

# Norwegian Bilateral Relations in the Implementation of the EEA Financial Mechanisms

Final Report



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**Project:** Review of Norwegian Bilateral Partnerships in the  
Implementation of the Financial Mechanisms

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## Acronyms and Abbreviations

EC	European Commission
EEA	European Economic Area
EU	European Union
EUR	Euro (currency)
FMC	Financial Mechanism Committee
FMO	Financial Mechanism Office
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NCP	National Call for Proposals
NFP	National Focal Point
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
NMFA	Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs
TOR	Terms of Reference

## 1 Executive Summary

The EEA Financial Mechanism and the Norwegian Financial Mechanism were formally established in May 2004 with the objective:

*"Contribute to the reduction of social and economic disparities within the EEA, and to enable all EEA countries to participate fully in the Internal Market".*

Through the EEA Financial Mechanism, the three EEA-EFTA states Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway will make a total of EUR 672 million available to the 12 countries that joined the EU and the EEA in May 2004 and in January 2007, as well as to Greece, Portugal and Spain. Through the Norwegian Financial Mechanism, Norway will make an additional EUR 567 million available to the 10 countries that joined the EU and the EEA in 2004. Both mechanisms run over a five-year period until 2009. Norway, as the largest of the three donors, will contribute EUR 1.2 billion.

When Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) were negotiated with Beneficiary States, a clause on the strengthening of bilateral relations was included. The wording of this purpose is somewhat different in the various MoUs. But the meaning is generally the same. There is also a difference in how and where this purpose is expressed in the MoU. In most it is expressed as a preamble, stating

*"Whereas the EEA Enlargement Agreement and the Norwegian Financial Mechanism will strengthen relations between Norway and Beneficiary State to the mutual benefit of their peoples".*

In some this is also repeated in the introduction to Annex B to the MoU, where it is explicitly stated:

*The Norwegian Financial Mechanism aims to strengthen the bilateral relations between the Beneficiary State and Norway*

Many of the countries have in guidelines for different schemes included extra points for partnership projects in their evaluations. In most countries such measures to promote partnerships have been introduced after the first round of national calls for proposals.

In February 2008 FMO had received a total of 663 project applications of which 145 projects (21.9 %) had Norwegian partners. Latvia is the country with by far the highest share of partnership projects (36 %). For four countries this share is higher than for the average: Portugal 29.0 %, Poland 26.4 %, Estonia (25.8 %) and Slovenia 25.0 %.

There is quite a difference between the Priority Sectors. Two Priority Sectors stand out. First there is "Academic research" with 67.7 % of funds going to approved partnership projects and 52.9 % of the all the projects in this Priority Sector have partners. Then there is "Regional Policy" with 51.3% and 50.0 % respectively.

There are 168 partnerships in the 145 submitted partnership projects. 17 projects have more than one Norwegian partner.

There are 98 Norwegian institutions which are quoted as partners in the 145 partnership projects. 25 of these are partners in more than one project. Actually these 25 institutions have altogether 93 partnerships, which is 55.4 % of the total 168 partnerships.

The biggest category of Norwegian partnership institutions is “Private business companies” with 21 of the institutions (21.4 %). There are 18 institutions (18.4 %) in each of the two categories “Research institutions” and “Regional and local government”. There are 11 higher education institutions (11.2 %) and nine museums (9.2 %).

This review included surveys of Norwegian institutions who are project partners with institutions in the beneficiary states and of project promoters in these countries with and without partnerships.

For 67.7 % of the project promoters with Norwegian partners the partnership was a continuation of an existing contact with a Norwegian institution. For 64.5 % of the Norwegian institutions the partnership was a continuation of an existing cooperation. For those project promoters for whom the partnership was a new contact, 50 % had used their own network to find the partner. Very few had used assistance from others to find the partner. 87.9 % of the project promoters and 83.3 % of the Norwegian institutions rated the partnership as successful.

In the survey sent to project promoters without Norwegian partners 86.3 % responded that they had not in any way been encouraged to look for Norwegian partners when they prepared the project proposal. 26.2 % responded that they had considered trying to find a Norwegian partner and 73.4 % that they had not. 93.3 % responded that they had not been approached by a Norwegian institution with interest to develop a partnership. 65.6 % responded that they would have looked for a Norwegian partner if they had been aware of the Norwegian embassy’s availability to assist in finding such partner.

Almost all of those surveyed are involved in projects following the first call for proposals. After this, most of those involved both from the Norwegian side and in the beneficiary states have undertaken different measures to promote and encourage partnerships. This includes for instance extra points for partnerships in projects and seed money funds to encourage partnerships. While 17 % of approved projects by December 2007 had partnerships, this share comes to 21.9 % if all submitted projects by February 2008 are included.

There is quite a consistency in the opinions on factors that contribute to partnerships. All agree that most partnerships build on long term relations. 68% of project promoters with partnerships reported that the current project was a continuation of existing relations. Likewise 65 % of the Norwegian partners also reported that the partnership was a continuation of existing relations with the partner. In addition informants both in Beneficiary States and in Norway emphasise that for those who do not have existing contacts to build on, the need for necessary access to information on potential partners is of paramount importance. Furthermore such new partnerships depend on necessary time to find and build the relations. For all institutions on both sides it is stated by all that successful partnerships depend on a clear understanding of the benefits and value added for each party and the tasks and responsibilities this involve. In most cases the benefits are based on complementarity and compatibility.

This review gives concrete recommendations to the different players on how they further promote partnerships in projects. Institutions in Beneficiary States involved in the management of Financial Mechanisms should prepare a comprehensive documentation on existing guidelines and procedures on partnerships. They should be more proactive in

assisting project applicants in addressing issues which may be detrimental to partnerships. Finally, they should collect and present positive experiences from partnership projects.

Institutions in the beneficiary states must take into account that they will have to be active in order to find and motivate Norwegian institutions for partnership. This means that they must develop their ideas on what they want from such partnerships, what they expect from the other and what they themselves will bring into such a partnership and how this may strengthen their application.

There is a shared opinion in the beneficiary states that the Norwegian embassies play a pivotal role in promoting and facilitating partnerships and that it is important that these efforts are sustained. At this stage it is particularly important that the embassies intensify their role as an intermediary to identify candidates for partnership, provide advice and further develop the embassy's role as a mediator between project promoters and Norwegian institutions looking for partners. The embassies should also organise best practice events with emphasis on positive partnership experiences with equal emphasis on experiences from both sides.

### **Recommendations**

The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (NMFA) should discuss with the beneficiary states possibilities to alleviate procedures and requirements which may be detrimental to partnerships. NMFA should take the necessary steps to better disseminate information to the public and relevant institutions on possibilities for and achievements from partnerships. NMFA should establish "pre-project" facilities (seed money) for developing project ideas and establishing contacts. This should target institutions both in beneficiary states and in Norway and target those types of institutions which have been less successful in establishing partnerships, e.g. NGOs.

Individual Norwegian institutions trying to establish partnerships for shared projects in Beneficiary State should follow closely the calendar for calls for proposals in the beneficiary states and familiarize themselves with priority sectors, funds and programmes in countries of interest. They need to be more active in building up contacts at all levels in beneficiary states (Focal Point, Intermediaries and individual institutions) and identify project promoters who are likely to prepare applications and approach these.

FMO is the nodal point for the Financial Mechanisms. It has access to most information on partnerships in all the beneficiary states. FMO should document strategies and measures as well as experiences and results from partnership projects in the different countries. This should include information on rules and procedures for partnerships in different countries. This should then be followed up with a systematic dissemination of good partnership experiences. FMO should cooperate actively with the beneficiary states to simplify application procedures and documentation requirements as much as possible.

The Financial Mechanisms have opened up for Norway a totally new and very broad scope of entry points for bilateral relations with the beneficiary states, which it never had before. It constitutes a unique door opener for NMFA with its embassies as well as for other Norwegian institutions. Financial Mechanisms represent an entry point and stepping stone for development of bilateral relations well beyond just individual partnership projects. It is a gate opener to areas and institutions which are not so easily captured through more



“traditional” relations through embassies. However, in spite of the shared views of the positive contribution of the Financial Mechanisms to bilateral relations, it is also the opinion of some, that in practice the potential that grants represent in this regard are not fully followed up. If Norway wants to capitalize on the positive experiences from partnerships through projects and use this to further strengthen bilateral relations and broaden the policy dialogue between the countries, Norway will have to expand and somewhat shift the focus of its cooperation with the beneficiary states through the Financial Mechanisms.

Given the fact that some of the National focal points have expressed that there is no clear statement on what Norway wants to achieve with regard to bilateral relations, NMFA should prepare a policy document explaining this. Such a document should be well suited to be presented at the annual meetings between Norway and the beneficiary states.

## 2 Background and Introduction

The EEA Financial Mechanism and the Norwegian Financial Mechanism were formally established in May 2004 in connection with the enlargement of the European Union when ten new member states joined not only the EU, but also the European Economic Area (EEA). The EEA brings together the EU and Iceland, Lichtenstein and Norway in the Internal Market. The objective of the Financial Mechanisms is

*"Contribute to the reduction of social and economic disparities within the EEA, and to enable all EEA countries to participate fully in the Internal Market".*

Through the EEA Financial Mechanism, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway will make a total of EUR 672 million available to the 12 new member states that joined the EU and the EEA in 2004 and 2007, as well as to Greece, Portugal and Spain. Through the Norwegian Financial Mechanism, Norway will make an additional EUR 567 million available to the ten countries that joined the EU and the EEA in 2004. Both mechanisms run over a five-year period until 2009. Norway, as the largest of the three donors, will contribute EUR 1.2 billion. Norway will contribute an additional EUR 68 million over the same period through bilateral cooperation programmes with Bulgaria and Romania. There are two Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) for each country, with the exception of Spain, Portugal and Greece. For these three countries there is no separate Norwegian mechanism, and therefore only one MoU. Both types of MoUs have a preamble on bilateral relations.

In this report we do not make any distinction between the EEA Financial Mechanism and the Norwegian Financial Mechanism and refer to them jointly as the Financial Mechanisms. The focus of this report is on projects with Norwegian partners and the bilateral relations between Norway and the beneficiary states.

The Financial Mechanisms are jointly implemented by the beneficiary states and the donor states. The MoUs specify the implementation system in each beneficiary state, focus areas within the overall priority sectors and any special block grants, or funds, which the beneficiary states want to establish to support groups or activities with specific needs and requirements.

The Financial Mechanisms offer assistance in different forms as specified in the MoU with each Beneficiary State.

Individual projects are the most common form of support under the Financial Mechanisms. Annex B to the MoU defines the Priority Sectors with sub-categories for individual projects in each individual country. These vary between the countries.

In addition Annex C in the MoU also identifies specific forms of grant assistance such as Non-governmental Organisation (NGO) grant scheme, Scholarship grant scheme, Technical assistance fund, Seed money grant scheme, Short-term expert fund. They are often referred to as programmes, block grants or funds and defined as "groups of projects". This instrument may be used to support several projects that share a common geographic or sectoral theme. Once approved, the implementation of such programmes or funds will be coordinated by a designated intermediary in the beneficiary state. The intermediary will be responsible for making grants available to potential end-recipients within the group or activity covered by the fund. Such projects are often referred to as sub-projects.

The maximum grant rate is normally 60% of the total eligible project cost, but may be extended to up to 85% if the applicant has secured at least 15% co-financing from local, regional or central budget allocation. NGOs may receive a grant rate of up to 90% of total eligible project costs, provided that the application is submitted within one of the priority sectors that are common to both financial mechanisms.

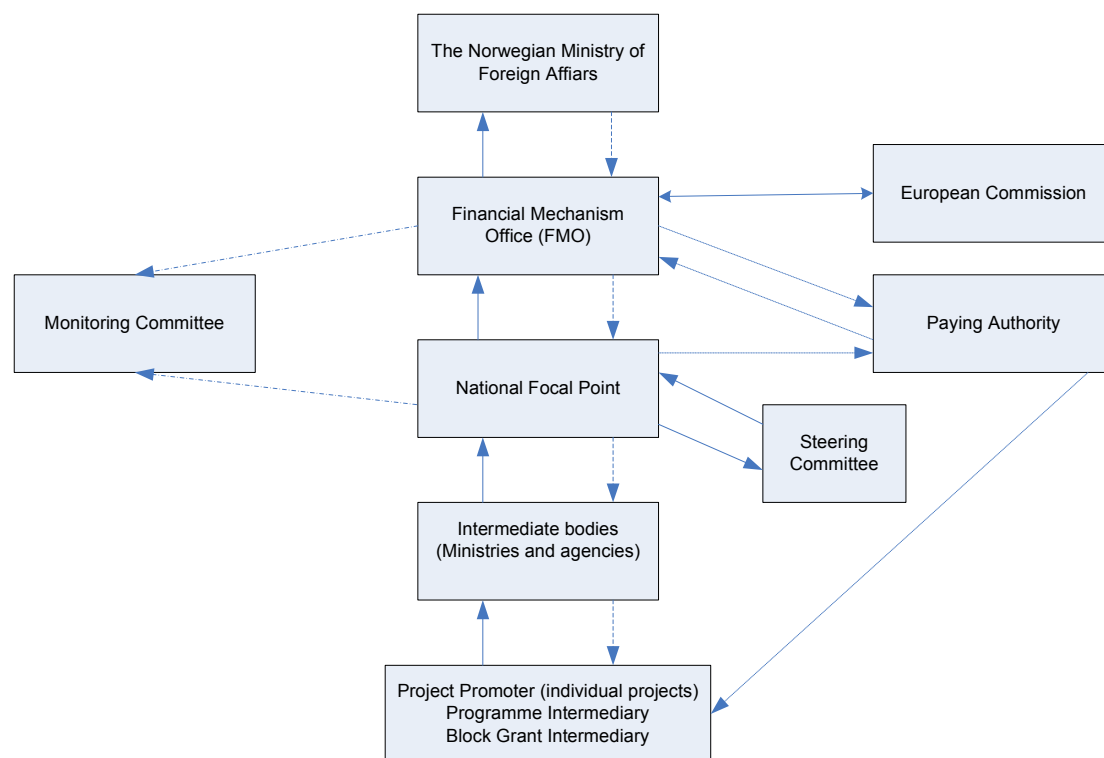
Generally the total funding available for individual projects in the priority sectors is larger than the amount available for the sub-projects under programmes and funds. For individual projects in the priority sectors there is a lower threshold of EUR 250,000, while this is much lower for sub projects.

Table 2.1 gives the Financial Mechanisms allocation to the different states.

**Table 2.1 Allocations per beneficiary state 2004 – 2009 (in EUR)**

COUNTRY	EEA	NORWAY	TOTAL
Poland	280 800 000	277 830 000	558 630 000
Hungary	60 800 000	74 300 000	135 100 000
Romania	50 500 000		50 500 000
Czech Republic	48 500 000	62 400 000	110 900 000
Spain	45 800 000		45 800 000
Greece	34 300 000		34 300 000
Slovakia	32 300 000	38 000 000	70 300 000
Portugal	31 300 000		31 300 000
Lithuania	27 000 000	40 300 000	67 300 000
Bulgaria	21 500 000		21 500 000
Latvia	19 700 000	34 000 000	53 700 000
Estonia	10 100 000	22 700 000	32 800 000
Slovenia	6 100 000	12 500 000	18 600 000
Malta	1 900 000	1 700 000	3 600 000
Cyprus	1 300 000	3 400 000	4 700 000
Total	671 900 000	567 130 000	1 239 030 000

The structure for the Financial Mechanisms and the procedures are drawn up in the MoUs with individual countries. There are variations between the countries. Figure 2.1 shows an example taken from the MoU between Norway and Latvia . In some countries there are no intermediary bodies between the National Focal Point (NFP) and the project promoters and in some there are not both Steering Committee and Monitoring Committee.

**Figure 2.1** Financial Mechanisms structures and procedures

The implementation of the Financial Mechanisms is based on close cooperation between the donor states and the beneficiary states. The Financial Mechanism Office (FMO) in Brussels acts as a day-to-day secretariat. In each Beneficiary State a National Focal Point (NFP) is responsible for announcing calls for proposals and for prioritizing among the applications submitted by potential project promoters in their country and then submit these to the FMO. The FMO and the donor states clear the open call text.

In most countries line ministries (occasionally regional governments) cooperate with the NFP and they are represented in different committees. However, in some countries the NFP is supported by intermediate bodies and auxiliary institutions in charge of priority sectors. Furthermore Intermediaries are selected to operate Programmes and funds. They are the ones who do the “ground work”, preparing the invitation for calls, collect proposals, and do the first evaluation and forward proposals with recommendations to the NFP.

The prioritized applications from each call for proposal are forwarded by the NFP to the FMO for an appraisal and for screening by the European Commission (EC). Finally, the donor states make a decision on each application. This decision is based on a grant recommendation by the FMO, the opinion of the beneficiary state and the screening by the EC.

