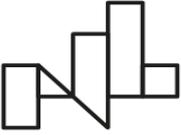


Iceland 
Liechtenstein
Norway grants

EEA Financial Mechanism 2014-2021

Strategic Report 2021-2022 for Greece



HELLENIC REPUBLIC
MINISTRY OF
DEVELOPMENT AND INVESTMENTS

General Secretariat for Public Investments & the NSRF
Special Service EEA Grants - National Focal Point

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1. Executive summary

As per Art. 2.6 of the EEA Grants Regulation 2014-2021, the National Focal Point submits by the present document the Strategic Report of the EEA Grants 2014-2021 in Greece for the reporting period from November 2021 to October 2022.

The Strategic Report is following the Regulation Annex template and its foreseen sections, as follows:

Political, economic and social context section presents the overview of the political, economic and social status and developments in Greece in the reference period. Greece, in the past year, had not any major political changes, but was affected like all countries in Europe and worldwide by the pandemic at both social and economic level. At the same time, it was a year of substantial progress in the setup of financial mechanisms and tools for the years ahead.

Effects of the Grants section presents the overall anticipated effects in the funding period of the Grants in their sectorial interventions and at the national level. Each Programme and the Bilateral Fund are designed to contribute to the overall objectives of the EEA Grants for the reduction of social and economic disparities and the strengthening of the bilateral relations. In the reference period implementation has kick-started and made its initial project contracts and steps, thus forming the base for the effects and results to unfold in the next years.

Status of Programmes section presents the status and the developments for each programme separately. All programmes operated by Greek national authorities were into the implementation phase with project contracts issued for all their projects. In most cases, the year in reference was a period of preparation for their public procurement.

Status of the Bilateral Funds section presents, under the approval of the JCBF, the developments of the Bilateral Fund. In the reporting period, NFP in coordination with the JCBF published an open call and 4 initiatives were selected in this context by October 2022. Also, 2 projects were selected as a response to the Ukraine war and finally the bilateral allocation to the programmes implanted by Fund Operators was streamlined through respective projects.

Management and implementation section presents the activities related to the Management and Control System at the national level and of the associated Manual of Procedures. All procedures foreseen in the MCS such as monitoring, controls, public procurements, verifications, financing, reporting and IFRs, irregularities and audits were implemented as applicable.

Communication section presents the progress and developments in the implementation of the Communication strategy at the national level. Activities included inter alia networking, cooperation and training between the different entities and staff related to the Grants, continuous and dynamic presence in the social media, participation to Thessaloniki International Fair, the most important exhibition event in Greece and a major annual political milestone.

Monitoring section presents the main responsibilities and tasks of the NFP in monitoring progress of programmes, bilateral fund and technical assistance.

Annexes section presents further information on risk assessment and mitigation, the Technical Assistance implementation and organizational issues related to NFP and the national level authorities.

The issues to be discussed at the Annual meeting, scheduled to be held on 16 November 2022 reflect the issues of the respective sections of the current Strategic Report.

2. Political, economic and social context

During the period covered by this report, Greece has experienced a stable political environment with no major changes. The 14th Enhanced Surveillance Report (prepared in the context of the enhanced surveillance framework for the delivery of Greece's reform commitments following the completion of the financial assistance programme in 2018) acknowledged Greece's progress in achieving the targets set in 2018 and in June 2022, the Eurogroup welcomed the country in its normal European Semester procedures.

However, whereas the country was returning to normality, achieving high rates of GDP growth and cautiously reopening the economy after the first waves of covid-19, the geopolitical situation was worsening. Russia's undeclared war to Ukraine in February led to a worldwide economic, geopolitical and humanitarian crisis. Simultaneously, Turkey escalated long-running tensions over the Aegean, triggering public discussions for a possible aggressive incident.

According to both the Institute of Economic and Industrial Studies¹ and the Parliament's Budget Office², geopolitical tensions keep uncertainty very high and lead to intense fiscal pressures both on the revenue side (due to economic slowdown and the pressure on supply chains) and on the expenditure side (pressure to cover energy costs). Rising inflation puts pressure on consumption for households; combined with heightened risk aversion and sharp rise in interest rates it makes more cautious investors and threatens those with high debts – a serious problem in Greece despite recent progress in NPL management. The generalized slowing of economies makes it difficult to increase exports, despite the weakening of the Euro. The problems will be more intense in Europe where the massive wave of refugees, the review of defense strategies and the effort to limit dependence on natural gas from Russia will cause an additional burden on state budgets.

All the above found Greece still weak and with less room for fiscal maneuver than its European partners: The unprecedented expansionary policies implemented to deal with the pandemic have caused a cumulative fiscal deterioration of the order of 30 billion euros. The combination of reduced tax revenues and increased spending, although necessary in the emergency, is not sustainable in the medium term. The size of the primary deficit of the general government and the public debt, combined with the absence of investment grade, make the Greek government bonds particularly vulnerable to potential disturbances in the financial markets, despite the support from the ECB.

On the other hand, though, Greece has experienced a period of sustained growth and is forecast to remain on a virtuous path in the coming years. According to the Spring forecast of the European Commission³ GDP growth, not least sustained by the remarkable increase in revenues from tourism, is to reach 3,5% in 2022 and lower to 3,1% in 2023. This has roughly offset the sharp decline of -9% of 2019 and allowed for a remarkable reduction of public debt. Employment rate is likely to further decline although higher than the Eurozone average (13,7%, compared to 6,8% in the Eurozone⁴):

Indicators	2020	2021	2022	2023
GDP growth (% , yoy)	-9,0	8,3	3,5	3,1
Inflation (% , yoy)	-1,3	0,6	6,3	1,9

¹ [Report on the Greek Economy, July 2022](#) in Greek.

² [Report on the first trimester 2022, June 2022](#) in Greek.

³ [EC Spring 2022 economic forecast for Greece](#).

⁴ The [total employment rate](#), too, remains significantly weak in Greece: it is calculated at 62,6%, when the EU average is 71,3%. Women's employment rate is 20 percentage points lower than men's (52% vs 72%).

Indicators	2020	2021	2022	2023
Unemployment (%)	17,6	14,7	13,7	13,1
General government balance (% of GDP)	-10,2	-7,4	-4,3	-1,0
Gross public debt (% of GDP)	206,3	193,3	185,7	180,4
Current account balance (% of GDP)	-7,9	-8,3	-8,4	-6,4

Source: [EC Spring 2022 economic forecast for Greece](#)

European funds represent the main investment resource for Greece. The new law governing the deployment of the Structural and Resilience Funds 2021-2027 as well as the Agricultural Fund was adopted in early 2022 and programmes are being agreed with the European Commission:

Recovery and Resilience Fund (RRF)	€ 31,6 bn (first tranche € 3,6 bn disbursed in April). The total has to be earmarked by 2023 at the latest and spent by 2025.
Development Plan for the Greek Economy (Structural and Investment Funds) 2021-2027	€ 20,9 bn (or € 26,2 incl. national contribution). The programmes are being agreed this summer/autumn)
European agricultural fund for rural development 2021-2027	€ 19,36 bn
EEA Grants 2014-2021	€ 116,7 million (without the national contribution)

FDI is also restarting in the country, above the Eurozone average⁵, at 1,7% in 2020 (EU: 2,1%, Eurozone: 0,7%). However, total investments remain significantly lower than the EU average⁶, at 12,9% of GDP 2021.

GDP/capita in PPS for 2021 is among the lowest in the Eurozone at 65% (EU 27, 2020 = 100) when the Eurozone average is 105%; so is nominal labour productivity at 69% (Eurozone average is 104,8% (EU 27, 2020 = 100).

Closer to the EEA Grants interventions, we have witnessed a sharp decrease in the number of persons subject to pending asylum applications (25.310 in May 2022, down from 49.235 in July 2021), while the average number of arrivals remained stable⁷, at 967 in June 2022 (compare with 309 – the lowest- in January 2022 and 617 in July 2021). According to the Hellenic Police, in May 2022 there were 27,280 Ukrainian refugees in Greece⁸.

The number of Roma people in Greece is not clear: The Council of Europe estimates that there are approximately 265,000 Roma living in Greece (2.47% of the population, 2015), whereas the European Commission's factsheet refers to approximately 175 000 (data from 2012), or i.e. 1.55 % of the population⁹. In April 2022 Greece adopted the National Strategy for Social Inclusion (ESKE) Roma 2021-

⁵ The World Bank, [Foreign Direct Investments, net inflows, % of GDP](#).

⁶ [According to Eurostat](#), Gross fixed capital formation for 2021 was at 12,9% of GDP up from 11,7% in 2020, while in the EU it was 21,9% for both years.

⁷ Combined data from IOM, [Flow monitoring, migration flows to Europe](#), and Eurostat, [Persons subject of asylum applications pending at the end of the month- monthly data](#)

⁸ [Over 27,280 Ukrainian refugees in Greece](#), www.e-kathimerini.com

⁹ European Commission, [EU Funding for Roma integration](#).

2030¹⁰. The ESKE-Roma defines the national priorities and objectives, policy measures and institutional interventions for the equality, inclusion and participation of Roma at national, local and regional level, in terms of:

- the prevention and fight against poverty and social exclusion of the Roma (PILLAR I)
- strengthening Roma's equal access to basic services and goods (education, employment, health, social care and housing) (PILLAR II).
- preventing and combating stereotypes and discrimination against the Roma (PILLAR III).
- promoting the active participation of Roma in social, economic and political life (PILLAR IV).

The EEA Grants Programme “Roma inclusion and empowerment” is at the cornerstone of the ESKE-Roma; indeed, it represents a pilot programme to be deployed in other geographical areas in the future.

Concerning the environment, the European shift towards environmentally friendly and diversified energy sources seems intensified due to the collapse of the collaboration with Russia; the EEA Grants programmes for Water management and Renewable Energy are contributing to this aim. Especially investments in the energy sector are booming¹¹.

Last but not least, boosted by the Covid pandemic and long overdue, the digitalization of the public sector is becoming a reality: the last two years, 8,051,700 individuals have issued at least one document or submitted an electronic declaration through gov.gr; individual visits by citizens to gov.gr resulting in the issuance of at least one document or the submission of an electronic declaration: 207.451.971. It is not an exaggeration to say that this is a quiet digital revolution, to the benefit of all¹².

¹⁰ See: <https://ypergasias.gov.gr/i-nea-ethniki-stratigiki-gia-tin-koinoniki-entaxi-ton-roma-vimata-brosta-gia-mia-syberiliptiki-koinonia/>, in Greek.

¹¹ For more detail, see [International Energy Association: Greece](#) (energy) and [European Committee of the Regions, Greece: water management](#).

¹² See: <https://www.gov.gr/updates/statistics/nees-uperesies-ioulios-2022>, in Greek, last data from July 2022.

