



HELLENIC REPUBLIC
**MINISTRY OF ECONOMY,
DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM**

EEA GRANTS 2009-2014



STRATEGIC REPORT

+ Annual report on Technical Assistance

(Covering year 2015)

28 March 2016

UPDATED REPORT AS OF SEPTEMBER 2016

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

FMC	Financial Mechanism Committee
FMO	Financial Mechanism Office
NFP	National Focal Point
PO	Programme Operator
FO	Fund Operator
PP	Project Promoter
PA	Programme Agreement
MCS	Management and Control System
SGS	Small Grant Scheme
BFNL	Bilateral Fund at National Level
GHG Emissions	Greenhouse Gas Emissions
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
CRES	Centre for Renewable Energy Sources
RES	Renewable Energy Sources
AVR	Assisted Voluntary Return
NSRF	National Strategic Reference Framework
GR01	Technical Assistance and Bilateral Fund at National Level
GR02	Integrated Marine and Inland Water Management
GR03	Renewable Energy
GR04	Funds for NGO
GR05	Address urgent needs for the reception and screening of new arrivals and for the accommodation of vulnerable groups. Assistance to voluntary returns
GR06	Capacity building of national asylum and migration management systems
GR07	Research
GR08	Solidarity and Social Inclusion in Greece

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The year 2015 had proved to be very challenging and interesting from the point of view of implementation. Significant advances are to be noted, while Greece was faced with the fifth year of acute crisis.

During the year 2015, three elections took place in Greece (general elections in January, a referendum in July, and again general elections in September), restrictions on capital movements were imposed, and an unprecedented rise in the migration flows occurred.

However, during 2015, the EEA Grants programmes were deployed in this environment of limited financial resources with very good results and faced all difficulties with success in spite of the slower rhythm of the previous years. All programmes monitored by the NFP finalized their calls and proceeded to evaluations and registering of projects until September 2015. The programmes monitored by the FMO also continued their implementation, and nearly exhausted their resources.

Thus, the impact of the implementation to the main objectives of the Grants, namely Cohesion and Bilateral Relations, started to be more visible this year. Indeed, especially concerning the social impact, the contribution of the Grants was significant, by improving the social conditions of vulnerable groups (Ffourarcheio, coupons, shelters) or by reinforcing the administrative capacity of services at the cutting edge, such as the Asylum and the First Reception Services. Subsequent redesign of the programmes, including exceptional budget transfers between them, contributed to strengthening the programmes that mostly help to respond to the mounting crisis. A more pronounced impact is expected in 2016 and onwards, including in the other sectors (environment, research) and in the bilateral relations.

The general extension for one more year, that was granted to all programmes, as well as the ring-fencing of the funds, decided in August, mean enhanced opportunities for the POs, and especially for the PPs to finalize the projects. However, the persistent crisis remains a cause of concern as to whether the programmes will reach their targets.

UPDATE:

All the projects of the programmes monitored by the NFP have an extension of implementation until April 2017 and all of them are in progress (only the small grant scheme II of the GR02 Programme will be completed by the end of September 2016).

Payment flows (from the Programme of Public Investments) were normalized and the majority of the disbursed funds have been transferred to the projects/programme operators. The payments from the FMO were resumed.

