

# EEA GRANTS 2009-2014



## STRATEGIC REPORT 2016

&

ANNUAL REPORT ON TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

**(UPDATED AS OF SEPTEMBER 2017)**



HELLENIC REPUBLIC  
MINISTRY OF  
ECONOMY & DEVELOPMENT

**NATIONAL FOCAL POINT – SPECIAL SERVICE EEA GRANTS**

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# Strategic Report

## EEA and Norwegian Financial Mechanisms 2009-2014

### 1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The impact to the main objectives of the Grants, namely Cohesion and Bilateral Relations, became more visible in the course of 2016 and early 2017, as programmes of the 2009-2014 programming period entered their final phase of implementation.

Payments from the FMO to Greece resumed in 2016 and a significant increase in the use of funds was noted also in 2017, raising so far the absorption rate of the Greek - managed programmes of 2009-2014 to an average of approximately 76%, from less than ~50% at the end of 2016, with at least two programmes so far achieving more than 90%. Under-spending is already apparent mainly in GR06, for the reasons outlined in the relevant sections of this report and Cooperation Committees of the Programme. The bilateral actions of the programmes also accelerated and delivered results, and several cooperation events and exchange of know-how were organised in this period. These actions have a final implementation date on 31/12/2017. Closing events for programmes are also planned, two by the end of the year 2017.

The NFP assisted POs with various instructions for both the completion of the current, as well as the negotiations and preparation for the next (2014-2021) programming period. The upcoming last months of 2017 will provide the final results for all Programmes, with the exception of GR 01, namely the fund for bilateral relations at national level and technical assistance, eligibility of which end in April and August 2018 respectively.

Lastly, the new national MIS for EEA Grants was delivered in 2016 (OPS-EOX) and in this reference period expenditures of all programmes were entered in the MIS by the POs, retroactively for the whole 2009-2014 programming period, bringing the EEA grants in line with the extensive monitoring and (electronic only) payment tools used for all public expenditure and co-financed projects monitoring and thus providing a systemic approach and validation.

### 2 ASSESSMENT OF THE EFFECT OF THE GRANTS

#### 2.1 Cohesion

Please refer to main report (for 2016 submitted to FMO in March 2017, as per Regulation).

#### 2.2 Bilateral relations

The National Focal Point communicated with project promoters as provided in the approved BFNL Work Plan, to request the acceleration of implementation (reference: letter of Secretary General, in September 2017 to expedite progress and payments). The NFP has the reassurance of project that projects will be completed in due time. Projects will continue to be monitored as the timeline is very short.

Please refer to the table as follows:

No.	Project Title	Project Promoter	Donor Project Partner	Progress							
				Work Plan Budget	Status	Timetable	Eligible Expenses Declared- #IFR's (Oct/17)	Incurred Expenses not Declared (Oct/17)	Remaining Budget	Final Budget (current estimation)	Amount to be redistributed (current estimation)
1	Safety in the Off-Shore & Oil Gas Sector	Greek Ministry for Environment and Energy	Norwegian Petroleum Safety Authority.	30.000 €	Funding request pending.	Nov 2017 to Apr 2018	0 €	0 €	30.000 €	30.000 €	0 €
2	Entrepreneurship in Education	Junior Achievement Greece (SEN/JA)	Ungt Entreprenørskap, Junior Achievement – Young Enterprise (JA-YE) Norway	60.000 €	On-going	To Dec 2017.	21.489,34 €	0 €	38.000 €	60.000 €	0 €
3	Identification of best practices within the Norwegian Social Inclusion Model	Ministry of Labour, Social Security & Social Solidarity	Norwegian Ministry of Labor and social affairs	35.000 €	Completed	-	27.736,73 €	0 €	0 €	27.736,73 €	7.263 €
4	Geothermal Development	CRES	Norwegian Centre for Geothermal Energy Research (CGER)	30.000 €	On-going	Oct 2016 to Dec 2017	0 €	30.000 €	0 €	30.000 €	0 €
5	EU-Presidency Activity	Centre of International and European Economic Law (CIEEL)	Cooperation with Fundamental Rights Agency	50.000 €	Completed	-	38.632 €	0 €	0 €	38.632 €	11.368 €
6	Academic cooperation	The Technological University of Crete	The University of Adger (Norway)	30.000 €	Funding request pending.	Nov 2017 to Apr 2018	0 €	0 €	30.000 €	30.000 €	0 €
7	Cooperation between the Municipalities of Athens & Oslo in Migration/Integration issues	Municipality of Athens	Municipality of Oslo	82.000 €	On-going	Nov 2017 to Apr 2018	0 €	0 €	60.300 €	60.300 €	21.700 €
<b>TOTAL</b>				<b>317.000</b>			<b>87.858 €</b>	<b>30.000 €</b>	<b>158.300 €</b>	<b>276.669 €</b>	<b>40.331 €</b>

