



EEA FINANCIAL MECHANISM 2014–2021 AND
NORWEGIAN FINANCIAL MECHANISM 2014–2021

GUIDE FOR BENEFICIARIES

Part 7: ARCHIVING AND CLOSING A PROJECT

CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION AND ADAPTATION PROGRAMME
EDUCATION, SCHOLARSHIPS, APPRENTICESHIP AND YOUTH
ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROGRAMME

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Table of Contents

List of abbreviations	3
1 Introduction.....	4
2 Providing an audit trail	4
3 Closing a project.....	5
4 Archiving a project	5

List of abbreviations

EEA	European Economic Area
eMS	Electronic Monitoring System
GODC	Government Office for Development and European Cohesion Policy

1 Introduction

The document on archiving and completing projects within the programmes *Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation* and *Education, Scholarships, Apprenticeship and Youth Entrepreneurship* (hereinafter: the document) represents the basic rules for archiving and completing projects.

With the proper storage of project documentation, the beneficiary preserves the content of the documents in such a way that it is accessible and preserved in the long term in an unchanged and credible form throughout the retention period.

In doing so, it provides an audit trail that allows traceability and visual inspection for the purposes of monitoring, control and evaluation of the project throughout the entire duration of the project and even after its completion, up to the prescribed period of compulsory retention of documents.

The document is issued by the Government Office for Development and European Cohesion Policy (hereinafter: GODC) acting as the Programme Operator of the programmes *Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation* and *the Education, Scholarships, Apprenticeship and Youth Entrepreneurship* (hereinafter: Programme Operator).

The document is binding for all Project Promoters and Project Partners (hereinafter beneficiaries) implementing projects selected under the call for proposals as well as for predefined projects under the abovementioned programmes.

If necessary, the document shall be subject to revision during project implementation which is why the beneficiaries must always use the last valid version of the document published on the website dedicated to the implementation of the Financial Mechanisms in the Republic of Slovenia, namely www.norwaygrants.si and www.eeagrants.si (hereinafter dedicated website), accessible at www.norwaygrants.si/en/calls/education and www.norwaygrants.si/en/calls/environment.

Wherever used in this document, a pronoun in the masculine gender shall be considered as including the feminine gender in line with the principles of gender-inclusive language.

2 Providing audit trail

The Programme Operator shall collect and store data on projects in electronic form for the purposes of implementation of payments, monitoring of project implementation, reporting, auditing and evaluation of the programme. For the purpose of collecting and storing data in electronic format, an electronic monitoring system (eMS) has been set up, through which the beneficiary reports on the implementation of the project. In accordance with the project contract Project Promoter shall also report through the eMS on the implementation of the project on behalf of the Donor State Project Partner. Details are specified in Part 5 of this Guide.

The beneficiary shall provide a sufficient and adequate audit trail. The accounting and supporting documentation of the project shall be kept at the premises of the beneficiary. Documents may be kept either as originals or in versions certified to be in conformity with originals on commonly accepted data carriers. The documents related to the application and

implementation of the project (application form, partner report, project report, etc.) are stored electronically in eMS.

3 Closing a project

The completion of the project is the final stage in the project implementation process and includes two parallel activities: Completion of project activities and preparation of the final project report. The completion of the project in the eMS is defined in Part 5 of this Guide.

The closure of a project does not represent the end of the beneficiary's commitment in relation to the project. Even after the approval of the final project report and the implementation of the last reimbursement of funds, the project may be subject to controls and audits.

4 Archiving a project

For audit, control or evaluation purposes, the beneficiary shall keep safe and orderly all official files, documents and project data in their original form from the start of the project to the date of retention of documents, i.e. three years after the final programme report has been approved by the donor countries.

In the event that project activities fall under State aid, the documentation in this respect shall be kept for at least ten years from the date on which the State aid was granted.

The documentation relating to equipment and infrastructure shall be kept by the beneficiary for at least five years after the approval of the final project report.

The beneficiary shall keep the original supporting documents of the expenditure and keep it in the accounts in such a way that they can be easily traced for control purposes and for the provision of an audit trail, as well as keep a record of the accounts and all participants who keep the documents in the audit trail.