

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

Slovenia

2023

## A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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

The 2023 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, which 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.

2023 was an important year for the implementation of the Climate programme and related projects, as it represented the peak of the project's implementation. This year, work on the Climate programme was mainly devoted to monitoring the implementation of 17 projects under the programme. The projects aim to increase renewable energy production, enhance sustainable mobility management, increase the application of circular economy principles, and improve the management of ecosystems under climate change pressure.

The implementation of the projects is also affected by the situation in global markets, over which none of the stakeholders have any influence, i.e., the war in Ukraine and the related rise in prices. Price increases affect mostly investment projects since a large part of the costs are related to the supply of building materials and the construction itself.

The main constraint affecting the programme implementation is the very tight deadline for project implementation and completion. This is particularly the case for projects that involve complex activities (e.g., public procurement, seasonal or infrastructure activities).

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.

The pre-defined project **INFO-GEOTHERMAL** aims to map deep geothermal potential for direct use of thermal water and geothermal energy, organise and publish data as grounds for future "one-stop-shop" in geothermal energy, support in training authorities, research organisations and project developers from Slovenia and Iceland, create a national geothermal network, and establish a business-attractive environment.

Most of the projects were selected under Outcome 3: Increased Application of Circular Economy Principles, namely six. **Studio of Circular Economy (studioKroG)** project partners presented good practices in environmental conservation and sustainable development at a press conference that took place in used shipping containers. It has become clear that taking care of our planet is crucial, as we face many challenges that demand immediate action. The project StudioKroG is designed to become a model of sustainable development and the circular economy for other local communities. The project has developed an innovative infrastructure that provides a better understanding of the circular economy and promotes local production and reuse of materials.

The project **Restoration of the Network of Wetlands and Grasslands (ReNature)**, related to Outcome 4: Improved Management of Ecosystems Under Climate Change Pressure, aims at improving the management of wetlands and grassland ecosystems in Karst and Reka River Basin Biosphere Reserve as well as in Seasonal Lakes of Pivka Nature Park. The restoration of these ecosystems aims to preserve and enhance the critical functions they provide for various plant and animal species, as well as for human activities.

Bilateral cooperation with the Donor States took place in the form of regular meetings with their representatives and through their involvement in the project implementation phase. The bilateral component is well represented also on the project level: 15 out of 17 projects are implemented in cooperation with partners from the Donor States, i.e., twelve from Norway, two from Liechtenstein and one from Iceland.

In 2023, bilateral cooperation was in full swing in Slovenia. Study visits offered an excellent opportunity for project partners to learn about good practices and share valuable experiences. Several Slovenian project partners visited Iceland, Liechtenstein, or Norway and welcomed donor project partners to Slovenia in the past year. Thus, in the scope of the **SALOMON** project, which brings together two Slovenian institutions and the Norwegian partner of Nord University, the partners took part in the official opening of the bicycle parking facility and electric vehicle charging station in front of the Novo mesto General Hospital.

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

The 2023 Combined Strategic and Annual Report for the EEA and Norway Grants for the period 2014-2021 in Slovenia is 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, which acts as the National Focal Point and Programme Operator. It reflects the progress made in the implementation of the programme Education, Scholarships, Apprenticeship, and Youth Entrepreneurship.

2023 was an important year for the implementation of the Education programme and related projects, as it represented the peak of the projects' implementation. This year, work on the Education programme was mainly devoted to monitoring the implementation of 24 projects under the programme.

In 2023, all projects are being implemented according to plan or are in minor delay, which will not affect the achievement of results. All planned activities will be implemented by the end of the project implementation, and all target values of the outcome and output indicators will be achieved.

Under *Outcome 1: Improved Institutional Cooperation at All Levels of Formal and Informal Education*, within the project **Establishing New Education Modules in the Field of Augmented and Virtual Reality (Think XR)** A 100-hour – XR Academy training programme for mentors/teachers was held, and the Train the trainers programme was conducted. Also, the

Design Thinking workshop on digital tool concepts was prepared and implemented. Two local networking events were held to build XR partnerships. Slovenian project partners participated in a study visit to Norway. They participated in lectures, practical workshops, and visits to good practice examples. After the study visit, they developed guidelines for the transfer of good practice in XR to the Slovenian environment.

Project **Increasing Employment Potentials in the Pomurje Region (TALENT LAB)**, related to the *Outcome 3 Education and Social Environment to Support Disadvantaged Groups Improved*, held the first Startup Academy for young potential first-time entrepreneurs to introduce support services and current financial incentives available for entrepreneurs. The first series of entrepreneurship hackathons was continued and concluded. This activity culminated in the first PitchDay showcase event, which was also attended by the Ambassador of the Kingdom of Norway.

Both pre-defined projects under the programme, i.e., BlendVET and Children's House (Barnahus), were further implemented according to the plan foreseen for 2023.

The **BlendVET** project is also a part of the international #OurStories campaign. The project develops school strategies for the introduction of blended learning, provides training for teachers, and designs and develops practical solutions for e-learning.

The activities included regular partner (online) meetings for effective project management, self-evaluation of schools on the use of digital technology, design of school development strategies with an implementation plan for the introduction of blended learning, training for blended learning for vocational and technical education teachers, video guides, purchase of ICT equipment necessary for the implementation of blended learning for eight additional Slovenian schools, and a study visit to Slovenia.

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

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). The experience of the Project Promoters with the Donor Project Partners has mostly been positive.

Many study visits to Norway have been carried out as part of the projects. Under one of the projects, i.e., **digi.komp** project, Slovenian partners hosted a Norwegian delegation. The Norwegian project partner conducted the first round of workshops together with three lecturers.

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. So far, the project has seen effective cooperation, active involvement, and good responsiveness of the DPPs.

The main constraint currently affecting the programme implementation is the very tight deadline for project implementation and completion. 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. COUNTRY DEVELOPMENTS AND EFFECTS OF THE GRANTS

In 2023, the implementation of Financial Mechanisms in Slovenia was affected by two major organisational changes. The first change, which took place on 1 December 2022 relates to the internal organisational change affecting the internal units of the Government Office for Development and Cohesion Policy (GODC) that hosted the National Focal Point (NFP) and the Programme Operators (POs) until the end of 2022.

The second change that had an impact on the organisation of GODC is related to the referendum on the changes to the government act, which took place on 27 November 2022. Following the referendum outcome, the GODC was transformed into the Ministry of Cohesion and Regional Development (MCRD) in early 2023 upon finalization of all procedures relating to the government reshuffle. As a result, the NFP and the POs underwent certain changes that affected the Description of the Management and Control System (DMCS).

The Financial Mechanisms Division's position within the ministry's internal organisation remained largely unchanged compared to 1 December 2022. Due to minor organisational and personnel changes within the ministry, it was necessary to update the DMCS for the NFP. The main change compared with previous arrangement is that the Head of NFP is simultaneously the Head of PO for Education and Climate programme. The new Head of the Financial Mechanisms Division, who is also the Head of the NFP and the Head of POs has been appointed in June 2023.

However, all these organisational changes did not have a significant negative effect on the implementation of programmes. There has been no major deviation regarding the achievement of the planned programme objectives.

### **SI-CLIMATE**

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 sustainably 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, a 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 consequences of the Ukrainian crisis that affect the implementation of projects under the programme are also felt, for example, longer delivery times, an increase in prices in construction works and equipment, and a lack of raw materials and disrupted supply chains.

In August, Slovenia was hit by unforeseen and severe flooding, including in the areas where the projects' activities are implemented. Fortunately, project implementation was not significantly affected by the floods themselves. Only a few activities had to be implemented later than originally planned.

These are all external factors with potential consequences and are therefore considered very seriously.

### **SI-EDUCATION**

The 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. Also, learning for and through life is the central strategic orientation of the strategy. In this context, the projects that are being implemented within the Education programme aim to promote institutional cooperation at all levels of formal and informal education, improve the supportive environment for targeted disadvantaged groups and improve work-life balance.

**Bilateral relations with the donor countries** are strengthened through the involvement of the Donor Project Partners in 17 projects implemented under the Climate programme (altogether 15 Donor Project Partners participating in 17 projects) and in 22 projects implemented under the Education programme (21 projects selected under the Call for Proposals and one pre-defined project). The Donor project partners contribute their knowledge and expertise through exchange of good practices, study visits, active participation in training and conferences, etc.

All projects within the Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation programme and the Education programme will be completed by the 30 April 2024. Based on project's results it will be possible to assess the effects of the Norwegian and EEA grants towards reducing social and economic disparities and towards strengthening bilateral relations with the donor countries.

## **C. PERFORMANCE**

### **1. Programme progress and results**

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

2023 was an important year for the implementation of the Climate programme and related projects, as it represented the peak of the project's implementation. This year, work on the Climate programme was mainly devoted to monitoring the implementation of 17 projects under the programme. The selection process for the project was concluded back in 2022 when contracts were signed with 17 project promoters in total.

The projects aim to Increase Renewable Energy Production (Outcome 1), Enhance Sustainable Mobility Management (Outcome 2), Increase the Application of Circular Economy Principles (Outcome 3), and Improve the 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, programme meetings, etc.) and through their involvement in the projects' implementation phase.

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

Overview of key milestones and activities in 2023:

June 2023	The Cooperation Committee has agreed to the text of the Notice regarding the call for the award of additional funding to already contracted projects under the Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation programme
26 June 2023	Announcement of the Notice regarding the call for the award of additional funding to already contracted projects under the Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation programme is now available on the programme's website
August-September 2023	Evaluation of received applications for additional funding
September 2023	The Cooperation Committee's agreement on the awarding of additional funds to 4 projects
October 2023	Decision on the allocation of additional funding issued by the Minister

The implementation of the projects is also affected by the situation in global markets over which none of the stakeholders has any influence, i.e., the war in Ukraine and the related rise in prices. Price increases affect all projects, but not to the same extent. Investment projects are more subject to this since a large part of the costs are related to the supply of building materials and the construction itself.

As there were still some funds available after the contracts had been signed with all the projects under the programme, the Programme Operator decided to allocate additional funds to the projects that were affected by the increase in infrastructure prices.

Due to significant infrastructure cost increases, the Promoter published "Notice on the call for the award of additional funding to already contracted projects under the programme Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation" (hereinafter referred to as Notice) in June.

The Notice complies with the conditions set out in the FMO letter "Award of Additional Funding to Already Approved Projects" dated 9 June 2022.

Before publication, the Notice was approved by written procedure by the members of the Cooperation Committee.

Based on the Notice regarding the call for the award of additional funding to already contracted projects under the Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation programme, four applications were received. After evaluation, all four applications have been eligible for additional co-financing of infrastructure costs.

The Cooperation Committee agreed to allocate additional funding to all four projects at its September correspondence meeting.

A total of EUR 387,497.59 additional funds was allocated to the projects: Soporem, Si-GeoElectricity, Predjama Sustainable, and Zagon.

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

Under this outcome, 3 projects are being implemented and 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 is being carried out, envisioning **the construction of Slovenia's first geothermal power plant**. This project is intended to serve as a pilot to test the operation of such geothermal power plant and as a demonstration project of good practices. 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). In 2023, the main activities included the development of a protection and safety plan, along with the rehabilitation of the utilised gas well.

The pre-defined project **INFO-GEOTHERMAL** is also implemented under Outcome 1. The project is **relevant on the national level, and it aims to map deep geothermal potential for direct use of thermal water and geothermal energy**, organise and publish data as grounds for future "one-stop-shop" in geothermal energy, support in training authorities, research



organisations and project developers from Slovenia and Iceland, create a national geothermal network, and establish a business-attractive environment. It should be mentioned that the partnership also includes the Iceland School of Energy of Reykjavik University, the only Icelandic partner involved in the programme.

Under Outcome 1, the two selected projects SOPOREM in Si-Geo-electricity did not contribute to the programme indicators yet since their attainment is closely related to the construction works, which are planned to be finished at the end of the project implementation in April 2024. Concerning the pre-defined project INFO-GEOTHERMAL, the project delivered the first preliminary reports about the potential of geothermal energy in Slovenia. In addition, an international summer school in thermogeology was organised with particular attention to advances in developing geothermal resources for heating, cooling and electricity production.

The pre-defined project under the Outcome 1 Info Geothermal is the first project aimed at strengthening the institutional capacities of national authorities involved in managing geothermal energy use, local authorities, and other actors included in the exploration of deep geothermal potential in Slovenia. In 2023, project activities were focused on capacity-building activities and preparing preliminary analysis on the potential of deep geothermal energy. Within the working package “Networking to Promote the Development of Geothermal Energy”, a Summer School was organised in Ljubljana from 3 to 8 July, where 24 students attended the training on geothermal use of energy. In the working package “Providing Information on Deep Geothermal Energy”, two reports were delivered. The first analysis prepared a set of frequently asked questions in various fields that are relevant to the whole process: from basic information on geothermal energy and potential, its use in Slovenia and worldwide, to the legislative framework and documentation required for geothermal energy use, how monitoring is carried out, which laws cover geothermal energy use, and what are the financing options for geothermal projects. The second report deals with different (web)tools and types of public information in neighbouring countries and Iceland to improve common knowledge and public acceptance of geothermal energy.