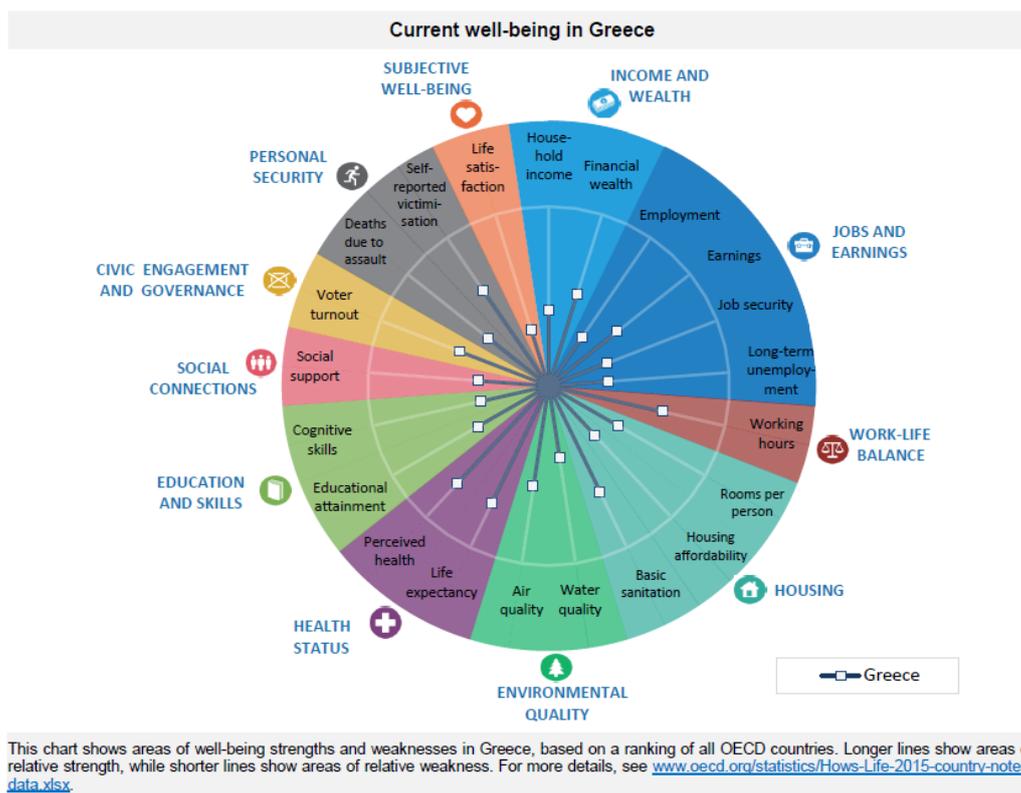
Every effort is being made to speed up implementation, however risks remain due to relatively slow deployment of programmes, legislative amendments and implementation issues in specific cases, as analysed further in the present report.

The projects of the Programmes managed by the FMO are almost completed, except GR05 that has an extension till April 2017. Further to agreement with the FMC during the Annual Meeting of 2015, an exceptional budget transfer of 3,985 mil € from the programmes GR01, GR02 and GR06 to programme GR05 took place in early 2016 (see tables par. 3.1).

2. ASSESSMENT OF THE EFFECT OF THE GRANTS

2.1 Cohesion

The majority of the projects started in 2015, or had just been initiated towards the end of the year. In fact, apart from the programme GR06, the rest of the programmes signed contracts (and subsequently, registered them into Doris and the National Public Investments programme) in mid-September 2015. Therefore, the impact of the Grants in terms of cohesion and strengthening the bilateral relations is still relatively small.



Source: *How's life in Greece? OECD Better Life Initiative report, October 2015.*

According to the OECD Better Life Initiative, (see <http://www.oecdbetterlifeindex.org/countries/greece/>) in general, Greeks are less satisfied with their lives than the OECD average. When asked to rate their general satisfaction with life on a scale from 0 to 10, Greeks gave it a 4.8 grade, the lowest score in the OECD, where average life satisfaction is 6.6.

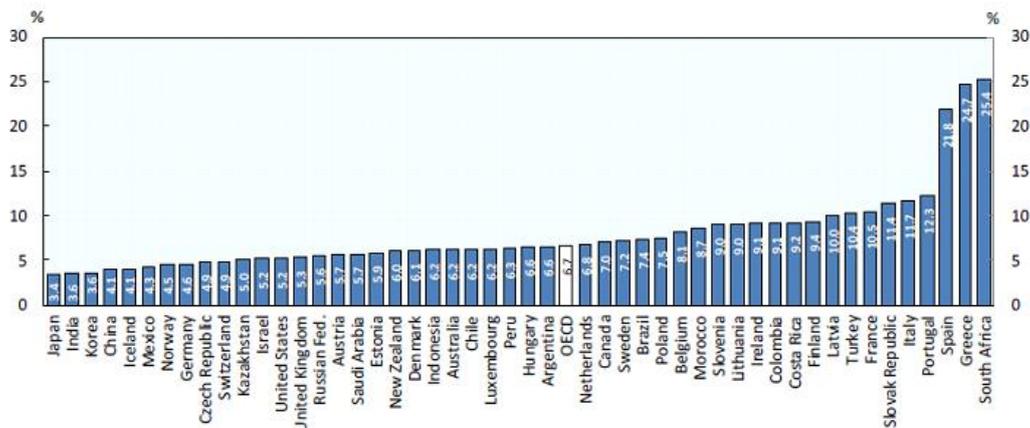
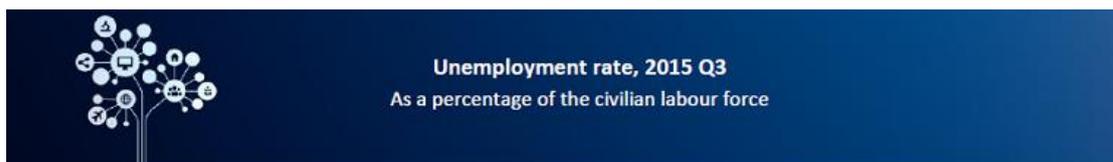
In summary, and according to the European Commission's European Economic Forecast of autumn 2015, published in November, "the unsuccessful conclusion of the 2nd adjustment programme, the referendum called in June 2015, the ensuing bank holiday and the introduction of capital controls raised uncertainty and deteriorated the growth outlook". The Greek economy is forecast to contract by 1,4% in 2015 and further by 1,3% in 2016. The decreasing trend of unemployment is expected to be interrupted for 2016 and 2017. In this context, Greece is facing an unprecedented rise in the migration flows, which further stresses its finances.