### 3 REPORTING ON PROGRAMMES

#### 3.1 Overview of Programme status

Further to the calls of 2014-2015 and initial implementation stages, the past year 2016 was a year of full implementation for EEA Grants 2009-2014 implementation and was characterized by increased activity in all programmes.

All the programmes monitored by the NFP had an extension of implementation until 30 April 2017 and therefore were completing their outcomes (and payments) within the timeframe of the present report edition.

At present (and appx. correlated with the last IFR to be submitted in the 2009-2014 period, via DORIS in Nov 2017), the table of **financial progress** is updated as follows:

Programme No. *	Total budget	EEA Grants budget contribution (€)	Funds disbursed by FMO (€, 31.08.17)	Expenditures incurred by the PO/FO (€, 31.12.16)	Expenditures incurred by the PO/FO (€, 31.08.17)	Absorption Rate (%)
		EEA/Norway	EEA/Norway			
<b>GR01</b>	771.220	771.220	473.650	157.432	282.661	37%
<b>GR02</b>	7.641.176	6.495.000	6.242.350	3.196.060	8.250.870	<b>108%</b>
<b>GR03</b>	11.188.235	9.510.000	9.404.222	5.412.775	10.334.041	<b>92%</b>
<b>GR06</b>	13.947.108	11.855.042	8.322.710	6.055.046	7.004.463	50%
<b>GR07</b>	3.525.072	2.996.311	2.872.476	2.194.327	2.587.040	73%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>37.072.811</b>	<b>31.627.573</b>	<b>27.315.408</b>	<b>17.015.640</b>	<b>28.459.075</b>	<b>77%</b>

Source: data from P.O.s, Public Investment Programme (national co-financing), DoRIS “programme overview” reports and IFR declared expenditures including all 2016 and until 31/8/2017.

*\*: Only GR-managed programmes are presented in this update. For FMO-managed programmes, information as was available to NFP can be found in the main report.*

Basically the programmes (except for GR 01, which has different final eligibility date) have largely completed their financial and physical objectives, as possible until the end of their eligibility period.

There is a small amount per programme outstanding, regarding the management costs and programme bilaterals which can be eligible until 31/12/2017 and will be declared in the final balance reports. Therefore the amounts in the above table are expected to slightly increase, but the picture will largely be as depicted here.

### 3.2 Individual Programme summaries

#### **GR 02 - Environment & water management**

All projects were completed on 30 April 2017. Actually the programme slightly over-performed in budget due to a previous decrease and these funds are planned to be reimbursed to the projects within the 2014-2021 mechanism (also for eligibility until April 2017).

The PO developed and applied an annual on-the-spot verification programme, for all the projects, in order to ensure the legality and regularity of declared expenditure.

In June (29-30) 2017 the PO organized a two-day workshop in Athens.

The aim of this workshop was:

- to examine the possible synergy and complementarity of the projects
- to identify the added value of the projects and
- to investigate the possibility of further exploiting the results of the projects

In regard to GR 02 bilateral projects, six (6) projects have already contributed to strengthening bilateral relations with the participation of partners from the Donor States in project implementation.

In addition, eight project promoters have expressed their interest in implementing actions related to bilateral relations under measure b. Those actions were contracted in February 2017 and are still in progress. According to the current progress of the bilateral activities and the reductions which have been achieved in the initial estimated cost, the final budget of the bilateral activities, under measure b, is estimated to be approximately 60.000 Euros by the end of 2017.

Lastly, the verifications programme will be completed in December 2017.