3. Effects of the Grants

Effects of the EEA Grants at the strategic level are identified in the time horizon of the funding period FM 2014-2021 as well as in the total period of the financial mechanism implementation in Greece, since 1994. These effects may interact, conform, adopt and contribute to the developments and to unforeseen situations in the country and beyond as they unfold during the period. In the reporting period the effects of the grants have been gradually iterated in terms of implementation and communicated. The presentation of the Grants in the context of Thessaloniki International Fair this year gives a significant opportunity for awareness of their objectives, anticipated results and effects.

Since the commencement of the EEA Financial Mechanism in 1994, Greece has been a beneficiary state continuously and the effects of its presence and implementation in the country in the previous funding periods, in terms of results, institutional framework, national authorities, donor partners and stakeholders' networking as well as in terms of communication and publicity, constitute a substantial basis on which to develop the EEA Grants period 2014-2021.

For the EEA Grants 2014-2021 period, critical sectors have been selected for the programme interventions, to reflect the interests of both the Donor countries and of Greece as the Beneficiary country. Further to the thematic area 16 for "Good Governance, Accountable Institutions, Transparency", which is instructed by the EEA Grants for intervention in all beneficiary countries, 4 other thematic areas have been selected, to be funded through programmes implemented by the Greek authorities and it is anticipated that these programmes will have significant impact to their respective sectors. Additionally the Bilateral Fund at the national level is expected to have a significant impact, in the objectives of reducing social and economic disparities and strengthening the bilateral relations. In particular, the effect of each programme is anticipated to be as follows:

Programme B for Roma Inclusion and Empowerment aims to address the most acute housing challenges of Roma population in Greece within a holistic framework in a pilot project. Housing is one of the key priority areas identified by Council Recommendation of December 2013 on effective Roma integration measures in the EU Member States, which also include employment, education and health, as well as the promotion of equal treatment and the respect of fundamental rights of Roma. The programme focus on housing was selected because it affects critically the access to regular attendance and attainment in education, as well as providing the conditions for living in a healthy environment. Furthermore, it impacts the employment opportunities and potential for entrepreneurship. The housing project of the programme will be located in the municipality of Katerini, it will contribute locally to the benefit of both the Roma and the general population and it will serve as a pilot intervention which is expected to offer valuable know how, experience and lessons learned for future respective interventions in the country. In addition to the housing project, the implementation of a Task force Unit in areas of high concentration of Roma populations will ensure the effective implementation of the national strategy of Roma inclusion as it will partake in the support of local government and the activation of the Roma population in all policy – measures concerning social inclusion (housing, education, employment, health, empowerment, etc.). Additional activities funded by the reserve resources already allocated to the programme will contribute further to the objectives of the programme and to its greater impact and effect.

The timely and smooth implementation of the programme is of utmost importance; the NFP and the PO are monitoring it closely in order to prevent any further delays.

Programme D for Water Management addresses the need to improve the environmental status of water ecosystems by supporting the rational use of water mainly in vulnerable areas and islands. It is expected to provide drinking water to vulnerable areas and islands and technologies for water leakages in water grids. In addition, the programme will finance research studies, which will provide with data and solutions for the improvement of the status of water bodies or improvement of water management. The

programme will fund awareness campaigns highlighting the water problems and the importance of improving the status of water bodies.

At the same time, bilateral relations with donor state entities will be strengthened by having donor partners in projects and by activities organized in the context of the bilateral fund budget allocated to the programme. Additional projects funded by the reserve resources allocated to the programme in the current reporting period will contribute further to the objectives of the programme and to its greater impact and effect.

This programme is implemented without serious delays or difficulties. Its impact is important in the sense that it is targeted to geographical areas with significant problems regarding water management.

Programme E for Renewable Energy, Energy Efficiency aims to promote Renewable Energy Sources and Energy Efficiency and substantially contributes to the implementation of a balanced development framework that creates high added value and prospects for the local economy, while familiarising residents with sustainable practices which improve their quality of life.

The programme will support all three pillars of sustainability, i.e. the economic, social, and environmental pillars, thus increasing the general welfare of their respective communities. Apart from their direct positive environmental impact, the projects will enhance social sustainability by applying Renewable Energy Sources and Energy Efficiency solutions to promote sustainable living in the local communities. All chosen projects will reinforce the local economy of their communities by providing work to local contractors, during times of adverse economic climate. At the same time, the chosen projects will promote economic sustainability, as project promoters will save energy for their public buildings and infrastructures every year. Additional projects funded by the reserve resources allocated to the programme in the current reporting period will contribute further to the objectives of the programme and to its greater impact and effect.

The energy crisis that the world is experiencing now makes the relevance of this programme even more evident. As it is being implemented, it helps both to mitigate the effects of the crisis and to move towards greener energy sources.

Programme F for Good Governance, Accountable Institutions and Transparency will significantly and directly contribute to the integrity, transparency, accountability and effectiveness of public administration. Through the proposed actions, direct citizen access to public administration will be improved, technological modernization of public administration and reduction of bureaucracy will be enhanced. The proposed reform actions concerning the reduction of bureaucracy and the technological modernization of public administration are in line with the anti-corruption transparency and integrity actions of the Programme. Finally, actions to reduce maladministration and enhance management concerning citizens' problems will contribute and reinforce the objectives and effects of the programme.

This is an important programme that may need some budget adjustments in order to reach its full potential. The PO and the NFP are working closely in order to explore the options.

Programme G for Asylum and Migration aims to ensuring well-functioning national asylum and migration management systems while at the same time assisting asylum seekers to exercise basic rights. The target group focuses to Third Country Nationals arriving at Greek territory with emphasis placed on unaccompanied minors and vulnerable groups. Moreover, the programme contributes to strengthening the bilateral relations among national institutions playing key roles in the field of asylum and migration and Donor States partners. Most of the predefined projects will be implemented in close cooperation with donor project partners, such as the Norwegian Directorate of Immigration (UDI), the Norwegian Immigration Appeals Board (UTLENDINGSNEMNDA-UNE), the Norwegian Ministry of Justice and Public Security as well as the Directorate of Integration and Diversity (IMDI).

After careful study, the programme is in the process of revision in order to ensure the best absorption and a timely implementation; there may be a need for future adjustments in the course of the year.

4. Status of programmes

In the reporting period from November 2021 to October 2022, programmes operated by Greek national authorities, were into implementation phase. Project contracts were issued for all projects and consequently they started preparation and procedures for public procurement and in house implementation. In this period, the majority of the Grants showed progress according to their design and timeline, while there are cases, which face delays and challenges to be addressed and recovered.

The NFP in accordance with the PO has initiated a series of revisions and consequent adjustments, in order to increase both absorption and impact.

The status and developments per Programme in the reporting period are as follows:

Programme B – Roma Inclusion and Empowerment

Programme Operator: Executive Authority (“Special Service - Executive Structure NSRF”), Division of Employment and Social Economy, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs	Modalities: 2 predefined projects, 3 small grant schemes and bilateral activities
IPO: European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (EU FRA)	Budget: 7ME (EEA Grants: 5ME, National co financing 2ME). Additional allocation from the reserve 700KE to be included in modification of PA (EEA Grants reserve 500KE, National co financing: 200KE)
National Programme Partner: General Secretariat for Social Solidarity and Fight Against Poverty (General Secretariat for Social Solidarity), Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs	

Predefined Project 1: "Task Force Units supporting Roma inclusion and empowerment"

In the previous reporting period, the procedure to setup the Task Force had a significant progress. In this period, the Task Force launched in full operation after the confirmation of the final selection results in November 2021 and the contracts with the 25 members of the Task Force Units in December 2021. All of the Task Force members participated –as observers– in the 2nd CC, which was held via teleconference on 9 February 2022. At the meantime, on 30 November 2021 the Project Promoter released a 2nd call for tender for car leasing, as the 1st call since on 28 May 2021 didn't receive any bids. The new call for tender has turned fruitful and a contract was signed. Overall, the Project Promoter for the PDP1 has contracted for all tenders that were issued to support the operation of Task Force (for equipped and furnished offices, office supplies, consumables, and the technical assistance of the Project Promoter as well). On 8-9 June 2022 the first training session for all the Task Force Units was held in Athens.

Predefined Project 2: "Integrated pilot social housing relocation scheme for Roma inclusion"

The infrastructure projects, to be financed exclusively by the national resources, have been included in the Public Investment Program with a budget of 2.700.000 euros. Within this framework, Municipality of Katerini, as the Project Promoter of the PDP 2, issued a call for proposals with the view to contract with an external entity. On 1 February 2022 a technical expert was assigned to carry out the technical studies for the public infrastructure works and the preparation of the location, in which the housing relocation for the beneficiary Roma population will be installed.

As a result, it was found that the soil and the underground of the relocation place needs extra infrastructure measures to get more solid. By September 2022 the Project Promoter of the PDP2 is in the

pursuit for additional resources to support the necessary technical works.

Additionally to the infrastructure actions, other activities were also carried out. The Municipality of Katerini updated and confirmed the list of Roma families that are the beneficiaries of the relocation.

Also, a detailed questionnaire was drafted by the Roma Branch officers, the General Secretariat for Solidarity and fight against Poverty, the IPO and the PO and was disseminated to the beneficiaries with the aim to inform them about the Programme and assess their needs and expectations. Furthermore, the municipal authority has established a public bus line, which reaches the Roma settlement area, connects it with the town, and is used for the daily transportation of the Roma students to school. The Programme's Strategic Partner (General Secretariat for Social Solidarity & Fight against Poverty) visited Katerini in October 2021 and held meetings with the Roma population and the local authorities. Finally, the Roma Branch of the Municipality of Katerini has been active in providing services to Roma people in four thematic areas: health, education, social inclusion and employment & access to the labour market.

Small Grant Schemes

By the end of 2021 the Programme Operator started the elaboration of the calls for the Small Grant Scheme 1 and 2. For the formulation of the call actions and the selection and evaluation criteria a structured consultation process was organized by the Secretariat General of Social Solidarity and Fight against Poverty in cooperation with the Programme Operator according to the "focus group methodology" (suggested by the IPO's practice) and with the participation of numerous Roma NGOs. There has, also, been a close cooperation with the IPO, whose consultancy was very helpful. The Programme Operator completed the call text and the evaluation and selection criteria and in July 2022 the call for the SGS1 was published. Also, by September 2022 the call for the SGS2 and SGS3 are in the final phase of elaboration.

Bilateral Initiatives

The bilateral initiatives have not been activated yet.

