

EEA GRANTS
NORWAY GRANTS

Making a difference

STATUS REPORT MAY 2009



eea
grants
iceland liechtenstein norway

Opportunity Solidarity Cooperation

norway
grants

Making a difference

Together the EEA Grants and the Norway Grants aim to make a difference in Central and Southern Europe, by contributing to the reduction of social and economic disparities and by enhancing bilateral relations between the beneficiary states and the donor states Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway.

The EEA and Norway Grants are the €1.3 billion contribution from Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway to the reduction of social and economic disparities within the European Economic Area (EEA). At the end of the five year period May 2004–April 2009, grants have been awarded to 1 250 projects, programmes and funds in 15 beneficiary states across Central and Southern Europe.

This status report highlights some of the most significant contributions and results so far. By way of illustration, the reader will learn how energy consumption is strongly reduced and renewable energy introduced in Polish schools and healthcare institutions and how NGO Funds supported by the EEA and Norway Grants provide vital support to a young and vulnerable civil society in Central Europe.

Finally, thousands of new contacts and a wide variety of networks have been established between the donor and beneficiary states at all levels of society.

Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway firmly believe in cooperation and solidarity within Europe. Through the EEA and Norway Grants, we are proud to be able to make our contribution to a more equal Europe.



Össur Skarphéðinsson,
Foreign Minister
of Iceland

Dr. Aurelia Frick,
Foreign Minister
of Liechtenstein

Jonas Gahr Støre,
Foreign Minister
of Norway

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Iceland

THE EEA AND NORWAY GRANTS

A more equal Europe

4 | In 2004 Europe took a huge political leap when ten new countries joined the EU.

The EEA and Norway Grants were established to support social and economic development in the new member states.

The ten new members from 2004, as well as Bulgaria and Romania who joined in 2007, had a GDP level below the EU average. Although grant schemes for the poorer regions of the EEA have existed ever since the EEA Agreement entered into force in 1994, the contribution increased ten-fold in response to the historic enlargement. Old member states Greece, Portugal and Spain are additional beneficiaries of the EEA Grants.

The EEA and Norway Grants differ from EU programmes as the grant schemes also support projects within other sectors and of a smaller size. This has also given the beneficiary states an opportunity also to steer support towards 69 programmes and funds for small-scale projects within areas such as civil society, cultural exchange and student exchange.

The EEA Grants is jointly funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, while the Norway Grants is funded solely by Norway.



