

GRACE

Grants
Administration
and Collaboration
Environment

Bilateral Fund Work plan

GrACE User Manual for National Focal Point

Version 1.0, July 2025

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Introduction

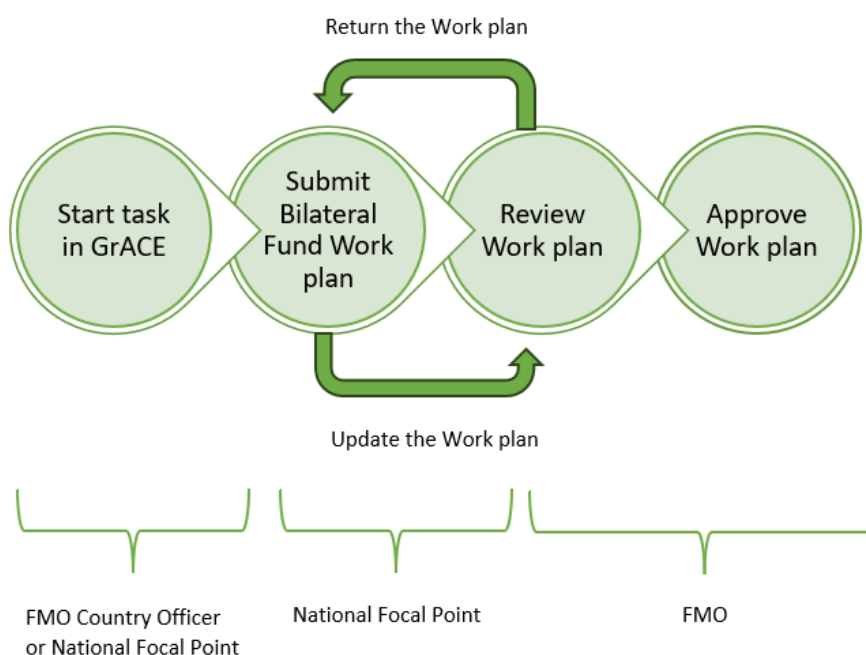
GrACE stands for Grants Administration and Collaboration Environment. The system supports the management of the EEA and Norwegian Financial Mechanisms 2021-2028. GrACE is used by the Donor and Beneficiary State entities and the Financial Mechanism Office (FMO). Users access GrACE through the website <https://grace.eeagrants.org/>.

For further help and support, please contact grace.support@efta.int. You can find this user manual and other manuals on our website <https://eeagrants.org/gracemanuals>. Be sure to regularly check for updated versions. The National Focal Point (NFP) prepares the Bilateral Fund Work plan. It describes the proposed activities to be implemented under the Fund for Bilateral Relations for the duration of the fund and in consultation with the Donors. The Joint Committee for the Bilateral Fund (JCBF) then defines the Work plan and the NFP updates it at least once per year.

For further help and support, please contact grace.support@efta.int. You can find this user manual and other manuals on our website <https://eeagrants.org/gracemanuals>. Be sure to regularly check for updated versions.

1. Bilateral Fund Work plan in GrACE

The following represents the Bilateral Fund Work plan workflow in GrACE. The workflow is started either by the Country Officer or the NFP. Both parties can find the task in their dashboard. According to the regulations¹, the initial draft of the workplan should be submitted at least 4 weeks prior to the first meeting of the Joint Committee. When the NFP has submitted the Work plan in GrACE, the FMO Country Officer reviews it.



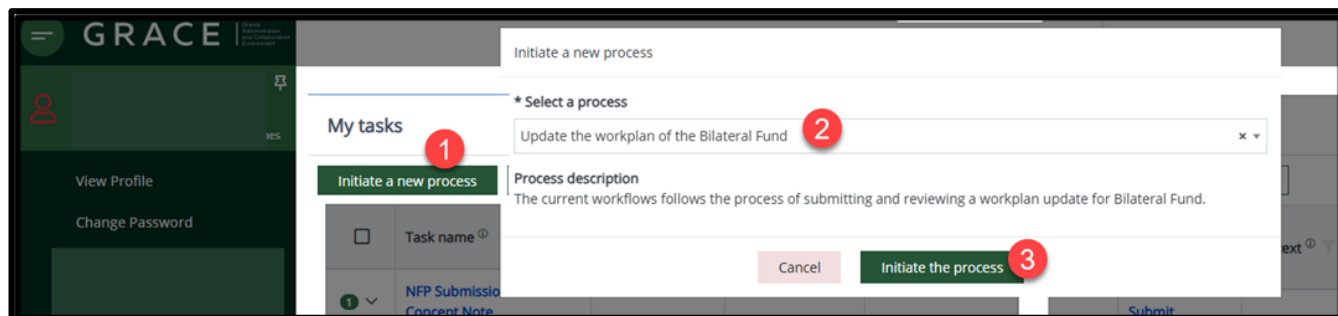
The Joint Committee for Bilateral Funds (JCBF) members are representatives of the NFP, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Beneficiary State and the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, represented by their respective Embassies. Representatives of the FMO serve as observers in the JCBF. The Work plan for the Bilateral Fund is prepared by the NFP in consultation with the Donors and submitted to the FMO through GrACE.