Programme level & Management Cost (including MoU special concerns and PA conditions)

In the previous reporting period, there was a MoU modification for the allocation of funds from the reserve to programmes, including the Roma programme. In this line, additional funds of 700.000 euros were allocated to the programme, out of which 500.000€ are granted by EEA FM and 200,000€ will be national resources. Subsequently, during the current reporting period, there was an extensive discussion between FMO and PO for the additional activities and the respective modification of the Programme Agreement. The modification was concluded with the adoption of the Programme Agreement on 19 July 2022. By September 2022, the modification is imminent to be published in the Official Gazette.

Regarding the Management Cost, the Programme Operator has signed the foreseen contracts. The last pending contract is the one with external consultants/chartered accountants for the expenditure's verification.

The Programme Operator submitted 2 IFRs regarding the progress accomplished and the grants used within the reference period according to the Regulation. The Programme Operator organized the 2nd Cooperation Committee on 9 February 2022, which was, also, held via teleconference with simultaneous Greek / English interpretation.

As regards to the Management and Control System at the programme level, the Programme received opinion and approval from the Audit Authority on 10 November 2021. In the context of monitoring, the

Programme Operator is in regular contact with the Project Promoters of the PDP1 & PDP2, on weekly basis or several times per week depending on the issues emerged.

Cooperation with IPOs, DPP and NPP

The Programme Operator has a close and frequent communication with the representative of FRA that is the IPO for the Programme. The Programme Operator has followed the IPO's recommendations and suggestions of good practice (e.g. the focus group methodology, the consultation with the Roma NGO's and entities). In addition, the Programme Operator has asked for IPO's expertise on drafting the call for SGS3.

Communication

The Programme Operator has a new contract with a consultancy vendor for communication and publicity activities. All news, call texts (at programme and project level), press releases and any information related to the Programme are published on the official website. The Programme Operator regularly participates to the communication group sessions by the NFP and exchanges useful best practices and recommendations. On 6 June 2022 the first dissemination event took place with the participation of all the stakeholders and online projection on YouTube. The event was recorded and there was simultaneous interpretation into English.

Next steps- planning for the year ahead

As regards to PDP2, a study is expected, by September 2022, in order to define the necessary soil remediation actions. The study will also update the budget needs, an update which will define the necessary additional funds. Also, due to the recent price increases, a study is conducted to update the budgetary needs regarding the supply and allocation of the Roma housing. The respective contracts are expected to be signed in the next reporting period. Roma beneficiaries relocation is expected to take place until November 2023. At the same time, actions to facilitate the relocation of the beneficiaries will take place, as foreseen.

Finally, additional activities included in the Programme Agreement modification to reinforce PDP2 will come into force. Simultaneously, the Programme Operator has already published the SGS1 call, which is expected to conclude by the end of 2022 and to implement throughout until the end of the programme. The Programme Operator will publish an open call and start implementation for both SGS2 and SGS3, by the end of year 2022 and until the end of 2023.

Table 1: Financial progress of the programme

PDP/OPEN CALL/SMALL GRANT SCHEME/BILATERAL INITIATIVE/MANAGEMENT COST	Project title	Grant	Incurred expenditure
PDP 1	Task Force Units supporting Roma inclusion and empowerment	3.100.000,00	191.029,99
PDP 2	Integrated pilot social housing relocation scheme	2.300.000,00	0,00

for Roma inclusion			
SGS 1	Women and Youth Empowerment	700.000,00	0,00
SGS2	Promotion and Support of Roma children in summer camps and community activities	250.000,00	0,00
SGS 3	Small Scale Interventions	50.000,00	0,00
BI	Not available yet	50.000,00	0,00
MC	Management cost	600.000,00	159.522,24
		TOTAL	350.552,23

Programme D - Water Management

Programme Operator: Ministry of Environment and Energy, Executive Authority of the Partnership Agreement, Environmental Sector	Modalities: 3 open calls, 1 small grant scheme and bilateral activities
IPO: N/A	Budget: 6,5ME (EEA Grants: 5,2ME, National co financing: 1,3ME) (Including 1,5ME from the reserve-PA amendment in November 2021)
Donor/Other Programme Partner: N/A	

In the reporting period 2021-2022, the **Water management** programme developments and progress were according to planning with slight time deviation. The Programme has been allocated the amount of 1.500.000 euros from the reserve. The Programme Agreement modification was approved in November 2021. The amount of 1.450.000 euros from the reserve was allocated to output 1. The relevant second call (call 3) was published. The remaining 50.000 euros was allocated to the small grant scheme and the relevant call was issued in November 2021.

The implementation of the programme outputs was as follows:

Output 1.1 -Implementation of water management systems –Desalination Units

The call for the output 1.1 was published on 10 December 2020, with deadline on 26 March 2021. The selection process took place in two stages, by independent evaluators. Four projects had project contracts from April and June 2022 and their initial phase of implementation is the preparation of public procurement.

A second call for output 1.1 was issued in March 2022. This call 3 was issued with the budget of 1.450.000€, coming from the reserve allocation. The deadline of the call was on 27 May 2022. Four (4) project proposals have been submitted and they are currently under evaluation.

Output 1.2 -Implementation of research measures of river basin management plans. The call for the output 1.2 was published on 13 November 2020, with deadline on 11 February 2021. Stage A and B of evaluation took place between 2021 and 2022. By October 2022, all project contracts have been issued and the projects are currently are under implementation.

Output 1.3 -Small grant scheme. The call for output 1.3 was published on 19 November 2021, with deadline on 31 March 2022. An extra amount of 50.000 euros has been allocated from the reserve to output 1.3, so the available grant is 100.000 euros. The evaluation took place in two stages in the first semester of 2022 and by September 2022, one project contract is imminent.

Bilateral Initiatives

The initial amount allocated to the programme according to the MOU from the Bilateral Fund was 50.000 euros. In the current reporting period, the programme was allocated an extra amount of 50.000 euros, increasing the total allocation to 100.000 euros, for bilateral initiatives. Project Promoters were invited to submit proposals for bilateral initiatives, in the context of calls for Outputs 1.1, 1.2. and 1.3.

Output 1.1: Two projects funded by the call 1.1 include bilateral initiatives. These are:

- Project (Installation of green desalination plant at Kimolos island incorporating innovative technology of brine treatment – BrIZE') with the University of Iceland and the Institute for Energy Technology in Norway, Budget: 40.320,50€

- Project (Smart green system for leakage control and water quality monitoring of water district area of city Paramythia - Municipality of Souli) with the Norwegian University of Life Sciences and the municipal water company in Oslo. Budget: 20.000€

Output 1.2: One project funded by the call 1.2 include bilateral initiatives. This is:

- Bilateral Relations of the Democritus University of Thrace with the Matis Research Institute in Iceland, Budget: 20.000€

Programme level & Management Cost (including MoU special concerns and PA conditions)

The main developments at the Programme level were as follows:

- The PA modification took place in November 2021. With the PA modification the Programme was allocated an additional amount of 1.500.000 euros from the reserve. In addition, the procedure for the stage A evaluation was amended, so that it overcomes burdens and delays of the previous arrangement. The new procedure was applied to the Small Grant Scheme call and to call 3.
- The programme submitted 2 IFRs in the reporting period, related to Management cost activities incurred expenditure.
- Covid-19 had a negative impact to physical meetings between the Programme Operator with both FMO and the national authorities. The meetings took place either virtually or were postponed for later time and successfully completed.
- Covid -19 situation also caused delays in the evaluation procedure. The procedure was adapted to the physical appearance restrictions.

The MOU special concern is: *'The Programme addresses the water management needs of particular vulnerable areas and islands through support to projects aiming at water saving and desalination. The Programme encourages the increased exploitation of innovative technologies including RES.'* The calls for the output 1.1 considered the special concern in whole. Regarding the call 1.2, it promoted during the evaluation the particularly vulnerable areas and islands.

Moreover, according to the Programme Agreement conditions:

The Programme Operator encourages bilateral partnerships across all calls for proposals. It is worth to mention that, apart from contracting projects with bilateral initiatives, there are 3 projects contracted under output 1.1 and 1 project contracted under output 1.2 with donor state partners.

The terms listed in the Programme Agreement regarding the buildings purchased, constructed, renovated or reconstructed under the project, are incorporated in the calls.

An ex-ante review of public procurement and contracting procedures and documentation carried out under the Programme, is carried out by a competent independent entity (the NFP) to ensure compliance with all applicable procedures and the Greek public procurement legislation.

Communication

The activities and developments were as follows:

- The webpage of the programme is updated regularly, according to the administrative and regulatory requirements.
- The logos of EEA grants are displayed publicly both online and in print in all actions or events carried out by the Programme Operator.

- The Programme Operator's launching and matchmaking event took place on January 20th, 2021, where 200 people participated. The event is available on YouTube. In addition, press releases were issued by the Ministry of Environment and Energy concerning the event:
- All calls have been published on the Programme Operator's websites and the Ministry of Environment and Energy. Moreover, announcements were sent to the NFP and the Norwegian Embassy.
- All the project proposals incorporated a Communication Plan in accordance with article 2.3 of Annex III of the EEA FM 2014-2021 Regulation.
- All project contracts are available on the Programme Operator's website.
- The Programme Operator will soon sign a contract for production of photos and videos for the contracted projects. The aim is to highlight the necessity of the projects, the geographical position, the budget, the duration of the projects and the bilateral relations developed.

Next steps- planning for the year ahead

In the year ahead, projects from output 1.1, 1.2 and the small grant scheme will be under implementation. Regarding the call 3, it is expected to conclude the evaluation procedure, by the end of 2022 and start the implementation in 2023.

In 2023, and when the projects' progress permits to share first results, a conference will take place inviting the Project Promoters, with the aim to saw off their project achievements, share good practices, exchange experiences, problem solving, and acceleration of projects if necessary.

A concern regarding possible price increases of materials due to the general supply chain disruptions is present.