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

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 the regional and inter-municipal level

In 2023, the projects continued with their planned activities. It is expected that all planned activities will be implemented by the end of the project implementation and because of this, it is foreseen that all target values of the outcome and output indicators will be achieved.

This year, the target values of two output indicators on the programme level were already exceeded, namely for indicator “Number of People Reached by Awareness Raising Campaigns” and “Number of Regional Mobility Centres Piloted”.

The project under this outcome with the greatest achievements this year is project ReMOBIL.

In the hope of long-term reduction of negative environmental effects of traffic through the improvement of regional sustainable mobility, project **ReMOBIL** established a pilot network of six regional mobility centres, each one in a different partner region. They are also in the process of designing a model of regional mobility management and creating guidelines for mobility management at the regional level. As of now, they have made a draft of both. When finished, the model of mobility management is going to be a foundation for the establishment and operation of the regional mobility centres. During the awareness-raising campaign, around 500.000 people were reached.

Regarding Output 2.1: Measures to Improve Regional Sustainable Mobility Implemented, only one project (ReMOBIL) was selected. However, the project already achieved the target values of three programme indicators.

Under Output 2.2: Plans for Sustainable Mobility Management at High-volume Traffic Locations Developed, selected projects contributed to the development of one regional sustainable mobility plan, whereas six measures/tools at the regional level have been introduced. The programme indicator on the average annual increase of trips made by sustainable means of transport in the areas supported by the programme will be measured at the end of project implementation. Thus, the actual achievement of the concerned indicator will be reported at the end of the programme.

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

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 **studioKroG** aims at improving community engagement in applying principles of circular resource use and improving the understanding of circular economy through the reuse and eco-design by setting up a studio (consisting of discarded shipping containers), which will be furnished with re-used equipment. The studio is also to be used as a demonstration point for visitors in promoting the principles of circular economy. In 2023, the main activities involved placing the discarded containers at two different locations, arranging the surroundings, and putting re-used furniture in the containers to showcase the principles of industrial symbiosis.

Under Outcome 3, one pilot project on circular economy was implemented, whereas three intervention areas related to low-carbon circular economy objectives in Slovenia Development Strategy have been addressed.

Outcome indicator: Share of Targeted Population Who Self-report Increased Understanding of the Circular Economy and Outcome indicator: Number of Innovative Green Technologies/Processes/Solutions Applied will be measured and expected to be achieved at the end of projects' implementation.

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

Three projects selected under this outcome focus mostly on:

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

In 2023, the projects continued with their planned activities. It is expected that all planned activities will be implemented by the end of the project implementation, and because of this, it is foreseen that all target values of the outcome and output indicators will be achieved.

This year, the target values of two output indicators on the programme level were already exceeded, namely for indicators "Number of Professional Staff Trained" and "Number of People Reached by Awareness Raising and Education Campaigns".

Under Outcome 4, 132 professional personnel underwent training, with 38 of them being women. Within project campaigns, 8,266 people have been reached by awareness raising and education campaigns.

The project under this outcome with the greatest achievements this year is:

The project **ReNature** aims at improving the management of wetlands and grassland ecosystems in Karst and Reka River Basin Biosphere Reserve as well as in Seasonal Lakes of Pivka Nature Park. The project focuses on restoring meadows and karst ponds, which are important habitats for Natura 2000 species, developing a management model based on ecosystem services and raising awareness among targeted audience and public. In 2023, the main activities involved preparatory activities for mobilising expert communities in restoring wetlands and grasslands in target areas through workshops and awareness-raising campaign.

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

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 implementation since the DPP was actively involved in the process of allocating additional funds to four projects with an infrastructure component.

Moreover, the DPP and the PO strengthened bilateral relations through several meetings. During the year, both the PO and the DPP attended several events organised by POs from other beneficiary states or the FMO. These meetings were an excellent opportunity to discuss open issues regarding the implementation of programmes and to exchange experiences and opinions as well as to look at how programmes and projects work in other countries.

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 involve a Donor Project Partner from Donor States, i.e., twelve from Norway and two from Liechtenstein. The experience of the Project Promoters with the Donor Project Partners has mostly been positive.

Some examples of good cooperation are briefly described below.

- Project Trata 2.1: Partners visited Liechtenstein and the Austrian region of Vorarlberg at the end of March to learn about good practices the country and the companies are rolling out to encourage a shift in employees' travel habits and promote the use of sustainable modes of travel.
- Project NovilKroG: Five Slovenian partners visited the Bodø-based Norwegian project partner Nord University in March 2023. Slovenian delegation met with the representatives of Norwegian scientific and research institutions, the public sector, NGOs, and the economy that showcased many good practices and trends in the circular economy.
- In the scope of the SALOMON project, which brings together two Slovenian institutions and the Norwegian partner Nord University, the partners took part in the official opening of the bicycle parking facility and electric vehicle charging station in front of the General Hospital Novo mesto.

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

EUR 100,000 was allocated to the programme in line with both MoUs.

At the Cooperation Committee meeting in December 2022, the Cooperation Committee approved the bilateral initiative amounting to EUR 100,000. The initiative in circular economy was submitted by the Regional Development Agency of Ljubljana Urban Region. The bilateral project includes partners from Norway and Iceland.

The project titled »Circular Economy – New Economic Imperative for Regional, Sustainable, Social and Ecological Impacts« is still in the implementation phase and will be concluded by the end of September 2024.

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

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 competencies 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.

The 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, the 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. Also, the EU Directive on work-life balance aims to both increase (i) the participation of women in the labour market and (ii) the take-up of family-related leave and flexible working arrangements.

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 given 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.

2023 was an important year for the implementation of the Education programme and related projects, as it represented the peak of the projects' implementation. This year, work on the Education programme was mainly devoted to monitoring the implementation of 24 projects under the programme. The selection process for projects selected under the call for proposals was concluded back in 2022 when contracts were signed with 22 Project Promoters in total.

The 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 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, programme meeting, etc.).

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.

2023 represented the peak year of projects' implementation. The Program Operator's main activities were related to intensive project implementation (administrative and on-site monitoring, event participation, etc.). In 2023, there were no major problems with the absorption or disbursement of funds to selected projects. More than EUR 4,6 million was paid to the projects in 2023. Some projects have already received 80% of the total funds foreseen for disbursement by the end of the year, in line with the contract. Although some projects are facing minor delays in implementation, the Project Promoters have stated that it is expected that all the allocated funds will be disbursed by the end of the implementation.

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

Under this outcome, 11 projects are being implemented and focus mostly on:

- improving different competencies 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 competencies of students on different levels of education

In 2023, all projects are being implemented according to plan or are in minor delay, which will not affect the achievement of results. All planned activities will be implemented by the end of the project implementation, and all target values of the outcome and output indicators will be achieved.

This year, the target values of two outcome indicators on the programme level were already significantly exceeded, namely for indicators “Number of Intellectual Outputs Generated by Institutional Cooperation” and “Number of Institutions Which Are Using the New Teaching Models, Methods and Strategies”.

As for the achievement of the output indicators on the programme level, almost all target values of the output indicators on the programme level were significantly exceeded, namely for indicators “Number of Staff Participating in Developing and Testing Teaching Models”, “Number of Staff Trained (providing training for educators on the use of teaching models and methods”, “Number of Peer Learning Activities Carried Out” and “Number of Participants in Peer Learning (educators, staff, other education stakeholders)”. The target value of the output indicator “Number of Professional Staff Trained” was just about to be achieved by the end of the year.

The projects under this outcome with the greatest achievements in this year are:

- **Designing for Enhanced Competence Through Active Participation in Higher Education (DECAP-HE)**

The project held a didactic programme and multiplier development meetings. Nine guidelines were developed with an active learning model that prepares students for self-reflection and active engagement in public and private life. An instrument to measure the use of active learning guidelines in higher education was also developed, which is useful and transferable to diverse fields of study environments. It is designed to improve the competencies of teachers/professors and students. This instrument aims to understand the needs and opportunities for modernising teaching and learning approaches and practices in all forms of higher education, both formal and non-formal.

- **Raising Digital Competences (digi.komp)**

Programmes targeting teachers, mentors, civil servants, and other target groups were implemented and evaluated. Most of the planned workshops for these target groups have already been organised, and quality assessments have been prepared for the workshops. Workshops for seniors, children and youth have also been held, and training for leaders has been completed. Several peer learning events were also organised. A study visit of the Norwegian project partner to Slovenia was carried out. The PP participated in the organisation of workshops and learned about good practice examples in Slovenia.

- **Supportive Environments to Enhance Transversal Competencies in Education (SETCOM)**

They started with training modules for higher education teachers and continued with training modules for students – future teachers and active teaching staff. They also continued to give performances for students, under the mentorship of the designers and implementers of the training modules. Further knowledge transfer activities were carried out in partner institutions to increase interest in and synergies between social-emotional competencies (SEC) and artificial intelligence (AI) literacy. A Competence Centre was opened to strengthen competencies in SEC and AI literacy in education and to ensure the sustainability of the transfer of project results. The Slovenian project partners carried out a study visit to Norway. They visited two primary schools, an adult education centre, and the research and teaching laboratory and received training on the use of virtual and augmented reality equipment.

- **Establishing New Education Modules in the Field of Augmented and Virtual Reality (Think XR)**

A 100-hour – XR Academy training programme for mentors/teachers was held, and the Train the Trainers programme was conducted. Also, the Design Thinking workshop on digital tool concepts was prepared and implemented. Two local networking events were held to build XR partnerships. Slovenian project partners participated in a study visit to Norway. They participated in lectures, practical workshops, and visits to good practice examples. After the study visit, they developed guidelines for the transfer of good practice in XR to the Slovenian environment.

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

The pre-defined project **BlendVET** was further implemented according to the plan in 2023. The activities included regular partner (online) meetings for effective project management, self-evaluation of schools on the use of digital technology, design of school development strategies with an implementation plan for the introduction of blended learning, training for blended learning for vocational and technical education teachers, video guides, purchase of ICT equipment necessary for the implementation of blended learning for additional eight Slovenian schools and a study visit to Slovenia.

The Project Promoter reported on several results achieved under Outcome 2, Outputs 2.1 and 2.2. The results are included in Annex 1 of this report under the programme Education,

Scholarships, Apprenticeship and Youth Entrepreneurship. The pre-defined project is expected to achieve all target values of the outcome and output indicators, some will even be exceeded.

The achievements reported in Annex 1 include the results submitted by the Project Promoter for the implementation period until 30<sup>th</sup> April 2023. For the period from May to December 2023, 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 April, the pre-defined project BlendVET received payment for eligible expenditure incurred in the second reporting period, which was to be reported in the 8<sup>th</sup> Interim Financial Report for the period from 1<sup>st</sup> January to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2023 (see Point 3 Implementation, Financial status).

In September, the project received payment for eligible expenditure incurred in the third reporting period, which will be reported in the 9<sup>th</sup> Interim Financial Report for the period from 1<sup>st</sup> July to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023.

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

Under this outcome, seven projects are being implemented and 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

In 2023, all projects are being implemented according to plan or are in minor delay, which will not affect the achievement of results. All planned activities will be implemented by the end of the project implementation and all target values of the outcome and output indicators will be achieved.

This year, the target value of the outcome indicator “Number of Beneficiaries of Services Provided or Improved” on the programme level was already exceeded.

As for the achievement of the output indicators on the programme level, almost all target values of the output indicators on the programme level were already exceeded.

Under *Output 3.1 Support Services for the NEETs (not in employment, education, or training) Established*, one project is being implemented and the target values of two output indicators were exceeded, namely for indicators “Number of Staff Trained to Work with NEETs” and “Number of Inclusive Activities (events, workshops, trainings)”.



Under *Output 3.2 Support to Youth Provided*, six projects are being implemented and the target values of all three output indicators were already significantly exceeded, namely for indicators “Number of New or Upgraded Services”, “Number of Staff Trained” and “Number of Networking, Training or Advisory Activities for the Young”.

Under *Output 3.3 Support Environment for Precarious Workers Provided*, no project is being implemented.

The projects under this outcome with the greatest achievements this year are:

- **Empowerment and Integration of NEETs into the Labour Market and Development of a Comprehensive Programme of Support Services for NEETs, Including the Solutions on Systemic Level (PreseNEETi se)**

In 2023 project provided training on “Empowering and integration of NEETs into the labour market and development of a comprehensive program of support services for NEETs, including the solutions on systemic level” for nine people who will work with NEETs during the study visit to Norway. The activities in the project include the training of 40 mentors to work with NEETs in the framework of the NEET Empowerment and Social Activation Programme. Additionally, the study visit to Norway was organised and the training for mentors to work with NEETs was carried out. For this purpose, 8 specialised training sessions were organised (4 in person and 4 online), which were open to other interested persons who could demonstrate that they had encountered NEETs in their daily work. In the newly developed Empowerment and Social Activation Programme for NEETs 30 young NEETs were enrolled. They were interviewed in depth at the start of the programme to identify their life interests, aspirations, ambitions, and possible past experiences.