The FMO may return the Work plan to the NFP with comments. The NFP will then make any necessary changes and re-submit the Work plan to the FMO. The FMO reviews the Work plan once more and then validates the final version in GrACE.

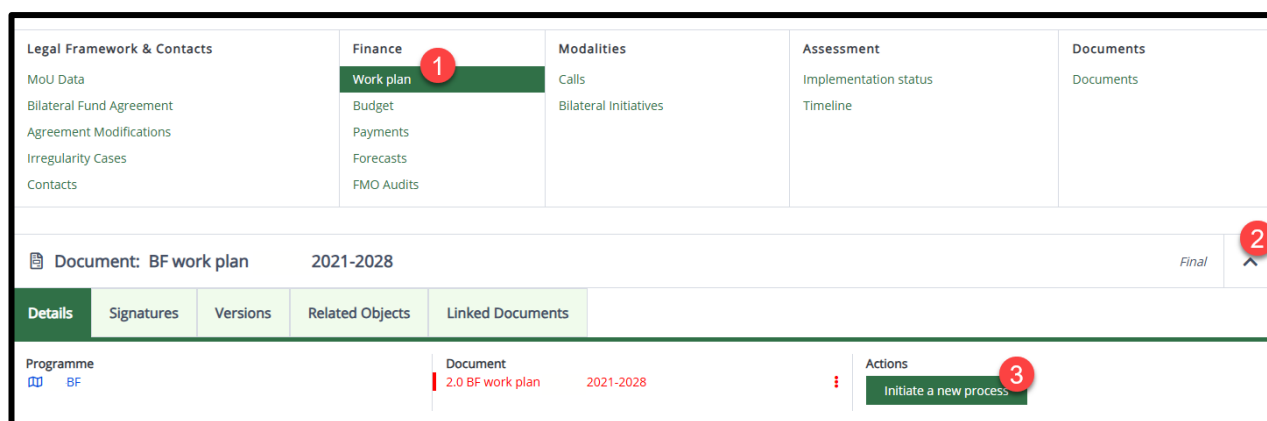
¹ Article 2.6 «Work plan», <https://eeagrants.org/resources/regulation-implementation-eea-grants-including-annexes-2021-2028>

2. Start the Bilateral Fund Work plan workflow

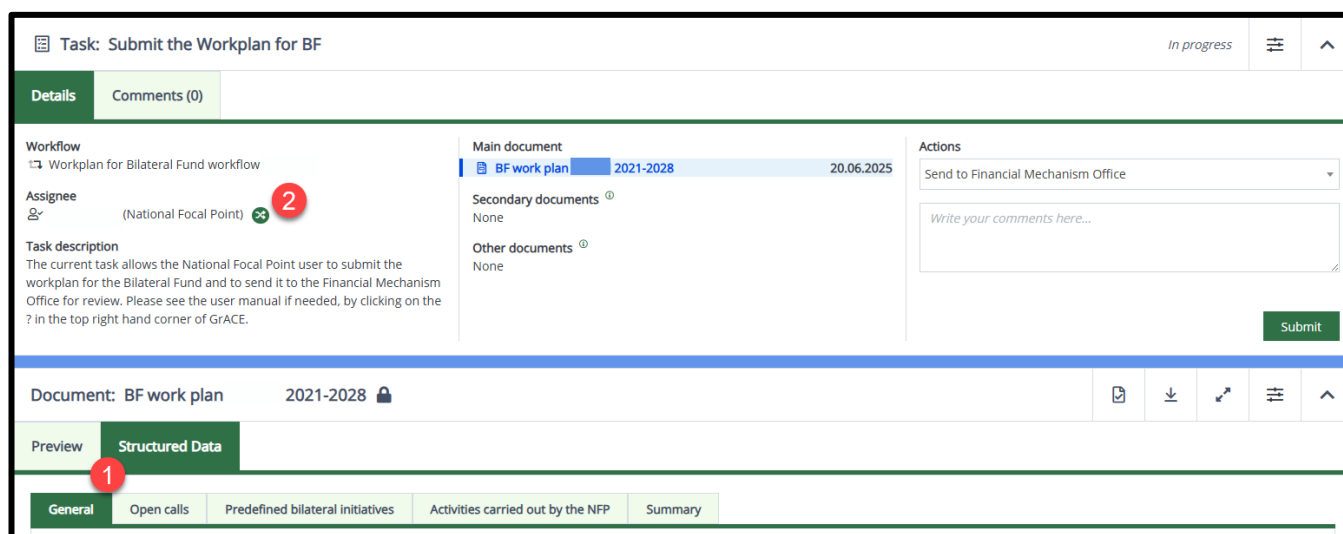
To start the workflow for the Bilateral Fund Work plan, click on 'Initiate a new process' under My tasks on your dashboard (1). Select 'Update the Work plan of the Bilateral Fund' (2) and click on **Initiate the process** (3).