All public and private institutions operating in the public interest may apply for grants as may NGOs and other civil society organizations. Applicants need to be established legal entities in the beneficiary state in which they submit their application, but partnerships with non-national partners, such as from the donor states Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, are

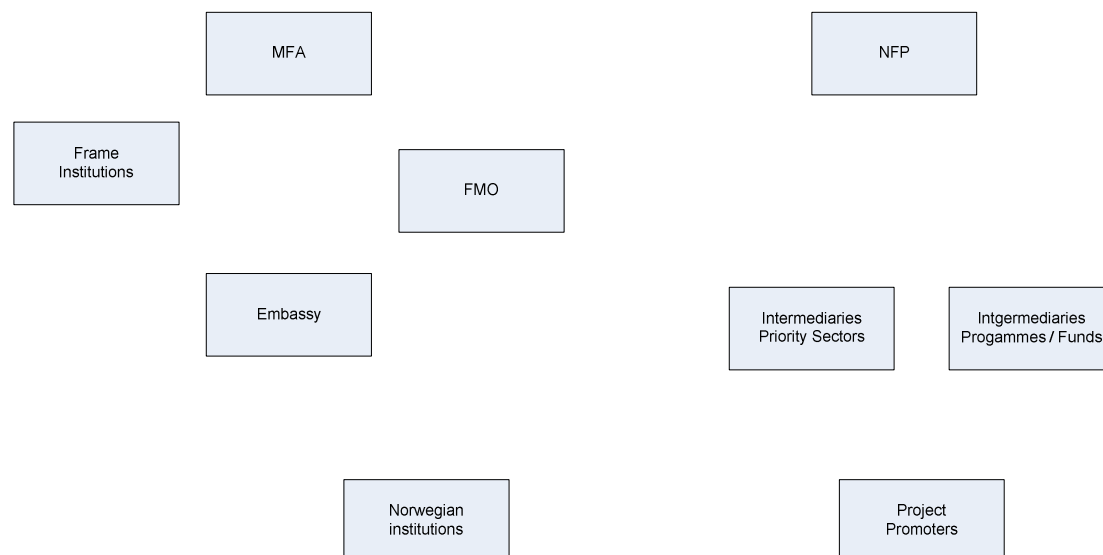
fully acceptable provided that a legal entity from the beneficiary state acts as a lead partner. Generally there is no requirement for partnership, but partnerships are promoted and encouraged in different ways.

The Project cycle from application for an individual project to final approval will depend upon the structure in the country and may consist of the following steps:

1. National call for proposal (NCP)
2. Project promoter prepares and submits project application to the NFP or the intermediary or intermediary body in the countries where these are included
3. Proposal is evaluated by intermediary or intermediary body and recommended projects are submitted to NFP (only in those countries where this level is included)
4. NFP evaluates the received projects, following different procedures in different countries and submits the projects nominated nationally for financing to the FMO for appraisal and EC screening.
5. The EC screens the project, the FMO makes an evaluation and submits a recommendation to approve or reject the project to the NMFA or FMC for decision.

In the case of sub-projects under programmes or block grants, the applicant deals solely with the intermediary.

Figure 2.2 presents an overview of the players involved in the Financial Mechanisms and promotion of partnerships. In this we have included the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (NMFA) and the Norwegian frame institutions that NMFA has involved in their work with the Grants. These institutions have no formal role in the structure and the processes. But they work actively to promote Norwegian partnerships, liaising with individual Norwegian organisations as well as public institutions and individual organizations in the Beneficiary States. In the figure we have also included the Norwegian embassies in the Beneficiary States. They play an important role as a nodal point for networking between Norwegian frame institutions and individual organisations on one side and institutions and individual organizations in beneficiary states. In some countries they also participate in most of the seminars and promotional activities arranged by national institutions in connection with national calls for proposals. The figure also includes Norwegian organisations that may be partners to organisations in the beneficiary states.

**Figure 2.2: Players involved in promotion of project partnerships**

In addition there is the Financial Mechanism Committee, which is composed of the three donor countries Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway. All the three countries must approve the projects under the EEA Financial Mechanism, while financing under the Norwegian Financial Mechanism is only done by NMFA.

## 2.1 Terms of Reference and Methodology

The Terms of Reference (ToR) is enclosed as Annex A to this report. It states that “the main purpose of this review is to assess the progress made so far in relation to the objective of strengthening the bilateral relationship between Norway and the beneficiary states, and to provide recommendations for the remaining implementation period.” It then states that the scope of the Review is two-fold:

- (i) To the extent possible within the time constraints provided, document how the bilateral relationships with the beneficiary states have developed as a result of the implementation of the Financial Mechanisms, and assess the achievements made in relation to the bilateral objectives of the mechanisms.
- (ii) Analyse and identify various aspects and trends regarding the establishment of successful partnerships. Success criteria should be indicated and recommendations provided on the best approach for the remaining implementation period of the Financial Mechanisms. This should be the main emphasis of the review. As part of this assignment an appropriate questionnaire should be developed and submitted to all Norwegian partners that have successfully established partnerships that have been recommended for funding.

In line with the ToR the focus of the review has been on the various aspects of the partnerships. It was agreed with the NMFA that the basis for the review should be the 60 projects with Norwegian partners for which donors had committed funding by mid December 2007. In addition 11 projects submitted from Latvia and one from the Czech Republic were added to this list. The first task was to review project applications, appraisal reports and partnership statements for these 72 projects to see how issues related to bilateral relations and partnerships were addressed, and identify the Norwegian partner institutions with contact persons and addresses.

The next step was to undertake interviews with NMFA and Norwegian frame institutions with which NMFA has cooperated.

Three web based surveys were undertaken, based on approved projects, each with a special questionnaire: (i) Norwegian institutions with partnerships (see section 5.3); (ii) Project promoters with partnerships (see section 4.4); and (iii) Project promoters without partners (see section 4.5).

The Review Team visited Latvia, Poland and the Czech Republic, meeting the Norwegian Embassy, the NFP, Intermediary institutions in charge of priority sectors and programmes and funds, and some selected projects with and without partners. These interviews were based on conversation guides that had been sent out beforehand, to ensure that the same questions were addressed in all three countries. Norwegian embassies were furthermore requested to provide information on Norwegian institutions that had made unsuccessful efforts to find project promoters interested in partnership, and information and opinions on how Financial Mechanisms contribute to the strengthening of bilateral relations.

Throughout the Review FMO has expeditiously provided all the statistical information necessary for the Review. FMO also assisted in providing e-mail addresses of project partners for the two surveys to project promoters and by informing National Focal Points and project promoters about the survey.

## 2.2 Report Structure

This report contains six substantive chapters:

- Chapter 3 provides an overview of the intentions of the different players to strengthen bilateral relations and promote partnerships through the Financial Mechanisms. It also includes a statistical overview of Financial Mechanisms and partnerships and a summary presentation of the Norwegian partner institutions.
- Chapter 4 presents information on how partnerships are viewed in Latvia, Poland and the Czech Republic as well as the findings from the two surveys to project promoters in all the beneficiary states.
- Chapter 5 presents information on how Norwegian actors promote partnerships and their views on this, and includes the findings from the survey to Norwegian institutions with partnerships.
- Chapter 6 addresses how the Financial Mechanisms contribute to the strengthening of bilateral relations between Norway and the beneficiary states and the future challenges in this regard.

- Chapter 7 presents conclusions and recommendations on both partnerships and bilateral relations.

In addition there are two annexes:

- Annex A provides the full ToR;
- Annex B gives an overview of the Norwegian partners involved in the Financial Mechanisms.

## 2.3 Acknowledgements and Disclaimer

The review team had to rely heavily on the time and support from a wide range of persons. The team would like to thank in particular staff at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and at the FMO in Brussels for all their assistance, particularly in providing the data requested.

The team was met, without exception, by a very positive and forthcoming attitude by Embassy staff, National Focal Point staff and other national partners implementing activities funded by the EEA Financial Mechanisms during the field visits. Norwegian partner institutions and informants interviewed in Norway were likewise very helpful, and we are also grateful to the Norwegian and partner country project promoters who replied to the various surveys.

This Draft Report is the sole responsibility of the consultants, and does not necessarily reflect the views of the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Norwegian Embassies, the authorities of the partner countries visited or other informants spoken with.



### 3 Bilateral Relations and Partnerships

When the Norwegian Government submitted the State Budget for 2005 to Parliament for the initial allocation for the Financial Mechanisms, two important statements were made:

*In addition to the objective of contributing to a reduction of economic and social disparities in the EEA the financial schemes play an important role in strengthening the bilateral relations between Norway and the respective countries.*

*In order to facilitate the participation of Norwegian stakeholders in the financial schemes the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has close contact with other ministries, local authorities and business and non governmental organisations in connection with preparation of guidelines and rules..*

Parliament made the following comments:

*The committee requests the Government to consider how to further facilitate increased participation of NGOs in the financial schemes for the enlarged EEA.*

*The majority considers that Norwegian business can play an important role in the transition process which the new member countries are now going through. Norwegian business may, in the opinion of the majority, together with the authorities and other stakeholders contribute to a sustainable economic and regional development in the new member countries.*

*The majority considers that an interaction between Norwegian business and other stakeholders both in Norway and the recipient countries is important in order to gain access in the new member countries. The majority believes that one should consider the establishment of a dedicated grant scheme*

*The majority believes that one should consider the establishment of a dedicated grant scheme, and asks the Government to revert to this in connection with the adjusted National Budget for 2005.*

In the State Budget for 2007 the Government described how the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had facilitated the use by Norwegian stakeholders of the possibilities under the schemes, and how Norwegian Embassies in the recipient countries work actively for facilitating increased bilateral cooperation in connection with the schemes.

Parliament commented on this through the following statement from the committee:

*The committee refers to the fact that it is a political objective to strengthen the bilateral relations between Norway and the recipient countries through the schemes, and notes that the government has contributed with contacts and information in order for Norwegian stakeholders to develop such bilateral cooperation. Through hearings the committee has become aware that for many stakeholders, for instance NGOs and the labour and employers' unions, has been difficult to establish a bilateral cooperation due to lack of financing on the Norwegian side. The committee considers that the authorities must consider how the objective of bilateral cooperation can be better secured through the financial schemes or in other ways.*

In practice the intentions of Parliament have been followed up in many ways. When MoUs were negotiated with Beneficiary States, a clause on the strengthening of bilateral relations was included. The wording of this purpose varies somewhat across the various MoUs

though the meaning is generally the same. There is also a difference in how and where this purpose is expressed in the MoU. In most it is expressed as a preamble, stating

*“Whereas the EEA Enlargement Agreement and the Norwegian Financial Mechanism will strengthen relations between Norway and Beneficiary State to the mutual benefit of their peoples”.*

In some this is also repeated in the introduction to Annex B to the MoU, where it is explicitly stated:

*The Norwegian Financial mechanism aims to strengthen the bilateral relations between the Beneficiary State and Norway*

A similar clause is included for the EEA Financial Mechanism.

The application forms to be used for individual projects have one clause on partnership, which may apply to possible partners from the Beneficiary State and from abroad (clause 4.4.2). If this includes partners from EEA-EFTA states, their roles should be explained. Then there is a clause on bilateral relations (clause 10), where the applicant is to answer the following:

- Whether the project may contribute to the strengthening of relations between EEA-EFTA states and the Beneficiary State
- If the project involves partners from EEA-EFTA states, explain the opportunities to be gained

The FMO’s Appraisal Manual has a special section (number 7) where the Appraisal Agent in charge of the appraisal is to assess bilateral relations and partnerships.

In the three countries visited it was noted that partnerships with institutions from EEA-EFTA states are mentioned or encouraged in many of the documents following calls for proposals (Set-up, criteria and guidelines).

In addition to the individual projects several of the various programmes and block grants (often referred to as funds) are designed to favour partnerships with partners from EEA-EFTA countries and in some cases specifically Norway. They include different NGO funds, Scholarship schemes, Short Term Experts and Seed Money for project preparation when they include foreign partners etc. For some of these partnership with Norwegian institutions is even compulsory.

Many of the countries have in their guidelines for different schemes included extra points for partnership projects in their evaluations. In most countries such measures to promote partnerships have been introduced after the first round of national calls for proposals. In connection with this review FMO checked to what extent partnerships have been addressed in calls for proposals in the different beneficiary states. This showed that partnerships are explicitly addressed in a large number of programmes and funds in most of the countries, but the impetus varies. The weakest are those where “partnerships are welcomed, but not especially supported” and where “partnerships are welcomed, but not especially encouraged”. Then there is the case when applications are given extra points as a selection criterion when there is a partnership, which is the case for many types of schemes including some NGO funds in some countries. There is the case when partnership is an absolute requirement and condition in order to be eligible for funding, such as for some of the Seed

Money funds and Research funds. Finally, there are the special schemes which are designed for interchange of persons from the two countries (Short Term Expert fund, National Scholarship block Grant) or directly to promote partnerships (Seed Money fund, National – Regional Cooperation, National – Cultural Exchange Fund).

Bilateral relations and partnerships are also included as items in FMO's monitoring procedures, annual country reports and the FMO annual report and addressed at the annual meetings with each Beneficiary State. Projects with EEA-EFTA partners and Norwegian partners are identified and the category for status of such partnerships is included in FMO's project database. This is also a recurrent item which is being addressed at all annual meetings between Norway/FMC and each Beneficiary State.

### 3.1 Statistical overview of Financial Mechanisms and Partnerships

It was agreed with NMFA that the basic unit for the statistical presentation of Financial Mechanisms and partnerships should be projects approved by donors. FMO provided the Review Team with a database of such projects as of December 2007. In this some block grants and programmes are included as projects. Based on this, the tables below were prepared, which may be summarised as follows:

- By December 2007, 353 projects had been approved for a total value of EUR 403.7 million (Table 3.1); Of these, 60 projects (17% of the total) had a Norwegian partner;
- 19.1 % of the total approved funding has gone to projects with Norwegian partners;
- There is quite a difference between the 11 countries. Poland has the highest number of partnership projects (27), but Portugal has by far the highest share of partnership projects (35 %);
- There is a difference in the percentage of money going to projects with partners as to whether these are individual projects (20.8 % of the money), block grants (16.3 %) or programmes (6.5 %). But many of the sub-projects under the block grants and programmes have partnerships which are not captured in this data base (Table 3.2);
- There are major differences between the Sectors. Academic Research" has 68% of funds going to partnership projects and Regional Policy has 51% (Table 3.3).

In February 2008 FMO provided some updated information on both the 378 approved projects and the 285 pending project applications at the FMO, for a total of 663 project applications. The main findings are (Table 3.4):

- 21.9 % of all the 663 submitted applications have Norwegian partners.
- Latvia is the country with by far the highest share of partnership projects (36 %)
- For four countries the share of projects with partnerships is higher than average: Portugal 29.0 %, Poland 26.4 %, Estonia 25.8 % and Slovenia 25 %.
- Types of partnerships are identified in the database as per level of commitment. In 33 projects (22.8 %) the partnership is mentioned in the application . This is the weakest level of commitment between the parties. For 48 projects (33.1 %) there is a letter of intent. For 64 projects (44.1 %) there is a partnership statement or agreement, which is the strongest level of commitment between the parties.

**Table 3.1: Approved projects and partnerships**

	Total		Funds partnership		Partnership projects	
	Funding €	Projects	€	% funds	Number Projects	% of projects
Czech Rep	33 520 011	42	6 767 157	20.2	5	11.9
Estonia	21 434 191	24	3 517 355	16.4	6	25.0
Hungary	24 379 239	15	0	0.0	0	0.0
Latvia	17 807 343	14	1 614 268	9.1	4	28.6
Lithuania	9 903 995	4	3 000 135	30.3	1	25.0
Malta	3 355 373	8	0	0.0	0	0.0
Poland	223 559 825	166	52 698 630	23.6	27	16.3
Portugal	18 851 833	20	4 724 583	25.1	7	35.0
Slovakia	26 430 111	39	1 660 437	6.3	6	15.4
Slovenia	9 857 504	13	2 320 839	23.5	3	23.1
Spain	14 636 485	8	999 998	6.8	1	12.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>403 735 910</b>	<b>353</b>	<b>77 303 402</b>	<b>19.1</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>17.0</b>

**Table 3.2: Partnerships and types of financing**

	Block grant	Individual projects	Programme	Total
Total approved €	113 307 640	279 413 774	11 014 496	403 735 910
No partner €	94 807 505	221 325 055	10 299 948	326 432 508
Partnerships €	18 500 135	58 088 719	714 548	77 303 402
% partnership	16.3 %	20.8 %	6.5 %	19.1 %
Total projects	40	306	7	353
No partner	37	254	6	297
Partnerships	3	52	1	56
% partnership	7.5 %	17.0 %	14.3 %	15.9 %

**Table 3.3 Partnerships and Priority Sectors**

	Total approved		Partner projects			
	EUR	Proj.	EUR	%	Projects	%
Academic research	33 587 572	34	22 694 867	67.6	18	52.9
Conservation of cultural heritage	78 985 163	67	14 460 461	18.3	11	16.4
Cross border activities	6 980 353	5	0	0	0	0.0
Health and childcare	32 474 800	42	3 576 147	11.0	4	9.5
Human resource development	27 634 608	29	8 214 818	29.7	4	13.8
Schengen / judiciary	43 151 273	16	16 203 884	37.6	5	31.3
Sustainable development	11 138 101	8	0	0.0	0	0.0
Protection of environment	85 617 970	112	6 529 114	7.6	8	7.1
Regional policy	10 972 810	12	5 624 111	51.3	6	50.0
Total	330 542 650	325	77 303 402	23.4	56	17.2

**Table 3.4: Total submitted projects to FMO with and without Norwegian partners**

	Total projects		
	Total	Norwegian	%
		partner	partner
		projects	projects
Cyprus	5	0	0.0
Czech Rep	78	9	11.5
Estonia	31	8	25.8
Greece	1	0	0.0
Hungary	52	6	11.5
Latvia	50	18	36.0
Lithuania	53	8	15.1
Malta	9	0	0.0
Poland	269	71	26.4
Portugal	31	9	29.0
Slovakia	46	9	19.6
Slovenia	20	5	25.0
Spain	18	2	11.1
Total	663*)	145	21.9

\*) Of which 378 committed and 285 not committed.