Portugal, 32
€ 29.7 million

Spain, 21
€ 43.7 million

Projects, funds and programmes by country

■ Beneficiary states ■ Donor states

Norway

Estonia, 35
€ 30.8 million

Latvia, 76
€ 50.5 million

Lithuania, 86
€ 63.2 million

Poland, 421
€ 528.2 million

Czech Republic, 144
€ 104.6 million

Slovakia, 102
€ 65.4 million

Hungary, 101
€ 127.4 million

Romania, 72
€ 91.4 million

Slovenia, 25
€ 17.4 million

Bulgaria, 69
€ 38.3 million

Greece, 52
€ 32.1 million

Cyprus, 6
€ 4.4 million

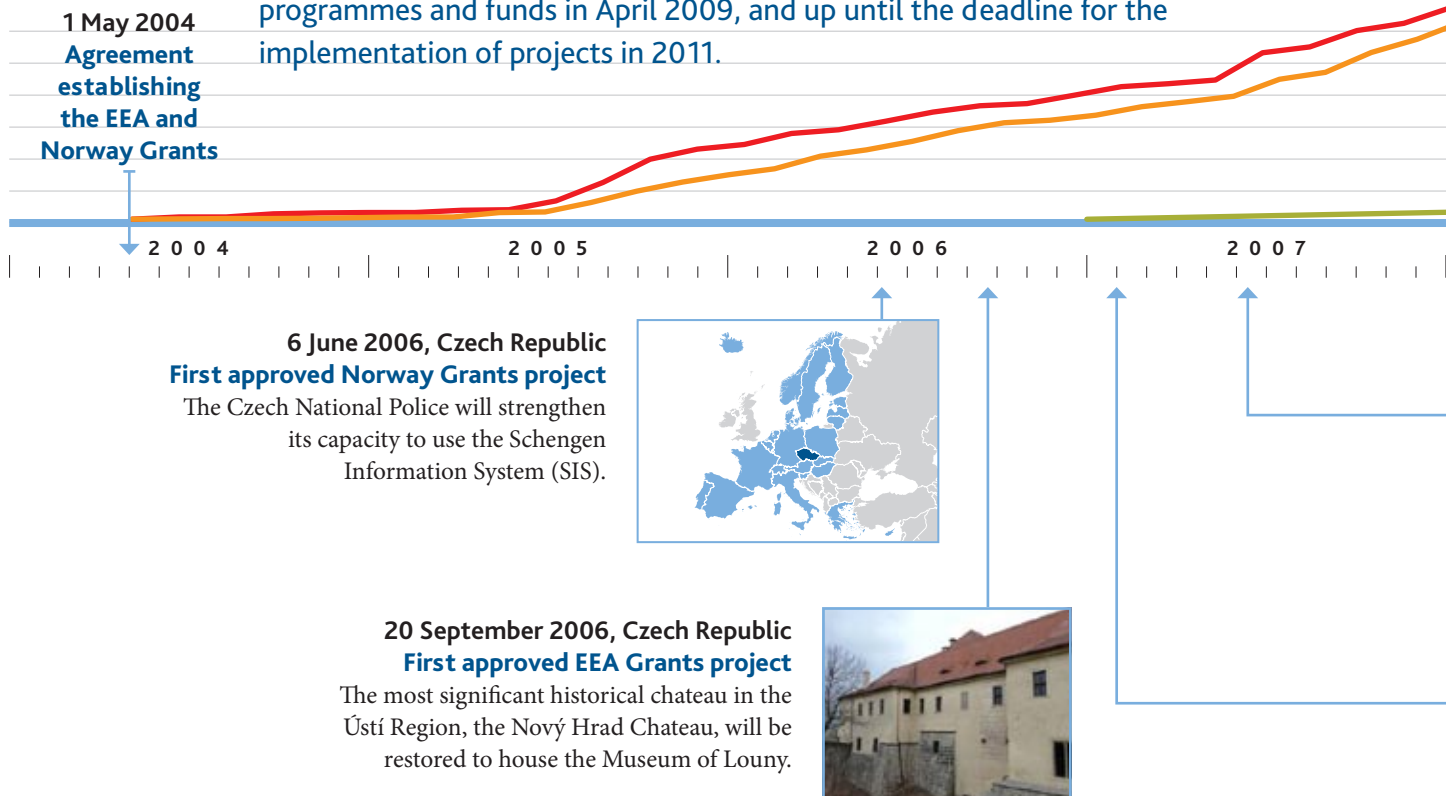
Malta, 8
€ 3.4 million

Liechtenstein



EEA and Norway Grants

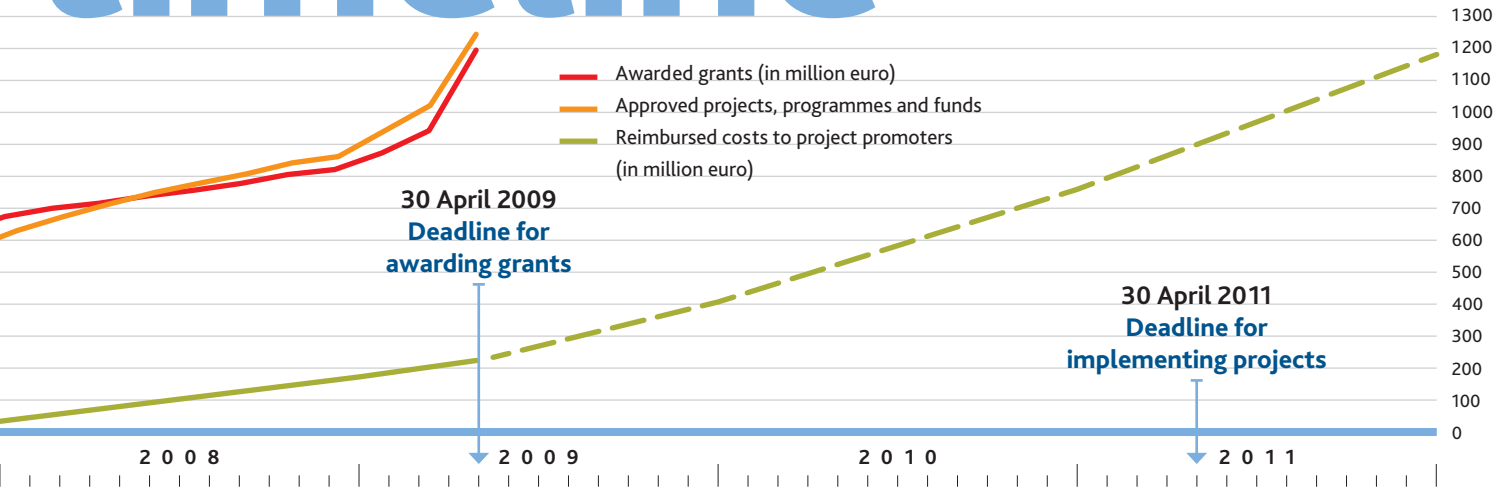
The timeline shows the history of the grant schemes, including significant milestones from their set up in 2004 through to the final approval of projects, programmes and funds in April 2009, and up until the deadline for the implementation of projects in 2011.



Year in brief May 2008 – April 2009

- At the end of the five-year commitment period to April 2009, 1 250 projects, programmes and funds had been awarded support.
- Close to one fourth of the approved projects will be implemented in cooperation between entities in the beneficiary states and the donor states.
- A mid-term review by PricewaterhouseCoopers confirmed the high popularity of the EEA and Norway Grants in the beneficiary states, saying that the programmes have been highly visible, that implementation capacity is good and bilateral cooperation has increased.
- Bulgaria, Greece and Romania launched their open calls for individual project proposals during spring 2008.
- NGO funds were launched in Bulgaria, Cyprus and Romania, bringing the total number to 19 funds providing €85 million in support to civil society in the beneficiary states.
- By April 2009, the number of projects implemented by NGOs exceeded 1 000.
- Several hundred students have benefited from scholarships to study in Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, and the Czech Republic and Hungary have doubled their share of students in Norway due to the set-up of scholarship funds.
- Support to renovate public buildings in Poland – schools and health institutions – is expected to cut energy consumption by more than 50%, according to a review by PROEKO and Scanteam.

timeline



11 June 2007, Malta
First completed project
 Malta International Airport was split into separate terminals for Schengen and non-Schengen travellers.



31 January 2007, Poland
Largest grant
 A €37.5 million grant was awarded to the Polish NGO fund.

- In the Czech Republic, items of cultural heritage that have been in a critical state and in danger of complete deterioration are preserved through efforts under the EEA and Norway Grants, according to a review by Cross Czech and Nordic Consulting Group.
- In September 2008, payments to Bulgaria were suspended under the EEA Grants, with the exception of the NGO fund. Projects were later approved on the condition that an implementing agency was replaced.
- On 26 September 2008, negotiations started between the European Commission and Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway for continued contributions after 30 April 2009.

Distribution of awarded grants

Priority sectors	Grants	Funding
Academic research	95	€ 83 000 000
Conservation of European cultural heritage	225	€ 257 600 000
Environment and sustainable development	356	€ 283 800 000
Health and childcare	241	€ 175 300 000
Human resource development	166	€ 130 700 000
NGO Funds	19	€ 85 300 000
Regional policy and cross-border activities	60	€ 56 900 000
Schengen and the judiciary	57	€ 127 100 000
Other	31	€ 30 700 000

Includes the Norwegian Cooperation Programmes with Bulgaria and Romania 2007-2009 (€68 million) which are administered separately by Innovation Norway.

