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Public consultation for the Blue Book of the EEA and Norway Grants, Financial Mechanism 2021-2028

Final Report

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Executive summary

This final report presents findings from the public consultation for the Blue Book of EEA and Norway Grants, Financial Mechanism 2021-2028. The consultation aimed to gather input from stakeholders to refine the Blue Book's 15 programme areas and three funds before final publication. Each programme area/fund in the Blue Book includes sections on rationale, areas of support, activity types, key actors and beneficiaries, and specific conditions. An online survey was structured in alignment with these sections and provided space for feedback from stakeholders.

The consultation was implemented as an online survey on the Alchemer survey platform, which attracted 2,305 participants in total. However, due to the non-mandatory nature of survey questions, the report focuses on 300 respondents' responses after filtering out empty or incomplete responses to the survey. These selected respondents' responses[1] include at least one answer to a question about any of the 18 programme areas/funds. Looking at the participants profile, the consultation had high engagement from Poland, Greece, and the Czech Republic, and most participants were from non-governmental organisations (NGOs), central government bodies, or other entities such as research institutions.

The survey revealed a generally strong support for the programme areas/fund descriptions, though stakeholders emphasised the need for flexibility, inclusion of groups in vulnerable situations, enhanced civil society roles, gender equality, and data transparency. Specific requests included reducing administrative burdens and increasing accessibility for diverse organisations. Civil society engagement emerged as a crucial priority. Participants also recommended a focus on democratic participation, rule of law, and media engagement. Bilateral relations received strong support across programme areas/funds, with some respondents advocating for multilateral frameworks to enhance impact. Overall, the consultation highlights stakeholders' desires for inclusive, adaptable, and collaborative programme structures to ensure the EEA and Norway Grants effectively address regional needs and foster resilient international partnerships.

[1] Respondents' response in the framework of this report means a response to the survey, not the number of responses to the questions (one respondents' response = one respondent). One survey response can contain several comments to the open questions.

1. Introduction

This document is the draft final report of the public consultation for the Blue Book of EEA and Norway Grants 2021-2028. The aim of this public consultation was to allow the invited stakeholders to provide input and comments on the draft Blue Book to improve it before its final publication.

The Blue Book presents the 15 programme areas and three funds for the EEA and Norway Grants for the period of 2021-2028. The document includes the description of each programme area/fund following the six main sections:[2]

1. Programme area/fund objective to which the projects funded must contribute.
2. Rationale for the support: the background and relevance of the support.
3. Areas of support: the thematic sub-components eligible for funding.
4. How the objectives will be addressed: methods and type of activities to be supported to reach the objective.
5. Key actors and beneficiaries and target groups/areas.
6. Programme area/fund specifics: binding conditions for each Programme area/Fund.

As the survey aimed to collect feedback on the programme area/fund description on the Blue Book, the questionnaire was thus built following the structure of the document. Moreover, an additional question was added about strengthening bilateral relations, and an opportunity was given to leave any final remarks. Lastly, a special question was included for the Civil Society Fund about its country specific topics. Therefore, the final survey questionnaire is accessible in **Annex 1.** Survey questionnaire.

The timeline of survey implementation is presented in **Figure 1** below. After piloting the survey with the Financial Mechanism Office (FMO), it was launched on the 13th of September 2024. The survey was open for five weeks until the 18th of October 2024. During this period, the survey link was disseminated to the stakeholders by the client while the survey team provided weekly reports for the client.

The online survey was built on the Alchemer platform, which allows to create visually appealing, user-friendly surveys with interactive reporting options and question skip logic. This latter feature increases the probability of completing the survey and that respondents will not provide insights on Blue Book sections where they do not have the necessary knowledge.

Figure 1. Timeline of online survey implementation

Source: Visionary Analytics, 2024

The reach of the survey was high - overall 2305 respondents opened the survey and checked questions and content. However, since there were no mandatory questions in the survey, respondents could submit the survey without answering any questions. This was the case for the majority (approx. 87%) of the survey respondents' responses[3] – they were empty or not complete (e.g., only general identification questions answered but no information was provided about the programme areas or funds). Therefore, this report further analyses only responses of those respondents, who answered at least one answer to question about any of the 18 programme areas/funds. The number of such respondents after data cleaning is 300.

The following chapters of the report present an overview of the survey: participants' profiles (Chapter 2), participation rates per programme area/fund covered in the Blue Book (Chapter 3), and summaries of key topics and issues raised by the participants (Chapter 4). The report is concluded with final remarks in Chapter 5. Lastly, Annex 1. Survey questionnaire contains the final survey questionnaire,

[2] Terms of Reference for the "Technical solution to host the public consultation for the Blue Book of EEA & NO Grants FMs 2021-2028" project.
[3] Respondents' response in the framework of this report means a response to the survey, not the number of responses to the questions (one respondents' response = one respondent). One survey response can contain several comments to the open questions.

while more detailed summaries of survey results per each programme area/fund are available in Annex 2. Programme area/Fund feedback overviewIn addition to this report, raw survey data is separately provided to the client as

Green business and innovation

Rationale of the support

The majority of respondents (87.2% or 34 of 39) think that the rationale described reflects the development of the EEA Grants countries in this programme area. The comments received suggests that rationale could recognise the role of research institutions and Higher Education Institutions, emphasise soft measures like fostering appropriate attitudes, and address pollution alongside climate change for a comprehensive view.

Areas of the support

Most respondents (92.5% or 37 of 40) agree that the proposed areas of support enable the achievement of the programme area objective. Nevertheless, a few comments received suggested emphasising digital transition and digitalisation in the areas of support, and incorporate donor states' strategic directions, such as Norway's priorities of the Green Alliance.

Furthermore, 44.7% of respondents (17 of 38) indicated that there could be additional areas of support that could help reach the programme area objective in their country of interest. Key areas include prioritising digital transformation and automation, promoting cross-cluster cooperation, flood resilience, and public education. Capacity building for local organisations, public awareness campaigns, and partnerships with government and private sectors are vital. Supporting collaboration between enterprises and research institutions, ESG governance and AI data collection, gender equality measures, social enterprises, and knowledge transfer can further enhance sustainable development and innovation.

How the objectives will be addressed

Most respondents (88.9% or 32 of 36) found the proposed methods and activities appropriate for achieving the programme area objective. Among those who disagreed, comments suggested that the programme area could benefit from stronger research partnerships to connect academia with business. In addition, expanding the target to "circular bioeconomy" would support broader sustainability goals. Lastly, gender equality assessments with relevant indicators are also recommended.

Key actors and beneficiaries

Out of the 37 respondents who answered the question, 75.7% (28) agreed on the relevance of the listed actors and beneficiaries for achieving the programme area objective. However, some comments suggested emphasising Higher Education Institutions and research organisations as main actors in fostering innovation and supporting the green transition. Non-profit organisations and social enterprises should also be recognised for their capacity to drive social impact and innovation.

PA specifics

Most respondents (86.5% or 32 of 37) agreed that the listed conditions address relevant development challenges or opportunities in their country of interest. Comments from those who disagreed suggested explicitly including startups, and emphasising partnerships with applied research institutions. In addition, the clause prioritising projects with bilateral partnerships may need reconsideration, as such relationships are often contractual rather than true partnerships.

Bilateral relations

Of the 37 respondents, 89.2% (33) found the areas of support relevant for cooperation with entities from the donor states. From those who disagreed, it was suggested that multinational projects would be more effective than just bilateral partnerships. In addition, emphasis should be placed on leveraging donor states' strong Higher Education Institutions for cross-border collaboration and joint initiatives. Including knowledge transfer on Sustainability Life Cycle Assessment and related business models would also enhance the programme's relevance and impact.

Final remarks

In the final remarks, common themes among the comments received included enhancing bilateral cooperation with early feasibility studies and later-stage green technology transfers, replacing "green" with "circular," and involving political actors in local waste management. Strengthening partnerships with Higher Education Institutions, expanding the role of business associations, and ensuring gender mainstreaming and harmonised participation rules were recommended. Leveraging public procurement to drive innovation and prioritising flood resilience infrastructure were also highlighted.

Research and innovation

Rationale of the support

The majority of respondents (92.6% or 50 of 54) think that the rationale described reflects the development of the EEA Grants countries in this programme area. The comments received suggest that rationale could include direct support for research and innovation aimed at tackling the root causes of these challenges, such as environmental impacts and technological advancements. Suggestions include expanding the focus to cover specific areas such as environmental climate change-related research, early-warning systems, and Earth System Models, alongside recognising opportunities in fields like marine biotechnology to support the green transition.

Areas of the support

Most respondents (86.8% or 46 of 53) agree that the proposed areas of support enable the achievement of the programme area objective. Nevertheless, recommendations received include integrating environmental research and innovation, expanding citizen engagement in science, promoting international cooperation through multilateral network funding, supporting research infrastructure and FAIR data, and incorporating bioengineering and biotechnology for sustainable healthcare solutions to enhance the programme's effectiveness and sustainability.

Furthermore, half of respondents (26 of 52) indicated that there could be additional areas of support that could help reach the programme area objective in their country of interest. Key areas include funding for early-stage start-ups, basic and interdisciplinary research, sustainable development of universities, and strategic technologies like AI, data science, and cybersecurity. Emphasis is also placed on international cooperation, gender equality, open science with FAIR data, bioinformatics, marine bio-discovery, anti-discrimination education, and NGO-led research for human rights and corporate sustainability.

How the objectives will be addressed

Many respondents (70.6% or 36 of 51) found the proposed methods and activities appropriate for achieving the programme area objective. Among those who disagreed, comments suggested that proposed methods should be broadened to enhance collaboration across research stages, support interdisciplinary and market-oriented research, and include social innovation. Emphasis on environmental research, infrastructure investment, and expanded roles beyond research administrators is recommended. Flexible thematic focus and stronger international cooperation are also necessary to address emerging challenges effectively.

Key actors and beneficiaries

Out of the 51 respondents who answered the question, 70.6% (36) agreed on the relevance of the listed actors and beneficiaries for achieving the programme area objective. However, received comments suggested expanding the list of actors to include NGOs, non-profits, trade unions, employers, public authorities, and public companies. Universities, research teams, RTOs, and applied research institutions should also be highlighted. In addition, including bioengineering centres and biotech firms is suggested to enhance programme outcomes.

PA specifics

Most respondents (85.7% or 42 of 49) agreed that the listed conditions address relevant development challenges or opportunities in their country of interest. Comments from those who disagreed suggested the need for stronger emphasis on education, the establishment of dedicated centres like an EEA & Norway Grants Centre in Hungary, more inclusive partnerships involving RTOs and universities, increased opportunities for multilateral cooperation, and the addition of gender equality requirements in research and innovation.

Bilateral relations

Of the 51 respondents, 92.2% (47) found the areas of support relevant for cooperation with entities from the donor states. From those who disagreed, one comment noted that the areas of support are somewhat limited for donor state entities, as they “should also include cooperation between research units (RTO, universities etc.) from the beneficiary state”. Additionally, a lack of opportunities for multilateral cooperation was noted in another response.

Final remarks

In the final remarks, common themes among the comments received included support for start-ups, better researcher compensation, fostering experienced-youth collaboration, and practical citizen engagement. Comments emphasised gender equality, research security, enhanced multilateral and transnational partnerships, simplified administration, EU programme synergies, just transitions, human rights in supply chains,

and piloting collaborative innovation projects without high-level hardware investments to boost underperforming regions.

Education, training and youth employment

Rationale of the support

The majority of respondents (98% or 96 of 98) think that the rationale described reflects the development of the EEA Grants countries in this programme area. One comment received suggests that rationale could address the role of NGOs rather than just public/private schools in innovation in the education and long life learning.

Areas of the support

Most respondents (94.8% or 92 of 97) agree that the proposed areas of support enable the achievement of the programme area objective. Nevertheless, the comments received suggest also adding emphasis on ecosystemic thinking, democracy and civic education, e-learning solutions, and transnational cooperation for full achievement of objective.

Furthermore, 47.4% of respondents (45 of 95) indicated that there could be additional areas of support that could help reach the programme area objective in their country of interest. Key areas include developing educational ecosystems, fostering civil society, supporting comprehensive Earth observation and AI education, enhancing civic and democratic education, expanding non-formal training and volunteer support, facilitating access to education for groups in vulnerable situations, strengthening mental health and safeguarding policies, and ensuring gender equality and job integration measures for minorities and marginalised groups.

How the objectives will be addressed

Most respondents (88.4% or 84 of 95) found the proposed methods and activities appropriate for achieving the programme area objective. Among those who disagreed, comments suggested incorporating ecosystemic thinking, supporting child-led activities, extending capacity building to non-academic staff, financing shared e-learning platforms, including transnational exchanges, and engaging NGOs/CSOs in programme development. Recommendations also included adding museum educators as participants, conducting gender equality assessments, and addressing inequalities for minorities such as Roma and LGBTQ communities.

Key actors and beneficiaries

Out of the 94 respondents who answered the question, 78.7% (74) agreed on the relevance of the listed actors and beneficiaries for achieving the programme area objective. However, some comments highlighted the need to include NGOs/CSOs, labour market institutions, universities, youth workers as key actors and beneficiaries due to their significant role in education, youth support, and policymaking. Expanding collaboration to include policy bodies and companies involved in lifelong learning was also suggested.

PA specifics

Most respondents (92.4% or 85 of 92) agreed that the listed conditions address relevant development challenges or opportunities in their country of interest. Comments from those who disagreed suggested stronger emphasis on partnerships with CSOs, conditions ensuring involvement of key actors in funded infrastructure projects, clearer guidance on institutional cooperation and capacity building, fairer financing structures to cover actual staff costs, and budget flexibility for extraordinary activities. Additionally, promoting inclusion, diversity, gender equality, and LGBTQ rights was recommended as a necessary condition.

Bilateral relations

Of the 92 respondents, 98.9% (91) found the areas of support relevant for cooperation with entities from the donor states. The respondent who disagreed with this statement did not provide an explanation.

Final remarks

In the final remarks, common themes among the comments received included the need to integrate NGOs and ecosystem-based approaches, ensure inclusive education that addresses the needs of marginalised and at-risk youth, support gender equality, and highlight the importance of non-formal education, youth work, and civic engagement. Emphasis was also placed on expanding support for digital learning and vocational training, ensuring financial and practical accessibility, and fostering international and multilateral partnerships. Additionally, a focus on enhancing mental health support, addressing educational gaps for specific groups such as refugee and autism spectrum disorder (ASD) children, and promoting active citizenship through education and training were strongly advocated.

Culture

Rationale of the support

The majority of respondents (85.7% or 36 of 42) think that the rationale described reflects the development of the EEA Grants countries in this programme area. The few comments received stress the need to include cultural infrastructure, sports for sustainable development and addressing inequalities, intergenerational fairness, and minority rights, including Roma and LGBTQ, to foster social cohesion and democratic resilience.

Areas of the support

Most respondents (90.2% or 37 of 41) agree that the proposed areas of support enable the achievement of the programme area objective. Nevertheless, a few comments received suggest also adding emphasis on accessibility and sustainability of culture, cultural expression and integration through sports facilities to better achieve the programme objectives.

Furthermore, half of respondents (20 of 40) indicated that there could be additional areas of support that could help reach the programme area objective in their country of interest. Key areas include innovative cultural products for international competitiveness, community engagement, cultural infrastructure, cultural integration for refugees, mental health support, gender equality initiatives, sustainable education, and expanded accessibility for smaller organisations, as well as promoting diversity and minority cultures, such as Roma and LGBTQ communities.

How the objectives will be addressed

Most respondents (78.6% or 33 of 42) found the proposed methods and activities appropriate for achieving the programme area objective. Among those who disagreed, comments suggested revisions such as replacing “minorities” with “persons from different ethnic groups” for constitutional accuracy in certain countries, including “cultural infrastructure” to broaden programme impact, and clarifying the feasibility of climate change mitigation measures in cultural heritage contexts. Suggestions also included adding gender equality assessments, sports, intergenerational fairness, and disabled persons as target groups, as well as enhancing cultural participation and self-expression for underrepresented communities like Roma and LGBTQ.

Key actors and beneficiaries

Out of the 41 respondents who answered the question, 82.9% (34) agreed on the relevance of the listed actors and beneficiaries for achieving the programme area objective. However, some comments suggested including educational institutions, social enterprises, sports organisations, and scientific research institutions. Additionally, there was a call for greater emphasis on support for NGOs and including diverse social and age groups as beneficiaries to enhance inclusivity and sustainability.

PA specifics

Most respondents (81% or 34 of 42) agreed that the listed conditions address relevant development challenges or opportunities in their country of interest. Comments from those who disagreed highlighted that certain conditions create excessive administrative burdens, such as co-financing requirements, low cost limits, and specific funding allocations, potentially hindering development. They recommended greater flexibility, including removing strict allocations for the independent cultural sector and adjusting climate change mitigation measures due to legal constraints in cultural heritage protection. Additionally, they suggested infrastructure investments be optional unless supporting indirect soft measures, and proposed funding to strengthen minority cultural sectors, including Roma and LGBTQ.

Bilateral relations

Of the 42 respondents, 97.6% (41) found the areas of support relevant for cooperation with entities from the donor states. The respondent who disagreed with this statement did not provide an explanation.

Final remarks

In the final remarks, common themes among the comments received included appreciation for the programme’s support for capacity building and recognition of culture as a driver for sustainable development. Respondents highlighted the need to tailor approaches to local cultural contexts, reduce bureaucracy, and incorporate a gender perspective throughout all areas. Additional focus was suggested on youth inclusion, social cohesion, and the integration of ecological education and sustainable development. Proposals included enhancing accessibility for smaller organisations, promoting refugee cultural initiatives, and supporting green adaptations of cultural infrastructure to align with climate change measures.

Local development, good governance and inclusion

Rationale of the support

The majority of respondents (90.6% or 58 of 64) think that the rationale described reflects the development of the EEA Grants countries in this programme area. However, some respondents suggest adjustments, such as reducing overlap with green transition area, incorporating "innovative and creative communities", and strengthening the emphasis on human rights and recent geopolitical developments impacting migration patterns.

Areas of the support

Most respondents (95.2% or 59 of 62) agree that the proposed areas of support enable the achievement of the programme area objective. Nevertheless, a couple of comments received suggest broadening the areas of support to include “Good governance and rule of law", as well as adding local investments in resilience and social development to better align with the programme’s objectives on fostering resilience in local development.

Furthermore, 47.6% of respondents (30 of 63) indicated that there could be additional areas of support that could help reach the programme area objective in their country of interest. Key areas include strengthening local democracy and rule of law, civil oversight to counter corruption, building capacities for local governance, and tailored support for minority and groups in vulnerable situations. Respondents also highlighted social entrepreneurship, grassroots organisations, inclusion of LGBTQIA issues, gender equality measures, and resilience in local investments. Additional areas suggested include local investments in resilience and social development, and specific programmes for integrating refugees and addressing labour shortages.

How the objectives will be addressed

Most respondents (87.1% or 54 of 62) found the proposed methods and activities appropriate for achieving the programme area objective. Among those who disagreed, comments suggested a stronger focus on grassroots level and real conditions on the ground. Some proposed adding research projects and comparative studies to map developmental paths and regional disparities, as well as promoting intersectional approaches. Some respondents recommended more support for rural social enterprises and systemic solutions, including gender equality assessments and a focus on good governance, gender equality, and human rights, including LGBTQ rights.

Key actors and beneficiaries

Out of the 62 respondents who answered the question, 79% (49) agreed on the relevance of the listed actors and beneficiaries for achieving the programme area objective. However, some suggested including social entrepreneurs, research institutions, locally public bodies, and informal networks of civil society groups, especially grassroots organisations, trade unions, and those supporting groups of vulnerable populations like Roma, LGBTQ, and undocumented migrants.

PA specifics

Most respondents (88.5% or 54 of 61) agreed that the listed conditions address relevant development challenges or opportunities in their country of interest. Comments from those who disagreed suggested making public participation and civil society cooperation mandatory, adding conditions to address systemic discrimination of minorities (including Roma and LGBTQ). Some proposed flexibility in donor cooperation and local governance requirements, as well as reconsidering the mandatory gender perspective.

Bilateral relations

Of the 59 respondents, 98.3% (58) found the areas of support relevant for cooperation with entities from the donor states. The respondent who disagreed with this statement did not provide an explanation.

Final remarks

In the final remarks, common themes among the comments received included the need for sustained support for social enterprises beyond the startup phase, stronger focus on evaluation in programming, and inclusion of smart city initiatives. Respondents highlighted the importance of inclusive development, especially for groups in vulnerable situations, as well as enhancing local governance capacities in areas like evidence-informed policy-making and public service delivery. Comments also emphasised cooperation with civil society, services for refugees, open local government, and sustainable development.

Roma inclusion and empowerment

Rationale of the support

The majority of respondents (94.9% or 37 of 39) think that the rationale described reflects the development of the EEA Grants countries in this programme area. One comment received suggests that national Roma strategies should integrate across all sectoral strategies and plans, ensuring Roma inclusion is mainstreamed, adequately funded, and prioritised as a key measure for inclusive education and employment.

Areas of the support

Most respondents (86.5% or 32 of 37) agree that the proposed areas of support enable the achievement of the programme area objective. Nevertheless, a few comments received suggest the need for greater focus on the Roma minority in Hungary, emphasising inclusion in education, employment, and access to basic needs, alongside calls for project financing for infrastructure, such as Roma cultural centres, and strategies to improve school attendance among Roma children in rural areas.

Furthermore, 51.4% of respondents (19 of 37) indicated that there could be additional areas of support that could help reach the programme area objective in their country of interest. Key areas include enhancing legal protections and law enforcement training to combat institutional discrimination, expanding inclusive education efforts, addressing healthcare access barriers, and increasing community engagement through media campaigns and stakeholder collaboration.

How the objectives will be addressed

Most respondents (88.9% or 32 of 36) found the proposed methods and activities appropriate for achieving the programme area objective. Among those who disagreed, comments suggested enhancing cross-border collaboration, including labour market actors, and implementing targeted interventions to address homophobia and transphobia, and antigypsyism within Roma and LGBTQ communities.

Key actors and beneficiaries

Out of the 36 respondents who answered the question, 83.3% (30) agreed on the relevance of the listed actors and beneficiaries for achieving the programme area objective. However, some comments suggested expanding the list to include active citizens, entrepreneurs, national public authorities, training institutions, and law enforcement agencies, as well as a focus on grassroots organisations and targeting both Roma and non-Roma populations, including Roma LGBTQ groups.

PA specifics

Most respondents (91.2% or 31 of 34) agreed that the listed conditions address relevant development challenges or opportunities in their country of interest. Comments from those who disagreed suggested incorporating capacity-building measures for national authorities, including training for police officers to prevent human rights violations in Roma communities.

Bilateral relations

Of the 35 respondents, 97.1% (34) found the areas of support relevant for cooperation with entities from the donor states. The respondent who disagreed with this statement did not provide an explanation.

Final remarks

In the final remarks, common themes among the comments received included the importance of designing programs with both short- and long-term perspectives, applying a gender perspective across all areas, and focusing on Roma safety and trust-building with law enforcement. Additional suggestions emphasised strengthening Roma-led and grassroots organisations and addressing specific challenges in Roma education and inclusion.

Public health

Rationale of the support

The majority of respondents (85% or 34 of 40) think that the rationale described reflects the development of the EEA Grants countries in this programme area. However, some respondents recommended mandatory vaccination across age groups and expanded health information efforts. Concerns about healthcare access, corruption, and quality disparities between public and private hospitals were noted. Additionally, respondents suggested including disadvantaged groups, such as LGBTQ, and placing greater emphasis on sustainable healthcare innovations in areas like regenerative medicine and wound care.

Areas of the support

Most respondents (82.5% or 33 of 40) agree that the proposed areas of support enable the achievement of the programme area objective. Nevertheless, some comments suggest expanding support for healthcare and digital health. Flexibility was recommended to address diverse local needs, with specific mention of tackling discrimination against disadvantaged groups. Additionally, some respondents advocated for broadening support to include innovative solutions, like natural approaches to antimicrobial resistance (AMR).

Furthermore, many respondents (71.8% or 28 of 39) indicated that there could be additional areas of support that could help reach the programme area objective in their country of interest. Key areas include annual health education programmes in schools, particularly on topics such as sexual education and nutrition, and better integration of social and health services to support demographic changes. There is a need for expanded mental health support, especially in workplaces and child psychiatry. Respondents also highlighted digital health, health literacy, holistic and preventive health approaches, comprehensive care for refugees, and gender-specific healthcare measures. Increased access to services for disadvantaged groups, including LGBTQ individuals, and infrastructural investments for groups in vulnerable situations were also recommended.

How the objectives will be addressed

Most respondents (81.1% or 30 of 37) found the proposed methods and activities appropriate for achieving the programme area objective. Among those who disagreed, comments suggested incorporating comparative and case studies, and workplace health analyses. Media engagement was highlighted as crucial for informing population on health topics. Additionally, respondents recommended gender equality assessments with specific indicators, greater involvement of self-advocating patient groups in policy-making, and strengthened partnerships between healthcare institutions and biotech firms for advanced therapies.

Key actors and beneficiaries

Out of the 38 respondents who answered the question, 78.9% (30) agreed on the relevance of the listed actors and beneficiaries for achieving the programme area objective. However, some comments suggested including additional actors such as trade unions, employers, labour market institutions, local school and kindergarten teachers, hospitals. Respondents also recommended involving the medical device companies specialising in natural solutions, and permitting informal groups and civil society networks as beneficiaries to enhance collaboration and impact.

PA specifics

Most respondents (82.9% or 29 of 35) agreed that the listed conditions address relevant development challenges or opportunities in their country of interest. Comments from those who disagreed suggested deleting the maximum funding limit for investments and reconsidering the mandatory focus on women's health. Additionally, respondents recommended explicitly including cisgender and transgender women in relevant programmes and placing greater emphasis on encouraging market adoption of innovative healthcare solutions to strengthen public health resilience.

Bilateral relations

Of the 36 respondents, 94.4% (34) found the areas of support relevant for cooperation with entities from the donor states. However, one respondent noted that budgets are often insufficient in a donor state (e.g., Norway) as most funding is allocated to the main applicant.

Final remarks

In the final remarks, common themes among the comments received included the need for grants for young doctors, workplace health initiatives, continued tuberculosis investment, and improved integration of health and social services. Respondents emphasised corruption prevention, support for uninsured individuals, and applying gender equality across all areas. Suggestions included applying "Health in All Policies" approach, harmonised

rules for donor participation, and enhanced healthcare access for refugees, including mental health support. Additionally, respondents highlighted private sector collaboration to drive healthcare innovation and resilience, particularly through biotech partnerships.

Disaster prevention and preparedness

Rationale of the support

The majority of respondents (90% or 27 of 30) think that the rationale described reflects the development of the EEA Grants countries in this programme area. One comment received suggested increased focus on resilience against hybrid threats, particularly foreign information manipulation and migration-related risks, as well as recognising a bottom-up approach to strengthening state resilience at all levels of public administration.

Areas of the support

Most respondents (86.2% or 25 of 29) agree that the proposed areas of support enable the achievement of the programme area objective. Nevertheless, a few comments received suggest additional emphasis on digitisation to enhance disaster prevention, particularly through real-time control and monitoring systems for urban drainage to manage flooding and pollution risks, and a focus on civil protection and preparedness to address military and hybrid threats amidst current geopolitical tensions.

Furthermore, 46.4% of respondents (13 of 28) indicated that there could be additional areas of support that could help reach the programme area objective in their country of interest. Key areas include capacity-building initiatives for critical infrastructure protection, civil defence, and emergency response, especially for hybrid threats and extreme natural events; integration of space-based data and partnerships for innovation in disaster preparedness; gender-sensitive and disability-inclusive disaster risk management; urban drainage solutions for flood control; and climate refugees.

How the objectives will be addressed

Most respondents (76% or 19 of 25) found the proposed methods and activities appropriate for achieving the programme area objective. Among those who disagreed, comments suggested allowing higher education institutions (HEIs) to lead where they have pre-existing experience, adding measures to strengthen civil protection, integrating hybrid threat mitigation such as disinformation and migration-related risks, supporting emergency service competencies through training and exchanges, and incorporating gender equality assessments.

Key actors and beneficiaries

Out of the 26 respondents who answered the question, 88.5% (23) agreed on the relevance of the listed actors and beneficiaries for achieving the programme area objective. However, a couple of comments suggested explicitly including Higher Education Institutions and Research and Technology Organisations (RTOs) as key actors, as they could offer research-driven solutions, enhance local partnerships, and contribute significantly to competence and capacity building.