## 3.2 Norwegian institutions with partnerships

The basis for the statistical presentation of partnership projects in the previous section were the 60 approved projects with Norwegian partners by December 2007. This list was expanded with 11 partner projects in Latvia and one in the Czech Republic that had been submitted but not yet approved by FMO. This was done in order to get a broader list of Norwegian institutions with such partnerships to be included in the different surveys.

In February 2008 FMO provided an updated list of 145 submitted projects with Norwegian partners (not only the approved ones). For these 145 projects there are 168 partnerships. The reason why the figure is higher is that in 17 projects there are more than one Norwegian institution involved. The total number of institutions with partnerships is 98 institutions.

Norwegian partner institutions are listed in Annex B. Project numbers and categorization of the institutions are also given. 25 institutions are partners to more than one project, as shown in table 3.5.

**Table 3.5: Number of partnerships and institutions.**

Number of partnerships per institutions	Number of institutions with this number of partnerships	Number of projects per category
1	73	73
2	10	20
3	6	18
4	1	4
5	2	10
6	2	12
7	3	21
8	1	8

In Annex B the institutions are also categorised, using the categories shown in table 3.6. This is done in two ways and shows the following:

- Research institutions have 27.4 % of all the 168 partnerships. Almost all the departments of universities and university clinics are also involved in research. This means that 45.3 % of all the partnerships are with research institutions in a broad sense.
- Of the 98 partner institutions the single biggest group is “Private business companies” with 21.4 %. But if we lump together “Research institutions”, “Universities” and “University clinics”, all actually research institutions of some kind, they come to 29.8 %. 18.4 % of the institutions are in the category “Regional and local government”.

**Table 3.6 Partnerships and institutions**

<b>Categories of institutions</b>	<b>Partnerships per categories of institutions</b>		<b>Institutions per categories</b>	
	Numbers	%	Numbers	%
Research institutions	46	27.4	18	18.4
Private business companies	23	13.7	21	21.4
Regional and local government	25	14.9	18	18.4
Ministries, directorates and other government institutions	23	13.7	11	11.2
Museums	10	6.0	9	9.2
Universities and higher education	24	14.3	11	11.2
University clinics	6	3.6	2	2.0
NGO	5	3.0	5	5.1
School -	3	1.8	3	3.1
Other	3	1.8	0	0.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Finally, it should be mentioned that of the 663 submitted projects, five projects have partners from Iceland and Liechtenstein. There are five partner institutions from Iceland and one from Liechtenstein.

## 4 Partnerships and the Beneficiary States

This chapter addresses the partnerships as seen from the beneficiary state. The first three sections look at the experiences in Latvia, Poland and the Czech Republic, while the last two sections present the two surveys of the national project promoters - those with and those without Norwegian partners.

### 4.1 Latvia

A total of EUR 53.7 million is allocated for Latvia for the period 2004 to 2009. The first National call for proposals for individual projects was launched on 5 December 2006. It is planned that the second call will take place in the first half of 2008. Calls for programmes and funds take place at different times.

Individual projects are large projects with a minimum grant threshold of EUR 250 000. Projects under programmes, funds and block grants are smaller projects, e.g. Seed Money minimum range from EUR 5 000 to EUR 20 000, NGO Project measure EUR 8 000- 100 000, NGO support measure EUR 22 400 - 56 000, and NGO capacity strengthening EUR 5 000 - 30 000.

Each of the nine priority sectors are managed by a ministry. Of the three programmes and seven funds in Latvia one is managed by a ministry and the others by state agencies and an NGO.

Table 4.1 summaries the situation in Latvia with a view to projects and partners.

**Table 4.1: Partnerships in Latvia**

	Total	With partners	% with partners
Approved projects by FMC/NMFA December 2007 *)	7	4	57.1 %
New projects submitted to FMO (Dec 2007) *)	34	11	32.4 %
Total as of December 2007	41	15	36.6 %
Submitted as of January 2008 **)	41	23	46%

\*) Only individual projects

\*\*) Information from National Focal Point

The NFP informed that the total number of submitted applications through National Call for Proposal (NCP) so far is 218 of which 71 have donor state partners. Table 4.2 shows how the numbers vary between the priority sectors.

These statistics only capture partnerships in connection with project proposals within priority sectors, which have to be submitted to FMO. But interviews in Latvia showed that the ratio of projects with partnerships increases in the course of the project cycle, as shown in table 4.3.



**Table 4.2 Project proposals and partnerships in priority sectors**

	Total	With partners	% with partners
Human resources and development	56	20	35.7
Health	37	14	37.8
Protection of the environment	28	6	21.4
Regional Policy and development of economic activity	24	9	37.5
Conservation of European heritage	24	7	29.2
Sustainable development	20	7	35.0
Children with special needs	15	6	40.0
Schengen and Judiciary	14	2	14.3
Total	218	71	32.6

**Table 4.3 Partnerships and the project cycle**

	Total projects	Partners	%
<b>Regional Policy</b>			
1. Projects received intermediary	24	11	45.8
2. Projects accepted by NFP	6	4	66.7
<b>HRD and Education</b>			
1. Projects received intermediary	56	20	35.7
2. Projects forwarded to NFP	45	20	44.4
3. Projects forwarded to FMO	5	5	100.0
<b>Sustainable development</b>			
1. Projects received intermediary	27	7	25.9
2. Projects forwarded to NFP	16	7	43.8
3. Projects forwarded to FMO	3	3	100.0
<b>Protection of environment</b>			
1. Projects received intermediary	21	6	28.6
2. Projects forwarded to NFP	11	7	63.6
3. Projects forwarded to FMO	3	3	100.0
<b>Health</b>			
1. Projects received intermediary	37	10	27.0
2. Projects accepted by NFP	5	4	80.0

There are no special measures to promote partnerships for individual projects beyond the general encouragement to have partners and the way this is to be addressed in the application form.

Some of the programmes, Funds and block grants also have certain measures to encourage or favour partnerships as mentioned in table 4.4.

**Table 4.4: Examples of measures to encourage partnership**

Name of EEA Grant	Measures to promote partnership
Short term expert fund	Sub-project's applications are encouraged to bring in experts from Norway. Extra points are awarded for partnership (max 10 of 100)
Scholarship fund	Extra points to projects which includes studies in EEA countries
Promotion of public-private partnership	Extra points for partnership

#### 4.1.1 National views on partnership

In interviews with NFP, those in charge of individual projects, programmes and funds as well as the projects visited, key issues related to partnerships were discussed.

All those interviewed were favourable to partnerships being established in connection with the projects. Virtually all mentioned that in seminars in connection with NCP it was stressed that partnerships were encouraged. In those cases where that would bring about extra evaluation points this was highlighted. At the same time many emphasised that it is the content and substance of the partnership which is most important. Two partnership models were mentioned. Historically the most common has been the “Gap filling model”, where the partner is a provider of inputs, mostly skills through training and capacity building. The other model is the “Consortium model” where the results are to benefit both sides and there is a shared responsibility for the implementation of project activities. Although it was expressed that the “Gap filling model” still has its merits and that there will always be a need for such inputs, it is clearly the “Consortium model” that is preferred.

#### 4.1.2 Factors that may contribute to partnerships

- Availability and easy access to information on relevant Norwegian institutions;
- Information on success stories of partnerships which will encourage others;
- Previous relations and experiences to be built on;
- Relevant fields for partnership – the project promoter must have a genuine need to be addressed through the partnership;
- Cheap travel makes it easier to have meetings between partners to develop ideas and design the project;
- Awareness and need for possibilities to acquire competence in special areas – filling in knowledge gap;
- Awareness of potential to improve institutions own competitiveness;
- Value added to the project promoter must be clear;
- Development of institutional and personal skills.

#### 4.1.3 *Factors that may inhibit partnerships*

- Requirements of legal documents, particularly when the partnership is of the consortium type. This is less burdensome in the case of block grants and programmes;
- Procurement regulations which are not conducive to direct purchase of services and equipment from the partner;
- The period allowed for preparation is short if the project promoter does not already have a partner;
- Lack of Norwegian institutions which respond favourably to efforts to establish partnerships (many cases when Norwegian institutions do not respond);
- Limited resources in Norwegian institutions to embark upon partnerships;
- Promoters outside the capital and in remote areas have more problems in finding partners;
- Language constitutes in some cases a barrier – both for preparing applications and for communicating with possible partners;
- Budget constraint when this shall also cover cost of partner, particularly a problem in smaller projects under block grants and programmes;
- High cost of Norwegian experts if this is to be included in the budget;
- Several informants report that in those cases where there is no partnership up to 50 % tried to establish partnerships, the reason being that they did not find a potential partner or in the case where a partner was identified, the Norwegian partner was unable to enter into a partnership.

## 4.2 Poland

With a total allocation of approximately EUR 558 million Poland is by far the largest recipient of grants. The grants are split on 10 priority sectors as well as eight programmes and funds.

Each priority sector is managed by a ministry or, in two cases, by the Office of the Committee for European Integration. In some cases, the intermediate bodies have delegated part of the administrative work to auxiliary institutions, such as the Ministry of Ecology to the Fund for Environmental Protection and Water Management, and the Ministry of Health to the Office for Foreign Aid Programs in Health Care. As to the funds, one is managed by a Ministry (Ministry of Culture) and the others by professional fund managers.

### 4.2.1 *Individual applications*

The first call led to approximately 1400 applications and 1200 applications in the second call. The Focal Point selected 179 projects and a reserve of 20 in the first call. The selection process for the second call is not yet completed for all priority sectors.

Tables 4.5 and 4.6 present a summary of the situation with a view to projects and partners for individual applications. The statistics thus only capture partnerships in connection with priority sectors where project proposals have to be submitted to FMO, and not the funds, where there are also partnerships (see comments below).

The second call is not completed as assessment of applications is still ongoing. The third call (EUR 60.6 million) was launched on 1 February 2008.

**Table 4.5: Partnerships in Poland – first call (approximately EUR 196 mill.)**

	<b>Total</b>	<b>With partners</b>	<b>% with partners</b>
Individual applications to Focal Point	1400	n.a.	n.a.
Individual project applications approved by Focal Point	179 + 20 in reserve	26	14.5
Individual project applications approved by FMC/NMFA	168 incl. 6 in reserve	26	15.4

**Table 4.6: Partnerships in Poland – second call (approximately EUR 177 mill.)**

	<b>Total</b>	<b>With partners</b>	<b>% with partners</b>
Individual applications to Focal Point	1200	250	20.8
Individual projects submitted to FMO	120	49	40.8

Table 4.7 shows how the numbers of projects and partnerships vary between the priority sectors. Academic research stands out as the one with the highest number of partnership projects (29) and the highest share of these (76.3 %).

**Table 4.7: Project applications received by FMO and partnerships in priority sectors**

	<b>Total number</b>	<b>With partners</b>	<b>% with partners</b>
Environment protection	131	12	9.2
Sustainable development	5	0	0.0
Cultural heritage	29	12	41.4
Human resources	30	8	26.7
Health and childcare	22	1	4.5
Academic research	38	29	76.3
Schengen acquis	18	6	33.3
Environment (acquis)	7	0	0.0
Regional policy	16	6	37.5
Acquis communautaire	3	0	0.0
Sum	299	74	24.7

Table 4.8 shows that there has been a significant increase in partnership projects from the first to the second call, with the share rising from 14.5 % to 40.8 %. The main reason for this increase is the increase of additional points for partnerships from 1 or 2 % in the first call to 10 % in the second call. The largest increase occurred in Cultural heritage, from 7.1 % to 73.3 %. Within Academic research the share of partnership projects increased from 64.7 % to 85.7 %. Some of the main reasons for these particular results appear to be the following:

- Close historical relations between Polish and Norwegian scientists, inter alia in the area of arctic and maritime research;
- Good cooperation in match making between Norwegian and Polish coordinators in the field of conservation of cultural heritage.

**Table 4.8: Project applications and partnerships in priority sectors, first and second call**

Priority sector	Applications first call			Applications second call		
	Total number	With partners	% with partners	Total Number	With partners	% with partners
Environment protection	91	6	6.6	40	6	12.8
Sustainable development	5	0	0			
Cultural heritage	14	1	7.1	15	11*	73.3
Human resources	11	2	18.2	19	6	31.5
Health and childcare	22	1	4.5			
Academic research	17	11	64.7	21	18	85.7
Schengen acquis	11	3	27.3	7	3	42.8
Environment (acquis)	2	0	0	5	0	0
Regional policy	3	2	66.7	13	4	30.8
Acquis communautaire	3	0	0	0	0	0
Sum	179	26	14.5	120	49	40.8

\* In addition, there is one project where the beneficiary is an institution established and run by a Norwegian living in Poland.

According to the annual report from FMO for 2007, four individual projects from the first call listed as partnership projects will either not be implemented or implemented without a Norwegian partner. Furthermore, one of the 11 projects with partners in the academic research sector is the Polish Norwegian Research Fund, which in reality is not an individual project, but a block grant (fund). It thus appears that the real number of individual projects with partnerships in the first call is only 21, reducing the share of partnership project to about 12 %. In the second call the share of projects with partnerships increased to approximately 40 %.

#### 4.2.2 Programmes and funds

Regarding the main funds, for some of them partnership with Norwegian organisations is compulsory. For others there is no such requirement, although partnership in one case is advocated through the guidelines and in other cases are said to be favoured through the practical handling of applications. For the latter category, the share of approved applications with partnerships with Norwegian organisations is as low as 4-10 %. Some applications with Norwegian partnerships were not successful in the selection process due to problems with the formal quality of the applications. According to a fund manager, this situation might have been different if the Norwegian partners had been involved in the application process.

An NGO fund with three components has been established in Poland:

- a Fund for Democracy and Civil Society, managed by Fund for Non-Governmental Organisations;
- a Fund for Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development, managed by Ecorys Polska; and
- a Fund for Equal Opportunities and Social Integration, managed by Ecorys Polska.

The three components have a common web-site and logo. Grant decisions are made by steering committees established for the various funds based on external appraisals of the applications. There will be five calls for the Fund for Democracy and Civil Society, and three calls for the two others. There is no requirement of partnerships with Norway or other donor countries, but projects with partners from any country (including Poland) may be given additional points if it is documented that the partner plays a vital role in the project.

In the case of the Fund for Democracy and Civil Society, there were more than 800 applications in each of the first two calls. According to the guidelines for this fund, projects with partners from the donor countries will be “particularly favoured”. For larger projects, partnership from any EEA country, including Poland, is compulsory. Out of a total of 170 approved projects, there were 40 projects with partners. These partnerships are divided between 26 Polish, seven Norwegian (4.1 % of total number of approved projects), one Icelandic and six partnerships from other countries.

As to the Equal Opportunities Fund there were more than 1200 applications in the first call, out of which 40 were with Norwegian partners. 43 projects were approved, including two with Norwegian partners (about 4.7 %). According to the fund manager several applications with Norwegian partners were rejected due to problems with the formal quality of the documentation. There is no reference in the guidelines for this fund to partnership with donor countries, but according to the fund manager, such partnership is favoured in practice. The second call is not yet completed.

For the Environmental Protection Fund there were 370 applications in the first call, out of which 40 were selected, including 4 with Norwegian partners (10 %). As in the case of the equal opportunities fund, Norwegian partnership is favoured in practice. The second call is not yet completed.

The Seed Money Fund, which is now closed, was managed by Ecorys Polska. For this fund partnership with donor countries was a requirement for obtaining grants. All together, 140 applications were approved of a total of 170. Several partnerships which were established for the applications for seed money are continued through applications for project funding.