Finances are still under great pressure, thus affecting the economic as well as social prospects of the citizens.

Greece/Euro area | Economic Indicators

Overview	Last		Previous		Frequency	Reference	Graph	
	GR	€ area	GR	€ area			GR	€ area
GDP Growth Rate	-0.6 %	0.3%	-1.4	0.3%	Quarterly	Dec/15		
Unemployment Rate	24.59 %	10.4%	24.65	10.5%	Monthly	Nov-Dec/15		
Youth Unemployment Rate	48%	22%	48,6%	22.1%	Monthly	Nov-Dec/15		
Inflation Rate	-0.7 %	0.4%	-0.2%	0.2%	Monthly	Jan/16		
Government Debt to GDP	179 %	93.5%	175	91.1%	Yearly	Dec/15		

Source: <http://www.tradingeconomics.com>

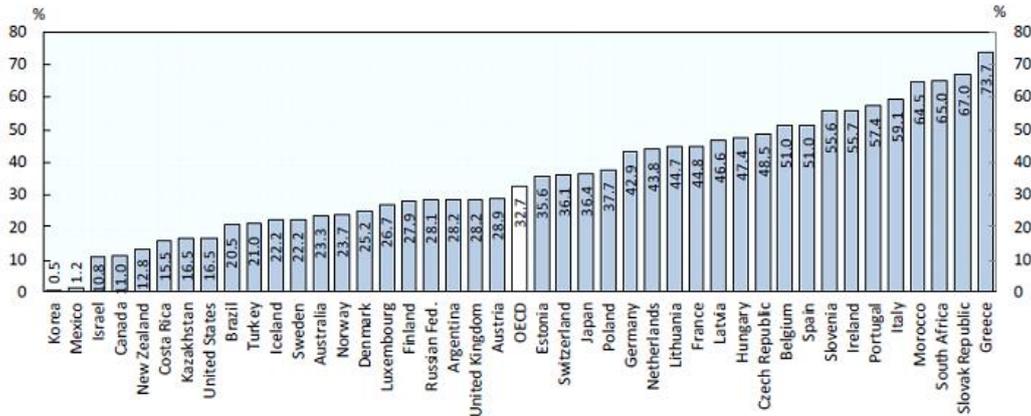


Note: The data for OECD countries refer to harmonised unemployment rates. OECD is a weighted average.



Long-term unemployment, 2015 Q3

Persons unemployed for one year or more
as a percentage of the total unemployed



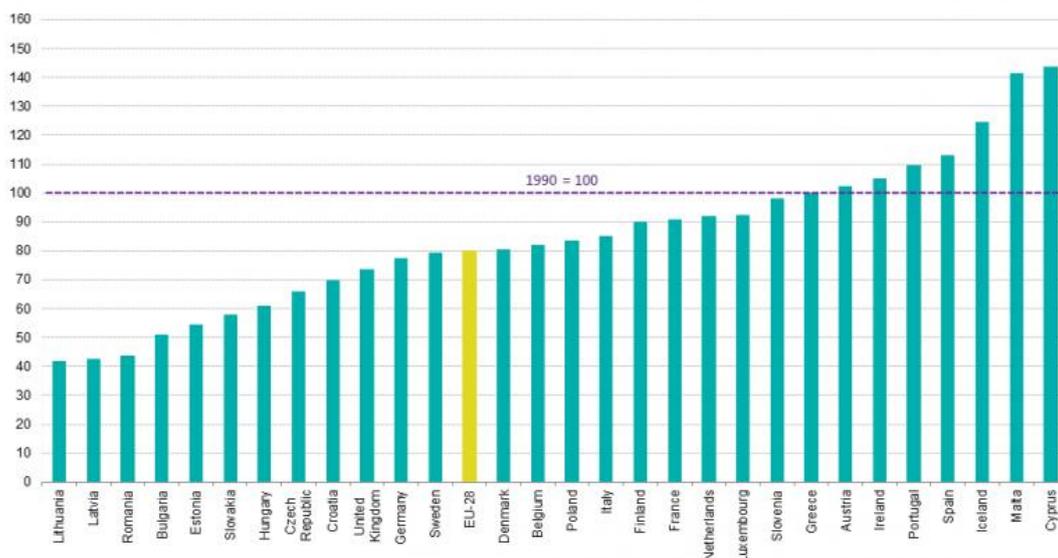
Note: OECD is a weighted average excluding Chile.