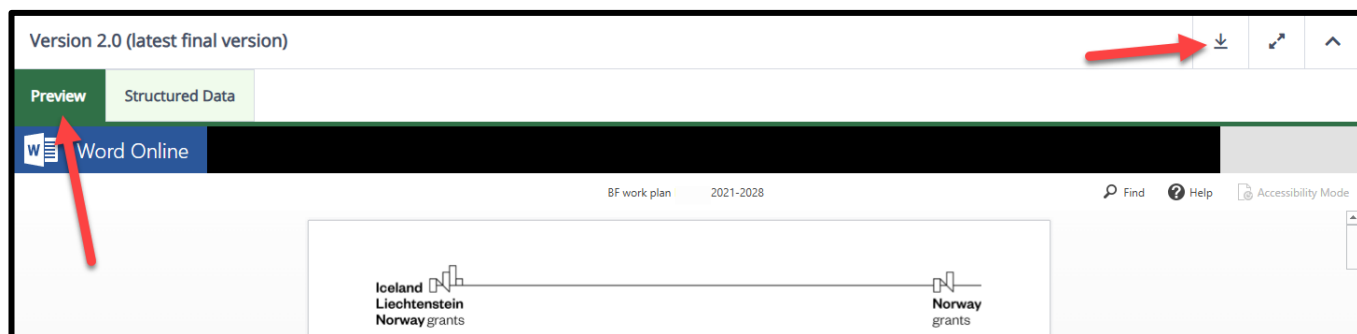
This task can also be started when looking at the current work plan (1), you might need to expand the Document properties by clicking on the arrow (2) and then you will see by clicking **Initiate a new process** (3).



A task page will appear once the process is initiated. To navigate through the different sections, click on the different titles under the *Structured Data* tab (1). Register the relevant data and information as needed. To reassign the task to a colleague, you can click on the green button next to your name (2) and assign it to someone else.



You can view a printable version of the Work plan that GrACE has created by clicking on the *Preview* tab. This document contains information currently registered under the *Structured Data* tab. You can also download the document by clicking on the download arrow in the right-hand corner.



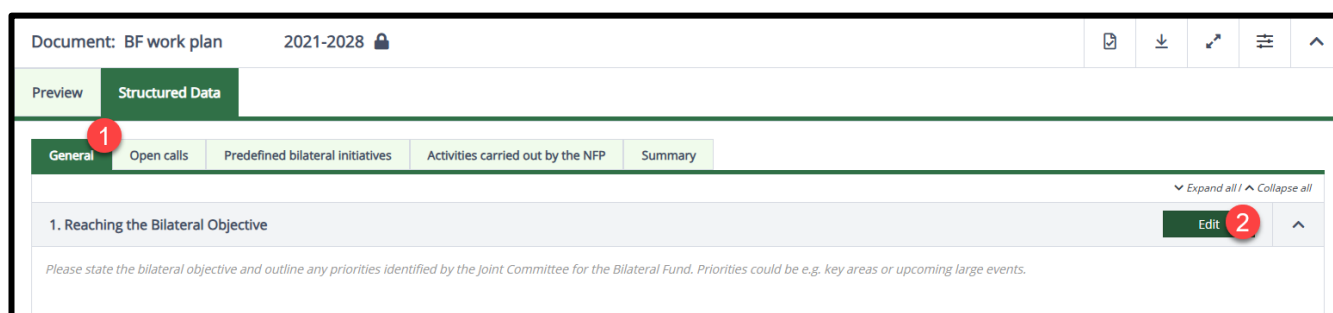
Until you press **Submit**, you have the possibility to **Edit/Update/Save** the information registered, as many times as necessary.

3. Fill in the Work plan

The Structured Data tab is composed of five tabs in which you will register the changes in the Work plan, in line with the template in Chapter 3:

- General text of the Work plan
- Open Calls
- Predefined bilateral initiatives
- Activities carried out by the NFP
- Summary

The General tab (1) contains text boxes for the first two sections of the Work plan: Reaching the Bilateral Objective, Implementation system. To enter data into these sections, click **Edit** on each section (2).