#### **GR 3 - Renewable Energy**

In the context of the Programme Area “Renewable Energy Sources (RES) – GR03” of EEA Grants 2009-14 implemented by Programme Operator “Centre for Renewable Energy Sources and Saving (CRES)”, nine (9) innovative demonstration projects for the integration of RES and electromobility in public buildings and facilities (hospitals, schools, universities, sports centers, public administration buildings, pumping stations) of great visibility and significant social value added, were implemented. The nature of the infrastructures in which they have been integrated ensured the highest possible multiplicity of results, demonstrating to large population groups that technical solutions that incorporate RES in small-scale applications, thus improving energy efficiency and reducing the operating costs of the infrastructure in which they are installed, are mature and sustainable. The completion of the projects reinforced actively the promotion of the national 2030 RES policies, and at the same time, stimulated the local economies through the involvement of the local construction sector where possible.

PO CRES closely monitored and ensured the smooth implementation of the GR03 projects and in many cases its contribution was crucial for ensuring that projects are completed before the eligibility deadline and avoiding any potential setbacks. With the continuous remote or on-site presence of the PO, unexpected issues such as extreme weather phenomena, delays in the acquisition of equipment due to capital controls etc. were addressed. Three – and in certain cases four - **on-the-spot verifications** were realized in all projects. The final on-the-spot verification for all projects was performed from 20/06/2017 to 27/07/2017. The competent subteam examined the implementation of the physical objective of the projects and inspected the productive operation of the 9 projects and their related subprojects.

No.	Project Promoter	Project title*	Output Indicators			
			1. Total RES consumption (MWh/year)	1.1. Renewable electricity consumption (MWh/year)	1.2. Renewable thermal energy consumption (buildings) (MWh/year)	2. Reduction or avoidance of CO2 emissions (tonnes/year)
1.	Region of Western Macedonia	RES Integrated interventions for developing the Local Community of Grevena	796,59	388,75	407,84	1.200,02
2.	Democritus University of Thrace	The contribution of Renewable Energy Sources in the sustainable development and operation of the Democritus University of Thrace – Creation of a sustainable Community	2.456,00	72,67	2.383,33	790,97
3.	Municipality of Andros	Demonstrative interventions for Renewable Energy Sources (RES) in the Island of Andros"	95,44	95,44	-	1.250,74
4.	Centre for Social Protection and Solidarity, Education and Environment – Polykoinoniko (Alexandroupolis)	Implementation of RES projects to support socially vulnerable groups and experiential environmental education in the Municipality of Alexandroupolis	950,59	25,20	925,39	229,03
5.	Agricultural University of Athens	Integration of RES Technologies in the Community of Agricultural University of Athens"	130,56	116,60	13,96	1.292,40
6.	Municipality of Nea Ionia	Geothermal System of district air conditioning and other RES applications	1.470,78	110,55	1.360,23	617,53

No.	Project Promoter	Project title*	Output Indicators			
			1. Total RES consumption (MWh/year)	1.1. Renewable electricity consumption (MWh/year)	1.2. Renewable thermal energy consumption (buildings) (MWh/year)	2. Reduction or avoidance of CO2 emissions (tonnes/year)
7.	General Hospital Mamatsio-Bodossakio	Installation of solar vacuum collectors for the full coverage of hot water needs, solar cooling with an absorption chiller and support of heating with the remaining thermal energy	1.211,90	1.211,90	-	376,00
8.	Municipality of Karpenissi	Application of RES technologies in municipal buildings of the Municipality of Karpenissi	879,00	199,60	679,00	255,00
9.	Organisation for the Development of Crete S.A. (O.A.K. S.A.)	Installation of photovoltaic systems in water tanks of O.A.K. SA & autonomous operation of water pumps	189,55	189,55	-	210,00

The aforementioned outcome indicators will be confirmed with the submission of the Project Completion Report and the Energy Targets Accomplishment Report by the Project Promoters.

**Bilateral relations projects** were assigned to all Project Promoters with the modification of the Accession Decision. PPs have been implementing actions, such as study trips to entities from Donor countries for the transfer of good practices in the field of RES, visits by experts from entities from Donor countries for the transfer of technical expertise and feasibility studies on installing RES technologies, with important entities from the Donor countries.

**Complementary Actions** include activities of technical expertise exchange between the actors of the GR03 Programme and similar RES and EE programmes applied in the current programming period (2009-2014) in six other (6) Beneficiary countries aiming at strengthening cooperation and the exchange of experience. In particular, a Study and analysis of the social-financial framework of similar to the GR03 EEA Programmes including a thorough analysis for each country (Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary, Poland, Latvia and Portugal) was conducted. The Study's objective was to draw conclusions on the objectives of such programmes, their results in relation to their financial environment, their management efficiency, possible obstacles and ways of surpassing them, etc. The results of the study can be found in the following web-based application: <http://res-eeagrants.com/el/>.