The Polish Norwegian Research Fund is managed by the fund manager OPI. For this fund, partnership with Norway is practised at all stages. There is a close relationship between the Norwegian Research Council (NFR) and OPI, there are Norwegian and Polish board members of the fund, and Norwegian – Polish partnership is a compulsory requirement for applications. Out of a total of 250 applications there were 88 projects recommended by the fund manager – all with partners. The first call was closed on 28 December 2007

Cultural Exchange Fund will be managed by Ministry of Culture. The launch took place on 7 February 2008. According to information received during the visit to Poland partnerships with donor countries will be compulsory

In Poland partnerships with Norway are encouraged in different ways as described below:

- Extra points for projects with partners (up to 10 % of total number of points from the second call onwards) in the evaluation of applications in the open calls
- For several funds (as described above) partnerships are required
- Seminars and conferences in Poland promoting partnerships with Norway
- A Polish-Norwegian partnership forum has been established to contribute to contacts and long term cooperation between Norwegian and Polish institutions. The venue of the forum varies between Poland and Norway.
- Other Publicity measures (including websites).

#### *4.2.3 National views on partnership*

In interviews with NFP and those in charge of priority sectors and programmes and funds, as well as selected beneficiaries, all were favourable to partnerships being established in connection with the projects. The arguments were the same as in Latvia, where the main point was that in order to develop genuine partnerships it is important that the cooperation is based on equality and mutual respect between the parties at all levels.

#### *4.2.4 Factors that may contribute to partnerships*

- Previous professional relations and co-operation between partners;
- Good professional level of partners;
- Professional cross-fertilization, mutual learning;
- Openness and willingness to cooperate of partners;
- Good personal relations;
- Efficient communication with the Norwegian partners;
- Requirement of partnership must be clearly formulated in the grant agreement;
- Financial resources should be allocated to the Norwegian partner;
- Availability and easy access to information on potential Norwegian partners;
- Establishment of a clearing house with data bases for the establishment of partnerships;
- Better and more active co-operation between coordinators in Poland and Norway for the various priority sectors;
- Conferences with match-making arrangements for specific sectors;
- Seed money and travel support;
- The system should be made more user-friendly;
- Evaluation and exchange of experiences of partnerships;
- All relevant websites should be both in English and Polish.

#### *4.2.5 Factors that may inhibit partnerships*

- Complex and bureaucratic procedures (general overregulation of the grant system, unnecessary documents, inflexible deadlines, slow decision making procedures);
- Lack of funds to finance contributions of partners;
- Lack of time on both sides to develop partnerships;

- Lack of experience in partnership building;
- Problems of communication/language barriers;
- Lack of understanding of the usefulness of partnerships in some Polish organisations;
- Legal problems (public procurement and state aid regulations);
- Norwegian competence is not sufficiently communicated and promoted;
- There are many small organisations in Norway with limited capacity for partnerships;
- Norway is a small country in relation to Poland. There may not be a sufficient number of relevant partners in all priority sectors;
- Lack of information about the grant system ,in particular in the Polish regions;
- High cost level in Norway.

### 4.3 Czech Republic

With a total allocation of approximately EUR 111 million the Czech Republic is the third largest recipient of grants.

Two calls have been carried out and the third call is in process. In addition to individual applications under the priority sectors, several programmes and funds have been established for specific purposes for a total amount of approximately EUR 22 mill (see section on programmes and funds below)

#### 4.3.1 *Individual applications*

As of 17 December 2007 the total number of individual applications from the first and second call received by FMO was 59. Of these, 34 were approved, 23 not yet decided and 2 rejected. Table 4.9 shows how the applications are distributed across priority sectors and projects with and without partnerships:

It appears that the number of approved individual projects with partnership statements in the first call was four, two of which were in the area of academic research, one in the area of conservation of European cultural heritage and one for implementing the Schengen *acquis*.



**Table 4.9 Individual applications to FMO**

Priority Sector	Applications sent to FMO		Applications approved by FMC/NMFA		Applications pending decision		Rejected applications
	Total number	With partners	Total number	With partners	Total number	With partners	Total number
Cultural heritage	24	2	16	1	7	1	1
Environment	6		1		4		1
Human resource dev	14		4		10		
Health and childcare	5		5				
Sustainable development							
Academic research	2	2	2	2			
Schengen acquis	5	1	3	1	2		
Regional policy	2		2				
Others	1		1				
Sum	59	5	34	4	23	1	2

In the second call the number of individual approved projects with partnerships is so far only one (conservation of European cultural heritage). Not all applications have yet been received by FMO. The number of partnerships is expected to increase.

The third call for a total amount of EUR 19.4 million for individual projects was launched in November 2007 and closed on 29 February 2008. It will cover all the main priority sectors except academic research.

The number of partnerships in individual projects is quite low in absolute and, except for academic research, also in relative terms. The donor states have worked with the Focal Point to increase the scoring provided for partnership projects in the third call. It remains to be seen if the number of partnerships will increase in the third call.

#### *4.3.2 Programmes and funds*

Several programmes and block grants have been established in the Czech Republic, some of which require partnerships with donor states. Due to long preparation time, several of them are just starting up.

Czech Research Fund: The Czech Research Fund with EUR 4.4 million recently announced its first open call. There will be three calls all together. The Fund shall support sub-projects in the field of academic research focusing on strengthening cooperation and scientific networking between the EEA EFTA states and the Czech Republic. The Fund has two

components: sub-projects and expert exchange between Czech Republic and EEA-EFTA states. The grants are in the range EUR 25,000-250,000.

All applicants have to have at least one partnership with Norway, Iceland and/or Liechtenstein.

Technical Assistance Fund: An open call for a technical assistance fund is presently under preparation. There will be three calls all together. The fund will have a requirement of partnerships with donor states. There will be three main areas: (i) Cooperation for helping build up their development assistance; (ii) exchange of experience on EU *acquis*; (iii) municipalities and other administrative units.

Scholarship Fund: The fund of EUR 2.5 million is managed by the National Agency for European Educational Programs with the Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Higher Education (SIU) as its counterpart. The Fund has three measures: (i) individual mobility of teachers and students, (ii) learning partnerships (inter-school cooperation), and (iii) institutional development (technical assistance). The learning partnerships and institutional development are implemented in partnership between Czech and donor states institutions. There are two sets of educational partnerships with Norway; relations between the main universities, which have historical links, and new links under the EEA grant scheme between smaller universities in the two countries. There are more than 100 Czech students in Norway, and a few Norwegian students studying in the Czech Republic.

Czech NGO fund: The size of the fund is EUR 10 million. The second call for proposals is now taking place. The first call was for maximum 12 months with projects in the EUR 10-25,000 range. The first call led to 415 proposals, of which 79 were funded. Partnerships with donor states are encouraged. However, none of the funded projects and even none of the proposals had Norwegian partners. It has been difficult to find Norwegian partners for the projects. The set-up of the fund has been altered following discussions with the FMO and donor states. An increase in the maximum sub-project size and duration are intended to make the assistance more adapted to partnership projects.

Seed Money Fund: The fund of EUR 600 000 is now closed and only had small-scale funds to disburse of EUR 5-20,000 each. The fund had about 600 applications, of which only 10 had a partnership. In the end, only 44 were approved, and none of these had partners. Some partnership projects were rejected on eligibility grounds.

There are also several regional funds: Vysocina and Zlin Region cultural heritage programmes of EUR 600 000 each, Hradec Kralove Programme for repair, reconstruction and modernisation of buildings of EUR 2.3 million, and South Bohemian programme reduction of social and economic disparities of EUR 1 million. These funds have no specific reference to bilateral partnerships, and have little potential for this.

In the Czech Republic partnerships with Norway are encouraged in different ways:

- For several funds (as described above) partnerships are required;
- Extra points for projects with partners (up to 8 % of total number of points) in the evaluation of applications for the third call. This percentage is lower than in several other beneficiary states such as Poland;
- Seminars, conferences in the Czech Republic promoting partnerships with Norway;
- Other publicity measures including websites;

- Czech governmental contributions to co-financing for projects in the area of scientific research and for several funds.

#### *4.3.3 National views on partnership*

The interviews revealed that the Financial Mechanisms have been useful to the Czech Republic to address areas that EU funds cannot reach, and in particular in the field of preservation of cultural heritage. Priority sectors were selected to avoid overlap with the EU Structural Funds.

The partnership dimension is not considered an obligation, but it is recognised that partnerships may be beneficial to both parties as it may provide value-added for both. The Financial Mechanisms have been an opportunity for the Czech Republic to get to know Norway better. There have been useful opportunities that have come out of this, such as the co-operation between Czech and Norwegian police.

There are a number of areas where there is real know-how from Norway available, but favouring this may be discriminatory against other sources of assistance and this is an issue that needs to be addressed. The relationship between donor and beneficiary states could also be more symmetrical. In areas like cultural heritage for instance, the Czech Republic has a lot to contribute.

Initially there were problems finding Norwegian relevant institutions such as NGOs. In the research area it has been easier. It is still difficult to find partners in fields like education and human resources development. It is not always clear who the Norwegian communication nodal point for assisting finding Norwegian partners could be. When selecting their Norwegian partners, local partners often have a history of co-operation before the project.

Czech authorities have spent a lot of time preparing several funds, and some of them are highly relevant for partnerships. But it took two years to get the final approval. According to the Czech authorities, there was a lack of capacity to handle the program on the donor side. The FMO seemed uncertain how to process and decide, there were a lot of technical issues being brought up, and it took a long time to get feed-back.

It is for the project promoter to decide whether a partnership shall be established or not. The Focal Point cannot enforce this but should maintain its neutrality on this issue.

One should pay more attention to the purely bilateral relations, with for example the Norwegian NMFA dealing more with the Czech NMFA and not only the Focal Point. Since there is not much of a history regarding the bilateral cooperation, the Financial Mechanisms can be used as a foundation for a larger dialogue

Norway should have been clearer in the MOU what they were looking for – that would have made it a lot easier for all Czech actors to understand and relate to. Now it is quite vague and often not easy for Czech partners to understand the purpose, nor know where to turn to find the partners, and know what to expect from the partnership.

#### *4.3.4 Factors that may contribute to partnerships*

- The cultural distance is not important and in the research area the professional level is the same in the two countries;
- Launching seminars are useful;

- Extra points useful, but only at the end of the process;
- Different web-sites should be updated continuously so that they are always valid;
- Try to link the EEA funding with EBRD and commercial credit dimensions;
- When an applicant wants a Norwegian partner, it has to be clear what they want, and then discuss this with the Norwegian – and that has worked out.

#### 4.3.5 Factors that may inhibit partnerships<sup>1</sup>

- There is not much of history of relations between the two countries;
- Lack of a clear focal point in Norway for identification of partners has been a problem;
- Some Norwegian organisations have little experience with the communist administration and do not to a sufficient degree understand issues like economic and organised crime coming out of Central Europe.

### 4.4 Project Promoters with Partnerships

The survey was sent to 72 project promoters with Norwegian partners in all the beneficiary states, of which 34 responded. FMO has three categories of partnership as explained in section 3.1. The table shows that for 57.6 % the partnership had been formalised. In addition five of those who responded “other” gave an explanation which implied a formal relationship, bringing the percentage of formal relationship to 72.7%.

**Table 4.10: Partnership status**

	Number	%
Only initial contact	1	3.0
Intentions established and mentioned in the application	4	12.1
Letter of intent signed	7	21.2
Partnership statement or agreement signed by both	12	36.4
Other	9	27.3
Total	33	

For two-thirds of the respondents the partnership was a continuation of an existing contact with a Norwegian institution. Of these 23 institutions with an existing contact, 52 % indicated that the nature of relationship was “professional relations” and 39 % that they had previously worked with the partner on one or more projects.

Of the 12 institutions for which the partnership was a new contact, half answered that the contact came about as a result of using their own network. Only two had approached the

<sup>1</sup> Other factors limiting partnerships than those mentioned by Czech authorities may be that the Czech FP from the beginning stated its intention for the funds to be for filling areas not covered by the EU Structural Funds. In addition, it wished to support the subsidiary principle and allow for regions in the CR to support their own projects and priorities. This was known to the donor states and accepted by them.

Norwegian embassy in the country, which had provided candidates for partnership. Only three indicated that they had participated in activities organised by the Embassy.

#### *4.4.1 Involvement of Norwegian partner*

Two thirds also reported that the Norwegian partner had participated in the development of the project idea and the preparation of the application. Those who explained the type of involvement at this preparatory stage indicate genuine cooperation with the partner, as for instance:

- Advice on objectives, on project design and on work plan as well as preparation of the application;
- Provide technical inputs on issues to be addressed and methods to be applied;
- Provide experiences from similar projects;
- Review and advice on project application.

All respondents explained the role of the Norwegian partner during implementation of the project, which varies a lot from project to project. The type of involvement may be summarised as follows:

- Provide training either and/or at the premises of the project promoter or the partner. The nature and methods for the training varies and include study tours, training courses and internships. They all include provision of experts and trainers;
- Provide technical advice and consultancy services during project implementation;
- Joint research activities with exchange of research results and validation of scientific methods;
- Provision of methodological tools for different types of both research and public management;
- Peer review on research.

It is a general tendency that the Norwegian partner is mostly a provider of inputs to the project and the Project promoter.

The project promoters were also asked to indicate whether the Norwegian partner contributed financially in addition to own salaries, travelling costs etc. For 84 % of the projects there was no such contribution. For five projects where Norwegian partners participated financially their contribution was very low, with one exception less than 3 % of the budget

On the other hand, 70 % of the promoters indicated that project budget covered costs to be incurred by the Norwegian partner. The amount varies, for 10 projects it is below 10 %, for 2 between 12% and 20 %, and for five between 40 and 50 %.

#### *4.4.2 Success of partnerships*

When asked to rate the partnership, 17 of the respondents (52%) rated it as Very Successful, 12 as Successful, and only four as Not Successful.

Some of the more important explanations given for the success include:

- Long term relations and mutual confidence due to previous good results of joint work;

- Shared interest and motivation;
- Both sides have something to contribute to the success of the project;
- The contributions from the Norwegian partner must be relevant and provide added value to the project promoter;
- Shared understanding of all sides of the project: conceptually, work program and responsibilities;
- Timeliness on both sides;
- Good communication.

In the few cases where the project promoter rates the partnership as not successful, the history is that the initial Norwegian partner withdrew after the initial agreement. In most cases this was because of shift of contact persons and that new persons did not have the same commitment. There is also a few cases where the partners were unable to agree on budget and inputs from the Norwegian partner.

The project promoters were also asked to list factors which contribute to the development of good partnerships in connection with Financial Mechanisms. Many are the same as those mentioned in the previous sections, but the most important success criteria are:

- Motivation on both sides;
- Shared values and common interests;
- High professional and personal quality of partner and the personnel involved;
- Compatibility and complementarity of skills and experiences;
- Good and expedient communication and access to the right people and least possible bureaucracy on both sides;
- Clear rules regarding tasks, responsibilities and the partnership itself;
- Resources on both sides for project meetings through all stages of the project cycle.

#### 4.5 Promoters without Partnerships

A survey was sent to 316 project promoters without Norwegian partners, to which 181 answered. The survey contained five questions:

- i) **“When you prepared your project proposal, were you in any way encouraged to look for a Norwegian partner?”**

168 respondents answered this question. Of these 86.3 % answered No and only 13.7 % Yes.

The 55 who answered Yes were asked to identify the type of encouragement they were exposed to. One third answered that the encouragement was in the announcement or invitation to present the proposal, while 20 % said that they had been exposed to activities to promote partnership from the Norwegian Embassy, which was mostly either seminars arranged by Norwegian authorities or other meetings with the participation of the Embassy.

- ii) **“When you prepared your project proposal, did you consider trying to find a Norwegian partner?”**

168 answered this question, of which only 26.2 % answered Yes. Of the 44 who did consider finding a Norwegian partner, 69.1 % answered that they did not find a Norwegian partner,

while 12.7% answered that they did find a partner but did not succeed in developing a partnership.

Of those 124 who answered that that they did not consider trying to find a Norwegian partner, 69% answered that the project did not lend itself to partnership. Several reasons were given, of which the most important ones are:

- Many of the respondents are in charge of block grants, funds or programmes and state they are not suitable for partnerships. Partnerships will actually only take place in sub-projects under these. Quite often the budget for such “sub-projects” will be too small to allow for partnerships;
- Many just state that the nature of the project is such that it is not interesting for the project promoter to include a foreign partner, often because there is no space or need for such a partner;
- In some cases it was stated that the project was a continuation of an on-going project and no reason to include new actors in this;
- Some projects are simply infrastructure projects, which includes procurement of equipment, material and construction activities. For this they will have to follow national procurement procedures which do not allow direct purchase from a given partner;
- Finally, some just mentioned that the time allotted to prepare the application was not enough to find a new partner and establish the foundation to develop a partnership for the project.

**iii) “Have you ever been approached by a Norwegian institution with an interest to develop a partnership under the EEA grant?”**

Of the 165 who answered this question, 154 answered with a No.