- **Carinthian Network of Supportive Environment for Youth KOR-NET (KOR-NET)**

A virtual youth incubator for the Carinthia region (web platform) was set up and a workshop was held for representatives of the project partners and others who will contribute content to the portal. 13 workstations (information points) were equipped to provide technical and IT support to young people in their activities in different fields. At the time, workshops for young people were held to improve their competencies, knowledge, and skills. Other stakeholders from the youth sector, mostly representatives of NGOs, also participated in the workshops. A camp for young people on the theme "School for Life" was organised. Workshops were held with young people to give their opinions, suggestions and initiatives, and an e-survey was carried out to receive input for the publication. A field survey was also carried out with entrepreneurs from the Carinthia region. The Slovenian project partners took part in a study visit to Norway. They visited organisations working with young people and learned about examples of good practice.

- **Increasing Employment Potentials in the Pomurje Region (TALENT LAB)**

Slovenian project partners identified the missing competencies of mentors in working with young people and selected suitable topics for implementation. They conducted two workshops for mentors – Project Staff, followed by two other workshops for mentors – Project Staff and Other Mentors from Support Organisations in the Region.

The first Startup Academy for young potential first-time entrepreneurs was held to introduce support services and current financial incentives available for entrepreneurs. Following this event, the PPs continued with individual counselling. The first series of entrepreneurship hackathons was continued and concluded. This activity culminated in the first PitchDay showcase event, which was also attended by the Ambassador of the Kingdom of Norway. After this series of entrepreneurial hackathons, a survey was conducted among students, mentors, companies involved in solving the entrepreneurial challenges, and young potential first-time entrepreneurs. The results will be used to prepare support for young people in the form of a mentoring scheme.

In spring, they took part in a study visit to Norway, where they exchanged good practices with the Norwegian project partner and other relevant stakeholders. Research work was also carried out to identify and collect information on good practices abroad aimed at stopping the brain drain or attracting and engaging educated people in less developed areas.

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

Under this outcome, four projects are being implemented and focus mostly on:

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

In 2023, all projects are being implemented according to plan or are in minor delay, which will not affect the achievement of results. All planned activities will be implemented by the end of the project implementation and all target values of the outcome and output indicators will be achieved.

This year, the target values of the outcome indicators “Number of Beneficiaries of Services Provided or Improved” and “Number of Institutions Applying Gender Equality Instruments (or WLB instruments)” on the programme level were already significantly exceeded.

Under *Output 4.1 Local Systems that Support Work-life Balance Established*, three projects are being implemented and the target values of both output indicators were already significantly exceeded, namely for indicators “Number of Measures Improved or Introduced at the Local Level (new or upgraded services, products, tools)” and “Number of Professional Staff Trained (coordinators, mentors, informal carers, animators etc.)”.

Under *Output 4.2 Organisational Culture of Work-life Balance and Gender Equality Generated*, one project is being implemented. It is expected that all planned activities will be implemented by the end of the project implementation and all planned results will be achieved.

The projects under this outcome with the greatest achievements this year are:

- **Creative Work-life Balance (BalanCed)**

The project strives to enrich human resources through artistic expression and to do so they opened a Creative Centre for visitors to attend creative workshops. They hold courses from various fields, for instance in photography, ceramic design, sewing and self-care. Within the Centre, there is also a space designated for children, where they can learn about different topics through planned out in- and outdoor activities, such as environmental protection and biodiversity.

They also want to raise awareness among individuals and decision-makers about the importance of empowering employees to face the challenges of balancing work and private life with a guided public debate.

- **A Hospice Approach to Relieve the Physical and Psychological Burden of Working Men and Women Caring for Terminally Ill and Dying Relatives (IMRO)**

In 2023 project developed an integrated elderly care model in the urban and rural environment (day-care centre). In the urban area adaptation of a premise for the purpose of the project was conducted.

The project partners conducted about 20 presentations about the project and its contents to the target groups. Several trainings and workshops were held on care for informal carers, relief for working women informal carers, empowerment for working men performing the role of informal carers and training for young informal carers. Through these trainings, the project has trained more than 160 people as coordinators, mentors, informal carers, animators, etc.

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

The pre-defined project **Children's House (Barnahus)** was further implemented in 2023, mainly according to the plan.

In 2023, the Children's House began to actively perform its function and accepted the first cases as part of the pilot operation – 52 children were interviewed in the Children's House, of which 41 interviews were based on court orders.

Several training sessions were also held in 2023: entry-level training on how to conduct a forensic interview with a child for three employees of the Children's House and the first training for school professionals titled: Sexual Abuse – When a Child Speaks, the purpose of which was to present the role of social services and the police directly after a child speaks to a school professional about sexual abuse and about the further role of the Children's House in the process, according to the child's statement. Training workshops were held for more than 360 professionals.

Medical equipment for the room for physical examinations of children in the Children's House and the promotional material were supplied, the recording and reproduction system was upgraded to better capture the sound of those interviewed, and the main part of the installation of the elevator was carried out.

In November 2023, an expert conference was held to raise awareness about the participation of children in the Children's House, in which both domestic and foreign experts participated, and the event was also reported in the media.

The Project Promoter reported on several results achieved under Outcome 5, Outputs 5.1 and 5.2. The results are included in Annex 1 of this report under the programme Education, Scholarships, Apprenticeship and Youth Entrepreneurship. The pre-defined project is expected to achieve all target values of the outcome and output indicators, some will even be exceeded.

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

The Norwegian Directorate for Higher Education and Skills – HK-dir and the 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 also in the phase of projects' implementation.

The DPPs and the PO strengthened bilateral relations through meetings and e-mail communication. The Programme Operator has been supported in the resolving of outstanding issues with a partner from Norway, who is a partner in one of the projects.

An excellent opportunity to exchange experience and opinions was the PO seminar held in Wroclaw, Poland, in June. The participants discussed about the achievements and successes and how to ensure that the programmes bring long-term impacts. They also debated about the successes and activities under bilateral cooperation and how to cope with various changes when implementing the programmes. The meeting also looked to the future, as the participants debated how to develop well-designed educational programmes.

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 the DPPs. Slovenian project partners hosted project partners from Norway and Iceland on a three-day study visit in April. A conference Digital and Innovative was held as part of the study visit.
- 21 out of 22 projects selected under the Call for Proposals involve a Donor Project Partner from Norway. The experience of the Project Promoters with the Donor Project Partners has mostly been positive. There are several issues with the Norwegian project partner in the project EMPOWER FOR 21. At first, the PO stepped in to address the problem and then turned to the Donor Programme Partner HK-dir for additional help.

Some examples of good cooperation are briefly described below:

- Project TALENT LAB: partners from Slovenia visited the Trondheim-based Norwegian project partner, the University of Science and Technology, in April 2023. The aim of the study visit was to share good practices with the relevant educational, supportive, and administrative

institutions given that Norway also faces the challenge of rural-to-urban migration of qualified young people.

- Project digi.komp: Slovenian project partners hosted a delegation from Norway in March 2023. Norwegian project partner together with three lecturers carried out the first round of workshops. In this context, Norwegian partners learned more about the relevant Slovenian institutions and the way they work and shared knowledge about new approaches and methods of teaching with Slovenian partners.

#### **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 following both MoUs. Once all approved activities have been implemented, there are still approximately EUR 35,000 available for the implementation of bilateral activities until the end of the eligible period.

In 2023 one activity was performed, namely “Supporting Norwegian Professors at 34<sup>th</sup> European Summer School in Logic, Language, and Information (ESLLI)” in the amount of 2,003.87 EUR.

One activity, approved by the Cooperation Committee will be performed in 2024. Activity with the title “Continuous Training of the Children’s House Personnel” was proposed by the Ministry of Justice. The bilateral initiative amounting to EUR 35,000, includes several bilateral activities, such as the exchange of knowledge and experiences through study visits and in-person meetings in Slovenia and Iceland (3) and the exchange of documents and information via e-mail (draft guidelines and protocols).

#### **D. STATUS OF BILATERAL FUNDS IN THE JOINT COMMITTEE FOR BILATERAL FUNDS (JCBF)**

On 13<sup>th</sup> September 2018, a Bilateral Fund Agreement was signed worth a total of EUR 754,000. Initially, the absorption of available funds was relatively slow. As of the end of 2022, an idea emerged to amend the MoU on the EEA Grants and the MoU on the Norway Grants to allocate an additional EUR 300,000 to the Fund for Bilateral Relations. The increase in funds would have allowed for an open call to select bilateral initiatives and hopefully boost the absorption. After carefully considering all reasons for and against the open call, the idea was abandoned. The main reason for this was the time-consuming and complex open-call administrative procedures. This potential open call was discussed at both the JCBF meeting and the 2023 Annual Meeting.

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

In 2023, the JCBF had one meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> August. The meeting was conducted online. The JCBF members were presented with the state of play of the Fund for Bilateral Relations and discussed a newly proposed bilateral activity called *MetalDays Festival – MetalDays Meets Norway*. This initiative aimed to foster cultural exchange between Norway and Slovenia in the field of metal music. Considering that metal music is a significant export product of Norway, the festival would provide a platform for artists, musicians, and fans to connect, share

experiences, and gain a deeper understanding of each other's metal music scenes, traditions, and cultural influences. On a general level, the JCBF supported this bilateral activity. However, some concerns were raised about the planned budget of EUR 80,370, which was considered one of the highest in proportion to other bilateral activities. As a result, the JCBF decided not to approve this activity and suggested modifications and a reduction in the budget. By modifying the activities and reducing the budget, the bilateral activity could be reconsidered. However, the promoter of this bilateral initiative decided not to resubmit the amended proposal.

Considering the recent devastating floods in Slovenia and Norway, the JCBF suggested inquiring about the requirements for bilateral cooperation to address the damages caused by extreme weather conditions. This is an essential topic that is currently very relevant.

#### Main activities carried out in 2023:

By the end of 2023, the following pre-defined bilateral initiatives were completed:

#### **1. A study visit of Slovenian delegation to donor countries on the agenda of regional innovation ecosystems and projects** (Project promoter: Regional Development Agency of Ljubljana Urban Region)

As part of the bilateral activity, three study trips were conducted to donor countries. Institutions from donor countries presented their activities and the role they play within their respective countries' innovation systems. The institutions were invited to attend a final conference held in Ljubljana. The international conference which took place on 21<sup>st</sup> June 2023 was attended by 67 stakeholders from Slovenia and the donor countries, and included presentations on the innovation ecosystems of both Slovenia and the donor countries.

#### **2. Basic Integration Assistance for Displaced Persons from Ukraine with Temporary Protection in Slovenia – II** (Project promoter: Government Office for the Support and Integration of Migrants)

The activities were divided into two substantive sections according to the goals of the project: i/ to provide psychosocial assistance to individuals from Ukraine and ii/ to prepare informative videos related to changes in legislation. The selected contractor started with the implementation of activities on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2023 with an informational meeting in Bled and continued with activities in several Slovenian locations and online. Due to a relatively late start of the project, the project promoter requested to extend it by one month, i.e. until 31<sup>st</sup> July 2023. During this period, 471 hours of group activities attended by 695 participants were carried out, 512 hours of direct individual psychosocial assistance, and 226 hours of indirect individual psychosocial assistance were offered to people from Ukraine.

#### **3. Supporting the Green Start-Ups of Tomorrow** (Project promoter: Primorska Technology Park)

The project involved three study visits to institutions from Norway and Slovenia which were ready to share knowledge and experience about green start-ups. The first study visit of

Slovenian institutions to Norway took place from 3<sup>rd</sup> May to 1<sup>st</sup> June 2023. The second study visit was organised in Slovenia for Norwegian institutions. During both study visits, a total of 29 experts took part in expert discussions. In total, more than 20 good practices of the participating institutions were identified. The third study visit, which took place from 10<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> September 2023, included the participation of all project partners (Primorska Technology Park, Slovenia, Startup LAB, Park Hammar and Insj UiO from Norway). Meetings among partners and participants focused on the exchange of knowledge of similar institutions in the field of entrepreneurship, especially those aiming at young start-ups and entrepreneurs. The study visit was also an opportunity for young participants from Slovenia and Norway to meet and exchange knowledge and experience about green entrepreneurship and involvement in society. The participants also learned about the best practices in sustainable content implemented by innovative start-up companies in Norway and visited the city of Oslo, which is one of the most sustainable cities in the world.

#### **4. Bi-annual Consultations and Expert Event on Women, Peace and Security**

The Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia, in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Norway, organised a two-day expert consultation on women, peace and security on 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> March 2023. On the first day, bilateral consultations between Slovenia and Norway on women, peace and security took place. On the second day, a regional expert event titled "Challenges and Opportunities for the Agenda for Women, Peace and Security: Views from South-Eastern Europe and Ukraine" was held. This event brought together, in addition to Slovenian and Norwegian representatives, also representatives from governmental and non-governmental organisations of the countries in South-Eastern Europe and Ukraine, non-governmental and academic representatives from Slovenia, and representatives of international and regional organisations.