ENVIRONMENT

Achieving a greener Europe

8 |

Environmental protection is at the heart of the EEA and Norway Grants. One quarter of the funding is spent on environmental projects.

Pollution does not stop at national borders and environmental concerns may often only be solved through cooperation across borders. The EEA Agreement entails a harmonisation of environmental standards within the single market, and the economic and social aspects of the EEA and Norway Grants are complemented by efforts on environment and development.

Environmental projects are prioritised in all 15 beneficiary states. The largest part of this green funding is focused on energy efficiency and renewable energy in public buildings, and cutting emissions of CO₂ and other pollutants. Other key areas of support include reducing water pollution, securing waste management, improving environmental monitoring and preserving biodiversity.

50% energy savings

In Poland, poor insulation and old-style fossil-fuelled heating systems make energy consumption in public buildings a heavy burden for the environment and public finances. The EEA and Norway Grants contribute to reduced energy consumption and pollution with the upgrading of hundreds of hospital and school buildings.

More than €51 million are spent on improving energy efficiency and introducing renewable energy sources in 350 draughty public buildings, including schools, kindergartens, hospitals and town halls. This will lower their energy bills, reduce emissions of greenhouse gases, pollutants and dust, and improve the environment in local communities.

SAVING ENERGY, SAVING MONEY

According to an independent review, carried out by Scanteam of Norway and PROEKO of Poland in late 2008, the energy savings in the 65 projects studied, including works on more than 300 buildings, are expected to exceed 50% on average. In a turbulent financial climate, lower energy bills for schools, health institutions and public authorities will benefit the Polish taxpayers for years to come.

In the town of Wąbrzeźno, the Norway Grants have financed upgrades to local schools and communal buildings that previously fell short of insulation requirements. This has resulted in €150 000 in annual cost savings for the 14 000 inhabitants. Gizela Pijar of Wąbrzeźno municipality says the warm

classrooms ensure comfortable study and work conditions that students and teachers had been dreaming of for a long time. The tired-looking buildings have also been transformed on the outside, and according to Pijar, the “colourful facades have made sad and damaged facilities attractive”.

INSULATION, SOLAR AND BIO-ENERGY

Much of the public building stock in Poland is old and in poor condition. Draught-proofing the windows, doors, walls and roofs will now significantly reduce heat loss, and poor heating and ventilation systems will be replaced. Outdated fossil-fuelled heating systems are to be replaced with solar energy sources for hot water, and with biomass, such as wood chips and pellets, as fuel in heat production.

The energy savings generated through the 65 studied projects are expected to reduce the consumption of coal by almost 20 000 metric tonnes per year, and CO₂ emissions by around 52 000 tonnes per year. This is equivalent to the emissions from around 25 000 cars.



350 public buildings in Poland will be insulated and made energy efficient, a number of them with renewable energy sources.

Photo © Tomasz Zygnarowski

“

Our commitment to energy efficiency and renewable energy in Poland offers both environmental and economic benefits.

”

Jonas Gahr Støre,
Foreign Minister of Norway



School of sustainability

10 |

The secondary school in Pakość reduced both CO₂ emissions and heat consumption by close to 80%, prompting teachers to incorporate sustainability ideas into classes.

“Our school was for many years known as the old school”, Patryk Wojtysiak (15) said, adding, “not only because of its long history, but also because of its ugly and gloomy appearance”. The crumbling roof of the 100 year old building posed a danger to both passers-by and students, and inefficient heating and gaps under doors and windows meant cold, uncomfortable class rooms during the winter season.

During spring 2008, a €250 000 grant from Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway financed proper insulation of the building mass, new doors and windows, and a new central heating system. “Everything changed when the project of thermal modernisation was completed”, school headmaster Grażyna Zygmąńska said. Constant class room temperatures have reduced student absence, money saved on gas bills has

provided the school library with a new stock of books and the architecturally beautiful building is again the pride of the 11 000 inhabitants in Pakość.

RAISING ECO-AWARENESS

Increased eco-awareness among teachers and students following in the wake of the renovation works lead to additions to the school curriculum. English classes nowadays include vocabulary on ecology, and new environmental lessons have been introduced to teach students about the environmental and ecological aspects of the project, as well as its economical benefits. Zygmąńska said teachers have noticed significant changes in the students’ behaviour. “They feel good in their school and small acts of vandalism have stopped”, she said.

Student happiness with their school’s new modern appearance and its warm classrooms initiated a new round of upgrades this spring. Several parents now spend their weekends redecorating classrooms for free. “The preservation of this historic building is very important for local people. They want the school to be beautiful not only outside, but also inside”, Zygmąńska said.

PROJECT

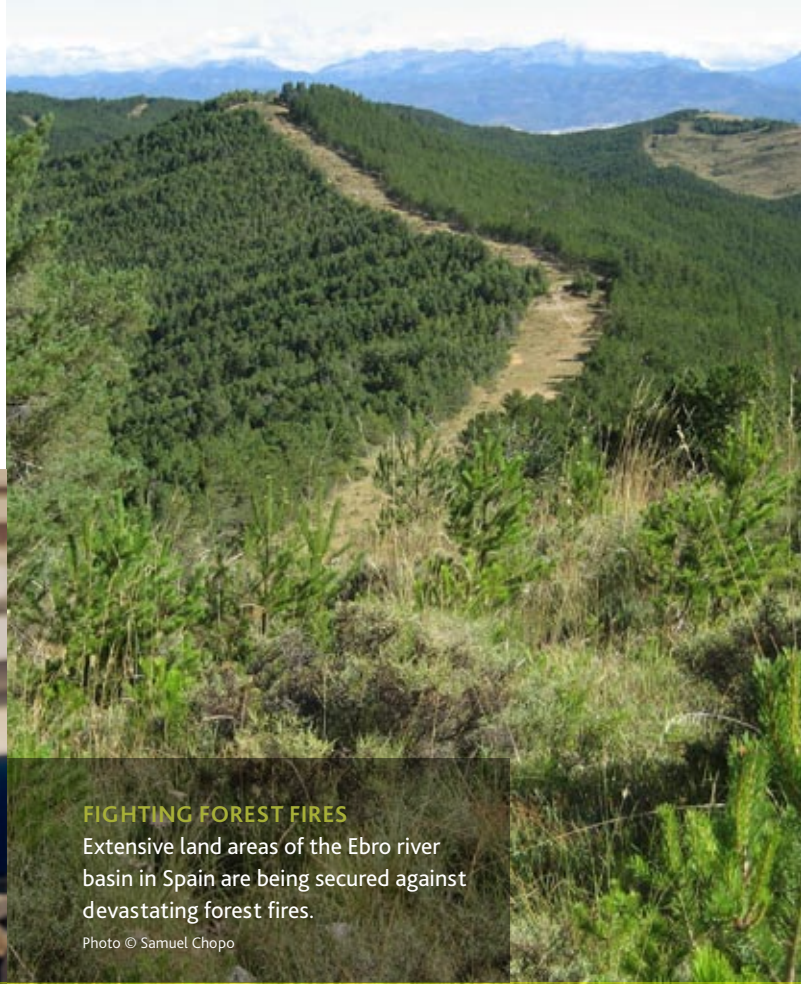
PAKOŚĆ
THERMO MODERNISATION OF A SECONDARY SCHOOL