Source : OECD. (<http://www.oecd.org/employment/ministerial/employment-in-figures.htm>)

The above data clearly demonstrate the necessity, and the significant contribution of the programmes dedicated to alleviating poverty, promoting social cohesion and offering social services. These programmes, namely GR04 and GR08, have deployed their potential in the year 2015, targeting wider range of beneficiaries and adapting to the increased and changing needs of the population.

According to the OECD, in Greece, the level of atmospheric PM10 – tiny air pollutant particles small enough to enter and cause damage to the lungs – is 27.3 micrograms per cubic meter in large urban areas, considerably higher than the OECD average of 20.1 micrograms per cubic meter.

Total greenhouse gas emissions by countries (including international aviation and excluding LULUCF), 2013, (Index 1990 = 100)



Source: Eurostat (http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Greenhouse_gas_emission_statistics#Main_statistical_findings)

For 2020, the EU has committed to cutting its emissions to 20 % below 1990 levels. The contribution of the flagship projects financed within GR03 will decisively contribute to reaching these targets. Indeed, according to the GR03 annual report, the interventions of the approved projects exceed the targets set for output indicators, both for renewable energy production and CO2 emissions reduction.

Equally, according to the OECD Better Life Initiative, in terms of environmental quality, only 69,4% of the Greek population is satisfied with the local water quality, compared to the OECD average of 80,9%; this is one of the lowest rates in the OECD. Although small in scale and limited in number, the projects selected under GR02 will have a significant impact, mainly local, towards improvement of water quality. Equally, the studies that are being financed will increase knowledge in fields of capital importance for Greece, such as shore erosion and protection and management of water bodies in danger.

The impact of GR07 on cohesion is mainly a consequence of the general absence of financing for the kind of studies that the EEA Grants are targeting. Indeed, in a context of very low R&D financing in general, the social research is not the main target of other sources of financing. We expect the results of the projects to significantly contribute to increased knowledge in these fields, and to lead to action; what is more, the viability of the research centers is also decisively affected by the financing.

Gross domestic expenditure on R&D, 2003–13 (% of GDP)

