



REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA
GOVERNMENT OFFICE FOR DEVELOPMENT
AND EUROPEAN COHESION POLICY



COMBINED STRATEGIC & ANNUAL PROGRAMME REPORT

ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EEA FINANCIAL MECHANISM AND NORWEGIAN FINANCIAL MECHANISM 2009–2014 IN SLOVENIA

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Contents

1	EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	3
2	ASSESSMENT OF THE EFFECT OF THE GRANTS	4
2.1	Cohesion	4
2.2	Bilateral relations.....	8
3	REPORTING ON PROGRAMMES	10
3.1	Overview of Programme status.....	10
3.2	Individual Programme reporting	11
4	MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION	36
4.1	Management and control systems.....	36
4.2	Compliance with EU legislation, national legislation and the MoU	36
4.3	Irregularities	37
4.4	Audit, monitoring, review and evaluation.....	37
4.5	Information and publicity	39
4.6	Work plan	39
5	SUMMARY LIST OF ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS	40
6	ATTACHMENTS TO THE STRATEGIC REPORT.....	41

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The final event for Norwegian and EEA Financial Mechanism 2009-2014 held in Ljubljana on 7 October 2016 brought together a number of stakeholders under the motto "Working Together Towards Common Goals". The event, which received considerable media coverage, was an excellent occasion for Programme Operators and project promoters to showcase the outcomes and outputs of the projects. These projects contributed to the social development and improved the quality of life in Slovenia. They also fostered partnership and networking while strengthening Slovenia's cooperation with the Donor States.

As many as 33 projects selected under a call for proposals and three pre-defined projects were implemented under the EEA Financial Mechanism Programme and the Norwegian Financial Mechanism Programme. The selected projects were outstanding as they built on collaboration and pursued the principle of sustainability. They made a significant contribution to advancement in the areas of public health, gender equality, biodiversity and ecosystem services, conservation and revitalisation of cultural and natural heritage and the environment.

The 33 projects supported under the NGO Fund targeted creation of job opportunities, especially for young people, conservation of natural and cultural heritage, reduction of violence and promote equality. Thanks to the NGO Fund, the local, sometimes overlooked projects were given a chance – they ended up making big solutions to small problems.

The 52 mobility projects involving exchange of 184 students, 84 teachers and 227 members of higher education teaching and administrative staff received support under the Slovenian Scholarship Fund. The project activities contributed to strengthening mutual understanding and perception and acceptance of differences, while promoting cooperation. Also, the activities under the Scholarship Fund helped foster enhancement of human capital and bilateral relations, while bringing together the economies and societies of the relevant countries.

Project promoters fully acknowledged the importance of cooperation – more than half of them implemented the projects in partnership with counterparts from the Donor States. As a result, a number of long term partnerships were forged between Slovenian, Norwegian, Icelandic and Liechtensteinian institutions.

The projects funded under the programmes of the Norwegian and EEA Financial Mechanism 2009-2014 are compiled in a publication titled **Working Together Towards Common Goals**, which was prepared by the National Focal Point in association with Slovenian Programme Operators to disseminate the project results and bring them closer to the general public.

In the year 2016 each of the programmes implemented a number of specific activities.

Under the EEA Financial Mechanism Programme (SI02) most of the projects were completed by the end of 2016, while four projects should be completed in January 2017. Final reports for the remaining seven projects will be prepared in 2017. The set goals and outputs of the pre-defined project have been achieved. All planned activities have been successfully finished, goals met, some of them even surpassed.

The majority of projects were finished as early as 2015 and only a small number of activities continued in 2016 under the NGO Programme (SI03). Therefore, the Programme Operator's work in 2016 mainly involved reviewing the reports, conducting evaluations, co-organising the final event and implementing several complementary actions. Detailed review of selected projects shows that all five programme outcomes have been addressed and achieved, and that the set target values were realistic.

The Programme Slovenian Scholarship Fund (SI04) fully focused on national and EU area as regards internationalisation. The implemented measures and activities have proven to be adequate and successful at all levels of the education sector. The planned mobility activities were implemented and some projects even involved more activities than planned. The activities of the Scholarship Fund (mobility, cooperation projects and study visits) and eligible funds under each measure represent the incentives needed for bilateral cooperation between the Beneficiary and Donor States to strengthen cooperation and share knowledge and good practices in the sector.

Under the Norwegian Financial Mechanism Programme all projects were completed by the end of 2016. 2017 will be marked by administrative closure activities, while bilateral cooperation activities will still be fully implemented throughout 2017. Results of the 20 projects in the area Public Health Initiatives were showcased at the conference "From Projects to a System-wide Solution". The targets of the projects have been successfully achieved, in certain cases even surpassed.

Cooperation with Donor State institutions at the national, programme and project level contributed to the exchange of knowledge, experience and good practices and facilitated strengthening of bilateral relations between Slovenia and the Donor States. The partnerships forged and friendships made will undoubtedly lead to further cooperation in numerous areas in the future.

The National Focal Point initiated a procurement procedure for the evaluation of the programmes co-financed under the Norwegian Financial Mechanism Programme and the EEA Financial Mechanism Programme 2009–2014 in December 2016. The purpose of evaluation is to assess the efficiency of the programme implementation system, review the results, outputs and outcomes achieved in relation to their target values, and assess the efficiency of communication strategy in relation to its target values. The programmes under EEA and Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2009–2014 are gradually closing in 2017 which gives us an excellent opportunity to reflect on the programming period and take stock of what has been achieved, learned and experienced. The findings will help us shape and define things in the new programming period 2014–2021.

2 ASSESSMENT OF THE EFFECT OF THE GRANTS

2.1 Cohesion

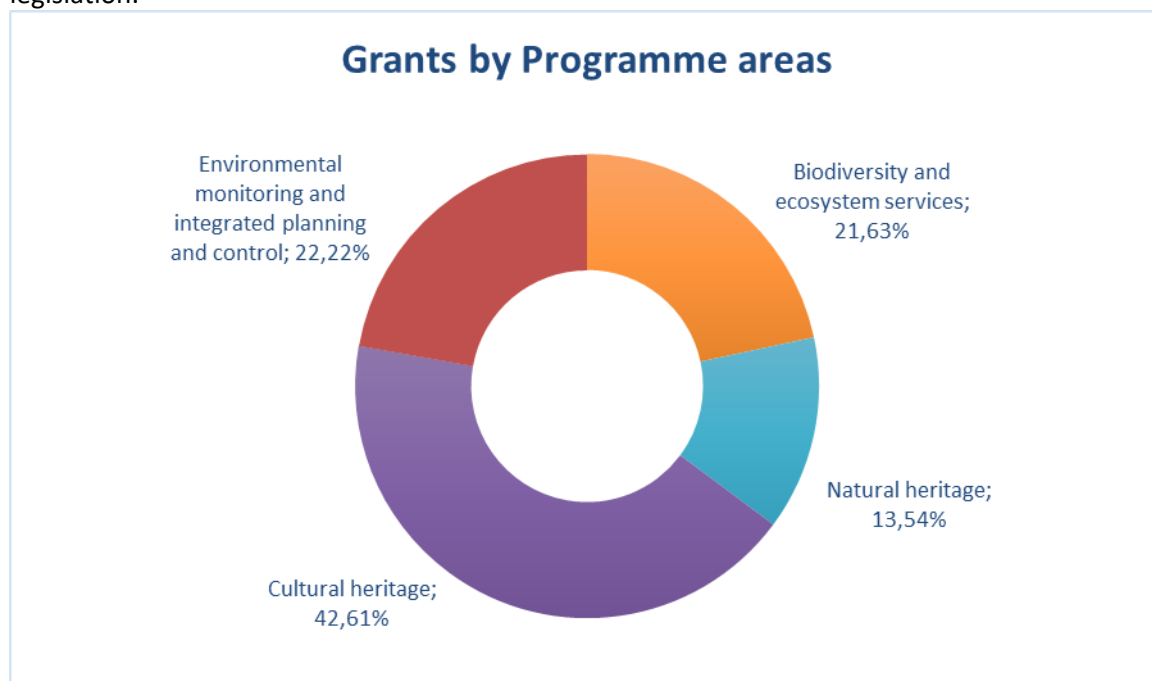
Support provided by the EEA Financial Mechanism and Norwegian Financial Mechanism contributes to reducing economic and social disparities in Europe and in individual beneficiary countries. The contribution Slovenia received in the period 2009–2014 was used to pursue the same objective. As such, the contribution was complementary to several priorities under the European Structural and Cohesion Funds.

Programme agreements identify the areas that contribute to the main objectives pursued by both financial mechanisms, and are recognised as important for economic and social development of Slovenia. Additionally, these programme areas make up what is an excellent opportunity for developing and strengthening bilateral relations and cooperation with the donor countries.

The implementation of five programmes and more than 120 projects, and the use of support which was channelled through the programmes, enabled Slovenia to boost its activities in the areas of environment and climate change, civil society, human and social development, cultural and natural heritage, research and scholarships and, last but not least, decent work and tripartite dialogue. Support provided in these areas is all about preserving and restoring our heritage, be it natural or cultural, and investing in environmentally friendly, healthy and knowledge-based future of Slovenia. The results and outcomes of the projects that were implemented in the period 2009–2014 contributed to development of different regions across Slovenia. Partnerships and cooperation of different types of institutions in various areas were fostered by the implemented projects to enhance bilateral relations between Slovenia and the donor countries.

Programme SI02 – EEA Financial Mechanism Programme

The EEA Financial Mechanism Programme covers three programme areas: Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services with the objective Halt the loss of biodiversity, Conservation and Revitalisation of Cultural and Natural Heritage with the objective Cultural and natural heritage for future generations safeguarded and conserved and made publicly accessible, and Environmental Monitoring and Integrated Planning and Control with the objective Improved compliance with environmental legislation.



Programme areas Environmental Monitoring and Integrated Planning and Control and Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services are complementary to thematic objectives under the EU cohesion policy and stand as Slovenia's priority areas in the scope of its engagement in the EU macro-regional strategies.

Environmental Monitoring and Integrated Planning and Control

The main goal of the pre-defined project implemented under the EEA Financial Mechanism Programme area Environmental Monitoring and Integrated Planning and Control was to facilitate the modernisation of spatial data infrastructure (SDI) as a necessary tool for the reduction of flood risks and impact of floods. Also, the project facilitated the establishment of a technical base in the area of geographic data referencing (state geodetic coordinate system, standardised topographic database) and in the area of hydrography (provision of terrain data, harmonised hydrographic data, data on existing water infrastructure). The grant itself and the need for project-oriented organisation in such a heterogeneous area brought together different professionals to develop the much needed common understanding and to work together to achieve common goals. Several strategic partnerships have been established as a result of cooperation under the project, bringing together the relevant state authorities, University and private sector.

Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services

The programme objectives in the area Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services were to halt the loss of biodiversity and improve management effectiveness of Natura 2000 sites which cover as many as 35% of Slovenia's surface territory. Slovenia is one of the EU countries with the highest biodiversity in Europe according to UNEP – WCMC Biodiversity index 2001. Well-preserved biodiversity represents Slovenia's enormous potential, particularly for the development of high-quality eco-tourism. Four selected projects, whose indicator target values have been achieved, were implemented in the area. The projects benefitted from enhanced monitoring and surveying of the Natura 2000 species whose conservation status is unknown due to insufficient data. The implemented projects are expected to

contribute to improved conservation status of 16 habitat types and species, and enhance the monitoring and surveying of unknown species.

Conservation and Revitalisation of Cultural and Natural Heritage

In terms of programme area Conservation and Revitalisation of Cultural and Natural Heritage, it is worth mentioning that in 2016 Slovenia became the world's first country to be declared a green destination according to the green destinations criteria¹. In the past few years, Slovenia has consistently applied adjectives *Green. Active. Healthy*. In destination branding and marketing to accentuate and summarise the advantages and character of its tourist offer, putting the green resources and responsible attitude towards the environment at the forefront. Two projects funded under the EEA Grants pursuing conservation and revitalisation of natural heritage make an important contribution to this overall tourism vision with new public visitor infrastructure. The infrastructure integrates the principles of nature protection with the aim of improving environmentally friendly public access to natural assets.

It is expected that programme objectives under the area Natural Heritage, i.e. Cultural and natural heritage in protected areas safeguarded and conserved for future generations and made publicly accessible, will be achieved.

Culture shapes personal traits and ethical behaviour of each and every individual, and is a promising agent of integrated social and sustainable development stimulating promotion of cultural diversity and equal cooperation of individuals and communities in society. Conservation of cultural heritage and promotion of sustainable use of resources are important elements conducive to values, development of the society and improvement of quality of life. In the area of cultural heritage, the Programme pursues restoration, renovation and protection of cultural monuments, making cultural heritage accessible to general public in order to boost local and regional development, and targets diversification of tourist offer by making local and regional environment recognisable. The project reports suggest that the renovation and restoration works on cultural monuments are in their final stage so that by the time the projects are completed, three cultural monuments which represent immovable cultural heritage will be revamped – restored and safeguarded, thus contributing to having cultural heritage publicly accessible, renovated, restored and conserved.

Programme SI03 – Funds for Non-governmental Organisations

Brief overview of situation and development of NGOs in Slovenia

The number of NGOs is constantly rising, as well as their income and number of employees. As at 31 December 2016, there were more than 27,300 registered civil society organisations (CSO) in Slovenia, 24,010 associations (87.7%), 3,094 private institutes (11.3%) and 263 foundations (0.9%). However, not all registered organisations are active. There has been a huge increase in registered social enterprises – currently there are 216 social enterprises recorded in the database of the Ministry of Economic Development and Technology (versus only 58 in 2015). The reason for such an increase lies in the allocation of financial support to encourage the starting of a social enterprise. However, organisations first need to get an official status of a social enterprise to be eligible.