After you click **Edit**, the text editor opens. You can then type in or paste the formatted text in the field. You can also use the word processing bar to further format the text (3).

The field will automatically resize according to the amount of text. Clicking **Save** (4) for each section edited will save the data and exit the edit mode.

General | Open calls | Predefined bilateral initiatives | Activities carried out by the NFP | Summary

Expand all / Collapse all

3

Please state the bilateral objective and outline any priorities identified by the Joint Committee for the Bilateral Fund. Priorities could be e.g. key areas or upcoming large events.

Words 29, characters 245.

Cancel Save 4

The *Open calls* tab includes a table with current calls and a button to update the list to show the latest data (1). Click on the title of an open call to view more details in a new tab in your browser (2), it will take you to the page of the call itself.

General | Open calls | Predefined bilateral initiatives | Activities carried out by the NFP | Summary

Open calls ⓘ

Click on the title of an open call to view more details in a new tab.

Table last updated on 20.06.2025 13:20 Update with the latest data 1

Title	State	JCBF approval date	Amount available	Applications received	Total grant applied for	Applications approved for funding	Total grant awarded	Terminated initiatives	Finalised initiatives	Total incurred under the call
New test bilateral call 2	Publishing	06.05.2025	€ 100,000			-		-	0	0
new call 2	Draft	11.06.2025		-		-		-	0	0

The same can be done with the *Predefined bilateral initiatives* tab. Here you will see predefined initiatives where the NFP is not the promoter:

General | Open calls | Predefined bilateral initiatives | Activities carried out by the NFP | Summary

Predefined bilateral initiatives ⓘ

Click on the title or code of an initiative to view more details in a new tab.

Table last updated on 20.06.2025 13:36 Update with the latest data 1

Title	Code	State	JCBF approval date	Grant awarded from Bilateral fund	Implementation period start	Implementation period end	Promoter	Type of initiative	Amount incurred
new initiative 1 2	-BI001	Under review by NFP	20.06.2025		-	-	-		

The tab *Activities carried out by the NFP* has the same setup. This tab contains a table with predefined initiatives where the NFP is the promoter. (Open calls where NFP is *promoter*, is not listed in this work plan.) In the top right corner there is a button to update the content with the latest data, which will be pulled in from the Bilateral Initiatives registered for the Programme.

General | Open calls | Predefined bilateral initiatives | Activities carried out by the NFP | Summary

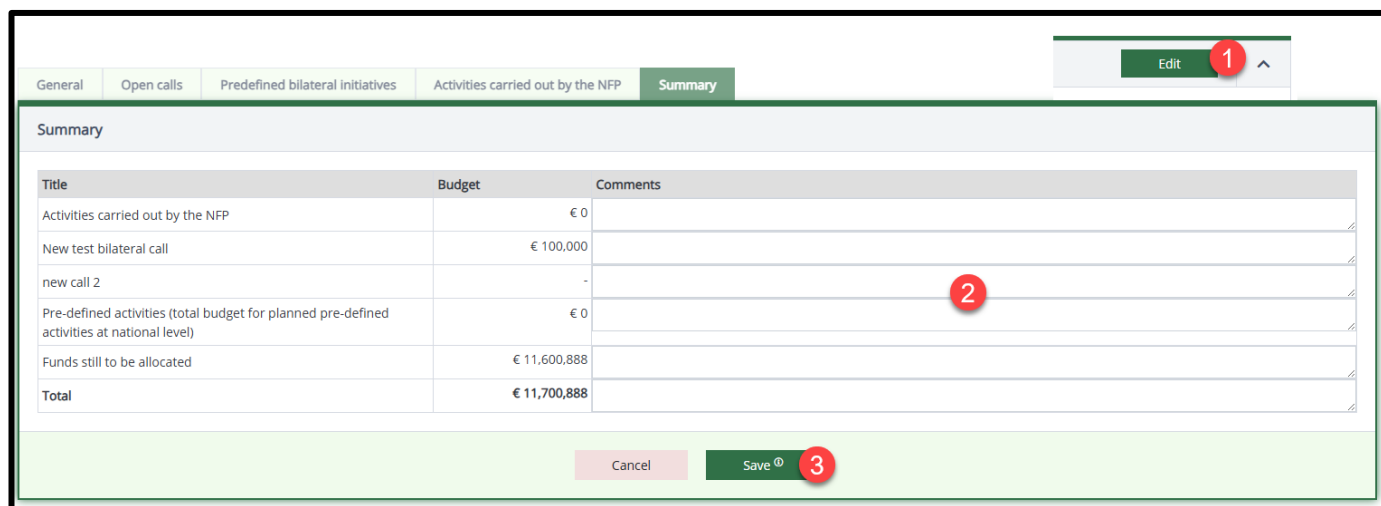
Activities carried out by the NFP ⓘ

Click on the title or code of an initiative to view more details in a new tab.