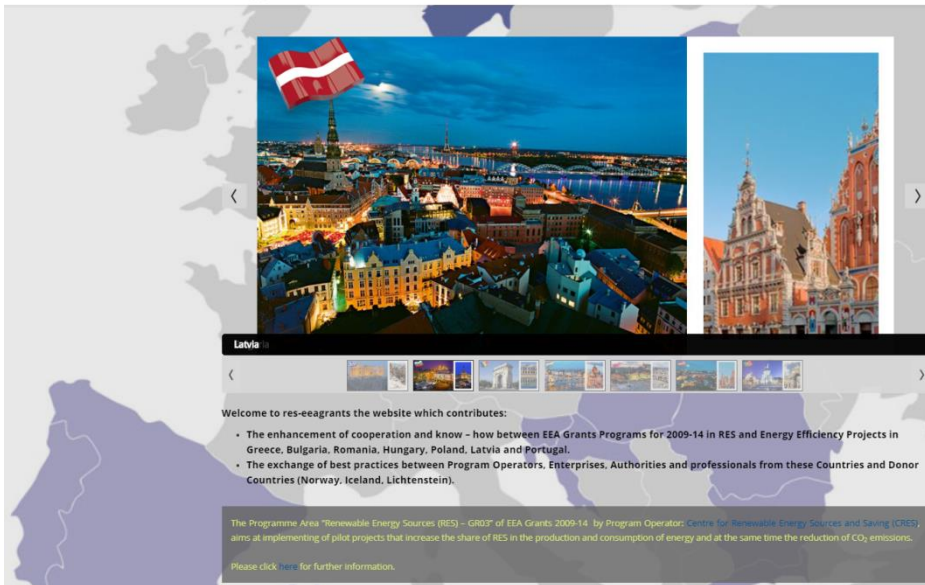


Image 1: GR03 Complementary Actions platform

Overall, the following activities were implemented:

- Activity A: Study and analysis of social – financial – aspects of similar to the GR03 programmes in EEA Grants beneficiary countries (for each beneficiary country that has implemented a RES-EE focused programme: Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary, Poland, Latvia and Portugal).
- Activity B: Techno – economic evaluation of two (2) chosen projects in every one of the six (6) beneficiary countries (results, promotion, social acceptance etc.). The selected projects are in accordance with similar projects which have been implemented in the GR03.
- Activity C: Analysis, collection, process and study of all data which comes up from the above activities and operation of an Integrated web-based application that offers the methodological, modern presentation of targets, implementation methods, real project data and actions, which have been implemented in relevant programmes in these countries (including Greece), through the web-based application (<http://res-eeagrants.com/el/>). It provides a common place for the exchange of information on the implemented projects by providing information to all those interested in participating in the EEA Grants, as well as to those interested in evaluating their results in the different countries. Moreover, it provides significant information for the participating countries and the progress they have made in the sectors of RES and Energy Efficiency.
- Activity D: The final activity refers to the organization of an event where the results of the aforementioned activities will be presented. The event is planned to take place on 06/12/2017. It should be noted that the Closing event of the programme will take place on 07/12/2017.



*Image 2: Solar collectors in Mamatseio Hospital*



*Image 3: PV power station in Democritus University of Thrace*



*Image 4: PV at the sewage plant of the Municipality of Andros*



*Image 5: Biomass Boiler and feeding system in Alexandroupolis*



*Image 6: Electric vehicles at the Agricultural University of Athens*



*Image 7: Geothermal district air conditioning in the Municipality of Nea Ionia*



*Image 8: Absorption chiller at Mpodosakeio Hospital*



*Image 9: PV at a school of the Municipality of Karpenissi*



*Image 10: Installed PVs on the tank top and the nearby pump house*

Lastly, regarding **on the spot verifications**: PO CRES closely monitored the implementation progress of all projects. In particular, daily project monitoring was implemented with the contribution of the Project Implementation Subteam and the Payment Claims Verification Subteam. PO CRES performed the first on-site verification of all Projects in October-November 2016, the second on-site verification in March 2017, a third on-site verification in certain cases in April 2017 and the final on-site verification in June-July 2017. Experts from the Project Implementation Subteam implemented the on-site verification using an appropriate questionnaire, which includes checking the technical scope of the project, the financial scope of the contract, the documentation kept by the Project Promoter and whether the publicity requirements of the Programme are met. After the completion of the on-site verifications, recommendations were made to Project Promoters based on the Management and Control System to ensure the smooth implementation of the projects.