**5. The Consultations and Expert Event on Modalities of Financing for Development** was carried out in two parts. The first part was held in June 2023 within the framework of the 5<sup>th</sup> Conference on the Internationalization of the Slovenian Economy in Maribor. The representative of the Norwegian investment fund NORFUND participated in the panel entitled "Inclusion of the Private Sector in International Programmes and International Development Cooperation" and presented the work and experience of this fund. The second part took place in October 2023 within the framework of the 11<sup>th</sup> Slovenian Development Days in Ljubljana. The event consisted of several panel discussions. One of the panels focused on the EU Global Gateway strategy with an emphasis on opportunities for smaller countries and small and medium-sized companies. The EU Global Gateway strategy represents the EU's response to global challenges and combines investments in development projects in the fields of digitization, climate and energy, transport, health, research and education. In another panel, good practices involving the private sector in international development cooperation were showcased. The experiences of the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation NORAD and the companies "Emata.ug" and "Computas" were presented. The basic framework and possibilities for involving the private sector in Slovenian development aid projects were also presented.

Main activities planned to be carried out in 2024:

- Implementation of newly proposed bilateral initiatives *Cooperation Between the National Libraries of Slovenia and Norway on Digital Humanities* and *Challenging the Future with Local Strengths* (provided that it is approved by the JCBF)
- Implementation of bilateral initiatives targeting damages from extreme weather and other bilateral initiatives, if they are proposed and approved by the JCBF.

## E. MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION

### 1. Management and control systems (MCS)

By early 2023, upon finalisation of all procedures relating to the government reshuffle, the Government Office for Development and Cohesion Policy has been transformed into the Ministry of Cohesion and Regional Development (MCRD). The Financial Mechanisms Division's position within the ministry's internal organisation remained largely unchanged compared to 1 December 2022.

Due to minor organisational and personnel changes within the ministry, it was necessary to update the Description of Management and Control System for the National Focal Point (NFP). The main change compared with previous arrangement is that the Head of NFP is simultaneously the Head of the Programme Operator (PO) for Education and Climate programme. According to the opinion of the Financial Mechanism Office (FMO), conveyed to the NFP on 6 June 2023, this is in line with Article 5.2.3 of both Regulations regarding the implementation of the Norwegian Financial Mechanism and the EEA Financial Mechanism.

In June 2023, the new Head of the Financial Mechanisms Division has been appointed, who is also the Head of the NFP and the Head of PO.

The NFP team consists of four employees, i.e. the Head of NFP, the Evaluation Officer, the Bilateral Officer, and the NFP Communication Officer. As of 20<sup>th</sup> November 2023, the Communication Officer's position is vacant. Presently, one of the Contract Managers is fulfilling the duties of the Communication Officer. However, the process of hiring a new Communication Officer is currently underway and is expected to be concluded by February 2024.

Regarding the POs team, it was determined that four full-time Contract Managers would be adequate to oversee 24 contracts under the Education Programme and 17 contracts under the Climate Programme. In 2023, the PO team has expanded with an additional two Contract Managers to effectively manage the heavy workload during the final phase of project implementation. As a result, the PO team now consists of six employees, i.e. the Head of POs, one Programme Manager for both programmes, and four Contract Managers. The recruitment process for hiring an additional Contract Manager and a Communication Officer is currently ongoing.

Both the NFP and the POs are assisted by other organisational units within MCRD (e.g. Human Resources Service, Finance Service, Legal Service and General Affairs Service).



## 2. Complaints

No complaints have been received by the National Focal Point in 2023.

## 3. Irregularities

No irregularities have been detected in 2023.

## 4. Audit

No system audits were carried out in the 2023 audit period. The Audit Authority has initially planned follow-up system audits at the National Focal Point, Programme Operators, Certifying Authority and irregularity Authority in the Audit strategy and the annual audit plan for 2023. However, since there were no open recommendations, there was no basis to conduct these audits.

The changes to the Management and Control System were assessed based on the desk analysis and the Audit Authority concluded that the changes do not have substantial impact on the functioning of the Management and Control System. Based on system audits carried out in the previous audit period, the AA's assessment of the system at the NFP, POs and NCU is in Category 2 (System works, but some improvements are needed) and the AA's assessment of the system at CA and IA is in Category 1.

All audits of projects were carried out by the responsible Audit Authority (Ministry of Finance - Budget Supervision Office). The AA used a non-statistical sampling method to select the sample of projects in accordance with the Audit Strategy and considering the "Sampling Guidance on how to carry out sampling strategies under the EEA and Norwegian Financial Mechanisms for 2014-2021". The AA ensured the representation of all programmes and 4 different types of costs in the sample (project expenditure, programme management costs, funds for bilateral relations and technical assistance). Following the recommended coverage of expenditures and project, a sample of 7 project was randomly selected. All auditees implemented suggested recommendations and/or required actions, therefore all recommendations were closed

## F. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

### 1. Monitorings 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 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

## **SI-CLIMATE**

In 2023, the PO carried out compliance-based (partner reports reviewed by Controllers), result-based (project reports reviewed by Contract Managers) and risk-based monitoring activities (on-the-spot checks performed by Controllers and project site visits performed by Contract Managers).

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 all projects implemented under the programme. Reporting on project progress occurs 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 laws. 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, particularly verifying 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 addition, on-the-spot checks and site visits were also carried out in 2023. The Contract Managers of the POs carried out on-site visits for seven projects in accordance with the identified risk factors. Projects with significant budgets, investments, complex public procurement procedures and seasonal activities were included in the sample for the on-site visit.

Based on the methodology developed in 2023, the Control Unit performed on-the-spot checks for seven projects. The sample for on-the-spot checks included projects with expenditure in the "Infrastructure and Construction" category and projects whose risk level was determined based on five criteria: the amount of funds allocated to the project, the amount of funds granted to the project partner, the estimated value of the funds in the category 'Equipment Cost', the number of projects under European Territorial Cooperation programmes and Financial Mechanisms programmes in which the Slovenian Project Partner participates, and the number of errors or irregularities found during the monitoring. On-the-spot checks by the Control Unit were mainly performed in the last quarter of 2023.

In addition to the above, on several occasions the PO has also attended the events in person to have a closer look at the performance of the projects.

The main constraint affecting the programme implementation is the very tight deadline for project implementation and completion. This is particularly the case for projects that involve complex activities (e.g., public procurement, seasonal activities) or for projects that involve infrastructure construction.

Projects have a maximum of 24 months to implement their project during this programme period. Several projects will be completing their main project activities in the last months of the eligibility period. Given the complexity of the projects and external factors (war in Ukraine, increasing prices and longer delivery times), more time should be allowed for project implementation.

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.

When reviewing the reports submitted by the Project Promoters and their partners, we noticed that some errors were repeated. As a result, the POs Control Unit organised a reporting workshop for Slovenian Partners in April to improve reporting and thus speed up the verification of project reports.

In addition, some Project Promoters still require strong support from the PO Contract Managers. Although very detailed guidelines for Project Promoters are published on the website, some Project Promoters prefer direct contact and advice from the Contract Managers. The PO personnel finds it hard to ensure such support while performing all other regular tasks, particularly considering the persistent understaffing issue. The problem was partly solved by employing new staff in the second half of the year.

### **SI-EDUCATION**

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 all projects implemented under the programme. 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 laws. 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, in particular verifying 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 addition, on-the-spot checks and site visits were also carried out in 2023. By the monitoring plan, the Contract Managers of the POs carried out on-site visits for six projects in accordance with the identified risk factors. Projects with significant budgets, investments, high equipment costs, and a large number of partners or problems with cooperation with the Norwegian partner were included in the sample for the on-site visit. On-site monitoring was also undertaken for three other projects in 2023, mainly due to significant delays in the disbursement of funds.

Based on the methodology developed in 2023, the Control Unit performed on-the-spot checks for 6 projects. The sample for on-the-spot checks included projects with expenditure in the "Infrastructure and Construction" category and projects whose risk level was determined based on five criteria: the amount of funds allocated to the project, the amount of funds granted to the project partner, the estimated value of the funds in the category 'Equipment Cost', the number of projects under European Territorial Cooperation programmes and Financial Mechanisms programmes in which the Slovenian project partner participates, and the number of errors or irregularities found during the monitoring.

Regular communication between the PO project Contract Managers and Project Promoters continued also in 2023. They communicated mainly by phone or e-mail. Whenever the need arises, either an online meeting or a face-to-face meeting is organised.

The main constraint affecting the programme implementation is the very tight deadline for project implementation and completion. 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.

When reviewing the reports submitted by the Project Promoters and their partners, we noticed that some errors were repeated. As a result, the POs Control Unit organised a reporting workshop for Slovenian partners in April to improve reporting and thus speed up the verification of project reports.

In addition, some Project Promoters still require strong support from the PO Contract Managers. Although very detailed guidelines for Project Promoters are published on the website, some Project Promoters prefer direct contact and advice from the Contract Managers. The PO personnel finds it hard to ensure such support while performing all other regular tasks, particularly in light of the persistent understaffing issue. The problem was partly solved by employing new personnel in the second half of the year.

## 2. Evaluations carried out

The Outcome and Result Evaluation will be designed and conducted by independent external experts for the Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation programme, in accordance with the updated Evaluation Plan that was prepared in September 2023. This will ensure that the evaluation is tailored to the current projects and programme implementation.

The Outcome and Result Evaluation aims to provide an objective, independent and systematic assessment of the contributions made by the EEA and Norway Grants towards the implementation and achievements of the projects/programmes. The evaluation will be finalised by the end of 2024, once the project results are 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.

The tender documentation was published on the Public Procurement Portal on 16 November 2023, and one tender, which met all the requirements, was received within the set deadline. The signature of the contract is foreseen in February 2024.

The Outcome and Result Evaluation is expected to be designed and conducted by independent external experts for the Education, Scholarships, Apprenticeship, and Youth Entrepreneurship programme by the end of 2024, once the project results are available, in accordance with the updated Evaluation Plan that was prepared in September 2023. This will ensure that the evaluation is tailored to the current projects and programme implementation.

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

The tender documentation was published on the Public Procurement Portal on 16 November 2023. However, no tender has been received within the set deadline. A new public procedure will be launched at the beginning of 2024.

## **G. ANNEXES**

- 1. Results achieved**
- 2. Communication summary**
- 3. Project summary and call details**
- 4. Risk management**
- 5. Monitoring plan**
- 6. Evaluation plan**
- 7. Evaluation report**
- 8. Technical assistance report**
- 9. Agreement conditions**

## Annex 1: Results achieved

### 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 2023			Target value	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Achievement value		
Estimated annual CO2 emissions reductions (in tonnes)	Annual number	0	0 (Strategic Report 2022)	-	-	0	1,726, Estimation based on the targets achieved by comparable project, Source: the Ministry of Infrastructure.	To be measured at the end of project implementation
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	-

<b>Number of national policies and laws influenced</b>	Cumulative number	0	0 (Strategic Report 2022)	-	-	0	1	To be measured at the end of project implementation
<b>Output 1.1: Improved capacity to develop less established renewable energy sources</b>								
Indicator	Unit of measurement	Baseline value	Previous achievement value	Achievements until end of December 2023			Target value	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Achievement value		
<b>Mapping of technical potential of deep geothermal energy carried out</b>	Binary	No	No (Strategic Report 2022)	-	-	No	Yes	To be measured at the end of project implementation
<b>Report on necessary legislative amendments of subsidy schemes for the accelerated use of geothermal energy prepared</b>	Binary	No	No (IFR 2023)	-	-	No	Yes	To be measured at the end of project implementation
<b>Number of experts trained in geothermal technologies</b>	Cumulative number	0	0 (IFR 2023)	-	-	0	40	Based only on already approved project reports.
<i>Gender</i>								
<i>Female</i>	-	-	0	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Male</i>	-	-	0	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Not specified</i>	-	-	0	-	-	0	-	-