Table last updated on 27.06.2025 14:47 Update with the latest data

Title	Code	State	JCBF approval date	Grant awarded from Bilateral fund	Implementation period start	Implementation period end	Type of initiative	Amount incurred
No entries found.								

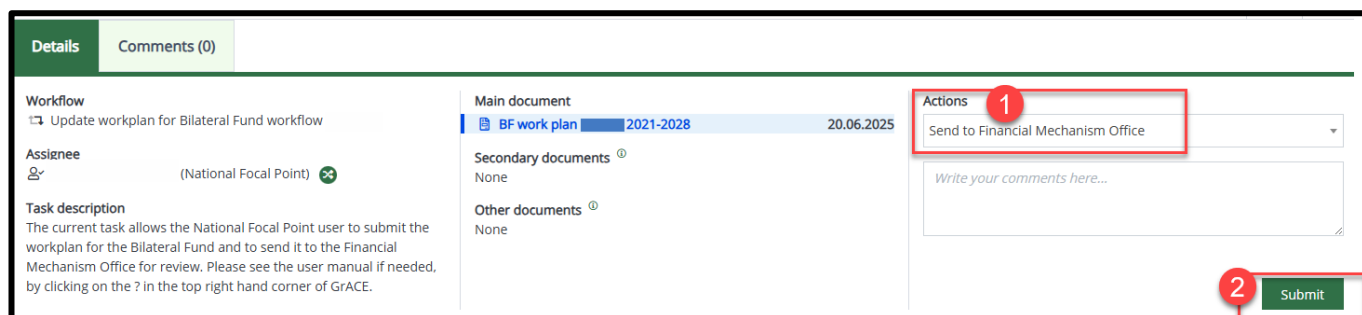
In the *Summary* tab, there is a table showing a summary of the previous tabs, with their budgets and comments. This table will be updated if any data in the other tabs are updated. The budget amounts are carried over from the corresponding tabs, and hence not possible to change in this view. You can add or change comments by clicking on **Edit (1)** in the upper right-hand corner, then editing a comment (2) and clicking **Save (3)**.



Title	Budget	Comments
Activities carried out by the NFP	€ 0	
New test bilateral call	€ 100,000	
new call 2	-	
Pre-defined activities (total budget for planned pre-defined activities at national level)	€ 0	
Funds still to be allocated	€ 11,600,888	
Total	€ 11,700,888	

4. Submit the Work plan

After finalising the registration of information in all *Structured Data* tabs, select **Send to Financial Mechanism Office (1)** and then click **Submit (2)**. The system will notify you in case there are empty textboxes. If this is the case, then you must fill them in before submitting the Work plan. Optionally, you can leave a comment for FMO.



Details | Comments (0)

Workflow
Update workplan for Bilateral Fund workflow

Assignee
(National Focal Point)

Task description
The current task allows the National Focal Point user to submit the workplan for the Bilateral Fund and to send it to the Financial Mechanism Office for review. Please see the user manual if needed, by clicking on the ? in the top right hand corner of GrACE.

Main document
BF work plan 2021-2028 20.06.2025

Secondary documents
None

Other documents
None

Actions
Send to Financial Mechanism Office

Write your comments here...

Submit

The FMO Country Officer will receive a task to Review Work plan submission.

5. Update the Work plan further to FMO comments

In case further changes are needed, the FMO Country Officer will return the *Update Work plan for Bilateral Fund* task to the NFP. Accordingly, you will receive a notification by email and a task to update the work plan, in GrACE.

In the task details, you can access the document with comments from FMO (if any) in the section “Secondary documents” (1) – or it might be that the feedback was left as Comments, in that case please find them in the “Comments” (2) tab:

You can now edit the Work plan as shown above in 3 Fill in the Work plan. When ready, you can submit the Work plan to FMO once more.