**iv) “Which situations or conditions would have made you look for Norwegian partners for your project?”**

Of the 119 who answered this question, 78 indicated the alternative “Knowledge about Norwegian embassy’s availability to assist in establishing contacts with possible partners”. The 41 respondents who gave other answers gave other situations or conditions which would have made them look for Norwegian partners, of which the most important ones were:

- Only if strict requirement from the donor;
- Previous experience from working with Norwegian institutions;
- Good websites on Norwegian institutions dealing with similar topics and being interested in partnerships;
- More knowledge of similar Norwegian institutions’ skills and competencies in topics of relevance to the project;
- A stronger feeling in the institution on needs and benefits from such partnerships;
- Clearer statements in National Call for Proposal encouraging such partnerships;
- Larger project budget giving more room for cooperation;
- Clearer statements in guidelines on partnership being an evaluation criterion providing extra points.

## 4.6 Findings and Conclusions

### Latvia

1. 32.6 % of all 218 projects that have been submitted within the priority sectors to the National Focal Point have Norwegian partners.
2. In January 2008, 46 % of the 41 projects submitted to FMO had Norwegian partners.
3. There is a clear increase in the share of Norwegian partnership projects from the initial submission to those which reach FMO.
4. Most projects with partners are found in two priority sectors: Human resources and development and Health.
5. For the Short term expert fund and the Promotion of public-private partnership extra points are given for partnership.
6. All interviewed were favourable to partnerships but many emphasised that partnership per se is not a target. Partnership must imply a value added for the project promoter. There is a distinction between two partnership models –the “gap filling model” and the “consortium model”, the latter being the one favoured as the one with most potential for building genuine partnerships.

### Poland

1. Poland is by far the country with most partnership projects. Academic research stands out as the one with the highest number of partnership projects (29) and the highest share of these (76.3 %).
2. For individual applications, there was a major increase in the number of partnerships from the first to the second call, from 15% to 41%. The main reasons for this increase appear to be the introduction of extra points for partnerships as well as effective match making activities in some Priority Sectors, notably conservation of the cultural heritage, where the share of partnership projects increased from 7.1 % to 73%.
3. There are few partnerships both in absolute and relative terms for funds which do not have partnerships as a compulsory requirement. Partnership with Norwegian NGOs in the three NGO funds is quite low (Fund for Democracy and Civil Society 4.1 %, Fund for Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development 10 % and Fund for Equal Opportunities and Social Integration 4.7 %).
4. Several funds with compulsory partnerships (as the Seed Fund and the Polish Norwegian Research Fund), have been able to administer funds in an efficient manner based on Norwegian-Polish partnerships.

### The Czech Republic

1. Of the total of 59 projects submitted to FMO only five had Norwegian partners.
2. Academic research where there are long time historical cooperation traditions between the two countries has so far been most conducive to individual Norwegian-Czech partnerships under the Financial Mechanisms.
3. The Scholarship Fund, which has partnership with donor countries as a compulsory requirement, has been successful in financing partnerships between smaller Czech



and Norwegian universities. Other funds with similar requirement are about to start their activities. Funds without compulsory partnership requirements have so far not financed any Czech Norwegian partnerships. Some funds are of small regional character and not likely to produce any new partnerships.

In all the three countries it was expressed from both national institutions and project promoters that the Financial Mechanisms' procedures are quite bureaucratic and cumbersome and more so than for instance the EU Structural Funds.

#### **Survey to project promoters with Norwegian partners**

1. For 73% of the respondents the partnership is formalised in a letter of intent or a partnership agreement.
2. For 67% of the respondents the partnership was a continuation of an existing contact with a Norwegian institution. For those for whom the partnership was a new contact 50 % had used their own network. Very few had used assistance from the Embassy or others to find the partner.
3. 67% of the respondents answered that the Norwegian partner had participated in the development of the project idea and the preparation of the application.
4. 71% promoters indicated that project budget covered costs to be incurred by the Norwegian partner.
5. 88 % rated the cooperation with the partner as successful or very successful.

#### **Survey to project promoters without Norwegian partners**

1. 86% responded that they had not in any way been encouraged to look for Norwegian partners when they prepared the project proposal.
2. Only 26 % responded that they had considered trying to find a Norwegian partner .
3. 93% responded that they had not been approached by a Norwegian institution with interest to develop a partnership.
4. 66 % responded that they would have looked for a Norwegian partner if they had been aware of the Norwegian embassy's availability to assist in finding such partner.

## 5 Norwegian Efforts to Promote Partnerships

### 5.1 Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (NMFA)

It is the Norwegian Parliament that has agreed to the establishment of the EEA Financial Mechanism and the Norwegian Financial Mechanism and approves the allocations to this, as described in chapter 2. The MoU between Norway and each Beneficiary State describes the roles and responsibilities of parties and specifies those of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (NMFA). Point 3 in article 4 in the MoU states:

*The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs shall manage the Norwegian Financial Mechanism. Decisions on the granting of financial assistance from the Norwegian Financial Mechanism shall be taken by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.*

FMC/MFA are given the opportunity to comment on the text for national calls for proposals as well as make a decision on each application for an individual project or for a fund or programme intermediary. The FMC/NMFA does not, however, approve or reject sub-projects under funds and programmes

Annual meetings are held between FMC/NMFA and the NFP in the each country.

NMFA works with the Beneficiary States through its embassies in these countries and through the FMO in Brussels, whose role in the approval process is described in chapter 2.

The Norwegian embassies are not part of the formal structure and procedures but play a pivotal role in promoting and following up the Financial Mechanisms. This includes tasks such as:

- Contribute to the strengthening of bilateral relations through projects financed by Financial Mechanisms;
- Distribute information about the Financial Mechanisms;
- Stimulate preparation of projects in accordance with the priorities and rules of the Financial Mechanisms;
- Assist in identifying possible Norwegian project partners and in the cooperation between these and organisations in the Beneficiary State;
- Maintain contacts with national institutions in charge of the grants in the Beneficiary State.

In two of the embassies there is one counsellor with the explicit and exclusive task to work on Financial Mechanisms in the country. There is one in Warsaw, covering Poland, and one in Riga, covering the three Baltic countries. All embassies have extra earmarked funding to enable them to undertake specific activities with regard to the Financial Mechanisms. They also have funds to hire extra local help when this is required.

### 5.2 Norwegian Frame Institutions

NMFA is working with some key institutions to strengthen bilateral relations and promote partnership in connection with the Financial Mechanisms. Previously some of these institutions were involved in the approval process of specific projects under other grant

schemes, most recently Norway's Plan of Action to support EU Accession Countries. This is no longer the case, but they still provide NMFA with expertise advice on issues within their realm of authority.

The most important ones, which have been interviewed for this review, are Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Health and Care Services, Directorate for Cultural Heritage, The Norwegian Helsinki Committee, Norwegian Police Directorate, Innovation Norway, Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Higher Education, The Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities: In this section we summarize the views which have been expressed:

Most of these institutions have been cooperating with NMFA for many years in this type of programme. They were actively involved in the preparation of the Financial Mechanisms. Most of them have a substantive area of work and responsibility where they see benefits for their own work in this type of cooperation. For most this type of work is a strategic area and for directorates it is often mentioned in their letter of appropriation from their ministries. While these institutions were previously quite involved in promoting and facilitating partnerships, most of them are not so directly involved any longer at project level and are now focusing more on developing bilateral relations with political authorities at different levels and the overall development of certain sectors, e.g. environment, civil society, judiciary sector etc. These institutions are also involved in dissemination of information as well contact information, particularly through websites, aiming at special target groups. Some also provide advice upon request to special groups of institutions, such as Innovation Norway to private business, The Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities to local authorities and Helsinki Committee to NGOs.

For some of these institutions this work is of high priority, often with a specially recruited person in charge.

In addition to their own work some of the ministries also work through their directorates. In the case the Norwegian Ministry for Environment, for instance, all their directorates are partners in different projects.

**a) Factors and conditions that contribute to partnerships**

All the persons interviewed emphasise the following factors as contributing to partnerships:

- It is more likely to have successful partnership projects in those cases where this is the result of previous relations and positive experiences;
- Those who wish to build partnerships must realise that this requires work, time and resources;
- There must be a shared understanding and agreement on all aspects of the project;
- There must be benefits and added value for both sides;
- It is a cumbersome process to prepare project applications – in some cases the Norwegian frame organisations have been giving advice on substantive and technical matters in the application;
- Seed money is important.

**b) Factors that inhibit partnerships**

Institutions mentioned the following factors or conditions which inhibit partnership:

- Inadequate information on legal conditions which may complicate partnerships – this may be legal documentation as well as rules on procurement of goods and services;
- Bureaucracy and special requirements such as bank guarantees may keep smaller institutions from being willing to get involved in partnerships;
- Partners are not willing to spend the time required to develop both mutual trust and good projects;
- Expectations have been too high and based on previous experiences from the Action Programme Eastern Europe and the Plan of Action to Support EU Accession Countries, when it was easier to get funding for projects for Norwegian institutions.

### 5.3 Norwegian Partner Institutions

A survey was sent to 65 Norwegian partner institutions of which 32 answered.

20 of the respondents reported that they had worked with institutions in EEA countries before. 15 provided the year when they had started, and of these 9 had started before 2000, indicating long term relations.

The respondents were also asked to give the number of projects where they had a partner and where they had not. This showed that all those who answered had only worked with a local partner. 8 of the respondents had experience from less than 5 projects and 5 from between 5 and 10. One institution stands out from having had as much as 50 projects with different local partners.

Five of the respondents had received financial support from the former Norwegian Plan of Action to support EU Accession countries while the other 27 had not received any such support.

#### a) Relations with the Project Promoter

FMO has three categories of partnership as explained in section 3.2. Table 5.1 shows that for 65.5% this was formalised in a letter of intent or a partnership statement or agreement.

**Table 5.1: Partnership status**

	Number	%
Only initial contact	1	3.5
Intentions established and mentioned in the application	5	17.2
Letter of intent signed	3	10.3
Partnership statement or agreement signed by both	16	55.2
Other	4	13.8
Total	29	100.0

The respondents were asked whether they already had contact with the Project Promoter or whether this was a new contact. 65 % answered that this was an existing contact. For those

20 for whom this was an existing contact, 65.0 % had previously had joint project work with the project promoter, while 25 % stated that they had had other types of professional relations.

For those for whom this was a new contact, the contact had been made by the Project Promoter in 77% of the cases and only in 23 % of the cases by the Norwegian institution.

In the cases when the Norwegian partner initiated the contact, the respondents report that they used their own network to find possible candidates. The respondents were also asked if they knew how the project promoters in the cases of new contacts had located the Norwegian institution. For 27% it was indicated that the project promoter used their own network. For the remaining the respondent did not know how they had been located by the project promoter.

47% responded that they had participated in activities undertaken by Norwegian institutions and/or the embassy to promote partnerships. This included activities, such as seminars both in Beneficiary State and in Norway; meetings at the Embassy; meetings arranged by NMFA; meetings arranged by other Norwegian institutions both in Norway and in Beneficiary state; and special subject workshops supported by the embassy.

Of those 16 who had participated in such activities 82 % said that the activities had been important and helpful with a view to promoting partnership.

#### **b) Involvement in project planning and implementation**

78% of the respondents informed that they had participated in the development of the project idea. Those who had participated also explained what their role and contribution had been, such as:

- Preparation of the project application with specification of own inputs;
- Discussions on project concept and related topics;
- Assessment of relevance and feasibility of project components and activities;
- Contributions on ideas of methods to be applied;
- Contribution on background information to be incorporated in the application;
- Facilitating project preparation workshops, using Logical Framework Approach (LFA).

Respondents also explained their role and contribution in the implementation of the project such as:

- Receive visitors for training at own institution;
- Arrange for other types of training in Norway and organise study tours and site visits;
- Undertake scientific work at own institution as inputs to the project;
- Undertake different types of analyses as inputs to the project;
- Provide expert inputs and recommendations to project promoter;
- Provide advice during implementation on technical and management issues as required;
- Participate in detailed planning and provide quality assurance;

- Be member of project management or steering committee;
- Manage sub projects which are part of the overall project,

Only 26% of the respondents informed that they were contributing financially to the project beyond their own salaries, travelling costs etc. 41% informed that the project covered their expenses.

**c) Importance of partnership in the evaluation of applications**

21 of the 32 respondents knew if the project application had received extra points because it involved a Norwegian partner. Of these, 15 answered that this had not given any extra points.

**d) Success of partnerships and factors contributing to this**

The project promoters were asked to rate the partnership. Of the 24 that responded, 9 rated it as Very Successful, 11 as Successful and 4 as Not Successful.. Some of the more important explanations given for the success include:

- Both sides have been adequately involved in the development and planning of the project;
- The project is within an area where both sides have relevant ongoing activities;
- The project is a continuation of an on-going cooperation, it builds on this and provides new results of relevance;
- Seed money made it possible to develop a project of mutual interest and benefit;
- Similarity between the two institutions;
- The project promoter decides on inputs to be provided so that it is relevant and timely.

For those who rated the partnership as not successful the reasons given were:

- Changes in key personnel because of long lead time before approval and consequently commitment and ownership are lost;
- No further communication after the project was approved. The Norwegian institution was just being used and then forgotten.

Finally, the respondents were asked to give important factors which contribute to the development of good partnerships in connection with Financial Mechanisms. The most important factors given were:

- Build on existing contacts and networks;
- Build on mutual interests;
- Quality of the project;
- Equality in the status of the partners;
- Complementarity in expertise which ensures the benefit for all involved;
- Clear and common understanding of objectives, roles, responsibilities, tasks and outputs before project starts. Relevant documents signed at sufficiently high levels on both sides;
- Sufficient time spent and available to ensure shared understanding and good communication;

- Good personal relations at working level;
- Anchoring the project at high level management and backing ensured during implementation;
- Measurable and beneficial results on both sides;
- Realistic expectations and ambitions on both sides on the outcome of the partnership.

## 5.4 Norwegian Institutions not Succeeding with Partnerships

As part of this review an attempt was made to identify Norwegian institutions that had tried to promote partnership projects but had not succeeded. Neither embassies, the NMFA or the frame organisations mentioned in 5.2 were able to come up with names, which presumably means that there are not so many such institutions.

With reference to the political emphasis which has been made in Norway on an active participation of Norwegian business enterprises in the development processes taking place in the new EU member states, there was initially considerable interest among Norwegian enterprises in taking part in projects financed with Financial Mechanisms. Table 3.6 also showed that of the 98 Norwegian partnership institutions 21 are private business companies.

In the annual letter of instruction from the Ministry of Industry and Trade to Innovation Norway (IN) it is written that “IN in co-operation with the NMFA should facilitate the participation of Norwegian enterprises in project which are financed with Financial Mechanisms. IN shall not demand payment from the users of these services”. IN has informed us that it considers that its main task in this respect is to provide information to Norwegian enterprises. This is done through the website of IN, seminars and its journal “Eksportaktuelt”. In addition, IN carries out promotion activities and services directed towards specific countries and sectors i.a. through its offices in Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Lithuania, Latvia and Spain.

Some of the main barriers to a participation by Norwegian enterprises in projects financed by Financial Mechanisms are probably the complexity and time consuming procedures of the Financial Mechanisms, the generally high level of activity in Norwegian economy, and the high cost level in Norway seen in combination with public procurement rules in the beneficiary states. There are certain expectations in Norwegian political and business circles that the new system for Norwegian grants to Bulgaria and Romania, which will be managed by Innovation Norway, and where partnerships with Norway are a requirement, will give greater opportunities to Norwegian enterprises than the present EEA scheme.

## 5.5 Views on Norwegian Efforts to Promote Partnerships

The NMFA, some of the frame organisations and embassies have all made different efforts to promote partnerships. The TOR lists examples of such measures and activities which have been introduced and carried out in order to stimulate partnerships. Views on these are presented below:

**a) Promotional activities**

Promotional activities include all those which somehow aim at making stakeholders aware of the objectives related to establishing partnerships between project promoters in the beneficiary states and Norwegian institutions, this may be brochures, website, special meetings. At the web page “eeagrants.org” there is a project database where it is possible to search for partnership projects. There is also a page “Finding partners” and another “ngonorway”, both with information on different Norwegian institutions within different sectors and areas.

Some of the views on promotional activities are as follows:

- This material must be available in both languages – English and national language;
- Must be targeted to actors, networks, arenas where one may find those who have resources, competence and motivation;
- “One to one” information is important;
- Promotional activities must provide realistic information on possibilities and challenges and not unrealistic expectations. This is most important for private business companies;
- Internet is not enough – advisory support is often necessary.

**b) Seminars**

Seminars are first and foremost held when the different Grant schemes are being launched. Some of the views expressed were:

- Introductory seminars to present the Financial Mechanisms and launch National Calls for Proposal are necessary, but have very little impact on partnerships;
- Must be targeted and provide opportunities for dialogue;
- Larger seminars are less effective than workshops and partnership seminars to involve new actors in both countries most important;
- Seminars and workshops with focus on themes of mutual interest for a limited group is most conducive for partnerships;
- Much effort must be put into ensuring the right and motivated participants in seminars and workshops;
- Seminars and workshops do create interest for partnership, but a challenge is the timing of these in relation to the process. When they are held too early, they create expectations and when they are not met – frustration.