## **GR06 - Capacity building of national asylum and migration management systems**

Early 2017 witnessed a decrease in the number of refugees and migrants crossing the Greek land and maritime borders. Nevertheless, during the first eight months of 2017, a total of 15.300 third country nationals arrived to Greece by sea, posing serious challenges to the overstretched accommodation facilities. Arrivals mainly originated from the Syrian Arab Republic (40%) and Iraq (16%). In addition to the sea arrivals, as of 31 August 2017, an estimated 2,200 people have arrived at the Evros Greek – Turkish land border.

The islands of the eastern Aegean Sea, namely Lesbos, Samos, Chios, Kos and Leros have received the largest numbers of refugees and migrants, including many unaccompanied minors and other vulnerable groups, as elderly people and people with disabilities and serious medical cases.

Following the extension granted until April 2017, all projects had 4 months to conclude from January 2017 and an additional 30-day period to conduct payments for invoices issued in April 2017. Meanwhile, since the establishment of the new Ministry of Migration Policy (MoMP) in November 2016, invoice payments for all Services under the Ministry (including RIS and the Asylum Service) had to be implemented via the Ministry's own -similarly newly set up- Financial Directorate (FD). This change delayed the timeline for the payments in the last months of implementation of GR 06, leading to invoices paid by the FD past the eligibility deadline. In light of these developments, the P.O. consulted with the NFP and the FMO to find measures or alternatives to safeguard the EEA grants contribution and absorb the funds allocated to the programme, in the event sub-projects would not be implemented by the end of April eligibility date.

Given that a further modification of the Programme was not a viable option due to the limited time left until the end of the Programme (and last modification took place only months before), a final internal reallocation exercise was put to the FMO, building on the assistance and technical expertise provided by the Norwegian Directorate of Immigration (UDI). It was suggested that underspending within project PDP#1, estimated at € 956.119 could be transferred to subproject 1 to reimburse the national budget for expenses of Hellenic Police staff that provided security services in the same RIC (funds to be safeguarded in national budget, no new payments to staff). Similarly, underspending under PDP#4, estimated at € 847.283, to be transferred to subproject 1. And lastly underspending under PDP#2, of € 2.277.036, were proposed to be transferred to sub-project 1 (staff recruitment) in order to reimburse the national budget for salaries of AS staff, who were providing the same services as the temp staff recruited and paid via EEA Grants, from 1/5/2016 to 30/4/2017. An external auditor assisted in the verification exercise. However, according to a letter by FMO dated 28 April 2017, the Donors decided not to approve the requested reallocation of funds.

In terms of project implementation, the Reception and Identification Service faced difficulties in proceeding with several subprojects, in particular in regard public tenders, as the new process required the MoMP to make central procurement. This affected PDPs #1, #4 and #5 in terms of supply contracts or services initially planned to be delivered in the last months of the Programme (national budget completed the funding gaps).

Following a monitoring visit which took place on 10/03/2017 in **RIC Fylakio**, PO confirmed that living standards had improved following the completion of the maintenance and repair works and services were provided normally. Interaction between staff and beneficiaries was found to be at a very good

level and entertainment facilities were available to the TCNs. Regarding unaccompanied minors, their average stay ranged from 2 to 3 months (in the wing for minors and families) due to the limited availability of open accommodation places through EKKA.

During the last months of the Programme, the **RIC in Moria, Lesvos**, operated at full capacity (180 places) following the completion of the maintenance and repair works. Transfers of TCNs to other accommodation facilities on the island and mainland Greece continued, alleviating to a small extent overcrowding issues. As regards unaccompanied minors, their stay at the RIC did not exceed 10 days (in the wing for minors) before being transferred, on the condition of available places.

The Project concerning the two **RIS Mobile Units** was adversely affected by the lack of new procurement procedures since late 2016 and was not implemented as planned.

The Greek **Asylum Service** continued to receive support through PDP#2, mainly directed towards staff recruitment and the provision of interpretation services. Public tenders for the provision and installation of identification badging system, the upgrade of network infrastructure, the police-on-line smart cards, the software for the programming of interviews and registrations, the purchase of books and the subscription to e-law libraries and the transcription of interviews, were expected to go ahead following the last Programme Agreement modification of November 11, 2016. However, only the software for the programming of interviews and registrations and the police-on-line smart cards were implemented via GR 06.