CSO sector in Slovenia in 2016 – figures

Number of active NGOs in the period 2009 – 2016								
Legal form/year	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Association	20,419	20,721	21,274	21,987	21,987	22,559	23,832	24,010
Private institute	1,541	1,763	1,946	2,347	2,348	2,566	2,857	3,094
Foundation	196	212	222	240	240	236	260	263
TOTAL	22,156	22,696	23,442	24,574	24,575	25,361	26,949	27,367

¹ Slovenian Tourist Board 2016, <https://www.slovenia.info/en/press-centre/press-releases/7076-slovenia-has-become-the-first-green-destination-in-the-world>

Funding sources for CSOs in Slovenia

The actual 2016 figures are still not official so these are only estimates. Around 40% of CSO income comes from public sources (national, local), 35% from the economic activity and the rest from donations and membership fees. There are no major foreign donors (except from the EEA and Norway Grants) present in Slovenia. There are cases of international foundation's support (e.g. Google foundation, Soros), but such cases are extremely rare and they support individual projects/organisations, and as such do not play a strategic role in CSO development in Slovenia. There has been some progress, however, mostly in the area of social services, given that certain ministries and municipalities started to provide long term support for the CSO programmes (multi-year projects). This kind of support is only possible for programmes that are already recognised but do not enable organisations to be innovative in their approach.

Dispersed in terms of location and heterogeneous in terms of their content, the projects of the NGO Fund in the period 2009-2014 first and foremost addressed social justice and social equality, human rights, children and young people, environment and sustainable development.

Apart from national public sources, significant source of CSO funding in the next five years will be European Structural and Investment Funds. EUR 6 million was allocated to infrastructure organisations which offer capacity building for CSOs at national and local level and advocate better environment for CSO development. One national NGO umbrella network (CNVOS), twelve local and four thematic networks are supported in the period 2015–2019.

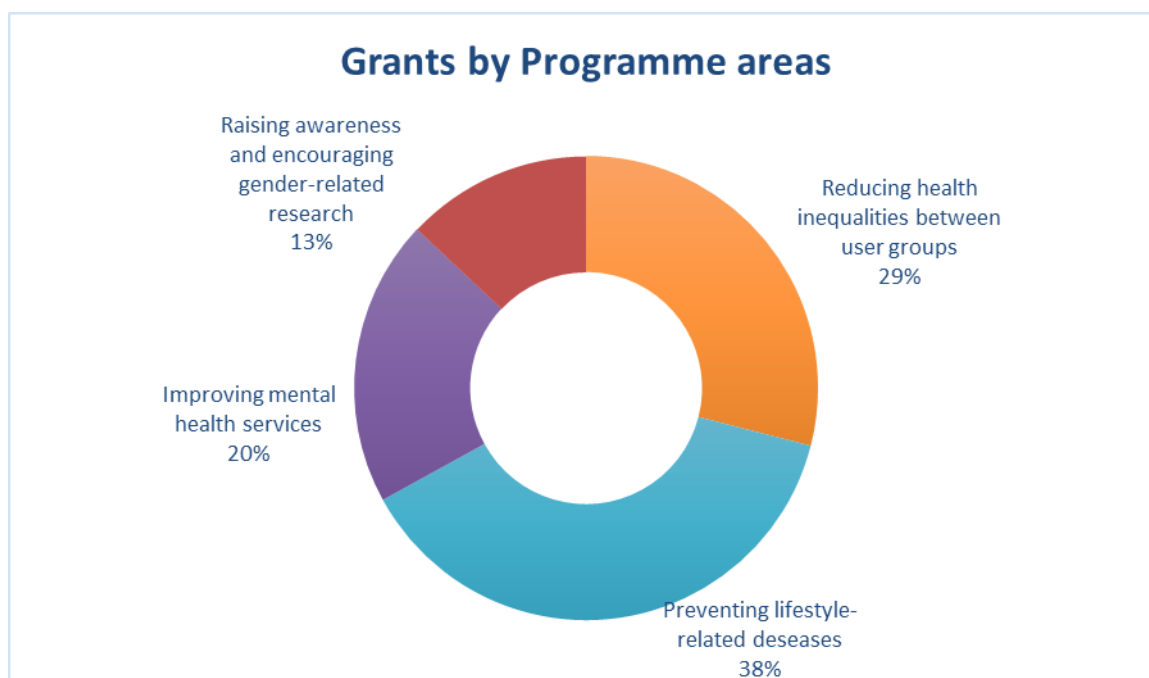
CSO activities are included in several other priorities as well (e.g. social inclusion and prevention of poverty, employment of marginalised groups, youth guarantee, informal education, CLLD, global grants, etc.), however, in the scope of these priorities CSOs are one of the many potential applicants and it is too early to assess how much they could actually receive. CSOs also seek financial support for their programmes in Brussels (Life+, Erasmus+, Europe for Citizens, IPA CSF, regional programmes, etc.) but there is no concrete information how successful they are winning the support.

Programme SI04 – EEA and Norwegian Scholarship Programme

Slovenian Scholarship Fund has strengthened the ties between countries, institutions and individuals either by mobility of students and staff or by cooperation projects among institutions. This was the main objective of the Programme – fostering human capital and bilateral relations, bringing economies and societies together. The Programme reached the institutions in higher education and those in primary and secondary education and training, be it general or vocational. Support under EEA and Norway Grants is a tremendously valuable source of funding as it provides additional funding for bilateral cooperation with countries where cooperation is otherwise less prominent due to limited availability of funding under other programmes. The Scholarship Fund was complementary to the new EU programme Erasmus+ in 2016, and at the same time stood for a reliable continuation of the former EU Lifelong Learning Programme.

Programme SI05 – Norwegian Financial Mechanism Programme

The Programme SI05 covers two programme areas: Public Health Initiatives and Mainstreaming Gender Equality and Promoting Work-life Balance. The expected results of the Programme in the area of public health were the following: reducing inequalities between user groups through new programmes and services tailored for different user groups, new integrated programmes and services for lifestyle-related diseases as well as preventive programmes for different user groups, and improved local capacity for mental health services through the establishment of new structures.



Like in other modern societies, health is what counts most in Slovenia, too. Health is the most important element of social capital, a precondition for social and economic development. The results, outputs and outcomes achieved in this area will importantly contribute to one of the main objectives pursued by the financial mechanisms – reducing economic and social disparities. Certain pilot projects which were implemented in the area of public health were later integrated in the public health system, which considerably improved public health services provided to citizens. The pre-defined project Towards Better Health and Reducing Inequalities in Health contributed to achieving both programme results in the area of Public Health Initiatives. This, consequently was a springboard for the achievement of the set programme outcome – reducing or preventing lifestyle-related diseases.

The results set under all of the projects have been achieved, in some cases even surpassed, which is an excellent starting point for reaching the programme outputs and outcomes. The latter will be subject to evaluation after the administrative closure of projects.

The objectives of the Programme in the area Gender Equality and Work-life Balance were to raise awareness of gender issues and power relations between men and women and facilitate and encourage gender-related research.

The activities carried out in the scope of the pre-defined project Towards Equalising Power Relations Between Women and Men contributed to achieving the set programme outputs in the field of Mainstreaming Gender Equality and Promoting Work-life Balance. Implementation of other projects targeting gender equality raised awareness about and promoted research on gender issues, thereby increasing understanding of equal/unequal power relations between women and men.

2.2 Bilateral relations

In 2016, the funds earmarked for bilateral relations importantly contributed to strengthening bilateral relations between Slovenia and the Donor States. The countries' cooperation took place at national as well as programme and project level in various frameworks, by way of cooperation among research institutions, governmental institutions, universities, officials, NGO sector as well as local communities.

Several study visits and conferences took place at the programme level. Project promoters and their project partners also contributed to strengthening bilateral relations between Slovenia and the

Donor States. A call for proposals under bilateral funds was published in May 2016 for the Programmes SI02 and SI05. The funds were allocated only to already co-financed projects selected under the call for proposals and to the pre-defined projects.

A call for proposals of bilateral activities under bilateral cooperation at the programme level worth EUR 104,000 was launched on 20 May 2016 in the scope of the Programmes SI02 and SI05. Two types of activities were foreseen: 1/Type 1: participation of Slovenian representatives at conferences, seminars, workshops in Norway and 2/Type 2: organisation of bilateral conferences, seminars and workshops in Slovenia. The call for proposals was open for project promoters and had two application deadlines (i.e. 30 July 2016 and 30 September 2016). The funds made available under the Fund for Bilateral Activities under the Programme SI02 stood at EUR 40,000. Two proposals were received. The latter were both approved and received a total of EUR 7,250 in grant for activities of Type 1.

The Slovenian NGO Programme was very successful as regards bilateral relations; as many as approximately one third of the selected projects involved partners from the Donor States. Several contacts were established through cooperation of the Fund Operator and the Norwegian Helsinki Committee (NHC). Also, the applicants who applied their projects in partnership with organisations from the Donor States were rewarded with (up to) additional 5 points (depending on the quality of the partnership cooperation).

Along with the re-allocated funds, a total of EUR 16,235 was made available under the Fund for Bilateral Relations for the selected beneficiaries who implemented the projects in partnership with organisations from the Donor States. The funds were entirely used already in 2015.

Since the three calls for proposals had been closed under the programme SI04, the only open call for proposals was the call for proposals for study visits. Its aim was to facilitate and strengthen bilateral cooperation and promote sharing of results and good practices. 38 applications were received in 2016, of which eight were rejected, nineteen approved and projects implemented, while seven were approved but the projects are yet to be realised. Four applications are still being processed. The total amount of approved allocated funding for study visits stood at EUR 76,863.70.

In 2016, a group study visit to Norway was organised for ten headteachers of secondary schools who visited four different school centres in order to get familiar with the education system, good practices in school management, curriculum development and examples of successful projects under EEA and Norway Grants. The results of such study visits usually include future cooperation with the hosting institution under the EEA and Norway Grants, Erasmus+ or other similar programmes, implementation of new ideas, exchange of good practices in participants' work and personal growth and development of their professional and personal competences.

A call for proposals of bilateral activities under bilateral cooperation at the programme level (SI05) worth EUR 104,000 was launched on 20 May 2016. Seven proposals, of which five were suitable, responded to the call for proposals. The allocation made equalled EUR 40,130 for one activity of Type 1 and four activities of Type 2. Six suitable proposals were received under the second call for proposals whose allocated funding amounted to EUR 40,368 EUR for three activities of Type 1 and three activities of Type 2. Given that a portion of the funds made available remained unspent, the Cooperation Committee decided to approve the launch of another call for proposals of bilateral activities in 2017. The latter should be completed by the end of September 2017, and the reports on the implementation of bilateral activities checked and payments to project promoters made by the end of 2017.

In 2016, the following activities were performed and paid for by the Fund for Bilateral Relations at National Level:

A study visit of Slovenian health authorities to Norway took place in the end of May. Its aim was for Slovenian representatives to learn good practices in the field of spatial planning from the aspect of public health from Norwegian counterparts and to contribute to Priority 2 Co-operation in the field of

health. Representatives of the Ministry of Health, the National Institute of Public Health and the National Laboratory of Health, Environment and Food got acquainted with the systemic organisation of spatial planning and the role of the public sector at the Norwegian Institute of Public Health, and explored how Norway tackles air pollution in the context of spatial planning at the Norwegian Institute for Air Research.

An international conference “From Projects to a System-wide Solution” featuring public health initiative projects implemented under the Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2009–2014 was organised in October by the Ministry of Health to seek and discuss new ways for further implementation of good examples of practices, models and other solutions developed during the project implementation to ensure sustainability of results. The representative of the donor programme partner, the Norwegian Institute of Public Health, participated via video-link.

3 REPORTING ON PROGRAMMES

3.1 Overview of Programme status

The funds under the **SI01** Programme, Technical Assistance Fund, are set aside to cover programme management costs incurred at the National Focal Point, the Certifying Authority and the Audit Authority and other activities related to the National Focal Point (conferences, workshops, organisation of the Final event of the Norwegian and EEA Financial Mechanism 2009-2014, update of the website, promotional material, etc..

Programme **SI02** covers three programme areas: Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, Conservation and Revitalisation of Cultural and Natural Heritage and Environmental Monitoring and Integrated Planning and Control. Ten projects were implemented under the Programme, of which nine were selected under the call for proposals and one was pre-defined.

Project promoters and Programme Operator put every effort into successful implementation and completion of all ten projects in 2016. Project promoters regularly reported on the project progress, and no significant issues were reported as regards the use of allocated support under the Programme and making payments to project promoters.

The projects were subject to on-the-spot verification whose findings were positive and did not unveil any significant shortcomings. The majority of the projects under the Programme SI02 were completed by 31 December 2016, and four projects should be completed by the end of January 2017. Project promoters of three projects have already submitted final reports, and the remaining seven final reports will be prepared in 2017.

The majority of projects under the SI03 Programme were finished as early as 2015 and only a small number of activities continued in 2016 under the NGO Programme in Slovenia. Therefore, the Fund Operator's work in 2016 mainly involved reviewing the reports, conducting evaluations, co-organising the final event and implementing several complementary actions.

The last eleven mobility projects under the 2015 call for proposals were completed in 2016 under the SI04 Programme, adding 103 participants in mobility projects (30 students and 73 members of teaching and administrative staff) to the list of final results. In addition, five inter-institutional projects selected under all three calls for proposals were completed and include qualitative results, outputs and 250 participants. Despite a considerably high realisation rate, a portion of funds under teacher and staff mobility remained unused due to national legal restrictions regarding daily allowances.