PROMOTER	Pakość Township
AIM	Reduce energy consumption to protect the environment
GRANT	€ 250 000

REDUCED TRAFFIC POLLUTION

A new urban mobility management and traffic control system in Thessaloniki will improve mass transportation, raise environmental awareness and reduce air pollution levels.

Photo © iStockphoto

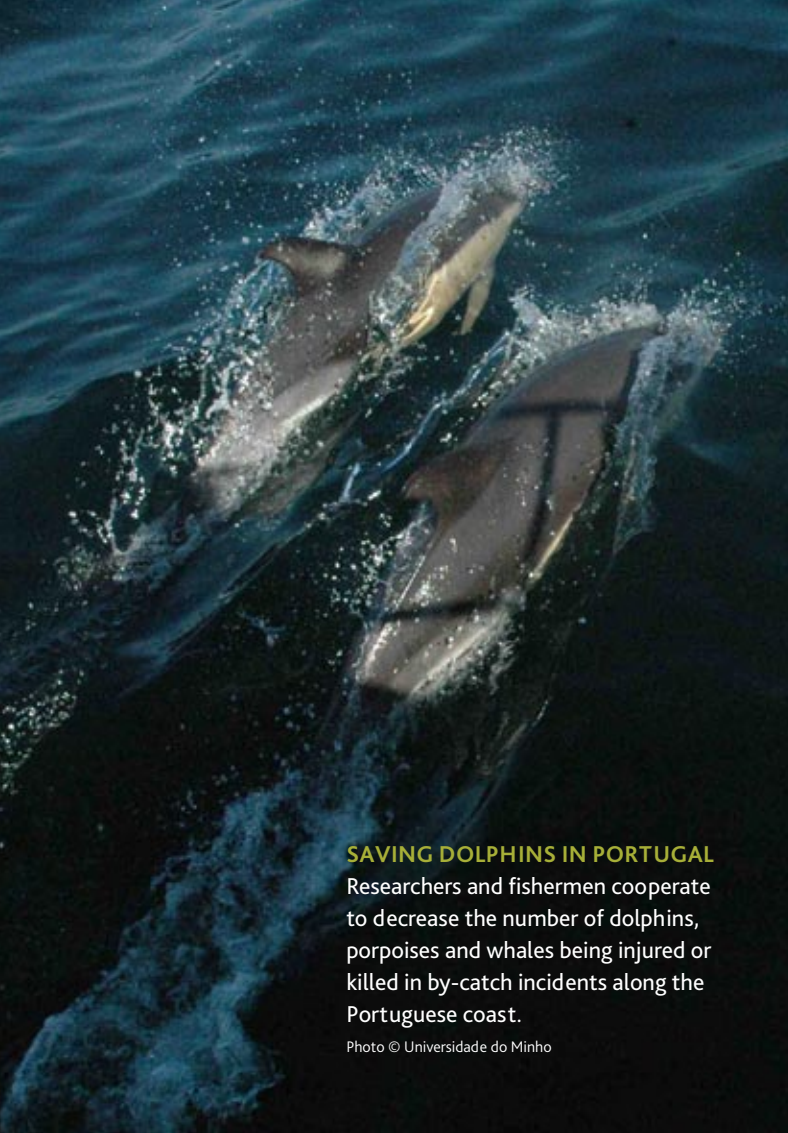


FIGHTING FOREST FIRES

Extensive land areas of the Ebro river basin in Spain are being secured against devastating forest fires.

Photo © Samuel Chopo

Environmental projects



SAVING DOLPHINS IN PORTUGAL

Researchers and fishermen cooperate to decrease the number of dolphins, porpoises and whales being injured or killed in by-catch incidents along the Portuguese coast.

Photo © Universidade do Minho



CZECH-ICELANDIC COOPERATION

The Technical University of Ostrava and the Icelandic School for Renewable Energy Science are exchanging knowledge within the field of alternative energy sources.

Photo © RES Graduate Students – Class of 2009

SOLIDARITY



The Roma population experiences more discrimination than any other minority in the EU. The EEA and Norway Grants support a number of projects which focus on social inclusion and human rights in a bid to overcome the exclusion of minorities in Central and Southern Europe.

12

In the Slovak city of Kamenica nad Hronom, the sound of children's chatter and laughter fills the classroom. A little Roma girl and her Slovak classmate are giggling as they show each other drawings made with crayons and coloured pencils, unaware of the role they play in breaking down social barriers.

Today, an estimated ten million Roma live in the European Union. Many of these still live in pockets of deep poverty, vulnerable to unemployment, low educational attainment and social exclusion. In a first ever EU-wide survey of immigrant and ethnic minority groups' experiences of discrimination and victimisation in everyday life, published in April 2009, the Roma population emerge as the ethnic group most prone to discriminatory treatment in Europe.