Table 1: Financial progress of the programme

PDP/OPEN CALL/SMALL GRANT SCHEME/BILATERAL INITIATIVE/ MANAGEMENT COST	Project title	Grant	Incurred expenditure
OC1	Electronic system installation location and control of leakages in the internal networks of DEVAVA - Phase A'	540.000,00	0,00
OC1	Smart green system for leakage control and water quality monitoring of water district area of city Paramythia of Municipality of Souli	620.000,00	0,00
OC1	Advanced energy systems for sustainable water management and desalination units in remote island communities EQUATION=ISLANDS	1.396.515,63	0,00

OC1	Installation of green desalination plant at Kimolos island incorporating innovative technology of brine treatment-BriZE	933.614,30	0,00
OC2	Delineation of saline groundwater in Zakynthos Island. Investigative monitoring and examination of artificial recharge potential as a restorative measure. Zante – Sal.	196.500,00	0,00
OC2	Actions for the improvement of the qualitative and quantitative situation and the adaptation to the climate change of the coastal Underground Water System "Larissos" of the catchment area of Peiros-Vergas-Pinios, Northern Peloponnese Water Department	200.358,00	0,00
OC2	Assessment of Arsenic and other contaminants in surface and groundwaters of Almopia municipality, Greece	225.735,50	0,00
OC3	Not available yet	1.450.000,00	0,00
SGS	WATER TANK: Promoting the importance of water loops management in island regions	100.000,00	0,00
BI	Bilateral Relations of the Dimocritus University of Thrace with the Matis Resreach Institute in Iceland	20.000,00	0,00
BI	Smart green system for leakage control and water quality monitoring of water district area of city Paramythia of Municipality of Souli- Bilateral initiative	20.000,00	0,00
BI	Installation of green desalination plant at Kimolos island incorporating innovative technology of brine treatment-BriZE - Bilateral initiative	40.320,00	0,00
MC	Management cost of the programme	300.000,00	25.441,70

	TOTAL	25.441,70
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Programme E - Renewable Energy, Energy Efficiency

Programme Operator: Centre for Renewable Energy Sources and Saving (CRES)	Modalities: 1 open call and bilateral activities
IPO: N/A	Budget: 10 ME (EEA Grants: 7,5 ME, National co financing: 2,5 ME). Additional allocation from the reserve 3,3 ME to be included in modification of PA (EEA Grants reserve 2,5 ME, National co financing: 800 KE)
National Programme Partner: N/A	

Open Call 1: “Improved energy efficiency”

Programme Operator coordinated and closely monitored all the required actions for the successful and timely execution of the subprojects’ tendering procedures. Our projects include 52 subprojects out of which 26 involve consulting-advisory services (total budget of €1.214.364,35) and 26 involve construction activities (total budget of €10.835.373,00).

Out of the 26 subprojects representing consulting-advisory services, 23 subprojects received the tendering procedure’s preliminary approval, 20 tenders were published (total budget of €1.029.139,56) and the remaining 6 are expected to be launched in the next couple of months (total budget of €185.224,79). In addition, 8 draft contracts for consulting-advisory activities received preliminary approval from the Programme Operator and were issued. Moreover, 2 draft contracts for construction activities received preliminary approval from the Programme Operator and were issued.

Out of the 26 subprojects involving construction activities, 4 received the tendering procedure’s preliminary approval, 3 were published (total budget of €2.503.586,82) and the remaining 23 are expected to be launched until the end of 2022 (total budget of €8.331.786,18). Taking into consideration the difficulties arising by the global energy crisis resulting to price increases, the Programme Operator suggests that additional funding is needed in order to mitigate any repercussions in the implementation, in full accordance with the objectives set.

The Programme Operator submitted the APR for 2021, as well IFR#6 and IFR#7 with incurred expenditure related the programme’s management cost.

Furthermore, during this period the Financial Audit Committee (EDEL) conducted a second audit of the management cost of the total scope of the GR-Energy Programme. The audit was thorough, and the Committee controlled IFR#5 and IFR#6. Along the process, the Programme Operator responded rapidly to all relevant requests and perceived the audit as an opportunity to be in line with the Programme’s requirements. The Programme Operator is currently expecting the audit’s final findings.

Bilateral initiatives

The Programme Operator has already prepared a bilateral relations plan and is currently ready to begin with its implementation. The implementation of these bilateral activities is connected to the subprojects and they have not initiated yet as the procedures of projects tenders have not concluded yet. The bilateral activities, to be implemented in the coming period, include activities through partnerships in projects, visits to donor countries and meeting/workshops at each project site.

During the reporting period, the Programme Operator managed to keep the network of potential partners from donor countries active. The programme’s communication activities and the NFP’s publicity actions have also helped to provide an extended network of potential partners from donor countries to implement the planned actions. Most importantly, the Programme Operator as the national competent authority for RES and Energy Saving has a high valued network with respective and relevant entities in the donor countries and a strong list of partners. As a result, for all activities there will be cooperation

with distinguished bilateral partners for know-how sharing and exchange of expertise. All Project Promoters will be invited to participate, according to their field of expertise and project scope.

Communication

At the communication front, the programme’s website (<http://eeares.cres.gr>) and social media pages (Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter) remain the key communication tools between the Programme Operator and the Project Promoters and are regularly updated in both English and Greek language, in accordance with the requirements of the EEA FM 2014-2021. All information regarding the projects’ latest developments such as the subprojects’ tendering procedures are promptly posted.

Next steps- planning for the year ahead

The Programme Operator plans to successfully complete all the projects’ implementation preliminary procedures (subprojects’ tendering procedure and signing of relevant contracts) on time and according to the Management and Control System (MCS) specifications. In fact, in the coming year the Programme Operator aims to report on the first results following the projects’ core implementation phase. The Programme Operator also aims to initiate the bilateral activities, as subprojects’ contracts (for both consulting-advisory services and construction activities) will be signed. The Programme Operator will make best use of its extended network of potential partners from donor countries to implement the 13 projects’ planned actions.

Table 1: Financial progress of the programme

PDP/OPEN CALL/SMALL GRANT SCHEME/BILATERAL INITIATIVE/ MANAGEMENT COST	Project title	Grant	Incurred expenditure
OC 1	Modern Energy Upgrade of Municipal Stadium and Actions to Reduce the Energy Footprint for the Local Community of Katerini	702.460,00	0,00
OC 1	NZEB Sports Building Infrastructure for the Activation of Citizens of the Municipality of Moschatos – Tavros	608.468,00	0,00
OC 1	Smart Building Model & Living Lab Energy Innovation Centre of ASFA at the Delphi Art Station	926.882,58	0,00
OC 1	Upgrade of Iconic Buildings of Samos through RES-EE Interventions and Innovative Actions with Applicability throughout Greek islands	548.700,00	0,00
OC 1	Application of Innovative Green Technologies in an Iconic Building and Facilities of the AUA	764.460,00	0,00
OC 1	Complete Energy Renovation of	708.908,00	0,00

	the Model Centre for Culture, Education and Innovation in Central Greece		
OC 1	Integration of Innovative Energy Technologies into the Central Building Infrastructure of High Use & Footfall of the AUTH	789.260,00	0,00
OC 1	Smart Application of Innovative RES Interventions and Energy Efficiency Improvement in Buildings & Facilities of the Municipality of Skyros	905.500,00	0,00
OC 1	Demonstrating Use of Renewable & Alternative Energy Technologies in Social Infrastructures of the Municipal Water Supply – Sewerage Company of Drama	948.499,56	0,00
OC 1	Demonstration projects for the Energy Upgrade of North Evros Municipal Buildings	1.250.000,00	0,00
OC 1	Energy Upgrade of the School Complex of Perigiali Municipality of Kavala	1.299.638,22	0,00
OC 1	Energy Upgrades and Installation of RES in buildings of the Municipality of Varis-Voulas-Vouliagmenis under the EEA Financial Mechanism Framework	1.296.961,00	0,00
OC 1	RES Projects and Energy Upgrade in Municipal Buildings of M.C. Ag. Anargyroi	1.299.999,99	0,00
BI	Bilateral Initiatives	100.000,00	0,00
MC	Management Cost of the Programme GR-ENERGY	1.233.333,00	423.230,00
		TOTAL	423.230,00

Programme F - Good Governance, Accountable Institutions, Transparency

Programme Operator: Management & Implementation Authority for Information Communication Technologies (M&IA ICT) **Modalities:** 3 predefined projects and bilateral activities

IPO: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) **Budget:** 8,2ME (EEA Grants: 7ME, National co-financing: 1,2ME)

National Programme Partner: N/A

In the reporting period 2021-2022, the programme issued the project contracts for all 3 Predefined Projects. The Project Promoters started the enactment of MCS processes for public procurement.

Concerns remain regarding the timely implementation of some of the activities.

The developments and the progress per project:

Predefined project 1: "Organizational Upgrade and Digital Transformation of Citizen Service Centers Network (KEP) and public services provided"

The project is consisted of 9 different activities (subprojects) with a total budget of 3.400.000,00 euros. In the current reporting period, 5 out of 9 subprojects had their call for tenders published. By September 2022, 2 subprojects have their contract signed while for the other activities, procedures are at their final stages of the tender process. The partnership agreement with OECD is expected to deliver its final deliverables until the end of 2022. The partnership with GRNet has started to yield first results like the first release of the new EU-GO portal, part of the scope of the digital transformation of the function of Citizen Service Centers. The project management consultant has been established to strengthen the internal coordination and acceleration of the implementation.

Predefined project 2: "Strengthening of integrity, transparency and anti-corruption framework"

The project is consisted of 3 different activities (subprojects) with a total budget of 1.998.640,59 euros. The subproject 1 is implemented through a partnership agreement with OECD, signed on 17 December 2021. As notified by the Project Promoter during the 3rd CC taken place in June 2022, certain activities foreseen in the project scope with OECD were already performed by the NTA due to priorities set by the Government, using other funding. This development leads in turn to the need of reducing the scope and the budget of the project and of the partnership agreement with OECD.

As regards to subproject 3, it has an implementation plan of 19 months and had as a prerequisite that a new Law on the management of confiscated assets was going to be adopted by June 2022 at the latest. Despite efforts and written and oral correspondence with the competent national authorities from the Project Promoter, the Programme Operator and the NFP, the Law was is still not adopted. Therefore, the remaining time until the end of eligibility period is not sufficient for the implementation of the project. Consequently, subproject 2, for a study about the improvement of the framework and processes on asset recovery and asset Management, planned to be implemented through a partnership with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) must be reviewed for its feasibility.

Due to the above developments, by September 2022 a process of project review from the project promoter and partner is in progress, in order to conclude to a new reduced scope for the project. On the basis of the new scope a Programme Agreement modification proposal will be submitted. The process is expected to conclude in October 2022, ahead of the Annual meeting.

Predefined project 3: "Greek Ombudsman actions for strengthening good governance, accountability and combating maladministration in the public sector"

The project is consisted of 10 separate activities (subprojects) with a total budget of 1.938.000,00 euros. In the reporting period, four subprojects have been contracted, whereas three others are in phase of tendering. The project promoter launched a major event in May 2022, which was also the final deliverable on one of its subprojects. All tenders are expected to be launched by December 2022. The Greek Ombudsman is expected to establish its brunch at Thessaloniki in 2023. The Project Promoter is aware of the short period within which, he needs to organise and deliver on the visits to the regions and will take measures to achieve the results.

Bilateral Initiatives

In April 2022 the Programme Operator had a consultation with the Project Promoters for their identified partners in Donor States and their projects' scope, timeline and budget. The Programme Operator issued the call to project promoters for bilateral projects on 26 May 2022. By September 2022 the Project Promoters are in preparation phase to submit their proposals. Proposals are expected to be submitted by the end of November, assessed so to start their implementation in the first semester of 2023.