PA specifics

Most respondents (77.8% or 21 of 27) agreed that the listed conditions address relevant development challenges or opportunities in their country of interest. Comments from those who disagreed suggested the inclusion of more flexibility in funding ratios between soft and hard measures, such as infrastructure investments. Additional recommendations included ensuring complementarity with external funds (such as AMIF, IBM, ISF), and flexibility in condition of donor and beneficiary state cooperation.

Bilateral relations

Of the 25 respondents, 92% (23) found the areas of support relevant for cooperation with entities from the donor states. The two respondents who disagreed with this statement did not provide an explanation.

Final remarks

In the final remarks, common themes among the comments received included the importance of enhancing disaster resilience through multi-sectoral cooperation, especially by involving Higher Education Institutions, youth organisations, and healthcare systems. Respondents highlighted the need for investments in green-blue infrastructure, inclusion of nuclear safety and security measures. Additional emphasis was placed on addressing

climate-related risks, reinforcing gender and disability inclusivity in disaster planning, and ensuring harmonised participation rules to streamline collaboration across donor and beneficiary states.

Domestic and gender-based violence

Rationale of the support

The majority of respondents (97.4% or 37 of 38) think that the rationale described reflects the development of the EEA Grants countries in this programme area. The respondent who disagreed with this statement did not provide an explanation.

Areas of the support

Most respondents (94.6% or 35 of 37) agree that the proposed areas of support enable the achievement of the programme area objective. Nevertheless, one comment received suggests that further emphasis could be placed on information campaigns about contraception.

Furthermore, 53.8% of respondents (21 of 39) indicated that there could be additional areas of support that could help reach the programme area objective in their country of interest. Key areas include strengthening partnerships with local NGOs, targeted training for police and judicial officials, expanded focus on workplace sexual violence, and broader awareness campaigns. Other suggested areas include mental health and childcare support, protections for groups in vulnerable situations (e.g., refugees, minorities), and addressing human trafficking as a gendered issue.

How the objectives will be addressed

Most respondents (83.8% or 31 of 37) found the proposed methods and activities appropriate for achieving the programme area objective. Among those who disagreed, comments suggested increased involvement of local media, deeper evaluations of legislative implementation, and use of gender equality assessments. Additionally, respondents highlighted the need for gender-sensitive, victim-centred training for law enforcement and suggested including specific support for LGBTQ+ people facing violence.

Key actors and beneficiaries

Out of the 38 respondents who answered the question, 78.9% (30) agreed on the relevance of the listed actors and beneficiaries for achieving the programme area objective. However, some comments suggested expanding the role of trade unions, employers, labour market institutions, and universities. Respondents also proposed allowing NGOs to act as project promoters, involving perpetrators in prevention efforts, and broadening beneficiaries to include women and girls in vulnerable situations, LGBTQ+ individuals facing intersecting forms of discrimination, and informal civil society networks.

PA specifics

Most respondents (91.9% or 34 of 37) agreed that the listed conditions address relevant development challenges or opportunities in their country of interest. Comments from those who disagreed suggested removing the condition that sets a maximum funding level for investment and include gender equality assessment.

Bilateral relations

Of the 34 respondents, 97.1% (33) found the areas of support relevant for cooperation with entities from the donor states. The respondent who disagreed with this statement did not provide an explanation.

Final remarks

In the final remarks, common themes among the comments received included strengthening democratic values, prioritising gender equality and its funding, and focusing on involvement of research and analytical support. Comments also recommended targeted support for refugees and migrants, and advocating for the Istanbul Convention.

Access to justice

Rationale of the support

The majority of respondents (85.7% or 30 of 35) think that the rationale described reflects the development of the EEA Grants countries in this programme area. The comments received suggested including “transparency” in relation to the judiciary and broadening the focus beyond the court system to encompass the full justice chain. Concerns about underreporting hate crimes, hate speech, and inadequate legal protections for disadvantaged groups were also highlighted.

Areas of the support

Most respondents (86.5% or 32 of 37) agree that the proposed areas of support enable the achievement of the programme area objective. Nevertheless, a couple of comments received suggest expanding the scope to include prosecution, and law enforcement capacity building and specialised training.

Furthermore, 61.8% of respondents (21 of 34) indicated that there could be additional areas of support that could help reach the programme area objective in their country of interest. Key areas include funding for advocacy, improving trial speed, judicial accountability, alternative dispute resolution measures, legal support for refugees, child-friendly and trauma-informed justice for groups in vulnerable situations, capacity building on gender-based violence, disability inclusion, outreach on hate crimes, and enhancing legal access for disadvantaged and marginalised communities.

How the objectives will be addressed

Most respondents (74.3% or 26 of 35) found the proposed methods and activities appropriate for achieving the programme area objective. Among those who disagreed, comments suggested implementing gender equality assessments, expanding support to the prosecution, enhancing IT systems to reduce bureaucracy, training law enforcement in IT for detention management, and extending funding eligibility to judicial training institutions. Additional suggestions included establishing child-specific legal aid and prioritising the role of law enforcement agencies to improve access to justice.

Key actors and beneficiaries

Out of the 36 respondents who answered the question, 66.7% (24) agreed on the relevance of the listed actors and beneficiaries for achieving the programme area objective. However, other respondents suggested including prosecutors, law enforcement agencies, lawyers, bar associations, notaries, magistrate organisations, and children’s ombudsmen. Respondents also recommended clarifying the role of international and civil society organisations.

PA specifics

Most respondents (88.9% or 32 of 36) agreed that the listed conditions address relevant development challenges or opportunities in their country of interest. Comments from those who disagreed suggested expanding the programme area to include prosecution, including gender equality assessments, and removing the funding cap on investments.

Bilateral relations

Of the 34 respondents, 97.1% (33) found the areas of support relevant for cooperation with entities from the donor states. The respondent who disagreed with this statement did not provide an explanation.

Final remarks

In the final remarks, common themes among the comments received included a focus on supporting magistrates' workload and burnout, ensuring efficient and fast access to justice, specifically for environmental CSOs, people with disabilities, and refugees. Respondents suggested mobile legal aid clinics and digital legal case tracking tools for refugees. Other remarks highlighted the importance of the Barnahus model, strengthening alternative dispute resolution and evidence-based reforms, and fostering trust with disadvantaged groups. Additionally, calls for comprehensive civil society cooperation and gender mainstreaming across programmes were noted.

Correctional services

Rationale of the support

The majority of respondents (96.3% or 26 of 27) think that the rationale described reflects the development of the EEA Grants countries in this programme area. The respondent who disagreed with this statement did not provide an explanation.

Areas of the support

Most respondents (89.3% or 25 of 28) agree that the proposed areas of support enable the achievement of the programme area objective. Nevertheless, a few comments indicate that probation clients should be highlighted alongside prisoners, as they are closely related and mentioned in the key actors and beneficiaries section. Emphasis was also placed on improving prison and pre-trial detention conditions and providing education and support for prison law enforcement and probation services staff, including management.

Furthermore, 44.8% of respondents (13 of 29) indicated that additional areas of support could help reach the programme area objective in their country of interest. Key areas include expanding prison mentoring programs, enhancing support for prisoners and families, promoting restorative justice, and prioritising groups in vulnerable situations, like women, juveniles, and refugee minors. Suggestions also focus on using technology for rehabilitation, strengthening post-release support, and reducing stigma through public awareness.

How the objectives will be addressed

Most respondents (89.3% or 25 of 28) found the proposed methods and activities appropriate for achieving the programme area objective. Among those who disagreed, comments suggested adding funding for infrastructure in pre-trial detention centres as well as supplementing the text as follows “Interventions related to substance abuse and anger management, including for domestic and gender-based violence offenders as well as debt management, are also supported”

Key actors and beneficiaries

Out of the 29 respondents who answered the question, 86.2% (25) agreed on the relevance of the listed actors and beneficiaries for achieving the programme area objective. However, some responses stress involving prosecutors, judges, prison and probation services, and law enforcement to enhance alternative sanctions. It is also recommended that civil society and international organisations, along with vulnerable offenders serving alternative sentences, be included.

PA specifics

Most respondents (92.6% or 25 of 27) agreed that the listed conditions address relevant development challenges or opportunities in their country of interest. One comment suggested deleting the condition that “The maximum level of funding for investment (..) (hard measures) shall be set in MoU or, exceptionally, in the PA”.

Bilateral relations

Of the 26 respondents, 96.2% (25) found the areas of support relevant for cooperation with entities from the donor states. The respondent who disagreed with this statement did not provide an explanation.

Final remarks

In the final remarks, common themes among the comments received included the need for sustainable, long-term rehabilitation and reintegration services beyond project funding, focusing on coordinated support in health, education, housing, and employment. Comments stress legal aid, mentorship, and community alternatives for refugee youth in detention. Addressing offenders of sexually motivated crimes and linking policy with practical measures for systemic improvements are also highlighted.

Serious and organised crime

Rationale of the support

The majority of respondents (81% or 17 of 21) think that the rationale described reflects the development of the EEA Grants countries in this programme area. Two comments received suggest that the rationale should include seniors as a vulnerable group and emphasise prevention and awareness to combat fraud and domestic violence. Comment recommends clarifying the link between gender-based violence and organised crime, potentially reassigning DGBV to more suitable areas (e.g. PA 10 or 11). Strengthen focus on cybercrime, corruption, economic crime, victim support, and asset recovery to enhance the approach to serious crime.

Areas of the support

75% of respondents (15 of 20) agree that the proposed areas of support enable the achievement of the programme area objective. Nevertheless, a few comments recommend aligning measures with relevant programme areas, such as shifting domestic violence to PA 10 and child-friendly justice to PA 11. It stresses strengthening anti-corruption efforts, addressing cybercrime and financial crime, and enhancing asset recovery. Additionally, comments recommend prioritising state-backed victim support and more comprehensive state action against trafficking and forced labour.

Furthermore, 57.9% of respondents (11 of 19) indicated that additional areas of support could help reach the programme area objective in their country of interest. Key areas include boosting anti-money laundering, countering tax fraud, and tackling cybercrime. Priorities also focus on enforcing sanctions, protecting refugees from trafficking, supporting victims, and using administrative approaches against organised crime. Emphasis is placed on child-friendly justice tools, modern slavery prevention, and strengthening forensic detection of hazardous materials.

How the objectives will be addressed

Two-thirds of respondents (61.9% or 13 of 21) found the proposed methods and activities appropriate for achieving the programme area objective. Among those who disagreed, comments focus on promoting cooperation with organisations, adopting a victim-centred justice approach, enhancing anti-corruption efforts, and supporting CSOs in legislative initiatives. Strengthening law enforcement with digital tools and fostering public awareness to counter social threats and petty crimes were also highlighted.

Key actors and beneficiaries

Out of the 21 respondents who answered the question, 85.7% (18) agreed on the relevance of the listed actors and beneficiaries for achieving the programme area objective. However, some comments suggested adding public entities like anti-corruption agencies and recognising NGOs not just as partners but as main actors capable of legislative development and creating support systems.

PA specifics

Most respondents (81% or 17 of 21) agreed that the listed conditions address relevant development challenges or opportunities in their country of interest. Comments from those who disagreed suggested setting investment levels in programme agreements for greater flexibility, ensuring complementarity with other external funds, and allowing exceptions for mandatory donor-beneficiary cooperation where agreed.

Bilateral relations

Of the 21 respondents, 95.2% (20) found the areas of support relevant for cooperation with entities from the donor states. The respondent who disagreed with this statement did not provide an explanation.

Final remarks

In the final remarks, common themes among the comments received included the emphasis on strengthening cross-border and regional cooperation to combat organised crime and trafficking, with a focus on improving detection, forensic capabilities, and law enforcement training. The importance of targeted support for evidence-based policy research and civil society involvement in monitoring institutional activities was highlighted. Addressing gender-based violence and hate crimes, including comprehensive training for law enforcement and social support for survivors, was a recurring priority. There was also strong advocacy for projects that support anti-trafficking measures, safe migration pathways, and survivor assistance. Lastly, the integration of international partnerships and practical training initiatives, such as those offered by UNICRI, was seen as essential for sustainable capacity building and effective policy implementation.

Asylum, migration and integration

Rationale of the support

The majority of respondents (92.3% or 36 of 39) think that the rationale described reflects the development of the EEA Grants countries in this programme area. One comment suggests that the rationale could also expand to acknowledge the instability arising from recent developments and conflicts in the Middle East, which continue to influence migration patterns.

Areas of the support

Most respondents (95% or 38 of 40) agree that the proposed areas of support enable the achievement of the programme area objective. Nevertheless, a comment received suggests adding child and gender sensitivity to the first support area, focusing on child-sensitive reception, protection in migration processes, access to essential services, and robust child protection preparedness plans.

Furthermore, 30% of respondents (12 of 40) indicated that additional areas of support could help reach the programme area objective in their country of interest. Key areas include supporting unaccompanied minors, ensuring safe working conditions for foreign workers, promoting voluntary return systems, and restorative justice. The mentioned priorities also cover gender-specific protections for migrant women, comprehensive asylum support, targeted employment programs, and strengthening grassroots organisations aiding migrants.

How the objectives will be addressed

Most respondents (85% or 34 of 40) found the proposed methods and activities appropriate for achieving the programme area objective. Among those who disagreed, recommendations include collecting case studies on workplace discrimination against foreign nationals, clarifying trade unions' roles in integration, and identifying barriers in employment. Emphasis is on long-term integration measures for TCNs, including psychological support and capacity building for migration forecasting. Proposals suggest incorporating gender equality assessments and supporting migrants of minority backgrounds, including LGBTQ individuals.

Key actors and beneficiaries

Out of the 39 respondents who answered the question, 79.5% (31) agreed on the relevance of the listed actors and beneficiaries for achieving the programme area objective. However, some comments recommend including trade unions, employers, research institutions, universities, and grassroots organisations as key actors. According to some comments civil society and international organisations should be considered main actors as well, especially in migration policy advocacy, while informal groups should be allowed as partners. Emphasising support for groups in vulnerable situation, including unaccompanied children, LGBTQ individuals, and undocumented migrants, is also advised.

PA specifics

Most respondents (85% or 34 of 40) agreed that the listed conditions address relevant development challenges or opportunities in their country of interest. Comments from those who disagreed suggest a stronger definition of civil society cooperation, expanding priorities to include systematic projects with integrated border management and Schengen security with external fund alignment. It advocates setting investment levels within programme agreements for flexibility, adding an option to waive mandatory donor-beneficiary cooperation, and revising priorities to support unaccompanied children, migrants, asylum seekers, and groups in vulnerable situations, including LGBTQ individuals.

Bilateral relations

Of the 41 respondents, 97.6% (40) found the areas of support relevant for cooperation with entities from the donor states. The respondent who disagreed with this statement did not provide an explanation.

Final remarks

In the final remarks, common themes among the comments received included the emphasis on comprehensive support for refugee and migrant integration, with a focus on socio-economic inclusion, access to services, and structured employment pathways. The importance of refugee-led initiatives, community engagement, and combating discrimination and disinformation were highlighted, alongside fostering collaboration with civil society and international partners. Recommendations stressed enhancing transparency, anti-corruption measures, and focusing on implementation and analytical work to identify and solve practical challenges. There is also a call for promoting smart communities, sustainable urban development, and better integration of EU priorities like the green transition and social resilience.

Institutional cooperation and capacity building

Rationale of the support

The majority of respondents (97.7% or 42 of 43) think that the rationale described reflects the development in the EEA Grants countries for this programme area. The respondent who disagreed with this statement did not provide an explanation.

Areas of the support

Most respondents (95.3% or 41 of 43) agree that the proposed areas of support enable the achievement of the programme area objective. The respondents who disagreed with this statement did not provide an explanation.

Furthermore, 25.6% of respondents (10 of 39) indicated that there could be additional areas of support that could help reach the programme area objective in their country of interest. Key areas include promoting cooperation and knowledge transfer between developed and peripheral regions, enhancing public bodies' capacities to combat corruption, and supporting CSOs in national strategy roles. Emphasis is also placed on strengthening institutions to better serve refugees, combating institutional racism, and fostering partnerships with NGOs and businesses. Training for public officials and mechanisms for public-private cooperation are highlighted as crucial.

How the objectives will be addressed

Most respondents (97.5% or 39 of 40) found the proposed methods and activities appropriate for achieving the programme area objective. The respondent who disagreed with this statement did not provide an explanation.

Key actors and beneficiaries

Out of the 39 respondents who answered the question, 89.7% (35) agreed on the relevance of the listed actors and beneficiaries for achieving the programme area objective. However, some comments suggest including civil society as potential partners, reviewers, and beneficiaries due to their extensive expertise.

PA specifics

Most respondents (92.9% or 39 of 42) agreed that the listed conditions address relevant development challenges or opportunities in their country of interest. Comments from those who disagreed recommend ensuring cooperation or consultation with CSOs representing groups in vulnerable situations with limited access to public services. It also suggests adding flexibility to mandatory donor-beneficiary partnerships at the project level by allowing exceptions where mutually agreed.

Bilateral relations

Of the 41 respondents, 97.6% (40) found the areas of support relevant for cooperation with entities from the donor states. The respondent who disagreed with this statement did not provide an explanation.

Final remarks

In the final remarks, common themes among the comments received included the need to enhance collaboration and capacity-building within civil society and public institutions. Emphasis is placed on partnerships involving NGOs, cross-agency coordination, and international organisations to support areas like refugee services and regulatory oversight. Calls for transparency, anti-corruption, and human-centric, accessible public services are prominent, alongside training programs focused on combating discrimination and institutional racism. Suggestions also highlight the importance of evidence-based policymaking, strengthening public sector skills, and integrating thematic priorities like democracy, the rule of law, and social inclusion into programme areas.

Civil society fund

Rationale of the support

The majority of respondents (91.8% or 89 of 97) think that the rationale described reflects the development in the EEA Grants countries for this programme area. Among those who disagreed, some comments suggest that the rationale should emphasise the crucial role of civil society in fostering inclusive democratic participation, not limited to marginalised groups, and highlight its role in promoting democracy, human rights, and social cohesion.

It should also acknowledge internal capacity issues, the impact of global challenges, funding limitations, and the need for alignment with EU values and initiatives, such as the European Child Guarantee and the European Green Deal. Additionally, the rationale should reflect the importance of addressing poverty, particularly in children, and the need for global awareness and education.

Areas of the support

Most respondents (94.9% or 93 of 98) agree that the proposed areas of support enable the achievement of the programme area objective. Nevertheless, a few comments recommend explicitly addressing the 'rule of law', merging related areas like civil society participation and enabling environments, highlighting independent media, retaining focus on gender-based violence, and narrowing 'environmental protection' to climate action and just transitions within civic engagement. Strengthening the civil society sector beyond organisational development was also advised.

Furthermore, 31.2% of respondents (29 of 39) indicated that there could be additional areas of support that could help reach the programme area objective in their country of interest. Key areas include financial assistance for community development, strengthening civil society networks, mental health initiatives, advocacy, and combating corruption. Noted priorities also involve youth engagement, countering disinformation, promoting open government, supporting groups in vulnerable situations, and enhancing human rights within green policies. Strategic funding and backing for independent media were also emphasised.

How the objectives will be addressed

Most respondents (92.6% or 88 of 95) found the proposed methods and activities appropriate for achieving the programme area objective. Among those who disagreed, comments include supporting NGOs' financial sustainability through social businesses, prioritising training, research, and advocacy. The fund should strengthen the rule of law, civil society resilience, and transparency, emphasising European-level collaboration and targeted support for LGBTQI organisations. Legal support for environmental CSOs and enhanced advocacy collaboration were also advised.

Key actors and beneficiaries

Out of the 96 respondents who answered the question, 89.6% (86) agreed on the relevance of the listed actors and beneficiaries for achieving the programme area objective. However, some comments highlight the importance of including a broader range of actors, particularly informal, grassroots, and transnational organisations, to achieve the fund's objectives effectively.

Fund specifics

Most respondents (88.5% or 85 of 96) agreed that the listed conditions address relevant development challenges or opportunities in their country of interest. Comments from those who disagreed highlight the need for direct funding and solidarity support for impactful democratic and social change. It was suggested to increase organisational development funding from 20% to 30% to aid financial sustainability, especially for NGOs setting up social enterprises. There was a strong emphasis on reaching underserved geographic areas, though concerns were raised that this focus may inadvertently disadvantage capital-based organisations which serve broader regions. Additionally, it was proposed that social services should be recognised as essential for civic empowerment, not just advocacy, to support marginalised communities. Additionally, there’s a need to distinguish ‘strengthening civil society’ through capacity-building from ‘creating an enabling environment,’ which addresses democratic principles. Respondents also suggest core funding to sustain small CSOs, including support for essential staff.

Bilateral relations

Of the 95 respondents, 97.9% (93) found the areas of support relevant for cooperation with entities from the donor states. From those who disagreed, one comment noted that bilateral relations therein would benefit from the explicit reference to children, such as child participation within civic engagement, children's safety and rights in the online environment.

Focus areas for Civil society fund

Based on the open responses, the most common focus areas that warrant special attention included (1) support for groups in vulnerable situations, (2) environmental protection and climate resilience, (3) civil society capacity building, (4) media freedom and literacy, (5) human rights and inclusion, (6) mental health and social services, (7) rule of law and democratic engagement, and (8) youth engagement and education.

Final remarks

In the final remarks, common themes among the comments received included the need for simplified reporting and reduced administrative burdens, particularly for small CSOs, to allow a greater focus on outcomes and impact. Recommendations highlighted introducing lump-sum payments and streamlined procedures. Emphasis was placed on ongoing organisational support, not just project-based funding, and broadening access to long-term grants. Other points included the importance of strengthening NGO networks, promoting civic education, and ensuring funding supports democratic values and social inclusion, especially in underserved areas. Calls were made for clearer regulatory definitions and better fund promotion to ensure participation and resilience within civil society.

Fund for capacity building and cooperation with international partner organisations and institutions

Rationale of the support

The majority of respondents (98.7% or 76 of 77) think that the rationale described reflects the development of the EEA Grants countries in this programme area. The respondent who disagreed with this statement did not provide an explanation.

Areas of the support

Most respondents (97.5% or 79 of 81) agree that the proposed areas of support enable the achievement of the programme area objective. One comment suggests making the list of areas of support as non-exhaustive, adding: "such as:".

Furthermore, 35.4% of respondents (28 of 79) indicated that additional areas of support could help reach the programme area objective in their country of interest. Key areas include strengthening local governance, addressing the challenges posed by rising populism and extremist ideologies, and prioritising environmental protection. Respondents also mentioned AI, emphasised professionalising public services and CSO operations, advancing research capacity, and forming anti-corruption coalitions of NGOs. Other suggestions included addressing migration challenges, supporting civil society with a focus on children's rights, enhancing nuclear safety, and fostering international partnerships for joint recommendations. Promoting a fair energy transition that considers societal impacts was also noted.

How the objectives will be addressed

Most respondents (93.8% or 75 of 80) found the proposed methods and activities appropriate for achieving the programme area objective. Among those who disagreed, comments suggested that the description is not entirely clear and the methods of potential cooperation with IOs should be detailed. Additionally, according to the respondents, data collection and analysis should be added, to consolidate evidence-based initiatives, actions, and policies. Finally, respondents recommended to expand the catalogue of potential knowledge exchange activities and include the following activities: job shadowing, mentoring and peer-to-peer learning.

Key actors and beneficiaries

Out of the 79 respondents who answered the question, 91.1% (72) agreed on the relevance of the listed actors and beneficiaries for achieving the programme area objective. However, some comments suggested including banks and their affiliated NGOs, as well as research associations, RTOs, and economic chambers as relevant actors. It was noted that local and national CSOs should be recognised as participants alongside international organisations and beneficiary states. Respondents also recommended considering countries near the EEA in the process of EU accession, such as Ukraine. Additionally, some comments proposed that references to beneficiaries should include broader terms like "and their societies at large" to ensure inclusivity.

Fund specifics

Most respondents (97.4% or 74 of 76) agreed that the listed conditions address relevant development challenges or opportunities in their country of interest. The two respondents who disagreed with this statement did not provide an explanation.

Bilateral relations

Of the 75 respondents, 94.7% (71) found the areas of support relevant for cooperation with entities from the donor states. From those who disagreed, one comment noted that tripartite cooperation should be clarified (it is

not clear how the contribution from the international organisations to the entities from the beneficiary countries will benefit entities from the donor states). Additionally, one respondent noted that capacity building should also support actions on the improvement of research capacity in beneficiary countries, as those are the tools for further improvements.

Final remarks

In the final remarks, common themes among the comments received included clarifying and broadening the fund's scope to better support NGOs, civil society, and smaller organisations, while integrating cross-cutting priorities such as gender equality, public trust, youth empowerment, and sustainability. There is also a strong emphasis on enhancing cooperation with civil society and international partners in areas like AI, governance, and refugee support. Calls for clearer commitments, measurable outcomes, knowledge sharing, and the inclusion of thematic priorities such as democracy, social resilience, and Ukraine support were also noted.

Fund for social dialogue and decent work (Norway Grants)

Rationale of the support

The majority of respondents (97.7% or 43 of 44) think that the rationale described reflects the development of the EEA Grants countries in this programme area. The respondent who disagreed with this statement did not provide an explanation.

Areas of the support

Most respondents (93.2% or 41 of 44) agree that the proposed areas of support enable the achievement of the programme area objective. Nevertheless, a few comments received suggest that to strengthen the impact one might mention policymaking institutions which deal with employment policy as well as to make the social dialogue definition broader including not only trade unions and employer organisations.

Furthermore, 39.5% of respondents (17 of 43) indicated that there could be additional areas of support that could help reach the programme area objective in their country of interest. Key areas include supporting social enterprise development, fostering economic integration for disadvantaged groups through entrepreneurship, and building capacity for social partners to improve conditions for seasonal and migrant workers. Emphasis was also placed on tackling undeclared work, promoting inclusive education, targeted NEET interventions in rural areas, and involving small organisations focused on employee well-being. Respondents highlighted the need for independent grievance mechanisms, better SME representation, and addressing climate and digital challenges to ensure job quality and workforce resilience. Lastly, promoting workplace diversity and inclusion was noted as an important aspect.

How the objectives will be addressed

Most respondents (90.9% or 40 of 44) found the proposed methods and activities appropriate for achieving the programme area objective. Among those who disagreed, comments suggested that local models of best practices for social dialogue and decent work should first be created, which can later be promoted both among unions and employers. Additional suggestions included that a living wage should be mentioned, or a following change implemented: “Gender equality and non-discrimination are cross-cutting principles that shall be addressed throughout the fund, including addressing issues related to discrimination of minorities, including Roma and LGBTQ”.

Key actors and beneficiaries

Out of the 44 respondents who answered the question, 90.9% (40) agreed on the relevance of the listed actors and beneficiaries for achieving the programme area objective. However, some comments noted that the most relevant promoters of the social dialogue are the successful social enterprises. Other mentioned organisations of B2B workers, civil law workers or SMEs. Additionally, one respondent proposed to give special attention to groups of workers underrepresented in social dialogue and workers vulnerable to discrimination, exploitation, and mistreatment in the labour market, including minorities such as Roma and LGBTQ.

Fund specifics

Most respondents (90.7% or 39 of 43) agreed that the listed conditions address relevant development challenges or opportunities in their country of interest. Comments from those who disagreed suggested the need for small infrastructure investments in social enterprises to exemplify social dialogue and decent work. Additionally, there were calls for greater support for social partners to address macro-societal challenges, such as climate change and the green transition, and for managing risks associated with digital transformation to maintain job relevance. It was also recommended to adapt business practices to enhance job quality and align social dialogue frameworks to these new challenges. Emphasis was again placed on ensuring projects focus on diversity, inclusion, and anti-discrimination, particularly for minority groups such as Roma and LGBTQ individuals.

Bilateral relations

Of the 43 respondents, 93.0% (40) found the areas of support relevant for cooperation with entities from the donor states. From those who disagreed, one comment noted that there could be a possibility for more space for non-profit organisations and cooperation with foreign actors.

Final remarks

In the final remarks, common themes among the comments received included concerns about bureaucratic challenges and the complexity of reporting processes, which were seen as obstacles to project efficiency. Additionally, respondents highlighted the importance of fostering partnerships, especially with relevant sectoral organisations, and underscored the need for inclusive education initiatives and support for entrepreneurial

efforts, particularly for migrants and refugees. The emphasis on building local models of best practices for social dialogue and promoting anti-discrimination measures also featured prominently.