COMING TOGETHER At the Wide Open School Foundation in Kamenica nad Hronom, Eva Koncokova is feeling hopeful as she puts the final touches to a Roma integration project supported by the EEA and Norway Grants. Through a new social integration support system, the project aims to fend off cultural biases and move Roma children into mainstream classrooms. Traditionally, Roma children in Slovakia have been placed in segregated classes or special schools. Many of these children grow up receiving substandard education, leaving them with limited opportunities for further education and employment later in life.

"In these times of financial crisis, our project can have a preventive dimension, targeting young Roma and allowing them to become equal participants in the educational system", says Koncokova. "Through our efforts, we hope to mitigate some of the growing social tension through training programmes both for teachers and pupils in our schools, encouraging closer bonds between Roma and other citizens".

“

We are certain that the most effective solution to this deep-rooted problem lies in equal access to education and the labour market.

”

David Hargitai,

Project Coordinator at the Equal Opportunity Office, Budapest



n the barriers

Roma children take part in educational activities organised by the Wide Open School Foundation in Slovakia.

Photos © Wide Open School Foundation

The "Start Up" project offers newly educated Roma training, mentoring and job placements in Budapest's municipal institutions.

Photo © Budapest Public Employment Service



A MOMENT FOR CHANGE "In these difficult economic times, discrimination and exclusion is increasing", says Luca Koltai of the Budapest Public Employment Service. This is echoed by her partner in an EEA Grants project to integrate young Roma into the Budapest labour market, David Hargitai of the Equal Opportunity Office in Budapest. "But simultaneously, this is a unique time for us to face these enormous challenges with a positive, inclusive approach to counteract prejudices against Roma", he says. "After years of attempts to integrate Roma in the educational system, we

are now faced with a new generation of Roma, who are skilled and educated. We would like our project to serve as a bridge between the educational system and the job market", says Koltai.

Newly educated young men and women belonging to the Roma minority are given the opportunity to gain invaluable work experience through traineeships in municipal institutions. Participants are also assigned a personal mentor, to assist and support them in breaking down the barriers young Roma meet in the labour market. These mentors

share their networks, introduce them to new contacts, and create new work possibilities. Municipal bodies in Budapest, from administrative units to schools and hospitals, have been eager to take part in the project, and over 300 institutions have already signed up.

"START UP" TRAINEE PROJECT FOR YOUNG ROMA

Promoted by Budapest Public Employment Service Non-profit Company, Hungary.

Aims to promote the integration of young Roma into the labour market and reduce prejudices against Roma.

Granted €251 000 in support.

EQUAL CHANCE IMPROVING EDUCATION FOR ROMA CHILDREN

Promoted by the Wide Open School Foundation, Slovakia.

Aims to increase the quality of education of Roma children by developing a support system of social integration of Roma pupils in elementary schools in Slovakia.

Granted €322 000 in support.

Voices of European civil society

Non-governmental organisations are engines of change and development in modern society. Funding more than 1 000 NGO projects, the EEA and Norway Grants are today primary supporters of civil society in Central and Southern Europe.

A strong and dynamic civil society is a central underpinning of modern democracies. Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway have made strengthening civil society a cornerstone of their grant support, as involving non-governmental organisations is essential to reach the goal of reducing economic and social disparities in Europe.

Through 19 NGO funds established in 12 beneficiary states, 1 000 NGO projects are already in implementation. Efforts to strengthen democracy and human rights, to fight discrimination and to improve the integration of disadvantaged groups are key areas of support. NGOs of all shapes and sizes have been awarded grants for activities such as teaching human rights principles in schools, setting up media watchdogs and involving youth in participatory approaches to local development.



Creating platforms for social change

Active civil society participation creates sound foundations for social and economic development. The EEA and Norway Grants are today prime supporters of capacity building in the NGO sector in Central and Southern Europe.

A vibrant and robust civil society is most clearly embodied in the active involvement of non-governmental organisations. In Central and Southern Europe, however, the civil society is still young and vulnerable, and many recently established NGOs lack the means to fulfil their potential as social catalysts.

BUILDING CAPACITY

Through the 19 NGO funds established in 12 beneficiary states, civil society organisations across Europe have found an indispensable source of support to strengthen their capacity.

Involvement of civil society is important in most areas of social and economic life and a wide variety of NGOs are supported under the NGO funds. Projects to promote democracy, human rights and justice, as well as protecting the environment dominate the spectre. Examples are efforts to integrate the Roma minority in the Czech Republic, Greece, Hungary and Slovakia, to monitor the performance of Polish national police and courts towards crimes related to racism, discrimination or acts of hatred, and the development of educational documentary films on issues of nature protection and sustainable development for schools in Latvia.



A €5 million NGO Fund has been established in Romania to support watch-dog activities and public policy initiatives by civil society organisations.

Photo © Kari Ertresvåg, FMO

FILLING THE FUNDING VACUUM

With many NGOs experiencing difficulties in obtaining funding, the grant support has been warmly welcomed by civil society organisations across Europe. According to Kuba Wygnański, fondly referred to in Poland as one of the prime movers of the country's NGO sector, the support from the EEA and Norway Grants has come at a time of financial uncertainty for Central European civil society organisations.

While the end of the Cold War saw foreign donors embracing the burgeoning NGO sector in Central Europe, numerous private and bilateral donors have in recent years withdrawn from the new EU member states. This new situation has posed grave challenges, both to the sustainability and to the very existence of civil society organisations in the region. Private contributions have also diminished alongside the global financial crisis, hitting the NGO sector across Europe hard. In this economic climate, the financial support has become ever more important, with Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway providing some €130 million to civil society organisations in Central and Southern Europe through NGO funds and direct project support.

“
Building democracies is a continuous task, and the support from the EEA and Norway Grants is unique in this area, funding the development of active civic participation.
 ”

Kuba Wygnański, civil society activist



Bulgaria's legislation will now provide better protection to victims of human trafficking through a project under the Bulgarian NGO Fund.