High realisation rates were also achieved in the area of primary and secondary schools (Measures 3 and 5). The final five mobility projects completed include 32 successfully realised staff/teacher

mobility activities. Moreover, all seven inter-institutional projects were completed delivering some outstanding results and outputs and as many as 246 individuals participating in short term mobility.

Programme **SI05** covers two programme areas: Public Health Initiatives and Mainstreaming Gender Equality and Promoting Work-life Balance. Twenty-six projects saw light of day under the Programme, of which 24 were selected under a call for proposals, while two projects were pre-defined, i.e. Towards Better Health and Reducing Inequalities in Health which was implemented by the National Institute of Public Health, and Towards Equalising Power Relations Between Women and Men carried out by the Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities.

Project promoters and Programme Operator put every effort into successful implementation and completion of all projects in 2016. Project promoters regularly reported on the project progress, and no significant issues were recorded as regards spending of the allocated support under the Programme and making payments to project promoters. The projects were subject to on-the-spot verification whose findings were positive and did not unveil any significant shortcomings. All projects under Programme SI05 were completed by 31 December 2016. Project promoters of seven projects have already submitted final reports, while the remaining final reports (19 projects) will be prepared in the first half of 2017.

Slovenian Cooperation Committee for Programme SI05 met on 21 November 2016. The members of the Cooperation Committee discussed the Programme implementation, progress of the projects, complementary activities and bilateral activities. They agreed that cooperation with Norwegian partners was outstanding, both at project and programme level. As part of the funds earmarked for bilateral relations remained unused, the Cooperation Committee reached the decision to launch a new call for proposals of bilateral activities in 2017.

3.2 Individual Programme reporting

3.2.1 Programme SI01 - Technical Assistance and the Fund for Bilateral Relations at National Level

The purpose of the Technical Assistance Programme is to contribute to management costs of the National Focal Point, the Certifying Authority and the Audit Authority related to the implementation of the EEA and the Norwegian Financial Mechanism, and to strengthen bilateral activities at the national level.

3.2.1.1 Overall progress as regards implementation of the Programmes and their sub-projects

In 2016, the following activities were performed and paid for by Technical Assistance funds:

- 5th Annual Audit Report and Opinion prepared;
- Audit Strategy prepared;
- All requests submitted to the Certifying Authority certified;
- Monitoring Committee organised by the National Focal Point (7 March 2016);
- Annual meeting organised by the National Focal Point (17 March 2016);
- Labour costs at the Certifying Authority, Audit Authority and National Focal Point;
- Participation of one representative of the National Focal Point at the workshop for the Fund for Decent work and Tripartite Dialogue (Warsaw, 2–3 March 2016);
- Participation of two representatives of the National Focal Point at the launch event for the next financial period 2014–2021 (Brussels, 25–26 May 2016);
- Participation of one representative of the National Focal Point at the workshop for the Scholarship Fund (Brussels, 10 June 2016);
- Participation of one representative of the National Focal Point at the communication workshop (Riga, 21–22 September 2016);

- Participation of one representative of the National Focal Point at the workshop for the Scholarship programme (Bergen, 19-20 September 2016);
- Participation of two representatives of the National Focal Point at the workshop for National Focal Points (Brussels, 11–12 October 2016);
- Update of the website norwaygrants.si and eeagrants.si;
- Preparation of the brochure: Working Together Towards Common Goals (presentation of more than 120 projects under all EEA and Norway Grants Programmes 2009-2014 in Slovenia);
- Promotional material for the final event of the EEA and Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2009-2014 and promotion of Financial Mechanisms in Slovenia;
- Organisation of the Final Event for the EEA and Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2009-2014: “Working Together Towards Common Goals” (Ljubljana, 7 October 2016).

3.2.1.2 Outputs achieved

- one representative of the National Focal Point was acquainted with activities within the Fund for Decent Work and Tripartite Dialogue;
- two representatives of the National Focal Point were acquainted with the procedures regarding the negotiations for the next financial period;
- one representative of the National Focal Point was acquainted with activities under the Scholarship Programme;
- one representative of the National Focal Point was acquainted with the communication activities regarding the presentation of projects, results, ...;
- two representatives of the National Focal Point were acquainted with novelties for the new period 2014–2021 (Regulation, Blue Book, programme preparation process, financial set-up, strategic reporting and evaluations, reporting requirements, bilateral fund, regional fund, ...);
- updated website norwaygrants.si, eeagrants.si;
- brochure Working Together Towards Common Goals.

3.2.1.3 Potential risks that may threaten the achievement of the objectives set out in the Programmes

The human resources management is important for efficient implementation. Each phase of the implementation of the EEA and Norwegian Financial Mechanism calls for an adequate number of appropriately skilled staff to carry out required tasks. The support provided by support services within the office (i.e. legal service, public procurement service, IT service, etc.) is equally indispensable.

3.2.1.4 The need for adjustments of plans, including actions for risk mitigation

No adjustments of plans concerning the activities under the Technical Assistance Fund are currently necessary.

3.2.1.5 The use of funds for bilateral relations

In 2016, the following activities were performed and paid for by the Fund for Bilateral Relations at National Level:

- Study visit to Oslo, Norway, with the aim of exchanging good practices in the field of spatial planning from the aspect of public health contributing to Priority 2 Co-operation in the field of health. Representative of the Ministry of Health, the National Institute of Public Health and the National Laboratory of Health, Environment and Food got acquainted with the systemic organisation of spatial planning and the role of the public sector at the Norwegian

Institute of Public Health, and learned how Norway tackles air pollution in the context of spatial planning at the Norwegian Institute for Air Research (31 May–1 June 2016).

- An international conference “From Projects to a System-wide Solution” featuring public health initiative projects implemented under the Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2009–2014 was organised in October by the Ministry of Health to seek and discuss new ways for further implementation of good examples of practices, models and other solutions developed during the project implementation to ensure sustainability of results. The representative of the donor programme partner, the Norwegian Institute of Public Health, participated via video-link.

The proposed changes of the Work Plan – Fund for Bilateral Relations at National Level:

In 2016, the Ministry of Health asked for changes to the Work Plan - Fund for Bilateral Relations at National Level.

As regards Priority 2 Co-operation in the field of health, the Ministry of Health requested that a study visit on public health be changed and extended, and that a portion of funds from the planned Conference on public health be re-allocated to the mentioned study visit.

The study visit of Slovenian public health experts and policy makers to Norway was extended as Slovenia needed to legally adopt the Guidelines for spatial planning from the aspect of public health targeting municipalities, urban and regional planners. Norway is an example of good practice in this field and Slovenian experts and policy makers gained tremendously by hearing Norwegian experience of the Norwegian Directorate of Health, Norwegian Institute of Public Health, Norwegian Institute for Air Research and Norwegian Ministry of Health and Care Services in the field of spatial planning, which is considered an important public health field. Representatives of the Ministry of Health, the National Institute of Public Health and the National Laboratory of Health, Environment and Food participated in the study visit.

This brief study visit resulted in sharing of good practices in SEA and public health, exchanging of ideas, experience and solutions, and strengthening of relations between the Kingdom of Norway and the Republic of Slovenia.

3.2.2 Programme SI02 – EEA Financial Mechanism Programme

3.2.2.1 Overall progress as regards implementation of the Programmes and their sub-projects

The EEA Financial Mechanism Programme covers three programme areas:

- Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, with the objective Halt the loss of biodiversity,
- Conservation and Revitalisation of Cultural and Natural Heritage, with the objective Cultural and natural heritage for future generations safeguarded, conserved and made publicly accessible,
- Environmental Monitoring and Integrated Planning and Control with the objective Improved compliance with environmental legislation.

Nine projects selected under the call for proposals and one pre-defined project were implemented in 2016.

Table: Allocated funds to projects by individual area

Area	No of projects	Total amount (in EUR)	Grant amount (in EUR)
Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services	4	2,137,960.31	2,030,508.80
Natural Heritage	2	1,401,844.90	1,271,242.28
Cultural Heritage	3	4,628,277.18	4,000,000.00
Environmental Monitoring and Integrated Planning and Control (pre-defined project)	1	3,060,000.00	2,085,882.00
TOTAL	10	11,228,082.39	9,387,632.28

Project promoters and Programme Operator put every effort into successful implementation and completion of projects in 2016. The Programme Operator provided support to project promoters and monitored the substantial and financial progress of the projects. The projects were subject to on-the-spot verification whose findings were positive and did not unveil any significant shortcomings. Project promoters regularly reported on the project progress. First-level control activities went smoothly, and no significant issues were recorded as regards spending of the allocated support under the Programme and making payments to project promoters in 2016.

Special attention was given to promotion of the Programme SI02, both at the programme and project level. Project promoters organised several events to showcase the results and outputs of their projects. Representatives of the Programme Operator attended the events.

The Programme SI02 contents and results were showcased at the Final event for the EEA and Norway Financial Mechanism 2009-2014 held in Ljubljana on 7 October 2016.

Most of the projects under the Programme SI02 were completed by the end of 2016, while four projects should be completed in January 2017. Final reports for the remaining seven projects will be prepared in 2017.

The set goals and outputs of the pre-defined project have been achieved. All planned activities have been successfully finished, goals met, some even surpassed.

The reason behind successful implementation was a well-developed project plan which was coordinated and modified during more than 40 project team meetings held during project implementation. The partnership has proven to be beneficial and necessary to get directions in cases of uncertainty and to raise confidence of the Slovenian project team.

The project received great attention in expert circles and of general public, inter alia, thanks to the effort the project team put into promotional activities. Many of the key tasks – expert (professional geodetic calculations, workshops, system implementation) and promotional (publications, final conference, public media) were successfully implemented during 2016. Project websites were constantly updated and news published. The project's visibility and recognition in the media and the expert public improved substantially. This may be attributed to self-confidence of the project team particularly at the stage of project's transition from the idea to realisation and successful implementation of important tasks.

The final conference which took place in October 2016 focused on presenting the main project achievements by emphasising the role of systemic prevention measures in place to reduce the risks and impacts of floods in Slovenia. The conference was an excellent opportunity to review and present the results of the project, and to bring together the Slovenian team with the teams from Norway and Iceland, and academic experts and civil organisations in the field of geodesy and hydrography. A press conference which took place after the final conference was an occasion to

present the results of the project to the general public. It received significant media coverage and was a great success. The new height calculation of Slovenia's highest mountain Triglav was presented as an example of the new national height system in practice

3.2.2.2 Progress towards expected outcomes

Environmental Monitoring and Integrated Planning and Control

Achievement of the output indicator "Increased exchange of information on environmental impact, status and trends between Beneficiary States and other EU Member States" is monitored on the basis of the implementation of the pre-defined project Modernisation of Spatial Data Infrastructure to Reduce Risks and Impacts of Floods.

Slovenia and other EU members have to transpose the Inspire Directive in the national legislation and report on its implementation. The key output of the project, which also reflects the Inspire Directive implementation, was the establishment of conditions that facilitate the exchange of information on environmental impacts of diverse natural or man-made causes. The prerequisite is standardisation of geolocation base as prescribed in the Inspire Implementing Rules, such as European spatial reference system and standardisation of topographic data themes, which were important parts of the project. Both will enable transnational exchange and comparability of spatial and environmental geo-referenced data. The Slovenian reference system has been successfully established within the project (coordinate reference system (emphasis on vertical component), topographic data standards and harmonisation of hydrographic data). Also, the metadata system within Slovenian geoportal has been improved, together with awareness-raising about its importance and use through capacity building programme which has been prepared and promoted, and through workshops or conferences on the importance of the Inspire Directive. As a result, more public authorities provide their data publicly, so that discovery and download services are established. One of the pivotal results is accessibility of LIDAR terrain data for the whole Slovenian territory under the authority of Slovenian Environment Agency, which can be used by state authorities, local communities and experts in flood mitigation processes. Other public authorities are included in the Inspire network (or in the process of inclusion). Network services specifying common interfaces for web services (discovery services, view services, download services and transformation services) are established or in the process of establishment. Instructions and guidelines have been prepared on how to establish such services according to the Inspire Implementing Rules. The network services are accessible through Slovenian Inspire geoportal and will be available also through European Inspire geoportal. The increased exchange of information on environmental impact, status and trends between Beneficiary States and other EU Member States was reported in the national report on Inspire implementation. The awareness about the need for cooperation between public bodies and promotion of standardisation in the field of SDI has improved by (1) better promotion of achieved results, (2) support from credible partners with sound results, such as Norwegian SDI implementation, and (3) establishment of data coverage for the whole of Slovenia (not only samples), such as digital terrain data or topographic data in future, which may be used by every user in any part of Slovenian territory of Slovenia.

Outcome	Indicator	Indicator value			
		Baseline	Target	Achieved 2016	Total achieved
Increased exchange of information on environmental impact, status and trends between Beneficiary States and other EU Member States	Number of public authorities that link their spatial datasets to the INSPIRE network	1	3	0	3
	Implementation of INSPIRE Implementing Rules	0	3	0	3
	Accessibility of spatial data	1	3	0	3

Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services

To achieve the overall programme objective (halt the loss of biodiversity) the Programme focuses on the areas with highest biodiversity which are part of the EU Natura 2000 network. Four projects demonstrating the need to improve unfavourable conservation status of 25 Natura habitat types and species (forests – three habitat types and five species, wetlands – three habitat types and five species, grasslands – four habitat types and five species) were implemented in Natura 2000 network . Additionally, projects benefitted from enhanced monitoring and surveying of the Natura species whose conservation status is unknown due to insufficient data. The implemented projects are expected to contribute to improved conservation status of 16 habitat types and species, and enhance the monitoring and surveying of unknown species.