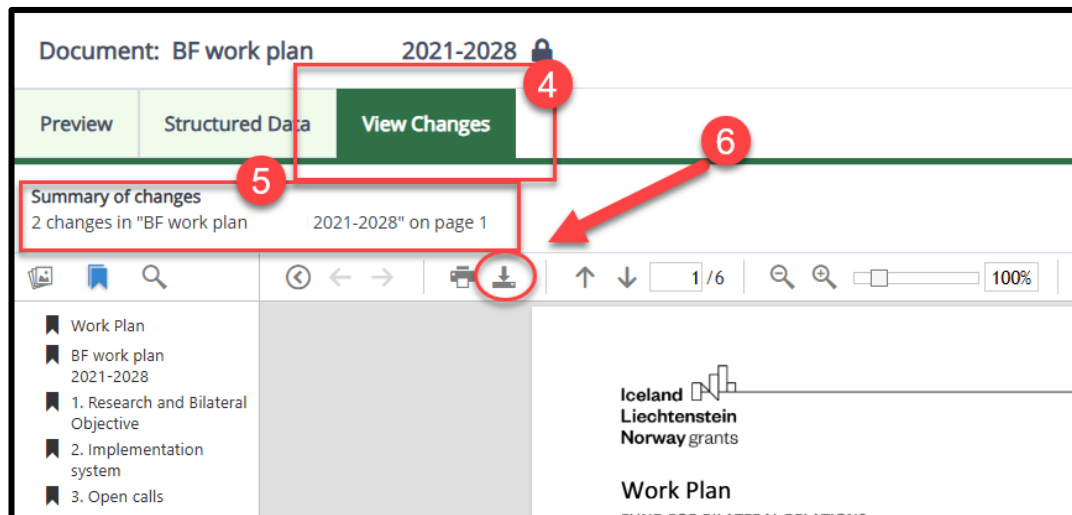
6. Updating the Work plan at a later stage

To update a Work plan that has already been submitted and approved by the FMO, further to a decision by the JCBF to amend the Work plan (e.g. to include new initiatives or modify priorities), the NFP has the possibility to start the update Work plan workflow itself.

You will find this option from your Dashboard when you first log into GrACE. Start the workflow by clicking **Initiate a new process** (1) and then select “Update the Work plan of the Bilateral Fund” (2). Click **Initiate the process** (3) to start it.

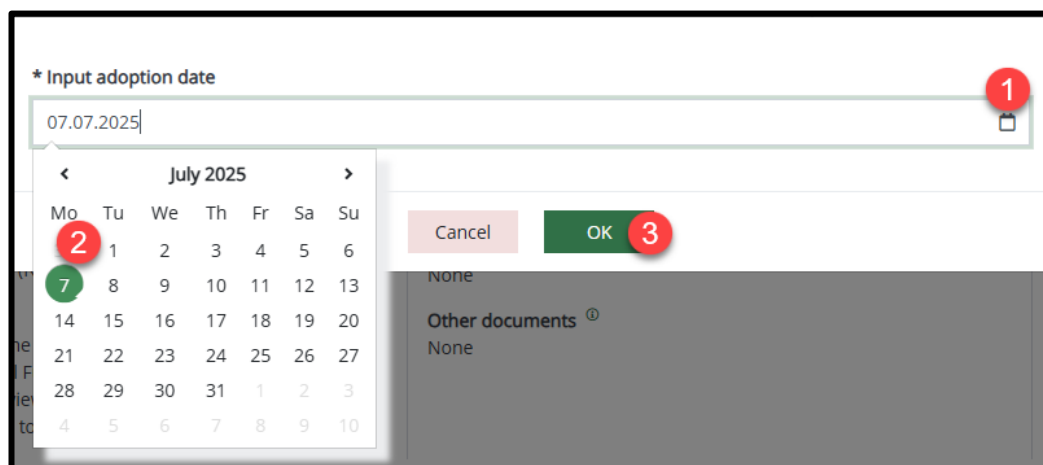
The new workflow will start, and you will once more find the task for submitting the Work plan on your dashboard as explained in the previous chapters of this user manual.

Inside the task of the update workflow, you can see the *View Changes* (4) tab. This tab will show the number of changes and on which page they were made (5) by comparing the previously submitted Work plan with the new edits. You can download this comparison document by clicking on the download icon (6) on the menu right above the document, this document can be viewed in Word showing the changes between the versions.