<b>Number of staff from beneficiary states in exchanges</b>	Cumulative number	0	0 (IFR 2023)	-	-	0	10	Based only on already approved project reports.
<i>Gender</i>								
<i>Female</i>	-	-	0	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Male</i>	-	-	0	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Not specified</i>	-	-	0	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Type of exchange</i>								
<i>Online</i>	-	-	0	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Physical</i>	-	-	0	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Not specified</i>	-	-	0	-	-	0	-	-
<b>Number of staff from donor states in exchanges</b>	Cumulative number	0	0 (IFR 2023)	-	-	0	3	Based only on already approved project reports.
<i>Gender</i>								
<i>Female</i>	-	-	0	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Male</i>	-	-	0	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Not specified</i>	-	-	0	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Donor State</i>								
<i>Norway</i>	-	-	0	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Iceland</i>	-	-	0	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Liechtenstein</i>	-	-	0	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Not specified</i>	-	-	0	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Type of exchange</i>								
<i>Online</i>	-	-	0	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Physical</i>	-	-	0	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Not specified</i>	-	-	0	-	-	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 2023			Target value	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Achievement value		
Installed capacity of less established RES (in MW)	Cumulative number	0	0 (IFR 2023)	-	-	0	2.40, Calculated from the CO2 target: 2,300 t CO2=0.85 0566 ktoe. Such target contributes 21 % to the NERAP 2020 targets for increase of installed geothermal energy increase from 17 kton 2017 to 21 kton by 2020, Table 22, of revised 2017 NERAP 2010-2020.	To be measured at the end of project implementation

Outcome 2: Enhanced sustainable mobility management								
Indicator	Unit of measurement	Baseline value	Previous achievement value	Achievements until end of December 2023			Target value	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Achievement value		
Number of sustainable mobility policy measures/tools at regional level introduced	Cumulative number	0	1 (IFR 2023)	-	-	1	2, 1. Regional Sustainable Mobility Centre, 2. Regional Sustainable Mobility Plan.	Cumulative number at the end of 2023
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 %	To be measured at the end of implementation
Output 2.1: Measures to improve regional sustainable mobility implemented								
Indicator	Unit of measurement	Baseline value	Previous achievement value	Achievements until end of December 2023			Target value	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Achievement value		
Number of regional mobility centres piloted	Cumulative number	0	6 (IFR 2023)	-	-	6	5	Cumulative number at the end of 2023
Regional mobility management model developed	Binary	No	No (IFR 2023)	-	-	No	Yes	To be measured at the end of

								implementation
<b>Number of people reached by awareness raising campaigns</b>	Cumulative number	0	200,000 (IFR 2023)	-	-	500,000	150,000, Estimated 50% of households in participating regions	Cumulative number at the end of 2023
<b>Number of awareness campaigns carried out</b>	Cumulative number	0	1 (IFR 2023)	-	-	1	3	Cumulative number at the end of 2023
<b>Number of professionals trained in sustainable regional and inter-municipal mobility planning and management</b>	Cumulative number	0	0 (IFR 2023)	-	-	0	60	Based only on already approved project reports.
<i>Gender</i>								
<i>Female</i>	-	-	0	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Male</i>	-	-	0	-	-	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 2023			Target value	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Achievement value		
<b>Number of sustainable mobility plans for high volume traffic generating locations developed</b>	Cumulative number	0	0 (IFR 2023)	-	-	1	10	Based only on already approved project reports.

Number of pilot actions from sustainable mobility plans for high volume traffic generating locations implemented	Cumulative number	0	0 (IFR 2023)	-	-	6	10	Based only on already approved project reports.
<b>Outcome 3: Increased application of Circular Economy principles</b>								
Indicator	Unit of measurement	Baseline value	Previous achievement value	Achievements until end of December 2023			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 %	To be measured at the end of implementation
Number of innovative green technologies/processes /solutions applied	Cumulative number	0	0 (IFR 2023)	-	-	0	12	To be measured at theActivities
<b>Output 3.1: Measures for Circular Economy implemented</b>								
Indicator	Unit of measurement	Baseline value	Previous achievement value	Achievements until end of December 2023			Target value	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Achievement value		
Number of circular economy demonstration / pilot projects implemented	Cumulative number	0	1 (IFR 2023)	-	-	1	19	Based only on already approved project reports.

<p><b>Number of intervention areas related to Low-carbon circular economy objectives of Slovenia Development Strategy 2030 addressed</b></p>	<p>Cumulative number</p>	<p>0</p>	<p>1 (IFR 2023)</p>	<p>-</p>	<p>-</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>9, Slovenia Development Strategy 2030, Objective 8 Low-carbon circular economy (pg. 39) sets five intervention areas of which two/three are addressed by this programme: a) breaking the link between economic growth and growth in consumption of resources and GHG emissions through education and including various stakeholders in the</p>	<p>Based only on already approved project reports.</p>
--	--------------------------	----------	---------------------	----------	----------	----------	---	--

							transition to a circular economy (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>								
<b>Indicator</b>		<b>Baseline value</b>	<b>Previous</b>	<b>Achievements until end of December 2023</b>			<b>Target value</b>	<b>Comment</b>

	Unit of measurement		achievement value	Numerator	Denominator	Achievement value		
<b>Total surface of rehabilitated land (in hectares)</b>	Cumulative number	0	0 (IFR 2023)	-	-	0	100	Activities are still on-going
<b>Number of governance models integrating ecosystem services into the decision-making processes for targeted ecosystems in actual use</b>	Cumulative number	0	0 (IFR 2023)	-	-	0	3	To be measured at the end of implementation
<b>Output 4.1: Improved capacity for ecosystems management</b>								
Indicator	Unit of measurement	Baseline value	Previous achievement value	Achievements until end of December 2023			Target value	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Achievement value		
<b>Number of restored ecosystems with ecosystem services mapped</b>	Cumulative number	0	0 (IFR 2023)	-	-	0	3	Activities are still on-going
<b>Number of proposed governance models</b>	Cumulative number	0	0 (IFR 2023)	-	-	0	3	To be measured at the end of implementation
<b>Number of professional staff trained</b>	Cumulative number	0	0 (IFR 2023)	-	-	132	45	Cumulative number at the end of 2023
<i>Gender</i>								
<i>Female</i>	-	-	0	-	-	38	-	-
<i>Male</i>	-	-	0	-	-	94	-	-

<i>Not specified</i>	-	-	0	-	-	0	-	-
<b>Number of people reached by awareness raising and education campaigns</b>	Cumulative number	0	0 (IFR 2023)	-	-	8,266	600	Cumulative number at the end of 2023
<b>Number of awareness and education campaigns carried out</b>	Cumulative number	0	0 (IFR 2023)	-	-	2	3	Activities are still on-going
<b>Bilateral Outcome: Enhanced collaboration between Slovene and Donor State institutions involved in the programme</b>								
Indicator	Unit of measurement	Baseline value	Previous achievement value	Achievements until end of December 2023			Target value	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Achievement value		
<b>Level of trust between cooperating entities in the Beneficiary state and Donor States</b>	Scale 1-7	6.73, Survey to be carried out by the FMO	1 (Strategic Report 2022)	-	-	1	4.50, Target is ≥4.5, and an increase on the baseline value	Survey to be carried out by the FMO
<b>Level of satisfaction with the partnership</b>	Scale 1-7	6.67, Survey to be carried out by the FMO	1 (Strategic Report 2022)	-	-	1	4.50, Target is ≥4.5, and an increase on the baseline value	Survey to be carried out by the FMO
<b>Share of cooperating organisations that apply the knowledge acquired from bilateral partnership</b>	Percentage	0.00 %	-	0	0	-	50.00 %	Survey to be carried out by the FMO
<b>Bilateral Output 1: Bilateral cooperation activities</b>								



Indicator	Unit of measurement	Baseline value	Previous achievement value	Achievements until end of December 2023			Target value	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Achievement value		
Number of projects involving cooperation with a donor project partner	Cumulative number	0	0 (IFR 2023)	-	-	15	TBD, Target is minimum 25% of selected projects	88%

### 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 2023			Target value	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Achievement value		
Number of intellectual outputs generated by institutional cooperation	Cumulative number	0	0 (Strategic Report 2022)	-	-	58	30	Cumulative number at the end of 2023
Share of cooperating education and training institutions applying new teaching and learning practices	Percentage	-	-	0	1	0.00 %	85.00 %	To be measured at the end of implementation
Level of satisfaction with the institutional cooperation	Scale 1-5	4.22	4.22 (Strategic Report 2022)	-	-	1	3.50, Target is minimum 3.5	To be measured at the end of implementation
Number of institutions which are using the new teaching models, methods and strategies	Cumulative number	0	0 (Strategic Report 2022)	-	-	25	10	Cumulative number at the end of 2023
Output 1.1: New teaching and learning practices for work and life developed								
Indicator	Unit of measurement	Baseline value		Achievements until end of December 2023			Target value	Comment

			Previous achievement value	Numerator	Denominator	Achievement value		
<b>Number of staff participating in developing and testing teaching models</b>	Cumulative number	0	78 (IFR 2023)	-	-	594	200	Cumulative number at the end of 2023
<b>Number of staff trained (providing training for educators on the use of teaching models and methods),</b>	Cumulative number	0	0 (IFR 2023)	-	-	56	15	Cumulative number at the end of 2023
<i>Gender</i>								
<i>Female</i>	-	-	0	-	-	40	-	-
<i>Male</i>	-	-	0	-	-	16	-	-
<i>Not specified</i>	-	-	0	-	-	0	-	-
<b>Output 1.2: Knowledge and good practices shared on advancing skills and competencies in education</b>								
Indicator	Unit of measurement	Baseline value	Previous achievement value	Achievements until end of December 2023			Target value	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Achievement value		
<b>Number of peer learning activities carried out</b>	Cumulative number	0	9 (IFR 2023)	-	-	66	16	Cumulative number at the end of 2023
<b>Number of participants in peer learning (educators, staff, other education stakeholders)</b>	Cumulative number	0	198 (IFR 2023)	-	-	810	300	Cumulative number at the end of 2023
<b>Number of professional staff trained</b>	Cumulative number	0	23 (IFR 2023)	-	-	59	60	Cumulative number at the end of 2023
<i>Gender</i>								
<i>Female</i>	-	-	15	-	-	30	-	-
<i>Male</i>	-	-	8	-	-	29	-	-
<i>Not specified</i>	-	-	0	-	-	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 2023			Target value	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Achievement value		

<b>Level of satisfaction with the institutional cooperation</b>	Scale 1-5	3.73, Baseline value to be submitted by the PO	3.73 (Strategic Report 2022)	-	-	1	3.50, Target is minimum 3.5	To be measured at the end of implementation
<b>Number of institutions which are using intellectual outputs created</b>	Cumulative number	0	0 (Strategic Report 2022)	-	-	0	15	Activities are still on-going
<b>Share of educational staff who declare improved skills and competencies through involvement in blended learning</b>	Percentage	N/A	-	0	1	0.00 %	90.00 %	To be measured at the end of implementation
<b>Number of institutions that have implemented a satisfactory strategic framework for offering blended learning</b>	Cumulative number	0	0 (Strategic Report 2022)	-	-	7	7	Cumulative number at the end of 2023
<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 2023			Target value	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Achievement value		
<b>Number of students that participated in blended learning</b>	Cumulative number	0	0 (IFR 2023)	-	-	0	260	Activities are still on-going
<i>Gender</i>								
<i>Female</i>	-	-	0	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Male</i>	-	-	0	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Not specified</i>	-	-	0	-	-	0	-	-
<i>State type</i>								
<i>Beneficiary State</i>	-	-	0	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Donor State</i>	-	-	0	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Not specified</i>	-	-	0	-	-	0	-	-
<b>Number of joint intellectual outputs created</b>	Cumulative number	0	0 (IFR 2023)	-	-	1	4	Activities are still on-going

<b>Number of staff trained in blended learning methods</b>	Cumulative number	0	35 (IFR 2023)	-	-	71	62	Cumulative number at the end of 2023
<i>Gender</i>								
<i>Female</i>	-	-	15	-	-	41	-	-
<i>Male</i>	-	-	20	-	-	30	-	-
<i>Not specified</i>	-	-	0	-	-	0	-	-
<i>State type</i>								
<i>Beneficiary State</i>	-	-	35	-	-	71	-	-
<i>Donor State</i>	-	-	0	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Not specified</i>	-	-	0	-	-	0	-	-
<b>Share of students who declare improved skills and competences through involvement in blended learning</b>	Percentage	N/A	-	0	0	-	90.00 %	Activities are still on-going
<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 2023			Target value	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Achievement value		
<b>Number of joint events (peer learning visits)</b>	Cumulative number	0	1 (IFR 2023)	-	-	2	3	Cumulative number at the end of 2023
<b>Number of staff from beneficiary state in exchanges</b>	Cumulative number	0	22 (IFR 2023)	-	-	22	24	Cumulative number at the end of 2023
<i>Gender</i>								
<i>Female</i>	-	-	11	-	-	11	-	-
<i>Male</i>	-	-	11	-	-	11	-	-
<i>Not specified</i>	-	-	0	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Type of exchange</i>								
<i>Online</i>	-	-	0	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Physical</i>	-	-	22	-	-	22	-	-
<i>Not specified</i>	-	-	0	-	-	0	-	-
<b>Number of staff from donor states in exchanges</b>	Cumulative number	0	6 (IFR 2023)	-	-	25	14	Cumulative number at the end of 2023
<i>Donor State</i>								