Information, education and awareness-raising activities were delivered to support the implementation of conservation activities previously described, to add value and achieve sustainability. Higher recognition of implementation of the Natura 2000 site management programme, particularly of activities implemented under the project, has been noticed. The current situation in terms of progress towards Programme indicators is given below:

Outcome	Indicator	Indicator value			
		Baseline	Target	Achieved 2016	Total achieved
Increased capacity to manage and monitor Natura 2000 sites effectively	Number of management plans for Natura 2000 areas implemented	109 plans, forestry (19,600 ha (agriculture))	115 plans forestry (+580 ha (agriculture = 20,180 ha)	+ 4 plans forestry (+96 ha agriculture)	+ 5 plans forestry = 114 plans (+ 618 ha agriculture = 20,218 ha)
	Number of Natura 2000 species / habitat types monitored and the share	110 species/ habitat types	116 species/ habitat types	+ 5 species/ habitat types	+13 species/ habitat types =

	of their population / range covered by monitoring				123 species/ habitat types
	Number of Natura 2000 species / habitat types in favourable or improved conservation status	Total 176 units out of 748	Total 181 units out of 748	+ 16 units	+16 units = 192 units out of 748

Conservation and Revitalisation of Cultural and Natural Heritage

Two projects were implemented in the field of natural heritage as part of the programme area Conservation and Revitalisation of Cultural and Natural Heritage. The objective of the two projects was to establish public infrastructure for visitors to access most important natural values in protected areas. The infrastructure links the principles of nature protection with improved environmentally friendly public access to natural values.

The below outcome indicator refers to the projects whose activities are already closed. For the time being, indicators referring to the number of visitors cannot be provided, as the actual figures will be known after the completion of the second project.

Outcome	Indicator	Indicator value		
		Baseline	Target	Achieved 2016
Cultural heritage made accessible to the public	Number of natural heritage sites protected or revitalised	0	1	1

Three projects were implemented in the field of cultural heritage. Their objective was to facilitate the renovation, preservation and restoration of cultural monuments which represent immovable cultural heritage. Additional activities of the projects aim to enhance access to cultural heritage.

The projects were kicked off in 2015; one of the projects was completed by the end of 2016, two projects are being implemented till the end of January 2017. Reports which include the description of project activities implemented by the end of August 2016 were received by the end of 2016. The reports suggest that the renovation and restoration works on cultural monuments are in their final stage so that by the time the projects are completed three cultural monuments which represent immovable cultural heritage will be revamped – renovated, restored and safeguarded, thus contributing to having cultural heritage publicly accessible, renovated, restored and conserved.

3.2.2.3 Outputs achieved

Environmental Monitoring and Integrated Planning and Control

The output indicators set for monitoring the progress of the project have been fulfilled, some indicator values have been surpassed. The output indicators have been selected so that the achievement of target values represents the necessary base for evaluation of project progress.

The output indicator Measured normal level of high-order networks – No of benchmarks, which refers to the establishment of a modern, European-compliant national geodetic reference system has been surpassed. A total of about 1,800 km of levelling has been done, levelling network of high order of accuracy has been adjusted, and 2,030 benchmarks have determined normal heights in the new Slovenian height system.

The new topographic database structure (Inspire-compliant) and database management system have been prepared, and the existing 1,950 sheets of topographic data have migrated to the new database structure. New data have been collected according to the newly prepared data capture rules. The coverage of the territory of Slovenia now stands at 2,430 map sheets at scale 1:5,000.

The indicator of coverage of Slovenia with fully Inspire-compliant hydrographic data has been met. The hydrographic data for 320 map sheets have been included in the newly established topographic database. Additionally, data capture of hydrographic data for the rest of Slovenia has been completed, with the data included in the new topographic database; this means that entire Slovenian territory is covered with fully Inspire-compliant data.

Inspire network services for topographic data are being promoted, and are prepared in accordance with the European Location Framework recommendations.

Output	Output indicator	Indicator value			
		Baseline	Target	Achieved 2016	Total achieved
Establishment of a modern National Geodetic Reference System compliant with ESRS	Measured normal level of high-order networks – No of benchmarks	0	1500	+ 2,030 benchmarks	2,030 benchmarks
Establishment of a topographic database with respect to INSPIRE Implementing Rules	Extended coverage of Slovenia with topographic data	1,950 sheets	2,280 sheets	+ 480 sheets	+ 480 sheets = 2,430 sheets
Inspire-compliant hydrography dataset	Coverage of Slovenia with fully Inspire-compliant hydrographic data	0	320 sheets	0	+ 320 sheets = 320 sheets
Components of NSDI in accordance with INSPIRE requirements	INSPIRE network services for topographic data	0	10	+1	+ 11 = 11

Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services

Four projects targeting biodiversity and ecosystem services were implemented in 2016. Three projects have already been completed and their final reports produced. Two of the projects have already received the amounts withheld. The fourth project is to be completed in January 2017. Regardless of the fact that one of the projects is still running, indicator target values have already been achieved, while certain values have even been surpassed.

The current situation in terms of progress towards programme indicators is given below:

Output	Output indicator	Indicator value			
		Baseline	Target	Achieved 2016	Total achieved
Adequate management (measures required by the Natura 2000 management programme) is secured on low input (extensive) meadows and / or protective or flooded forests within Natura 2000 sites hosting important populations of Natura 2000 species / habitat types	Surface (area) of measures targeting grassland and /or forest species / habitat types	19,600 ha meadows, (252,540 ha (forests))	20,180 ha meadows (260,040 ha (forests))	+ 96 ha meadows (+ 5,732 ha (forests))	+ 618 ha meadows = 20,218 ha (+ 8,210 ha forests = 260,750 ha)
Adequate management (measures required by the Natura 2000 management programme) is secured on wetlands within Natura 2000 sites hosting important populations of Natura 2000 species / habitat types	Surface (area) of measures targeting wetland species / habitat types	670 ha	700 ha	+ 34 ha	+37 ha = 707 ha
Parameters for determining conservation status of grassland and/or forest and/or wetland species (distribution area, population size) and/or habitat types (are being monitored	Number of Natura 2000 species / habitat types monitored and share of these species / habitat type covered by monitoring	110 species/ habitat types	116 species/ habitat types	+ 5 species/ habitat types	+13 species/ habitat types/ 123 species/habitat types
Acceptance of the implementation of Natura 2000 site management programme and conservation measures implemented in project activities	Number of key stakeholders accepting (agreeing) on the implementation of the Natura 2000 site management programme and conservation measures planned in project activities	4,500 people	4,750 people	+ 358 people	+ 541 people/ 5,041 people

Conservation and Revitalisation of Cultural and Natural Heritage

Two projects in the area of natural heritage were kicked off in 2015, the activities of the first project finished by the end of 2016 while the second projects is to be complemented by the end of January 2017.

The project CARS – OUT!: Promotion of environmentally friendly visitation to protected areas provided the Sečovlje Salina Nature Park with new footpaths, while old paths were repaired. A new

acquisition to the Park were also an electric car and electric vehicle with three trailers for visitor transportation, and electric and regular bicycles for the Sečovelje Salina Nature Park which will also be used in the Strunjan Nature Park. The visit to Sečovelje Salina Nature Park now takes place entirely on foot, by bicycle, electric vehicle or by boat from the sea. The possibilities of visiting the Strunjan Nature Park in an environmentally friendly way were improved.

The project Park and Enjoy Nature: Comprehensive introduction of environmentally friendly mobility in the Triglav National Park for the preservation and real experience of nature was not completed in 2016. However, the majority of the project activities were implemented, e. g. six public parking places were improved, a new public parking place was established, two bike rental places opened and two visitor information points providing information about environmentally friendly visit were put up.

Programme result indicators given in the table below refer to the completed project. For the time being, indicators referring to the number of visitors cannot be provided, as the actual figures will be known after the completion of the second project. However, it is estimated that the indicator relating to the reduced number of visits with motorised vehicles will be achieved, if not even surpassed.

Output	Output indicator	Indicator value		
		Baseline	Target	Achieved 2016
Establishment of new public infrastructure for visitors of the most important natural heritage sites in national protected areas	1-3 new infrastructure objects	0	1	1
Visitor infrastructure that successfully connects safe-guarding of natural heritage site and better public access to natural heritage Site	Increased amount of park infrastructure that safe-guards natural aspects, and offers environmental education and experiencing nature to users	0	1	1

Three projects were implemented in the area of cultural heritage. These projects pursued the renovation, preservation and restoration of cultural monuments representing immovable cultural heritage. Additional activities of the projects also aimed to improve access to cultural heritage.

The projects were launched in 2015, one of the projects was completed by the end of 2016, and the other two projects are to be finished by the end of January 2017. Project reports summarising the activities implemented by the end of August 2016 were supplied by the end of 2016. The reports suggest that the renovation and restoration works on cultural monuments are in their final stage so that by the time the projects are completed three cultural monuments which represent immovable cultural heritage will be revamped – renovated, restored and safeguarded, thus contributing to having cultural heritage publicly accessible, renovated, restored and conserved..

The achievement of the indicator value referring to increased visit cannot be commented at the time being, given that certain projects are still underway.

However, interim reports supplied do suggest that the number of visits has increased, including on account of numerous educational activities, awareness-raising activities concerning the role of cultural heritage and promotional activities which have contributed to improving access to cultural heritage.

3.2.2.4 Potential risks that may threaten the achievement of the objectives set out in the Programmes

An overwhelming majority of the projects under the Programme SI02 was completed by the end of December 2016. Despite the fact that the Programme Operator acted in accordance with provisions of the Regulation governing sustainability, and responded as rapidly and appropriately as possible to any situation that put the sustainability of project results at risk, we assessed that sustainability of project results was in some cases called into question.

In terms of bilateral activities, the identified risk involves insufficient interest of target groups to participate in the activities. In order to reduce the risk, the Programme Operator should regularly inform all target groups of the funding opportunities concerning bilateral activities.

3.2.2.5 The need for adjustments of plans, including actions for risk mitigation

Adjustments of plans are not required.

3.2.2.6 The use of funds for bilateral relations

In 2016, the funds available for bilateral relations facilitated strengthening of bilateral relations between Slovenia and the Donor States. The activities were implemented both at the programme and project level.

Activities at the programme level

The National Focal Point and the Ministry of the Environment and Spatial Planning put efforts into organising a joint bilateral conference on biodiversity and ecosystem services and natural heritage once again in 2016. Unfortunately, the conference was cancelled as the keynote speakers from Norway, experts in the above areas, had too many other obligations. As a consequence, the National Focal Point revised the 2016 Fund for Bilateral Relations Work Plan, which was approved by the Financial Mechanism Office. Two study visits or exchanges with Icelandic representatives were included in the Work Plan instead of the above conference. Study visits were planned to take place in 2016, however, the activities have been postponed to 2017 as the Icelandic experts were overcommitted.

A call for proposals under bilateral cooperation at the programme level was launched on 20 May 2016. Two types of activities were foreseen: 1/Type 1: participation of Slovenian representatives at conferences, seminars and workshops in Norway, and 2/Type 2: organisation of bilateral conferences, seminars and workshops in Slovenia. The call for proposals was open for project promoters under the programmes whose projects had been selected under the call which had two application deadlines (i.e. 30 July 2016 and 30 September 2016). The funds made available under the Fund for Bilateral Activities under the Programme SI02 stood at EUR 40,000. Two proposals were received. The latter were both approved and received a total of EUR 7,250 in grant for activities of Type 1.

Activities at the project level

Project promoters and their project partners contributed to strengthening bilateral relations between Slovenia and the Donor States, in particular in light of the fact that 50% of all programme-related projects were implemented in cooperation with donor project partners.

Cooperation with experts from both Donor States was particularly successful under the pre-defined project. The Surveying and Mapping Authority of Slovenia, the Norwegian Mapping Authority (Statens Kartverk) and National Land Survey of Iceland (Landmælingar Íslands) had annual project

management meetings to review the implementation of the project. Three joined workshops were organised to discuss and explore the topics of geodetic reference system and topographic system. A workshop on sub-project GRS was organised in Ljubljana in May 2016. The workshop, which featured Slovenian, Norwegian and Icelandic experts, was about implementing a new height model. A workshop on subproject TOPO was held in Hønefoss, Norway in June 2016. The participants of the workshop discussed new possibilities of the use and possible developments of topographic data. In September, a closing meeting of project partners was held in Akranes, Island. Its purpose was to review the work done in the scope of sub-projects.

The final conference which took place in October 2016 was an excellent opportunity to review and present the results of the project, and to bring together the Slovenian team with the teams from Norway and Iceland, and academic experts and civil organisations in the field of geodesy and hydrography. Articles and presentations about the project and the role of partners from the Donor States were published in professional publications and featured at conferences. Slovenian-Norwegian-Icelandic partnership was promoted in public media (TV, newspapers) through interviews. The final project report was published in Slovenian and English, with inputs from all project partners.

Bilateral cooperation activities in the form of regular meetings, study visits and exchange of knowledge and experience further took place throughout 2016 under the remaining four projects which involved donor state partners.

SI02 - Bilateral indicators achieved in 2016

Indicator	Baseline	Target	Achievement	
			2016	Total
Number of articles published in one country about the other partner country	0	2	1	1
Number of European and international networks where project and programme partners participate together	0	1	3	3
Number of joint (bilateral) articles published, written by persons from an institution in both a Beneficiary and Donor State, published in a national or international publication, originated from a project financed by the programme	0	3	0	0
Number of joint, sector-wide initiatives, in a Beneficiary or Donor State, beyond the programme	0	1	0	0
Number of men involved in exchange visits between Beneficiary and Donor States	0	7	17	27
Number of project partnership agreements in beneficiary civil society	0	0	0	0
Number of project partnership agreements in the beneficiary private sector	0	0	0	1
Number of project partnership agreements in the beneficiary public sector	0	2	0	4
Number of women involved in exchange visits between Beneficiary and Donor States	0	6	9	14

Complementary actions

The activities that covered, inter alia, exchange of good practices and sharing of experience among Programme Operators in Beneficiary States also took place in 2016.