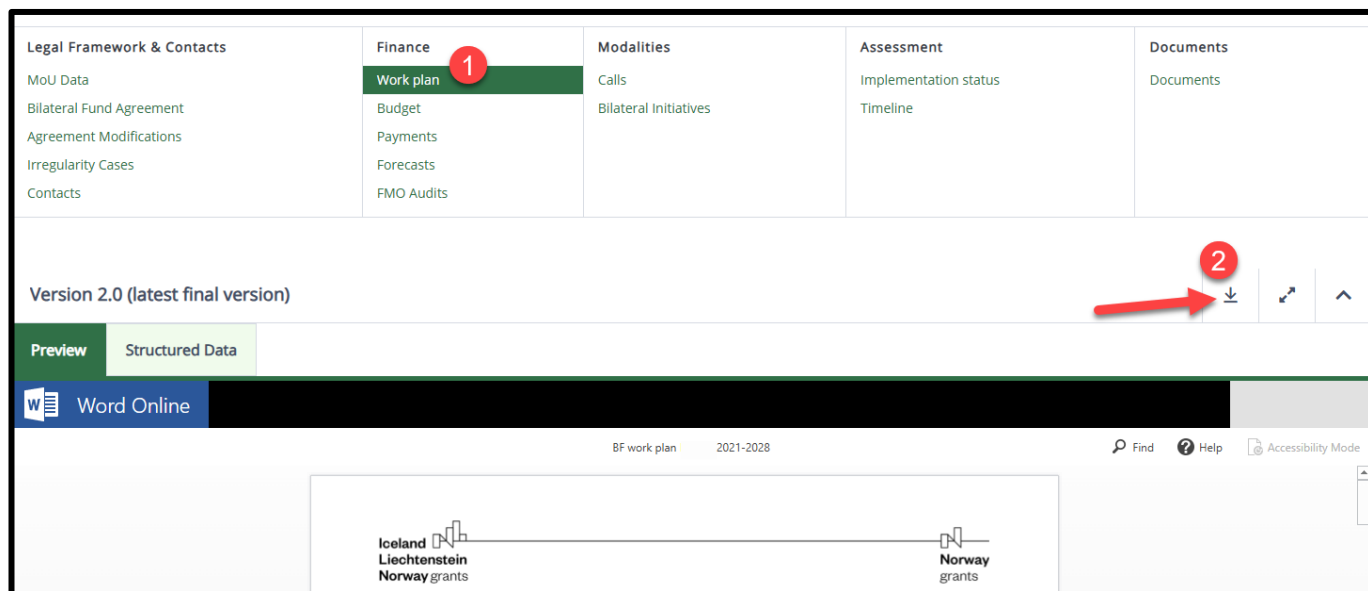
When the updated Work plan is ready to be submitted, submit as explained in *Submit the Work plan*.

When you submit you will be asked at what time the new Work plan was adopted by the JCBF. Select the icon for the calendar (1), select the adoption date (2) and click on **OK** (3). It will now be submitted to the FMO.



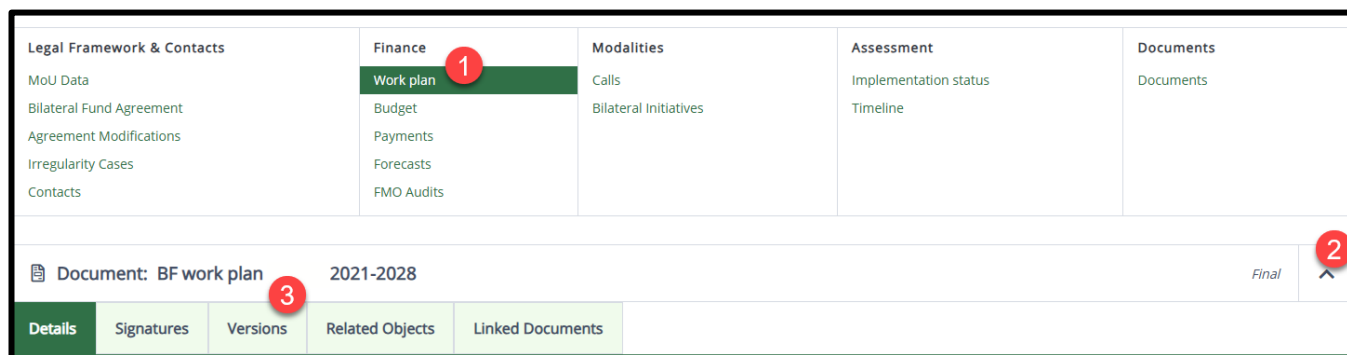
7. View the Work plan

The final Work plan can be viewed under the Finance section on the Bilateral Fund programme page (1). The latest version can either be previewed in GrACE or downloaded as a Word document or PDF by clicking on the **Download** button in the right-hand corner (2).