Programme level & Management Cost (including MoU special concerns and PA conditions)

In the reporting period, the Programme Operator processed activities in the context of management cost to support implementation at programme and project level. A contract for communications and publicity was signed on May 2022 with a 7-month-duration. Also, a contract for administrative support was signed on 1 September 2022 with a 7-month-duration. By September 2022, a pre – tendering public consultation for implementation support services concluded and the tendering procedure was launched. The contract is expected in the first trimester of 2023.

In other developments: the Programme Operator participated actively by providing content and instructors to a training seminar organized by the NFP and the MOU S.A., regarding public procurement legal framework.

For the support of the Project Promoters, 2 tendering procedures for implementation assistance consulting services were submitted by PDP1 and PDP3 and approved by the Programme Operator.

Finally, the Management and Control System at Program Level received opinion and approval from the Audit Authority on 29 June 2022.

Cooperation with IPOs

The Programme Operator invited the IPOs to participate in the 2nd and 3rd Cooperation Committee that took place during the reporting period. The IPOs provided with their point of view and suggestions, which proved helpful towards framing the issues and solutions forward.

In June 22, a 2-day Cooperation Committee was organised and took place, including an on-the-ground, walk through at the Project Promoter's premises. All aspects of the projects implementation achievements and risks were addressed, discussed extensively by invited parties NFP, FMO and the OECD. The Project Promoter of PDP2 informed the Cooperation Committee for the developments of the projects.

The partnership agreements with international organizations namely OECD (PDP 1) and FRA (PDP 3) were signed and in effect. The Project Promoter of PDP3 also signed its partnership agreement with OECD in November and the Programme Operator made all necessary steps so the Project Promoters had the ability to finance them.

Communication

The Programme Operator actively supports the Project Promoters in fulfilling their communication objectives with the support of the NFP. The Programme Operator assigned on 17 May 2022 a contract to an expert on communications who organized a workshop and submitted a communication plan, to be translated and communicated to the FMO before the Annual Meeting 2022. The physical object to implement the communication is going to be designated by the consultant, which will then be procured according to the relevant procedures. The Programme Operator actively participates in social media and fairs promoting the programme and the results of the projects.

Early communication activities are consistent with the Branding Manual, based on the fruitful collaboration between the NFP and for instance, the Greek Ombudsman who organised an international conference in May within the scope of PDP3.

Next steps- planning for the year ahead

By October 2022, a modification proposal of the Programme Agreement will be submitted to address the limited scope of PDP2. In the next period, all projects will be in implementation phase while several tangible results are expected to come by June 2023. On the results, PDP 1 has already created the first release of the web of EU GO, whereas the partnership agreement with the OECD will have delivered its final deliverables by December 2022. By the end of March 2023, a communication campaign will start to run to more than 1000 KEPs and through other channels. By June 2023, tablets for digital signatures will have been installed in KEPs, promoting that way e-services that use the electronic signature and identification. Also by June 2023, the initial studies on the processes and services of KEPs will have been delivered.

PDP3 has already implemented a major communication event (International Conference in May 2022). By the end of 2022, FRA will have delivered the educational material and will have implemented seminars to the personnel of the Greek Ombudsman. It is expected that also in 2022 the bureau at Thessaloniki will be in operational status. The Project Promoter expects to have implemented at least 10 of 22 workshops by June 2023, whereas the upgrade of the technical infrastructure and back – office processes is expected to be completed by the end of 2023. The communication plan is expected to be getting implemented by the beginning of 2023.

Table 1: Financial progress of the programme

PDP/OPEN CALL/SMALL GRANT SCHEME/BILATERAL INITIATIVE/ MANAGEMENT COST	Project title	Grant	Incurring expenditure
PDP 1	Organizational Upgrade and Digital Transformation of Citizen Service Centers Network (KEP) and public services provided	3.400.000,00	89.600,00
PDP 2	Strengthening of integrity, transparency and anti-corruption framework	1.998.640,59	
PDP 3	Program - Good Governance, Accountable Institutions, Transparency	1.938.000,00	108.208,40

BI		0.00	0.00
MC	Management Costs	823.529,00 €	2.133,00
		TOTAL	199.941,40

Programme G - Asylum and Migration (Capacity building of national asylum and migration management systems)

Programme Operator (PO): European and Development Programs Division - Ministry Of Citizen Protection (EDPD)	Modalities: 8 predefined projects, 1 small grant scheme and bilateral activities
Donor Programme Partner (DPP): Norwegian Directorate of Immigration (UDI)	Budget: 19,4ME (EEA Grants:16,5ME, National co financing:2,9 ME)

Predefined project 1: "Assistance to Appeals Authority"

Project Promoter (Appeals Authority) informed Programme Operator in September 2021 that the reduced backlog cases within Appeals Authority no longer justify the necessity for the establishment of additional ten 3-member Committees. In addition, the Project Promoter suggested to further enhance the capacity of the existing twenty-one (21) 3-member Committees by organizing ad-hoc meetings for certain categories of appeals, as well as to recruit personnel. Their proposal was examined by the relevant units of the Programme Operator and in this context, a Programme Agreement amendment request was submitted in March 2022. However, FMO responded that this remains within the mandates of the Programme Operator and a Programme Agreement amendment is not required.

Moreover, the Programme Operator and NFP reevaluated the Predefined Projects of the programme within the second quarter of 2022, in order to calculate their absorption rates. In the context of Pre Defined Project 1, a budget of 766.375,00 euros was estimated that will not be absorbed. Hence, in May 2022 the Programme Operator communicated this to the Ministry of Migration and Asylum, which acts as the Policy Maker of the programme, and suggested to reallocate funds from outcome 1 to outcome 3, in order to support new activities within Pre Defined Project 8, which was agreed by the General Secretary of Migration Policy. This reallocation was included in the Programme Agreement modification request submitted by the Programme Operator in August 2022. According to the modification proposal, the new budget of Pre Defined Project 1 will be €933.625,00. Finally, a respective project contract modification is expected to be signed within the last quarter of 2022.

Predefined project 2: "Capacity building of national asylum and migration management systems"

In September 2021, the Programme Operator positively appraised the partnership agreement between the Project Promoter (Asylum Service) and its Donor Project Partner (UDI) and it was signed shortly after. Furthermore, Project Promoter signed two rental contracts in December 2021 for the buildings that will host the Regional Asylum Offices for the vulnerable group of migrants in Athens and Thessaloniki. A project contract modification request was submitted in February 2022, which was rejected by the Programme Operator, since the administrative criteria were not met (the request was not submitted by the legal representative of the Project Promoter). The latest request was submitted in June 2022 and the Project Contract was officially modified in August 2022. The amendments were mainly focused on the means of implementation and they did not interfere with the Programme Agreement.

Moreover, the Programme Operator and NFP reevaluated the Predefined Projects of the programme within the second quarter of 2022, in order to calculate their absorption rates. In the context, an amount of € 1.188.286,00 was estimated that will not be absorbed. Hence, in May 2022 the Programme Operator communicated this to the Ministry of Migration and Asylum, which acts as the Policy Maker of the programme, and suggested to reallocate funds from Outcome 1 to Outcome 3, so as to support new

activities within Pre Defined Project 8, which was agreed by the General Secretary of Migration Policy. This reallocation was included in the Programme Agreement modification request submitted by the Programme Operator in August 2022, therefore the new budget of Pre Defined Project 2 will be €3.813.464,00.

Predefined project 3: "Enhancing and building-up national capacity of migration and asylum strategic planning"

The relevant project contract was signed in December 2021 and the partnership agreements between the Project Promoter (Ministry of Migration and Asylum) and the Donor Project Partners (Norwegian Ministry of Justice and IMDi) were positively appraised in March 2022 by the Programme Operator and signed shortly after. In this context a representative of IMDi visited the Project Promoter at its premises in July 2022, and technical meetings were performed, with the participation of Programme Operator and Donor Project Partners.

In the latest Programme Agreement modification request submitted by the Programme Operator in August 2022, the title of the Project Promoter was changed to "Ministry of Migration and Asylum/ Special Secretariat for the Coordination of Stakeholders" and the inclusion of the Ionian University was proposed, as project partner. It is foreseen that the university will assist the Project Promoter to develop a system, which will evaluate and certify the language proficiency, the knowledge and capacity/skills of the registered interpreters. This evaluation will further enhance the capacity of the Special Secretariat, enabling them to provide more qualitative interpretation services to the third country nationals and the asylum seekers. The parties have confirmed their mutual intention to cooperate via a letter of intent and their scope of action and activities will be thoroughly elaborated in due time. Finally, the budget of this potential partnership will be covered by the already allocated budget of the Project, thus a Programme Agreement modification is not required.

Predefined project 4: "Enhancing the capacity of National Center for Social Solidarity (EKKA) to manage unaccompanied minors and vulnerable groups"

The relevant project contract was signed in December 2021. The Project Promoter (National Center for Social Solidarity) has completed some important preparatory steps and the relevant technical specifications have been determined. Furthermore, a market request for the identification of potential tenders has been performed and a Call for the recruitment procedure was launched in August 2022, following its approval from the Supreme Authority of Staff selection (ASEP).

Predefined project 5: "Providing fundamental rights expertise to stakeholders operating in Greek migration and asylum system"

The relevant project contract was signed in February 2022. However, no progress was achieved in the development of the Partnership Agreement between the Project Promoter (the Greek Ombudsman) and its project partner (Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) of the European Union). In June 2022, FRA officially informed the Project Promoter that due to unforeseen circumstances and in the context of the Ukrainian Refugee crisis, it is not able to allocate personnel and resources in this project and cannot participate as a project partner.

Taken all of the above into consideration, the along with the DPP suggested to the Project Promoter to assess its real needs, to identify potential gaps and needs which could be addressed by the available resources, as well as any proposal for new activities to be included in the Pre Defined Project. Following this, the Programme Operator will examine the need to submit a Programme Agreement modification

request within the last quarter of 2022.

Predefined project 6: "Improving Hellenic Police capacity to identify and manage unaccompanied minors and vulnerable groups"

The relevant project contract was signed in July 2022, following its positive appraisal by an appointed external entity. The Partnership Agreement between the Project Promoter (Hellenic Police) and the project partner (Center for Security Studies) was positively appraised by the appointed external entity and signed shortly after.

Predefined project 7: "Enhancing first reception conditions and services provided to third country nationals"

The relevant project contract was signed in September 2021. The Project Promoter (Reception and Identification Service) signed a rental contract with the local church of the municipality of Pyrgos in December 2021 for the facility that will host the accommodation shelter for the extremely vulnerable groups of migrants. Furthermore, a project contract modification request was submitted to the Programme Operator for evaluation. The amendment was mainly focused on the means of implementation as well as the assistance towards the relevant procurement and human resources divisions of the Ministry of Migration and Asylum and did not contradict any provision included with the Programme Agreement. The Programme Operator examined the request and the project contract was modified in June 2022.