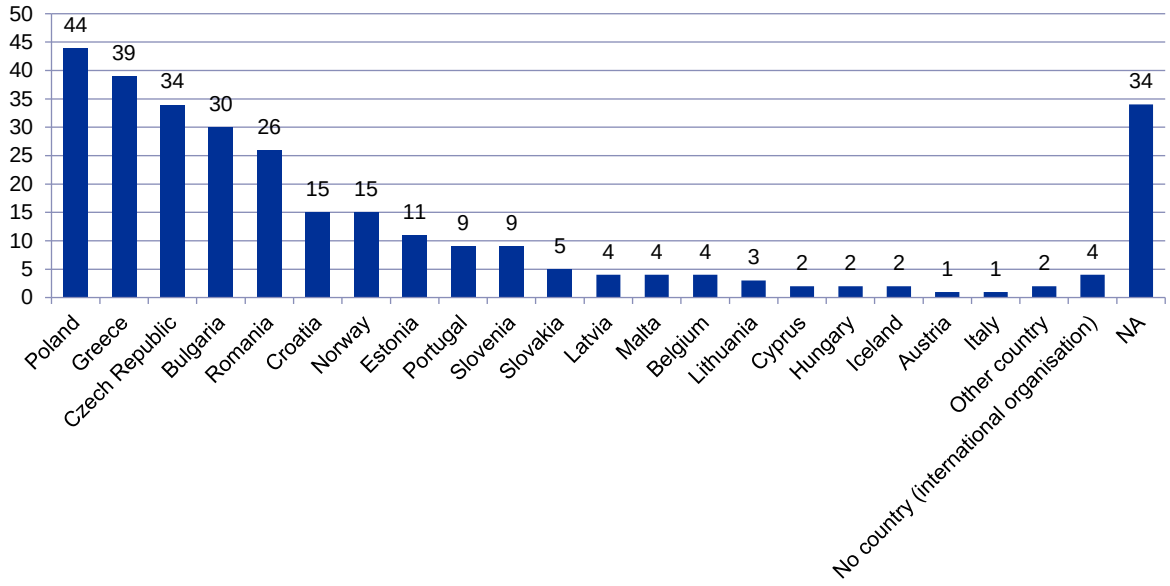
Annex 3. Raw survey data. Annex 4 provides illustrations to the closed survey questions.

2. Participants

This section analyses the profile of respondents behind the filtered 300 survey respondents' responses that include at least one answer to a question about any of the 18 programme areas/funds.

Figure 2 below illustrates the distribution of participants by country, highlighting the highest concentrations in Poland, Greece, and the Czech Republic, with respectively 15% (44 of 300), 13% (39 of 300), and 11% (34 of 300) participants. The countries with lower participation counts include Iceland, Hungary, and Cyprus, each with two or fewer participants. Overall, most participants come from donor and beneficiary states, with only a few respondents from other EU member states (i.e., Austria, Belgium, and Italy). Lastly, a significant portion of respondents (11% or 34 of 300) did not specify a country, marked as "NA".

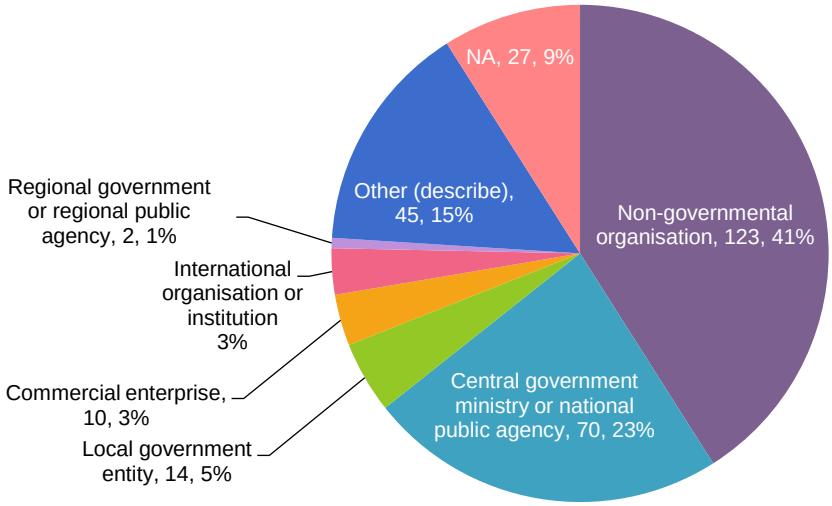
Figure 2. Participant's country



Note: The share of respondents' responses is counted from the total number of 'complete' respondents' responses (300), which include at least one answer to a question about any of the 18 PA/Funds.
Source: Visionary Analytics, 2024

Figure 3 below shows the distribution of participants by the type of organisation they represent. The largest category is non-governmental organisations (NGOs), which comprise 41% of participants (123 of 300). Following this, central government ministries or national public agencies account for 23% of respondents (70 of 300). The "Other" category, where respondents provided additional descriptions, represents 15%, with entries such as universities, research institutions, and trade unions. Lastly, "NA" (not specified) is 9% (27 of 300).

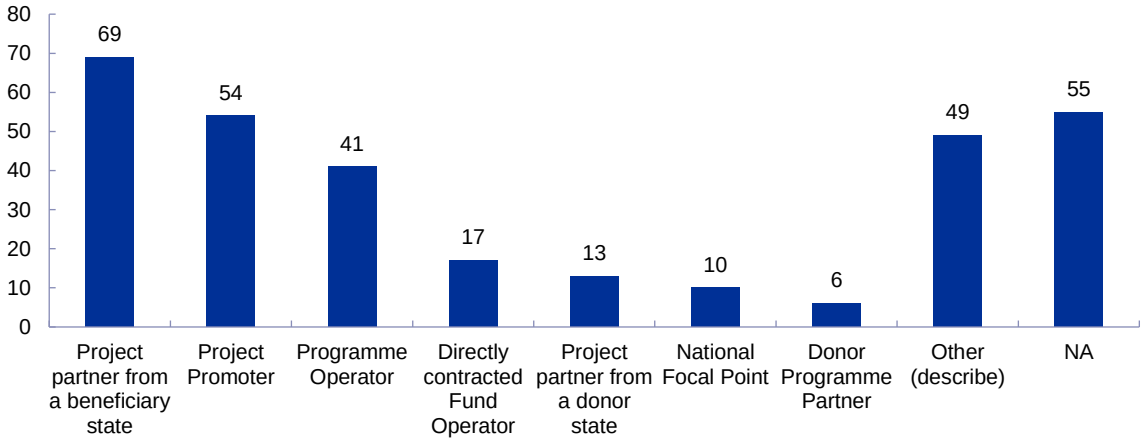
Figure 3. Participant's organisation



Note: The share of respondents' responses is counted from the total number of 'complete' respondents' responses (300), which include at least one answer to a question about any of the 18 PA/Funds.
Source: Visionary Analytics, 2024

Looking at the role of participant's organisation played during the 2014-2021 funding period of the EEA and Norway Grants (see **Figure 4**), the most common role was "Project partner from a beneficiary state" (23% or 69 of 300), followed by "Project Promoter" (18% or 54 of 300) and "Programme Operator" (14% or 41 of 300). Less common roles include "Directly contracted Fund Operator" (6% or 17 of 300), "Project partner from a donor state" (4% or 13 of 300), "National Focal Point" (3% or 10 of 300), and "Donor Programme Partner" (2% or 6 of 300). Moreover, 16% of respondents (49 of 300) indicated their role as "Other", which encompasses a range of descriptions, such as consultants, project hosts, evaluators, and future participants, as well as some who had no involvement yet. Lastly, 9% (55 of 300) did not specify the role, marked as "NA" in the figure.

Figure 4. Role of participant's organisation



Note: The share of respondents' responses is counted from the total number of 'complete' respondents' responses (300), which include at least one answer to a question about any of the 18 PA/Funds. Multiple answer options were possible.
Source: Visionary Analytics, 2024

3. Participation rates per Programme area/Fund

Table 1 in the following page provides the number of comments per section of the Blue Book and per programme area/fund. In total 1202 comments have been received throughout all programme areas/funds and sections.

Overall, comments outside of sections (final remarks) received the highest engagement across all programme areas/funds (423 comments). In addition, a similarly high number of comments (341) were related to suggested areas of support, indicating a desire for potential additions or expansions of programme areas/funds. The key actors and beneficiaries section also saw substantial commentary (129 comments), indicating an interest in stakeholder involvement. On the other hand, the bilateral relations section had the least amount of feedback (13 comments), suggesting it may be well-understood or widely approved by survey participants.

Looking at the programme area/fund level, the "Civil society fund" has the highest total number of comments (160)[4], suggesting it may be an area of high public interest. Moreover, "Education, training and youth employment" received a total of 115 comments, emphasising significant engagement in this programme area, especially under suggested areas of support (37 comments). However, programme areas such as "Correctional services" (29 comments) and "Institutional cooperation and capacity building" (25 comments) received fewer comments, potentially signalling less public interaction or lower prioritisation in these topics.

[4] Civil society fund had one additional question (with 36 answers) unlike the other PA/Funds. Therefore, the total number of comments including this question is 160.

Table 1. Number of received comments per Blue Book section

	Rationale for the support	Areas of support	Areas of support (suggested areas)	How the objectives will be addressed	Key actors and beneficiaries	PA/Fund specifics	Bilateral relations	Comments outside of sections	Total
Green transition	1	3	32	7	10	5	2	36	**96**
Green business and innovation	3	2	13	3	8	4	3	19	**55**
Research and innovation	3	6	21	13	12	5	2	25	**87**
Education, training and youth employment	1	4	37	10	17	6	0	40	**115**
Culture	5	3	19	7	6	7	0	23	**70**
Local development, good governance and inclusion	5	2	26	6	12	6	0	30	**87**
Roma inclusion and empowerment	1	3	19	3	5	2	0	19	**52**
Public health	5	6	27	6	7	5	1	24	**81**
Disaster prevention and preparedness	1	3	9	4	2	4	0	21	**44**
Domestic and gender-based violence	0	1	19	5	7	2	0	18	**52**
Access to justice	4	2	19	8	11	3	0	18	**65**
Correctional services	0	2	12	2	3	1	0	9	**29**
Serious and organised crime	2	4	10	6	2	2	0	11	**37**
Asylum, migration and integration	1	1	10	5	6	5	0	18	**46**
Institutional cooperation and capacity building	0	1	7	0	3	2	0	12	**25**
Civil society fund	7	4	25	6	9	10	1	62	**160**[5]
Fund for capacity building and cooperation with international partner organisations and institutions	0	1	23	4	6	1	2	24	**61**
Fund for social dialogue and decent work (Norway Grants)	0	2	13	3	3	3	2	14	**40**
Total	**39**	**50**	**341**	**98**	**129**	**73**	**13**	**423**	**1202**

Source: Visionary Analytics, 2024

[5] Civil society fund had one additional question (with 36 answers) unlike the other PA/Funds. Therefore, the total number of comments including this question is 160.

4. Survey results

This chapter presents a brief overview of survey responses for each programme area/fund in different sub-chapters. For more detailed summaries of each programme area/fund please consult **Annex 2.** Programme area/Fund feedback overview, while all survey data is provided separately as

Green business and innovation

Rationale of the support

The majority of respondents (87.2% or 34 of 39) think that the rationale described reflects the development of the EEA Grants countries in this programme area. The comments received suggests that rationale could recognise the role of research institutions and Higher Education Institutions, emphasise soft measures like fostering appropriate attitudes, and address pollution alongside climate change for a comprehensive view.

Areas of the support

Most respondents (92.5% or 37 of 40) agree that the proposed areas of support enable the achievement of the programme area objective. Nevertheless, a few comments received suggested emphasising digital transition and digitalisation in the areas of support, and incorporate donor states' strategic directions, such as Norway's priorities of the Green Alliance.

Furthermore, 44.7% of respondents (17 of 38) indicated that there could be additional areas of support that could help reach the programme area objective in their country of interest. Key areas include prioritising digital transformation and automation, promoting cross-cluster cooperation, flood resilience, and public education. Capacity building for local organisations, public awareness campaigns, and partnerships with government and private sectors are vital. Supporting collaboration between enterprises and research institutions, ESG governance and AI data collection, gender equality measures, social enterprises, and knowledge transfer can further enhance sustainable development and innovation.

How the objectives will be addressed

Most respondents (88.9% or 32 of 36) found the proposed methods and activities appropriate for achieving the programme area objective. Among those who disagreed, comments suggested that the programme area could benefit from stronger research partnerships to connect academia with business. In addition, expanding the target to "circular bioeconomy" would support broader sustainability goals. Lastly, gender equality assessments with relevant indicators are also recommended.

Key actors and beneficiaries

Out of the 37 respondents who answered the question, 75.7% (28) agreed on the relevance of the listed actors and beneficiaries for achieving the programme area objective. However, some comments suggested emphasising Higher Education Institutions and research organisations as main actors in fostering innovation and supporting the green transition. Non-profit organisations and social enterprises should also be recognised for their capacity to drive social impact and innovation.

PA specifics

Most respondents (86.5% or 32 of 37) agreed that the listed conditions address relevant development challenges or opportunities in their country of interest. Comments from those who disagreed suggested explicitly including startups, and emphasising partnerships with applied research institutions. In addition, the clause prioritising projects with bilateral partnerships may need reconsideration, as such relationships are often contractual rather than true partnerships.

Bilateral relations

Of the 37 respondents, 89.2% (33) found the areas of support relevant for cooperation with entities from the donor states. From those who disagreed, it was suggested that multinational projects would be more effective than just bilateral partnerships. In addition, emphasis should be placed on leveraging donor states' strong Higher Education Institutions for cross-border collaboration and joint initiatives. Including knowledge transfer on Sustainability Life Cycle Assessment and related business models would also enhance the programme's relevance and impact.

Final remarks

In the final remarks, common themes among the comments received included enhancing bilateral cooperation with early feasibility studies and later-stage green technology transfers, replacing "green" with "circular," and involving political actors in local waste management. Strengthening partnerships with Higher Education Institutions, expanding the role of business associations, and ensuring gender mainstreaming and harmonised participation rules were recommended. Leveraging public procurement to drive innovation and prioritising flood resilience infrastructure were also highlighted.

Research and innovation

Rationale of the support

The majority of respondents (92.6% or 50 of 54) think that the rationale described reflects the development of the EEA Grants countries in this programme area. The comments received suggest that rationale could include direct support for research and innovation aimed at tackling the root causes of these challenges, such as environmental impacts and technological advancements. Suggestions include expanding the focus to cover specific areas such as environmental climate change-related research, early-warning systems, and Earth System Models, alongside recognising opportunities in fields like marine biotechnology to support the green transition.

Areas of the support

Most respondents (86.8% or 46 of 53) agree that the proposed areas of support enable the achievement of the programme area objective. Nevertheless, recommendations received include integrating environmental research and innovation, expanding citizen engagement in science, promoting international cooperation through multilateral network funding, supporting research infrastructure and FAIR data, and incorporating bioengineering and biotechnology for sustainable healthcare solutions to enhance the programme's effectiveness and sustainability.

Furthermore, half of respondents (26 of 52) indicated that there could be additional areas of support that could help reach the programme area objective in their country of interest. Key areas include funding for early-stage start-ups, basic and interdisciplinary research, sustainable development of universities, and strategic technologies like AI, data science, and cybersecurity. Emphasis is also placed on international cooperation, gender equality, open science with FAIR data, bioinformatics, marine bio-discovery, anti-discrimination education, and NGO-led research for human rights and corporate sustainability.

How the objectives will be addressed

Many respondents (70.6% or 36 of 51) found the proposed methods and activities appropriate for achieving the programme area objective. Among those who disagreed, comments suggested that proposed methods should be broadened to enhance collaboration across research stages, support interdisciplinary and market-oriented research, and include social innovation. Emphasis on environmental research, infrastructure investment, and expanded roles beyond research administrators is recommended. Flexible thematic focus and stronger international cooperation are also necessary to address emerging challenges effectively.

Key actors and beneficiaries

Out of the 51 respondents who answered the question, 70.6% (36) agreed on the relevance of the listed actors and beneficiaries for achieving the programme area objective. However, received comments suggested expanding the list of actors to include NGOs, non-profits, trade unions, employers, public authorities, and public companies. Universities, research teams, RTOs, and applied research institutions should also be highlighted. In addition, including bioengineering centres and biotech firms is suggested to enhance programme outcomes.

PA specifics

Most respondents (85.7% or 42 of 49) agreed that the listed conditions address relevant development challenges or opportunities in their country of interest. Comments from those who disagreed suggested the need for stronger emphasis on education, the establishment of dedicated centres like an EEA & Norway Grants Centre in Hungary, more inclusive partnerships involving RTOs and universities, increased opportunities for multilateral cooperation, and the addition of gender equality requirements in research and innovation.

Bilateral relations

Of the 51 respondents, 92.2% (47) found the areas of support relevant for cooperation with entities from the donor states. From those who disagreed, one comment noted that the areas of support are somewhat limited for donor state entities, as they “should also include cooperation between research units (RTO, universities etc.) from the beneficiary state”. Additionally, a lack of opportunities for multilateral cooperation was noted in another response.

Final remarks

In the final remarks, common themes among the comments received included support for start-ups, better researcher compensation, fostering experienced-youth collaboration, and practical citizen engagement. Comments emphasised gender equality, research security, enhanced multilateral and transnational partnerships, simplified administration, EU programme synergies, just transitions, human rights in supply chains,

and piloting collaborative innovation projects without high-level hardware investments to boost underperforming regions.

Education, training and youth employment

Rationale of the support

The majority of respondents (98% or 96 of 98) think that the rationale described reflects the development of the EEA Grants countries in this programme area. One comment received suggests that rationale could address the role of NGOs rather than just public/private schools in innovation in the education and long life learning.

Areas of the support

Most respondents (94.8% or 92 of 97) agree that the proposed areas of support enable the achievement of the programme area objective. Nevertheless, the comments received suggest also adding emphasis on ecosystemic thinking, democracy and civic education, e-learning solutions, and transnational cooperation for full achievement of objective.

Furthermore, 47.4% of respondents (45 of 95) indicated that there could be additional areas of support that could help reach the programme area objective in their country of interest. Key areas include developing educational ecosystems, fostering civil society, supporting comprehensive Earth observation and AI education, enhancing civic and democratic education, expanding non-formal training and volunteer support, facilitating access to education for groups in vulnerable situations, strengthening mental health and safeguarding policies, and ensuring gender equality and job integration measures for minorities and marginalised groups.

How the objectives will be addressed

Most respondents (88.4% or 84 of 95) found the proposed methods and activities appropriate for achieving the programme area objective. Among those who disagreed, comments suggested incorporating ecosystemic thinking, supporting child-led activities, extending capacity building to non-academic staff, financing shared e-learning platforms, including transnational exchanges, and engaging NGOs/CSOs in programme development. Recommendations also included adding museum educators as participants, conducting gender equality assessments, and addressing inequalities for minorities such as Roma and LGBTQ communities.

Key actors and beneficiaries

Out of the 94 respondents who answered the question, 78.7% (74) agreed on the relevance of the listed actors and beneficiaries for achieving the programme area objective. However, some comments highlighted the need to include NGOs/CSOs, labour market institutions, universities, youth workers as key actors and beneficiaries due to their significant role in education, youth support, and policymaking. Expanding collaboration to include policy bodies and companies involved in lifelong learning was also suggested.

PA specifics

Most respondents (92.4% or 85 of 92) agreed that the listed conditions address relevant development challenges or opportunities in their country of interest. Comments from those who disagreed suggested stronger emphasis on partnerships with CSOs, conditions ensuring involvement of key actors in funded infrastructure projects, clearer guidance on institutional cooperation and capacity building, fairer financing structures to cover actual staff costs, and budget flexibility for extraordinary activities. Additionally, promoting inclusion, diversity, gender equality, and LGBTQ rights was recommended as a necessary condition.

Bilateral relations

Of the 92 respondents, 98.9% (91) found the areas of support relevant for cooperation with entities from the donor states. The respondent who disagreed with this statement did not provide an explanation.

Final remarks

In the final remarks, common themes among the comments received included the need to integrate NGOs and ecosystem-based approaches, ensure inclusive education that addresses the needs of marginalised and at-risk youth, support gender equality, and highlight the importance of non-formal education, youth work, and civic engagement. Emphasis was also placed on expanding support for digital learning and vocational training, ensuring financial and practical accessibility, and fostering international and multilateral partnerships. Additionally, a focus on enhancing mental health support, addressing educational gaps for specific groups such as refugee and autism spectrum disorder (ASD) children, and promoting active citizenship through education and training were strongly advocated.

Culture

Rationale of the support

The majority of respondents (85.7% or 36 of 42) think that the rationale described reflects the development of the EEA Grants countries in this programme area. The few comments received stress the need to include cultural infrastructure, sports for sustainable development and addressing inequalities, intergenerational fairness, and minority rights, including Roma and LGBTQ, to foster social cohesion and democratic resilience.

Areas of the support

Most respondents (90.2% or 37 of 41) agree that the proposed areas of support enable the achievement of the programme area objective. Nevertheless, a few comments received suggest also adding emphasis on accessibility and sustainability of culture, cultural expression and integration through sports facilities to better achieve the programme objectives.

Furthermore, half of respondents (20 of 40) indicated that there could be additional areas of support that could help reach the programme area objective in their country of interest. Key areas include innovative cultural products for international competitiveness, community engagement, cultural infrastructure, cultural integration for refugees, mental health support, gender equality initiatives, sustainable education, and expanded accessibility for smaller organisations, as well as promoting diversity and minority cultures, such as Roma and LGBTQ communities.

How the objectives will be addressed

Most respondents (78.6% or 33 of 42) found the proposed methods and activities appropriate for achieving the programme area objective. Among those who disagreed, comments suggested revisions such as replacing “minorities” with “persons from different ethnic groups” for constitutional accuracy in certain countries, including “cultural infrastructure” to broaden programme impact, and clarifying the feasibility of climate change mitigation measures in cultural heritage contexts. Suggestions also included adding gender equality assessments, sports, intergenerational fairness, and disabled persons as target groups, as well as enhancing cultural participation and self-expression for underrepresented communities like Roma and LGBTQ.

Key actors and beneficiaries

Out of the 41 respondents who answered the question, 82.9% (34) agreed on the relevance of the listed actors and beneficiaries for achieving the programme area objective. However, some comments suggested including educational institutions, social enterprises, sports organisations, and scientific research institutions. Additionally, there was a call for greater emphasis on support for NGOs and including diverse social and age groups as beneficiaries to enhance inclusivity and sustainability.

PA specifics

Most respondents (81% or 34 of 42) agreed that the listed conditions address relevant development challenges or opportunities in their country of interest. Comments from those who disagreed highlighted that certain conditions create excessive administrative burdens, such as co-financing requirements, low cost limits, and specific funding allocations, potentially hindering development. They recommended greater flexibility, including removing strict allocations for the independent cultural sector and adjusting climate change mitigation measures due to legal constraints in cultural heritage protection. Additionally, they suggested infrastructure investments be optional unless supporting indirect soft measures, and proposed funding to strengthen minority cultural sectors, including Roma and LGBTQ.

Bilateral relations

Of the 42 respondents, 97.6% (41) found the areas of support relevant for cooperation with entities from the donor states. The respondent who disagreed with this statement did not provide an explanation.

Final remarks

In the final remarks, common themes among the comments received included appreciation for the programme’s support for capacity building and recognition of culture as a driver for sustainable development. Respondents highlighted the need to tailor approaches to local cultural contexts, reduce bureaucracy, and incorporate a gender perspective throughout all areas. Additional focus was suggested on youth inclusion, social cohesion, and the integration of ecological education and sustainable development. Proposals included enhancing accessibility for smaller organisations, promoting refugee cultural initiatives, and supporting green adaptations of cultural infrastructure to align with climate change measures.

Local development, good governance and inclusion

Rationale of the support

The majority of respondents (90.6% or 58 of 64) think that the rationale described reflects the development of the EEA Grants countries in this programme area. However, some respondents suggest adjustments, such as reducing overlap with green transition area, incorporating "innovative and creative communities", and strengthening the emphasis on human rights and recent geopolitical developments impacting migration patterns.

Areas of the support

Most respondents (95.2% or 59 of 62) agree that the proposed areas of support enable the achievement of the programme area objective. Nevertheless, a couple of comments received suggest broadening the areas of support to include “Good governance and rule of law", as well as adding local investments in resilience and social development to better align with the programme’s objectives on fostering resilience in local development.

Furthermore, 47.6% of respondents (30 of 63) indicated that there could be additional areas of support that could help reach the programme area objective in their country of interest. Key areas include strengthening local democracy and rule of law, civil oversight to counter corruption, building capacities for local governance, and tailored support for minority and groups in vulnerable situations. Respondents also highlighted social entrepreneurship, grassroots organisations, inclusion of LGBTQIA issues, gender equality measures, and resilience in local investments. Additional areas suggested include local investments in resilience and social development, and specific programmes for integrating refugees and addressing labour shortages.

How the objectives will be addressed

Most respondents (87.1% or 54 of 62) found the proposed methods and activities appropriate for achieving the programme area objective. Among those who disagreed, comments suggested a stronger focus on grassroots level and real conditions on the ground. Some proposed adding research projects and comparative studies to map developmental paths and regional disparities, as well as promoting intersectional approaches. Some respondents recommended more support for rural social enterprises and systemic solutions, including gender equality assessments and a focus on good governance, gender equality, and human rights, including LGBTQ rights.

Key actors and beneficiaries

Out of the 62 respondents who answered the question, 79% (49) agreed on the relevance of the listed actors and beneficiaries for achieving the programme area objective. However, some suggested including social entrepreneurs, research institutions, locally public bodies, and informal networks of civil society groups, especially grassroots organisations, trade unions, and those supporting groups of vulnerable populations like Roma, LGBTQ, and undocumented migrants.

PA specifics

Most respondents (88.5% or 54 of 61) agreed that the listed conditions address relevant development challenges or opportunities in their country of interest. Comments from those who disagreed suggested making public participation and civil society cooperation mandatory, adding conditions to address systemic discrimination of minorities (including Roma and LGBTQ). Some proposed flexibility in donor cooperation and local governance requirements, as well as reconsidering the mandatory gender perspective.

Bilateral relations

Of the 59 respondents, 98.3% (58) found the areas of support relevant for cooperation with entities from the donor states. The respondent who disagreed with this statement did not provide an explanation.

Final remarks

In the final remarks, common themes among the comments received included the need for sustained support for social enterprises beyond the startup phase, stronger focus on evaluation in programming, and inclusion of smart city initiatives. Respondents highlighted the importance of inclusive development, especially for groups in vulnerable situations, as well as enhancing local governance capacities in areas like evidence-informed policy-making and public service delivery. Comments also emphasised cooperation with civil society, services for refugees, open local government, and sustainable development.

Roma inclusion and empowerment

Rationale of the support

The majority of respondents (94.9% or 37 of 39) think that the rationale described reflects the development of the EEA Grants countries in this programme area. One comment received suggests that national Roma strategies should integrate across all sectoral strategies and plans, ensuring Roma inclusion is mainstreamed, adequately funded, and prioritised as a key measure for inclusive education and employment.

Areas of the support

Most respondents (86.5% or 32 of 37) agree that the proposed areas of support enable the achievement of the programme area objective. Nevertheless, a few comments received suggest the need for greater focus on the Roma minority in Hungary, emphasising inclusion in education, employment, and access to basic needs, alongside calls for project financing for infrastructure, such as Roma cultural centres, and strategies to improve school attendance among Roma children in rural areas.

Furthermore, 51.4% of respondents (19 of 37) indicated that there could be additional areas of support that could help reach the programme area objective in their country of interest. Key areas include enhancing legal protections and law enforcement training to combat institutional discrimination, expanding inclusive education efforts, addressing healthcare access barriers, and increasing community engagement through media campaigns and stakeholder collaboration.

How the objectives will be addressed

Most respondents (88.9% or 32 of 36) found the proposed methods and activities appropriate for achieving the programme area objective. Among those who disagreed, comments suggested enhancing cross-border collaboration, including labour market actors, and implementing targeted interventions to address homophobia and transphobia, and antigypsyism within Roma and LGBTQ communities.

Key actors and beneficiaries

Out of the 36 respondents who answered the question, 83.3% (30) agreed on the relevance of the listed actors and beneficiaries for achieving the programme area objective. However, some comments suggested expanding the list to include active citizens, entrepreneurs, national public authorities, training institutions, and law enforcement agencies, as well as a focus on grassroots organisations and targeting both Roma and non-Roma populations, including Roma LGBTQ groups.