In terms of the **bilateral actions**, in February 2017 the PO successfully organized a two-day seminar on project management, provided by the BI Norwegian Business School. In addition, the Project Promoters were able to benefit in terms of knowledge transfer and best practices; in February, three RIS staff members took part in a two-day study visit in Norway for the examination of unaccompanied minors management from Norwegian authorities, while a second study visit was organized in March for the examination of migration system procedures followed by Norwegian Authorities and overview of the I.T. system (database) used for the monitoring of third country nationals accommodated in open facilities, whereby three RIS staff members and one Police Officer had the chance to acquaint themselves with relevant procedures. The 'Dublin Unit' of the Greek Asylum Service greatly benefited from the visit to the Norwegian Dublin Unit, whereby seven GAS staff members were provided with in-depth information on the structure and organization of the respective Norwegian Dublin Unit and presented with best practices, the adoption of which will directly contribute to the capacity-building of the Greek Dublin Unit.

As regards the progress achieved in terms of the Programme indicators, under PDP#1 a total of 13.263 TCNs and 794 unaccompanied children were accommodated at the RIC, well exceeding the Project's indicators (9.210 and 410 respectively). The Asylum Service reached the total number of 27.419 decisions on international protection claims taken at first instance, while the asylum requests received and processed within the RIC in Fylakio reached 1384. For PDP#4, a total of 888 TCNs and 818 unaccompanied children were accommodated, while 10.250 TCNs were informed at the RIC in Moria, Lesvos.

Table comprising the information requested in art. 2.1.4 of the Annex I of the Programme Agreement:

PROGRAMME AGREEMENT -11/11/2016 -GR 06				
	Total Payments (01/01/2017-31/08/2017)	Eligible Payments (01/01/2017-31/08/2017)	Non -Eligible Payments (01/01/2017-31/08/2017)	National Contribution (15%)*
GR06-0001 (Covering the operational cost of the First Reception Centre, Fylakio/Evros)	730.709 €	191.002 €	539.707 €	568.357 €
GR06-0002 (Assistance to Asylum Service)	581.326 €	557.041 €	24.285 €	107.841 €
GR06-0003 (Covering the operational costs for two First Reception Mobile Units)	13.243 €	0	13.243 €	13.243 €
GR06-0004 (Covering the operational costs of the First Reception Centre, Lesvos)	398.345 €	93.224 €	305.121 €	319.105 €
(Covering the costs for staff recruitment for the Reception and Identification Service)	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	1.723.623 €	841.267 €	882.356 €	1.008.546 €

*\*The amount that corresponds to the national contribution, was attributed by the national budget as the 2 Project Promoters of the GR06 Programme are public entities.*

## GR 07 – Research

The contribution of projects to the Programme outputs is updated as follows:

Output indicators	Target	Actual	Projects concluded implementation
No. of approved projects focusing on the thematic area “National inequalities and social exclusion	7	7	7
No. of approved projects focusing on the thematic area “Gender equality and work-life balance”	6	5	5
No. of approved projects focusing on the thematic area “Cultural diversity”	4	6	6

Special verification teams were established in General Secretariat of Research and Technology for conducting **on the spot verifications** (as per MCS). As per 31/08/2017 three (3) verifications performed and the rest scheduled by 15/11/2017, reports will be made available at the P.O. level.

## 4 MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION

### 4.1 Management and control systems

Please refer to main report.

### 4.2 Compliance with EU legislation, national legislation and the MoU

Please refer to main report.

### 4.3 Irregularities

One new complaint was received and reported to FMO as suspected irregularity in 2017 (Q2 periodic report, see section for Audit Authority).

In all, as per the periodic reporting on irregularities (last submitted for Q2 2017), five (5) irregularities were reported as pending by the NFP; of these three (3) are requested to be closed as all actions were completed and only two (2) are awaiting audit reports or administrative actions.

### 4.4 Audit, monitoring and review

A system audit to the Programme Operator General Secretariat for Research and Technology responsible for GR 07 “Research within Priority Sectors” programme will be performed in the final audit period by the Audit Authority (EDEL).

