

34th Financial Mechanism Committee 2009-14 meeting

7 May 2014

Conclusions

Adopted on 26.6.2014

1. Meeting agenda

The meeting agenda was adopted with a new agenda point "Roma statistics and information" under "8. Other issues".

2. Draft Minutes and Conclusions from the previous Committee meeting

The draft Minutes from the previous Committee meeting were adopted. The draft Conclusions were adopted with the following amendment: 6.1 FMC members travel costs should read as follows: "The Committee decided that the travel costs related to important seminars and/or events organised by the FMO and where donor state representation is deemed important could be covered by the FMO administrative budget upon request. The total number of travels covered by the FMO's administrative budget is limited to the yearly number of annual meetings and to one representative per Donor State per meeting."

3. Director's assessment

3.1 The progress report including: status of programme decisions, commitments, disbursements and forecasts and DORIS implementation

The Director briefed the Committee i.a. on: (i) programme progress, (ii) country progress, (iii) DoRIS implementation and (iv) events and communication issues.

The Committee requested the FMO to prepare a letter to be sent to all NFPs summarising the decisions already taken on extensions granted and underlining that there will be no more decisions on general extensions. The letter should also remind the NFPs about the reallocation deadline and ask them to review their portfolios to identify projects that are risk of not being completed by 30 April 2016. The letter should refer to three options for possible course of action: (i) the reallocation to other programmes within the Beneficiary State; (ii) completion of projects with national funds and (iii) completion of projects with funding from a future Financial Mechanism.

4. Progress report on implementation

4.1/4.2/4.3/4.4 Annual meetings, Feedback from annual meetings, progress reports and red and yellow flagged programmes

The Committee discussed in detail the Beneficiary States (Estonia, Poland, Latvia and Romania) for which an annual meeting is scheduled to take place before the next Committee meeting. The Committee discussed also the feedback from the annual meetings that had taken place since the March Committee meeting (Malta and Lithuania).

The Committee discussed the status of implementation and the progress of programmes in the Beneficiary States. Additionally, the FMO gave the Committee an overview of the programmes flagged red and yellow in the Beneficiary States.

5. Issues for adoption

5.1 Hungary – situation with Focal Point

The Committee noted that the information provided by the Hungarian authorities since 23 January 2014 (suspension notification), including the most recent letter and concept note dated 22 April 2014 had not led to an agreement with Hungary on where the NFP will be located. In the absence of an agreement on a new NFP within the timeframe required by the notification on the intention to suspend, the Committee decided, in accordance with Article 12.6 of the Regulations, to suspend all payments to Hungary. The Committee expressed its concern about the negative effect of a lack of NFP has had on the implementation in Hungary and will invite the Prime Minister's Office to Brussels to discuss a new NFP.

5.2 Mandate for Council of Europe Semi-Annual meeting

The Committee endorsed the mandate for the delegation from the EEA and Norway Grants for the Semi-annual coordination meeting.

5.3 Administrative budget 2013

The Committee approved the final accounts for 2013.

6. Issues for discussion

6.1 Sector report

The Committee took note of the Sector Report prepared by the FMO. The Sector Report is based on Annual Programme Reports presented by the Beneficiary States by 15 February 2014. The report presents overall trends per sector with regard to the two main objectives of the Grants; addressing social and economic disparities and strengthening bilateral relations and it looks at combined expected results of each sector.

6.2 Transparency international – corruption risk assessment

The Committee took note of the FMO's memo on TI – corruption risk assessment. Norway stressed the importance of discussing the TI country report results in the annual meetings.

6.3 Risk at project level, LV03 – cancellation of project and lessons learnt

The Committee took note of FMO's memo, and asked the FMO to share the lessons learnt with the Fund Operators and the National Focal Points.

7. Issues for information

7.1 Events' calendar

The Committee took note of the events calendar.

7.2 Planning wheel

The Committee took note of the planning wheel

8. Other issues

“Roma statistics and information” was discussed under “Other information”.

9. Next meeting

The next meeting will take place on 26 June 2014.

List of participants:*Iceland*

Kristján Andri Stefánsson
Angantyr Einarsson

Liechtenstein

Dominik Marxer

Norway

Anders Erdal (Chairman)
Henriette C Gulbrandsen
Tom Tomjlsland
Steinar Hagen
Aud Hellstrøm (observer)

FMO