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
EU-28	1.80	1.76	1.76	1.78	1.78	1.85	1.94	1.93	1.97	2.01	2.01
Euro area (EA-19)	1.81	1.78	1.78	1.80	1.81	1.89	1.99	1.99	2.04	2.09	2.09
Belgium	1.83	1.81	1.78	1.81	1.84	1.92	1.97	2.05	2.15	2.24	2.28
Bulgaria	0.47	0.48	0.45	0.45	0.44	0.46	0.51	0.59	0.55	0.62	0.65
Czech Republic	1.15	1.15	1.17	1.23	1.31	1.24	1.30	1.34	1.56	1.79	1.91
Denmark (*)	2.51	2.42	2.39	2.40	2.51	2.78	3.07	2.94	2.97	3.02	3.06
Germany	2.46	2.42	2.43	2.46	2.45	2.60	2.73	2.72	2.80	2.88	2.85
Estonia	0.77	0.85	0.92	1.12	1.07	1.26	1.40	1.58	2.34	2.16	1.74
Ireland	1.13	1.18	1.20	1.21	1.24	1.39	1.63	1.62	1.53	1.58	..
Greece (*)	0.55	0.53	0.58	0.56	0.58	0.66	0.63	0.60	0.67	0.69	0.80
Spain	1.02	1.04	1.10	1.17	1.23	1.32	1.35	1.35	1.32	1.27	1.24
France (*)	2.11	2.09	2.04	2.05	2.02	2.06	2.21	2.18	2.19	2.23	2.23
Croatia	0.95	1.03	0.86	0.74	0.79	0.88	0.84	0.74	0.75	0.75	0.81
Italy	1.06	1.05	1.05	1.09	1.13	1.16	1.22	1.22	1.21	1.27	1.26
Cyprus	0.32	0.34	0.37	0.39	0.40	0.39	0.45	0.45	0.46	0.43	0.48
Latvia	0.36	0.40	0.53	0.65	0.56	0.58	0.45	0.60	0.70	0.66	0.60
Lithuania	..	0.75	0.75	0.79	0.80	0.79	0.83	0.78	0.90	0.90	0.95
Luxembourg	1.65	1.63	1.59	1.69	1.65	1.65	1.72	1.50	1.41	1.16	1.16
Hungary (*)	0.92	0.87	0.93	0.99	0.97	0.99	1.14	1.15	1.20	1.27	1.41
Malta (*)	0.24	0.49	0.53	0.58	0.55	0.53	0.52	0.64	0.70	0.86	0.85
Netherlands (*)	1.81	1.82	1.81	1.77	1.70	1.65	1.69	1.72	1.89	1.97	1.98
Austria	2.18	2.17	2.38	2.37	2.43	2.59	2.61	2.74	2.68	2.81	2.81
Poland	0.54	0.56	0.57	0.55	0.56	0.60	0.67	0.72	0.75	0.89	0.87
Portugal (*)	0.70	0.73	0.76	0.95	1.12	1.45	1.58	1.53	1.46	1.37	1.36
Romania (*)	0.38	0.38	0.41	0.45	0.52	0.57	0.46	0.45	0.49	0.48	0.39
Slovenia (*)	1.25	1.37	1.41	1.53	1.42	1.63	1.82	2.06	2.43	2.58	2.59
Slovakia	0.56	0.50	0.49	0.48	0.45	0.46	0.47	0.62	0.67	0.81	0.83
Finland	3.30	3.31	3.33	3.34	3.35	3.55	3.75	3.73	3.64	3.42	3.31
Sweden (*)	3.61	3.39	3.39	3.50	3.26	3.50	3.42	3.22	3.22	3.28	3.30
United Kingdom	1.67	1.61	1.63	1.65	1.69	1.69	1.75	1.69	1.69	1.63	1.63
Iceland (*)	2.73	..	2.69	2.91	2.56	2.53	2.66	..	2.49	..	..
Norway	1.68	1.55	1.48	1.46	1.56	1.56	1.72	1.65	1.63	1.62	1.66
Switzerland	..	2.68	..	..	..	2.73	..	..	..	2.96	..
Montenegro	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	0.32	..	0.38
Serbia	..	..	..	..	..	..	0.87	0.74	0.72	0.91	0.73
Turkey	0.48	0.52	0.59	0.58	0.72	0.73	0.85	0.84	0.86	0.92	0.95
China (except Hong Kong) (*)	1.13	1.23	1.32	1.39	1.40	1.47	1.70	1.76	1.84	1.98	..
Japan (*)	3.14	3.13	3.31	3.41	3.46	3.47	3.36	3.25	3.38	..	..
Russia	1.29	1.15	1.07	1.07	1.12	1.04	1.25	1.13	1.10	1.13	1.11
South Korea (*)	2.49	2.68	2.79	3.01	3.21	3.36	3.56	3.74	4.04	..	..
United States (*)	2.55	2.49	2.51	2.55	2.63	2.77	2.82	2.74	2.77	2.81	..

(*) 2007: break in series.

(*) 2008: break in series.

(*) 2004 and 2010: break in series.

(*) 2004: break in series.

(*) 2003: definition differs.

(*) 2011: break in series.

(*) 2005: break in series.

(*) 2009: break in series.

(*) 2003–06: definition differs.

(*) Definition differs.

Note: when definitions differ, see http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_SDDS/EN/rd_esms.htm.

Source: Eurostat (online data codes: t2020_20 and rd_e_gerdtot)

Source : http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/R_%26_D_expenditure

The strategy Europe 2020 set the EU an objective of devoting 3 % of its gross GDP to R & D activities by 2020.