Norway	-	-	0	-	-	10	-	-
Iceland	-	-	6	-	-	15	-	-
Liechtenstein	-	-	0	-	-	0	-	-
Not specified	-	-	0	-	-	0	-	-
<b>Gender</b>								
Female	-	-	4	-	-	17	-	-
Male	-	-	2	-	-	8	-	-
Not specified	-	-	0	-	-	0	-	-
<b>Type of exchange</b>								
Online	-	-	0	-	-	0	-	-
Physical	-	-	6	-	-	25	-	-
Not specified	-	-	0	-	-	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 2023			Target value	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Achievement value		
<b>Share of involved service providers who declare improved skills</b>	Percentage	-	-	-	-	-	95.00 %	-
<b>Number of beneficiaries of services provided or improved</b>	Cumulative number	0	20 (IFR 2023)	-	-	568	350	Cumulative number at the end of 2023
<b>Gender</b>								
Female	-	-	12	-	-	352	-	-
Male	-	-	8	-	-	216	-	-
Not specified	-	-	0	-	-	0	-	-
<b>Age</b>								
Children and youth (0-17)	-	-	0	-	-	288	-	-
Young adults (18-29)	-	-	0	-	-	260	-	-
Adults (30-64)	-	-	20	-	-	20	-	-
Elderly (65+)	-	-	0	-	-	0	-	-
Not specified	-	-	0	-	-	0	-	-
<b>Output 3.1: Support services for the NEET (not in employment, education or training) established</b>								
Indicator	Unit of measurement	Baseline value		Achievements until end of December 2023			Target value	Comment

			Previous achievement value	Numerator	Denominator	Achievement value		
<b>Number of new or upgraded services developed and tested in local environment</b>	Cumulative number	0	0 (IFR 2023)	-	-	1	2	Cumulative number at the end of 2023
<b>Number of staff trained to work with NEET</b>	Cumulative number	0	0 (IFR 2023)	-	-	49	20	Cumulative number at the end of 2023
<i>Gender</i>								
<i>Female</i>	-	-	0	-	-	39	-	-
<i>Male</i>	-	-	0	-	-	10	-	-
<i>Not specified</i>	-	-	0	-	-	0	-	-
<b>Number of inclusive activities (events, workshops, trainings)</b>	Cumulative number	0	0 (IFR 2023)	-	-	9	20	Cumulative number at the end of 2023
<b>Output 3.2: Support to youth provided</b>								
Indicator	Unit of measurement	Baseline value	Previous achievement value	Achievements until end of December 2023			Target value	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Achievement value		
<b>Number of new or upgraded services</b>	Cumulative number	0	1 (IFR 2023)	-	-	6	3	Cumulative number at the end of 2023
<b>Number of staff trained</b>	Cumulative number	0	29 (IFR 2023)	-	-	134	15	Cumulative number at the end of 2023
<i>Gender</i>								
<i>Female</i>	-	-	19	-	-	91	-	-
<i>Male</i>	-	-	10	-	-	43	-	-
<i>Not specified</i>	-	-	0	-	-	0	-	-
<b>Number of networking, trainings or advisory activities for the young</b>	Cumulative number	0	9 (IFR 2023)	-	-	9	15	Cumulative number at the end of 2023
<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 2023			Target value	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Achievement value		

<b>Number of support services developed (advisory, information, training, etc.)</b>	Cumulative number	0	0 (IFR 2023)	-	-	0	3	no projects under this output
<b>Number of intellectual outputs produced (analyses, information materials, learning materials, etc.)</b>	Cumulative number	0	0 (IFR 2023)	-	-	0	5	no projects under this output
<b>Number of support activities (information events, workshops, etc.)</b>	Cumulative number	0	0 (IFR 2023)	-	-	0	10	no projects under this output
<b>Number of participants reached by awareness raising events (round tables, public debates, conferences, etc.)</b>	Cumulative number	0	0 (IFR 2023)	-	-	0	200	no projects under this output
<b>Outcome 4: Improved work-life balance (WLB)</b>								
Indicator	Unit of measurement	Baseline value	Previous achievement value	Achievements until end of December 2023			Target value	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Achievement value		
<b>Number of beneficiaries of services provided or improved</b>	Cumulative number	0	53 (IFR 2023)	-	-	684	150	Cumulative number at the end of 2023
<i>Gender</i>								
<i>Female</i>	-	-	45	-	-	506	-	-
<i>Male</i>	-	-	8	-	-	178	-	-
<i>Not specified</i>	-	-	0	-	-	0	-	-
<b>Number of institutions applying gender equality instruments (or WLB instruments)</b>	Cumulative number	0	0 (Strategic Report 2022)	-	-	5	3	Cumulative number at the end of 2023
<b>Share of participants with improved understanding of WLB and gender policies</b>	Percentage	-	-	-	-	-	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 2023			Target value	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Achievement value		

<b>Number of measures improved or introduced at local level (new or upgraded services, products, tools)</b>	Cumulative number	0	0 (IFR 2023)	-	-	9	3	Cumulative number at the end of 2023
<b>Number of professional staff trained (coordinators, mentors, informal carers, animators, etc.)</b>	Cumulative number	0	0 (IFR 2023)	-	-	254	20	Cumulative number at the end of 2023
<i>Gender</i>								
<i>Female</i>	-	-	0	-	-	163	-	-
<i>Male</i>	-	-	0	-	-	91	-	-
<i>Not specified</i>	-	-	0	-	-	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 2023			Target value	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Achievement value		
<b>Number of participants reached by awareness raising and capacity building activities in organisations (disaggregated by gender)</b>	Cumulative number	0	0 (IFR 2023)	-	-	0	100	Activities are still on-going
<b>Number of measures adopted in organisations (tools, guidelines etc.)</b>	Cumulative number	0	0 (IFR 2023)	-	-	2	4	Cumulative number at the end of 2023
<b>Outcome 5: Improved skills for good governance and cooperation in the provision of child victim services</b>								
Indicator	Unit of measurement	Baseline value	Previous achievement value	Achievements until end of December 2023			Target value	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Achievement value		
<b>Number of beneficiaries of services provided or improved</b>	Cumulative number	0	0 (IFR 2023)	-	-	0	80	Cumulative number at the end of 2023
<i>Gender</i>								
<i>Female</i>	-	-	0	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Male</i>	-	-	0	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Not specified</i>	-	-	0	-	-	0	-	-



Share of professional staff who declared improved skills and competences	Percentage	-	-	0	0	-	90.00 %	To be measured at the end of implementation
Number of institutions using the "Barnahus/Children's House" model	Cumulative number	0	0 (Strategic Report 2022)	-	-	1	1	Cumulative number at the end of 2023
<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 2023			Target value	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Achievement value		
Number of improved/new services supported	Cumulative number	0	0 (IFR 2023)	-	-	1	1	Cumulative number at the end of 2023
Number of pilot projects implemented for child victim services	Cumulative number	0	0 (IFR 2023)	-	-	0	1	Implementation not yet concluded
Number of professional staff trained	Cumulative number	0	37 (IFR 2023)	-	-	403	120	Cumulative number at the end of 2023
<i>Gender</i>								
<i>Female</i>	-	-	32	-	-	381	-	-
<i>Male</i>	-	-	5	-	-	22	-	-
<i>Not specified</i>	-	-	0	-	-	0	-	-
Number of training courses organised	Cumulative number	0	2 (IFR 2023)	-	-	10	14	Cumulative number at the end of 2023
Evaluation report on the pilot implementation	Binary	No	No (IFR 2023)	-	-	No	Yes	To be measured at the end of implementation
Plan for evaluation and expansion	Binary	No	No (IFR 2023)	-	-	No	Yes	To be measured at the end of implementation
<b>Output 5.2: Awareness raising activities carried out</b>								
Indicator	Unit of measurement	Baseline value	Previous achievement value	Achievements until end of December 2023			Target value	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Achievement value		

<b>Number of awareness raising campaigns</b>	Cumulative number	0	0 (IFR 2023)	-	-	1	3	Cumulative number at the end of 2023
<b>Number of people reached by awareness raising campaigns</b>	Cumulative number	0	0 (IFR 2023)	-	-	100,000	100,000	Cumulative number at the end of 2023
<b>Number of schools included in awareness raising workshops</b>	Cumulative number	0	10 (IFR 2023)	-	-	20	20	Cumulative number at the end of 2023
<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 2023			Target value	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Achievement value		
<b>Level of trust between cooperating entities in Beneficiary States and Donor States</b>	Scale 1-7	6.50, Survey to be carried out by the FMO	1 (Strategic Report 2022)	-	-	1	4.50, Target is ≥4.5, and an increase on the baseline value	Survey to be carried out by the FMO
<b>Level of satisfaction with the partnership</b>	Scale 1-7	6.75, Survey to be carried out by the FMO	1 (Strategic Report 2022)	-	-	1	4.50, Target is ≥4.5, and an increase on the baseline value	Survey to be carried out by the FMO
<b>Share of cooperating organisations that apply the knowledge acquired from bilateral partnership</b>	Percentage	0.00 %	-	0	1	0.00 %	50.00 %	Survey to be carried out by the FMO
<b>Bilateral Output 1: Bilateral cooperation activities supported</b>								
Indicator	Unit of measurement	Baseline value	Previous achievement value	Achievements until end of December 2023			Target value	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Achievement value		

<b>Number of projects involving cooperation with a donor project partner</b>	Cumulative number	0	22 (IFR 2023)	-	-	22	7	Cumulative number at the end of 2023
--	-------------------	---	---------------	---	---	----	---	--------------------------------------

## Annex 2: Communication summary

### 1. Best projects

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

##### Best Practice Examples

[Studio of Circular Economy \(studioKroG\)](#) project partners presented good practices in environmental conservation and sustainable development at a press conference that took place in used shipping containers. It has become clear that taking care of our planet is crucial, as we face many challenges that demand immediate action. Circular Economy Studio is an innovative concept based on circular economy principles. A circular economy is an approach that aims to limit the consumption of natural resources, reduce waste, and promote recycling and reuse. This approach is based on the idea that products, materials, and resources can be used in endless cycles, reducing the negative environmental impact. The Circular Economy Studio project is designed to become a model of sustainable development and circular economy for other local communities. The project aims to create a comprehensive environmental and economic system to promote waste reduction, reuse, and recycling and stimulate local employment and economic growth. The project has developed an innovative infrastructure that provides a better understanding of the circular economy and promotes local production and reuse of materials. The aim is to achieve full reuse of resources and minimise waste.

Under the [SALOMON project](#), the Novo mesto General Hospital, Novo mesto Development Centre and the Nord University from Norway work together as project partners to raise awareness of sustainable mobility options and spur change in travel habits. They aim to encourage hospital staff, patients and visitors to use more sustainable transport modes, such as public transport, car sharing, walking and cycling, to get to the hospital. As part of the project, a mobility plan is planned to be developed for the Novo mesto General Hospital. A bicycle parking facility under the GoNM bicycle sharing scheme and an electric vehicle charging station have been set up to tackle dense traffic building up daily around the Novo mesto General Hospital was established under the Salomon project. Moreover, the project partner NORD University carried out a survey on the travel habits of employees, patients and visitors.

The ReNature project conducted restoration work on grasslands and wetland ecosystems. The [ReNature project](#) has been underway since May 2022. One of the project's main objectives is to expand the restored wetlands and grassland areas, whose functionality has been diminished due to climate change. The restoration of these ecosystems aims to preserve and enhance the critical functions they provide for various plant and animal species, as well as for human activities.

### Best Bilateral Cooperation Examples

In 2023, bilateral cooperation at the project level was in full swing in Slovenia. Study visits offered an excellent opportunity for project partners to learn about good practices and share valuable experiences. Several Slovenian project partners visited Iceland, Liechtenstein or Norway and welcomed donor project partners to Slovenia in the past year. Thus, in the scope of the SALOMON project, which brings together two Slovenian institutions and the Norwegian partner of Nord University, the partners took part in the official opening of the bicycle parking facility and electric vehicle charging station in front of the Novo mesto General Hospital.

Partners of the [Trata 2.1 project](#) visited Liechtenstein and the Austrian region of Vorarlberg at the end of March 2023 to learn about good practices the country and the companies are rolling out to encourage a shift in employees' travel habits and promote the use of sustainable modes of travel. During the two-day visit, local companies and organisations, energy institute as well as local and national authorities presented several initiatives that are being implemented particularly at the organisational level to promote sustainable mobility among employees and the local population. The decision to support walking, cycling, using public transport or car sharing and car-pooling is dictated by the care for the health of both people and the planet, significant cost savings for the employees and the companies alike and reduced environmental impact of transportation.

Five Slovenian partners of the [NovilKroG project](#) visited the Bodø-based Norwegian project partner Nord University in March 2023. Slovenian delegation met with the representatives of Norwegian scientific and research institutions, the public sector, NGOs and the economy that showcased many good practices and trends in the circular economy. The Slovenian delegation consisted of the representatives of the Urban Municipality Novo mesto, the Development Centre Novo mesto, the Faculty of Industrial Engineering Novo mesto, the Public Utility Company Novo mesto and Knof social enterprise.