Moreover, the Project Promoter launched, in May 2022, a call for tenders in order to appoint an external entity to proceed with the required technical renovations of the building. It shall be reminded that according to the timeframe provided by the Project Promoter, the technical renovations should have been completed within August 2022 and the accommodation structure would be fully operational until then. However, the Project Promoter informed the Programme Operator that although the tender was awarded, another bidder appealed the award decision, as it is permitted by the National Law for Procurements, and that the appeal will be examined by a court no sooner than September 2022. Hence, this development significantly affects the timetable for the opening of the accommodation structure, as well as the additional relevant procedures (staff recruitment, refurbishment, etc). in August 2022, which now waits for official notification by the Project Promoter on the recent developments within the project, as well as any other proposal for internal reallocation of the unabsorbed funds.

Finally, during the calculation of the absorption rates performed by the Programme Operator and NFP within the first quarter of 2022, it was estimated that a budget of € 694.602,00 will not be utilized in this project. However, it was decided not to perform any budgetary reallocations and to further assess the project in September-October 2022.

Predefined project 8: 8) "Enhancing the capacity of the Special Secretariat for the Protection of Unaccompanied Minors (SSUAM) to evaluate the quality of services provided to unaccompanied minors within the Accommodation Centres"

The relevant project contract was signed in October 2021. The Partnership Agreement between the Project Promoter (Special Secretariat for the Protection of Unaccompanied Minors) and the Donor Project Partner (UDI) was positively appraised by the Programme Operator in March 2022 and was signed shortly after.

Furthermore, it was decided to reallocate budget from outcome 1 to outcome 3, in order to include new

activities in this project. In this context, a Programme Agreement modification request was submitted in August 2022. The proposal included the following additional activities for PDP8: a) the operation of the National Emergency Response Mechanism (NERM) and b) the accompaniment support mechanism. The proposed amended budget for the project is € 3.548.739,00.

Small Grant Scheme

A call for proposals, in the context of the Small Grant Scheme is under assessment by the Programme Operator. It will be forwarded to the DPP for any potential comments within the last quarter of 2022. The call will focus on the development of synergies between public administration and Civil Society and/or academic institutions, in the fields of asylum and migration. FMO will be officially informed at least three weeks prior to the publication of the call.

Bilateral Initiatives

The Programme Operator published a call for proposals in July 2022. Bilateral initiatives proposed by the Programme Operator (Programme Operators' Forum) and the Project Promoter of Pre Defined Project 5 (study visits and knowhow exchange with UDI), have been positively appraised by the Cooperation Committee and they will be implemented within the last quarter of 2022.

Programme level & Management Cost (including MoU special concerns and PA conditions)

A call for proposals was published in September 2021, which refers to the management cost of the programme. Currently, only the Programme Operator has requested assistance via the management cost and the relevant project contract was signed in February 2022. The available budget covered expenditures related to the Cooperation Committee and provision of external experts.

Regarding the conditions stipulated in the Programme Agreement, the conditions No.1 and No.3 have been fulfilled. The appraisal of PreDefined Project 6 has been performed by an external entity independent and the appraisal of PreDefined Project 7 occurred after the provision of the accommodation structure. Furthermore, a procurement procedure has been initiated by the Programme Operator, in order to appoint the external entity that will perform the verification of payment claims and the deliverables of the project (condition no 2).

Cooperation with IPOs, DPP and NPP

The Norwegian Directorate of Immigration (UDI), which is the central agency in the Norwegian immigration administration that implements and helps to develop the government's immigration and refugee policy, acting as the Donor Programme Partner, provides continuous advice on the implementation of the programme. During the reference period, UDI supported Programme Operator in critical phases of the programme modification, such as the Programme Agreement amendment, the preparation of the calls for proposals, the preparation and the successful implementation of the Cooperation Committee meetings and the update and evaluation of the milestones of the programme. The assistance is mainly provided by means of teleconferences, phone calls, e-mail exchanges and in person meetings.

The 7th, 8th and 9th Cooperation Committee meetings of the programme were held in October 2021, March 2022 and June 2022 respectively. The 10th Cooperation Committee Meeting is foreseen to take place within the first week of October 2022.

Communication

Press releases were published on the dedicated webpage of the programme, as well as relevant posts in

social media, regarding the publication of the calls for proposals, as well as the project contracts of the Pre Defined Projects. Furthermore, the Programme Operator participated in the Thessaloniki International Fair, and presented the programme.

Next steps- planning for the year ahead

By September 2022 the programme is expected to finalize the Programme Agreement. The Project Promoters involved in the modification of the Programme Agreement and have been instructed to begin drafting the relevant Partnership Agreements with the Project Partners and to redraft the Project Technical Fiches within the National Management Informatics System.

Furthermore, during the latest Cooperation Committee Meeting of the Programme, DPP and FMO stated that in case that no substantial progress is achieved within Pre Defined Projects 2 and 7 until the last quarter of 2022, then a suspension of payments will probably occur. Hence, taking into consideration the fact that additional unabsorbed funds are likely to emerge, then an additional Programme Agreement amendment request is foreseen to be submitted until the last date for the modification of Programmes (30.04.2023). PO has already communicated with three Project Promoters (Special Secretariat for the Coordination of Stakeholders, National Center for Social Solidarity and Special Secretariat for the Protection of Unaccompanied Minors) with a view to assess their needs and priorities and to propose new activities that could be included in the Programme. Until August 2022, only the Special Secretariat for the Protection of Unaccompanied Minors responded to the request, by proposing five additional activities.

Finally, in the year ahead, particular emphasis shall be placed on the development of synergies between the Pre Defined Projects of the Programme, or between Programme Operators and Programmes in general. To this end, a potential synergy between Pre Defined Projects 6 and 8 has been unofficially proposed by the PO to the Project Promoters (Hellenic Police and Special Secretariat for the Protection of Unaccompanied Minors respectively), since both Projects fall under the same Outcome and share a common target group of beneficiaries.

Table 1: Financial progress of the programme

PDP/OPEN CALL/SMALL GRANT SCHEME/BILATERAL INITIATIVE/ MANAGEMENT COST	Project title	Grant	Incurred expenditure
PDP 1	Assistance to Appeals Authority.	1.700.000,00	42.000,00
PDP 2	Assistance to Asylum Service.	5.001.750,00	0
PDP 3	Providing fundamental rights expertise to stakeholders operating in Greek migration and asylum system.	1.247.200,00	0
PDP 4	Enhancing first reception conditions and services provided to third country nationals.	4.988.800,00	21.000,00
PDP 5	Enhancing and building-up	1.950.000,00	81.992.40

	national capacity of migration and asylum strategic planning.		
PDP 6	Enhancing the capacity of National Center for Social Solidarity (EKKA) to manage unaccompanied minors through the effective operation of the National Child Protection Hotline "1107"	744.254,00 €	0
PDP 7	Improving Hellenic Police capacity to identify and manage unaccompanied minors and vulnerable groups.	600.000,00	0
PDP 8	Enhancing the capacity of the Special Secretariat for the Protection of Unaccompanied Minors (SSUAM) to evaluate the quality of services provided to unaccompanied minors within the Accommodation Centres.	1.596.078,00	0
BI	Bilateral Relations Actions of the Programme GR-G "Capacity Building of National Asylum and Migration Management Systems".	125.000,00	0
SGS	Improved strategy and contingency planning		
MC	Management costs of the Programme GR-G "Capacity Building of National Asylum and Migration Management Systems".	517.205,95	59.286,05
		TOTAL	204.278,45

5. Status of bilateral funds

In the previous reporting period 2020-2021, 9 strategic initiatives were approved by JCBF and 7 of them had a project contract issued by NFP. The approved initiative for NFP activities has not been processed to a project contract, while 1 initiative approved by JCBF concerning Oil & Gas Industry's Transformation during the Energy Transition was resubmitted in the context of the Open Call (see below). In the reference period November 2021 - October 2022, the Bilateral Fund, overcoming much of the burden of Covid19 pandemic, made further significant progress in terms of initiatives' selection and implementation, as follows:

1. An Open Call was approved by JCBF and was published by the NFP on 15 November 2021. The goal of the call was to provide a widely communicated platform for project proposals and selection, which have a high potential to contribute to the EEA FM 2014-2021 and in particular to the Bilateral Fund objectives and priorities by improving and strengthening the bilateral relations between Greece and Norway. The total budget of the call was 400.000 euros and the maximum grant for an initiative was set at 80.000 euros. By October 2022, 8 initiative proposals were submitted in the context of the call and 4 of the were selected. One project was rejected, as it did not justify cooperation with Greek entities. The total amount of budget allocated to the selected initiatives amounts to 204.121,00 euros. See table 1 below for more details about the initiatives selected.
2. As a response to the war in Ukraine, the EEA Financial Mechanism Committee, with a letter to NFPs on 11 March 2022 enabled and urged the selection of initiatives in the Bilateral Fund to address urgently the respective refugee crisis. According to the letter, a bilateral partner from the Donor countries was not necessary for these initiatives, due to the exceptional and urgent circumstances. Following the letter and after relevant contacts from the Norwegian embassy and the NFP, the agencies "The Smile of the Child" and "Doctors of the World - Greece" submitted proposals, which were approved by the JCBF. Subsequently the NFP completed the procedure of the project contract. The total budget allocated to the 2 initiatives was 300.000 euros. See table 1 below for more details about the initiatives selected.
3. Under the provision of the MoU for allocation of Bilateral Fund budget to the programmes, 3 new projects were adopted, in order to fund the programmes implemented under Regulation article 6.13. The total budget allocated to the projects was 325.000 euros, in accordance with the allocation in the MoU. The invitation was addressed by the NFP on 25 February 2022, to the respective Fund Operators, namely to:
 - a) Innovation Norway, Fund Operator of the programme "Innovation, Business Development and SMEs"
 - b) Crowe SOL SA & Human Rights 360 jointly Fund Operator of the programme "Local Development and Poverty Reduction" and the programme "Asylum and Migration (Addressing urgent needs for the reception and screening of new arrivals and for the accommodation of vulnerable groups)".