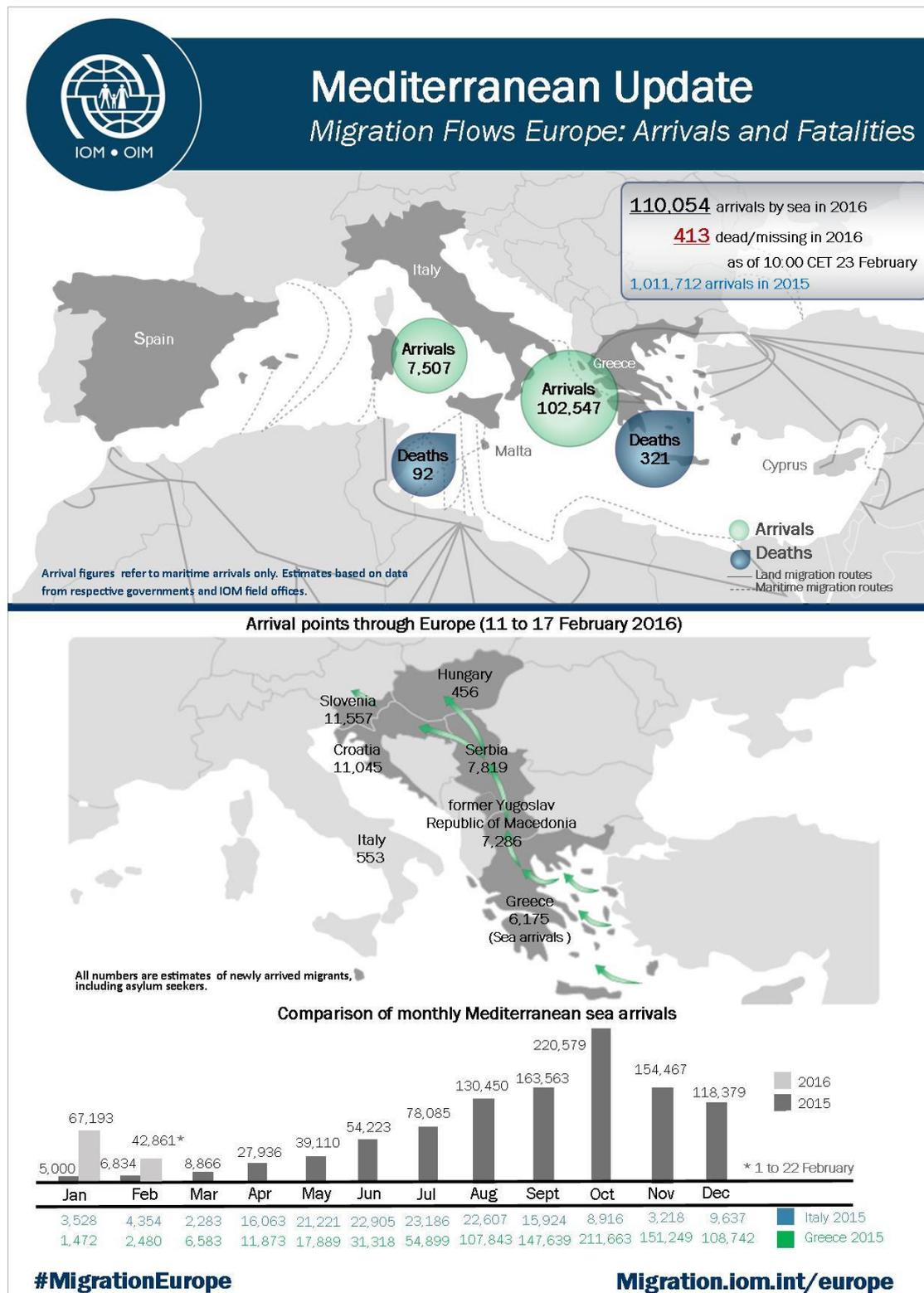
Gender inequality

		Value	Int'l Rank
	Country	2014	2014
1	Slovenia	0,016	1
2	Switzerland	0,028	2
3	Germany	0,041	3
4	Denmark	0,048	4
5	Austria	0,053	5
6	Sweden	0,055	6
7	Netherlands	0,062	7
8	Belgium	0,063	8
9	Norway	0,067	9
10	Italy	0,068	10
11	Finland	0,075	11
12	Iceland	0,087	12
13	France	0,088	13
14	Czech Republic	0,091	15
15	Spain	0,095	16
16	Luxembourg	0,100	17
17	Portugal	0,111	20
18	Ireland	0,113	21
19	Cyprus	0,124	22
20	Lithuania	0,125	23
21	Poland	0,138	28
22	Greece	0,146	29
23	Croatia	0,149	30
24	Estonia	0,164	33
25	Slovakia	0,164	33
26	Latvia	0,167	36
27	United Kingdom	0,177	39
28	Hungary	0,209	42
29	Malta	0,227	46
30	Liechtenstein	..	..