Bringing traffickers to justice

Human trafficking is one of the largest and fastest growing criminal industries in the world. Today, the main routes of trafficking in Europe cross Bulgaria and widespread criminal networks are perpetuating an extensive trade in human beings. While most of these cases never appear before the courts, those that do are faced with systematic barriers within the Bulgarian judicial system.

ENSURING FAIR TRIALS

The voluntary organisation Bulgarian Judges Association has been awarded support from the EEA Grants for a project concerning legal reforms, that will ensure just trials for victims of human trafficking.

Relevant case law will be standardised and judges will be trained in enforcing legislation related to trafficking in women and children. Bulgarian civil society organisations working within this field, and the victims themselves, will be involved in the drafting of a new training module for judges, which will help build knowledge and understanding of the trafficking issue.

STANDARDISATION AND CONSISTENCY

Though Bulgaria has made significant efforts to fight this modern day slavery, trafficking cases are still handled largely ad hoc in the country's judicial system. According to the Bulgarian Judges Association, conflicting jurisprudence leads the courts to reach contradictory verdicts on similar cases.

These issues have long been recognised by the courts, but a lack of funding and capacity has hampered the urgently needed reforms. The grant from the Bulgarian NGO fund finally allowed the Bulgarian Judges Association to start its long-awaited project in January 2009, and the organisation is now developing strategies to ensure standardised case law and improved legislative processes for future trafficking-related cases.

PROJECT

FUND	Bulgarian NGO Fund
MANAGER	Foundation for Local Government Reform
FOCUS AREAS	Develop civil society and protect human rights
GRANT	€ 2 million

FAIR TRIAL FOR VICTIMS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING

PROMOTER	Bulgarian Judges Association
AIM	Standardise and strengthen judicial protection for victims of trafficking
GRANT	€ 30 200

LOCAL INITIATIVE

In a project supported by the Polish NGO fund, the Foundation Gothic Land is promoting cooperation between local authorities, NGOs and youth through educational activities.

Photo © Co-operation Fund Foundation



GREEN MOBILITY

The organisation Oživení has been awarded funding by the Czech NGO fund to promote walking and cycling as alternative modes of transport.

Photo © Oživení, o.s.



Civil society projects

DIALOGUE AND RECONCILIATION

In the UN buffer zone in Nicosia, an educational centre is being established to foster closer ties between civil society organisations from both Cypriot communities.

Photo © Hilde Berit Eide, Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs



CENTRE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION
Young volunteers participate in the reconstruction of an environmental educational centre, a project supported by the Slovak Environmental NGO fund.

Photo © CEEE Zivica



OPPORTUNITY



In Latvia, every other released inmate returns to prison. Latvia is now introducing prison education to its crime-fighting arsenal, through a Norway Grants project in the Zemgale region.

18

In Jekabpils prison, a young, Russian-speaking man anxiously approaches the social worker. He says he has no profession, speaks no Latvian, and that he is uncertain about his ability to cope in the outside world again. But he says he might make a good carpenter. “Ok –”, Iveta Maticina says and begins to talk about the possibilities of a Latvian language course and vocational training.

FIGHTING STATISTICS Unfortunately, this case is still far from usual. Latvia’s prison population is soaring and the country ranks among those in Europe with the highest imprisonment rate. “The current financial situation does not improve the inmates’ chances. 50 to 60 percent of all Latvian prisoners go back to prison soon after they’re released”, Imants Naudiss says, Deputy Director of the Cēsu Correctional Institution for Juveniles.

Repeat offenders pose an enormous burden on public budgets, and Latvia’s ongoing penal reform has its spotlight on bringing prisoners back in to society. In January 2009, the Latvian Cabinet of Ministers approved a new concept for re-socialisation of inmates. This new approach to re-entry is now being tested through a €1.2 million Norway Grants

project in the Jekabpils and Jelgava state prisons in Zemgale, southern Latvia.

LIFE RAFT The two Zemgale prisons are filled with reincarcerated low-educated men aged twenty five and below who are once again faced with a life in isolation, solitude, and confinement. These inmates are the risk group Latvia has highlighted in its national strategy to fight poverty. “Without the funding from Norway we would just sit and see the ship go down. Now we can improve the situation”, Deputy Director Naudiss says.

Over the next two years, 370 offenders will gain skills within the leading sectors of the region – carpentry, welding and electrical work. Russian-speaking persons can in addition enroll in Latvian language courses. Social workers have been



Run-down buildings at Jelgava and Jekabpils prisons will now be completely overhauled.

Photo © Latvian Prison Administration's Photo Archives

“

Before the prison sentence, many of them had nothing. Now they can get vocational training and set their lives in order.

”

Imants Naudiss, Deputy Director of the Cēsu Correctional Institution of Juveniles

Cēsu Correctional Institution of Juveniles is one of the Latvian prisons which will benefit from the pilot programme under development at the Zemgale prisons.

Photo © Latvian Prison Administration's Photo Archives



employed to follow up with inmates and staff in the new rehabilitation effort. The motivation for schooling is frequently noted by project manager Ilona Spure, whom inmates pull aside to ask about opportunities for continued participation in the project. “When I tell them they’re close to finalising their first school year, they smile and say they’re willing to do a follow-up course in September when the school year begins again”.

ROTTEN FLOORS AND LEAKING ROOFS The lack of adequate training facilities and the precarious state of the 1960s prison buildings, riddled with holes and cracks, nevertheless cause discomfort and stress for both inmates and staff. In Jelgava prison, the sizzling of hot metal crackles during weekdays in the large hall used for vocational

training. Only a heavy carpet hangs from the ceiling to separate the hall in two and make a class room on the opposite side of the welding noise for a group of inmates wiring electrical systems. Better conditions for studying form part of the Norway Grants project, and both prisons will completely overhaul their classrooms, workshops and common areas.

NORWEGIAN IMPETUS The Norwegian-Latvian cooperation, dating back to 1994, has been a pillar in the development of the educational programmes in the Zemgale project. Naudiss and other directors and staff of Latvian prisons visited Bergen in February 2009 to discuss rehabilitative strategies with the County Governor of Hordaland, the institution responsible

for prison education in Norway. The officer in charge, Torfinn Langelid, strongly supports Latvia’s efforts to reduce recidivism: “Rehabilitation starts with education. What is best for the individual and society is to turn offenders away from crime through skills and employment”.