The selected initiatives under all calls at the national level by October 2022 are as follows:

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE/OPEN CALL/UKRAINE CALL/FUND OPERATORS CALL	Title	Implementing partners	Short description	State of play
Strategic initiative	Bilateral activities at the national level*	National Focal Point (NFP)	The initiative is based on lessons learned from the previous period and the recognized need for an available and flexible budget line to fund, timely and without administration burdens, small-scale individual activities	No project contract yet
Strategic initiative	Transmissions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Onassis Foundation ✓ ULTIMA Festival 	The initiative is in the field of culture and arts, focusing on music. With its activities, such as university exchanges, sound art residencies, community and schools' art projects, devised production, and public art programmes, it aims to enhance bilateral collaboration of artists, university music departments, and other entities related to the music and art scene.	In implementation phase with delays due to pandemic. A funding request from the PP is imminent.
Strategic initiative	Youth Employment and Gender Equality: Mobilizing human capital for sustainable growth in Greece	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy (ELIAMEP) ✓ Fafo Research Foundation 	The initiative addresses the difficulties of young people and women to access the labour market, especially as an output gap produced by the crisis and depended on the reformation of the national growth. In this context, the aim is twofold: (a) to document and analyse the conditions of the Greek labour market and examine the main barriers (b) to formulate appropriate policy proposals on how to facilitate the access of young people to the Greek labour market, including specific recommendations on how to overcome gender-related barriers.	In implementation phase with delays due to pandemic. A funding request from the PP is imminent.
Strategic initiative	Necessary legislative adjustments to promote offshore wind energy in Greece	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Hellenic Wind Energy Association ELETAEN ✓ Norwea 	The initiative aims to develop a partnership between Greek and Norwegian actors that collaborate to produce a comparative analysis of regulatory frameworks for floating offshore wind. In this line, it will prepare draft input of legal documentation for offshore floating wind in Greece, with all the critical adjustments /modifications of Greek legislation, to facilitate the development of offshore wind projects in Greece.	The initiative has concluded.
Strategic initiative	Head to Head, a bilateral exhibition project between Greece and Iceland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Kling & Bang gallerí ehf, Iceland ✓ A-Dash Space; ASFA / Athens School of Fine Art; ✓ The Icelandic Art Centre 	"HEAD to HEAD" is a bilateral exhibition initiative connecting the two unique, dynamic, and ever-expanding artist-run visual art scenes of Athens, Greece, and Reykjavik, Iceland. The project aims to establish an energetic connection between Greek and Icelandic artists and spaces and boost peripheral European cultural collaboration. The project's execution is based on an exchange and pairing of Greek and Icelandic artists resulting in exhibitions in both places.	In implementation phase. An exhibition was implemented in 2021. Next activities are scheduled to take place in 2023.
Strategic initiative	ProGender: A Digital Hub on Gender, the	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Panteion University of Social and 	"ProGender" aims to promote bilateral activities between Iceland, Greece, and Norway by creating a digital hub devoted to gender perspectives of COVID-19 and its aftermath. The activities, to be	In implementation phase. In the reporting period, the project implemented most activities of the scope,

	COVID-19 crisis and its Aftermath	<p>Political Sciences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Institute for Gender Equality and Difference – University of Iceland Reykjavik, Iceland ✓ Norwegian University of Science and Technology Trondheim ✓ Research and Education Collective ✓ STIN PRIZA 	carried out within the hub online, promote gender perspectives, analyses, and policy responses to the covid19 crisis through a set of actions and initiatives that enhance cooperation and exchange between Greek, Icelandic and Norwegian institutions.	achieving its target goals to a significant degree. The initiative is expected to conclude by the end of 2022.
Strategic initiative	Energy Governance for Sustainable Development (Norway-Greece ENERGO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ University of Ioannina, Department of Economics, Greece ✓ National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Department of Economics, Political Economy of Sustainable Development Laboratory, Greece ✓ Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI) 	“Energy Governance for Sustainable Development” (ENERGO) aims to the advancement of scientific evidence-based mutual knowledge development. The project fosters bilateral relationships, research cooperation and long-term strategic partnership between partners from the donor and the beneficiary states. ENERGO further supports capacity building and continuous collaboration by bringing together a multi-disciplinary team of experts, from Norway and Greece, to analyse systematically common challenges and solutions.	In implementation phase.
Strategic initiative	“Winds of Change”: Can Renewable Energy shape a new geo-economic paradigm for the EU, Greece and its Neighbourhood?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy (ELIAMEP) ✓ Alma Economics; Norwea 	“Winds of Change” aims to produce thorough analysis, initiate discussions and a constructive dialogue between key stakeholders and build bridges of mutual trust and collaboration on green transition and the deployment of renewable energy (RE) sources, notably offshore wind energy, for a new energy model for Greece and the Eastern Mediterranean	In implementation phase. A funding request from the PP is imminent.
Open Call	Review of Norwegian Oil & Gas Industry’s Transformation during the Energy Transition and its Application to Greece	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Hellenic Hydrocarbon Resources Management S.A ✓ SINTEF AS by its institute SINTEF Digital. 	The initiative aims to the collaboration of Norway and Greece in exploring how current hydrocarbon activities in Greece can be supplemented with “green” energy solutions, with a particular focus on the areas of a) carbon capture and storage and b) offshore wind energy. This will involve a comprehensive review of the successful transformation of the Norwegian Oil and Gas sector in the last few years, and application of techniques and lessons learned into the Greek energy sector.	In initiation phase.

Open Call	#GIL4W - Greek Innovation Lab for Women: Partnership for Norwegian Transfer of Knowledge to boost the female expertise in R&I and entrepreneurship in Greece	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Athena Research Center For Innovation In Information, Communication and Knowledge Technologies ✓ Institute of Communications and Computer Systems (ICCS) ✓ CTI Diophantus ✓ Demokritos NCSR ✓ Hellenic Institute Pasteur ✓ European Centre for Women and Technology- ECWT 	#GIL4W is a concept presented by ECWT, based on the best practices of Innovation in combination with expertise built up during recent years through collaboration and projects between ECWT and the Norwegian Confederation of Industries, SIMULA Research Lab Norway, NTNU, SINTEF, the National Competence Centre for Multicultural Value Creation and incorporating also UN Women's Innovation Strategy. #GIL4W intends to become the leading Greek ecosystem to adopt a gender-sensitive approach to research, innovation and entrepreneurship, integrating the female talent into the sustainable, green and digital Post-Covid recovery of the Greek economy.	In initiation phase.
Open Call	GENDER- IN: Integrating Gender in interdisciplinary research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ HELLENIC SOCIETY OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN (ELEGYP) ✓ KILDEN- Knowledge Centre for Gender Balance and Gender Perspectives in Research 	"GENDER-IN: Integrating Gender in interdisciplinary research" aims to enhancing the mutual learning process between scientists and researchers in Greece and Norway on the integration of gender in research content. The activities will be both online and physical and will promote gender perspectives in science. GENDER-IN will focus to academics and researchers from Greece and Norway working in 6 different interdisciplinary research areas: 1. Health, 2. Culture, Creativity and Inclusive Society, 3. Civil Security for Society, 4. Digital, Industry and Space, 5. Climate, Energy and Mobility, 6. Food, Bio-economy, Natural Resources, Agriculture and Environment.	In initiation phase.
Open Call	NANOSCOPY-GR: Greek Nanoscopy Network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Aristotle University of Thessaloniki ✓ Centre for Materials Science and Nanotechnology (SMN) του University of Oslo (UiO) 	"Nanoscopy-GR" aims to strengthen the research and the long-term coordination of research strategy between Greece and Norway in the field of study of nanomaterials through electron nanoscopy by creating a node between the two most important Greek laboratories in the field and relating it to the corresponding Norwegian one.	In initiation phase.
Call for Ukraine	Care for displaced persons from Ukraine seeking protection in Greece	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Doctors of the World - Greece 	The initiative aims to provide health care and psychosocial support to displaced persons and citizens from Ukraine seeking International Protection in Greece following the war in Ukraine. The aim of the action is to serve and cover at least 800 unique beneficiaries living in the wider areas of Attica and Central Macedonia, a population composed of 35% children and 65% adults, of which 70% are women and 30%, are men.	In implementation phase. A request for funding is submitted and the payment to promoter is imminent.
Call for Ukraine	Direct and holistic support of refugee families from	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Smile of the child 	The initiative aims to provide holistic support to 61 refugees (23 families), who came to Greece, following the war in Ukraine. The beneficiaries will be accommodated in fully equipped houses of the	In implementation phase. A request for funding is submitted and the

	Ukraine		promoter and will be provided food supplies and cash assistance.	payment to promoter is imminent.
Call for FOs	Innovation Norway - Bilateral Activities	✓ Innovation Norway	The initiative corresponds to the MoU bilateral budget of the Programme Innovation, Business Development and SMEs. It will include activities to strengthen bilateral relations within the scope of the programme.	In implementation phase.
Call for FOs	Bilateral cooperation initiatives - programme asylum and migration	✓ Crowe SOL SA	The initiative corresponds to the MoU bilateral budget of the Programme "Asylum and Immigration" (urgent needs for the reception and identification of new arrivals and accommodation of vulnerable groups)". It will include activities to strengthen bilateral relations within the scope of the programme.	In initiation phase.
Call for FOs	Bilateral cooperation initiatives - programme local development and poverty reduction	✓ Crowe SOL SA	The initiative corresponds to the MoU bilateral budget of the Programme "Local Development and Poverty Reduction". It will include activities to strengthen bilateral relations within the scope of the programme.	In initiation phase.

* The NFP bilateral initiative has been approved by JCBF but it is not processed yet to a selected initiative with a project contract.