Source: Eurostat (int'l data).

Along with the difficult economic situation, Greece is facing an unprecedented flow of refugees and migrants that want to cross the country in their way to Central Europe. The majority of the migrants were Syrian refugees, followed by Afghans and Iraqis. The flows are not expected to diminish; in fact, the relatively good weather conditions during the winter encouraged the refugees to undertake the risky crossing from the Turkish coast to the Hellenic islands.

Below is a picture of the refugee flow in early 2016. *Source: IOM.*



The programme GR06 is greatly contributing to the management of the migration flows, both by promoting the administrative capacity of the First Reception Centre and the Asylum Service, as well as by establishing the conditions for better management, thus promoting local social cohesion and better conditions for the refugees. The programme registered significant progress in the year 2015, and is expected to soon reach its targets, as far as the operation of the FRC in Evros is concerned; the Asylum Service, while it has doubled its capacity and enhanced its operation in order to meet the needs, thanks to EEA Grants financing, is lagging behind the targets, mainly due to the fact that Greece is seen as a transit country and not as a permanent destination.

Statistical snapshot, as at June 2015	
Residing in Greece	
Refugees	8,231
Asylum Seekers	29,157
Returned Refugees	0
Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)	0
Returned IDPs	0
Stateless Persons	214
Various	0
Total Population of Concern	37,602
Originating from Greece	
Refugees	112
Asylum Seekers	84
Returned Refugees]	0
Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)	0
Returned IDPs	0
Various	0
Total Population of Concern	196

Source: UNHCR, 2015, <http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49e48e726.html>

It is also important to note that, exceptionally, there has been an internal reallocation of budget within the programmes, in order to strengthen the programme GR05, which is showing increased absorption rates and needed further funding. The total amount reallocated is € 3,985 million. In the same vein, the project “temporary care for unaccompanied minors” was transferred from GR06 to GR05.

UPDATE:

During 2016 Greece continues to face a humanitarian crisis following the sharpest increase of migrant and refugee arrivals to Europe in 2015. During the first eight months of 2016, a total of 163,734 third country nationals (48% from Syria, 25% from Afghanistan and 15% from Iraq) have arrived to Greece by sea, posing serious challenges to the overstretched accommodation facilities in the islands of the eastern Aegean. Children comprised 38% of new arrivals, while men accounted for 41% and women for 21%.

Developments such as the closure of the Balkan route and the EU-Turkey Statement on March 18 have brought migration flows through the Eastern Mediterranean to a relative standstill during the second quarter of 2016, yet following the failed coup in Turkey around 3,000 TCNs arrive to the Greek islands per month bringing the total number of stranded migrants and refugees in Greece to over 60,000.

During 2016 Programmes GR05 & GR06 had to adapt to the aforementioned rapidly evolving situation, as well as the Programmes extension until April 2017 and the introduction of a new law (4375/2016) highlighting the creation of the Reception and Identification Service, restructuring of the Asylum Service and the Appeals' Authority and the creation of new Regional Asylum Offices. Building on the assistance and technical expertise provided by the Norwegian Directorate of Immigration UDI, the PO of GR06 succeeded in concluding a budget reallocation early in 2016 and initiating a final reallocation exercise currently pending approval by the FMO. The requested reallocation safeguards funds utilisation and further contributes to building capacities in the Asylum Service through developing in-house tools and relative know-how.

2.2. Bilateral relations

All programmes have established intensive bilateral relations, which are either ongoing, or about to be implemented in the coming months. We must point out that the 2015 is the first year that the programmes, fully in deployment, are collaborating with entities from the donor countries and the general perception is very positive, although the fact that those same entities are sought for from all beneficiary countries might create a certain difficulty in actually establishing a partnership. However, the interest on the part of the Donors is high, as demonstrated in the match making events and the subsequent collaborations, and the NFP is confident that at least part of these will turn into permanent ties.

Part of Technical Assistance programme of Greece also includes a Fund for Bilateral Relations at national level (BFNL), whose allocation provides support for wider bilateral initiatives, relations and contact between entities from Greece and the donor countries. Under this fund as well as in TA, the process of resolving the payments problem has proven lengthy and complicated and it caused a serious delay in fully deploying the bilateral activities at national level. During the last trimester of 2015 a solution was found and the payments resumed.