Back in Latvia, Naudiss, Spure and their colleagues discuss how and what part of Norway’s experiences could be adapted to Latvian circumstances. Their resources are limited, but with the support from the Norway Grants improvements are expected. “To do the same in Latvia as in Norway is a dream. We are realists”, Naudiss says, adding, “But we are working to improve our system, and with this new resocialisation model, we’re witnessing the future a little bit”.

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ZEMGALE – RESOCIALISATION OF INMATES

Promoted by the Latvian Prison Administration.

In cooperation with Viesīte Vocational School, Jelgava Amatu School, Jelgava Vocational Secondary School and the County Governor of Hordaland, Norway.

Aims to develop and implement a resocialisation programme for two prisons in the Zemgale region, with the overall objective of improving the efficiency of the penalty enforcement system in Latvia.

Granted € 1 million in support.

A diverse group of people, including men and women of various ages and ethnicities, are shown in a celebratory mood. They are wearing business attire and have their fists raised in the air, suggesting a successful outcome or a moment of triumph. The background is a warm, golden-brown color, and the overall atmosphere is one of excitement and achievement.

BILATERAL RELATIONS

A silent revolution

20

The EEA and Norway Grants have contributed to a silent revolution in bilateral interaction.

A key goal of the EEA and Norway Grants is to strengthen bilateral relations and to bring actors from the beneficiary and donor states together in order to exchange ideas, knowledge and know-how. Thousands of cross-border contacts and a wide variety of networks have been established through direct project cooperation.

More than one in five supported projects is implemented in cooperation between project promoters and donor partners, the majority being Norwegian entities. Research and educational institutions make up the largest group of partners, while local authorities and non-governmental organisations are also involved in partnership projects.

High level of academic research cooperation

Academic research projects contribute to important innovations and cross-border cooperation contributes to exchanges of ideas, know-how and experience. Three out of five supported research projects are based on bilateral partnerships.

International cooperation within the field of academic research is particularly important for long-term social and economic progress. New insight is produced by sharing resources, ideas, knowledge and experience. Through encouraging partnership projects, the EEA and Norway Grants have created a wide variety of new arenas and possibilities for bilateral dialogue and cooperation. This is especially the case within the field of academic research, in which close to 60% of all projects are implemented in cooperation between project promoters in the beneficiary states and partners from the donor states.

ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH ON TOP

The large majority of partnership projects within the field of research concerns protection of the environment and sustainable development. One example is a monitoring project on sulphur and nitrogen pollution in the Czech Republic, carried out in partnership between the Czech Geological Survey and the Norwegian Institute for Water Research. Other examples are an Estonian project on soil-based emissions of greenhouse gases, and a Portuguese project on the effects of global climate change on marine ecosystems.

POLISH-NORDIC RESEARCH

Norwegian institutions are involved in all 56 partnership projects in the field of research, of which half originate in Poland. One of these projects also involves an Icelandic partner. The Centre of Migration Research (CMR) at the University of Warsaw aims to develop a new methodology for migration research in collaboration with both the Icelandic Centre of Immigration Research (CIRRA) and the Norwegian Institute of Social Sciences and Labour Market (FAFO). Other areas of Polish-Norwegian cooperation include research on innovative solutions for wastewater management, research on a novel method for removal of gas and petrochemical pollutants, and research on modelling of biomass energy production.



Through the HOMING programme, the Foundation for Polish Science and the Norwegian Research Council encourage young Polish scientists to continue their research in Poland.

Photo © Piotr Waniorek, Zelazna Studio

“
The cooperation established with Norwegian and Icelandic fellows due to the EEA and Norway Grants is of significant value to Polish researchers.
”

Professor Barbara Kudrycka,
Minister of Science and Higher Education



Polish and Norwegian scientists have joined forces to study the impact of climate change on marine and terrestrial ecosystems in the Arctic. The project is supported by the Polish-Norwegian Research Fund.

Arctic climate change study

Photo © Cornelius Nelo

One of the largest single contributions of the EEA and Norway Grants is the €21.4 million grant to the €25.2 million Polish-Norwegian research fund. The aim of this fund is to establish and strengthen the cooperation between Polish and Norwegian researchers, primarily within the areas of environment and health research. More than 50 different research institutions from Poland and Norway benefit from the fund through the 36 projects awarded support to date.

ARCTIC BIRD LIFE IN DANGER

In one of the supported projects, Polish and Norwegian researchers study how climate change can impact the breeding and reproduction conditions for Little Auks, a small Arctic bird. The Little Auks search for food by swimming under water and breed on islands such as those of Svalbard, Norway.

In the €1.8 million project, the researchers evaluate the response of marine and terrestrial ecosystems to climate change in the

Arctic, focusing on the links between the physical environment, the biodiversity of zooplankton and seabird populations. While Little Auks feed mainly on large Arctic zooplankton species, climate change will bring in more warm Atlantic water containing smaller species. The reproduction of these birds can be in danger in areas where the search for large zooplankton becomes more difficult.

SECURE FUNDING

The project is led by the Institute of Oceanology of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Sopot, which has over 20 years of experience in the Arctic. “We need to follow developments closely over a longer period. Now we finally have some stable and secure funding for some years, which is extremely important”, explains project coordinator Joanna Szczucka.

During summer 2008, four Norwegian and Polish research vessels were involved in the first missions within this project in the West Spitsbergen fjords and shelf areas. New measurements, samples and observations are planned for the summer of 2009 and 2010, and the project is expected to conclude its report by the end of 2010.

The Polish Academy of Sciences is implementing this project in cooperation with the University of Gdańsk, the Norwegian Polar Institute, the University Centre in Svalbard and the Norwegian Institute for Water Research. This is one of the largest bilateral research projects under the EEA and Norway Grants.