Financial progress by initiative as per IFR – September 2022

Title	Budget allocation	Payments to promoters	Incurred expenditure
Bilateral activities at the national level*	80.000,00	0,00	0,00
Transmissions	284.400,00	0,00	0,00
Youth Employment and Gender Equality: Mobilizing human capital for sustainable growth in Greece	119.077,00	0,00	0,00
Necessary legislative adjustments to promote offshore wind energy in Greece	25.000,00	23.233,23	23.233,23
Head to Head, a bilateral exhibition project between Greece and Iceland	20.000,00	10.000,00	9.999,60
ProGender: A Digital Hub on Gender, the COVID-19 crisis and its Aftermath	135.493,00	73.549,00	73.549,00
Energy Governance for Sustainable Development (Norway-Greece ENERGO)	110.400,00	16.560,00	0,00
"Winds of Change": Can Renewable Energy shape a new geo-economic paradigm for the EU, Greece and its Neighbourhood	77.590,00	0,00	0,00
Review of Norwegian Oil & Gas Industry's Transformation during the Energy Transition and its Application to Greece	39.660,00	0,00	0,00
#GIL4W - Greek Innovation Lab for Women: Partnership for Norwegian Transfer of Knowledge to boost the female expertise in R&I and entrepreneurship in Greece	62.001,00	0,00	0,00
GENDER- IN: Integrating Gender in interdisciplinary research	62.460,00	0,00	0,00
NANOSCOPY-GR: Greek Nanoscopy Network	40.000,00	0,00	0,00

Care for displaced persons from Ukraine seeking protection in Greece	150.000,00	0,00	0,00
Direct and holistic support of refugee families from Ukraine	150.000,00	0,00	0,00
Innovation Norway - Bilateral Activities	150.000,00	135.000,00	70.886,00
Bilateral cooperation initiatives - programme asylum and migration	125.000,00	0,00	0,00
Bilateral cooperation initiatives - programme local development and poverty reduction	50.000,00	0,00	0,00
TOTAL	1.681.081,00	258.342,23	177.667,83

Financial progress by Workplan budget breakdown as per IFR – September 2022

Title	Budget allocation	Project contracts	Payments to promoters	Incurred expenditure
Activities carried out by the NFP	62.040,37	0,00	0,00	0,00
Pre-defined activities (total budget for planned pre-defined activities at national level)	1.071.959,63	1.071.959,63	123.342,23	106.781,83
Open Call	400.000,00	204.121,00	0,00	0,00
GR-INNOVATION	150.000,00	150.000,00	135.000,00	70.886,00
GR-ROMAINCLUSION	50.000,00	0,00	0,00	0,00
GR-LOCALDEV	50.000,00	50.000,00	0,00	0,00
GR-ENVIRONMENT	100.000,00	80.320,50	0,00	0,00
GR-ENERGY	100.000,00	0,00	0,00	0,00
GR-GOODGOVERNANCE	100.000,00	0,00	0,00	0,00
GR-HOMEAFFAIRS	125.000,00	0,00	0,00	0,00
GR-HOMEAFFAIRS (FMO)	125.000,00	0,00	0,00	0,00
Funds still to be allocated	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00
TOTAL	2.334.000,00	1.556.401,13	258.342,23	177.667,83

6. Management and implementation

a. Management and control systems (MCS)

The Management and control System has been in effect since the year 2019-2020.

In the current reporting period, a modification of the respective Joint Ministerial Degree took place with minor adjustments at the national level (Official Gazette 2447 B'/18/05/2022).

For the training of the entities involved with the implementation of the Grants (Programme Operators and Project Promoters), NFP organized a 4days online seminar for public procurement. The 4 days long seminar (30-31 March and 6-7 April 2022) was addressed to the staff of programme operators and Project Promoters.

The seminars were organized, as per foreseen competence, by MOU SA in coordination with the National Focal Point.

As regards to the MCS at the programme level, as per Art.5.7, par. 2:

The programme **GR D – Water Management, GR E-Energy and GR G – Asylum and Migration** have a fully approved MCS from the previous reporting periods.

The programme **GR B- Roma Inclusion and Empowerment** received opinion and approval from the Audit Authority on 10 November 2021.

The programme **GR F- Good Governance** received opinion and approval from the Audit Authority on 29 June 2022.

b. Irregularities

In accordance with Chapter 12 of the EEA Grants Regulation 2014-2021 for Irregularities, the MCS Manual of Procedures incorporates a dedicated Operational Area consisted of procedures, including workflows and templates, for the management of irregularities. In the reporting period, further guidelines and instructions were sent to POs. Additionally as per art. 12.4, the NFP designed the template of the Registry of Irregularities alongside the respective instructions of use and sent it for use to POs and Certifying Authority.

The NFP submitted Irregularities reports through Grace according to the foreseen quarters. Reporting was based to input from Certifying Authority, Audit Authority and Programme Operators. No irregularities have been reported so far.

c. Complaints

In the reporting period, no complaint was filled.

d. Audit

As per Art. 5.5, the Audit Authority (EDEL) has drawn-up an audit strategy that spreads throughout the programming period 2014-2021, lays down general and specific objectives and incorporates the methodology that is necessary for its implementation.

The audit strategy covers all the programmes of EEA Grants for which EDEL is the Audit Authority and sets out the audit methodology, the sampling method for audits on projects and the indicative planning of audits to ensure that audits are spread evenly throughout the programming period. Audits are

performed according to EDEL's Audit Manual that meets the requirements of the international standards on auditing.

The last Audit Strategy was adopted by Audit Authority after the 895th meeting on 12 May 2022 and is available to FMC/FMO upon request. The key points of this strategy are summed up to:

- For the current reference period the sampling unit is the MIS and the population consists of 10 MIS. Each MIS corresponds to a call and is consisted of a number (one or more) of projects. There is a MIS that relates to an advance payment and this one does not participate in the population of the relevant audit period (i.e. from 1/1/2022 - 31/12/2022).
- A non-statistical sampling method (single period) has been applied and the selected sample of MIS/projects (3 audits) covers 30% of the population and the expenditure of the sample covers 67,79% of the total expenditure.
- In the following reference periods EDEL will use the project as the sampling unit. If the number of projects is higher than 100 units then a statistical sampling method will be applied».

7. Communication

In the realm of Comms, the NFP has been working closely with all the entities involved in the implementation of programmes, projects as well as the initiatives that form part of the Bilateral Fund. It is a commonsensical approach that the realization of the comms aims, as described in the Annex 3, can produce tangible results based primarily on a sense of togetherness. In this line, the NFP organises frequent online and offline meetings to enhance and strengthen the synergy spirit and planning.

Describing more of the NFP's comms activities:

- The www.eeagrants.gr site hosts all the updated information regarding documents issued on behalf of the POs and PPs, such as calls-for-proposals, relevant amendments, etc., and press releases which showcase vibrant activities of the projects' life-cycle.
- Our social media accounts (Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn) are always refreshed and up-to-date, according to a scheduled timeline posting—that takes into consideration each medium's idiosyncrasies and metrics—, and the reports issued as part of the platforms updating and guidance. The aim of the social media planning and content creation is that we would be in concert with the KPIs described in the NFP's Communication Strategy.
- During the 2021 fall, the NFP visited projects implemented in previous funding periods in an attempt to work closer with the FMO's Communication Unit and further promote the FMO's campaign #CivilSocietyStartsHere. For instance, we visited the Athenian Agora (throughout the funding period 2004-2009, the #EEAGrants funded the project "Reviving the Ancient Agora: The Cradle of Democracy", within the framework of the measure "Preservation of the European Cultural Heritage") and wrote about the value of Democracy, one of the six fundamental European values—according to the Communication Unit's campaign's rationale and guidelines. (See posts here: <https://www.facebook.com/EEAGrantsGR/posts/2957908141141188> <https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:6863451911807479808/>)
- The NFP has put a considerable effort to draw up a tender on "An EEA Grants Greece comprehensive Comms Strategy" with the aim to prepare a three-year conclusive plan comprising of well-targeted and well-resourced comms and publicity activities. This work is the result of a detailed studying and in-depth survey regarding the cutting-edge approach in Public-Setting Communication and the extremely rigid Public Procurements Greek legislation. The call is expected to be launched in early 2023.
- Throughout the summer 2022, the NFP has been preparing for its second, consecutive participation in the [International Thessaloniki Fair](#). (We presented last year's participation as a best practice in the Annual Comms Workshop.) This year there are two events, dedicated to programmes and projects that touch people in an immediate manner, and those programmes/projects that care for the environment and the preservation of natural resources. Fifteen (15) key-speakers representing entities has come together to share with the audience their hands-on work, and invaluable experience. The ultimate goal is to give voice to the PPs who have already started implementing their projects, instead of presenting the works in a faceless way. An audience comprised of universities, local government, NGOs, environmental associations, experts, and more have been invited to form part of this interaction that shows how the EEA Grants Mechanism in Greece works to enhance human lives.

8. Monitoring and evaluation

a. Monitoring

In the previous year, following the **Midterm review**, the MoU was modified and a total amount of EUR 7.479.448 (EEA FM contribution 6.146.115 E and National contribution for the Greek operated programmes 1.333.333 E) from the reserve was allocated to the Greek operated programmes **GR B Roma inclusion, GR D Water management and GR E Energy**. In that reporting period the programme **GR E Energy** modified respectively its Programme Agreement (Official Gazette 4132 B'/09/09/2021). In the current reporting period, the respective modification for the programme **GR D - Water** management took place in November 2021 and was transposed by MD in February (Official Gazette 486 B'/08/02/2022). The modification for the programme **GR B- Roma inclusion and empowerment** came into force by September 2022.

The Declaration and the verification of expenditures as well as the subsequent IFRs submissions are done, covering the preparation phase and/or preliminary actions' expenditures in programmes and in Technical Assistance.

Forecasts submitted as foreseen in the Regulation for accurate and realistic forecasts, to the best possible degree. The NFP as well as all programme operators cooperated with Certifying Authority in this regard.

Overall progress monitoring, coordination and support where applicable and/or necessary: The NFP is closely monitoring not only formally, but also informally, all aspects of implementation and absorption. This led to the imminent modification of the GR-G "Asylum" and may lead to more adjustments in the months to come.

All implementation follows procedures, roles and tasks as foreseen in the respective JMD which transposes the Regulation and the adjacent Manual of Procedures. Helpdesk and support is provided by the National Focal Point, the Certifying Authority and the Special Service for MIS OPS to all involved parties on daily basis. Meetings and follow ups are organized with all programmes and national entities on regular basis.

Coordination of the JCBF and implementation for the selected initiatives of the Bilateral Fund.

Training seminars were implemented in the reference period as follows:

For the entities involved with the implementation of the Grants (Programme Operators and Project Promoters), NFP organized a 4days online seminar for public procurement. The seminar was developed in 4 days (30-31 March and 6-7 April 2022) and it was addressed to the staff of programme operators and Project Promoters.

b. Evaluation

As per art.10.1 of the Regulation and the Evaluation plan that the NFP has submitted to FMO, NFP decided the ongoing evaluation of the programme "Asylum and Migration" on the grounds of a) the delays observed in the procedure of evaluation and project contracts of the PDPs and b) the need of consecutive modifications of the programme agreement in relation to the original design. In this context NFP awarded a respective contract to external independent experts on 1 November 2022. The evaluation was submitted and approved by the NFP on 14 June 2022.

9. Issues for the Annual meeting 2022

The Annual meeting 2022 has been scheduled to take place on Wednesday 16 November 2022. The issues to be included in the agenda are as follows:

1. Status of Programmes: Progress and outstanding issues of implementation, timeframe, risks and deficiencies, planning and goals for the year ahead.
2. Status of the Bilateral Fund: Progress of implementation, strategic initiatives, open call, timeframe, planning and goals for the year ahead.
3. Communication -Publicity: Strategy and activities' progress, planning ahead, dynamic showcase of complementary programmes and projects, effective and captivating dissemination of the new EEA Grants campaign taking into account both the linguistic and the cultural idiosyncrasies of Greece.
4. Organizational issues of NFP – Technical Assistance.
5. AOB, according to issues raised by Donors and the participants.