally sound manner.	<p>Is condition fulfilled? - N/A</p> <p>Comment</p> <p>Not applicable in 2022 due to the status of programme implementation</p>
2. The Programme Operator is required to ensure visibility of the EEA Grants contributions among other funding sources.	<p>Is condition fulfilled? - Yes</p> <p>Comment</p> <p>The promotional activities have been implemented in accordance with the plan. So far, the majority of activities aiming to increase the visibility of the Grants and the Donors have been made online. The most efficient way to increase the visibility is to share the news about the project implementation on the dedicated website and social networks, especially the news about project kick-offs, study visits to the project partners from the Donor States and other interesting activities.</p>
3. The Programme Operator is required to monitor results of CO <sub>2</sub> -reductions and the cost efficiency of the interventions in terms of CO <sub>2</sub> reduction, and report on them in the annual and final programme reports.	<p>Is condition fulfilled? - N/A</p> <p>Comment</p> <p>Not applicable in 2022 due to the status of programme implementation.</p>
4. The Programme Operator shall organize at least two broad experience sharing events during the programme implementation period, with the aim of showcasing innovative approaches in the projects supported.	<p>Is condition fulfilled? - N/A</p> <p>Comment</p> <p>Not applicable in 2022 due to the status of programme implementation.</p>

<p>5. The Programme Operator shall, in the Final Programme Report, report on the impact that the projects supported will have and have had on the dissemination of knowledge about and further investments in climate change mitigation and adaptation in Slovenia.</p>	<p>Is condition fulfilled? - N/A Comment</p> <p>Projects under the Call for Proposals were selected in 2022.</p>
<p>6. The Programme Operator shall encourage bilateral partnerships across all calls for proposals.</p>	<p>Is condition fulfilled? - Yes Comment</p> <p>Bilateral partnerships have been successfully encouraged as 15 out of 17 projects involve a Donor Project Partners.</p>
<p>7. The National Focal Point shall ensure that the Programme Operator ensures that Project Promoters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep any buildings purchased, constructed, renovated or reconstructed under the project in their ownership for a period of at least 5 years following the completion of the project and continue to use such buildings for the benefit of the overall objectives of the project for the same period;</li> <li>• Keep any buildings purchased, constructed, renovated or reconstructed under the project properly insured against losses such as fire, theft and other normally insurable incidents both during project implementation and for at least 5 years following the completion of the project; and</li> </ul>	<p>Is condition fulfilled? - Yes Comment</p> <p>Projects under the Call for Proposals started mainly in May 2022. The conditions are detailed in the Guidelines for beneficiaries and specified in the project contract.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set aside appropriate resources for the maintenance of any buildings purchased, constructed, renovated or reconstructed under the project for at least 5 years following the completion of the project. The specific means for implementation of this obligation shall be specified in the project contract.</li> </ul>	
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#### SI-EDUCATION Education, Scholarships, Apprenticeship and Youth Entrepreneurship

General	
Condition	Fulfilled status
<p>1. The NFP shall ensure that the Programme Operator ensures that the pre-defined project "Barnahus/Children's House" is complementary and provides synergies with the "Barnahus/Children's House" project, between the Ministry of Justice in Slovenia and the Council of Europe, supported by the EU Structural Reform Support Programme and that the activities are not duplicated.</p> <p>2. The National Focal Point shall ensure that the Programme Operator ensures that project promoters:</p>	<p>Is condition fulfilled? - Yes</p> <p>Comment</p> <p>The PO and the Project Promoter have established several mechanisms to manage risks to fulfil this condition. The Minister of Justice established an inter-ministerial working group which includes members of all key stakeholders to oversee the implementation of the "Children's House" in Slovenia. The PO also participated in the meetings of the working group. The Project Promoter must provide a report on the synergies and activities of both projects regularly, i.e. in each interim project progress report.</p> <p>The projects under the Call for Proposals started mainly in June 2022. The conditions are detailed in the Guidelines for beneficiaries and specified in the project contract.</p>



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep any buildings purchased, constructed, renovated or reconstructed under the project in their ownership for a period of at least 5 years following the completion of the project and continue to use such buildings for the benefit of the overall objectives of the project for the same period;</li> <li>• Keep any buildings purchased, constructed, renovated or reconstructed under the project properly insured against losses such as fire, theft and other normally insurable incidents both during project implementation and for at least 5 years following the completion of the project; and</li> <li>• Set aside appropriate resources for the maintenance of any buildings purchased, constructed, renovated or reconstructed under the project for at least 5 years following the completion of the project. The specific means for implementation of this obligation shall be specified in the project contract.</li> </ul>	
<p>3. For outcomes 1 and 2 indicator "Level of satisfaction with the institutional cooperation", where the baseline value is "to be determined" (TBD), the Programme Operator shall submit to the FMO for approval the baseline value, together with a description of the data collection method used, no later than 12 months after the finalisation of the selection of projects under the last relevant call for proposals. The updated baseline value</p>	<p>Is condition fulfilled? - N/A</p> <p>Comment</p> <p>The projects under the Call for Proposals started mainly in June 2022. The methodology and the approval of the baseline value will be sent to the FMO in January 2023.</p>

shall be agreed upon through a modification of the programme agreement.	
<b>Pre-eligibility</b>	
<b>Condition</b>	<b>Fulfilled status</b>
No costs shall be eligible under the pre-defined project "Barnahus/Children's House" before a detailed description of the scope, activities and final budget, including costs related to refurbishment, furniture and equipment, has been submitted by the Programme Operator and the FMC has confirmed the grant to the project as described in Annex II to this Programme Agreement.	<p>Is condition fulfilled? - Yes</p> <p>Comment</p> <p>Condition fulfilled.</p>