PROJECT

FUND	Polish-Norwegian Research Fund
MANAGER	Information Processing Centre, Warsaw
FOCUS AREAS	Environmental and health research
GRANT	€ 21.4 million

ALKEKONGE (LITTLE AUK)

PROMOTER	Institute of Oceanology of the Polish Academy of Sciences
AIM	Study the impact of climate change on marine and terrestrial ecosystems in the Arctic
GRANT	€ 1.6 million

SCANDINAVIAN LANGUAGES IN LITHUANIA

In close collaboration with the University of Oslo, Vilnius University is revising and expanding its Scandinavian language programme.

Photo © Vilnius University

LATVIAN-ICELANDIC COOPERATION

Pauls Stradiņš Clinical University Hospital and the Icelandic Landspítali Hospital are developing an electronic system to registrate patients and their medical history.

Photo © Pauls Stradiņš Clinical University Hospital



Partnership projects



REINTEGRATING YOUNG INMATES

Viru prison in Estonia is improving its penal enforcement by creating a more sustainable reintegration system in collaboration with the Norwegian police.

Photo © Aigi Kasvand, Estonian Ministry of Finance



LIVELY TOWN CENTRES

The town centres of five cities the Gorenjska region in Slovenia will be revitalised, drawing on expertise from the Norwegian county of Hedmark.

Photo © Zvonko Vrankar

COOPERATION



Bringing the

The Czech Republic and Norway bring together craftsmen to unlock and safeguard the many secrets of heritage preservation. Carpenters from both countries work together on site at the Wallachian Open Air Museum, one of the region's most important tourist destinations.

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The Wallachian Open Air Museum features replicas of historical homes, farmsteads and workplaces of the south-east rural region of the Czech Republic. In the midst of one of the small wooden towns, Czech and Norwegian carpenters intently hammer nails into a replica of a traditional Wallachian barn. Although the group takes their craft seriously, the carpenters fill the air with jokes and laughter as their construction strides towards completion.

SHARED PASSION In a workshop like this, visiting experts from Norwegian Crafts Development at Maihaugen will stay for a week in the Czech village of Rožnov, sharing their experiences in preserving historic timber buildings with the museum's local craftsmen. During the course of the 48-month EEA and Norway Grants project at the open air museum, ten replicas of historical Wallachian village buildings will be raised, among them a barn, a church, a pub and a school.

To Václav Mikušek, Deputy Director of the Wallachian Open Air Museum, the bilateral cooperation is one of the greatest assets of the project. After a somewhat tentative start, due in no small part to language barriers, collaboration has flourished and close bonds have developed between the craftsmen. "The partnership has already developed further than anyone had expected", says Eivind Falk, Director of Norwegian Crafts Development. Learning from crafts traditions other than one's own is mutually rewarding for all parties, adding value to the project quite apart from the actual recreation of the historical buildings.

WALLACHIA REDEVELOPING AN OPEN AIR MUSEUM

Promoted by Wallachian Open Air Museum in Rožnov pod Radhoštěm, the Czech Republic.

In cooperation with Norwegian Crafts Development – Open Air Museum Maihaugen.

Aims to restore and redevelop the collections of the museum, in order to preserve the folk cultural heritage of the Wallachia region.

Granted € 2.7 million in support.

LIVING PIECE OF HISTORY Maintaining the respect for and knowledge about the folk culture of the historically poor and underprivileged region of Wallachia is at the core of the project. At the open air museum, cultural heritage is recreated and brought to life every day. "The main idea of its founders was to build a 'living museum', and we want to keep it that way", says Mikušek. A year-round cycle of activities make visitors assistants in helping to further the preservation of folk customs by taking part in old ways of farming and traditional crafts.



past to life



Staff from the Wallachian Open Air Museum teaches traditional Czech handicrafts to Norwegian school children during a visit to Norwegian Crafts Development at Maihaugen.

Photo © Hanne Bergseth, NHU

“
The partnership has already developed further than anyone had expected.
 ”

Eivind Falk, Director of Norwegian Crafts Development

A bit further along from where the craftsmen are plying their trade, a visiting group of children gain hands-on experience with what living cultural heritage entails. In a solid timber house, the children sit very still on hardwood benches, listening attentively to a stern teacher who is not taking any excuses from the ones that fail to answer his questions. The educational tool of interactivity has the children bursting with a mixture of apprehension and excitement for having moved their classroom into the real-world of the Wallachian 19th century.

LONG TERM COOPERATION The EEA and Norway Grants project ends in 2010, but the museum’s task is an ongoing one. Museum Deputy Director Mikušek expects the activities in the village to multiply over time. The same goes for the collaboration with the Norwegian craftsmen, who will continue to be heavily involved in developing the collections of the Wallachian Open Air Museum.

Buoyed by the vibrant cooperation between the Czech and Norwegian builders, other crafts experts have joined in on the project. Norwegian bakers, blacksmiths and textile experts have visited and will continue to visit the museum to study the traditions of the Wallachian region, ensuring a broad exchange of experience and skills and enhancing the preservation of both Czech and Norwegian cultural heritage.

EEA and Norway Grants set-up

The EEA and Norway Grants are implemented in cooperation between the **donor states and the beneficiary states**, with the **Financial Mechanism Office (FMO)** in Brussels as the day-to-day secretariat. A national **Focal Point** is the co-ordinating authority in each beneficiary state, also responsible for open calls for individual project proposals and prioritisation of received applications.

Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway make decisions on applications based on grant recommendations from the FMO. The decision-making body of the EEA Grants is the **Financial Mechanism Committee (FMC)**, consisting of representatives of the ministries of foreign affairs of the three donor states. For the Norway Grants, the decision-making body is the **Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs**.

The EEA and Norway Grants 2004-2009 had a five-year commitment period, which expired on 30 April 2009. Projects may be implemented until 30 April 2011, and several nationally operated funds and programmes will continue with open calls and award grants until early 2010.

The Norway Grants for Bulgaria and Romania are set up as bilateral cooperation programmes administered separately by **Innovation Norway**.

Further information about the EEA and Norway Grants, including contact details to all involved institutions, is available on www.eeagrants.org

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EEA and Norway Grants

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