Furthermore, according to the Audit Authority methodology, a random sample of expenditures to be audited for Period 1 (concerning incurred (actual) expenditure in IFRs submitted from 1/1/2016 to 15/7/2017) is to be extracted by the Management Information System (OPS-EOX) after 15/7/2017 and a random sample for Period 2 (concerning incurred (actual) expenditure in IFRs submitted from 16/7/2017 until closure) is to be extracted after 31/8/2018.

Following an official complaint submitted to the Audit Authority (EDEL), the latter decided to perform complementary audits to three (3) contracts, as included in the revised Audit Strategy submitted to the FMO in July 2017.

Lastly, audits or on the spot verifications by external auditors are planned on behalf of FMC/FMO to selected projects in the last months of 2017.

#### 4.5 Information and publicity

- For GR 02: The **second Publicity event** was held on **17 January 2017**, at the amphitheater of the Ministry of Environment and Energy. The aim of this event was to present the progress of the project of the overall Program and to display good practices. It offered the opportunity to exchange experiences and contributed to speed up the completion of the projects.
- For GR 03: The **Closing event** is planned for **7 December 2017**. The GR03 Programme website is updated with news, info and clarifications. The website can be found under the url: <http://eeares.cres.gr> (Greek and English). All Project Promoters have created websites for their Projects, on which a detailed description of their Project can be found (see below). Project Promoters implemented their dissemination activities according to the provisions of their project contracts.

##### Project Promoter & Websites:

1. Region of Western Macedonia: <http://www.pdm.gov.gr/praxi-olokliromenes-paremvasis-ape-gia-tin-anaptyxi-tis-topikis-kinotitas-grevenon/>

 : EOX Γρεβενά,  : @GrevenaEox

2. Democritus University of Thrace: <http://reuni.eu/en/>

3. Municipality of Andros: [www.andros-eeagrants.gr](http://www.andros-eeagrants.gr)

4. Centre for Social Protection and Solidarity, Education and Environment – Polykoinoniko (Alexandroupolis): <http://www.reis2.eu/>

5. Agricultural University of Athens: <http://xmeox.aua.gr>

6. Municipality of Nea Ionia: <http://www.neaionia.gr/Inner.aspx?LangID=1&FolderID=e4e779e0-bf6c-49cb-b494-43b5cea2e166>

 : Nea Ionia Municipality,  : @neaioniacity

7. General Hospital Mamatsio-Bodossakio: <http://mpodosakeio.plano2.gr/>

8. Municipality of Karpenissi: <http://www.karpenisi-eox.gr/>



9. Organisation for the Development of Crete SA: <http://oakae.gr/index.php/2013-12-29-08-16-57/526-2017-05-05-13-05-52>,  <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iPHw2IlnWA>

- The GR 06: **Closing event** is planned for **30-31 October 2017**.
- For GR 07: In terms of information and communication: the programme dedicated website <http://www.gsrt.gr/EOX/> was updated in order to inform all interested parties about the current developments. In addition, communication actions were undertaken within the completed projects in order to disseminate their results to the scientific community. Scientific publications were issued, based on EE Grants research. According to the final reports submitted by all project promoters, a total of 106 dissemination activities took place and 82 scientific publications were issued throughout the duration of the programme.
- New logos for EEA Grants, as received by FMO, have been sent to all Programme Operators (current and new) by NFP.
- NFP Closing event: planned for spring 2018 (coordinate with FMO about poss combination with launching event for 2014-2021).

#### 4.6 Work Plan

1. Continuous delivery of all regulatory and managerial tasks, as provided by the Regulation and the MCS, including inter alia management of Technical Assistance and Bilateral Fund at the National Level, monitoring of the implementation and closure procedures for all other Programmes, irregularities reporting, communication and publicity requirements, etc. Expected increased number of events as programmes are closing.
2. Organisation of the 2017 Meeting of the Bilateral Fund Committee, planned for **31 October 2017**.
3. New MoU 2014-2021 signature: **31 October 2017**.
4. Organisation of the 2017 Annual Meeting: planned for **1 November 2017**.
5. Final IFR (payment claim) for all POs for the 2009-2014 programming period (except TA): 15/11/2017. Via DoRIS, as usual.
6. Awarding independent **ex-post evaluations** for programmes GR 03 and GR 06. The evaluation recommendations may assist in new relevant programmes for EE Grants 2014-2021. Final Reports expected latest 1/3/2018 (T.A. financed).
7. Input of all technical assistance (GR01) and all Programmes data and payments into the new MIS system for EEA grants (OPS-EOX).
8. Final Programme Reports (due **28/2/2017**) and final balance monitoring as per the Regulation, instructions sent by Certifying Authority (September 2017) to all P.O.s. Intermediate deadline set by CA for draft reports by 15/1/2018.
9. NFP Closing event: **Spring 2018** (tbc).
10. Final Strategic Report: **30 June 2018**.
11. Final TA Report: **15 November 2018**.