The Bulgarian Ministry of Environment and Water invited Programme Operators in the area of biodiversity and ecosystem services to a two-day meeting held in October 2016. The event opening which featured high-level Bulgarian officials was followed by several project site visits. The second day of the event was focused on the presentation of the programmes that were implemented in nine Beneficiary States and was a perfect opportunity for the participants to network and share knowledge, experience and good practices.

A three-day meeting of Programme Operators in the area of cultural heritage was held in the Czech Republic in November 2016. The first day was dedicated to networking of Programme Operators and to the presentation of several projects implemented in the area (the Slovenian project was showcased as well) and exchange of experience and good practices. The second day featured the kick start of the International Study Centre project at the Český Krumlov State Castle which received support from the EEA and Norway Grants. An international conference under the above project which brought together participants from several countries was held on the last day of the event.

Both events featured representatives of the Donor States.

3.2.3 Programme SI03 – Funds for Non-governmental Organisations

3.2.3.1 Overall progress as regards implementation of the Programmes and their sub-projects

The majority of projects were finished as early as 2015 and only a small number of activities continued in 2016 under the NGO Programme in Slovenia. Therefore, the Fund Operator's work in 2016 mainly involved reviewing the reports, conducting evaluations, co-organising the final event and implementing several complementary actions.

The selection procedure was concluded already in 2014, but given that a certain amount of funds was still not committed and the actual spending was lower than anticipated, the Fund Operator published an additional call for proposals in order to re-allocate unused funds amounting to approximately EUR 10,000. Approvals of the Financial Mechanism Office and of the Selection Committee at the end of 2015 finally gave green light to the additional call for proposals which was published in the beginning of 2016.

Progress on horizontal issues

Unlike racism, xenophobia, tolerance, multicultural understanding and transparency, horizontal issues such as hate speech, homophobia, tolerance and multicultural understanding, Roma and human trafficking were directly tackled by the projects. As a result, the following activities were implemented in 2016 under the following issues:

Hate speech

The Peace Institute organised the Second National Consultative Assembly where the project received active support from 35 organisations and 39 individuals. The project team also provided an overview of hate speech in Slovenia and produced an action plan to combat hate speech in Slovenia. Both documents are now available for public and online distribution. Additionally, the Memorandum to Act Against Hate Speech was signed at the closing event and remains open for signature as a public document.

Homophobia

An international final event was carried out in February under the project DIKE. Representative of the project partner participated in the event and presented the history of LGBTIQ movements in Norway. The conference reflected on the negative result of the rejected referendum on the law introducing

equal rights to same-sex couples and focused on steps forward. The results of the campaign about same-sex couples' rights carried out in the beginning of 2016 were also presented.

The Roma

A final event of Eco-Ethno Roma Fashion project took place in the beginning of 2016. The project was well accepted in the local community as well as among the Roma community. Efforts to empower women through the project are now continued under another project. The showroom continues to serve as a meeting place and a place to create and is used by members of the Roma community and others.

Human trafficking

The Society Ključ developed and published a computer game for raising awareness of children and adolescents of human trafficking. The game is available at Facebook and at their website. The beneficiary also organised round tables in five Slovenian towns with a view to raising awareness about and discussing the problems of the Roma children whose basic children rights are often violated under the guise of tolerance towards Roma culture. The Society's biggest success was seeing the topic of human trafficking integrated in school curricula.

Cross-cutting issues

Several common points can be underlined in this respect. First, for example, gender equality is largely understood in very rigid terms - as an equal number of women and men, at events for example, or equal access for both to all project activities, rather than equal representation and participation in the economy, decision-making or life. It is also true that the issue of gender equality is not equally relevant for all topic areas (eg. less for environment protection). Second, the notion of good governance is sometimes misunderstood by the beneficiaries. They do not know what is actually expected from them in terms of good governance and how to address the issue in the report. Apparently, the issue is not internalised enough in the Slovenian society.

Nevertheless, gender equality was the *fil rouge* of the Balkan Slippers project. The project promoter and partners tried to include migrant women from former Yugoslavian countries in the project, but failed up until their husbands were convinced it would benefit them too. They decided to conduct several workshops for men first, before being able to work with women.

A lot of focus on gender equality was put in the Eco-Ethno Roma Fashion project as well, since part of the project was focused on empowering Roma women. After initial problems with engaging the women, things finally started going right when children were allowed to participate as well.

3.2.3.2 Progress towards expected outcomes

The NGO Programme in Slovenia pursues five outcomes: active citizenship fostered, cross-sectoral partnerships developed, advocacy and watchdog role developed, developed networks and coalitions of NGOs working in partnership and empowerment of vulnerable groups.

Detailed review of selected projects shows that all five outcomes were addressed and that the set target values were realistic (or modest in some cases).

Outcome	Standard indicator	Baseline	Target	Achieved in 2016
Active citizenship fostered	Evidence of decision-makers responding to citizens actions	0	10	35
Cross-sectoral partnerships developed, particularly with government organisations at local, regional and / or national level	Number of mechanisms fostering dialogue between citizens, civil society and local/national institutions	0	11	11
Advocacy and watchdog role developed	Number of laws, policies or practices changed or improved as a consequence of NGO advocacy activities	0	6	15
Developed networks and coalitions of NGOs working in partnership	Number of NGO networks/ platforms/ coalitions developed	0	20	33
Empowerment of vulnerable groups	Number of beneficiaries engaged in strategic planning/ implementation of activities	0	55	2500

Outcome 1: Active Citizenship fostered

Public participation in decision-making process is considerably well governed in Slovenian legislation, but responsible bodies fail to implement it properly. On the other hand, NGOs and citizens need encouragement for a more active participation in political and social life. By selecting Outcome 1 under the NGO Programme, the focus was shifted to the issues of good governance and transparency, participatory democracy, anti-corruption and the rule of law to support the NGOs to develop their monitoring and watchdog role, and to build their skills and expertise, as only a small number of NGOs is active in this field. More projects were expected to aim at fostering active citizenship as there was almost no funding available for them in Slovenia, but it turned out that 10 out of 33 selected projects tackled the issue.

Outcome 2: Cross-sectoral partnerships developed, particularly with government organisations at local, regional and / or national level

The needs identified within the NGO sector in Slovenia include, inter alia, the need for networking, cooperation, mutual learning and involvement in cross-sectoral partnerships. Cross-sectoral partnerships, particularly at the local level, are considered to be extremely important for the development of NGOs and of communities as such. Support to this activity targeted promotion of sustainable development and responsible attitude towards local community. The Fund Operator is satisfied with the developments in the field as some of the beneficiaries managed to achieve good results particularly at the local level.

Outcome 3: Advocacy and watchdog role developed

Slovenian NGOs do engage in advocacy and watchdog activities, but this is mostly organised on an ad-hoc manner and the NGOs do not use all sources of influence available – i.e. ministries and other administrative bodies, government, political parties, individual MPs, parliamentary committees, etc. Also, only rarely do they engage in monitoring activities. Since these activities are crucial for fostering democracy and active citizenship, we wanted to support NGOs in their effort to develop and implement such projects. A total of eight projects addressed Outcome 3, and the target value (i.e. six acts, policies or practices changed or improved as a consequence of NGO advocacy activities) has been surpassed, as the beneficiaries reported ten such cases.

Outcome 4: Developed networks and coalitions of NGOs working in partnership

Networking between organisations active in the same field is already supported by the European Social Fund. In order to upgrade networking and create synergies, we wanted to support focused networking seeking collaboration between bigger and smaller organisations. The approach has been well received among NGOs and almost all beneficiaries considered it within their projects. By the end of 2016, we received reports about 33 established or broadened networks or coalitions of NGOs working in partnership, thereby surpassing considerably the set target value (20).

3.2.3.3 Outputs achieved

The NGO monitoring and watchdog role was strengthened, citizens' participation in decision-making increased and local NGOs capacities improved under Outcome 1 (Active citizenship fostered). For example: Association Legebitra developed a system for monitoring discrimination against LGBT population under the DIKE project. The system will be coordinated by the "Defender" of equal opportunities Mr Boštjan Vernik Šetinc, who is also an active member of the project team. The activity was delayed due to the reformation of the Institute of Defender.

A whole other aspect of activism was covered by the MARŠ Urban community project on activation of the citizens of Maribor and surroundings. The aim was to put in place the system of participatory budgeting in one of the municipalities. They realised the project idea in the community of Radvanje (part of the Maribor Municipality). However, the first step to this was the development of several legislative initiatives and a proposal of law on participatory budgeting. An Icelandic partner with valuable experience had a major role in this activity.

Awareness about key environmental issues was raised and cooperation among NGOs and government institutions at local and national level improved under Outcome 2 (Cross-sectoral partnerships developed, particularly with government organisations at local, regional and / or national level). For example: Duh časa's project Computers for all combined environmental and societal aspects and targeted recycling of old, used computers by giving them out to those (individuals and organisations) that could not afford to buy new ones. They received over 1,000 old computers from different donors (individuals, companies and public organisations), managed to recycle them, and found new users for over 500 of computers during the project lifetime. Hence, they reduced the amount of discarded computer equipment that represents a huge burden for the environment and established a new regional recycling centre – a place where people bring old computers and workshops where these computers are recycled and prepared for a new user. Now, there are three recycling centres in Slovenia in three different regions – Ljubljana, Maribor and Novo mesto. Each of them is an independent unit and has its own management and structure. Everything functions on a voluntary basis.

The role of NGOs in democratic life improved under Outcome 3 (Advocacy and watchdog role developed): Legal information center launched two advocacy initiatives: Initiative to the Court of Audit on Climate Fund and Initiative to the Ministry of the Environment and Spatial Planning on the

Resolution on Traffic, despite experience show that the Ministry of the Environment is not particularly in favour of proposals made by the public and relevant NGOs. Developments are easier to achieve by legal means (e.g. a beneficiary succeeded with complaint against the killing of wolf) and continuous informal communication with the representative of the European Commission's Directorate-General for the Environment.

Business initiatives among marginal groups were promoted under Outcome 4: Developed networks and coalitions of NGOs working in partnership: Project Eco-ethno Roma Fashion which was implemented by the Roma Association Romano Veseli turned old Roma clothes into fashionable outfits by giving them a fresh look – the participants used recycling to design a collection for all, not just the Roma population. They produced a new fashion line called Amulet made mostly from recycled clothes. The organisation also established a social enterprise hoping to continue producing and selling products after the project is finished.

Marginal groups were activated in the scope of Outcome 5 (Empowerment of vulnerable groups): migrant women in Jesenice and Ljubljana became active members of civil society thanks to the project Balkan slippers, which was, for some, the first opportunity to get out of their homes. The project promoters put extra effort in the project and worked with the husbands since most of the women needed husbands' permission to participate in the project. A lot of them also learned Slovenian language during the project and actively participated in other activities the association was organising. The women who participated in the project continue to meet regularly even though the project has already finished.

3.2.3.4 Potential risks that may threaten the achievement of the objectives set out in the Programmes

Programme Operator did not identify any new risks. The most crucial one, i.e. low management costs and the need to finish the Programme on a rather pro bono basis due to the large overload during the selection procedure was already reported to and discussed with the Financial Mechanism Office.

3.2.3.5 The need for adjustments of plans, including actions for risk mitigation

Only one change was made to the Programme Implementation Agreement in 2016. The Programme Operator proposed shifting the unused funds under outcomes 2, 3, 4 and 5 (a total of EUR 35,250 EUR) to the complementary action to have a sufficient allocation covering for the costs of peer-to-peer exchange and gaining of experience from other Programme Operators.

3.2.3.6 The use of funds for bilateral relations

The Slovenian NGO Programme was very successful as regards bilateral relations; as many as approximately one third of the selected projects involved partners from the Donor States. Several contacts were made through cooperation of the Fund Operator and the Norwegian Helsinki Committee (NHC). Also, the applicants who applied their projects in partnership with organisations from the Donor States were rewarded with (up to) additional 5 points (depending on the quality of the partnership cooperation).

Along with the re-allocated funds, a total of EUR 16,235 was made available under the Fund for Bilateral Relations for the selected beneficiaries who implemented projects in partnership with organisations from the Donor States. The funds were entirely used already in 2015.

Slovenian applicants were highly motivated for establishing project partnerships with the Donor State organizations, and the indicator referring to the number of partnership agreements has been surpassed. There has been a huge overachievement in all programme outcome indicators. Some concrete examples are provided below.

Bilateral indicators	Baseline	Target	Achieved in 2016
Number of project partnership agreements in beneficiary civil society	0	10	13
Number of projects with expected shared results (both partners are involved professionally in planning and implementation and can claim credit for achieved results)	0	5	13
Number of articles published in one country about the other partner country	0	1	7

The results of internal evaluation suggest that, according to the beneficiaries, it was quite difficult to find an appropriate project partner, while in other cases the models applied in donor countries were not suitable for transfer to Slovenia due to differences between the two systems. On the other hand, the majority of beneficiaries stated that donor states partners were excellent and that they managed to transfer the knowledge successfully. In some cases, a view from outside was very valuable, partners were supportive, responsible and positive.

3.2.4 Programme SI04 – EEA and Norwegian Scholarship Programme

Three calls for proposals were announced during the programming period:

The 2013 call for proposals:

The Programme Operator received:

- 13 applications for mobility projects in higher education,
- 5 applications for mobility projects for teaching staff in general and vocational education and training,
- 2 applications for inter-institutional cooperation projects in higher education, and
- 8 applications for inter-institutional cooperation projects in education and training.