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

### Best Practice Examples

[BalanCed](#) project launched The Creative Centre with an innovative programme aimed at creating a work-life balance and it is part of the project Creative Work-life Balance. In the form of free courses and workshops, the Creative Centre is offering the acquisition of skills in modelling clay, sewing, making natural cosmetics and photography. It also offers a programme to strengthen soft skills for employees in organisations, and a diverse programme for children.

The [Koroška Region Youth Support Network Project \(KOR-NET\)](#) aims to strengthen the support environment for young people in the Koroška region, reduce brain drain and co-create, in cooperation with young people, a quality environment for life and work. The project aims to give all young people in the Koroška region equal opportunities and a chance to get actively involved and participate in local decision-making, especially on issues that affect them. This will also help young people enter the labour market with more confidence and become more active citizens. In addition to setting up a total of 13 workstations for young people across the region, the project also results in setting up the [Koroška Region Virtual Youth Incubator](#), in the design of a model for active participation of young people – a set of good practices in the field of youth work, and in organising workshops, camps and networking events for young people to connect with experts, decision-makers, entrepreneurs, etc.

The purpose of the project [Heritage School for New Generations](#) is to establish an inter-institutional environment and learning practices for a more planned education of young people about cultural heritage and its renewal at the elementary school level. The project is aimed at the development of new teaching practices for the integration of cultural heritage into curricula and programmes in primary schools. The project also transfers the good practices of the Norwegian learning system in cooperation with the Norwegian project partner Magma Geopark AS. Heritage School for New Generations officially opened the renovated space of its new Heritage Learning Laboratory in Škofja Loka. The renovated space is used primarily to train primary school teachers to integrate cultural heritage content into the curriculum, in line with the new curricula being developed under the project. The complex renovation of the building was led by the Municipality of Škofja Loka with the assistance of project partners and the Institute for the Protection of Cultural Heritage, which carried out restoration work on the building. In the process, various phases from at least five hundred years of the building's history were uncovered. Heritage School for New Generations also opened the didactic corner gallery Pod Homanovo lipo at the Ivan Grohar Primary School. The gallery Pod Homanovo lipo was visited for the first time by the pupils of the school, who saw a part of the Škofja Loka's town centre and experienced the gallery as a place to socialise and educate about cultural heritage in a pleasant and interesting way.

[EMPOWER FOR 21](#) project aims to create, through teacher training for communication, leadership, mental health and teaching critical thinking, long-term teacher training EMPOWER FOR 21 as a long-term mechanism to better prepare teachers to teach professionals in higher education and at work (development of sustainable teacher training to teach competent professionals in healthcare). The project responds to societal challenges demanding that an expert of the 21st century is not only competent in his/her profession but also acts as a co-creator of the wider society, which he/she serves through his/her leadership and responses to the fundamental challenges of the environment. Within the project the inauguration of a laparoscopic simulator took place at the Faculty of Medicine in Maribor. The advanced equipment will enable medical students to perform processes and experiments in a controlled environment outside a living organism.

### Best Bilateral Cooperation Examples

In 2023, bilateral cooperation at the project level was in full swing in Slovenia. Study visits offered an excellent opportunity for project partners to learn about good practices and share valuable experiences. Several Slovenian project partners visited Iceland, Liechtenstein or Norway and welcomed donor project partners to Slovenia in the past year. Thus, for example, Slovenian and Norwegian project partners learned about new methods of outdoor learning as part of the SCHOOL21 project.

As part of the [KIPSI project](#), Slovenian project partners hosted partners from Norway and Iceland on a three-day study visit between 17 and 21 April 2023. Project partners visited the Celje School Centre and the Koper Secondary Technical School. Partner schools showcased the demo versions of e-materials and shared what it was like to have students participating in the creation of e-materials. They also visited the Novo mesto School Centre where they discussed blended learning in practice. A conference Digital and Innovative was held as part of the study visit. Partners from Slovenia, Norway and Iceland presented to the Slovenian public the possibilities of introducing blended learning in the learning process and didactic-pedagogical approaches that are being tested by combining traditional face-to-face teaching in classroom-based settings with online learning. Visitors were able to try out for themselves what the video and digital resources developed in the scope of the project are like.

Project partners from Slovenia (Pomurje Technology Park, Faculty of Mechanical Engineering of the University of Maribor, School of Economics Murska Sobota, Bilingual Secondary School Lendava, Biotechnological School Rakičan, Secondary School for Catering and Tourism Radenci) visited the Trondheim-based Norwegian partner, University of Science and Technology between 18 and 21 April 2023 in the scope of the [TALENT LAB project](#). The study visit aimed to share good practices with the relevant educational, supportive and administrative institutions given that Norway, more specifically the Trøndelag region, also faces the challenge of rural-to-urban migration of qualified young people. Norwegian project partner presented interesting measures, incentives and initiatives that have been designed to encourage young people to remain in the region, connect them with the local economy and mitigate or prevent brain drain. The latter has been a critical issue for years in the Pomurje region.

Slovenian project partners hosted a delegation from Norway between 21 and 23 March 2023 as part of the [digi.komp project](#). Norwegian project partner Pikel together with three lecturers carried out the first round of workshops. In this context, Norwegian partners learned more about the relevant Slovenian institutions and the way they work and shared knowledge about new approaches and methods of teaching with Slovenian partners. To end the study visit, project partners visited the Cukrarna Gallery and saw the exhibition Konsekvence – Fragments of a Possible Ecosystem. The visit to the gallery was a perfect opportunity for Norwegian partners to learn more about Slovenian projects that are similar to their educational, artistic and technological activities.

As part of the [IMRO project](#), Project Promoter Slovenian Hospice Society and project partner Society for Cultural Relations SPES paid a seven-day visit to Norway in the first half of March 2023. The host, Norwegian partner Bjerkaker LearningLab, made excellent arrangements and prepared a study visit programme that was packed with insightful visits to Norwegian organisations that are active in the areas relevant to the development of activities in the scope of the project. In this context, the participants paid a visit to the non-profit organisation Fransiskus Hjelpen which provides home-based palliative care services, Diakonhjemmet Sykehus General Hospital, non-profit organisation Oslo Sanitetsforening runs various women support and empowerment programmes, centre for activities Aktivitetshuset Prindsen that offers a range of services to people with mental health issues, the housing and community centre for senior citizens Forsmannsenteret and non-governmental organisation based on voluntary work that encourages creative leisure activities Sandefjord Vikingparken. The study visit allowed Slovenian project partners and organisations from Norway to share valuable knowledge, good practices and experience and inspired them with new ideas.

Partners of the [Think XR project](#), in cooperation with a multidisciplinary working group, organised a study visit to Norway between 6 and 8 March 2023. They met with experts at the Trondheim-based Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU) who acquainted them with the novelties and the projects under development. The Norwegian partner took the participants through development labs, explaining how work is done in labs and classrooms. Thus, Slovenian project partners saw first-hand how the teaching process, the work with students and the work on projects are carried out at NTNU. On the Gløshaugen and Dragvoll campuses, the hosts presented the didactic and pedagogical approaches they employ and explained how augmented reality (AR) and extended reality (XR) technologies are being used in this process. They outlined the work and progress done in XR projects and showed the Slovenian project partners the labs and the equipment used for work with XR technologies. The participants also got to know how contents are being developed and how academia, researchers and companies that are rolling out XR technology in their processes are involved in the work of NTNU.

## 2. Visibility of the Grants and the Donors

### [Overview of the Communication Achievements in 2023](#)

EEA and Norway Grants in 2023 were mostly marked by many activities under the programmes Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation and Education, Scholarships, Apprenticeship and Youth Entrepreneurship. At the national level, activities were carried out by the Communication Strategy. Communication and information activities mainly supported the regular tasks of the National Focal Point. In 2023, there were no significant activities or major events planned for the wider public.



Regarding the indicators of the specific communication objective set out in the Communication Strategy, the cumulative values remained unchanged. 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 the Period	Source	F o R
					2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023			
Specific Objective	Inform (potential) beneficiaries / communicate the possibilities of using the EEA and Norway Grants	Number of factsheets	Number	0	1	1	1	2	2	2	3	NFP	A
	and	Other information materials (e.g., brochures, etc.) <sup>(0)</sup>	Number	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	NFP	A
	inform target audiences of the results, benefits and impact of the EEA and Norway Grants, its programmes and projects	Events performed	Number	0	1	1	1	2	2	2	3	NFP	A

The website ([norwaygrants.si](http://norwaygrants.si) and [eeagrants.si](http://eeagrants.si)), which was launched in 2022, continued its work in 2023. The main activities on the website are related to updating relevant information related to EEA and Norway Grants and publishing news in Slovenian and English on the activities and progress of EEA and Norway Grants projects.

In March 2023, the National Focal Point organised the fifth Annual Meeting to discuss the implementation progress and achievements of the Norway Grants in Slovenia. The meeting took place on 29 March 2023 in Postojna, Slovenia, to discuss the status of each programme and to ensure efficient use of the funds available under the EEA and Norway Grants.

Several daily news items were prepared and published on the social media channels. The news item about the meeting was published on the [dedicated website](#). Projects from Programmes Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation and Education, Scholarships, Apprenticeship and Youth Entrepreneurship reported on many activities as they implemented many of the project objectives set for 2023.

The National Focal Point is promoting on a dedicated website and EEA and Norway Grants Slovenia social media #Ourstories campaign. The campaign tells the stories behind the programmes and projects that are supported through the EEA and Norway Grants. Through #OurStories of collaboration and transformation, the EEA and Norway Grants exemplify the power of unity in diversity, showcasing how the simple thread of shared aspirations can weave a tapestry of positive change that transcends borders and nationalities. The Slovenian BlendVET project which is part of the programme Education, Scholarships, Apprenticeship and Youth Entrepreneurship is also part of the international #OurStories campaign. The BlendVET project develops school strategies for the introduction of blended learning, provides training for teachers and designs and develops practical solutions for e-learning. The [video](#) about the project BlendVET was filmed in 2023 and it came out in January 2024.

The National Focal Point participated in two Annual Communication Workshops organised by the Financial Mechanism Office. The first one took place on 13 and 14 June in EFTA House in Brussels. The discussions in the workshop focused on how artificial intelligence can change the way we communicate, the long-awaited #OurStories campaign was introduced, and the participants presented inspiring examples of storytelling about the impact of the EEA and Norway Grants. The second one was carried out on 24 and 25 October 2023 also at the EFTA House in Brussels. The workshop emphasised a broader perception of financial mechanisms through the presentation of (current) results and their impact, discussed the progress of the #OurStories campaign and the participants were tasked with creating the best and most innovative communication plan for the ending of the financial mechanisms. The National Focal Point and the Financial Mechanism Office also held quite a few regular online quarter meetings.

The Ministry of Cohesion and Regional Development commissioned a public opinion survey conducted by Ninamedia agency on the topic of knowledge of the EEA and Norway Grants. The Ninamedia agency conducted the online survey as part of their online panel using the CAWI method. The link was

sent to the questionnaire via e-mail addresses of people from the agency database. It was a representative group of participants who were asked to fill out the survey. The survey system in their online panel enables fast, reliable, and quality data collection. Field surveys were conducted in various locations across Slovenia (shopping centres, parking lots, shops) with the help of tablets and laptops.

The results of the survey show that a good half of the respondents (58,3%) do not know the financial mechanisms of EEA and Norway Grants. Two-fifths (41,7%) of respondents are familiar with the mentioned financial mechanisms EEA and Norway Grants. Furthermore, a good half of the respondents identified Norway (52,6%) as the main donor country, followed by Sweden (34,7%), Switzerland (21,0%), Luxembourg (21,0%), the Netherlands (20,6%), Iceland (16,2%), Liechtenstein (14,2%) and Ireland (10,4%).

Two-thirds of respondents (60,1%) believe that the projects that are co-financed by EEA and Norway Grants have a positive impact on Slovenia and its development. A good third of the respondents (33,3%) believe that Slovenia is (very) inefficient in using financial mechanisms, (16,4%) believe that Slovenia is neither efficient nor inefficient, while (14,4%) believe that Slovenia is (very) efficient in the use of resources.

When asked 71% of respondents did not know any displayed logos from EEA and Norway Grants. However, the most recognisable logo was logo from the financing period 2009-2014 by 14,8% of respondents. The current Norway grants logo, logo number 2 is known to 9,2% of respondents.

Respondents were asked about the media visibility of EEA and Norway Grants. A good half of the respondents (56,9%) were not (yet) familiar with the EEA and Norway Grants. 13,8% of respondents learn about financial mechanisms through a website, followed by those who learn about them through social media (12,4%), through television (5,6%), in a business environment (4,0%) etc. A good tenth of the respondents (12,4%) have noticed media activities related to the EEA and Norway Grants in Slovenia. Two-thirds of the respondents (67,4%) who have already visited the website ([www.norwaygrants.si](http://www.norwaygrants.si)) have rated the website as (very) good.