**c) Consultation processes**

Consultations include systems and availability on advice on how to locate possible partners and establishing partnership in connection with a project application. Views expressed include:

- Most important for small actors who need more advice, local authorities and NGOs;
- Consultation processes and access to advice are important for both project promoters and Norwegian institutions, but the needs are different;
- In Latvia some expressed that consultations did not help much in creating partnerships;



- Some find that possibilities for consultations with advisory services are important others find this obsolete and think that e-mails and websites take care of this.

**d) Conferences**

Conferences are major events, usually addressing issues of interest to a larger public. Views expressed include:

- There has been much interest in Beneficiary States for major conferences on a broad range of topics. But the interest from Norwegian institutions has been very low;
- Conferences are old fashioned and not very conducive to partnership;
- In Latvia some expressed that partners do find one another at such conferences.

**e) Travel support**

The purpose of travel support is to make it easier for possible partners to meet in order to bring about partnership. Views expressed on this include:

- Most important for actors with limited resources – especially NGOs and smaller local authorities. Travel support must be targeted and easily available for such groups in the beneficiary states. Travel support to Norwegian institutions is less relevant;
- Many state that if the preparatory work has been done, the motivation is high and travel costs are not a detriment to arranging partnership meetings.

**f) Seed money funds**

The purpose of seed money is first and foremost to encourage and facilitate initial contacts between partners and facilitate joint preparation of project ideas and applications. Views expressed are somewhat contradictory:

- Seed money is only relevant for major projects and not small projects under special programmes or block grants;
- Most important for actors with limited resources – especially NGOs;
- One major problem has been that seed money arrangements were established much too late after the first calls for proposals had been launched. They are now being introduced prior to second calls and are much in demand;
- Another major problem is that these funds have only been administered by the Beneficiary State with no possibility for Norwegian institutions to access these funds directly.

**g) Extra points for partnerships**

In chapter 3 it was described how partnerships are given extra points in certain cases. Views on this include:

- This is often the final and decisive factor for the best projects in the final selection of projects of similar quality;
- Contributes to more efforts to find Norwegian partners;
- The “downside” is that project promoters have approached Norwegian institutions for partnership in order to be able to report this in the application without genuine desire for such partnership, which has then not been followed up. In some countries

this has brought about a large number of unserious partnership seekers. It has not been possible to follow up these requests for assistance to find partners;

- Some express that partnership should be evaluated on its own merit and not given extra points. Partnership is an instrument and not a criterion.

## 5.6 Summary of findings

NMFA is working with some key institutions, referred to as frame institutions, to strengthen bilateral relations and promote partnership in connection with the Financial Mechanisms. Most of these institutions have been cooperating with NMFA for many years in this type of programme. They were actively involved in the preparation of the Financial Mechanisms. Most of them have a substantive area of work and responsibility where they see benefits for their own work in this type of cooperation. For most this type of work is a strategic area and for directorates it is often mentioned in their letter of appropriation from their ministries.

The main findings from the survey to Norwegian partner institutions are:

1. 62 % informed that they had worked with institutions in EEA countries before;
2. 65 % informed that they had already worked with the project promoter and 35.5 % it was a new contact;
3. In the case where the partnership was a new contact, 77% informed that the contact had been made by the project promoter;
4. 66% informed that the partnership was formalised with a letter of intent or a partnership agreement;
5. 47% responded that they had participated in activities undertaken by Norwegian institutions and/or the embassy to promote partnerships;
6. 78 % of the respondents informed that they had participated in the development of the project idea and the preparation of the project and 21.9 % that they had not;
7. 66% informed that the project application had received extra points because it involved a Norwegian partner;
8. 83 % rated their partnership as successful.

The NMFA, some of the frame organisations and embassies have all made different efforts to promote partnerships. It is evident that initial information through promotional activities including seminars is important in order to motivate promoters to consider including Norwegian institutions in the project. But this is not enough alone. The activity which stands out as most important is the awareness of and access to consultations and advice on how to find the right Norwegian partner. Seed money funds to support this are equally important. Extra points for partnerships are also a motivating factor.

## 6 Partnerships and Bilateral Relations

The TOR states that “the main purpose of this review is to assess the progress made so far in relation to the objective of strengthening the bilateral relationship between Norway and the beneficiary states, and to provide recommendations for the remaining implementation period.” It then states that the scope of the Review is two-fold:

- To the extent possible within the time constraints provided, document how the bilateral relationships with the beneficiary states have developed as a result of the implementation of the Financial Mechanisms, and assess the achievements made in relation to the bilateral objectives of the mechanisms.
- Analyse and identify various aspects and trends regarding the establishment of successful partnerships. Success criteria should be indicated and recommendations provided on the best approach for the remaining implementation period of the Financial Mechanisms. This should be the main emphasis of the review. As part of this assignment an appropriate questionnaire should be developed and submitted to all Norwegian partners that have successfully established partnerships that have been recommended for funding.

In previous chapters it has been documented how the Financial Mechanisms are bringing about an important and increasing number of partnerships between Norwegian institutions and project promoters in the different countries. The purpose of this chapter is to analyse what this means with regard to strengthening bilateral relations and how bilateral relations are being strengthened beyond individual partnership projects.

### 6.1 Perspectives on Bilateral Relations with Beneficiary States

Since the fall of the Iron Curtain Norway’s policy to develop relations with these countries has followed a two-pronged strategy – one multilateral and one bilateral. The multilateral strategy has first and foremost been through NATO and the Nordic Council. The bilateral strategy has been through three major programs, financing specific projects in support of the Beneficiary States. The first was the Action Programme for Eastern Europe from 1992 – 1996. The second was the Plan of Action to Support EU Accession Countries from 2001 – 2004. The third is the on-going Financial Mechanisms. Although there are important differences between these programs, some of the basic thinking behind has been the same: to develop and strengthen overall political relations between Norway and the beneficiary states through individual projects involving players from both Norway and the Beneficiary State, and to promote relations beyond these projects involving stakeholders and policy makers at a higher level and within a broader context beyond the individual projects.

The Financial Mechanisms represent a major shift compared to the two previous programmes. Firstly, the objective of the Financial Mechanisms is to reduce social and economic disparities within the EEA and to enable the EEA countries to participate in the internal market. Secondly, this consists of an agreement with the EU. For the two previous programmes, however, the initiative was exclusively Norway’s and the sole decision-making body was NMFA, and eligible applicants were only Norwegian institutions or multi-lateral organisations. In the Financial Mechanisms, on the other hand, it is only organisations from the beneficiary states who may apply for project support and the basic

decision-making structure are the different national institutions involved in the application process in each country. This has opened up for Norway a totally new and very broad scope of entry points for bilateral relations it never had before. In interviews NMFA and the Norwegian frame institutions were asked to compare the Financial Mechanisms and the Plan of Action to Support EU Accession Countries with a view to development of partnerships and development of bilateral relations. The results are summarised in table 6.1 below.

**Table 6.1: Comparison, Financial Mechanisms and “Plan of Action to Support EU Accession Countries”**

	<b>Development of bilateral relations</b>	<b>Promotion of partnership</b>
Action Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not so much on bilateral relations</li> <li>• Focus on promoting relations through projects and less on relations beyond and above projects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promoted more strongly involvement of Norwegian institutions as they were the ones who applied and then had to find partners in the Beneficiary State (BS)</li> <li>• Most of the money to Norwegian institutions</li> <li>• Sustainability of these relations is questioned as it was based on external financing outside the Beneficiary State</li> <li>• Most priority to public sector, very little to private business</li> <li>• Norwegian institutions in the “driver’s seat”. This combined with less bureaucracy made it much more possible to “drive” issues</li> </ul>
Financial Mechanisms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Favours more bilateral relations because well anchored with national authorities which are in charge of the grants</li> <li>• More open to capacity building – which is what institutions in BS favour</li> <li>• More scope for Norwegian frame institutions to promote capacity building</li> <li>• The economic size of the Financial Mechanisms make it much more interesting for national authorities and opens up for political dialogue which was hardly possible under the Action Programme, where national authorities were much less involved.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More open to involvement of private business</li> <li>• Less money to Norwegian institutions</li> </ul>

## 6.2 Preparation and Implementation of Financial Mechanisms

Following the EEA Enlargement Agreement and Protocol 38a to this, Norway engaged in the preparation of individual Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) with each of the individual Beneficiary State. These negotiations laid the basis for the bilateral relations to be developed and the MoUs with their annexes constitute the foundation and framework for these relations. Prior to this Norway had never had such a framework for bilateral relations with any of these states.

The EEA Enlargement Agreement and Protocol 38a does not include any statements on strengthening of bilateral relations. This was first introduced during the negotiations of the MoUs with the different beneficiary states. The wording of the intention to strengthen bilateral relations is somewhat different in the various Memoranda of Understanding, as noted in the introduction to Chapter 3, though the meaning is generally the same.

Several informants commented that Norway has been more eager to emphasise this overall aim to strengthen the bilateral relations than the beneficiary states. NMFA is now very clear about the shared and mutual responsibility of Beneficiary State and Norway to jointly work for the fulfilment of this aim. Norway brings this up in annual meetings and in the approval of second calls for proposals in the different beneficiary states.

During the implementation of the Grants, there are several ways in which Norway strengthens its bilateral relations with each of the Beneficiary States:

#### Approval of National Calls for Approvals and Guidelines

NMFA is given the opportunity to comment on the text for national calls for proposals. In some countries where partnership projects have been slow in coming about, Norway has actively pursued ways of strengthening the mechanism to award extra points for partnerships and to develop special funds to promote partnerships.

#### The annual meeting between Norway and each Beneficiary State

This is the venue where NMFA and the two other donors reiterate the aim to strengthen bilateral relations, based on the annual report from the Beneficiary State. The focus is on the implementation of the mechanisms and the projects including partnerships in projects, but NMFA always makes an effort to see this within the broader perspective of bilateral relations. The general comment is that Beneficiary States are showing more interest and motivation to see Financial Mechanisms within this broader perspective. The same applies to Financial Mechanism Committee.

#### Norwegian Embassy participation in national meetings, seminars etc

The Norwegian embassies play a pivotal role in promoting bilateral relations. They liaise directly with National Focal Point and intermediaries in the beneficiary states and participate in promotional events organised by these. They also organise promotional events and information material for national organisations with interests for partnerships and assist Norwegian individual organisations and frame institutions in their efforts to establish contacts.

#### Norwegian frame institutions' participation in seminars etc with participation from institutions in beneficiary states

Norwegian frame institutions have a dual purpose with regard to bilateral relations. They want to develop broader policy relations with similar institutions, but in doing this they are also paving the way for Norwegian organisations in search of partnership projects.

### 6.3 Opinions on the Development of Bilateral Relations

Development of bilateral relations was discussed with various actors.

### *6.3.1 Norwegian embassies in beneficiary states*

The Norwegian Embassies are in a key position to assess development of bilateral relations. This was discussed in interviews with embassies in Latvia, Poland and the Czech Republic, and also with NMFA in Oslo. In addition embassies in other countries also provided their views on this.

There is a shared opinion that the Financial Mechanisms constitute a new and very good platform and framework for strengthening bilateral relations. They constitute a unique door opener for NMFA with its embassies as well as for other Norwegian institutions. Norway has through the grants and all associated activities been able to make itself well known to a wide range of stakeholders and players. This is an exposure to public and private (business and NGOs) actors at different levels and locations in the country. Politically and in public opinion attention is being directed to Norway as a relevant player with a view to Norway's support to issues of relevance in the country. Quite a number of Norwegian public institutions, private businesses and NGOs have participated in and contributed to this strengthening of bilateral relations beyond that of only project partnerships. This has often been through seminars on themes where Norway has broad competence, such as environment, energy, social and judiciary issues, gender equality etc. In summary the Financial Mechanisms represent an entry point and stepping stone for development of bilateral relations well beyond just individual partnership projects. It is a gate opener to areas and institutions which are not so easily captured through more "traditional" relations through embassies. In some countries it was noted that in high level meetings between the two countries the Financial Mechanisms have provided the basis for broader and deeper political conversations than what would otherwise have been the case. In all countries it is reported that bilateral relations are broader, more diversified and closer than before as a result of the Financial Mechanisms.

However, in spite of the shared views of the positive contribution of the Financial Mechanisms to bilateral relations, it is also the opinion of some embassies, that in practice the potential that grants represent in this regard is not fully followed up. The most important view is that there is a lack of consistency between Norway's efforts to promote partnerships and the follow-up regarding bilateral relations. It is expressed that there is a tendency among Norwegian political leaders not to give adequate priority to high level exchange visits involving government and parliament. There is a perception that some find that such relations are well attended to through multi-lateral systems. Some embassies report that this is not the view in the Beneficiary States and that high level officials would welcome much more active efforts from Norway to develop bilateral relations based on the Financial Mechanisms beyond mere partnership projects.

It is also expressed that the heavy reliance on individual projects and partnerships as a vehicle to strengthening bilateral relations has other limitations. Firstly, there is the fact that most partnerships are a continuation of existing partnerships which have been built up over a longer period and that there is a limit to how many new partnerships the Financial Mechanisms will bring about within its current timeframe. Secondly, most embassies report that institutions in the beneficiary states have problems in finding Norwegian institutions that are motivated to develop genuine partnerships through projects. Some embassies also report that when they want to arrange different types of seminars etc with the intention to

promote relations beyond just partnerships (which is also included), they have major problems in finding interested Norwegian institutions willing to participate.

Finally, but not least, the view has been expressed that there are limitations as to how much Norway can influence the Financial Mechanisms to meet Norway's interest in promoting partnerships and strengthening bilateral relations. It is clear that generally partnerships are not a requirement and that it is the beneficiary states that play the main role when it comes to the content and directions of the Financial Mechanisms in each country.

### *6.3.2 Norwegian frame organisations*

Norwegian frame organisations were also asked about how they see bilateral relations being strengthened through the Financial Mechanisms. It is shared view that the Financial Mechanisms provide an opportunity to develop and expand bilateral relations at a higher level and in a more comprehensive manner. Several of these Norwegian frame institutions have in their strategic plans the objective to develop bilateral relations in Financial Mechanisms countries and the Financial Mechanisms is an excellent way to pursue this strategy. It is also expressed that the Financial Mechanisms favour more bilateral relations because they are well anchored with national authorities who are in charge of the grants and Norwegian authorities. The economic size of the Financial Mechanisms also makes it interesting for national authorities. The grants therefore open up for political dialogue which was hardly possible under the previous Norwegian programmes, where national authorities were much less involved. Finally, it is also mentioned the Financial Mechanisms also give Norwegian ministries the opportunity to pave the way and open doors for cooperation through their directorates. In the case of the Norwegian Ministry of Environment all its four directorates are involved in EEA Grant activities and projects.

### *6.3.3 Institutions in beneficiary states*

In the three countries we visited the issue of bilateral relations was first and foremost discussed with the NFP. It was noted that the purpose to strengthen bilateral relations was not part of the basic agreement of October 2003 between Norway and the European Community. This being said, in all countries the NFP said that they were favourable to the strengthening of bilateral relations through the Financial Mechanisms. In one country it was stated that as this was the initiative from Norway, Norway should have been clearer in the negotiations on the MoU on how they defined the type of bilateral relations to be strengthened through the Financial Mechanisms. Norway should also have been more explicit on the outcome it expected in this regard. It was recognised that in general bilateral relations had been broadened and deepened as a result of the Financial Mechanisms.

Otherwise the NFPs in the three countries expressed that the issue of bilateral relations was primarily addressed in the negotiations that brought about the MoU and then in the approval process of calls for proposals and guidelines with a focus on individual projects. In the application there is an item on how the project contributes to bilateral relations. The NFP comments upon this in their submission to FMO of recommended projects. The NFP had no comment on development of bilateral relations beyond this. However, they emphasised the importance of the Norwegian embassy in various events and the way this contributed to development of bilateral relations in connection with individual projects.

The intermediaries managing priority sectors and special programmes, funds and grants had different views. Most just stated that beyond the level of individual projects, they had no experience on the development of bilateral relations in a broader sense. However, some made some important observations. Firstly, that through the management of the grants and the activities and procedures this involved, they had important, frequent and substantive contacts with the Norwegian embassy. Secondly, they had participated in events and had contacts with Norwegian government institutions working in the same fields as themselves and that this had opened up for relations at policy levels. A general statement is that the frequency of contacts has increased notably.

## 6.4 Challenges and Future Perspectives

This report has shown how the Financial Mechanisms are bringing about an important and increasing number of partnerships between Norwegian institutions and project promoters in the different countries. Interviews and surveys substantiate that these partnerships contribute to the strengthening of bilateral relations between Norway and each Beneficiary State. Nevertheless, different informants have noted that there is a limit to how much bilateral relations may be further strengthened by such project partnerships only. There is a view that the efforts made to promote these partnerships as well as Norway's participation in the different Financial Mechanisms processes together constitute a platform for a much more vigorous strengthening of bilateral relations. But some express that this would require Norway to better express their objectives and expected outcome of this and to achieve a mutual understanding and agreement with beneficiary states in this regard. It also means that Norway would have to give more impetus to high level political commitment and follow-up to the reciprocal strengthening of such bilateral relations from both government and Parliament.