PA specifics

Most respondents (91.2% or 31 of 34) agreed that the listed conditions address relevant development challenges or opportunities in their country of interest. Comments from those who disagreed suggested incorporating capacity-building measures for national authorities, including training for police officers to prevent human rights violations in Roma communities.

Bilateral relations

Of the 35 respondents, 97.1% (34) found the areas of support relevant for cooperation with entities from the donor states. The respondent who disagreed with this statement did not provide an explanation.

Final remarks

In the final remarks, common themes among the comments received included the importance of designing programs with both short- and long-term perspectives, applying a gender perspective across all areas, and focusing on Roma safety and trust-building with law enforcement. Additional suggestions emphasised strengthening Roma-led and grassroots organisations and addressing specific challenges in Roma education and inclusion.

Public health

Rationale of the support

The majority of respondents (85% or 34 of 40) think that the rationale described reflects the development of the EEA Grants countries in this programme area. However, some respondents recommended mandatory vaccination across age groups and expanded health information efforts. Concerns about healthcare access, corruption, and quality disparities between public and private hospitals were noted. Additionally, respondents suggested including disadvantaged groups, such as LGBTQ, and placing greater emphasis on sustainable healthcare innovations in areas like regenerative medicine and wound care.

Areas of the support

Most respondents (82.5% or 33 of 40) agree that the proposed areas of support enable the achievement of the programme area objective. Nevertheless, some comments suggest expanding support for healthcare and digital health. Flexibility was recommended to address diverse local needs, with specific mention of tackling discrimination against disadvantaged groups. Additionally, some respondents advocated for broadening support to include innovative solutions, like natural approaches to antimicrobial resistance (AMR).

Furthermore, many respondents (71.8% or 28 of 39) indicated that there could be additional areas of support that could help reach the programme area objective in their country of interest. Key areas include annual health education programmes in schools, particularly on topics such as sexual education and nutrition, and better integration of social and health services to support demographic changes. There is a need for expanded mental health support, especially in workplaces and child psychiatry. Respondents also highlighted digital health, health literacy, holistic and preventive health approaches, comprehensive care for refugees, and gender-specific healthcare measures. Increased access to services for disadvantaged groups, including LGBTQ individuals, and infrastructural investments for groups in vulnerable situations were also recommended.

How the objectives will be addressed

Most respondents (81.1% or 30 of 37) found the proposed methods and activities appropriate for achieving the programme area objective. Among those who disagreed, comments suggested incorporating comparative and case studies, and workplace health analyses. Media engagement was highlighted as crucial for informing population on health topics. Additionally, respondents recommended gender equality assessments with specific indicators, greater involvement of self-advocating patient groups in policy-making, and strengthened partnerships between healthcare institutions and biotech firms for advanced therapies.

Key actors and beneficiaries

Out of the 38 respondents who answered the question, 78.9% (30) agreed on the relevance of the listed actors and beneficiaries for achieving the programme area objective. However, some comments suggested including additional actors such as trade unions, employers, labour market institutions, local school and kindergarten teachers, hospitals. Respondents also recommended involving the medical device companies specialising in natural solutions, and permitting informal groups and civil society networks as beneficiaries to enhance collaboration and impact.

PA specifics

Most respondents (82.9% or 29 of 35) agreed that the listed conditions address relevant development challenges or opportunities in their country of interest. Comments from those who disagreed suggested deleting the maximum funding limit for investments and reconsidering the mandatory focus on women's health. Additionally, respondents recommended explicitly including cisgender and transgender women in relevant programmes and placing greater emphasis on encouraging market adoption of innovative healthcare solutions to strengthen public health resilience.

Bilateral relations

Of the 36 respondents, 94.4% (34) found the areas of support relevant for cooperation with entities from the donor states. However, one respondent noted that budgets are often insufficient in a donor state (e.g., Norway) as most funding is allocated to the main applicant.

Final remarks

In the final remarks, common themes among the comments received included the need for grants for young doctors, workplace health initiatives, continued tuberculosis investment, and improved integration of health and social services. Respondents emphasised corruption prevention, support for uninsured individuals, and applying gender equality across all areas. Suggestions included applying "Health in All Policies" approach, harmonised

rules for donor participation, and enhanced healthcare access for refugees, including mental health support. Additionally, respondents highlighted private sector collaboration to drive healthcare innovation and resilience, particularly through biotech partnerships.

Disaster prevention and preparedness

Rationale of the support

The majority of respondents (90% or 27 of 30) think that the rationale described reflects the development of the EEA Grants countries in this programme area. One comment received suggested increased focus on resilience against hybrid threats, particularly foreign information manipulation and migration-related risks, as well as recognising a bottom-up approach to strengthening state resilience at all levels of public administration.

Areas of the support

Most respondents (86.2% or 25 of 29) agree that the proposed areas of support enable the achievement of the programme area objective. Nevertheless, a few comments received suggest additional emphasis on digitisation to enhance disaster prevention, particularly through real-time control and monitoring systems for urban drainage to manage flooding and pollution risks, and a focus on civil protection and preparedness to address military and hybrid threats amidst current geopolitical tensions.

Furthermore, 46.4% of respondents (13 of 28) indicated that there could be additional areas of support that could help reach the programme area objective in their country of interest. Key areas include capacity-building initiatives for critical infrastructure protection, civil defence, and emergency response, especially for hybrid threats and extreme natural events; integration of space-based data and partnerships for innovation in disaster preparedness; gender-sensitive and disability-inclusive disaster risk management; urban drainage solutions for flood control; and climate refugees.

How the objectives will be addressed

Most respondents (76% or 19 of 25) found the proposed methods and activities appropriate for achieving the programme area objective. Among those who disagreed, comments suggested allowing higher education institutions (HEIs) to lead where they have pre-existing experience, adding measures to strengthen civil protection, integrating hybrid threat mitigation such as disinformation and migration-related risks, supporting emergency service competencies through training and exchanges, and incorporating gender equality assessments.

Key actors and beneficiaries

Out of the 26 respondents who answered the question, 88.5% (23) agreed on the relevance of the listed actors and beneficiaries for achieving the programme area objective. However, a couple of comments suggested explicitly including Higher Education Institutions and Research and Technology Organisations (RTOs) as key actors, as they could offer research-driven solutions, enhance local partnerships, and contribute significantly to competence and capacity building.

PA specifics

Most respondents (77.8% or 21 of 27) agreed that the listed conditions address relevant development challenges or opportunities in their country of interest. Comments from those who disagreed suggested the inclusion of more flexibility in funding ratios between soft and hard measures, such as infrastructure investments. Additional recommendations included ensuring complementarity with external funds (such as AMIF, IBM, ISF), and flexibility in condition of donor and beneficiary state cooperation.

Bilateral relations

Of the 25 respondents, 92% (23) found the areas of support relevant for cooperation with entities from the donor states. The two respondents who disagreed with this statement did not provide an explanation.

Final remarks

In the final remarks, common themes among the comments received included the importance of enhancing disaster resilience through multi-sectoral cooperation, especially by involving Higher Education Institutions, youth organisations, and healthcare systems. Respondents highlighted the need for investments in green-blue infrastructure, inclusion of nuclear safety and security measures. Additional emphasis was placed on addressing

climate-related risks, reinforcing gender and disability inclusivity in disaster planning, and ensuring harmonised participation rules to streamline collaboration across donor and beneficiary states.

Domestic and gender-based violence

Rationale of the support

The majority of respondents (97.4% or 37 of 38) think that the rationale described reflects the development of the EEA Grants countries in this programme area. The respondent who disagreed with this statement did not provide an explanation.

Areas of the support

Most respondents (94.6% or 35 of 37) agree that the proposed areas of support enable the achievement of the programme area objective. Nevertheless, one comment received suggests that further emphasis could be placed on information campaigns about contraception.

Furthermore, 53.8% of respondents (21 of 39) indicated that there could be additional areas of support that could help reach the programme area objective in their country of interest. Key areas include strengthening partnerships with local NGOs, targeted training for police and judicial officials, expanded focus on workplace sexual violence, and broader awareness campaigns. Other suggested areas include mental health and childcare support, protections for groups in vulnerable situations (e.g., refugees, minorities), and addressing human trafficking as a gendered issue.

How the objectives will be addressed

Most respondents (83.8% or 31 of 37) found the proposed methods and activities appropriate for achieving the programme area objective. Among those who disagreed, comments suggested increased involvement of local media, deeper evaluations of legislative implementation, and use of gender equality assessments. Additionally, respondents highlighted the need for gender-sensitive, victim-centred training for law enforcement and suggested including specific support for LGBTQ+ people facing violence.

Key actors and beneficiaries

Out of the 38 respondents who answered the question, 78.9% (30) agreed on the relevance of the listed actors and beneficiaries for achieving the programme area objective. However, some comments suggested expanding the role of trade unions, employers, labour market institutions, and universities. Respondents also proposed allowing NGOs to act as project promoters, involving perpetrators in prevention efforts, and broadening beneficiaries to include women and girls in vulnerable situations, LGBTQ+ individuals facing intersecting forms of discrimination, and informal civil society networks.

PA specifics

Most respondents (91.9% or 34 of 37) agreed that the listed conditions address relevant development challenges or opportunities in their country of interest. Comments from those who disagreed suggested removing the condition that sets a maximum funding level for investment and include gender equality assessment.

Bilateral relations

Of the 34 respondents, 97.1% (33) found the areas of support relevant for cooperation with entities from the donor states. The respondent who disagreed with this statement did not provide an explanation.

Final remarks

In the final remarks, common themes among the comments received included strengthening democratic values, prioritising gender equality and its funding, and focusing on involvement of research and analytical support. Comments also recommended targeted support for refugees and migrants, and advocating for the Istanbul Convention.

Access to justice

Rationale of the support

The majority of respondents (85.7% or 30 of 35) think that the rationale described reflects the development of the EEA Grants countries in this programme area. The comments received suggested including “transparency” in relation to the judiciary and broadening the focus beyond the court system to encompass the full justice chain. Concerns about underreporting hate crimes, hate speech, and inadequate legal protections for disadvantaged groups were also highlighted.

Areas of the support

Most respondents (86.5% or 32 of 37) agree that the proposed areas of support enable the achievement of the programme area objective. Nevertheless, a couple of comments received suggest expanding the scope to include prosecution, and law enforcement capacity building and specialised training.

Furthermore, 61.8% of respondents (21 of 34) indicated that there could be additional areas of support that could help reach the programme area objective in their country of interest. Key areas include funding for advocacy, improving trial speed, judicial accountability, alternative dispute resolution measures, legal support for refugees, child-friendly and trauma-informed justice for groups in vulnerable situations, capacity building on gender-based violence, disability inclusion, outreach on hate crimes, and enhancing legal access for disadvantaged and marginalised communities.

How the objectives will be addressed

Most respondents (74.3% or 26 of 35) found the proposed methods and activities appropriate for achieving the programme area objective. Among those who disagreed, comments suggested implementing gender equality assessments, expanding support to the prosecution, enhancing IT systems to reduce bureaucracy, training law enforcement in IT for detention management, and extending funding eligibility to judicial training institutions. Additional suggestions included establishing child-specific legal aid and prioritising the role of law enforcement agencies to improve access to justice.

Key actors and beneficiaries

Out of the 36 respondents who answered the question, 66.7% (24) agreed on the relevance of the listed actors and beneficiaries for achieving the programme area objective. However, other respondents suggested including prosecutors, law enforcement agencies, lawyers, bar associations, notaries, magistrate organisations, and children’s ombudsmen. Respondents also recommended clarifying the role of international and civil society organisations.

PA specifics

Most respondents (88.9% or 32 of 36) agreed that the listed conditions address relevant development challenges or opportunities in their country of interest. Comments from those who disagreed suggested expanding the programme area to include prosecution, including gender equality assessments, and removing the funding cap on investments.

Bilateral relations

Of the 34 respondents, 97.1% (33) found the areas of support relevant for cooperation with entities from the donor states. The respondent who disagreed with this statement did not provide an explanation.

Final remarks

In the final remarks, common themes among the comments received included a focus on supporting magistrates' workload and burnout, ensuring efficient and fast access to justice, specifically for environmental CSOs, people with disabilities, and refugees. Respondents suggested mobile legal aid clinics and digital legal case tracking tools for refugees. Other remarks highlighted the importance of the Barnahus model, strengthening alternative dispute resolution and evidence-based reforms, and fostering trust with disadvantaged groups. Additionally, calls for comprehensive civil society cooperation and gender mainstreaming across programmes were noted.

Correctional services

Rationale of the support

The majority of respondents (96.3% or 26 of 27) think that the rationale described reflects the development of the EEA Grants countries in this programme area. The respondent who disagreed with this statement did not provide an explanation.

Areas of the support

Most respondents (89.3% or 25 of 28) agree that the proposed areas of support enable the achievement of the programme area objective. Nevertheless, a few comments indicate that probation clients should be highlighted alongside prisoners, as they are closely related and mentioned in the key actors and beneficiaries section. Emphasis was also placed on improving prison and pre-trial detention conditions and providing education and support for prison law enforcement and probation services staff, including management.

Furthermore, 44.8% of respondents (13 of 29) indicated that additional areas of support could help reach the programme area objective in their country of interest. Key areas include expanding prison mentoring programs, enhancing support for prisoners and families, promoting restorative justice, and prioritising groups in vulnerable situations, like women, juveniles, and refugee minors. Suggestions also focus on using technology for rehabilitation, strengthening post-release support, and reducing stigma through public awareness.

How the objectives will be addressed

Most respondents (89.3% or 25 of 28) found the proposed methods and activities appropriate for achieving the programme area objective. Among those who disagreed, comments suggested adding funding for infrastructure in pre-trial detention centres as well as supplementing the text as follows “Interventions related to substance abuse and anger management, including for domestic and gender-based violence offenders as well as debt management, are also supported”

Key actors and beneficiaries

Out of the 29 respondents who answered the question, 86.2% (25) agreed on the relevance of the listed actors and beneficiaries for achieving the programme area objective. However, some responses stress involving prosecutors, judges, prison and probation services, and law enforcement to enhance alternative sanctions. It is also recommended that civil society and international organisations, along with vulnerable offenders serving alternative sentences, be included.

PA specifics

Most respondents (92.6% or 25 of 27) agreed that the listed conditions address relevant development challenges or opportunities in their country of interest. One comment suggested deleting the condition that “The maximum level of funding for investment (..) (hard measures) shall be set in MoU or, exceptionally, in the PA”.

Bilateral relations

Of the 26 respondents, 96.2% (25) found the areas of support relevant for cooperation with entities from the donor states. The respondent who disagreed with this statement did not provide an explanation.

Final remarks

In the final remarks, common themes among the comments received included the need for sustainable, long-term rehabilitation and reintegration services beyond project funding, focusing on coordinated support in health, education, housing, and employment. Comments stress legal aid, mentorship, and community alternatives for refugee youth in detention. Addressing offenders of sexually motivated crimes and linking policy with practical measures for systemic improvements are also highlighted.

Serious and organised crime

Rationale of the support

The majority of respondents (81% or 17 of 21) think that the rationale described reflects the development of the EEA Grants countries in this programme area. Two comments received suggest that the rationale should include seniors as a vulnerable group and emphasise prevention and awareness to combat fraud and domestic violence. Comment recommends clarifying the link between gender-based violence and organised crime, potentially reassigning DGBV to more suitable areas (e.g. PA 10 or 11). Strengthen focus on cybercrime, corruption, economic crime, victim support, and asset recovery to enhance the approach to serious crime.

Areas of the support

75% of respondents (15 of 20) agree that the proposed areas of support enable the achievement of the programme area objective. Nevertheless, a few comments recommend aligning measures with relevant programme areas, such as shifting domestic violence to PA 10 and child-friendly justice to PA 11. It stresses strengthening anti-corruption efforts, addressing cybercrime and financial crime, and enhancing asset recovery. Additionally, comments recommend prioritising state-backed victim support and more comprehensive state action against trafficking and forced labour.

Furthermore, 57.9% of respondents (11 of 19) indicated that additional areas of support could help reach the programme area objective in their country of interest. Key areas include boosting anti-money laundering, countering tax fraud, and tackling cybercrime. Priorities also focus on enforcing sanctions, protecting refugees from trafficking, supporting victims, and using administrative approaches against organised crime. Emphasis is placed on child-friendly justice tools, modern slavery prevention, and strengthening forensic detection of hazardous materials.

How the objectives will be addressed

Two-thirds of respondents (61.9% or 13 of 21) found the proposed methods and activities appropriate for achieving the programme area objective. Among those who disagreed, comments focus on promoting cooperation with organisations, adopting a victim-centred justice approach, enhancing anti-corruption efforts, and supporting CSOs in legislative initiatives. Strengthening law enforcement with digital tools and fostering public awareness to counter social threats and petty crimes were also highlighted.

Key actors and beneficiaries

Out of the 21 respondents who answered the question, 85.7% (18) agreed on the relevance of the listed actors and beneficiaries for achieving the programme area objective. However, some comments suggested adding public entities like anti-corruption agencies and recognising NGOs not just as partners but as main actors capable of legislative development and creating support systems.

PA specifics

Most respondents (81% or 17 of 21) agreed that the listed conditions address relevant development challenges or opportunities in their country of interest. Comments from those who disagreed suggested setting investment levels in programme agreements for greater flexibility, ensuring complementarity with other external funds, and allowing exceptions for mandatory donor-beneficiary cooperation where agreed.

Bilateral relations

Of the 21 respondents, 95.2% (20) found the areas of support relevant for cooperation with entities from the donor states. The respondent who disagreed with this statement did not provide an explanation.

Final remarks

In the final remarks, common themes among the comments received included the emphasis on strengthening cross-border and regional cooperation to combat organised crime and trafficking, with a focus on improving detection, forensic capabilities, and law enforcement training. The importance of targeted support for evidence-based policy research and civil society involvement in monitoring institutional activities was highlighted. Addressing gender-based violence and hate crimes, including comprehensive training for law enforcement and social support for survivors, was a recurring priority. There was also strong advocacy for projects that support anti-trafficking measures, safe migration pathways, and survivor assistance. Lastly, the integration of international partnerships and practical training initiatives, such as those offered by UNICRI, was seen as essential for sustainable capacity building and effective policy implementation.

Asylum, migration and integration

Rationale of the support

The majority of respondents (92.3% or 36 of 39) think that the rationale described reflects the development of the EEA Grants countries in this programme area. One comment suggests that the rationale could also expand to acknowledge the instability arising from recent developments and conflicts in the Middle East, which continue to influence migration patterns.

Areas of the support

Most respondents (95% or 38 of 40) agree that the proposed areas of support enable the achievement of the programme area objective. Nevertheless, a comment received suggests adding child and gender sensitivity to the first support area, focusing on child-sensitive reception, protection in migration processes, access to essential services, and robust child protection preparedness plans.

Furthermore, 30% of respondents (12 of 40) indicated that additional areas of support could help reach the programme area objective in their country of interest. Key areas include supporting unaccompanied minors, ensuring safe working conditions for foreign workers, promoting voluntary return systems, and restorative justice. The mentioned priorities also cover gender-specific protections for migrant women, comprehensive asylum support, targeted employment programs, and strengthening grassroots organisations aiding migrants.

How the objectives will be addressed

Most respondents (85% or 34 of 40) found the proposed methods and activities appropriate for achieving the programme area objective. Among those who disagreed, recommendations include collecting case studies on workplace discrimination against foreign nationals, clarifying trade unions' roles in integration, and identifying barriers in employment. Emphasis is on long-term integration measures for TCNs, including psychological support and capacity building for migration forecasting. Proposals suggest incorporating gender equality assessments and supporting migrants of minority backgrounds, including LGBTQ individuals.

Key actors and beneficiaries

Out of the 39 respondents who answered the question, 79.5% (31) agreed on the relevance of the listed actors and beneficiaries for achieving the programme area objective. However, some comments recommend including trade unions, employers, research institutions, universities, and grassroots organisations as key actors. According to some comments civil society and international organisations should be considered main actors as well, especially in migration policy advocacy, while informal groups should be allowed as partners. Emphasising support for groups in vulnerable situation, including unaccompanied children, LGBTQ individuals, and undocumented migrants, is also advised.

PA specifics

Most respondents (85% or 34 of 40) agreed that the listed conditions address relevant development challenges or opportunities in their country of interest. Comments from those who disagreed suggest a stronger definition of civil society cooperation, expanding priorities to include systematic projects with integrated border management and Schengen security with external fund alignment. It advocates setting investment levels within programme agreements for flexibility, adding an option to waive mandatory donor-beneficiary cooperation, and revising priorities to support unaccompanied children, migrants, asylum seekers, and groups in vulnerable situations, including LGBTQ individuals.

Bilateral relations

Of the 41 respondents, 97.6% (40) found the areas of support relevant for cooperation with entities from the donor states. The respondent who disagreed with this statement did not provide an explanation.

Final remarks

In the final remarks, common themes among the comments received included the emphasis on comprehensive support for refugee and migrant integration, with a focus on socio-economic inclusion, access to services, and structured employment pathways. The importance of refugee-led initiatives, community engagement, and combating discrimination and disinformation were highlighted, alongside fostering collaboration with civil society and international partners. Recommendations stressed enhancing transparency, anti-corruption measures, and focusing on implementation and analytical work to identify and solve practical challenges. There is also a call for promoting smart communities, sustainable urban development, and better integration of EU priorities like the green transition and social resilience.

Institutional cooperation and capacity building

Rationale of the support

The majority of respondents (97.7% or 42 of 43) think that the rationale described reflects the development in the EEA Grants countries for this programme area. The respondent who disagreed with this statement did not provide an explanation.

Areas of the support

Most respondents (95.3% or 41 of 43) agree that the proposed areas of support enable the achievement of the programme area objective. The respondents who disagreed with this statement did not provide an explanation.

Furthermore, 25.6% of respondents (10 of 39) indicated that there could be additional areas of support that could help reach the programme area objective in their country of interest. Key areas include promoting cooperation and knowledge transfer between developed and peripheral regions, enhancing public bodies' capacities to combat corruption, and supporting CSOs in national strategy roles. Emphasis is also placed on strengthening institutions to better serve refugees, combating institutional racism, and fostering partnerships with NGOs and businesses. Training for public officials and mechanisms for public-private cooperation are highlighted as crucial.

How the objectives will be addressed

Most respondents (97.5% or 39 of 40) found the proposed methods and activities appropriate for achieving the programme area objective. The respondent who disagreed with this statement did not provide an explanation.

Key actors and beneficiaries

Out of the 39 respondents who answered the question, 89.7% (35) agreed on the relevance of the listed actors and beneficiaries for achieving the programme area objective. However, some comments suggest including civil society as potential partners, reviewers, and beneficiaries due to their extensive expertise.

PA specifics

Most respondents (92.9% or 39 of 42) agreed that the listed conditions address relevant development challenges or opportunities in their country of interest. Comments from those who disagreed recommend ensuring cooperation or consultation with CSOs representing groups in vulnerable situations with limited access to public services. It also suggests adding flexibility to mandatory donor-beneficiary partnerships at the project level by allowing exceptions where mutually agreed.

Bilateral relations

Of the 41 respondents, 97.6% (40) found the areas of support relevant for cooperation with entities from the donor states. The respondent who disagreed with this statement did not provide an explanation.

Final remarks

In the final remarks, common themes among the comments received included the need to enhance collaboration and capacity-building within civil society and public institutions. Emphasis is placed on partnerships involving NGOs, cross-agency coordination, and international organisations to support areas like refugee services and regulatory oversight. Calls for transparency, anti-corruption, and human-centric, accessible public services are prominent, alongside training programs focused on combating discrimination and institutional racism. Suggestions also highlight the importance of evidence-based policymaking, strengthening public sector skills, and integrating thematic priorities like democracy, the rule of law, and social inclusion into programme areas.

Civil society fund

Rationale of the support

The majority of respondents (91.8% or 89 of 97) think that the rationale described reflects the development in the EEA Grants countries for this programme area. Among those who disagreed, some comments suggest that the rationale should emphasise the crucial role of civil society in fostering inclusive democratic participation, not limited to marginalised groups, and highlight its role in promoting democracy, human rights, and social cohesion.

It should also acknowledge internal capacity issues, the impact of global challenges, funding limitations, and the need for alignment with EU values and initiatives, such as the European Child Guarantee and the European Green Deal. Additionally, the rationale should reflect the importance of addressing poverty, particularly in children, and the need for global awareness and education.

Areas of the support

Most respondents (94.9% or 93 of 98) agree that the proposed areas of support enable the achievement of the programme area objective. Nevertheless, a few comments recommend explicitly addressing the 'rule of law', merging related areas like civil society participation and enabling environments, highlighting independent media, retaining focus on gender-based violence, and narrowing 'environmental protection' to climate action and just transitions within civic engagement. Strengthening the civil society sector beyond organisational development was also advised.

Furthermore, 31.2% of respondents (29 of 39) indicated that there could be additional areas of support that could help reach the programme area objective in their country of interest. Key areas include financial assistance for community development, strengthening civil society networks, mental health initiatives, advocacy, and combating corruption. Noted priorities also involve youth engagement, countering disinformation, promoting open government, supporting groups in vulnerable situations, and enhancing human rights within green policies. Strategic funding and backing for independent media were also emphasised.

How the objectives will be addressed

Most respondents (92.6% or 88 of 95) found the proposed methods and activities appropriate for achieving the programme area objective. Among those who disagreed, comments include supporting NGOs' financial sustainability through social businesses, prioritising training, research, and advocacy. The fund should strengthen the rule of law, civil society resilience, and transparency, emphasising European-level collaboration and targeted support for LGBTQI organisations. Legal support for environmental CSOs and enhanced advocacy collaboration were also advised.

Key actors and beneficiaries

Out of the 96 respondents who answered the question, 89.6% (86) agreed on the relevance of the listed actors and beneficiaries for achieving the programme area objective. However, some comments highlight the importance of including a broader range of actors, particularly informal, grassroots, and transnational organisations, to achieve the fund's objectives effectively.

Fund specifics

Most respondents (88.5% or 85 of 96) agreed that the listed conditions address relevant development challenges or opportunities in their country of interest. Comments from those who disagreed highlight the need for direct funding and solidarity support for impactful democratic and social change. It was suggested to increase organisational development funding from 20% to 30% to aid financial sustainability, especially for NGOs setting up social enterprises. There was a strong emphasis on reaching underserved geographic areas, though concerns were raised that this focus may inadvertently disadvantage capital-based organisations which serve broader regions. Additionally, it was proposed that social services should be recognised as essential for civic empowerment, not just advocacy, to support marginalised communities. Additionally, there’s a need to distinguish ‘strengthening civil society’ through capacity-building from ‘creating an enabling environment,’ which addresses democratic principles. Respondents also suggest core funding to sustain small CSOs, including support for essential staff.

Bilateral relations

Of the 95 respondents, 97.9% (93) found the areas of support relevant for cooperation with entities from the donor states. From those who disagreed, one comment noted that bilateral relations therein would benefit from the explicit reference to children, such as child participation within civic engagement, children's safety and rights in the online environment.

Focus areas for Civil society fund

Based on the open responses, the most common focus areas that warrant special attention included (1) support for groups in vulnerable situations, (2) environmental protection and climate resilience, (3) civil society capacity building, (4) media freedom and literacy, (5) human rights and inclusion, (6) mental health and social services, (7) rule of law and democratic engagement, and (8) youth engagement and education.

Final remarks

In the final remarks, common themes among the comments received included the need for simplified reporting and reduced administrative burdens, particularly for small CSOs, to allow a greater focus on outcomes and impact. Recommendations highlighted introducing lump-sum payments and streamlined procedures. Emphasis was placed on ongoing organisational support, not just project-based funding, and broadening access to long-term grants. Other points included the importance of strengthening NGO networks, promoting civic education, and ensuring funding supports democratic values and social inclusion, especially in underserved areas. Calls were made for clearer regulatory definitions and better fund promotion to ensure participation and resilience within civil society.

Fund for capacity building and cooperation with international partner organisations and institutions

Rationale of the support

The majority of respondents (98.7% or 76 of 77) think that the rationale described reflects the development of the EEA Grants countries in this programme area. The respondent who disagreed with this statement did not provide an explanation.

Areas of the support

Most respondents (97.5% or 79 of 81) agree that the proposed areas of support enable the achievement of the programme area objective. One comment suggests making the list of areas of support as non-exhaustive, adding: "such as:".