#### Summary of Activities to Promote Bilateral Cooperation Opportunities in 2023

There were no significant activities to promote bilateral cooperation, nevertheless, several bilateral initiatives were successfully completed by the end of 2023. Please see the relevant chapter of Combine Strategic and Annual Report 2023.

## Events

Besides the regular activities of the National Focal Point, no significant events were planned for the wider public in 2023.

## Best Practices

	Activity Description	The Audience Reached (type and size)	Contribution to Communication Objectives
1	Website of the EEA and Norway Grants in Slovenia (norwaygrants.si and eeagrants.si)	All	The website contributes to consistency with the overall visual identity of the EEA and Norway Grants. The aim is to report on projects' progress.
2	New social media EEA and Norway Grants Slovenia (FB and IG)	All	Social media contributes to highlighting the important progress of the projects.

## 3. Media coverage

The media coverage in 2023 was significantly larger compared to the previous year. In 2023, the EEA and Norway Grants were mentioned in over 270 articles in various local, regional, and national media outlets. For the most part media coverage related to the midterm results of the projects under the programmes Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation and Education, Scholarships, Apprenticeship and Youth Entrepreneurship.

The number of media outlets show that there is great interest in reporting the results of the project for programmes Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation and Education, Scholarships, Apprenticeship and Youth Entrepreneurship. The media coverage was distributed evenly between the programmes (approximately 135 media outlets per programme).

In the programme Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation few of the project stands out in terms of media coverage, such as StudioKrog ([RTVSLO](#), [Zelena Slovenija](#), [Večer](#)), Smart Move ([24ur](#), [RTVSLO](#), [Dnevnik](#)) and LFIA-REC ([STA](#), [N1info](#), [RTVSLO](#)).

In the programme Education, Scholarships, Apprenticeship and Youth Entrepreneurship few of the projects stand out in terms of media coverage, such as KOR-NET ([Koroške novice](#), [STA](#), [Večer](#)), TERA ([Val202](#), [RTVSLO](#), [Posavski Obzornik](#)) and NEKSTEP ([Visit Koper](#), [Podjetniški portal](#), [Primorske novice](#)). The project [BlendVET](#) was presented to an international audience with an [article](#) by Fredrik Mjell from the Financial Mechanism Office.

#### 4. Website and social media

Link to the National Focal Point's (EEA and Norway Grants) webpage	Total number of page views in the reporting year
<a href="https://www.norwaygrants.si">https://www.norwaygrants.si</a>	75946

	Link or account handle	Number of posts published in the reporting year	Number of followers
Facebook	facebook.com/NorwayGrantsSlovenia	115	139
Instagram	instagram.com/EEANorwayGrantsSlovenia	89	449

#### 5. Visuals

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

The following visuals are highlighted:

- [Studio of Circular Economy - YouTube](#)
- [ThinkXR - Trondheim study visit - YouTube](#)
- [ThinkXR - promo video - YouTube](#)

### Annex 3: Project summary and call details

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

##### 1. Project summary

	Number	Total Grant	Amount budgeted to dpps (estimate)
<b>Total number of projects contracted</b>	17	€ 16,653,289	€ 1,518,089
<b>Number of pre-defined projects contracted</b>	1	€ 1,073,529	€ 0
<b>Number of projects with a donor project partner</b>	15	€ 15,245,842	€ 1,518,089
Number of projects with a donor project partner Norway	12	€ 11,958,991	€ 1,359,368
Number of projects with a donor project partner Iceland	1	€ 1,073,529	€ 0
Number of projects with a donor project partner Liechtenstein	2	€ 2,213,322	€ 158,721

##### 2. Call details

Call title	Outcome(s)	Call amount	Submission deadline	Number of applications received	Grant amount applied for	Grant demand %	Number of applications approved for funding	Grant amount awarded	Number of projects contracted	Amount contracted
Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation programme Call for Proposals	Outcome 1, Outcome 2, Outcome 3, Outcome 4	€ 15,564,706	30/09/2021	43	€ 15,564,706	100.00 %	16	€ 15,579,760	16	€ 15,579,760

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

##### 1. Project summary

	Number	Total Grant	Amount budgeted to dpps (estimate)
<b>Total number of projects contracted</b>	24	€ 14,467,849	€ 1,696,425
<b>Number of pre-defined projects contracted</b>	2	€ 3,171,432	€ 507,559
<b>Number of projects with a donor project partner</b>	22	€ 12,434,639	€ 1,696,425

Number of projects with a donor project partner Norway	22	€ 12,434,639	€ 1,493,106
Number of projects with a donor project partner Iceland	1	€ 1,607,844	€ 203,320
Number of projects with a donor project partner Liechtenstein	0	€ 0	€ 0

## 2. Call details

Call title	Outcome(s)	Call amount	Submission deadline	Number of applications received	Grant amount applied for	Grant demand %	Number of applications approved for funding	Grant amount awarded	Number of projects contracted	Amount contracted
CALL FOR PROPOSALS for co-financing of projects under the programme Education, Scholarships, Apprenticeship and Youth Entrepreneurship	Outcome 1, Outcome 3, Outcome 4	€ 11,299,156	30/09/2021	61	€ 11,299,156	100.00 %	22	€ 11,296,417	22	€ 11,296,417



## Annex 4: Risk management

### SI-CLIMATE Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation

Risk description	Likelihood (1-4)	Consequence (1-4)	Risk score	Planned response in 2024
Shortage of staff, unforeseen institutional changes	1 low	2 medium low	1.41	New employees in the role of contract managers Training of staff and other forms of motivation to retain experienced staff
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.	2 medium low	3 medium high	2.45	In 2023 projects were and still are regularly monitored by PO contract managers in order to detect possible bottlenecks in public procurement procedures.
Rising prices due to the energy crisis and the war in Ukraine	2 medium low	3 medium high	2.45	In 2023 PO published a notice on the call for the award of additional funding to already contracted projects, which were affected by the increase in infrastructure prices. Four projects were eligible for additional funding. Projects are regularly monitored by PO contract managers.
Projects with significant budget	3 medium high	3 medium high	3.00	There is a possibility that all funds available for projects will not be spent due to short time that is available for implementation of such complex projects. PO contract managers are in regular contact with project promoters of all complex (investment) projects within the programme.
<b>Overall risk of not absorbing most financing and achieving most targets (1-4):</b>			<b>2.83</b>	

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

Risk description	Likelihood (1-4)	Consequence (1-4)	Risk score	Planned response in 2024
Shortage of staff, unforeseen institutional changes	1 low	2 medium low	1.41	New employees in the role of contract managers Training of staff and other forms of motivation to retain experienced staff

Less experienced project promoters and project partners	2 medium low	2 medium low	2.00	Frequent communication between contract managers and project promoters in order to clear out doubts and provide relevant information
<b>Overall risk of not absorbing most financing and achieving most targets (1-4):</b>			<b>2.83</b>	

### **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 2023:

- Submission of Interim Financial Reports for Technical Assistance and the Fund for Bilateral Relations
- Preparation and submission of the Combined Strategic and Annual Programme Report for the period from 1 January to 31 December 2022
- Organisation of the Annual Meeting with the donors (Postojna, 29 March 2023)
- Preparation, submission, and acceptance of the revised MoUs and PAs
- Participation at the Cooperation Committee meetings of SI-CLIMATE and SI-EDUCATION programmes
- Implementation of promotional activities (posting content and news articles on the webpage [www.norwaygrants.si/www.eeagrants.si](http://www.norwaygrants.si/www.eeagrants.si), and on social media such as Facebook and Instagram)
- Organisation of the JCBF meeting (30 August 2023, online)
- Conclusion of contracts for new bilateral initiatives under the Fund for Bilateral Relations and provision of support to potential project promoters of pre-defined bilateral activities
- Participation in the meetings and workshops organised by the FMO

#### Audit Authority

The following activities were performed in 2023:

- Preparation of the 5<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 4, March 2023)
- Seven audits of declared expenditures for projects under SI-CLIMATE and SI-EDUCATION programmes, Technical Assistance, and Fund for Bilateral Relations activities

#### Certifying Authority

The following activities were performed in 2023:

- Control and authorisation of all payment requests submitted to the Certifying Authority by the Programme Operators or the National Focal Point and reimbursement of funds to 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 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 the Technical Assistance funds
- Reporting for national purposes
- Follow-up on the updates of the national and FMO documents and legislation relevant to the Financial Mechanisms, communication and cooperation with other national bodies on open issues and keeping up with other relevant information
- Participation in the meetings and workshops organised by the national bodies or the FMO

**Irregularities Authority**

The following activities were performed in 2023:

- Submission of irregularity reports to the FMO
- Monitoring and reviewing audit reports received from the Audit Authority
- Maintaining a register of irregularities
- Use of the eMS and GRACE IT systems, as well as server folders and local folders, to maintain all the necessary documents and data records
- Participation in the meetings and workshops organised 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 2023	ACTUAL EXPENDITURE 2023	
	in EUR <small>(planned in Combined Strategic and Annual Report for 2022)</small>	in EUR <small>(as reported in GRACE)</small>	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>435,236</b>	<b>104,880.17</b>	
		IFR 8 <small>(February 2023)</small>	IFR 9 <small>(September 2023)</small>
Total		55,600.94	49,279.23
<i>National Focal Point</i>		<i>19,547.18</i>	<i>18,517.79</i>

<i>Certifying Authority</i>		13,364.84	14,393.56
<i>Audit Authority</i>		20,822.60	14,746.53
<i>Irregularities Authority</i>		1,866.32	1,621.35

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 2023 will be reported in the 10<sup>th</sup> Interim Financial Report by 15 March 2024.

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

<b>TA BUDGET</b>	<b>TOTAL BUDGET in EUR</b>	<b>CUMULATIVE EXPENDITURE in EUR</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,131,000.00</b>	<b>434,143.47</b>
<i>National Focal Point</i>	591,000	182,577.94
<i>Certifying Authority</i>	250,000	72,280.31
Certifying Authority: Ministry of Finance, CA from 18 June 2019	231,000	
Certifying Authority : Public Fund for Regional Development and Development of Rural Areas, CA until 17 June 2019	19,000	

<i>Audit Authority</i>	250,000	172,961.94
<i>Irregularities Authority</i>	40,000	6,323.28

### Planned expenditure for 2024 - 2025

TA BUDGET	TA BUDGET	PLANNED EXPENDITURE 2024	PLANNED EXPENDITURE 2025
	Total In EUR	in EUR	in EUR
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,131,000.00</b>	<b>180,000</b>	<b>90,000</b>

### Procurement

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

Other entities using the Technical Assistance funds did not conduct any public procurement activities.

### Staffing

National Focal Point				
Name of staff member	Official position	Main tasks	Workload (% of working time)	Funded through the Grants (Y/N)



Jadranka Plut	Head of the Financial Mechanisms Division	Head of NFP	20%	N
Nataša Babuder Rumpret	Secretary in the Financial Mechanisms Division	Bilateral Fund Officer	50%	N
Gordana Stanišič	Undersecretary in the Financial Mechanisms Division	Evaluation Officer	50%	N
Andreja Štravs	Senior Advisor within the Financial Mechanisms Division	NFP Communication Officer (until 20 November 2023)	60%	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
Maja Švajger	Other European Funds and Mechanisms Audit Division	Auditor	50%	Y
<b>Irregularities Authority</b>				
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

Description	Type	Tracking	Fulfilled	Date of fulfilment	Description of measures taken
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.	General	Continuously tracking	N/A		Not applicable in 2023 due to the status of programme implementation
2. The Programme Operator is required to ensure visibility of the EEA Grants contributions among other funding sources.	General	Continuously tracking	N/A		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.
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.	General	Continuously tracking	N/A		Not applicable in 2023 due to the status of programme implementation.
4. The Programme Operator shall organize at least two broad experience sharing events during the programme	General	Continuously tracking	N/A		Not applicable in 2023 due to the status of programme implementation.

implementation period, with the aim of showcasing innovative approaches in the projects supported.					
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.	General	Continuously tracking	N/A		Projects under the Call for Proposals were selected in 2022.
6. The Programme Operator shall encourage bilateral partnerships across all calls for proposals.	General	Continuously tracking	N/A		Bilateral partnerships have been successfully encouraged as 15 out of 17 projects involve a Donor Project Partners.
7. The National Focal Point shall ensure that the Programme Operator ensures that Project Promoters: <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</li> </ul>	General	Continuously tracking	N/A		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>least 5 years following the completion of the project; and</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>					
--	--	--	--	--	--

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

Description	Type	Tracking	Fulfilled	Date of fulfilment	Description of measures taken
<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>General</p>	<p>Continuously tracking</p>	<p>N/A</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</p>

<p>2. 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> <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>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>
<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</p>	<p>General</p>	<p>One-time fulfilment</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>02/02/2023</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>

<p>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 shall be agreed upon through a modification of the programme agreement.</p>					
<p>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>	<p>Pre-eligibility</p>	<p>One-time fulfilment</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>20/03/2020</p>	<p>Condition fulfilled.</p>