The Programme Operator approved:

- 6 mobility projects in higher education
- 5 mobility projects for teaching staff in general and vocational education and training
- 2 inter-institutional cooperation projects in higher education, and
- 2 inter-institutional cooperation projects in education and training.

The 2014 call for proposals:

The Programme Operator received:

- 11 applications for mobility projects in higher education,
- 8 applications for mobility projects for teaching staff in general and vocational education and training,
- 4 applications for inter-institutional cooperation projects in higher education, and
- 14 applications for inter-institutional cooperation projects in education and training.

The Programme Operator approved:

- 7+1 mobility projects in higher education
- 5 mobility projects for teaching staff in general and vocational education and training
- 2 inter-institutional cooperation projects in higher education, and
- 3 inter-institutional cooperation projects in education and training.

The 2015 call for proposals:

The Programme Operator received:

- 10 applications for mobility projects in higher education,
- 6 applications for mobility projects for teaching staff in general and vocational education and training,
- 2 applications for inter-institutional cooperation projects in higher education, and
- 9 applications for inter-institutional cooperation projects in education and training.

The Programme Operator approved:

- 6+1 mobility projects in higher education
- 3+1 mobility projects for teaching staff in general and vocational education and training
- 2 inter-institutional cooperation projects in higher education, and
- 2 inter-institutional cooperation projects in education and training.

Initial problems reported under the calls for proposals, included, for example, receiving a sufficient number of applications for mobility projects for the school sector (Measure 3). However, according to the trends of each call for proposals it can be concluded that the interest in the preparation and implementation of inter-institutional projects (Measure 5), which pursue enhanced cooperation and achievement of tangible results, is growing, as well as the impact on the local and wider school environment. The interest has also grown in the last two calls for proposals thanks to a better visibility of the Programme as a result of intensive promotion in the sector.

3.2.4.1 Overall progress as regards implementation of the Programmes and their sub-projects

The Programme Slovenian Scholarship Fund under the EEA and Norwegian Financial Mechanism fully focused on national and EU area as regards internationalisation. The implemented measures and activities have proven to be adequate and successful at all levels of the education sector. In 2014, when the new EU programme Erasmus+ was set in motion, the Scholarship Fund became a complementary and at the same time reliable continuation of the former EU Lifelong Learning Programme.

Higher education institutions easily integrated the Programme within their regular activities, strengthening their cooperation with institutions in the Donor States. The planned mobility activities were realised and some projects even included more of such activities than planned. The activities of the Scholarship Fund (mobility, cooperation projects and study visits) and eligible funds under each measure represent the incentives needed for bilateral cooperation between the Beneficiary and Donor States to strengthen cooperation and share knowledge and good practices in the sector.

The last eleven mobility projects under the 2015 call for proposals were completed in 2016, adding 103 participants in mobility projects (30 students and 73 members of teaching and administrative staff) to the list of final results. In addition, five inter-institutional projects selected under all three calls for proposals were concluded and include qualitative results, outputs and 250 participants. Despite a considerably high realisation rate, a portion of funds under teacher and staff mobility remained unused due to national legal restrictions regarding daily allowances.

High realisation rates were also achieved in the area of primary and secondary schools (Measures 3 and 5). The final five mobility projects concluded with 32 successfully realised staff/teacher mobility activities. Moreover, all seven inter-institutional projects were completed delivering some outstanding results and outputs and included 246 participants in short term mobility.

Cross-cutting issues were not addressed directly in the implementation of the calls for proposals although they were integrated in the organisation of the Programme. Good governance has been ensured at the level of the Programme Operator and the project promoter. The Programme Operator is monitored by the National Focal Point's revision department, in order to guarantee accountability

and transparency of the Programme. Project promoters' good governance is monitored by the Programme Operator upon application, preparation of the agreement and through the monitoring plan. Cross-cutting issues such as environmental considerations, economic and social sustainability and gender equality were addressed by the projects, their planned activities and results.

3.2.4.2 Progress towards expected outcomes

Outcome 1 - Increased higher education student and staff mobility between Beneficiary States and EEA EFTA States.

Data about the mobility were also collected through a survey among participants. Out of 184 students only 130 completed the questionnaire, 85 of them responding that they received the ECTS credits for their mobility. This accounts for 77% of the target set in the Programme. The project promoters will be asked to remind the participants to complete the survey and to report on reasons for the low acquisition of ECTS credits. The Programme Operator is expecting this target to rise, and the findings will be included in the final report.

Outcome 2 - Increased and strengthened institutional cooperation at all levels of education sector between the Beneficiary States and EEA EFTA States.

As many as 532 participants were involved in short-term mobility and improved their skills and competencies thanks to institutional cooperation projects (Measures 4 and 5). 176 individuals out of 532 participants were members of administrative or teaching staff, which surpasses the set target and stands at an enviable 176% realisation rate. The participants increased their skills and competencies, as the projects addressed the topics integrated in the regular implementation of the Programme; they also strengthened bilateral cooperation among partners, which should have a long term effect. The concrete results in the form of products or services will be disseminated after the projects have been completed.

3.2.4.3 Outputs achieved

Output 1.2 - Agreements for higher education student and staff mobility formalised/existing agreements enhanced

The 25 realised higher education mobility projects involving 184 students who participated in the Programme account for 84% of the set target. 227 members of administrative and teaching staff participated in mobility programme, which represents 90% of the set target. 65 students were involved in work placements, which is a 59% level of target achievement. The main reason for low figure lies in students having difficulties finding a company that would provide training.

Output 2.1 - Mobility programme for institutional cooperation effectively implemented

84 individuals participated in teacher and staff mobility in the scope of fourteen projects under Measure 3, which represents 84% of the target.

Output 2.2 - Joint projects identified and implemented by partner institutions

Six inter-institutional projects were implemented under Measure 4, and seven under Measure 5. Altogether, this stands for 130% of the target set under the Programme. Interest in such projects has been continuously growing ever since the first call for proposals in 2013, so the set target was expected to be met or even surpassed.

The main reason for the underachievement of the set target value lies in difficulties project promoters had finding partners and establishing cooperation. Furthermore, the projects were planned so as to use the maximum amount of funds available. As a result, the total allocation of funding was distributed under the three calls for proposals. However, in accordance with the national regulations governing allowances, a considerable amount of funds remained unused even

under the projects where all planned mobility activities were realised or additional introduced. Despite the efforts of the Programme Operator to encourage project promoters to give the remaining amount of funds back during the eligibility period, in order to be re-allocated on time, the majority of programme promoters claimed that the funds would be spent.

Lessons learned: closer and continuous monitoring of projects; putting in place the procedures that allow the Programme Operator to redistribute funds from low performing projects and to re-allocate them to a reserve list projects on the basis of interim reports; selection of realistic targets that are guaranteed to be achieved already at the project selection phase of later calls for proposals.

3.2.4.4 Potential risks that may threaten the achievement of the objectives set out in the Programmes

The main 2016 risk was the use of unspent funds by projects, despite the measures the Programme Operator undertook: close monitoring of the projects, counselling and re-allocation of funds.

3.2.4.5 The need for adjustments of plans, including actions for risk mitigation

The only adjustment made was the re-allocation of funds from other Measures to Measure 1 made in cooperation with the Financial Mechanism Office and the National Focal Point.

3.2.4.6 The use of funds for bilateral relations

Since the three calls for proposals had been closed, the only open call for proposals was the call for proposals for study visits. Its aim was to facilitate and strengthen bilateral cooperation and promote sharing of results and good practices. 38 applications were received in 2016, of which eight were rejected, nineteen approved and projects implemented, while seven were approved but the projects are yet to be realised. Four applications are still being processed. The total amount of approved allocated funding for study visits stood at EUR 76,863.70.

A group study visit to Norway was organised for ten headteachers of secondary schools who visited four different school centres in order to get familiar with the education system, good practices in school management, curriculum development and examples of successful projects under the EEA and Norway Grants. The study visit was an excellent opportunity for the participants to network in order to establish possible future partnerships.

The results of such study visits usually include future cooperation with the hosting institution under the EEA and Norway Grants, Erasmus+ or other similar programmes, implementation of new ideas, exchange of good practices in participants' work and personal growth and development of their professional and personal competences.

Complementary action

The complementary action funds were used to prepare and organise the so-called SHARE workshop in cooperation with CNVOS (Programme Operator for NGOs), where the project promoters networked with project promoters of Erasmus+ and Europe for Citizens Programme, shared good practices and used brainstorming to generate ideas about possible future co-operation and projects under one of the programmes.

The Programme Operator enabled a study visit of two staff members working on the Programme to the donor programme partner, i.e. Rannis, Icelandic Centre for Research.

Complementary action funds also supported the organisation of the final outreach event, prepared in association with the Programme Operator for NGOs and the National Focal Point, in order to

promote project results in Slovenia. The event which featured creative presentations of project results (and a publication) was very successful receiving over 100 guests and considerable media coverage.

3.2.5 Programme SI05 – Norwegian Financial Mechanism Programme

3.2.5.1 Overall progress as regards implementation of the Programmes and their sub-projects

The Programme **SI05** covers two programme areas: Public Health Initiatives and Mainstreaming Gender Equality and Promoting Work-life Balance.

The programme area Public Health Initiatives includes three sub-areas: Reducing inequalities between user groups, Prevention of lifestyle-related diseases and Improved mental health services with twenty projects implemented.

Seven projects selected under a call for proposals worth EUR 3,834,493.13 (of which EUR 3,597,010.07 in grant) were implemented in the sub-area Reducing inequalities between user groups.

Six projects selected in the scope of a call for proposals and amounting to EUR 2,571,701.68 (of which EUR 2,392,897.38 in grant) and one pre-defined project were implemented in the sub-area Prevention of lifestyle-related diseases. The pre-defined project called Towards Better Health and Reducing Inequalities in Health worth a total of EUR 2,352,941.00 (100% grant) was implemented by the National Institute of Public Health.

Six projects selected in the scope of a call for proposals equalling EUR 2,578,237.56 (of which EUR 2,408,243.44 in grant) were carried out in the sub-area Improved mental health services.

Programme area Mainstreaming Gender Equality and Promoting Work-life Balance includes three sub-areas: Economic decision-making (one project selected under a call for proposals), Political decision-making (two projects selected under a call for proposals) and Promoting work-life balance (two projects selected under a call for proposals). The five projects worth a total of EUR 1,215,353.69 (of which EUR 1,126,951.00 in grant) were implemented in the programme area Mainstreaming Gender Equality and Promoting Work-life Balance along with one pre-defined project, i.e. Towards Equalising Power Relations Between Women and Men worth a total of EUR 500,000.00 EUR (100% grant) and implemented by the Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities.

Area	Sub-area	No of projects	Total amount (in EUR)	Grant amount (in EUR)
Public Health Initiatives		20	11,337,373.37	10,751,091.89
	Reducing inequalities between user groups	7	3,834,493.13	3,597,010.07
	Prevention of lifestyle-related diseases	7	4,924,642.68	4,745,838.38
	<i>Selected projects</i>	6	2,571,701.68	2,392,897.38
	<i>Pre-defined project</i>	1	2,352,941.00	2,352,941.00
	Improved mental health services	6	2,578,237.56	2,408,243.44
Gender Equality		6	1,715,353.69	1,626,951.00
	<i>Selected projects</i>	5	1,215,353.69	1,126,951.00

Area	Sub-area	No of projects	Total amount (in EUR)	Grant amount (in EUR)
	<i>Pre-defined project</i>	1	500,000.00	500,000.00
TOTAL NOR		26	13,052,727.06	12,378,042.89

Project promoters and Programme Operator put every effort into successful implementation and completion of all projects in 2016. The Programme Operator provided support to project promoters and monitored the substantial and financial progress of the projects. The latter were subject to on-the-spot verification whose findings were positive and did not unveil any significant shortcomings. Project promoters regularly reported on the project progress. First-level control activities went smoothly, and no significant issues were recorded as regards spending of the allocated support under the Programme and making payments to project promoters in 2016.

Special attention was given to promotion of the Programme SI05, both at the programme and project level. Project promoters organised several events to showcase the results and outputs of their projects. Representatives of the Programme Operator attended the events.

The Programme SI05 contents and results were showcased at the Final event for the EEA and Norway Financial Mechanism 2009-2014 held in Ljubljana on 7 October 2016.

Results of the twenty projects in the area Public health initiatives were showcased at the conference "From Projects to a System-wide Solution" (Ljubljana, 26 October 2016). The project targets have been successfully achieved, in certain cases even surpassed. All project promoters emphasised that the Norway Grants and cooperation with the Norwegian partners were the pivotal aspect adding value to the projects. Given the projects' success, the country should investigate the possibility of co-funding such projects at a system-wide level. Similar funding opportunities are offered by European Structural and Investment Funds (Cohesion Fund), in the scope of cross-border cooperation programmes and under calls for proposals launched by individual ministries and within local communities' funding.

The projects under the Programme SI05 were completed by the end of December 2016. Project promoters of seven projects have already prepared final reports that have been submitted to the Programme Operator for approval. Approved final reports are the pre-condition for making payments of sums withheld. The rest of nineteen projects should see final reports produced in the first half of 2017.