Furthermore, 35.4% of respondents (28 of 79) indicated that additional areas of support could help reach the programme area objective in their country of interest. Key areas include strengthening local governance, addressing the challenges posed by rising populism and extremist ideologies, and prioritising environmental protection. Respondents also mentioned AI, emphasised professionalising public services and CSO operations, advancing research capacity, and forming anti-corruption coalitions of NGOs. Other suggestions included addressing migration challenges, supporting civil society with a focus on children's rights, enhancing nuclear safety, and fostering international partnerships for joint recommendations. Promoting a fair energy transition that considers societal impacts was also noted.

How the objectives will be addressed

Most respondents (93.8% or 75 of 80) found the proposed methods and activities appropriate for achieving the programme area objective. Among those who disagreed, comments suggested that the description is not entirely clear and the methods of potential cooperation with IOs should be detailed. Additionally, according to the respondents, data collection and analysis should be added, to consolidate evidence-based initiatives, actions, and policies. Finally, respondents recommended to expand the catalogue of potential knowledge exchange activities and include the following activities: job shadowing, mentoring and peer-to-peer learning.

Key actors and beneficiaries

Out of the 79 respondents who answered the question, 91.1% (72) agreed on the relevance of the listed actors and beneficiaries for achieving the programme area objective. However, some comments suggested including banks and their affiliated NGOs, as well as research associations, RTOs, and economic chambers as relevant actors. It was noted that local and national CSOs should be recognised as participants alongside international organisations and beneficiary states. Respondents also recommended considering countries near the EEA in the process of EU accession, such as Ukraine. Additionally, some comments proposed that references to beneficiaries should include broader terms like "and their societies at large" to ensure inclusivity.

Fund specifics

Most respondents (97.4% or 74 of 76) agreed that the listed conditions address relevant development challenges or opportunities in their country of interest. The two respondents who disagreed with this statement did not provide an explanation.

Bilateral relations

Of the 75 respondents, 94.7% (71) found the areas of support relevant for cooperation with entities from the donor states. From those who disagreed, one comment noted that tripartite cooperation should be clarified (it is

not clear how the contribution from the international organisations to the entities from the beneficiary countries will benefit entities from the donor states). Additionally, one respondent noted that capacity building should also support actions on the improvement of research capacity in beneficiary countries, as those are the tools for further improvements.

Final remarks

In the final remarks, common themes among the comments received included clarifying and broadening the fund's scope to better support NGOs, civil society, and smaller organisations, while integrating cross-cutting priorities such as gender equality, public trust, youth empowerment, and sustainability. There is also a strong emphasis on enhancing cooperation with civil society and international partners in areas like AI, governance, and refugee support. Calls for clearer commitments, measurable outcomes, knowledge sharing, and the inclusion of thematic priorities such as democracy, social resilience, and Ukraine support were also noted.

Fund for social dialogue and decent work (Norway Grants)

Rationale of the support

The majority of respondents (97.7% or 43 of 44) think that the rationale described reflects the development of the EEA Grants countries in this programme area. The respondent who disagreed with this statement did not provide an explanation.

Areas of the support

Most respondents (93.2% or 41 of 44) agree that the proposed areas of support enable the achievement of the programme area objective. Nevertheless, a few comments received suggest that to strengthen the impact one might mention policymaking institutions which deal with employment policy as well as to make the social dialogue definition broader including not only trade unions and employer organisations.

Furthermore, 39.5% of respondents (17 of 43) indicated that there could be additional areas of support that could help reach the programme area objective in their country of interest. Key areas include supporting social enterprise development, fostering economic integration for disadvantaged groups through entrepreneurship, and building capacity for social partners to improve conditions for seasonal and migrant workers. Emphasis was also placed on tackling undeclared work, promoting inclusive education, targeted NEET interventions in rural areas, and involving small organisations focused on employee well-being. Respondents highlighted the need for independent grievance mechanisms, better SME representation, and addressing climate and digital challenges to ensure job quality and workforce resilience. Lastly, promoting workplace diversity and inclusion was noted as an important aspect.

How the objectives will be addressed

Most respondents (90.9% or 40 of 44) found the proposed methods and activities appropriate for achieving the programme area objective. Among those who disagreed, comments suggested that local models of best practices for social dialogue and decent work should first be created, which can later be promoted both among unions and employers. Additional suggestions included that a living wage should be mentioned, or a following change implemented: “Gender equality and non-discrimination are cross-cutting principles that shall be addressed throughout the fund, including addressing issues related to discrimination of minorities, including Roma and LGBTQ”.

Key actors and beneficiaries

Out of the 44 respondents who answered the question, 90.9% (40) agreed on the relevance of the listed actors and beneficiaries for achieving the programme area objective. However, some comments noted that the most relevant promoters of the social dialogue are the successful social enterprises. Other mentioned organisations of B2B workers, civil law workers or SMEs. Additionally, one respondent proposed to give special attention to groups of workers underrepresented in social dialogue and workers vulnerable to discrimination, exploitation, and mistreatment in the labour market, including minorities such as Roma and LGBTQ.

Fund specifics

Most respondents (90.7% or 39 of 43) agreed that the listed conditions address relevant development challenges or opportunities in their country of interest. Comments from those who disagreed suggested the need for small infrastructure investments in social enterprises to exemplify social dialogue and decent work. Additionally, there were calls for greater support for social partners to address macro-societal challenges, such as climate change and the green transition, and for managing risks associated with digital transformation to maintain job relevance. It was also recommended to adapt business practices to enhance job quality and align social dialogue frameworks to these new challenges. Emphasis was again placed on ensuring projects focus on diversity, inclusion, and anti-discrimination, particularly for minority groups such as Roma and LGBTQ individuals.

Bilateral relations

Of the 43 respondents, 93.0% (40) found the areas of support relevant for cooperation with entities from the donor states. From those who disagreed, one comment noted that there could be a possibility for more space for non-profit organisations and cooperation with foreign actors.

Final remarks

In the final remarks, common themes among the comments received included concerns about bureaucratic challenges and the complexity of reporting processes, which were seen as obstacles to project efficiency. Additionally, respondents highlighted the importance of fostering partnerships, especially with relevant sectoral organisations, and underscored the need for inclusive education initiatives and support for entrepreneurial

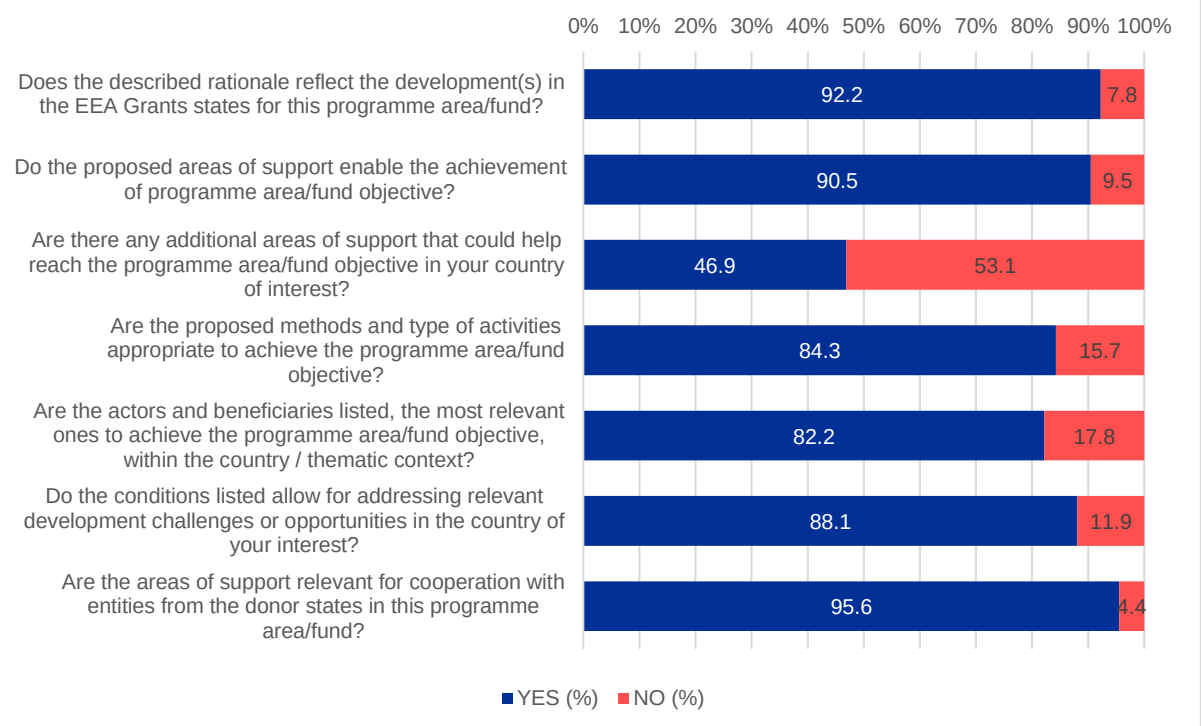
efforts, particularly for migrants and refugees. The emphasis on building local models of best practices for social dialogue and promoting anti-discrimination measures also featured prominently.

Annex 3. Raw survey data. Illustrations for the closed questions and all programme areas/funds are provided in **Annex 4**.

In general, the survey results indicate broad support across all 18 programme areas/funds, with the vast majority of respondents agreeing on the description of each programme area/fund in the Blue Book (see Figure 5). 92.2% of respondents think that the described rationale in program areas/funds reflects the developments of the EEA Grants countries. 90.5% agree that the proposed area of support enables the achievement of the objectives, however, 46.9% think that there are additional areas of support that could be added. This mostly came from “Public health” (71.8%) and “Access to justice" (61.8%) programme areas (for more information see **Annex 4**). Looking at the methods – 84.3% support the proposed methods and activities. Survey participants also agree that the listed actors are the most relevant ones (82.2%) and that listed conditions allow for addressing relevant development challenges or opportunities in the country (88.15%). Finally, the vast majority (95.6%) agree that the areas of support are relevant for cooperation entities from the donor states. The mode detail breakdowns for each programme area/fund can be found in the subsequent sub-sections, **Annex 2.** Programme area/Fund feedback overview and **Annex 4**.

Looking at received comments, a common pattern emerged around respondents’ calls for flexibility, inclusion of groups in vulnerable situations (e.g. LGBTQ and refugees), expanded involvement of civil society, gender equality assessments, data transparency, and evidence-based policymaking. Bilateral cooperation was widely supported, though some respondents recommended more multilateral frameworks to increase impact. In addition, there were frequent calls to reduce administrative burdens, and enabling different types of organisations to access funds more easily. Overall, the feedback highlights a desire for programme areas/funds to be inclusive, adaptable, and collaborative, balancing local expertise with international partnerships to address complex social and environmental challenges across the EEA and Norway Grants support areas.

Figure 5. Average of responses to the closed questions in all programme areas/ funds



Note: Total N=300. The number of participants varies between questions. For the exact number of participants answering each question from different programme area/fund please consult Annex 2.
Source: Visionary Analytics, 2024

4.1. Green transition

The survey responses show strong support for the “Green transition” programme area, with 97.3% agreeing on its rationale. While 92.9% agree on the effectiveness of the proposed support areas, respondents suggest enhancing environmental protection, circular economy practices, and local engagement. Additionally, 54.3% feel more support areas (such as environmental education and sustainable energy initiatives) could be beneficial. The methods and activities for achieving objectives received approval from 87.9% of respondents, though some advocated for increased collaboration time and greater involvement of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). Key actors and beneficiaries were deemed relevant by 83.8%, but some urged a more active role for civil society organisations (CSOs) and research institutions. PA specifics were supported by 90.6% of respondents, with some requests for flexibility in Higher Education Institutions involvement and more gender equality. Bilateral cooperation was supported by 94%, though systemic differences and resource constraints may impact donor state engagement. Final remarks highlighted needs such as broader waste management education, inclusion of innovative green technologies, and harmonised programme rules.

4.2. Green business and innovation

The survey responses show strong support for the “Green business and innovation” programme area, with 87.2% agreeing on its rationale, though some suggested incorporating a stronger role for Higher Education Institutions and research institutions and addressing pollution alongside climate change. The proposed areas of support were approved by 92.5%, with some respondents advocating for greater emphasis on digitalisation, and alignment with donor states' strategies, while 44.7% suggested additional support areas such as cross-cluster cooperation. 88.9% of respondents found the methods for achieving objectives appropriate but some recommended stronger research-business partnerships and expanding the focus to a circular bioeconomy. Key actors were considered relevant by 75.7%, though some respondents proposed prioritising Higher Education Institutions as primary actors. For PA specifics, 86.5% agreed with the listed conditions, though some suggested a focus on startups and a reassessment of bilateral partnership clauses to foster true collaboration. Bilateral relations section received approval from 89.2%, with recommendations for more multilateral projects and expanded knowledge-sharing on sustainability. Final remarks included calls for early feasibility studies, circular economy terminology, political engagement, and strengthening public procurement to drive green innovation.

4.3. Research and innovation

The survey responses show strong support for the “Research and innovation” programme area, with 92.6% agreeing on its rationale, though some suggest focusing more on areas like climate change research and marine biotechnology. While 86.8% find the proposed support areas effective, recommendations include adding citizen engagement, multilateral cooperation, bioengineering, and infrastructure for greater impact. Half of the respondents see additional support needs for start-ups, interdisciplinary research, and strategic technologies like artificial intelligence (AI) and data science. The methods for achieving objectives were deemed appropriate by 70.6%, though some advocated for broader collaboration, flexible themes, and social innovation. Key actors were seen as relevant by 70.6%, with calls to involve NGOs, bioengineering centres, and biotech firms among others. PA specifics received 85.7% approval, with suggestions like inclusive partnerships and gender equality requirements. Bilateral relations were supported by 92.2%, though some urged expanded cooperation with research units in donor states, and more multilateral cooperation. Final remarks highlighted needs such as start-up support, youth collaboration, gender equality, and simplified administration.

4.4. Education, training and youth employment

The survey responses show strong support for the “Education, training and youth employment” programme area, with 98% agreeing on its rationale, though some suggest recognising non-

governmental organisations (NGOs') role in education. The support areas were endorsed by 94.8%, with some recommendations for civic education, e-learning, and transnational cooperation. Nearly half (47.4%) see room for additional areas, such as educational ecosystems, support for groups in vulnerable situations, and job integration for marginalised communities. The methods were approved by 88.4%, though respondents suggest greater NGO involvement, financing e-learning, and addressing inequalities. Key actors were deemed relevant by 78.7%, with calls to emphasise actors like NGOs, labour market institutions, and youth workers. PA specifics received 92.4% approval, with recommendations, such as civil society organisations (CSO) partnerships, diversity measures, and budget flexibility. Bilateral relations were widely supported (98.9%). Final remarks highlighted needs such as inclusive education, digital learning, multilateral partnerships, and targeted support for youth groups in vulnerable situations, especially refugees and those with autism.

4.5. Culture

The survey responses show strong support for the "Culture" programme area, with 85.7% agreeing on its rationale, though some suggest adding cultural infrastructure, sports, and minority rights to enhance social cohesion. The support areas were endorsed by 90.2%, with calls for greater accessibility, sustainability, and cultural integration. Half of respondents see additional needs, including mental health, refugee integration, and diversity initiatives for groups like Roma and LGBTQ communities. The methods received 78.6% approval, with suggestions like inclusive terminology, cultural infrastructure, and gender equality focus. Key actors were seen as relevant by 82.9%, with recommendations to include educational and sports organisations and broaden non-governmental organisations (NGO) support. Programme area specifics received 81% approval, though respondents would like reduced administrative burdens and more flexibility. Bilateral relations were widely supported (97.6%). Final remarks highlighted needs such as adapting to local contexts, reducing bureaucracy, and supporting sustainable, accessible cultural initiatives.

4.6. Local development, good governance and inclusion

The survey responses show strong support for the "Local development, good governance and inclusion" programme area, with 90.6% agreeing on its rationale, though some suggest emphasising human rights, innovative communities, and geopolitical impacts on migration. The support areas received 95.2% approval, with suggestions to broaden focus to good governance and rule of law and resilience in local investments. Nearly half (47.6%) would like to see additional areas, such as anti-corruption measures, support for minority and groups in vulnerable situations, and social entrepreneurship. The methods were endorsed by 87.1%, though some respondents recommend more grassroots engagement, comparative studies, and gender and human rights focus. Key actors were seen as relevant by 79%, with calls to include social entrepreneurs, research bodies, and informal civil society networks, among others. Programme area specifics were supported by 88.5%, with proposals such as mandatory civil society cooperation and anti-discrimination measures. Bilateral relations received near-universal support (98.3%). Final remarks emphasised needs such as further support for social enterprises, local governance capacity-building, and inclusive services for refugees and groups in vulnerable situations.

4.7. Roma inclusion and empowerment

The survey responses show strong support for the "Roma inclusion and empowerment" programme area, with 94.9% agreeing on its rationale, though some suggest mainstreaming Roma inclusion across all strategies and plans. The support areas were endorsed by 86.5%, with some calls for focused efforts in Hungary, improved education, and Roma cultural centres. Over half (51.4%) see further needs, such as legal protections, inclusive education, healthcare access, and community engagement. The methods received 88.9% approval, with suggestions like cross-border collaboration and interventions. Key actors were deemed relevant by 83.3%, with some recommendations to involve law enforcement, training institutions, and grassroots groups. Programme area specifics received 91.2% support, with calls for national authorities training on Roma rights. Bilateral relations were widely supported (97.1%). Final

remarks highlighted needs such as long-term planning, gender inclusivity, Roma safety, and stronger grassroots support.

4.8. Public health

The survey responses show strong support for the “Public health” programme area, with 85% agreeing on its rationale, though some suggest mandatory vaccination, expanded health information, and focus on disadvantaged groups. The support areas received 82.5% approval, with calls for flexibility to address diverse local needs, digital health, and discrimination, among others. Many (71.8%) see further needs, including school health education, mental health support, and more focus on groups in vulnerable situations. The methods were deemed appropriate by 81.1%, with suggestions like comparative/case studies, workplace health, and media engagement. Key actors were seen as relevant by 78.9%, with recommendations to add trade unions, employers, civil society networks, and others. Programme area specifics received 82.9% support, with some calls to lift funding limits and ensure gender inclusivity. Bilateral relations were widely supported (94.4%), though budget might not be sufficient for donor states. Final remarks emphasised needs such as grants for young doctors, service integration, private sector collaboration, and expanded healthcare access for refugees.

4.9. Disaster prevention and preparedness

The survey responses show strong support for the “Disaster prevention and preparedness” programme area, with 90% agreeing on its rationale, though some suggest increased focus on hybrid threats and a bottom-up resilience approach. The support areas received 86.2% approval, with calls for digitisation, civil protection, and hybrid threat preparedness, among others. Nearly half (46.4%) would like to see additional areas, such as critical infrastructure protection, space-based data, urban flood management, and climate refugee support. The methods were deemed appropriate by 76%, with suggestions such as allowing experienced Higher Education Institutions to lead, enhancing civil protection, and incorporating hybrid threat mitigation and gender equality assessments. Key actors were seen as relevant by 88.5%, with recommendations to include Higher Education Institutions and Research and Technology Organisations (RTOs). Programme area specifics received 77.8% support, with some calls for flexibility in funding allocations and complementarity with external funds. Bilateral relations were widely supported (92%). Final remarks highlighted needs such as multilateral cooperation, investments in green-blue infrastructure, nuclear safety, and inclusivity.

4.10. Domestic and gender-based violence

The survey responses show strong support for the “Domestic and gender-based violence” programme area, with 97.4% agreeing on its rationale. The support areas were approved by 94.6%, though some suggest additional focus like contraception awareness. Over half (53.8%) see further needs, such as partnerships with non-governmental organisations (NGOs), training for police and judiciary, workplace sexual violence, and support for refugees and minorities. The methods were deemed appropriate by 83.8%, with calls for media engagement, law enforcement training, and specific support for LGBTQ+ victims. Key actors were seen as relevant by 78.9%, though some respondents suggest adding trade unions, employers, and expanding NGO roles. Programme area specifics received 91.9% support, with recommendations such as lifting funding limits and adding gender equality assessments. Bilateral relations were widely supported (97.1%). Final remarks emphasised democratic values, Istanbul Convention, and support for refugees.

4.11. Access to justice

The survey responses show strong support for the “Access to justice” programme area, with 85.7% agreeing on its rationale, though some recommend broadening the focus to transparency and the full justice chain. The support areas received 86.5% approval, with calls to include prosecution, and train law enforcement. Many (61.8%) see additional needs, such as child-friendly justice, gender-based violence training, and access to justice for marginalised communities. The methods were seen as appropriate by 74.3%, with suggestions like IT upgrades and expanded law enforcement training. Key

actors were supported by 66.7%, with recommendations to add prosecutors, law enforcement agencies, and children's ombudsmen, among others. Programme area specifics received 88.9% support, with some requests to expand scope and lift funding caps. Bilateral relations were widely supported (97.1%). Final remarks emphasised needs such as fast access to justice, and support for groups in vulnerable situations.

4.12. Correctional services

The survey responses show strong support for the "Correctional services" programme area, with 96.3% agreeing on its rationale. The support areas received 89.3% approval, with suggestions to include probation clients and improve conditions for detainees. Additional needs (indicated by 44.8% of respondents) include prison mentoring, restorative justice, and support for groups in vulnerable situations. The methods were seen as appropriate by 89.3%, with calls for pre-trial facility funding and support for substance abuse interventions. Key actors were supported by 86.2%, with recommendations to add prosecutors, judges, and civil society. Programme area specifics were approved by 92.6%, with some suggesting removing funding caps. Bilateral relations were widely supported (96.2%). Final remarks emphasised needs such as sustainable rehabilitation and community alternatives for refugee youth.

4.13. Serious and organised crime

The survey responses show strong support for the "Serious and organised crime" programme area, with 81% agreeing on its rationale, though some recommend focusing more on cybercrime, anti-corruption, and victim support. The support areas received 75% approval, with suggestions to align efforts across programme areas and enhance anti-corruption and victim support. Additional needs (indicated by 57.9% of respondents) include tackling tax fraud, cybercrime, trafficking, and refugee protections, among others. The methods were seen as appropriate by 61.9%, with some calls for victim-centred justice and digital tools for law enforcement. Key actors were supported by 85.7%, with recommendations such as to include anti-corruption agencies and empower non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Programme area specifics received 81% support, with suggestions for funding flexibility. Bilateral relations were widely endorsed (95.2%). Final remarks emphasise needs such as cross-border cooperation, forensic capabilities, anti-trafficking measures, and civil society involvement in monitoring.

4.14. Asylum, migration and integration

The survey responses show strong support for the "Asylum, migration and integration" programme area, with 92.3% agreeing on its rationale, though some suggest acknowledging recent conflicts' impact on migration. The support areas received 95% approval, with recommendations like child and gender sensitivity. Additional needs (indicated by 30% of respondents) include support for unaccompanied minors, safe work conditions, and grassroots involvement. The methods were deemed appropriate by 85%, with some suggestions for workplace discrimination case studies and migrant psychological support. Key actors were seen as relevant by 79.5%, with calls such as to include trade unions and grassroots groups. Programme area specifics were supported by 85%, with requests such as flexibility in cooperation requirements. Bilateral relations were widely endorsed (97.6%). Final remarks stressed needs such as socio-economic inclusion, combating discrimination, and better alignment with the European Union (EU) priorities.

4.15. Institutional cooperation and capacity building

The survey responses show strong support for the "Institutional cooperation and capacity building" programme area, with 97.7% agreeing on its rationale. The support areas were endorsed by 95.3%, though some suggest additional areas (25.6%), such as focus on anti-corruption, cooperation between developed and peripheral regions, and civil society organisation (CSO) involvement in national strategies. The methods were seen as appropriate by 97.5%, while the key actors were deemed relevant by 89.7%, with recommendation to include civil society as potential partners, reviewers, and

beneficiaries. Programme area specifics received 92.9% approval, with some requests for civil society organisations (CSO) consultations and flexibility in donor partnerships. Bilateral relations were widely supported (97.6%). Final remarks highlighted needs such as collaboration with non-governmental organisations (NGOs), transparency, anti-corruption, and training to combat discrimination and improve public sector skills.

4.16. Civil society fund

The survey responses show strong support for the “Civil society fund”, with 91.8% agreeing on its rationale, though some suggest a stronger emphasis on civil society's role in democratic participation and poverty reduction. The support areas, endorsed by 94.9%, received some recommendations to focus on rule of law, independent media, and climate action. Additional needs (indicated by 31.2% of respondents) include community development, mental health, anti-corruption measures, and independent media support. The methods were deemed appropriate by 92.6%, with calls to sustain non-governmental organisations financially and bolster European collaboration. Key actors were viewed as relevant by 89.6%, with suggestions to include grassroots and transnational organisations, among others. Fund specifics were supported by 88.5%, with recommendations like direct funding, better access for underserved areas, and sustained support for small civil society organisations (CSOs). Bilateral relations received 97.9% approval with suggestion to explicitly reference children. The highlighted fund’s focus areas include support for groups in vulnerable situations, climate resilience, civil society capacity, media freedom, human rights, mental health, rule of law, and youth engagement. Final remarks express needs such as simplified reporting, long-term funding, strengthened non-governmental organisations networks, and support for democratic values.

4.17. Fund for capacity building and cooperation with international partner organisations and institutions

The survey responses show strong support for the “Fund for capacity building and cooperation with international partner organisations and institutions”, with 98.7% agreeing on its rationale. The support areas were endorsed by 97.5%, with one suggestion to make the list non-exhaustive to allow flexibility. Additional needs (indicated by 35.4% of respondents) include local governance, combating populism, environmental protection, AI, and anti-corruption coalitions. The methods were deemed appropriate by 93.8%, with calls such as detailed cooperation guidelines, data collection, and expanded knowledge exchange, such as mentoring and peer learning. Key actors were seen as relevant by 91.1%, with recommendations to include banks, economic chambers, and broader civil society, among others. Fund specifics received 97.4% approval, with no additional suggestions. Bilateral relations were widely supported (94.7%), though some call for clarified tripartite cooperation and support for research capacity building. Final remarks stress needs such as non-governmental organisations support, youth empowerment, artificial intelligence, governance, and Ukraine support, along with measurable outcomes and cross-cutting priorities like gender equality and sustainability.

4.18. Fund for social dialogue and decent work (Norway Grants)

The survey responses show strong support for the “Fund for social dialogue and decent work (Norway Grants)”, with 97.7% agreeing on its rationale. The support areas were endorsed by 93.2%, with some suggestions to broaden social dialogue to include more than just trade unions and employers. Additional needs (indicated by 39.5% of respondents) include support for social enterprises, economic integration for disadvantaged groups, undeclared work, and workplace diversity. The methods were seen as appropriate by 90.9%, with calls for local best practices and stronger focus on anti-discrimination. Key actors were viewed as relevant by 90.9%, with recommendations to include social enterprises and worker groups in vulnerable situations. Fund specifics received 90.7% approval, with suggestions for infrastructure investments, support for climate and digital challenges, and focus on inclusion. Bilateral relations were supported by 93%, with a suggestion for more space for non-profit organisations and cooperation with foreign actors. Final remarks emphasised needs such as reducing bureaucracy, fostering partnerships, and supporting education and entrepreneurship for migrants and refugees.

5. Final remarks

The public consultation for the Blue Book of EEA and Norway Grants 2021-2028 demonstrated broad stakeholder support for the outlined programme areas and funds. Key insights reflect a strong endorsement for inclusive, adaptable frameworks that balance local priorities with regional and international goals.

Respondents across all programme areas emphasised the need for greater flexibility, especially in accessing funds, as well as the importance of integrating groups in vulnerable situations, enhancing civil society involvement, and promoting gender equality. Bilateral relations were also widely supported, with some suggestions to incorporate multilateral frameworks to increase impact.

Feedback also underscored specific needs in different programme areas and funds. Calls for strengthened digitalisation, sustainable practices, and support for marginalised communities were common themes. The recommendations from this consultation provide valuable direction for refining the Blue Book to meet diverse stakeholder needs and foster collaborative action across the EEA and Norway Grants framework.

Annexes

Annex 1. Survey questionnaire

Introduction

The EEA and Norway Grants are funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein, and Norway. The Grants have two goals – to contribute to a more equal Europe, both socially and economically – and to strengthen the relations between Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, and the 15 EU Member States (Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Cyprus, Estonia, Hungary, Greece, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal, Malta, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia).

The funding aligns with the EU's Cohesion Policy and has been distributed over several funding periods. The latest agreement with the EU, for the 2021-2028 Financial Mechanism, allocates 3.268 billion euro for this period.