## 5 SUMMARY LIST OF ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- The limited time for actual programme implementation and absorption of grants (slow start, limited margin for implementation, admin changes, legislative updates etc.), continued to affect EEA Grants progress in 2016 and Jan – Aug 2017 with eligibility ending in this period (April 2017) for most Programmes. This is why every effort is made to start the new programming period with sufficient timeframe for the relevant stakeholders to implement new programmes and projects.
- Programmes of 2009-2014 were completed at programming level with a satisfactory use of funds, improving on previous periods. In Dec 2017, the programmes will present final picture for results and use of funds and this picture will be formally presented in the final reports and final balance of each programme.
- NFP will be closely monitoring the achievement of the bilateral actions especially at national level during 2017 and until eligibility end in April 2018, facilitating where possible. The beneficiary bodies retain the key responsibility for timely implementation and budget absorption. For this, NFP could strongly benefit from additional designated staff for payments support and relevant processes now culminating with the execution of contracts, organisation of events etc. It is noted that more than half of the amounts available in the 2009-2014 period for TA and BFNL would need to be implemented, invoiced, paid and inserted to all systems (DoRIS and national), in these last months of late 2017 and early 2018.

## 6 ANNUAL REPORT 2016 updated – Technical Assistance (& BFNL)

### 6.1 New Institutional setup for the National Focal Point

The **Independent Unit** for EEA Grants (NFP) was changed to a '**Special Service**' for Planning, Coordination and Monitoring of the Implementation of the Financial Mechanisms of the European Economic Area, with legislation adopted by Law no. 4465/ 2017, in April 2017. The Special Service has the same line of hierarchy as before within the Ministry of Economy & Development and retains the same responsibilities, as well as infrastructure and staff. The change was instituted to bring it in line with the legal status of Special Services responsible for EU funds.

Today it is staffed by 3 officials of high expertise and working experience in the monitoring and implementation of co-financing mechanisms and public investments. The Special Service (NFP) is planning for further staffing; following requirements and provisions of the relevant regulatory framework, recruitment and staffing for the Special Service is expected to be completed by spring 2018.

### 6.2 NFP staff in the reference period

Name of staff	Official position	Main tasks	Level of effort (% of working time)	Funded through the Grants (Y/N)
Niki Dandolou	Acting Head	All 2009-2014 programmes and new negotiation for 2014-2021.	100% From July 2016.	N
Herakles Alexopoulos	Desk officer	GR01, 02, 03, Bilaterals.	100%	N
Eleni Kontaxaki	Desk officer	T.A., Irregularities, support to the negotiation of new period.	100% From May 2017.	N

### 6.3 T.A. and bilateral NFP issues

Implementation for **Technical Assistance** is on-going in the reference period and efforts are made to efficiently and effectively absorb the available funds. To this end, relevant proposals will be examined together with FMO regarding possible final reallocations or reviews of budget headings. The management and payment procedures for **bilateral** projects are following the relevant national rules and are dependent on the legal status of each final beneficiary.

Lastly, the total amount of incurred expenditure for GR 01 (T.A. and bilateral fund), status #IFR10 (July 2017) is depicted in the following table:

	<b>Incurred expenditure in ref. per. (#IFR10)</b>	<b>TOTAL INCURRED</b>	<b>TOTAL BUDGETED</b>
<b>Incurred expenditures Totals</b>	<b>125.229</b>	<b>282.661</b>	<b>771.220</b>
Programme Management - NFP	7.119	<b>65.722</b>	<b>241.720</b>
Programme Management – Certifying Authority	0	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
Programme Management – Audit Authority	0	<b>5.3590</b>	<b>62.500</b>
Programme Management → Other entities (MIS etc)	95.232	<b>118.848</b>	<b>150.000</b>
Fund for Bilateral Relations (BFNL)	22.878	<b>89.991</b>	<b>317.000</b>