3.2.5.2 Progress towards expected outcomes

The expected outcomes of the Programme SI05 are as follows:

Outcome	Standard outcome indicators	Baseline	Target value	Achieved value
Reduced inequalities between user groups	Number of actions taken to reduce inequalities in health through increased access	0	10	17
Lifestyle-related diseases prevented or reduced	Number of actions/activities aiming to reduce or prevent lifestyle-related diseases at national/local level	0	15	3
Improved mental health services	New local structures for mental health	0	3	3
Awareness raised and research on gender issues promoted	Attitudes towards gender roles changed	0	60	60

3.2.5.3 Outputs achieved

The expected outputs of the Programme SI05 are as follows:

Output	Standard output indicators	Baseline	Target value	Achieved value
New equity-oriented programmes and services for different user groups developed and implemented	Number of actions taken to reduce inequalities in health through increased access	0	10	17
Capacity of professionals for health equity and work with vulnerable groups improved	Number of trained professionals in health inequality and related topics and issues	0	500	833
New integrated programmes and services for lifestyle-related chronic diseases prevention for different user groups developed and implemented	Number of actions aiming to reduce or prevent lifestyle related diseases at national/local level	0	15	3
Capacity of professionals for work with vulnerable groups in lifestyle-related chronic diseases prevention improved	Number of trained professionals in life style related chronic diseases prevention	0	300	220
Local capacity for mental health improved	Number of local structures for mental health developed	0	3	3
Capacity of primary health care and other professionals in mental health improved	Number of trained primary health care and other professionals in mental health	0	100	395
Understanding of equal/unequal power relations between women and men in order to identify adequate responses to imbalances that persist in a gender-based power structure in society increased	Number of target audience reached (in %)	0	50	60
	Number of implemented policies (action plans, measures)	0	2	3
	Number of good practices identified and assessed	0	2	19
Understanding of equal/unequal power relations between women and men increased	Number of reports disseminated to target groups	0	500	2300
	Level of satisfaction (in %)	0	60	93
	Number of target audience reached using TV, radio spots and other means of communication (in %)	0	50	82
	Number of implemented policies (action plans, measures)	0	2	2
	Number of good practices identified and assessed	0	4	4

3.2.5.4 Potential risks that may threaten the achievement of the objectives set out in the Programmes

The projects under the Programme SI05 were completed by the end of December 2016. Despite the fact that the Programme Operator acted in accordance with provisions of the Regulation governing sustainability, and responded as rapidly and appropriately as possible to any situation that put the sustainability of project results at risk, we assessed that sustainability of project results was in some cases called into question. In terms of bilateral activities, the identified risk involves insufficient interest of target groups to participate in the activities. In order to reduce the risk, the Programme Operator should regularly inform all target groups of the funding opportunities concerning bilateral activities.

3.2.5.5 The need for adjustments of plans, including actions for risk mitigation

Adjustments of plans are not required.

3.2.5.6 The use of funds for bilateral relations

A call for proposals of bilateral activities under bilateral cooperation at the programme level worth EUR 104,000 was launched on 20 May 2016. Two types of activities were foreseen: 1/Type 1: participation of Slovenian representatives at conferences, seminars, workshops in Norway and 2/Type 2: organisation of bilateral conferences, seminars and workshops in Slovenia. The call for proposals was open for project promoters and had two application deadlines (i.e. 30 July 2016 and 30 September 2016). Seven proposals, of which five were suitable, responded to the call for proposals. The allocation made equalled EUR 40,130 for one activity of Type 1 and four activities of Type 2. Six suitable proposals were received under the second call for proposals whose allocated funding amounted to EUR 40,368 EUR for three activities of Type 1 and three activities of Type 2. Given that a portion of the funds made available remained unspent, the Cooperation Committee decided to approve the launch of another call for proposals of bilateral activities in 2017. The latter should be completed by the end of September 2017, and the reports on the implementation of bilateral activities checked and payments to project promoters made by the end of 2017.

SI05 - Bilateral indicators achieved by the end of 2015 (results of calls for proposals, study visits (Bilateral Fund) and pre-defined projects)

Indicator	Baseline	Target	Achieved
Number of project partnership agreements in beneficiary civil society	0	0	0
Number of project partnership agreements in the beneficiary private sector	0	0	0
Number of project partnership agreements in the beneficiary public sector	0	2	2
Number of projects with expected shared results (both partners are involved professionally in planning and implementation and can claim credit for achieved results)	0	2	18
Number of women involved in exchange visits between beneficiary and donor states	0	30	49
Number of men involved in exchange visits between beneficiary and donor states	0	25	20

Number of joint (bilateral) articles published, written by persons from both institutions in a beneficiary and donor state, published in national or international publications, originated from a project financed by the programme	0	4	9
Number of joint (bilateral) scientific papers written with co-researchers in at least one beneficiary and one donor state, and published in a national or international scientific publication, originated from a project financed by the programme	0	3	0
Number of new technologies/new practises, including IT-systems, adopted in a beneficiary state, as a result of transfer of knowledge from a donor state partner	0	2	2
Number of professional networks between institutions in beneficiary and donor states established and operational	0	1	2

Complementary action

Two meetings of Programme Operators under the Norwegian Financial Mechanism Programme bringing together Programme Operators from all Beneficiary States implementing the public health programme were held in 2016.

The meeting held in Vilnius (8-11 June 2016) focused on key mid-term evaluations of Norwegian Financial Mechanism Programme and EEA Financial Mechanism Programme and underlined priority areas and developments concerning programme implementation in the upcoming period. Representatives of Lithuania, host of the meeting, showcased four of their success stories.

The meeting held in Bucarest (23-25 November 2016) reviewed the implementation of the Norwegian Financial Mechanism Programme which achieved remarkable progress. Programme Operators discussed the status of implementation of their respective programmes and substantiated their findings by providing good practices at the project level.

4 MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION

4.1 Management and control systems

The management and control system for the EEA Financial Mechanism Programme 2009-2014 (SI02) was approved in 2014. There were no changes of the management and control system in 2016. A follow-up system audit will be carried out in January 2017.

The management and control system for the Norwegian Financial Mechanism Programme 2009-2014 (SI05) was approved in 2014. There were no changes of the management and control system in 2016. A follow-up system audit will be carried out in January 2017.

4.2 Compliance with EU legislation, national legislation and the MoU

The implementation of EEA and Norway Grants 2009–2014 has fully complied with EU legislation and national legislation, focusing on public procurement and eligibility of expenditures and the provisions of the Memorandum of Understanding. Furthermore, environmental legislation will be fully respected.

Controls of compliance with the legislative framework will be performed by the Programme Operators, in accordance with the provisions for controls set out in the description of management and control systems which was submitted in 2014.

4.3 Irregularities

Based on the performed audit verifying the eligibility of expenditure under the fifth and the sixth Interim Financial Report under the Programme SI04, the Budget Supervision Office (BSO) found the irregularities specified below.

The BSO detected ineligible expenditure in the amount of EUR 6,345.00 which occurred because the project promoter did not proportionally reduce the monthly subsistence allowances of students for a stay of less than 1.5 months. The project promoter reimbursed the faculties' actual accommodation costs incurred by their administrative and teaching staff, but declared subsistence allowances in the maximum value in its payment claims and retained the surplus.

The BSO recommended that Government Office for Development and European Cohesion Policy (GODC-NFP) draw up a claim and request reimbursement of ineligible expenditure totalling EUR 6,345.00. The BSO recommended CMEPIUS to re-examine all final reports of project promoters and eliminate from the certified payment claims the following ineligible expenditure: (1) over-calculated subsistence allowances for monthly stays of students for a period of less than 1.5 months and (2) subsistence allowances of administrative and teaching staff exceeding the actual accommodation costs paid by the faculties, and notify the GODC and the donors accordingly. The BSO also recommended that CMEPIUS specify in its instructions to project promoters in more detail the minimum duration of stay and reimbursement rules for stays shorter than one month, as well as the principles of eligibility for different types of expenditure.

GODC called on the Programme Operator CMEPIUS to provide clarification as to whether the amounts unduly paid were reimbursed and asked CMEPIUS to provide evidence of the reimbursement. The Programme Operator notified GODC that the three institutions reimbursed the amounts unduly paid and provided accompanying documentary evidence. Programme Operator for the Slovenian Scholarship Fund reviewed all final projects reports in accordance with the recommendations made by the BSO and found no other irregularities.

The BSO found that GODC had just deducted the ineligible expenditure from SI04 first, second and third Interim Financial Reports in the total value of EUR 9,365.00 from the value of eligible expenditure declared in the fifth Interim Financial Report. Hence, adequate audit trail of eligible expenditure in the fifth Interim Financial Report had not been ensured. The BSO recommended that, in the future, in the case of subsequently identified ineligible expenditure, the GODC should prepare a claim for reimbursement and perform the settlement and payment to the beneficiary accordingly.

GODC responded that BSO was wrong concluding that there was no audit trail of eligible expenditure in the fifth Interim Financial Report. The notification of performed examination of the fifth Interim Financial Report (No 5d) clearly shows that the Programme Operator had been paid the difference between the eligible expenditure and unjustified expenditure from the previous interim reports. A claim for reimbursement would make sense if the implementation of the relevant programme had ended, as such it only represents an additional and, in GODC's opinion, unnecessary burden for GODC and Programme Operator.

4.4 Audit, monitoring, review and evaluation

In December 2016, the Audit Authority (Budget Supervision Office of the Republic of Slovenia) issued the Fifth Annual Audit Report outlining the work done by the Audit Authority in the period from 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016:

- In the reporting period the Audit Authority performed a System Audit at the Certifying Authority – Ministry of Finance, Department for Management of EU Funds;

- In the period between 22 February 2016 and 15 March 2016 the Audit Authority performed a System Audit at the Programme Operator for the Programme SI04 – Centre of the Republic of Slovenia for Mobility and European Educational and Training Programmes;
- In the period between 4 April 2016 and 23 May 2016 the Audit Authority performed an audit of expenditure under fifth and sixth interim financial reports for the Programme SI04.

The 2017 Audit Plan was submitted to the Financial Mechanism Office and the National Focal Point on 12 January 2017. The Budget Supervision Office 2017 Work Plan includes the following:

- follow-up system audits at the National Focal Point and Programme Operator for Programmes SI02 and SI05, i.e. the Government Office for Development and European Cohesion Policy, European Territorial Cooperation and Financial Mechanism Office;
- follow-up system audits at the Certifying Authority for all programmes, i.e. the Ministry of Finance, Department for Management of EU Funds;
- follow-up system audits at the Programme Operator for the Programme SI04, i.e. the Centre of the Republic of Slovenia for Mobility and European Educational and Training Programmes;
- audits of expenditure at the project level. The sample of projects and respective expenditure will be chosen among interim financial reports on the basis of risk analysis of the expenditure incurred in the period between 1 May 2015 and 30 April 2016, declared in interim financial reports and submitted to the donor countries on or before 15 July 2016.

Indicative timetable for the implementation of audit assignments for the EEA and Norwegian Financial Mechanism:

Auditee	Function of the bodies	Type of audit	Period	Auditors	Planned audit days
GODC	NFP and PO for SI02 and SI05	Follow-up system audit	January–March	Valerija Rogelj, Božidar Hlebec	15
MF DMEUF	CA	Follow-up system audit	January–March	Valerija Rogelj, Božidar Hlebec	15
CMEPIUS	PO for SI04	Follow-up system audit	January–March	Valerija Rogelj, Božidar Hlebec	15
Not established yet ²	Project promoters	Audits of expenditure	April–June	Valerija Rogelj, Božidar Hlebec	70
/	/	Annual audit report with opinion	December	Božidar Hlebec	5
Total audit days:					120

In December 2016, the National Focal Point initiated the process of public procurement procedure for the evaluation of the programmes co-financed under the Norwegian Financial Mechanism

² Number of audited projects will be specified on the basis of assessment of functioning of management and control system.

Programme and the EEA Financial Mechanism Programme 2009–2014 (except for the NGO Fund which is directly contracted to the Financial Mechanism Office).

4.5 Information and publicity

Government Office for Development and European Cohesion Policy developed and updated the website (www.norwaygrants.si and www.eeagrants.si) which is available in Slovenian and English and provides information on the National Focal Point, specific programmes, relevant documents (including reports, guidelines and logos), latest news and upcoming events.

The redesigned website and updated Facebook profile EEA and Norway Grants Slovenia have upgraded available information with more links to different events, new photos, etc. The Facebook profile and website address are placed on the Government Office's website.

Government Office for Development and European Cohesion Policy (National Focal Point), in cooperation with CNVOS, REC and CMEPIUS held the Final event for the Norwegian and EEA Financial Mechanism 2009-2014 titled "Working Together Towards Common Goals" on 7 October 2016. The event was an occasion bringing together the stakeholders to share experience and disseminate results, and featured representatives of the Donor States. The closing event featured some of the projects that received support, while all the projects funded under both financial mechanisms are compiled in a publication of the same title as the final event Working Together Towards Common Goals.³ Furthermore, the Royal Norwegian Embassy in Budapest supported the shooting of a short promotional video of the final event, which was published on the website and Facebook profile.

A procurement procedure was launched to acquire promotional material. A promotional bag containing promotional items was distributed among participants at the final event.

The events foreseen in the scope of bilateral relations will be published on the dedicated website and Facebook profile.

The main communication and publicity activities to improve visibility of the Programme SI04 were as follows:

- promotion of the call for proposals for study visits on the Programme Operator's websites, Facebook page and other social media and at all events organised by CMEPIUS;
- SHARE workshop organised in cooperation with CNVOS (Programme Operator for NGOs), where the project promoters networked with project promoters of Erasmus+ and Europe for Citizens, shared good practices and held brainstorming sessions about the possible future co-operations and projects under one of the programmes;
- In December 2016, the Programme Operator awarded best projects under the Slovenian Scholarship Fund as part of the annual celebration of best lifelong learning projects (eTwinning and European Language Label). Three projects received the so-called Apple of Quality award.