The EU and the Donor States have also agreed that the country specific allocations shall promote three thematic priorities:

- European green transition.
- Democracy, rule of law and human rights.
- Social inclusion and resilience.

To contribute to these thematic priorities, **15 programme areas** and **three funds** have been identified. The following three funds have been established within the EEA and Norway Grants 2021-2028 funding period.

- Fund for Civil Society.
- Fund for Capacity building and Cooperation with International Partner Organisations and Institutions.
- Fund for Social Dialogue and Decent work (only Norway Grants).

These three funds will also contribute to the objectives and thematic priorities of the Grants. All three funds will be managed by the Donor States.

The Grants are based on the common values and principles of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and the respect for human rights including the rights of persons belonging to minorities. All programmes and activities funded by the Grants shall be in line with these common values and principles and implementation shall comply with the fundamental rights and obligations enshrined in relevant instruments and standards. Gender equality and digitalization are to be mainstreamed and form parts of all relevant programme areas.

As one of the two main goals of the EEA and Norway Grants is to increase cooperation and relations with the beneficiary states, partnerships between entities from the beneficiary states and their counterparts in Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway are a fundamental part of the Grants. In the last funding mechanism almost 40% of projects were carried out in partnership with Donor entities such as national directorates, universities, municipalities, hospitals, cultural institutions and artists, civil society organisations and businesses. Partnerships under the Grants provide a unique opportunity to address common European challenges. They enhance international experience and networks, support access to new knowledge, expertise, and facilities, foster innovation, and create forums for developing cooperation to be supported with other funding sources.

In this financial period, the EEA and Norway Grants include a contribution of €183 million to be made available for projects related to challenges stemming from the Russian invasion of Ukraine. The projects should meet identified needs in the Beneficiary States.

The consultation

The subject of this consultation, the draft 'Blue Book,' outlines the programme areas and funds identified for the EEA and Norway Grants 2021-2028. It describes the objectives and approaches for each programme area/fund and the areas eligible for support.

Stakeholders provide valuable insights into the needs of the intended beneficiaries and their input also supports alignment with the priorities and the experiences of those likely to manage the funds.

Stakeholders are invited to participate in this consultation on the draft 'Blue Book' and provide input on elements prior to its final publication until 18 October (EOD). The opportunity to provide input is open to all interested parties.

Structure of the consultation

1. Questions about you and your organisation for us to understand who is responding to this consultation.
2. Useful information before you start regarding the programme areas/funds.
3. Your comment on the programme areas and funds.
4. Option to provide more general comments.

Be advised that only comments in English will be taken into account.

(*A list of organisations participating in the consultation will be published, as well as a summary of the results of the consultation. Private contributions will not be published but will be subject to the public access policies of the donor states and the Financial Mechanism Office. You can read more about our privacy policy* here).

Should you have any questions about this consultation, please contact Bluebookconsultation@efta.int.

Identification questions

We will now ask you a few questions to better understand who is responding. This will help us to identify patterns in the feedback we receive and allow us to contact you if we need clarification on your suggestions.

What organisation are you representing?

- Official name of the organisation: [Write-in]
- English name of the organisation: [Write-in]
- The organisation's website: [Write-in]
- What is your title / position in the organisation? [Write-in]
- [For private individuals only:] We understand that you are responding in a personal capacity. However, it would be helpful for us to understand your interest in the EEA and Norway Grants. If applicable, please mention the organisation and/or title / position related to your interest in the EEA and Norway Grants [Write-in]
- What is your name (first name and family name)? [Write-in]
- Country: [alphabetical list of Donor and beneficiary states, followed by alphabetical listing of the remaining EU Member States, followed by: Belarus, Moldova, Russian Federation, Switzerland, Ukraine, other country, no country (international organisation)]

[List of countries]

Donor and beneficiary states:

- Bulgaria
- Croatia
- Cyprus
- Czech Republic
- Estonia
- Greece
- Hungary
- Iceland
- Latvia
- Liechtenstein
- Lithuania
- Malta
- Norway
- Poland
- Portugal
- Romania
- Slovakia
- Slovenia

Other EU Member States:

- Austria
- Belgium
- Denmark
- Finland

- France
- Germany
- Ireland
- Italy
- Luxembourg
- Netherlands
- Spain
- Sweden

Others:

- Belarus
- Moldova
- Russian Federation
- Switzerland
- Ukraine
- Other country
- No country (international organisation)

Please indicate what type of organisation this is:

- Central government ministry or national public agency
- Regional government or regional public agency
- Local government entity
- Commercial enterprise
- Non-governmental organisation
- International organisation or institution
- Other (describe) [Write-in]

[multiple answers possible] **What role, if any, did you / your organisation play in the funding period 2014-2021 of the EEA and Norway Grants:**

- National Focal Point
- Programme Operator
- Directly contracted Fund Operator
- Project Promoter
- Donor Programme Partner
- Project partner from a beneficiary state
- Project partner from a donor state
- Other (describe) [Write-in]

Information on the consultation

We will now ask for your comments to the descriptions of the programme areas and funds outlined in the draft Blue Book. Before you proceed, please consider the following:

- The priorities and the names of the programme areas and funds are not subject to change as they have been agreed between the Donors and the European Union.
- The objective of each programme area has been carefully drafted to highlight the intent of the programme area and is therefore not subject to change.
- Each EEA and Norway Grants programme must contribute to the objective of one programme area.
- Programmes can either focus on a single programme area or combine multiple areas of support from several programme areas in a single programme, provided that the projects in the programme collectively contribute to the objective of one programme area.

Digital version of the draft Blue Book

The content provided is for consultation purposes only. The provided draft cannot be downloaded or copied in any way.

Please select the programme area and/or fund you wish to comment on from this list. You will have the opportunity to comment on multiple programme areas and/or funds if desired.

[List of programme areas and funds]

Programme areas:

- Green transition
- Green business and innovation
- Research and innovation
- Education, training and youth employment
- Culture
- Local development, good governance and inclusion
- Roma inclusion and empowerment
- Public health
- Disaster prevention and preparedness
- Domestic and gender-based violence
- Access to justice
- Correctional services
- Serious and organised crime
- Asylum, migration and integration
- Institutional cooperation and capacity building
- Funds:
- Civil society fund
- Fund for capacity building and cooperation with international partner organisations and institutions
- Fund for social dialogue and decent work (Norway Grants)

Questions to each of the programme area and funds

Rationale for the support

Sets out the reasoning of why support is relevant.

Q1. Does the described rationale reflect the development(s) in the EEA Grants states for this programme area/fund?

- Yes
- No

[Question is shown only to respondents who selected 'No' in the previous question] **Please explain:**

- [Write-in]

Areas of support

Describes the thematic subcomponents eligible for funding and represents a strategic direction. Not all areas need to be supported in each programme. The list is exhaustive.

Q2.1. Do the proposed areas of support enable the achievement of programme area/fund objective?

- Yes
- No

[Question is shown only to respondents who selected 'No' in the previous question] **Please explain:**

- [Write-in]

Q2.2. Are there any additional areas of support that could help reach the programme area/fund objective in your country of interest?

- Yes
- No

[Question is shown only to respondents who selected 'Yes' in the previous question] **Please explain:**

- [Write-in]

How the objectives will be addressed

Describes methods and type of activities to be supported to reach the programme area/fund objective.

Q3. Are the proposed methods and type of activities appropriate to achieve the programme area/fund objective?

- Yes
- No

[Question is shown only to respondents who selected 'No' in the previous question] **Please explain:**

- [Write-in]

Key actors and beneficiaries

Describes the main key actors and beneficiaries to reach the objective. Specific target groups/areas are also identified.

Q4. Are the actors and beneficiaries listed, the most relevant ones to achieve the programme area/fund objective, within the country / thematic context?

- Yes
- No

[Question is shown only to respondents who selected 'No' in the previous question] **Please explain:**

- [Write-in]

Programme area/fund specifics

Sets out binding conditions within the programme area/fund, often related to bilateral cooperation or requirements on infrastructure investments.

Q5. Do the conditions listed allow for addressing relevant development challenges or opportunities in the country of your interest?

- Yes
- No

[Question is shown only to respondents who selected 'No' in the previous question] **Please explain:**

- [Write-in]

Bilateral relations

Strengthening bilateral relations is one of the two overall objectives of the EEA and Norway Grants. Please consider the scope of bilateral partnerships and opportunities to strengthen relations in this programme area/fund.

Q6. Are the areas of support relevant for cooperation with entities from the donor states in this programme area/fund?

- Yes
- No

[Question is shown only to respondents who selected 'No' in the previous question] **Please explain:**

- [Write-in]

Especially for the Civil Society Fund

The areas of support for the Civil Society Fund are common across all 15 beneficiary states, but some topics may be country specific.

Q7. *[Question is shown only to respondents who selected 'Civil Society Fund' in the beginning of the survey]* **Could you suggest any particular focus areas in your country that align with these support areas but warrant special attention? Please provide your rationale.**

- [Write-in]

Q8. Should you have any additional comments to this programme area/fund in general, please provide them here.

- [Write-in]

Thank You!

We wish to thank you for providing your comments and suggestions to the draft Blue Book of the EEA and Norway Grants 2021-2028. The comments will be reviewed, and a summary of the results and will be published on our **website**. If you wish to receive news about EEA and Norway Grants in the future, consider subscribing to our newsletter by following this **link**.

Annex 2. Programme area/Fund feedback overview

Green transition

Rationale of the support
The majority of respondents (97.3% or 71 of 73) think that the described rationale reflects the development in the EEA Grants countries for this programme area. One comment received suggests that rationale “could emphasize the role of ocean-based biotechnologies, such as fish skin products, more prominently in the blue economy context”.
Areas of the support
Most respondents (92.9% or 65 of 70) agree that the proposed areas of support enable the achievement of the programme area objective. Nevertheless, a few comments received suggest also adding emphasis on environmental protection, maritime activities, and circular economy models to strengthen the impact. Furthermore, 54.3% of respondents (38 of 70) indicated that there could be additional areas of support that could help reach the programme area objective in their country of interest. Key areas include environmental education, enhanced sustainable energy initiatives like energy storage, and integrating circular economy practices, particularly in waste management. Some respondents also highlighted the importance of involving local institutions and fostering public awareness to align green transition efforts with community needs.
How the objectives will be addressed
Most respondents (87.9% or 58 of 66) found the proposed methods and activities appropriate for achieving the programme area objective. Among those who disagreed, comments suggested that the programme area should allow more time for collaboration with major institutions, enhance the involvement of higher education institutions (HEIs), and support both innovation and scaling of proven green technologies. Additional suggestions included conducting gender equality assessments and removing restrictions on small-scale infrastructure projects to better meet local community needs.
Key actors and beneficiaries
Out of the 68 respondents who answered the question, 83.8% (57) agreed on the relevance of the listed actors and beneficiaries for achieving the programme area objective. However, some comments suggested elevating civil society organisations (CSOs) to main actors due to their role in mobilising citizens and advancing green initiatives, and allowing research institutions a more proactive role in project initiation. Additionally, some proposed including informal civil society groups to enhance community engagement in the green transition.
PA specifics
Most respondents (90.6% or 58 of 64) agreed that the listed conditions address relevant development challenges or opportunities in their country of interest. Comments from those who disagreed suggested enhancing flexibility by allowing Higher Education Institutions and research bodies to proactively propose solutions, reflecting their role in addressing complex environmental challenges. Additional feedback recommended more inclusive planning for energy infrastructure projects, more examples of gender equality measures, and relaxed restrictions on soft measures, particularly for small community-based infrastructure projects.
Bilateral relations
Of the 67 respondents, 94% (63) found the areas of support relevant for cooperation with entities from the donor states. From those who disagreed, one comment noted that some organisations in donor states may lack interest in cooperation due to system differences and resource constraints while another comment suggested increasing support for multinational projects.
Final remarks
In the final remarks, common themes among the comments received included the need for stronger support in waste management education for local leaders, broader partnerships with entities like schools and local governments, and enhanced roles for CSOs to foster sustainable transitions. Respondents also suggested expanding focus areas to include innovative green technologies, carbon capture, flood resilience, and climate-related migration. Calls for harmonised program rules and clearer objectives for program impact were also noted.

Green business and innovation

Rationale of the support

The majority of respondents (87.2% or 34 of 39) think that the rationale described reflects the development of the EEA Grants countries in this programme area. The comments received suggests that rationale could recognise the role of research institutions and Higher Education Institutions, emphasise soft measures like fostering appropriate attitudes, and address pollution alongside climate change for a comprehensive view.

Areas of the support

Most respondents (92.5% or 37 of 40) agree that the proposed areas of support enable the achievement of the programme area objective. Nevertheless, a few comments received suggested emphasising digital transition and digitalisation in the areas of support, and incorporate donor states' strategic directions, such as Norway's priorities of the Green Alliance.

Furthermore, 44.7% of respondents (17 of 38) indicated that there could be additional areas of support that could help reach the programme area objective in their country of interest. Key areas include prioritising digital transformation and automation, promoting cross-cluster cooperation, flood resilience, and public education. Capacity building for local organisations, public awareness campaigns, and partnerships with government and private sectors are vital. Supporting collaboration between enterprises and research institutions, ESG governance and AI data collection, gender equality measures, social enterprises, and knowledge transfer can further enhance sustainable development and innovation.

How the objectives will be addressed

Most respondents (88.9% or 32 of 36) found the proposed methods and activities appropriate for achieving the programme area objective. Among those who disagreed, comments suggested that the programme area could benefit from stronger research partnerships to connect academia with business. In addition, expanding the target to "circular bioeconomy" would support broader sustainability goals. Lastly, gender equality assessments with relevant indicators are also recommended.

Key actors and beneficiaries

Out of the 37 respondents who answered the question, 75.7% (28) agreed on the relevance of the listed actors and beneficiaries for achieving the programme area objective. However, some comments suggested emphasising Higher Education Institutions and research organisations as main actors in fostering innovation and supporting the green transition. Non-profit organisations and social enterprises should also be recognised for their capacity to drive social impact and innovation.

PA specifics

Most respondents (86.5% or 32 of 37) agreed that the listed conditions address relevant development challenges or opportunities in their country of interest. Comments from those who disagreed suggested explicitly including startups, and emphasising partnerships with applied research institutions. In addition, the clause prioritising projects with bilateral partnerships may need reconsideration, as such relationships are often contractual rather than true partnerships.

Bilateral relations

Of the 37 respondents, 89.2% (33) found the areas of support relevant for cooperation with entities from the donor states. From those who disagreed, it was suggested that multinational projects would be more effective than just bilateral partnerships. In addition, emphasis should be placed on leveraging donor states' strong Higher Education Institutions for cross-border collaboration and joint initiatives. Including knowledge transfer on Sustainability Life Cycle Assessment and related business models would also enhance the programme's relevance and impact.

Final remarks

In the final remarks, common themes among the comments received included enhancing bilateral cooperation with early feasibility studies and later-stage green technology transfers, replacing "green" with "circular," and involving political actors in local waste management. Strengthening partnerships with Higher Education Institutions, expanding the role of business associations, and ensuring gender mainstreaming and harmonised participation rules were recommended. Leveraging public procurement to drive innovation and prioritising flood resilience infrastructure were also highlighted.

Research and innovation

Rationale of the support

The majority of respondents (92.6% or 50 of 54) think that the rationale described reflects the development of the EEA Grants countries in this programme area. The comments received suggest that rationale could include direct support for research and innovation aimed at tackling the root causes of these challenges, such as environmental impacts and technological advancements. Suggestions include expanding the focus to cover specific areas such as environmental climate change-related research, early-warning systems, and Earth System Models, alongside recognising opportunities in fields like marine biotechnology to support the green transition.

Areas of the support

Most respondents (86.8% or 46 of 53) agree that the proposed areas of support enable the achievement of the programme area objective. Nevertheless, recommendations received include integrating environmental research and innovation, expanding citizen engagement in science, promoting international cooperation through multilateral network funding, supporting research infrastructure and FAIR data, and incorporating bioengineering and biotechnology for sustainable healthcare solutions to enhance the programme's effectiveness and sustainability.

Furthermore, half of respondents (26 of 52) indicated that there could be additional areas of support that could help reach the programme area objective in their country of interest. Key areas include funding for early-stage start-ups, basic and interdisciplinary research, sustainable development of universities, and strategic technologies like AI, data science, and cybersecurity. Emphasis is also placed on international cooperation, gender equality, open science with FAIR data, bioinformatics, marine bio-discovery, anti-discrimination education, and NGO-led research for human rights and corporate sustainability.

How the objectives will be addressed

Many respondents (70.6% or 36 of 51) found the proposed methods and activities appropriate for achieving the programme area objective. Among those who disagreed, comments suggested that proposed methods should be broadened to enhance collaboration across research stages, support interdisciplinary and market-oriented research, and include social innovation. Emphasis on environmental research, infrastructure investment, and expanded roles beyond research administrators is recommended. Flexible thematic focus and stronger international cooperation are also necessary to address emerging challenges effectively.

Key actors and beneficiaries

Out of the 51 respondents who answered the question, 70.6% (36) agreed on the relevance of the listed actors and beneficiaries for achieving the programme area objective. However, received comments suggested expanding the list of actors to include NGOs, non-profits, trade unions, employers, public authorities, and public companies. Universities, research teams, RTOs, and applied research institutions should also be highlighted. In addition, including bioengineering centres and biotech firms is suggested to enhance programme outcomes.

PA specifics

Most respondents (85.7% or 42 of 49) agreed that the listed conditions address relevant development challenges or opportunities in their country of interest. Comments from those who disagreed suggested the need for stronger emphasis on education, the establishment of dedicated centres like an EEA & Norway Grants Centre in Hungary, more inclusive partnerships involving RTOs and universities, increased opportunities for multilateral cooperation, and the addition of gender equality requirements in research and innovation.

Bilateral relations

Of the 51 respondents, 92.2% (47) found the areas of support relevant for cooperation with entities from the donor states. From those who disagreed, one comment noted that the areas of support are somewhat limited for donor state entities, as they “should also include cooperation between research units (RTO, universities etc.) from the beneficiary state”. Additionally, a lack of opportunities for multilateral cooperation was noted in another response.

Final remarks

In the final remarks, common themes among the comments received included support for start-ups, better researcher compensation, fostering experienced-youth collaboration, and practical citizen engagement. Comments emphasised gender equality, research security, enhanced multilateral and transnational partnerships, simplified administration, EU programme synergies, just transitions, human rights in supply chains, and piloting collaborative innovation projects without high-level hardware investments to boost underperforming regions.

Education, training and youth employment

Rationale of the support

The majority of respondents (98% or 96 of 98) think that the rationale described reflects the development of the EEA Grants countries in this programme area. One comment received suggests that rationale could address the role of NGOs rather than just public/private schools in innovation in the education and long life learning.

Areas of the support

Most respondents (94.8% or 92 of 97) agree that the proposed areas of support enable the achievement of the programme area objective. Nevertheless, the comments received suggest also adding emphasis on ecosystemic thinking, democracy and civic education, e-learning solutions, and transnational cooperation for full achievement of objective.

Furthermore, 47.4% of respondents (45 of 95) indicated that there could be additional areas of support that could help reach the programme area objective in their country of interest. Key areas include developing educational ecosystems, fostering civil society, supporting comprehensive Earth observation and AI education, enhancing civic and democratic education, expanding non-formal training and volunteer support, facilitating access to education for groups in vulnerable situations, strengthening mental health and safeguarding policies, and ensuring gender equality and job integration measures for minorities and marginalised groups.

How the objectives will be addressed

Most respondents (88.4% or 84 of 95) found the proposed methods and activities appropriate for achieving the programme area objective. Among those who disagreed, comments suggested incorporating ecosystemic thinking, supporting child-led activities, extending capacity building to non-academic staff, financing shared e-learning platforms, including transnational exchanges, and engaging NGOs/CSOs in programme development. Recommendations also included adding museum educators as participants, conducting gender equality assessments, and addressing inequalities for minorities such as Roma and LGBTQ communities.

Key actors and beneficiaries

Out of the 94 respondents who answered the question, 78.7% (74) agreed on the relevance of the listed actors and beneficiaries for achieving the programme area objective. However, some comments highlighted the need to include NGOs/CSOs, labour market institutions, universities, youth workers as key actors and beneficiaries due to their significant role in education, youth support, and policymaking. Expanding collaboration to include policy bodies and companies involved in lifelong learning was also suggested.

PA specifics

Most respondents (92.4% or 85 of 92) agreed that the listed conditions address relevant development challenges or opportunities in their country of interest. Comments from those who disagreed suggested stronger emphasis on partnerships with CSOs, conditions ensuring involvement of key actors in funded infrastructure projects, clearer guidance on institutional cooperation and capacity building, fairer financing structures to cover actual staff costs, and budget flexibility for extraordinary activities. Additionally, promoting inclusion, diversity, gender equality, and LGBTQ rights was recommended as a necessary condition.

Bilateral relations

Of the 92 respondents, 98.9% (91) found the areas of support relevant for cooperation with entities from the donor states. The respondent who disagreed with this statement did not provide an explanation.

Final remarks

In the final remarks, common themes among the comments received included the need to integrate NGOs and ecosystem-based approaches, ensure inclusive education that addresses the needs of marginalised and at-risk youth, support gender equality, and highlight the importance of non-formal education, youth work, and civic engagement. Emphasis was also placed on expanding support for digital learning and vocational training, ensuring financial and practical accessibility, and fostering international and multilateral partnerships. Additionally, a focus on enhancing mental health support, addressing educational gaps for specific groups such as refugee and autism spectrum disorder (ASD) children, and promoting active citizenship through education and training were strongly advocated.

Culture

Rationale of the support

The majority of respondents (85.7% or 36 of 42) think that the rationale described reflects the development of the EEA Grants countries in this programme area. The few comments received stress the need to include cultural infrastructure, sports for sustainable development and addressing inequalities, intergenerational fairness, and minority rights, including Roma and LGBTQ, to foster social cohesion and democratic resilience.

Areas of the support

Most respondents (90.2% or 37 of 41) agree that the proposed areas of support enable the achievement of the programme area objective. Nevertheless, a few comments received suggest also adding emphasis on accessibility and sustainability of culture, cultural expression and integration through sports facilities to better achieve the programme objectives.

Furthermore, half of respondents (20 of 40) indicated that there could be additional areas of support that could help reach the programme area objective in their country of interest. Key areas include innovative cultural products for international competitiveness, community engagement, cultural infrastructure, cultural integration for refugees, mental health support, gender equality initiatives, sustainable education, and expanded accessibility for smaller organisations, as well as promoting diversity and minority cultures, such as Roma and LGBTQ communities.

How the objectives will be addressed

Most respondents (78.6% or 33 of 42) found the proposed methods and activities appropriate for achieving the programme area objective. Among those who disagreed, comments suggested revisions such as replacing “minorities” with “persons from different ethnic groups” for constitutional accuracy in certain countries, including “cultural infrastructure” to broaden programme impact, and clarifying the feasibility of climate change mitigation measures in cultural heritage contexts. Suggestions also included adding gender equality assessments, sports, intergenerational fairness, and disabled persons as target groups, as well as enhancing cultural participation and self-expression for underrepresented communities like Roma and LGBTQ.

Key actors and beneficiaries

Out of the 41 respondents who answered the question, 82.9% (34) agreed on the relevance of the listed actors and beneficiaries for achieving the programme area objective. However, some comments suggested including educational institutions, social enterprises, sports organisations, and scientific research institutions. Additionally, there was a call for greater emphasis on support for NGOs and including diverse social and age groups as beneficiaries to enhance inclusivity and sustainability.

PA specifics

Most respondents (81% or 34 of 42) agreed that the listed conditions address relevant development challenges or opportunities in their country of interest. Comments from those who disagreed highlighted that certain conditions create excessive administrative burdens, such as co-financing requirements, low cost limits, and specific funding allocations, potentially hindering development. They recommended greater flexibility, including removing strict allocations for the independent cultural sector and adjusting climate change mitigation measures due to legal constraints in cultural heritage protection. Additionally, they suggested infrastructure investments be optional unless supporting indirect soft measures, and proposed funding to strengthen minority cultural sectors, including Roma and LGBTQ.

Bilateral relations

Of the 42 respondents, 97.6% (41) found the areas of support relevant for cooperation with entities from the donor states. The respondent who disagreed with this statement did not provide an explanation.

Final remarks

In the final remarks, common themes among the comments received included appreciation for the programme’s support for capacity building and recognition of culture as a driver for sustainable development. Respondents highlighted the need to tailor approaches to local cultural contexts, reduce bureaucracy, and incorporate a gender perspective throughout all areas. Additional focus was suggested on youth inclusion, social cohesion, and the integration of ecological education and sustainable development. Proposals included enhancing accessibility for smaller organisations, promoting refugee cultural initiatives, and supporting green adaptations of cultural infrastructure to align with climate change measures.

Local development, good governance and inclusion

Rationale of the support

The majority of respondents (90.6% or 58 of 64) think that the rationale described reflects the development of the EEA Grants countries in this programme area. However, some respondents suggest adjustments, such as reducing overlap with green transition area, incorporating "innovative and creative communities", and strengthening the emphasis on human rights and recent geopolitical developments impacting migration patterns.

Areas of the support

Most respondents (95.2% or 59 of 62) agree that the proposed areas of support enable the achievement of the programme area objective. Nevertheless, a couple of comments received suggest broadening the areas of support to include “Good governance and rule of law", as well as adding local investments in resilience and social development to better align with the programme’s objectives on fostering resilience in local development.

Furthermore, 47.6% of respondents (30 of 63) indicated that there could be additional areas of support that could help reach the programme area objective in their country of interest. Key areas include strengthening local democracy and rule of law, civil oversight to counter corruption, building capacities for local governance, and tailored support for minority and groups in vulnerable situations. Respondents also highlighted social entrepreneurship, grassroots organisations, inclusion of LGBTQIA issues, gender equality measures, and resilience in local investments. Additional areas suggested include local investments in resilience and social development, and specific programmes for integrating refugees and addressing labour shortages.

How the objectives will be addressed

Most respondents (87.1% or 54 of 62) found the proposed methods and activities appropriate for achieving the programme area objective. Among those who disagreed, comments suggested a stronger focus on grassroots level and real conditions on the ground. Some proposed adding research projects and comparative studies to map developmental paths and regional disparities, as well as promoting intersectional approaches. Some respondents recommended more support for rural social enterprises and systemic solutions, including gender equality assessments and a focus on good governance, gender equality, and human rights, including LGBTQ rights.

Key actors and beneficiaries

Out of the 62 respondents who answered the question, 79% (49) agreed on the relevance of the listed actors and beneficiaries for achieving the programme area objective. However, some suggested including social entrepreneurs, research institutions, locally public bodies, and informal networks of civil society groups, especially grassroots organisations, trade unions, and those supporting groups of vulnerable populations like Roma, LGBTQ, and undocumented migrants.

PA specifics

Most respondents (88.5% or 54 of 61) agreed that the listed conditions address relevant development challenges or opportunities in their country of interest. Comments from those who disagreed suggested making public participation and civil society cooperation mandatory, adding conditions to address systemic discrimination of minorities (including Roma and LGBTQ). Some proposed flexibility in donor cooperation and local governance requirements, as well as reconsidering the mandatory gender perspective.

Bilateral relations

Of the 59 respondents, 98.3% (58) found the areas of support relevant for cooperation with entities from the donor states. The respondent who disagreed with this statement did not provide an explanation.

Final remarks

In the final remarks, common themes among the comments received included the need for sustained support for social enterprises beyond the startup phase, stronger focus on evaluation in programming, and inclusion of smart city initiatives. Respondents highlighted the importance of inclusive development, especially for groups in vulnerable situations, as well as enhancing local governance capacities in areas like evidence-informed policy-making and public service delivery. Comments also emphasised cooperation with civil society, services for refugees, open local government, and sustainable development.

Roma inclusion and empowerment

Rationale of the support

The majority of respondents (94.9% or 37 of 39) think that the rationale described reflects the development of the EEA Grants countries in this programme area. One comment received suggests that national Roma strategies should integrate across all sectoral strategies and plans, ensuring Roma inclusion is mainstreamed, adequately funded, and prioritised as a key measure for inclusive education and employment.

Areas of the support

Most respondents (86.5% or 32 of 37) agree that the proposed areas of support enable the achievement of the programme area objective. Nevertheless, a few comments received suggest the need for greater focus on the Roma minority in Hungary, emphasising inclusion in education, employment, and access to basic needs, alongside calls for project financing for infrastructure, such as Roma cultural centres, and strategies to improve school attendance among Roma children in rural areas.