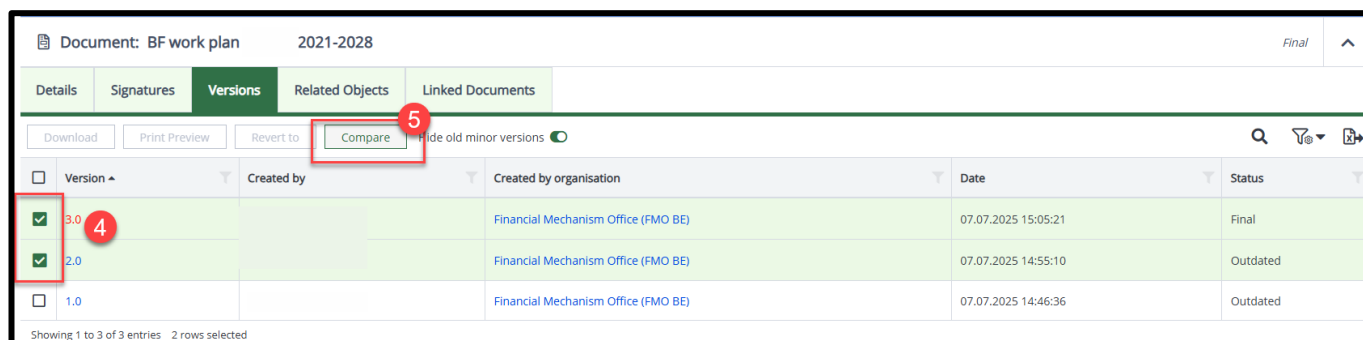
The screenshot shows the Bilateral Fund programme page. The 'Finance' section is highlighted with a red circle (1), and the 'Work plan' item is selected. In the top right corner, there is a download button (2) represented by a downward arrow icon.

To access older versions of the Work plan and/or to compare the latest version, first click the 'Work plan' (1) item in the menu. Then click the down-facing arrow (2) of in the right-hand corner of the document, to open up the menu with options for the document.



The screenshot shows the document view for 'BF work plan 2021-2028'. The 'Versions' tab is highlighted with a red circle (3). In the top right corner, there is a down-facing arrow (2) next to the 'Final' status.

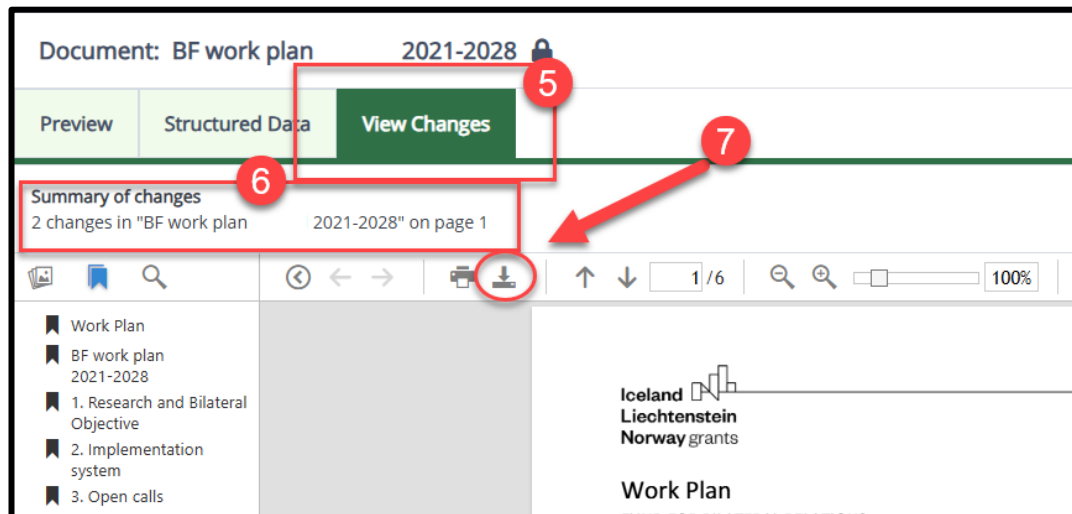
Under the *Versions* tab (3), tick the checkboxes of the versions you want to compare (4). Click on **Compare** to view the track changes merged into one document (5).



The screenshot shows the 'Versions' tab with a table of document versions. The 'Compare' button is highlighted with a red circle (5). The table has columns for Version, Created by, Created by organisation, Date, and Status. The first two rows are selected, indicated by checkboxes (4).

Version	Created by	Created by organisation	Date	Status
3.0		Financial Mechanism Office (FMO BE)	07.07.2025 15:05:21	Final
2.0		Financial Mechanism Office (FMO BE)	07.07.2025 14:55:10	Outdated
1.0		Financial Mechanism Office (FMO BE)	07.07.2025 14:46:36	Outdated

Once the comparison page loads, you will see the *View Changes* (5) tab. This tab will show the number of changes and on which page they were made (6) by comparing the previously submitted Work plan with the new edits. You can download this comparison document by clicking on the download icon (7) on the menu right above the document, this document can be viewed in Word showing the changes between the versions.



It is also possible to download older versions as a document by ticking the checkbox next to a version and then clicking **Download**.