4.6 Work plan

National Focal Point

1st quarter of 2017

- Evaluation;
- Monitoring Committee;
- Annual meeting with donors;

³ Available at: http://www.norwaygrants.si/wp-content/uploads/SODELUJEMO_ZA_SKUPNE_CILJE_web.pdf

- Reporting on irregularities;
- Preparations for programme closure;
- Preparations for the next financial period.

2nd quarter 2017

- Evaluation;
- Reporting on irregularities;
- Preparations for programme closure;
- Preparations for the next financial period.

3rd quarter 2017

- Evaluation;
- Reporting on irregularities;
- Preparations for programme closure.

4th quarter 2017

- Evaluation;
- Reporting on irregularities;
- Closure of the programmes.

Programme SI02 – EEA Financial Mechanism Programme

1st quarter 2017

- Project completion (checking of last interim reports and final reports);
- Final payments to project promoters;
- Implementation of bilateral activities.

2nd quarter 2017

- Project completion (checking of last interim reports and final reports);
- Final payments to project promoters;
- Implementation of bilateral activities.

3rd quarter 2017

- Project completion (checking of final reports);
- Final payments to project promoters;
- Implementation of bilateral activities.

4th quarter 2017

- Final payments (related to bilateral activities).

Programme SI05– Norwegian Financial Mechanism Programme

1st quarter 2016

- Project completion (checking of last interim reports and final reports);
- Final payments to project promoters;
- Implementation of bilateral activities.

2nd quarter 2016

- Cooperation Committee meeting (end of May 2017);
- Project completion (checking of last interim reports and final reports);
- Final payments to project promoters;
- Implementation of bilateral activities.

3rd quarter 2016

- Project completion (checking of final reports);
- Final payments to project promoters;
- Implementation of bilateral activities.

4th quarter 2016

- Final payments (related to bilateral activities) to project promoters.

5 SUMMARY LIST OF ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The following issues and/or recommendations concerning management and control of EEA and Norway Grants 2009–2014 in Slovenia have been identified in 2016:

Bilateral cooperation under two of the Programmes, notably the Programme SI02, areas Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services and Natural Heritage, faced several challenges. The Programme Operator had considerable problems providing experts that would participate in an international conference on the relevant area. Similar problems hindered the organisation of a study visit. We are fully aware that there are only three donor countries as opposed to a number of beneficiary countries. However, we do believe that sharing of experience and good practices in identified areas of cooperation makes an important contribution to the development or even upgrade of a certain area, and to the strengthening of inter-institutional cooperation and of bilateral cooperation per se.

Human resources management is important for effective implementation, and a shortage of staff and unforeseen changes put efficient implementation at considerable risk. Each phase of implementation of the EEA and Norwegian Financial Mechanism requires an adequate number of appropriately skilled staff to carry out the required tasks. It is also important to have the support of all the supporting services within the office (i.e. the legal department, public procurement department, IT department, etc.).

6 ATTACHMENTS TO THE STRATEGIC REPORT

Attachments for each Programme

1. Monitoring Plan, see section 7.3 in the Programme Operators' Manual
2. Risk assessment of the Programme.

Annex: Risk assessment at the national level

Relevance to Grants ⁴	Description of risk	Likelihood ⁵ [1-4]	Consequence ⁶ [1-4]	Mitigation
Cohesion objective	Lack of sustainability	2	1	Plan to monitor the projects after the closure
Bilateral objective	Strengthening long-term bilateral cooperation between Slovenia and donor countries	1	1	Increase cooperation with the donor countries institutions
Operational issues	Shortage of staff and staff turnover	2	1	Flexibility in assuring human resources in terms of quantity and skills according to actual needs Adequate reorganisation and education of staff

⁴ The risks should be categorised in one of 3 ways, depending on whether the cohesion or bilateral objective is at risk, or whether the risk is more of an operational issue.

⁵ 4 = Almost certain (75 – 99% likelihood); 3 = Likely (50 – 74%); 2 = Possible (25 – 49%); 1 = Unlikely (1 – 24%)

⁶ The aim is to assess whether the risk could make a particular programme fail to meet its expected results. The following scores and descriptors can be used with respect to consequence: 4 = severe; 3 = major; 2 = moderate; 1 = minor; n/a = not relevant or insignificant.

Annex: Risk assessment of the programme

Programme SI02 and SI05	Type of objective ⁷	Description of risk	Likelihood ⁸	Consequence ⁹	Mitigation planned/done
	Cohesion (Programme) outcomes:	Lack of sustainability of projects' results	2	2	Rapid response to identified risk and situations and adequate response to them by the Programme Operator
	Bilateral outcome(s):	Insufficient interest of target groups to be involved in bilateral activities	2	2	Systematic and regular information of key target groups
	Operational issues:	/	/	/	/

Programme SI03	Type of objective ¹⁰	Description of risk	Likelihood ¹¹	Consequence ¹²	Mitigation planned/done
	Cohesion (Programme) outcomes:	Non-achievement of OUTCOME 1: Active citizenship fostered	1	Moderate: Difficulties reaching the outcome	Extensive capacity building activities: Individual assistance, on-spot assistance, thematic workshops of beneficiaries; promotion through communication activities of Fund Operator
		Non-achievement of OUTCOME 2: Cross-sectoral partnerships developed, particularly with Government institutions at local, regional and/or national level	2	Moderate: Difficulties reaching the outcome	Extensive capacity building activities: Individual assistance, on-spot assistance, thematic workshops of beneficiaries; promotion through communication activities of Fund

⁷ The risks should be categorised in one of 3 ways, depending on whether the cohesion or bilateral objective is at risk, or whether the risk is more of an operational issue

⁸ Each risk should be described as to whether it poses a risk to the cohesion outcomes (programme outcomes), the bilateral outcome or crucial operational issues 4 = Almost certain (75 – 99% likelihood); 3 = Likely (50 – 74%); 2 = Possible (25 – 49%); 1 = Unlikely (1 – 24%)

⁹ Assess the consequence(s) in the event that the outcomes and/or crucial operations are not delivered, where 4 = severe; 3 = major; 2 = moderate; 1 = minor; n/a = not relevant or insignificant.

¹⁰ The risks should be categorised in one of 3 ways, depending on whether the cohesion or bilateral objective is at risk, or whether the risk is more of an operational issue.

¹¹ Each risk should be described as to whether it poses a risk to the cohesion outcomes (programme outcomes), the bilateral outcome or crucial operational issues 4 = Almost certain (75 – 99% likelihood); 3 = Likely (50 – 74%); 2 = Possible (25 – 49%); 1 = Unlikely (1 – 24%)

¹² Assess the consequence(s) in the event that the outcomes and/or crucial operations are not delivered, where 4 = severe; 3 = major; 2 = moderate; 1 = minor; n/a = not relevant or insignificant.

					Operator
		Non-achievement of OUTCOME 3: advocacy and watchdog role developed	1	Moderate: Difficulties reaching the outcome	Extensive capacity building activities: Individual assistance, on-spot assistance, thematic workshops of beneficiaries, additional capacity building workshop for monitoring and advocacy if needed
		Non-achievement of OUTCOME 4: Developed networks and coalitions of NGOs working in partnership	1	Moderate: Difficulties reaching the outcome	Extensive capacity building activities: Individual assistance, on-spot assistance, thematic workshops of beneficiaries
		Non-achievement of OUTCOME 5: Empowerment of vulnerable groups	2	Moderate: Difficulties reaching the outcome	Extensive capacity building activities: Individual assistance, on-spot assistance, thematic workshops of beneficiaries; promotion through communication activities of Fund Operator
	Bilateral outcome(s):	Lack of interest for donor project partnerships	2	Major: Bilateral cooperation not fostered, missed opportunity for cooperation with EEA countries	Organisation of launch event with at least 18 EEA NGOs, promotion of the skype conference – dating agency, active facilitation of partnerships, cooperation with Norwegian Helsinki Committee, motivation in project documentation, funds available for partnership projects
	Operational issues:	Problems with time management concerning programme implementation	3	Moderate: Delays in publication of calls for proposals, evaluation and signing of the contracts, lower quality of capacity building activities	Regular meetings of the consortium, regular checking of the timetable, mutual assistance between the partners
		Low management costs vs high oversubscription	2	Major: There is a risk of overspending management costs, if re-allocation is not allowed.	Proposal for budget re-allocation with clear explanation of the situation will be sent to Financial Mechanism Office
		Low interest of journalist for NGO stories	2	Moderate: Projects, project promoters and NGO Programme not enough presented and known to the general public	Regular contacts with journalists, selection and preparation of interesting cases and articles

		Lack of interest for capacity building activities	2	Moderate: Project applications not in line with programme outcomes and outputs, lower quality of project applications, missed opportunities to share experience with other project promoters	Broad promotion (newsletter, website, FB) and presentation of benefits of capacity building activities
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Programme SI04	Type of objective ¹³	Description of risk	Likelihood ¹⁴	Consequence ¹⁵	Mitigation planned/done
Slovenian Scholarship Fund	Cohesion (Programme) outcomes:				
	Increased higher education student and staff mobility between Beneficiary and EEA EFTA States	<i>Lack of interest from eligible institutions</i>	2	4	Promotional/Motivation activities far in advance, organised support to institutions during application phase in time, enough time between publication of Calls and application deadline
		<i>Lack of interest from individuals</i>	2	5	Information/Promotion activities Monitoring of the beneficiary
		<i>Poor quality of applications / projects</i>	3	3	Training workshops before deadlines with presentation of the call, application form Instructions on “how to fill out an application” E-mail and phone help-desk Individual support for Measure 3
		<i>Poor implementation / management of awarded projects/activities</i>	2	2	Organised support to implementing institutions, regular reporting, monitoring activities (meetings, on-the-spot visits, phone calls) On time reporting about difficulties from PP’s
	Increased and strengthened institutional cooperation at all	<i>Lack of interest from eligible institutions</i>	1	2	Promotional/Motivation activities far in advance, organised support to institutions during application phase in time, enough time between publication of Calls and application deadline

¹³ The risks should be categorised in one of 3 ways, depending on whether it poses a risk to the cohesion objective, the bilateral objective, or is more of an operational issue.

¹⁴ Each risk should be described as to whether it poses a risk to the cohesion outcomes (programme outcomes), the bilateral outcome or crucial operational issues 4 = Almost certain (75 – 99% likelihood); 3 = Likely (50 – 74%); 2 = Possible (25 – 49%); 1 = Unlikely (1 – 24%)

¹⁵ Assess the consequence(s) in the event that the outcomes and/or crucial operations are not delivered, where 4 = severe; 3 = major; 2 = moderate; 1 = minor; n/a = not relevant or insignificant.

	levels of education sector between Beneficiary and EEA EFTA States				
		<i>Poor quality of applications / projects</i>	1	2	Training workshops before deadlines with presentation of the call, application form Instructions on “how to fill out an application” E-mail and phone help-desk
		<i>Insufficient dissemination of results</i>	3	3	Contractual obligation for beneficiaries Thematic workshop organised Handbook on dissemination distributed Organized events – SHARE/DELI Use of study visits
		<i>Lack of sustainability</i>	3	4	Information to beneficiaries regarding different possibilities for long term cooperation E+ Encouragement of beneficiaries for establishment of bilateral agreements Identification and exchange of good practices – DELI/SHARE events Use of study visits
	Increased mobility of education sector staff at all levels of education between Beneficiary and EEA EFTA States	<i>Lack of interest from eligible institutions/organisations</i>	2	2	Direct promotion via established channels Allocation of funds
		<i>Poor quality of applications / projects</i>	2	3	Training workshops before deadlines with presentation of the call, application form Instructions on “how to fill-out an application” E-mail and phone help-desk Individual support for Measure 3
Slovenian Scholarship Fund	Bilateral outcome(s):				
	New bilateral agreements and cooperation established	<i>Lack of interest from eligible institutions/organisations</i>	2	4	Promotion/Motivation activities far in advance, organised support to institutions/individuals during application phase in time, enough time before publication of Call 2015 and application deadline
		<i>Poor quality of applications / projects</i>	3	3	Instructions on “how to fill out an application” E-mail and phone help-desk
		<i>Lack of sustainability</i>	3	4	Information to beneficiaries regarding different possibilities for long term cooperation Encouragement of beneficiaries for establishment of bilateral agreements Identification and exchange of good practices

					Use of study visits
Slovenian Scholarship Fund	Operational issues:	Staff turnover	2	4	Established back-up team Suitable personal staff
		Re-allocation of funds	2	4	Desk check of all interim and final reports > committing projects on the reserve list, transfer of funds to other measures On-time response Communication with the Financial Mechanism Office

Monitoring plan

Programme SI02, SI05	Monitoring action	Planned timing	Criteria for monitoring	Potential risk	Comments
	/	/	/	/	/

SI04

There is one midterm report and one final report for all projects obligatory in accordance with contractual obligations of project promoters concerning reporting. The Programme Operator regularly carries out monitoring visits, on-the-spot checks, desk-checks of the documentation and offers consultancy over the phone, e-mail or in person.

An IT tool for project management named Mobius was introduced for the purpose of regular monitoring of projects. Detailed information on indicators, outputs and outcomes of each project is entered into the tool with the aim of facilitating monitoring and reporting.

Type of Measure	Analysis of final reports	Desk-check of supporting material		On-the-spot check during the action		On-the-spot check (audit) upon completion	
	Frequency	Frequency	Minimum N°	Frequency	Minimum N°	Frequency	Minimum N°
Preparatory Visits	100%	10%	10	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Mobility in HE	100%	10%	10	5%	3	5%	1
Mobility in non HE	100%	10%	10	5%	3	5%	1
Cooperation projects in HE	100%	10%	10	5%	3	5%	1
Cooperation projects in education/training	100%	10%	10	5%	3	5%	1