Furthermore, 51.4% of respondents (19 of 37) indicated that there could be additional areas of support that could help reach the programme area objective in their country of interest. Key areas include enhancing legal protections and law enforcement training to combat institutional discrimination, expanding inclusive education efforts, addressing healthcare access barriers, and increasing community engagement through media campaigns and stakeholder collaboration.

How the objectives will be addressed

Most respondents (88.9% or 32 of 36) found the proposed methods and activities appropriate for achieving the programme area objective. Among those who disagreed, comments suggested enhancing cross-border collaboration, including labour market actors, and implementing targeted interventions to address homophobia and transphobia, and antigypsyism within Roma and LGBTQ communities.

Key actors and beneficiaries

Out of the 36 respondents who answered the question, 83.3% (30) agreed on the relevance of the listed actors and beneficiaries for achieving the programme area objective. However, some comments suggested expanding the list to include active citizens, entrepreneurs, national public authorities, training institutions, and law enforcement agencies, as well as a focus on grassroots organisations and targeting both Roma and non-Roma populations, including Roma LGBTQ groups.

PA specifics

Most respondents (91.2% or 31 of 34) agreed that the listed conditions address relevant development challenges or opportunities in their country of interest. Comments from those who disagreed suggested incorporating capacity-building measures for national authorities, including training for police officers to prevent human rights violations in Roma communities.

Bilateral relations

Of the 35 respondents, 97.1% (34) found the areas of support relevant for cooperation with entities from the donor states. The respondent who disagreed with this statement did not provide an explanation.

Final remarks

In the final remarks, common themes among the comments received included the importance of designing programs with both short- and long-term perspectives, applying a gender perspective across all areas, and focusing on Roma safety and trust-building with law enforcement. Additional suggestions emphasised strengthening Roma-led and grassroots organisations and addressing specific challenges in Roma education and inclusion.

Public health

Rationale of the support

The majority of respondents (85% or 34 of 40) think that the rationale described reflects the development of the EEA Grants countries in this programme area. However, some respondents recommended mandatory vaccination across age groups and expanded health information efforts. Concerns about healthcare access, corruption, and quality disparities between public and private hospitals were noted. Additionally, respondents suggested including disadvantaged groups, such as LGBTQ, and placing greater emphasis on sustainable healthcare innovations in areas like regenerative medicine and wound care.

Areas of the support

Most respondents (82.5% or 33 of 40) agree that the proposed areas of support enable the achievement of the programme area objective. Nevertheless, some comments suggest expanding support for healthcare and digital health. Flexibility was recommended to address diverse local needs, with specific mention of tackling discrimination against disadvantaged groups. Additionally, some respondents advocated for broadening support to include innovative solutions, like natural approaches to antimicrobial resistance (AMR).

Furthermore, many respondents (71.8% or 28 of 39) indicated that there could be additional areas of support that could help reach the programme area objective in their country of interest. Key areas include annual health education programmes in schools, particularly on topics such as sexual education and nutrition, and better integration of social and health services to support demographic changes. There is a need for expanded mental health support, especially in workplaces and child psychiatry. Respondents also highlighted digital health, health literacy, holistic and preventive health approaches, comprehensive care for refugees, and gender-specific healthcare measures. Increased access to services for disadvantaged groups, including LGBTQ individuals, and infrastructural investments for groups in vulnerable situations were also recommended.

How the objectives will be addressed

Most respondents (81.1% or 30 of 37) found the proposed methods and activities appropriate for achieving the programme area objective. Among those who disagreed, comments suggested incorporating comparative and case studies, and workplace health analyses. Media engagement was highlighted as crucial for informing population on health topics. Additionally, respondents recommended gender equality assessments with specific indicators, greater involvement of self-advocating patient groups in policy-making, and strengthened partnerships between healthcare institutions and biotech firms for advanced therapies.

Key actors and beneficiaries

Out of the 38 respondents who answered the question, 78.9% (30) agreed on the relevance of the listed actors and beneficiaries for achieving the programme area objective. However, some comments suggested including additional actors such as trade unions, employers, labour market institutions, local school and kindergarten teachers, hospitals. Respondents also recommended involving the medical device companies specialising in natural solutions, and permitting informal groups and civil society networks as beneficiaries to enhance collaboration and impact.

PA specifics

Most respondents (82.9% or 29 of 35) agreed that the listed conditions address relevant development challenges or opportunities in their country of interest. Comments from those who disagreed suggested deleting the maximum funding limit for investments and reconsidering the mandatory focus on women's health. Additionally, respondents recommended explicitly including cisgender and transgender women in relevant programmes and placing greater emphasis on encouraging market adoption of innovative healthcare solutions to strengthen public health resilience.

Bilateral relations

Of the 36 respondents, 94.4% (34) found the areas of support relevant for cooperation with entities from the donor states. However, one respondent noted that budgets are often insufficient in a donor state (e.g., Norway) as most funding is allocated to the main applicant.

Final remarks

In the final remarks, common themes among the comments received included the need for grants for young doctors, workplace health initiatives, continued tuberculosis investment, and improved integration of health and social services. Respondents emphasised corruption prevention, support for uninsured individuals, and applying gender equality across all areas. Suggestions included applying "Health in All Policies" approach, harmonised rules for donor participation, and enhanced healthcare access for refugees, including mental health support. Additionally, respondents highlighted private sector collaboration to drive healthcare innovation and resilience, particularly through biotech partnerships.

Disaster prevention and preparedness

Rationale of the support

The majority of respondents (90% or 27 of 30) think that the rationale described reflects the development of the EEA Grants countries in this programme area. One comment received suggested increased focus on resilience against hybrid threats, particularly foreign information manipulation and migration-related risks, as well as recognising a bottom-up approach to strengthening state resilience at all levels of public administration.

Areas of the support

Most respondents (86.2% or 25 of 29) agree that the proposed areas of support enable the achievement of the programme area objective. Nevertheless, a few comments received suggest additional emphasis on digitisation to enhance disaster prevention, particularly through real-time control and monitoring systems for urban drainage to manage flooding and pollution risks, and a focus on civil protection and preparedness to address military and hybrid threats amidst current geopolitical tensions.

Furthermore, 46.4% of respondents (13 of 28) indicated that there could be additional areas of support that could help reach the programme area objective in their country of interest. Key areas include capacity-building initiatives for critical infrastructure protection, civil defence, and emergency response, especially for hybrid threats and extreme natural events; integration of space-based data and partnerships for innovation in disaster preparedness; gender-sensitive and disability-inclusive disaster risk management; urban drainage solutions for flood control; and climate refugees.

How the objectives will be addressed

Most respondents (76% or 19 of 25) found the proposed methods and activities appropriate for achieving the programme area objective. Among those who disagreed, comments suggested allowing higher education institutions (HEIs) to lead where they have pre-existing experience, adding measures to strengthen civil protection, integrating hybrid threat mitigation such as disinformation and migration-related risks, supporting emergency service competencies through training and exchanges, and incorporating gender equality assessments.

Key actors and beneficiaries

Out of the 26 respondents who answered the question, 88.5% (23) agreed on the relevance of the listed actors and beneficiaries for achieving the programme area objective. However, a couple of comments suggested explicitly including Higher Education Institutions and Research and Technology Organisations (RTOs) as key actors, as they could offer research-driven solutions, enhance local partnerships, and contribute significantly to competence and capacity building.

PA specifics

Most respondents (77.8% or 21 of 27) agreed that the listed conditions address relevant development challenges or opportunities in their country of interest. Comments from those who disagreed suggested the inclusion of more flexibility in funding ratios between soft and hard measures, such as infrastructure investments. Additional recommendations included ensuring complementarity with external funds (such as AMIF, IBM, ISF), and flexibility in condition of donor and beneficiary state cooperation.

Bilateral relations

Of the 25 respondents, 92% (23) found the areas of support relevant for cooperation with entities from the donor states. The two respondents who disagreed with this statement did not provide an explanation.

Final remarks

In the final remarks, common themes among the comments received included the importance of enhancing disaster resilience through multi-sectoral cooperation, especially by involving Higher Education Institutions, youth organisations, and healthcare systems. Respondents highlighted the need for investments in green-blue infrastructure, inclusion of nuclear safety and security measures. Additional emphasis was placed on addressing climate-related risks, reinforcing gender and disability inclusivity in disaster planning, and ensuring harmonised participation rules to streamline collaboration across donor and beneficiary states.

Domestic and gender-based violence

Rationale of the support

The majority of respondents (97.4% or 37 of 38) think that the rationale described reflects the development of the EEA Grants countries in this programme area. The respondent who disagreed with this statement did not provide an explanation.

Areas of the support

Most respondents (94.6% or 35 of 37) agree that the proposed areas of support enable the achievement of the programme area objective. Nevertheless, one comment received suggests that further emphasis could be placed on information campaigns about contraception.

Furthermore, 53.8% of respondents (21 of 39) indicated that there could be additional areas of support that could help reach the programme area objective in their country of interest. Key areas include strengthening partnerships with local NGOs, targeted training for police and judicial officials, expanded focus on workplace sexual violence, and broader awareness campaigns. Other suggested areas include mental health and childcare support, protections for groups in vulnerable situations (e.g., refugees, minorities), and addressing human trafficking as a gendered issue.

How the objectives will be addressed

Most respondents (83.8% or 31 of 37) found the proposed methods and activities appropriate for achieving the programme area objective. Among those who disagreed, comments suggested increased involvement of local media, deeper evaluations of legislative implementation, and use of gender equality assessments. Additionally, respondents highlighted the need for gender-sensitive, victim-centred training for law enforcement and suggested including specific support for LGBTQ+ people facing violence.

Key actors and beneficiaries

Out of the 38 respondents who answered the question, 78.9% (30) agreed on the relevance of the listed actors and beneficiaries for achieving the programme area objective. However, some comments suggested expanding the role of trade unions, employers, labour market institutions, and universities. Respondents also proposed allowing NGOs to act as project promoters, involving perpetrators in prevention efforts, and broadening beneficiaries to include women and girls in vulnerable situations, LGBTQ+ individuals facing intersecting forms of discrimination, and informal civil society networks.

PA specifics

Most respondents (91.9% or 34 of 37) agreed that the listed conditions address relevant development challenges or opportunities in their country of interest. Comments from those who disagreed suggested removing the condition that sets a maximum funding level for investment and include gender equality assessment.

Bilateral relations

Of the 34 respondents, 97.1% (33) found the areas of support relevant for cooperation with entities from the donor states. The respondent who disagreed with this statement did not provide an explanation.

Final remarks

In the final remarks, common themes among the comments received included strengthening democratic values, prioritising gender equality and its funding, and focusing on involvement of research and analytical support. Comments also recommended targeted support for refugees and migrants, and advocating for the Istanbul Convention.

Access to justice

Rationale of the support

The majority of respondents (85.7% or 30 of 35) think that the rationale described reflects the development of the EEA Grants countries in this programme area. The comments received suggested including “transparency” in relation to the judiciary and broadening the focus beyond the court system to encompass the full justice chain. Concerns about underreporting hate crimes, hate speech, and inadequate legal protections for disadvantaged groups were also highlighted.

Areas of the support

Most respondents (86.5% or 32 of 37) agree that the proposed areas of support enable the achievement of the programme area objective. Nevertheless, a couple of comments received suggest expanding the scope to include prosecution, and law enforcement capacity building and specialised training.

Furthermore, 61.8% of respondents (21 of 34) indicated that there could be additional areas of support that could help reach the programme area objective in their country of interest. Key areas include funding for advocacy, improving trial speed, judicial accountability, alternative dispute resolution measures, legal support for refugees, child-friendly and trauma-informed justice for groups in vulnerable situations, capacity building on gender-based violence, disability inclusion, outreach on hate crimes, and enhancing legal access for disadvantaged and marginalised communities.

How the objectives will be addressed

Most respondents (74.3% or 26 of 35) found the proposed methods and activities appropriate for achieving the programme area objective. Among those who disagreed, comments suggested implementing gender equality assessments, expanding support to the prosecution, enhancing IT systems to reduce bureaucracy, training law enforcement in IT for detention management, and extending funding eligibility to judicial training institutions. Additional suggestions included establishing child-specific legal aid and prioritising the role of law enforcement agencies to improve access to justice.

Key actors and beneficiaries

Out of the 36 respondents who answered the question, 66.7% (24) agreed on the relevance of the listed actors and beneficiaries for achieving the programme area objective. However, other respondents suggested including prosecutors, law enforcement agencies, lawyers, bar associations, notaries, magistrate organisations, and children’s ombudsmen. Respondents also recommended clarifying the role of international and civil society organisations.

PA specifics

Most respondents (88.9% or 32 of 36) agreed that the listed conditions address relevant development challenges or opportunities in their country of interest. Comments from those who disagreed suggested expanding the programme area to include prosecution, including gender equality assessments, and removing the funding cap on investments.

Bilateral relations

Of the 34 respondents, 97.1% (33) found the areas of support relevant for cooperation with entities from the donor states. The respondent who disagreed with this statement did not provide an explanation.

Final remarks

In the final remarks, common themes among the comments received included a focus on supporting magistrates' workload and burnout, ensuring efficient and fast access to justice, specifically for environmental CSOs, people with disabilities, and refugees. Respondents suggested mobile legal aid clinics and digital legal case tracking tools for refugees. Other remarks highlighted the importance of the Barnahus model, strengthening alternative dispute resolution and evidence-based reforms, and fostering trust with disadvantaged groups. Additionally, calls for comprehensive civil society cooperation and gender mainstreaming across programmes were noted.

Correctional services

Rationale of the support

The majority of respondents (96.3% or 26 of 27) think that the rationale described reflects the development of the EEA Grants countries in this programme area. The respondent who disagreed with this statement did not provide an explanation.

Areas of the support

Most respondents (89.3% or 25 of 28) agree that the proposed areas of support enable the achievement of the programme area objective. Nevertheless, a few comments indicate that probation clients should be highlighted alongside prisoners, as they are closely related and mentioned in the key actors and beneficiaries section. Emphasis was also placed on improving prison and pre-trial detention conditions and providing education and support for prison law enforcement and probation services staff, including management.

Furthermore, 44.8% of respondents (13 of 29) indicated that additional areas of support could help reach the programme area objective in their country of interest. Key areas include expanding prison mentoring programs, enhancing support for prisoners and families, promoting restorative justice, and prioritising groups in vulnerable situations, like women, juveniles, and refugee minors. Suggestions also focus on using technology for rehabilitation, strengthening post-release support, and reducing stigma through public awareness.

How the objectives will be addressed

Most respondents (89.3% or 25 of 28) found the proposed methods and activities appropriate for achieving the programme area objective. Among those who disagreed, comments suggested adding funding for infrastructure in pre-trial detention centres as well as supplementing the text as follows “Interventions related to substance abuse and anger management, including for domestic and gender-based violence offenders as well as debt management, are also supported”

Key actors and beneficiaries

Out of the 29 respondents who answered the question, 86.2% (25) agreed on the relevance of the listed actors and beneficiaries for achieving the programme area objective. However, some responses stress involving prosecutors, judges, prison and probation services, and law enforcement to enhance alternative sanctions. It is also recommended that civil society and international organisations, along with vulnerable offenders serving alternative sentences, be included.

PA specifics

Most respondents (92.6% or 25 of 27) agreed that the listed conditions address relevant development challenges or opportunities in their country of interest. One comment suggested deleting the condition that “The maximum level of funding for investment (..) (hard measures) shall be set in MoU or, exceptionally, in the PA”.

Bilateral relations

Of the 26 respondents, 96.2% (25) found the areas of support relevant for cooperation with entities from the donor states. The respondent who disagreed with this statement did not provide an explanation.

Final remarks

In the final remarks, common themes among the comments received included the need for sustainable, long-term rehabilitation and reintegration services beyond project funding, focusing on coordinated support in health, education, housing, and employment. Comments stress legal aid, mentorship, and community alternatives for refugee youth in detention. Addressing offenders of sexually motivated crimes and linking policy with practical measures for systemic improvements are also highlighted.

Serious and organised crime

Rationale of the support

The majority of respondents (81% or 17 of 21) think that the rationale described reflects the development of the EEA Grants countries in this programme area. Two comments received suggest that the rationale should include seniors as a vulnerable group and emphasise prevention and awareness to combat fraud and domestic violence. Comment recommends clarifying the link between gender-based violence and organised crime, potentially reassigning DGBV to more suitable areas (e.g. PA 10 or 11). Strengthen focus on cybercrime, corruption, economic crime, victim support, and asset recovery to enhance the approach to serious crime.

Areas of the support

75% of respondents (15 of 20) agree that the proposed areas of support enable the achievement of the programme area objective. Nevertheless, a few comments recommend aligning measures with relevant programme areas, such as shifting domestic violence to PA 10 and child-friendly justice to PA 11. It stresses strengthening anti-corruption efforts, addressing cybercrime and financial crime, and enhancing asset recovery. Additionally, comments recommend prioritising state-backed victim support and more comprehensive state action against trafficking and forced labour.

Furthermore, 57.9% of respondents (11 of 19) indicated that additional areas of support could help reach the programme area objective in their country of interest. Key areas include boosting anti-money laundering, countering tax fraud, and tackling cybercrime. Priorities also focus on enforcing sanctions, protecting refugees from trafficking, supporting victims, and using administrative approaches against organised crime. Emphasis is placed on child-friendly justice tools, modern slavery prevention, and strengthening forensic detection of hazardous materials.

How the objectives will be addressed

Two-thirds of respondents (61.9% or 13 of 21) found the proposed methods and activities appropriate for achieving the programme area objective. Among those who disagreed, comments focus on promoting cooperation with organisations, adopting a victim-centred justice approach, enhancing anti-corruption efforts, and supporting CSOs in legislative initiatives. Strengthening law enforcement with digital tools and fostering public awareness to counter social threats and petty crimes were also highlighted.

Key actors and beneficiaries

Out of the 21 respondents who answered the question, 85.7% (18) agreed on the relevance of the listed actors and beneficiaries for achieving the programme area objective. However, some comments suggested adding public entities like anti-corruption agencies and recognising NGOs not just as partners but as main actors capable of legislative development and creating support systems.

PA specifics

Most respondents (81% or 17 of 21) agreed that the listed conditions address relevant development challenges or opportunities in their country of interest. Comments from those who disagreed suggested setting investment levels in programme agreements for greater flexibility, ensuring complementarity with other external funds, and allowing exceptions for mandatory donor-beneficiary cooperation where agreed.

Bilateral relations

Of the 21 respondents, 95.2% (20) found the areas of support relevant for cooperation with entities from the donor states. The respondent who disagreed with this statement did not provide an explanation.

Final remarks

In the final remarks, common themes among the comments received included the emphasis on strengthening cross-border and regional cooperation to combat organised crime and trafficking, with a focus on improving detection, forensic capabilities, and law enforcement training. The importance of targeted support for evidence-based policy research and civil society involvement in monitoring institutional activities was highlighted. Addressing gender-based violence and hate crimes, including comprehensive training for law enforcement and social support for survivors, was a recurring priority. There was also strong advocacy for projects that support anti-trafficking measures, safe migration pathways, and survivor assistance. Lastly, the integration of international partnerships and practical training initiatives, such as those offered by UNICRI, was seen as essential for sustainable capacity building and effective policy implementation.

Asylum, migration and integration

Rationale of the support

The majority of respondents (92.3% or 36 of 39) think that the rationale described reflects the development of the EEA Grants countries in this programme area. One comment suggests that the rationale could also expand to acknowledge the instability arising from recent developments and conflicts in the Middle East, which continue to influence migration patterns.

Areas of the support

Most respondents (95% or 38 of 40) agree that the proposed areas of support enable the achievement of the programme area objective. Nevertheless, a comment received suggests adding child and gender sensitivity to the first support area, focusing on child-sensitive reception, protection in migration processes, access to essential services, and robust child protection preparedness plans.

Furthermore, 30% of respondents (12 of 40) indicated that additional areas of support could help reach the programme area objective in their country of interest. Key areas include supporting unaccompanied minors, ensuring safe working conditions for foreign workers, promoting voluntary return systems, and restorative justice. The mentioned priorities also cover gender-specific protections for migrant women, comprehensive asylum support, targeted employment programs, and strengthening grassroots organisations aiding migrants.

How the objectives will be addressed

Most respondents (85% or 34 of 40) found the proposed methods and activities appropriate for achieving the programme area objective. Among those who disagreed, recommendations include collecting case studies on workplace discrimination against foreign nationals, clarifying trade unions' roles in integration, and identifying barriers in employment. Emphasis is on long-term integration measures for TCNs, including psychological support and capacity building for migration forecasting. Proposals suggest incorporating gender equality assessments and supporting migrants of minority backgrounds, including LGBTQ individuals.

Key actors and beneficiaries

Out of the 39 respondents who answered the question, 79.5% (31) agreed on the relevance of the listed actors and beneficiaries for achieving the programme area objective. However, some comments recommend including trade unions, employers, research institutions, universities, and grassroots organisations as key actors. According to some comments civil society and international organisations should be considered main actors as well, especially in migration policy advocacy, while informal groups should be allowed as partners. Emphasising support for groups in vulnerable situation, including unaccompanied children, LGBTQ individuals, and undocumented migrants, is also advised.

PA specifics

Most respondents (85% or 34 of 40) agreed that the listed conditions address relevant development challenges or opportunities in their country of interest. Comments from those who disagreed suggest a stronger definition of civil society cooperation, expanding priorities to include systematic projects with integrated border management and Schengen security with external fund alignment. It advocates setting investment levels within programme agreements for flexibility, adding an option to waive mandatory donor-beneficiary cooperation, and revising priorities to support unaccompanied children, migrants, asylum seekers, and groups in vulnerable situations, including LGBTQ individuals.

Bilateral relations

Of the 41 respondents, 97.6% (40) found the areas of support relevant for cooperation with entities from the donor states. The respondent who disagreed with this statement did not provide an explanation.

Final remarks

In the final remarks, common themes among the comments received included the emphasis on comprehensive support for refugee and migrant integration, with a focus on socio-economic inclusion, access to services, and structured employment pathways. The importance of refugee-led initiatives, community engagement, and combating discrimination and disinformation were highlighted, alongside fostering collaboration with civil society and international partners. Recommendations stressed enhancing transparency, anti-corruption measures, and focusing on implementation and analytical work to identify and solve practical challenges. There is also a call for promoting smart communities, sustainable urban development, and better integration of EU priorities like the green transition and social resilience.

Institutional cooperation and capacity building

Rationale of the support

The majority of respondents (97.7% or 42 of 43) think that the rationale described reflects the development in the EEA Grants countries for this programme area. The respondent who disagreed with this statement did not provide an explanation.

Areas of the support

Most respondents (95.3% or 41 of 43) agree that the proposed areas of support enable the achievement of the programme area objective. The respondents who disagreed with this statement did not provide an explanation.

Furthermore, 25.6% of respondents (10 of 39) indicated that there could be additional areas of support that could help reach the programme area objective in their country of interest. Key areas include promoting cooperation and knowledge transfer between developed and peripheral regions, enhancing public bodies' capacities to combat corruption, and supporting CSOs in national strategy roles. Emphasis is also placed on strengthening institutions to better serve refugees, combating institutional racism, and fostering partnerships with NGOs and businesses. Training for public officials and mechanisms for public-private cooperation are highlighted as crucial.

How the objectives will be addressed

Most respondents (97.5% or 39 of 40) found the proposed methods and activities appropriate for achieving the programme area objective. The respondent who disagreed with this statement did not provide an explanation.

Key actors and beneficiaries

Out of the 39 respondents who answered the question, 89.7% (35) agreed on the relevance of the listed actors and beneficiaries for achieving the programme area objective. However, some comments suggest including civil society as potential partners, reviewers, and beneficiaries due to their extensive expertise.

PA specifics

Most respondents (92.9% or 39 of 42) agreed that the listed conditions address relevant development challenges or opportunities in their country of interest. Comments from those who disagreed recommend ensuring cooperation or consultation with CSOs representing groups in vulnerable situations with limited access to public services. It also suggests adding flexibility to mandatory donor-beneficiary partnerships at the project level by allowing exceptions where mutually agreed.

Bilateral relations

Of the 41 respondents, 97.6% (40) found the areas of support relevant for cooperation with entities from the donor states. The respondent who disagreed with this statement did not provide an explanation.

Final remarks

In the final remarks, common themes among the comments received included the need to enhance collaboration and capacity-building within civil society and public institutions. Emphasis is placed on partnerships involving NGOs, cross-agency coordination, and international organisations to support areas like refugee services and regulatory oversight. Calls for transparency, anti-corruption, and human-centric, accessible public services are prominent, alongside training programs focused on combating discrimination and institutional racism. Suggestions also highlight the importance of evidence-based policymaking, strengthening public sector skills, and integrating thematic priorities like democracy, the rule of law, and social inclusion into programme areas.

Civil society fund

Rationale of the support

The majority of respondents (91.8% or 89 of 97) think that the rationale described reflects the development in the EEA Grants countries for this programme area. Among those who disagreed, some comments suggest that the rationale should emphasise the crucial role of civil society in fostering inclusive democratic participation, not limited to marginalised groups, and highlight its role in promoting democracy, human rights, and social cohesion. It should also acknowledge internal capacity issues, the impact of global challenges, funding limitations, and the need for alignment with EU values and initiatives, such as the European Child Guarantee and the European Green Deal. Additionally, the rationale should reflect the importance of addressing poverty, particularly in children, and the need for global awareness and education.

Areas of the support

Most respondents (94.9% or 93 of 98) agree that the proposed areas of support enable the achievement of the programme area objective. Nevertheless, a few comments recommend explicitly addressing the 'rule of law', merging related areas like civil society participation and enabling environments, highlighting independent media, retaining focus on gender-based violence, and narrowing 'environmental protection' to climate action and just transitions within civic engagement. Strengthening the civil society sector beyond organisational development was also advised.

Furthermore, 31.2% of respondents (29 of 39) indicated that there could be additional areas of support that could help reach the programme area objective in their country of interest. Key areas include financial assistance for community development, strengthening civil society networks, mental health initiatives, advocacy, and combating corruption. Noted priorities also involve youth engagement, countering disinformation, promoting open government, supporting groups in vulnerable situations, and enhancing human rights within green policies. Strategic funding and backing for independent media were also emphasised.

How the objectives will be addressed

Most respondents (92.6% or 88 of 95) found the proposed methods and activities appropriate for achieving the programme area objective. Among those who disagreed, comments include supporting NGOs' financial sustainability through social businesses, prioritising training, research, and advocacy. The fund should strengthen the rule of law, civil society resilience, and transparency, emphasising European-level collaboration and targeted support for LGBTQI organisations. Legal support for environmental CSOs and enhanced advocacy collaboration were also advised.

Key actors and beneficiaries

Out of the 96 respondents who answered the question, 89.6% (86) agreed on the relevance of the listed actors and beneficiaries for achieving the programme area objective. However, some comments highlight the importance of including a broader range of actors, particularly informal, grassroots, and transnational organisations, to achieve the fund's objectives effectively.

Fund specifics

Most respondents (88.5% or 85 of 96) agreed that the listed conditions address relevant development challenges or opportunities in their country of interest. Comments from those who disagreed highlight the need for direct funding and solidarity support for impactful democratic and social change. It was suggested to increase organisational development funding from 20% to 30% to aid financial sustainability, especially for NGOs setting up social enterprises. There was a strong emphasis on reaching underserved geographic areas, though concerns were raised that this focus may inadvertently disadvantage capital-based organisations which serve broader regions. Additionally, it was proposed that social services should be recognised as essential for civic empowerment, not just advocacy, to support marginalised communities. Additionally, there’s a need to distinguish ‘strengthening civil society’ through capacity-building from ‘creating an enabling environment,’ which addresses democratic principles. Respondents also suggest core funding to sustain small CSOs, including support for essential staff.

Bilateral relations

Of the 95 respondents, 97.9% (93) found the areas of support relevant for cooperation with entities from the donor states. From those who disagreed, one comment noted that bilateral relations therein would benefit from the explicit reference to children, such as child participation within civic engagement, children's safety and rights in the online environment.

Focus areas for Civil society fund

Based on the open responses, the most common focus areas that warrant special attention included (1) support for groups in vulnerable situations, (2) environmental protection and climate resilience, (3) civil society capacity building, (4) media freedom and literacy, (5) human rights and inclusion, (6) mental health and social services, (7) rule of law and democratic engagement, and (8) youth engagement and education.