## 7 Conclusions and Recommendations

### 7.1 Principles for the Financial Mechanisms

The Financial Mechanisms were formally established in May 2004 with the objective

*Contribute to the reduction of social and economic disparities within the EEA, and to enable all EEA countries to participate fully in the Internal Market.*

Through the EEA Financial Mechanism, the three EEA-EFTA states Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway will make a total of EUR 672 million available to the 12 countries that joined the EU and the EEA in May 2004 and in January 2007, as well as to Greece, Portugal and Spain. Through the Norwegian Financial Mechanism, Norway will make an additional EUR 567 million available to the 10 countries that joined the EU and the EEA in 2004. Both mechanisms run over a five-year period until 2009. Norway, as the largest of the three donors, will contribute EUR 1.2 billion.

The Financial Mechanisms are jointly implemented by the beneficiary states and the donor states. This flexible approach resulted in detailed Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) between the donor states and each of the 15 beneficiary states that specify the implementation system in each beneficiary state, focus areas within the overall priority sectors and any special block grants, or funds, which the beneficiary states want to establish to support groups or activities with specific needs and requirements.

The Financial Mechanisms offer assistance in different forms as specified in the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with each Beneficiary State (BS). Individual projects are the most common form of support under the Financial Mechanisms. Annex B to the MoU defines the Priority Sectors with sub-categories for individual projects in each individual country. These vary between the countries. In addition Annex C in the MoU also identifies specific forms of grant assistance such as NGO grant scheme, Scholarship grant scheme, Technical assistance fund, Seed money grant scheme, Short-term expert fund.

The EEA Enlargement Agreement and Protocol 38a does not include any statements on strengthening of bilateral relations. This was first introduced during the negotiations of the MoUs with the different beneficiary states. The wording of the intention to strengthen bilateral relations is somewhat different in the various Memoranda of Understanding. But the meaning is generally the same. There is also a difference in how and where this purpose is expressed in the MoU. In most it is expressed as a preamble, stating

*“WHEREAS the EEA Enlargement Agreement and the Norwegian Financial Mechanism will strengthen relations between Norway and Beneficiary State to the mutual benefit of their peoples”.*

In some this is also repeated in the introduction to Annex B to the MoU, where it is explicitly stated:

*The Norwegian Financial mechanism aims to strengthen the bilateral relations between the Beneficiary State and Norway*

## 7.2 Partnerships with Norwegian Institutions

In February 2008 FMO had received a total of 663 project applications of which 145 projects had Norwegian partners. Latvia is the country with by far the highest share of partnership projects with 36%.

There is quite a difference between the Priority Sectors. Two Priority Sectors stand out: Academic research with 68% of funds going to approved partnership projects and 53 % of the all the projects in this Priority Sector have partners. Then there is "Regional Policy" with 51 % and 50,0 % respectively.

There are 168 partnerships in the 145 submitted partnership projects. 17 projects have more than one Norwegian partner.

There are 98 Norwegian institutions which are quoted as partners in the 145 partnership projects. 25 of these are partners in more than one project. Actually these 25 institutions have altogether 93 partnerships, which is 55 % of the total 168 partnerships.

The biggest category of Norwegian partnership institutions is "Private business companies" with 21 of the institutions (21,4 %). There are 18 institutions (18 %) in each of the two categories "Research institutions" and "Regional and local government". There are 11 higher education institutions (11%) and nine museums (9 %).

For 68 % of the project promoters with Norwegian partners the partnership was a continuation of an existing contact with a Norwegian institution. For 65 % of the Norwegian institutions the partnership was a continuation of an existing cooperation.

For those project promoters for whom the partnership was a new contact, 50 % had used their own network to find the partner. Very few had used assistance from the Embassy or others to find the partner. 47 % of the Norwegian partners responded that they had participated in activities undertaken by Norwegian institutions and/or the embassy to promote partnerships.

66,7 % of the project promoters answered that the Norwegian partner had participated in the development of the project idea and the preparation of the application. The same corresponding figure from the Norwegian institutions was 78 %.

71 % of the project promoters informed that the project budget covered cost for the partner, while only 41 % of the Norwegian institutions informed that their costs were covered.

88 % of the project promoters and 83 % of the Norwegian institutions rated the partnership as successful.

In the survey to project promoters without Norwegian partners 86 % responded that they had not in any way been encouraged to look for Norwegian partners when they prepared the project proposal. 26 % responded that they had considered trying to find a Norwegian partner and 73 % that they had not. 93 % responded that they had not been approached by a Norwegian institution with interest to develop a partnership.

65,6 % responded that they would have looked for a Norwegian partner if they had been aware of the Norwegian embassy's availability to assist in finding such partner.

### 7.3 Factors influencing Partnership

The partnership concept and what the different partners were to bring into the project have been brought up by many. Many refer to two different models – the “gap filling” model, where the project promoter has identified certain needs to be filled in by inputs from the partner, and the consortium model, with benefits and added value for both sides. Relatively few of the projects are of this last type. Most of the projects are predominantly “gap filling”, as it was also confirmed in the survey to Norwegian partner institutions. These inputs may be services such as training or expertise on the one hand or equipment or infrastructure on the other. The nature and potential for partnership will of course vary. It may also change over time. Several have observed that a large number of projects under previous programmes were gap filling service providing projects. Institutions no longer need these services and new projects are more infrastructure projects where previous partners do not have comparative advantages and much to offer. Traditionally, gap filling projects are asymmetric, with the Norwegian institution being the provider and the other the recipient. The challenge is to sustain such partnerships when needs and motivation change.

There is consensus regarding the factors that contribute to partnerships. All agree that most partnerships build on long term relations. 68% of project promoters with partnerships reported that the current project was a continuation of existing relations as did 65 % of the Norwegian partners. Informants both in Beneficiary States and in Norway emphasise that for those who do not have existing contacts to build on, the need for necessary access to information on potential partners is of paramount information. Furthermore such new partnerships depend on necessary time to find and build the relations. For all institutions on both sides it is stated by all that successful partnerships depend on a clear understanding of the benefits and value added for each party and the tasks and responsibilities this involve. In most cases the benefits are based on complementarity and compatibility.

Informants in beneficiary states and Norway highlight the same factors and conditions that are conducive to successful partnerships. The most important is that all sides see that the partnership is beneficial to both parties and that the project promoter must see that partnership means added value compared to the alternative of no partnership. The second most important factor is motivation and commitment by all involved while the third most important is full agreement and shared understanding of all elements of the project: conceptually, objectives and activities, and work programme and responsibilities.

Informants both in Norway and in Beneficiary States were asked about their views on efforts to promote partnerships, which may be summarised as follows:

Promotional activities are most conducive when they are targeted to actors, networks, arenas where one may find those who have resources, competence and motivation to develop genuine partnerships.

Seminars may have a purpose at an initial and introductory state, but not thereafter. Then tailored workshops with an explicit purpose to promote partnerships within specific interest sharing groups are much more conducive.

Consultation processes, meaning access to advice on finding partners and developing partnerships are by most seen as very important for institutions both in beneficiary states and in Norway. Such services should be targeted and tailored to those with no prior partnership experiences and in particularly NGOs and local authorities.

Conferences are by most seen as having limited potential for promoting partnership.

Travel support is seen by most as not an important measure for bringing about partnerships.

Seed money fund in connection with project preparation with a view to developing partnership is by most seen to be conducive. However, such funds must be established and operational well in advance of the calling for proposals and must be administered in a highly non-bureaucratic manner. Some also suggest that such a fund should be managed from Norway or that there should be two funds, one in each country.

Extra points for partnership is a measure where the informants both in Norway and in the Beneficiary States have conflicting views. Those in favour find that this is an important incentive to project promoters to look for partners and makes this a decisive factor in the final steps in the approval process. Those against this measure find that this brings about unserious search for partners and distorts the genuine criteria for selection. It seems fair to conclude that the usefulness of this measure is greater for sectors with limited traditions for partnerships than for sectors where there is a tendency for partnerships to develop without any particular stimulating measures.

It should also be remembered that extra points for partnership is a measure that in most countries was only introduced for second and third calls for proposals.

### *7.3.1 Factors that may Constitute Hindrance to Partnership*

Informants both in Norway and beneficiary states were asked about factors and conditions which may be a hindrance to partnership. Some of these factors may apply to conditions in the beneficiary state and with project promoters, others may apply to Norwegian institutions and others may be of concern to both sides.

#### Conditions in Beneficiary State:

In some of the interviews it has been mentioned that there are limitations in how far national authorities may promote and facilitate partnerships with Norwegian institutions specifically. Some have stated that this may be seen as favouring one country and be discriminatory to other countries.

Requirements for legal documents from the partner is seen as a serious detriment to the motivation to embark upon preparation of partnership. This is particularly so when the partnership is of the consortium type and the partner must present a large number of translated documents, certificates, bank guarantees etc. in line with local regulations. This is less burdensome in the case of gap filling partnerships, where the partner is just providing given inputs and this does not require cumbersome procurement procedures. This type of requirements on the partner is less stringent in block grants and programmes.

Many felt that the time frame for preparation of proposals is too short to find a new partner, unless contacts already exist.

Budgetary constraints, particularly combined with the high cost of Norwegian institutions, are by many quoted as a main detriment to partnerships. This is particularly so for the funds and programmes where the budgetary envelope is quite small. Lack of earmarked funding for the partner is therefore seen as a major problem. Some even suggested that there should be a mechanism to meet unforeseen partnership costs during implementation as these are difficult to estimate at the time of the preparation of the application.

Some mention language and remoteness to the capital as problems, but not as major constraints.

What most mention as a constraint is the lack of information about possible partners in Norway and the limited possibilities to assistance in finding these. This is often exacerbated by initial lack of motivation and readiness to see the added value of partnerships. Partnership projects are often seen as complicated.

#### Conditions in Norway:

The most frequently stated condition in Norway and regarding possible institutions is the limited number of Norwegian institutions interested in such partnerships. This applies to all categories, but in particular private companies and NGOs. There are quite a number of examples of project promoters who have tried to find partners, but not succeeded and others who did find, but then the Norwegian institution withdrew, most often because of lack of capacity or time or budgetary constraints of the project to cover expenses of the partner.

#### *7.3.2 Recommendations*

The ToR states that it is a purpose of this Review to provide recommendations for the remaining implementation period and direct this to the different players regarding the most effective role they could and should play. Based on the interviews and surveys we make the following recommendations on how different categories of actors may contribute to establishing partnerships:

##### **a) Institutions in Beneficiary State country involved in the management of Financial Mechanisms (NFP and intermediaries for priority sectors and special grants)**

There is scope for these institutions to play a more active role in promoting and facilitating partnerships, although this is not a specific task in their job descriptions in the MoUs.

#### Recommendation 1

It should be made clear to all national institutions involved in the management of Financial Mechanisms at annual meetings and otherwise that they have a responsibility to promote and facilitate partnerships. In support of this four follow-up actions are recommended:

#### Recommendation 2

These institutions and particularly the NFP should prepare specific guidelines on requirements and procedures for partnership. This should include an effort to simplify application procedures, reduce documentation on partners to be included, reduce bureaucracy and be more flexible because establishing partnerships takes time. They should also take into account that requirements should not be excessively cumbersome for Norwegian and local institutions to comply with as this may demotivate institutions on both sides from entering into partnerships. To the extent required, these efforts should be coordinated with FMO.

#### Recommendation 3

The Focal Point should systematically gather good experiences from partnership projects and report on best practices to a larger audience. This could include a conference on success stories on partnership in the country.

#### Recommendation 4

NFP should include an item on partnership at the launching seminars for national calls for proposals. This could be a presentation of good experiences and include Norwegian institutions with competence and partnership experience. The embassy would have to support the NFP in providing the right inputs for such an item on the agenda.

#### Recommendation 5

NFP should consider to open an e-mail response advisory service – information desk - on requirements and procedures on partnerships – particularly to pre-empt problems relating to documentation requirements from partners. This could also include a database on partner organisations, contact persons and best practices.

#### **b) Project promoters in the Beneficiary State trying to establish partnerships**

It is evident that the motivation to establish new partnerships must come from the project promoters themselves. If such a motivation exists, there are some basic recommendations for them to fulfil this desire.

#### Recommendation 6

The project promoters must develop well the purpose of the partnership and expected outcome of this – added value - by involving a partner and how this may strengthen their application.

#### Recommendation 7

The project promoter should participate in seminars, use the web and all other means to identify possible partners as soon as possible.

#### Recommendation 8

The project promoter should prepare a presentation of their own institution with emphasis on the scope and potential for partnership and circulate this to potential partners.

#### Recommendation 9

The project promoter should prepare the ideas on partnership with a view to sustaining these after the specific project.

#### **c) Norwegian embassy in Beneficiary State**

There is a shared opinion in the beneficiary states that the embassies play a pivotal role in promoting and facilitating partnerships and that it is important that these efforts are sustained.

#### Recommendation 10

At this stage it is particularly important that the embassies intensify their role as an intermediary to identify candidates for partnership, provide advice and further develop the embassy's role as a mediator between project promoters and Norwegian institutions looking for partners.

#### Recommendation 11

The embassies should support bilateral meetings between National Focal Point and intermediaries, interested project promoters and Norwegian institutions.

### Recommendation 12

The embassies should also organise best practice events with emphasis on positive partnership experiences with equal emphasis on experiences from both sides.

#### **d) Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (NMFA)**

NMFA may in different ways promote partnerships.

### Recommendation 13

As a follow up of Recommendation 1, NMFA may try to influence the beneficiary states to make the conditions more favourable to partnerships. This would include a reduction of bureaucracy and excessive requirements for documentation, which are obstacles to establishing partnerships.

### Recommendation 14

NMFA should take the necessary steps to better disseminate information to the public and relevant institutions on possibilities for and achievements from partnerships. Actually, there is a need to get in place a better system for coordinating and follow-up in Norway of efforts from project promoters to establish contacts with potential Norwegian partner institutions. NMFA should consider setting up a “clearing-house” mechanism or system for this.

### Recommendation 15

NMFA should establish “pre-project” facilities (seed money) for developing project ideas and establishing contacts. This should target institutions both in beneficiary states and in Norway and target those types of institutions which have been less successful in establishing partnerships, e.g. NGOs.

### Recommendation 16

NMFA should introduce measures to ensure that partnerships are indeed genuine and not just established for the sake of acquiring extra points. A measure in this regard could be to make payment to project promoters with partnerships contingent upon presentation of a partnership agreement signed by both parties.

#### **e) Norwegian Frame Institutions**

The role of these frame institutions is explained in section 5.2. They have no formal responsibilities, but they play an important role in encouraging relevant Norwegian institutions to get involved in partnerships. They also serve as an intermediary for project promoters looking for Norwegian partners within their field of competence. Both the embassies and NMFA channel requests for partners to these intermediary institutions. Finally, many of these pursue contacts with similar institutions in the beneficiary states and thus may serve as a door opener for individual Norwegian institutions, trying to familiarise themselves with Financial Mechanisms in the beneficiary states and possible partners.

### Recommendation 17

These institutions should continue and even strengthen their activities to promote and facilitate partnerships. Activities which may be considered within such a strategy could include:

- Pursue more systematically and actively contacts with similar institutions in beneficiary states when guidelines for national calls for proposals are prepared;
- Establish a special website on Financial Mechanisms and individual institutions participating or wishing to participate;
- Provide embassies with more information on Norwegian institutions and their competencies;
- Arrange seminars for exchange of experiences between Norwegian institutions working in these countries and with experience from Financial Mechanisms and similar facilities.

**f) Individual Norwegian institutions trying to establish partnerships for shared projects in Beneficiary State**

It is evident that individual Norwegian institutions may do much more in order to find and motivate project promoters for partnerships. Several suggestions on specific actions have been made.

Recommendation 18

These institutions should follow closely the calendar for calls for proposals in the beneficiary state and familiarize themselves with priority sectors, funds and programmes in countries of interest.

Recommendation 19

These institutions need to be more active in building up contacts at all levels in beneficiary states (Focal Point, Intermediaries and individual institutions) and identify project promoters who are likely to prepare applications and approach these.

Recommendation 20

These institutions need to have a good overview of other ongoing programmes within their field of activity. Such programmes may well be a stepping stone or entry point for new contacts and partnerships.

Recommendation 21

These institutions should maintain contacts with other Norwegian institutions working in EEA countries of interest for partnerships.

Recommendation 22

It is important that these institutions inform the embassies of their interest, keep the embassies updated on efforts undertaken and make it clear that they expect the embassies to provide information on important events and on institutions with interest in partnerships.

**g) FMO in Brussels**

FMO is the nodal point for the Financial Mechanisms. It is FMO that has access to most information on partnerships in all the beneficiary states.