Final remarks

In the final remarks, common themes among the comments received included the need for simplified reporting and reduced administrative burdens, particularly for small CSOs, to allow a greater focus on outcomes and impact. Recommendations highlighted introducing lump-sum payments and streamlined procedures. Emphasis was placed on ongoing organisational support, not just project-based funding, and broadening access to long-term grants. Other points included the importance of strengthening NGO networks, promoting civic education, and ensuring funding supports democratic values and social inclusion, especially in underserved areas. Calls were made for clearer regulatory definitions and better fund promotion to ensure participation and resilience within civil society.

Fund for capacity building and cooperation with international partner organisations and institutions

Rationale of the support

The majority of respondents (98.7% or 76 of 77) think that the rationale described reflects the development of the EEA Grants countries in this programme area. The respondent who disagreed with this statement did not provide an explanation.

Areas of the support

Most respondents (97.5% or 79 of 81) agree that the proposed areas of support enable the achievement of the programme area objective. One comment suggests making the list of areas of support as non-exhaustive, adding: "such as:".

Furthermore, 35.4% of respondents (28 of 79) indicated that additional areas of support could help reach the programme area objective in their country of interest. Key areas include strengthening local governance, addressing the challenges posed by rising populism and extremist ideologies, and prioritising environmental protection. Respondents also mentioned AI, emphasised professionalising public services and CSO operations, advancing research capacity, and forming anti-corruption coalitions of NGOs. Other suggestions included addressing migration challenges, supporting civil society with a focus on children's rights, enhancing nuclear safety, and fostering international partnerships for joint recommendations. Promoting a fair energy transition that considers societal impacts was also noted.

How the objectives will be addressed

Most respondents (93.8% or 75 of 80) found the proposed methods and activities appropriate for achieving the programme area objective. Among those who disagreed, comments suggested that the description is not entirely clear and the methods of potential cooperation with IOs should be detailed. Additionally, according to the respondents, data collection and analysis should be added, to consolidate evidence-based initiatives, actions, and policies. Finally, respondents recommended to expand the catalogue of potential knowledge exchange activities and include the following activities: job shadowing, mentoring and peer-to-peer learning.

Key actors and beneficiaries

Out of the 79 respondents who answered the question, 91.1% (72) agreed on the relevance of the listed actors and beneficiaries for achieving the programme area objective. However, some comments suggested including banks and their affiliated NGOs, as well as research associations, RTOs, and economic chambers as relevant actors. It was noted that local and national CSOs should be recognised as participants alongside international organisations and beneficiary states. Respondents also recommended considering countries near the EEA in the process of EU accession, such as Ukraine. Additionally, some comments proposed that references to beneficiaries should include broader terms like "and their societies at large" to ensure inclusivity.

Fund specifics

Most respondents (97.4% or 74 of 76) agreed that the listed conditions address relevant development challenges or opportunities in their country of interest. The two respondents who disagreed with this statement did not provide an explanation.

Bilateral relations

Of the 75 respondents, 94.7% (71) found the areas of support relevant for cooperation with entities from the donor states. From those who disagreed, one comment noted that tripartite cooperation should be clarified (it is not clear how the contribution from the international organisations to the entities from the beneficiary countries will benefit entities from the donor states). Additionally, one respondent noted that capacity building should also support actions on the improvement of research capacity in beneficiary countries, as those are the tools for further improvements.

Final remarks

In the final remarks, common themes among the comments received included clarifying and broadening the fund's scope to better support NGOs, civil society, and smaller organisations, while integrating cross-cutting priorities such as gender equality, public trust, youth empowerment, and sustainability. There is also a strong emphasis on enhancing cooperation with civil society and international partners in areas like AI, governance, and refugee support. Calls for clearer commitments, measurable outcomes, knowledge sharing, and the inclusion of thematic priorities such as democracy, social resilience, and Ukraine support were also noted.

Fund for social dialogue and decent work (Norway Grants)

Rationale of the support

The majority of respondents (97.7% or 43 of 44) think that the rationale described reflects the development of the EEA Grants countries in this programme area. The respondent who disagreed with this statement did not provide an explanation.

Areas of the support

Most respondents (93.2% or 41 of 44) agree that the proposed areas of support enable the achievement of the programme area objective. Nevertheless, a few comments received suggest that to strengthen the impact one might mention policymaking institutions which deal with employment policy as well as to make the social dialogue definition broader including not only trade unions and employer organisations.

Furthermore, 39.5% of respondents (17 of 43) indicated that there could be additional areas of support that could help reach the programme area objective in their country of interest. Key areas include supporting social enterprise development, fostering economic integration for disadvantaged groups through entrepreneurship, and building capacity for social partners to improve conditions for seasonal and migrant workers. Emphasis was also placed on tackling undeclared work, promoting inclusive education, targeted NEET interventions in rural areas, and involving small organisations focused on employee well-being. Respondents highlighted the need for independent grievance mechanisms, better SME representation, and addressing climate and digital challenges to ensure job quality and workforce resilience. Lastly, promoting workplace diversity and inclusion was noted as an important aspect.

How the objectives will be addressed

Most respondents (90.9% or 40 of 44) found the proposed methods and activities appropriate for achieving the programme area objective. Among those who disagreed, comments suggested that local models of best practices for social dialogue and decent work should first be created, which can later be promoted both among unions and employers. Additional suggestions included that a living wage should be mentioned, or a following change implemented: “Gender equality and non-discrimination are cross-cutting principles that shall be addressed throughout the fund, including addressing issues related to discrimination of minorities, including Roma and LGBTQ”.

Key actors and beneficiaries

Out of the 44 respondents who answered the question, 90.9% (40) agreed on the relevance of the listed actors and beneficiaries for achieving the programme area objective. However, some comments noted that the most relevant promoters of the social dialogue are the successful social enterprises. Other mentioned organisations of B2B workers, civil law workers or SMEs. Additionally, one respondent proposed to give special attention to groups of workers underrepresented in social dialogue and workers vulnerable to discrimination, exploitation, and mistreatment in the labour market, including minorities such as Roma and LGBTQ.

Fund specifics

Most respondents (90.7% or 39 of 43) agreed that the listed conditions address relevant development challenges or opportunities in their country of interest. Comments from those who disagreed suggested the need for small infrastructure investments in social enterprises to exemplify social dialogue and decent work. Additionally, there were calls for greater support for social partners to address macro-societal challenges, such as climate change and the green transition, and for managing risks associated with digital transformation to maintain job relevance. It was also recommended to adapt business practices to enhance job quality and align social dialogue frameworks to these new challenges. Emphasis was again placed on ensuring projects focus on diversity, inclusion, and anti-discrimination, particularly for minority groups such as Roma and LGBTQ individuals.

Bilateral relations

Of the 43 respondents, 93.0% (40) found the areas of support relevant for cooperation with entities from the donor states. From those who disagreed, one comment noted that there could be a possibility for more space for non-profit organisations and cooperation with foreign actors.

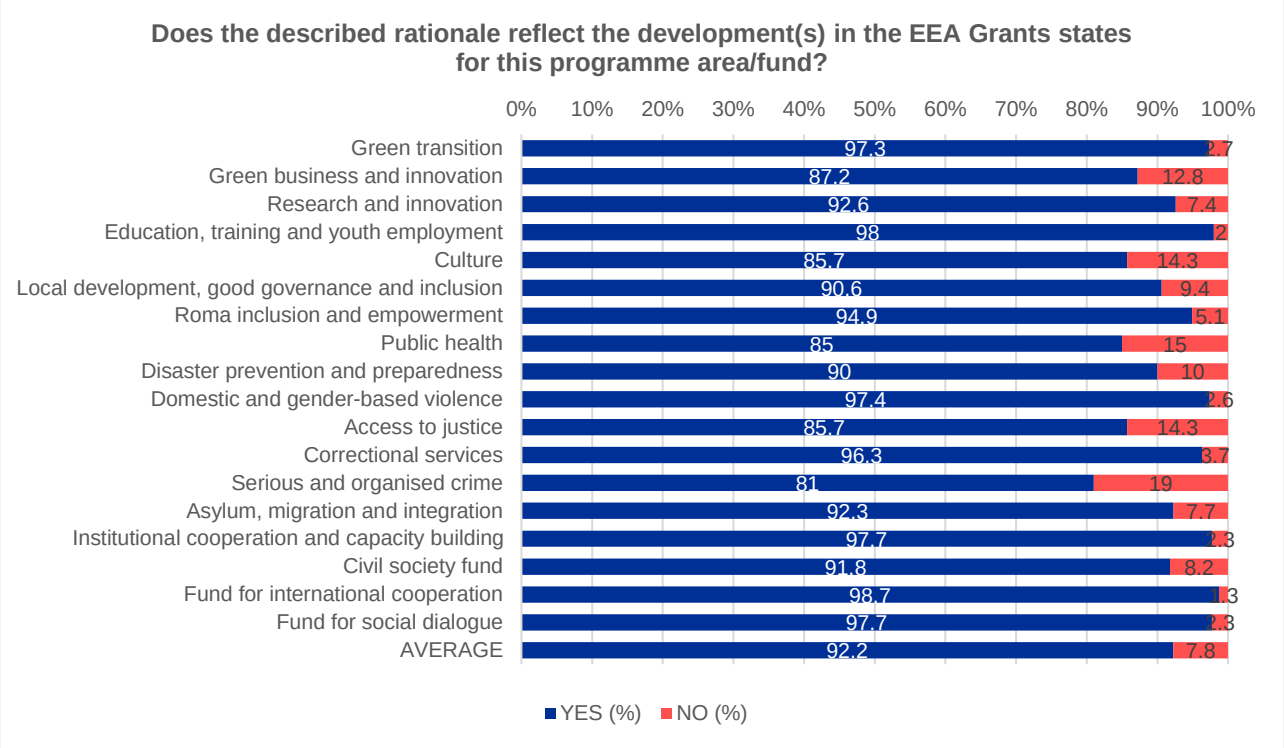
Final remarks

In the final remarks, common themes among the comments received included concerns about bureaucratic challenges and the complexity of reporting processes, which were seen as obstacles to project efficiency. Additionally, respondents highlighted the importance of fostering partnerships, especially with relevant sectoral organisations, and underscored the need for inclusive education initiatives and support for entrepreneurial efforts, particularly for migrants and refugees. The emphasis on building local models of best practices for social dialogue and promoting anti-discrimination measures also featured prominently.

Annex 3. Raw survey data

Submitted as a separate Excel file.

Annex 4. Answers to closed survey questions



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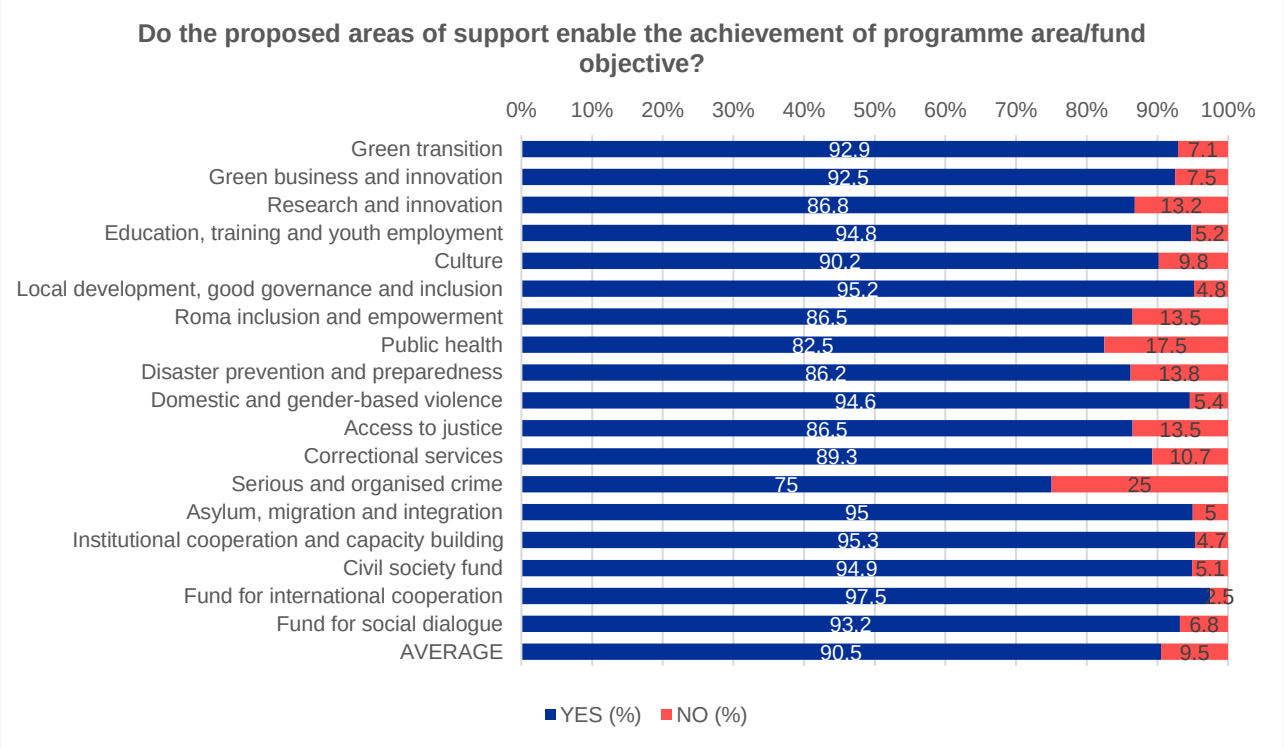

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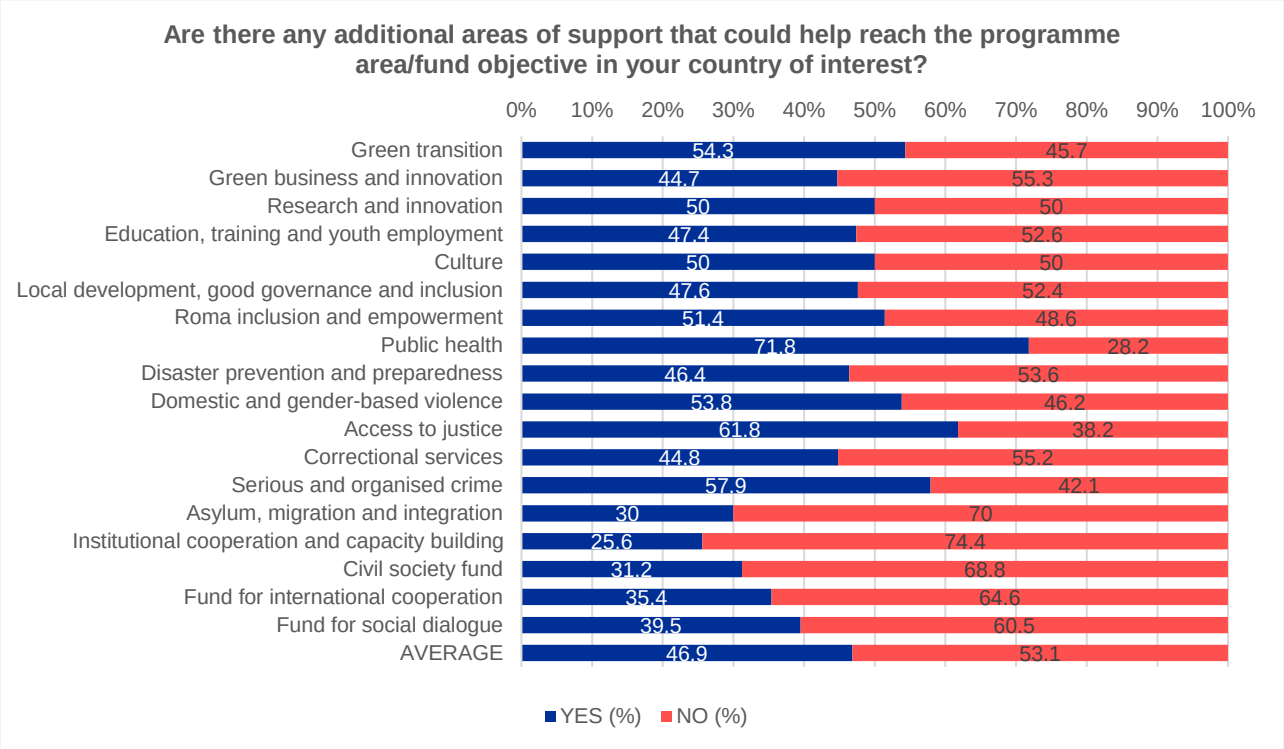

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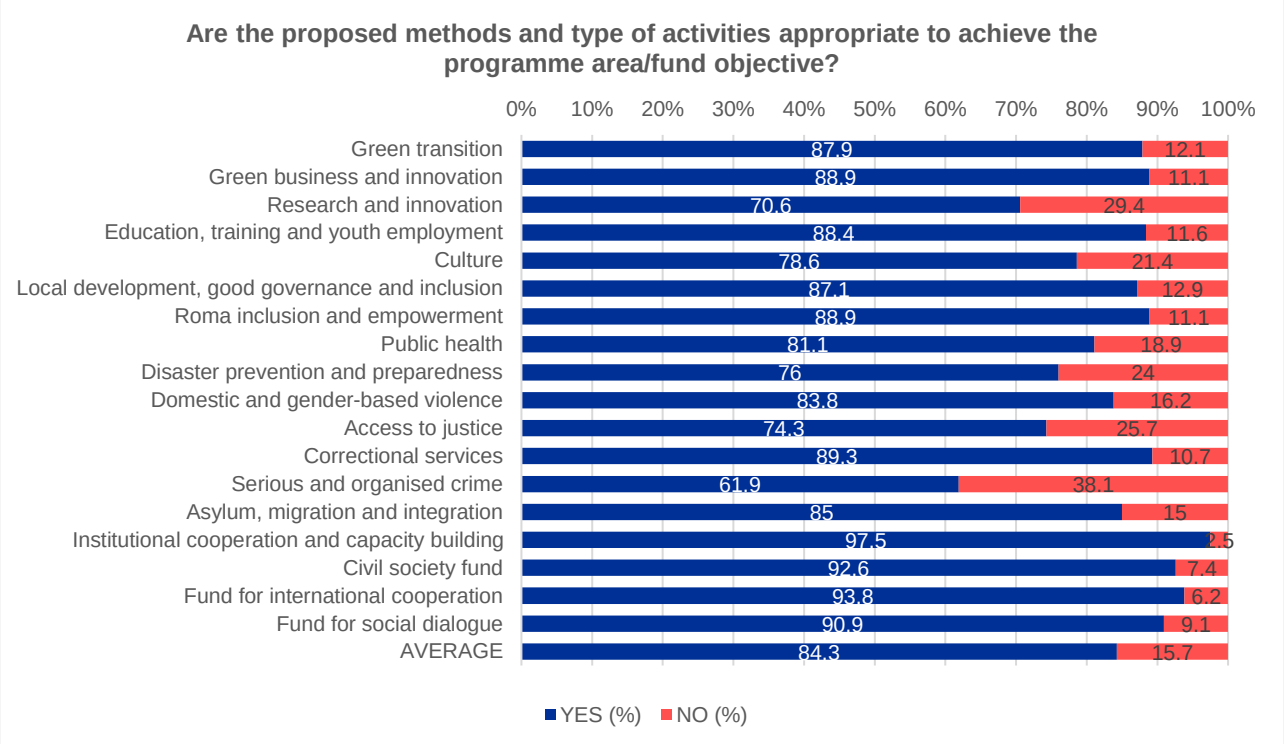

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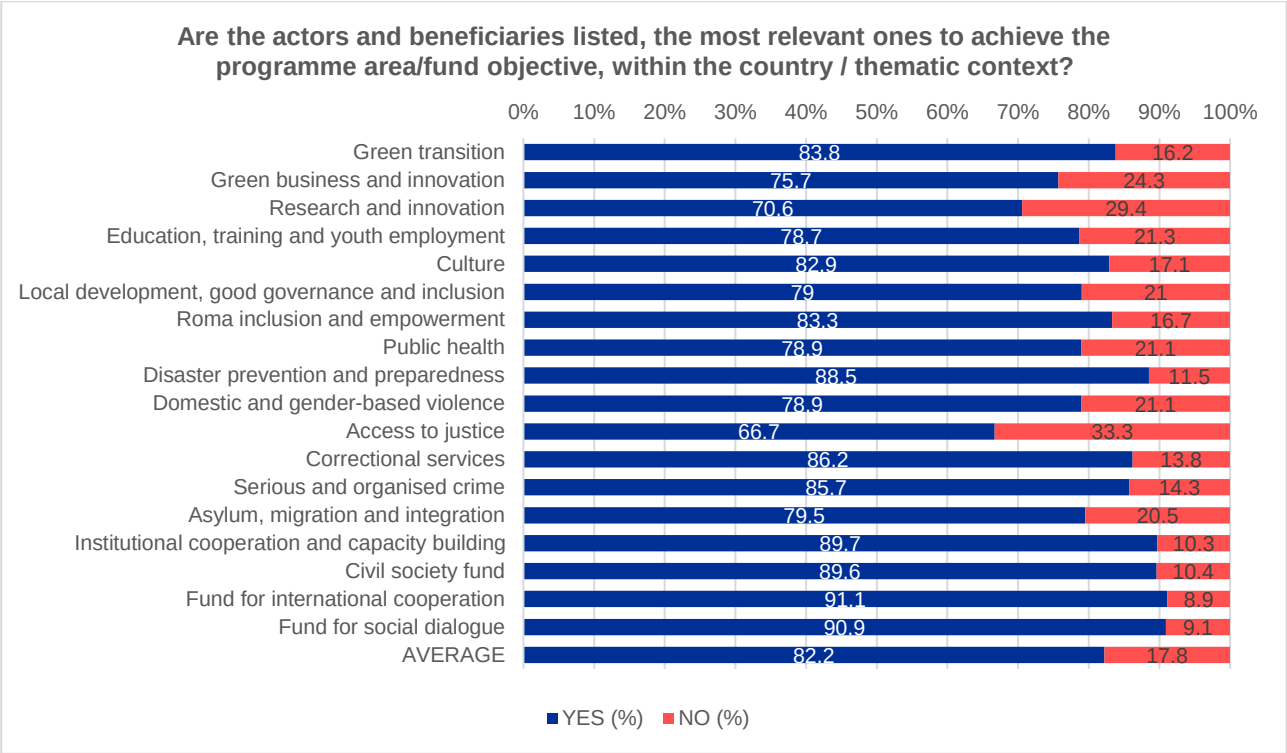

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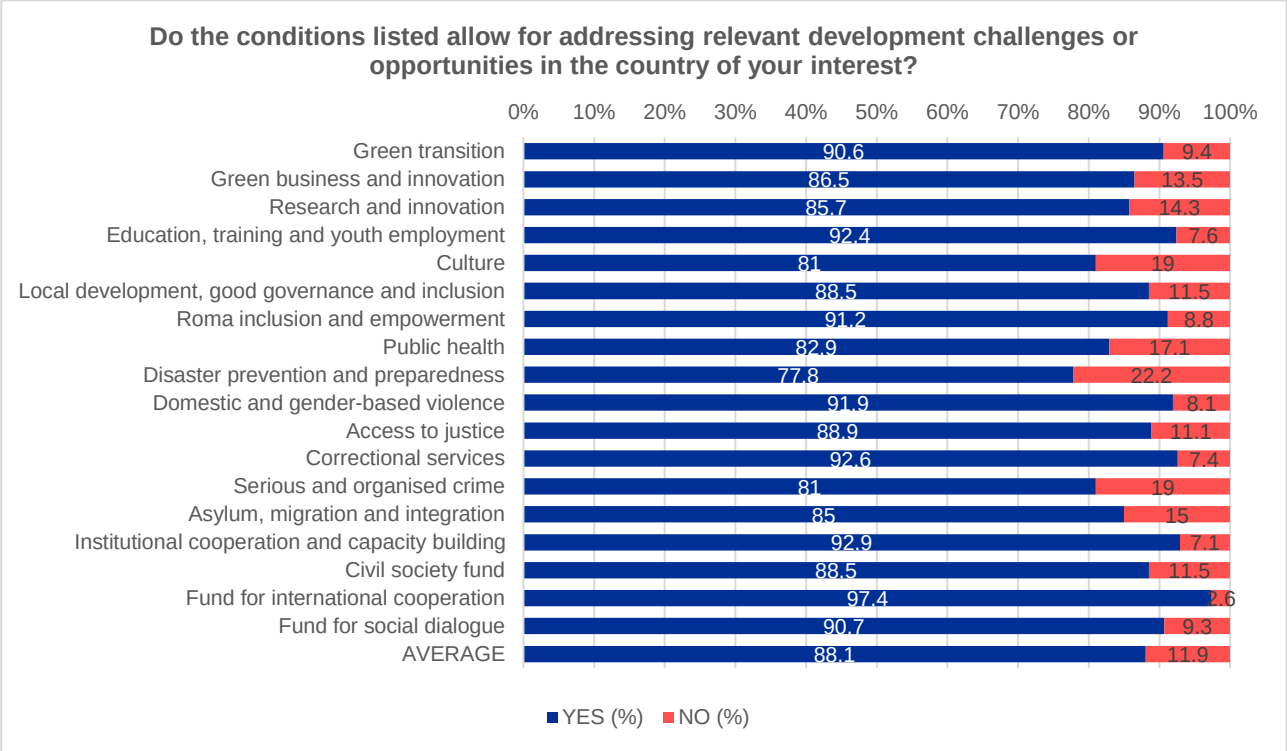

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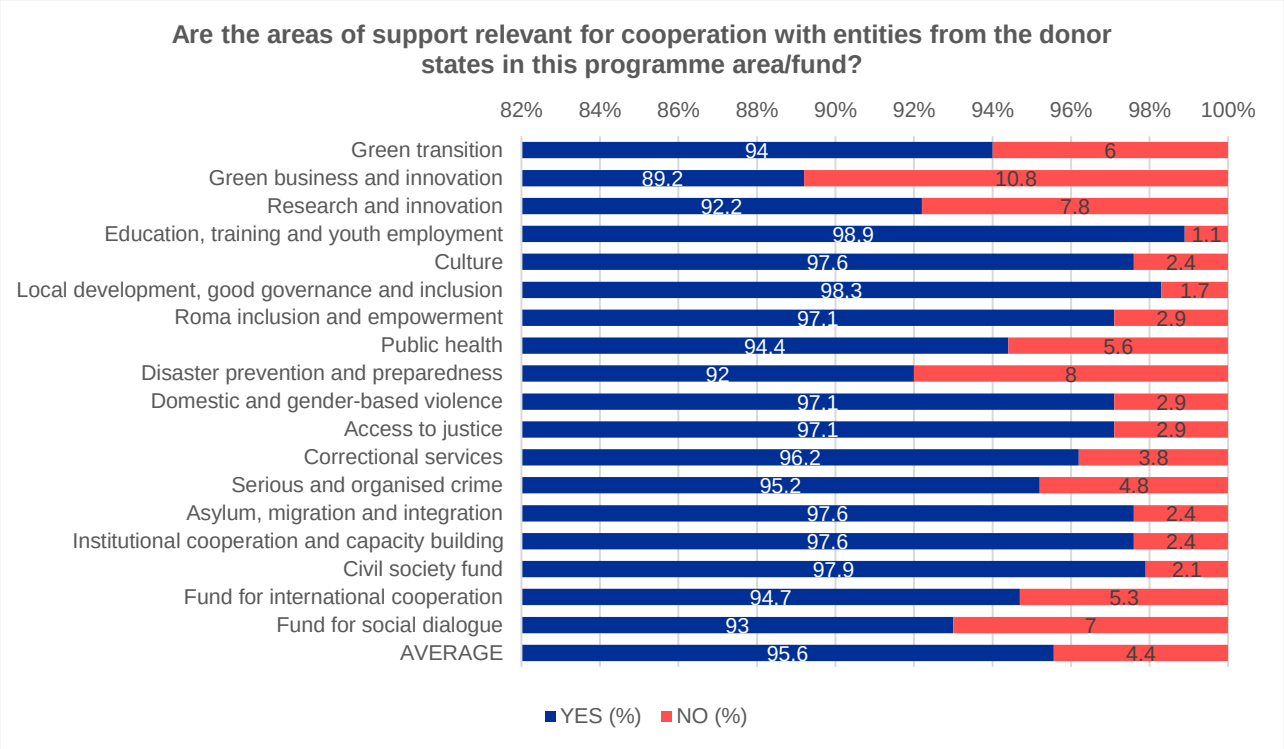

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