Recommendation 23

FMO should document strategies and measures as well as experiences and results from partnership projects in the different countries. This should include information on rules and



procedures for partnerships in different countries. This should then be followed up with a systematic dissemination of good partnership experiences.

#### Recommendation 24

FMO also has all the information on individual Norwegian partner institutions. This should be made more easily available on FMO's website.

#### Recommendation 25

In order to make sure that partnerships are genuine, submission of partnership agreements should be made a precondition for disbursement of the grant to project promoters with a partnership.

#### Recommendation 26

FMO should cooperate actively with the beneficiary states to simplify application procedures and documentation requirements as much as possible.

### 7.4 Strengthening Bilateral Relations

The Financial Mechanisms have opened up for Norway a totally new and very broad scope of entry points for bilateral relations with the beneficiary states, which it never had before. It constitutes a unique door opener for NMFA with its embassies as well as for other Norwegian institutions. Financial Mechanisms represent an entry point and stepping stone for development of bilateral relations well beyond just individual partnership projects. It is a gate opener to areas and institutions which are not so easily captured through more "traditional" relations through embassies. As a matter of fact, from some countries it has been mentioned that in high level meetings between the two countries the Financial Mechanisms have provided the basis for broader and deeper political conversations than what would otherwise have been the case. In all countries it is reported that bilateral relations are broader, more diversified and closer than before as a result of the Financial Mechanisms.

However, in spite of the shared views of the positive contribution of the Financial Mechanisms to bilateral relations, it is also the opinion of some, that in practice the potential that grants represent in this regard are not fully followed up. The most important view is that there is a lack of consistency between Norway's efforts to promote partnerships and the follow-up regarding bilateral relations. Different informants have expressed that there is a limit to how much bilateral relations may be further strengthened by such project partnerships only. There is a view that the efforts made to promote these partnerships as well as Norway's participation in the different Financial Mechanisms processes together constitute a platform for a much more vigorous strengthening of bilateral relations. In interviews in the three countries it has been expressed that high level officials would welcome much more active efforts from Norway to develop bilateral relations based on the Financial Mechanisms beyond mere partnership projects. But some express that this would require Norway to better express their own objectives and expected outcome of this and to achieve a mutual understanding and agreement with beneficiary states in this regard. It also means that Norway would have to give more impetus to high level political commitment and follow-up to the reciprocal strengthening of such bilateral relations from both government and Parliament.

If Norway wants to capitalize on the positive experiences from partnerships through projects and use this to further strengthen bilateral relations and broaden the policy dialogue between the countries, Norway will have to expand and somewhat shift the focus of its cooperation with the beneficiary states through the Financial Mechanisms.

#### *7.4.1 Recommendations*

##### Recommendation 1

Norway should use the opportunity to have more high level officials from Government participate in EEA Grant events in the beneficiary countries, particularly at the launching of calls and different seminars etc. This is an excellent way to emphasise Norway's role and to promote cooperation between the countries.

##### Recommendation 2

Given the fact that some of the National focal points have expressed that there is no clear statement on what Norway wants to achieve with regard to bilateral relations, NMFA should prepare a policy document explaining this. Such a document should be well suited to be presented at the annual meetings between Norway and the beneficiary states.

##### Recommendation 3

Given the limitations of Norway to influence the content and direction of Financial Mechanisms in the different beneficiary states and that Norway has certain areas of interest and competence which are best fitted for cooperation, Norway should consider how it can best establish some broader programmes for bilateral cooperation. This would either require some special additional programmes within the Financial Mechanisms or in parallel. Such programmes would have to be jointly prepared by Norway and selected countries. They would have to be in areas of mutual interest and benefit to both sides. Individual partner projects would have to respond to the overall objectives of the programme and be of mutual benefit to the project partners. Norwegian frame institutions should participate in this.

##### Recommendation 4

Finally, most of the projects with Norwegian partners are "gap filling" projects where the Norwegian partner is the provider of inputs, quite often training and capacity building. The scope of such projects is quite limited with a view to development and strengthening of bilateral relations. NMFA should look into the content of the on-going partnership projects and pull out those where there are mutual benefits and added value for both sides and where these constitute the basis for continued and sustained cooperation. These are the projects which are best suited as examples to be used in the policy dialogue to strengthen bilateral relations.

## Annex A: Terms of Reference

### BACKGROUND

The EEA Grants<sup>2</sup> represents the contribution of the three EEA EFTA states towards reducing the social and economic disparities in the European Economic Area. Over a five year period (2004-2009) a total of €1.239 mill. will be made available for grant assistance to 15 beneficiary states in Central and Southern Europe. Norway as the largest donor is contributing approximately 97% of the funding.

In line with MoUs signed between the donor countries and each beneficiary state the EEA Grants should also contribute to strengthening the bilateral relations between the beneficiary states and the donor countries. This was also underlined by the Norwegian parliament when approving the agreements establishing the mechanisms<sup>3</sup>.

The implementation of the EEA Grants is based on close cooperation between the donor states and the beneficiary states, with the Financial Mechanism Office in Brussels (FMO) acting as a day-to-day secretariat for the donor side. Grants are offered in the form of individual projects, programmes and block grants (“funds”). Each beneficiary state is responsible for announcing call for proposals, prioritising projects and forwarding the selected projects to the donor side for appraisal and approval. The beneficiary states are responsible for the implementation of the approved projects.

### CONTEXT AND PURPOSE OF THE REVIEW

The implementation of the EEA Grants is now in its fourth year. A total of 331 projects has so far been approved and this number is constantly increasing. It is expected that a total of 1000-1200 projects will have been approved by the end of the commitment period 30.04.2009. Of the 331 approved projects approximately 50 (15%) have some form of partnership with a Norwegian institution.

The main purpose of this review is to assess the progress made so far in relation to the objective of strengthening the bilateral relationship between Norway and the beneficiary states, and to provide recommendations for the remaining implementation period.

### SCOPE OF WORK AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE REVIEW

The scope of the review is two-fold:

- (i) To the extent possible within the time constraints provided, document how the bilateral relationships with the beneficiary states have developed as a result of the implementation of the EEA Grants, and assess the achievements made in relation to the bilateral objectives of the mechanisms.
- (ii) Analyse and identify various aspects and trends regarding the establishment of successful partnerships. Success criteria should be indicated and recommendations provided on the best approach for the remaining implementation period of the EEA

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<sup>2</sup> The EEA Financial Mechanism (2004-2009) and the Norwegian Financial Mechanism (2004-2009)

<sup>3</sup> Innst.S.nr.103 (2003-2004)

Grants. This should be the main emphasis of the review. As part of this assignment an appropriate questionnaire should be developed and submitted to all Norwegian partners that have successfully established partnerships that have been recommended for funding.

A wide variety of measures and activities have been introduced and carried out in order to stimulate partnership involvement, i.a. promotional activities, launching seminars, consultation processes, conferences, travel support, seed money funds, extra points for partnership projects etc.. The review team should, as part of their assignment, assess the successfulness of these activities.

The recommendations being formulated as a result of this assignment should be directed at potential Norwegian partners considering involvement in projects financed by the EEA Grants, and at the donor side (NMFA, Embassies, other institutions in Norway and the FMO) regarding the most effective role they could and should play.

The review should be carried out through analysis of relevant documentation, through the questionnaire mentioned above and through consultations/interviews with selected representatives of the following stakeholders:

- Institutions having succeeded in establishing partnerships with approved projects
- Institutions having tried but not succeeded in establishing partnerships
- National Focal Points and fund intermediaries
- Financial Mechanism Office
- Innovation Norway
- Helsinki Committee
- Relevant Norwegian Ministries and Directorates
- Norwegian Embassies
- Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Documenting the achievements should cover all the beneficiary states, while the more detailed analytical work and assessments should focus on Latvia, Poland and the Czech Republic. The review is expected to be carried out by a team of two persons utilising a total of 8-10 man-weeks to complete the assignment.

## **REPORTING**

The draft report in English should be presented by the team at a partnership conference planned for Norwegian institutions involved or considering involvement in the implementation of the EEA Grants. The conference will be arranged in Oslo at the end of February 2008. A debriefing by the team for NMFA highlighting their key findings and recommendations should take place before the conference, and again before the team conclude their work. The final report shall be presented shortly after the conference.

## Annex B: Projects and Partners

<b>Case Number</b>	<b>Partner Name</b>
PL0243	ABM-utvikling
PL0304	Agder Research
PL0255	Agder University College, Kristiansand, Norway.
LV0045	AKVAFORSK
PL0280	Antirasistisk Senter, Oslo
PT0037	Arendal kommune
PL0236	Bergen City
SI0018	Bergen City Cultural department
PL0274	BIOFORSK (Norwegian Institute for Agricultural and Environmental Research)
PL0271	BIOFORSK (Norwegian Institute for Agricultural and Environmental Research, Soil and Environment Division)
PL0082	BIOFORSK Jordforsk - Norwegian Centre for Soil and Environmental Research
PL0014	BIOFORSK Jordforsk, later named Bioforsk
EE0012	BIOFORSK Norwegian Institute for Agricultural and Environmental Research (Bioforsk)
PL0073	BIOFORSK, Planteforsk - the Norwegian Crop Research Institute
PT0010	Bodø University College (Høgskolen i Bodø)
LV0055	Buskerud, Telemark, Vestfold Region
LT0057	Cancer Research Institute of the Radium Hospital
PL0226	Eastern Norway Research Institute
PL0257	ECON
SK0013	ENSI - Energy Saving International AS
SK0024	Executive Committee for Northern Norway
LV0029	Exponor Tromsø
PL0060	Exponor Tromsø AS
LT0031	Floro Municipality
PL0262	GE Vingmed Ultrasound AS, Horten, Norway,
PL0253	Gode Sirklar AS
PL0098	GRIP - Foundation for Sustainable Production and Consumption.
SI0001	Hedmark County Council
LV0020	Hordaland County Governor
LV0026	Hospital Organiser AS
SI0032	Huseby Resource Centre for Visual Impairment and Deaf Blindness
CZ0091	Institute of Marine Research, Bergen
PL0272	Institute of Social sciences and Labour Market (FAFO)
LV0026	KITH AS

CZ0075	Kristiansand Dyrepark ASA
PL0282	Kristiansand municipality
PL0304	Kristiansand municipality
PL0239	Marian Cathedral Church, Bergen - Musical Manager Mr. Askeland
PL0261	Milvenn AS
SK0022	Molde Knowledge Park (Molde Kunnskapspark)
PL0238	Molde Kommune
SK0022	Molde kommune
SK0022	Møre og Romsdal fylkeskommune
HU0045	Narvik University College
LV0022	National Bureau of Crime Investigation of Norway (Kripos)
LV0047	National Institute of Nutrition and Seafood Research (NIFES)
LV0024	National Mediation Service of Norway
LV0034	National Museum of Art, Architecture and Design
EE0010	NGI - Norwegian Geotechnical Institute (Norges Geotekniske Institutt)
HU0049	NGU Norges Geologiske Undersokelse - NGU
CZ0074	NGU Norwegian Geological Survey
PL0259	NIKU (Norwegian Institute for Cultural Heritage Research)
PT0026	NIKU (Norwegian Institute for Cultural Heritage Research)
PT0045	NIKU (Norwegian Institute for Cultural Heritage Research)
PL0086	NIKU Norwegian Institute for Cultural Heritage Research in Oslo (NIKU)
PL0242	NIKU Norwegian Institute of Culture and National Heritage
PL0260	NILU (Norwegian Institute for Air Research)
CZ0049	NILU Norsk institutt for lufforskning - Norwegian Institute for Air Research
PL0027	NILU Norwegian Institute for Air Research
SK0020	NILU Norwegian Institute for air research (NILU)
EE0022	NINA Norwegian Institute for Nature Research (NINA)
PL0108	NINA Norwegian Institute for Nature Research NINA
PL0078	NINA Norwegian Institute for Water Research
EE0011	NIVA - Norwegian Institute for Water Research
PL0223	NIVA Norwegian Institute for Water Research
CZ0051	NIVA Norwegian Institute for Water Research (NIVA)
LV0046	NIVA Norwegian Institute for Water Research (NIVA)
LV0048	NIVA Norwegian Institute for Water Research (NIVA)
LT0047	NIVA Norwegian Water Research Institute (NIVA)
LT0009	none specific
PL0241	Nordic Artists' Centre, Dale
PL0250	Norsk Bergverksmuseum Kongsberg

PL0325	Norsk Biogass AS
LV0058	Norway road administration (name not specified)
ES0009	Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities (KS)
PL0304	Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities (KS)
PL0281	Norwegian Association for Adult Learning (NAAL)
PL0040	Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities (KS)
LT0035	Norwegian Board of Health, Norwegian Ministry of Health and Care Services
CZ0003	Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Higher Education (SIU)
PL0246	Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Higher Education (SIU)
PL0246	Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Higher Education (SIU)
SK0048	Norwegian Centre for Telemedicine
PL0075	Norwegian Centre of Telemedicine
LV0033	Norwegian Crafts Development (Maihaugen)
CZ0034	Norwegian Crafts Development - Open Air Museum Maihaugen
PL0243	Norwegian Directorate for Cultural Heritage
SI0028	Norwegian Film and TV School, Lillehammer
PL0107	Norwegian Institute of Public Health
LV0025	Norwegian Institute of Public Health, Department of Infections Disease Epidemiology
SI0004	Norwegian Mapping and Cadastre Authority
PL0031	Norwegian Mapping and Cadastre Authority (NMCA)
PL0294	Norwegian Mapping and Cadastre Authority
PL0243	Norwegian Maritime Museum
SK0036	Norwegian Mining Museum (NMM)
EE0020	Norwegian Ministry of Justice and the Police, Correctional Services
LT0035	Norwegian Ministry of Justice, Prison and Probation Department
PL0240	Norwegian Museum of Science and Technology
CZ0005	Norwegian National Police Commissioner
PL0069	Norwegian National Police Commissioner
PL0087	Norwegian National Police Commissioner
PL0091	Norwegian National Police Commissioner
PL0230	Norwegian National Police Commissioner
PL0232	Norwegian National Police Commissioner
PL0234	Norwegian National Police Commissioner
PL0015	Norwegian Packaging Association (DNE)
LT0055	Norwegian partner of the international network 'Supportnet'
PL0100	Norwegian Pollution Control Authority (SFT)
PL0071	Norwegian Research Council
PL0072	Norwegian Research Council of Norway

PL0257	Norwegian University of Life Sciences, Department of Economics and Resource Management
PL0274	Norwegian University of Life Sciences, Department of Economics and Resource Management
HU0045	Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU)
HU0056	Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU)
PL0077	Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU)
PL0237	Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU)
PL0267	Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU)
PL0270	Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU)
PT0012	Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU)
EE0041	Norwegian Youth council
PT0027	Oslo Bymuseum
PL0039	Oslo Child and Welfare Agency
ES0016	Oslo City
PL0286	Oslo City
PL0222	Oslo Teknopole
PL0104	Ostfold University College
PL0239	Patina Møbelrestaurering
HU0045	PPM AS
LV0026	Protec Innovation AS
LV0031	Rud Videregående Skole
PT0022	Røros Museum
PL0097	SINTEF
PL0269	SINTEF
PL0084	SINTEF
PL0237	SINTEF Building and Infrastructure
PL0287	SINTEF Building and infrastructure, Water and Environment Department
PL0314	SINTEF ICT
PL0219	SINTEF Technology and Society International Operation
CZ0066	Skiforeningen at Holmenkollen, Oslo
LV0056	Spydeberg kommune
PL0243	Stavanger Museum
SK0016	Svindland Consulting, Eirik Svindland
SK0061	Telemark University College
PL0294	Tonsberg kommune, Kommuneutvikling
PL0237	Trondheim City
HU0064	Ullevalsveien Skole – Hans-Kristian Treider.
PL0051	unidentified



LV0027	University Hospital of Tromsø
PL0266	University Hospital Oslo Rikshospitalet Department of Pathology
PL0075	University Hospital Oslo Rikshospitalet
LT0042	University Hospital Oslo Rikshospitalet
PL0079	University Hospital Oslo Rikshospitalet Department of Pathology
PT0009	University Hospital Oslo Rikshospitalet Department of Pathology
EE0016	University of Bergen, Centre for International Health,
LT0058	University of Oslo
PL0258	University of Oslo
HU0046	University of Oslo - Institute of Immunology
PL0268	University of Oslo Department of Geosciences,
PL0265	University of Oslo, Department of Chemistry,
CZ0091	University of Oslo, Department of Physics
LT0047	University of Oslo, Department of Physics
PL0256	University of Oslo, Psykiatrisk Institutt Vinderen - Oslo, Norway.
PT0019	University of Tromsø, Department of Community Studies
HU0067	Vadso municipality
EE0023	Vardar Eurus AS
PL0261	Western Norway Research Institute ("Vestlandsforskning")
LV0059	Østfold Fylkeskommune (Ostfold City Council)
PL0015	Østfold Research Foundation (STO)