Nevertheless, the NFP in the beginning of 2015 came in contact with the remaining 4 project promoters of the Annex's I work plan, in order to mobilize them to implement the projects. Only one project promoter responded and the project will be implemented in 2016. The donor project partners of two predefined projects refused their participation in the project and one project promoter wants to change the subject of the project. Finally, there is great

interest from some of the project promoters of the Annex's II work plan. Since there was a delay in payments for a long period, the Bilateral Fund Committee has not met, in order to modify the list of projects (by using the alternative predefined priority areas & activities of Annex II). The Bilateral Committee meeting will meet in the near future to discuss modifications in the Work Plan, provided that the pending payments to the implemented/running BFNL activities have been made by the NFP.

More in detail:

The NGO "Junior Achievement Greece", in cooperation with the "mother" NGO "Junior Achievement Norway", has started implementing the activity "Entrepreneurship in Education" in 2014, but it was interrupted in the beginning of 2015 since the PO (the NFP) did not manage to proceed to any payments to this project. Since then, the payment problem is solved and the payment will take place in early of 2016. The project is expected to restart and be completed in 2016.

The second project under the BFNL, "Geothermal Development" with promoter the Centre for Renewable Energy Sources and donor project partner the Orkustofnun, is on hold since an approval for increasing the total available budget of the project (donor partner's request) was rejected by the Committee of Bilateral Fund due to the existing payments problem.

The procedure for the approval of the Project with the title "Identification of best practices within the Norwegian social inclusion model, is in progress and the project will be implemented in 2016. The first visit of Norwegian experts is planned to take place in March 2016.

Apart from the BFNL, significant developments took place on the part of all the Programme Operators at programme level. For instance it is worth mentioning the following:

GR02: After the organization by the PO of a match making event on the 13 January 2015, with the aim to facilitate bilateral relations and possible partnerships among interested parties, there was a great response and in 91 submitted proposals in the open calls, 16 involving partnerships from the donor states. Six from the 12 approved projects have DPP. The first results will be seen in 2016. It is also significant to highlight that under the Small Grant II, 12 post-graduate students are granted scholarships in the 3 donor countries. Scholarships were awarded for Iceland and Lichtenstein which are rare destinations for Greek scholar-holders. The target of 22 scholarships will not be achieved, despite the efforts of the Project Promoter who launched the call twice in the year. The experiences of the students were presented in a video during the annual meeting in November 2015.

GR03: Following the training Seminar organized by CRES on November 30th 2015, the Project Promoters of the 10 approved projects submitted their proposals for knowledge and technology transfer under the subproject "Fund for Bilateral Relations (€156,659.00). Their proposals include proposed actions, project objectives, as well as a detailed budget breakdown per eligible cost category. In particular, the PPs have already established contacts with bodies from Donor countries and plan to travel in the donor countries to visit their potential partners, as well as to participate in conferences, seminars, courses, meetings and workshops. PO CRES is currently reviewing the submitted proposals. These actions are all expected to produce tangible results in the coming months.

GR04: 33 applications were submitted for funding and 18 initiatives were carried out under the measure "a". Under measure "b", 6 applications were submitted for funding and 5 were approved. 2 initiatives were already carried out and another 3 have been budgeted. Moreover 2 involved an organization from Norway, while one initiative involved an organization from Lichtenstein and one initiative an organization from Iceland. A successful example of bilateral cooperation was the visit to Kapellveien Habilitation Center in Norway

made by the Association of Parents, Guardians and Friends of People with Autism, an NGO located in the Cretan city of Rethymno, in March 2015. The Greek representatives had the opportunity to be informed about the health system in Norway and the use of non-invasive methods and diagnostic tools for people with autism.

GR05-GR06: The excellent cooperation between the Norwegian Directorate for Immigration (UDI) and two Programme Operators, namely the European and Development Programmes Division of the Ministry of Public Order and Citizens (GR06) and the International Organization for Migration (contracted by the FMO for the GR05) is continuing, a UDI expert is regularly detached in the EDPD. Within the reporting period the fruitful cooperation has resulted to the organization of three Cooperation Committees and in the organization of a complementary action namely a three day exchange of expertise meeting entitled “Assisted Voluntary Return - A comprehensive approach as part of Greek Migration Management”. Moreover the holding of a conference on the management of migration flows in Greece was agreed. This conference will constitute the core bilateral action under Programme GR06 for next year and is expected to take place in April 2016.

GR07: The open call for “Strengthened research capacity in the Beneficiary States”, announced by the PO in 2015, included also the fund for bilateral relations. 34 proposals were submitted for funding from this fund and eight (8) were approved (47.587,20€). All involve actions for networking, exchange, sharing and transfer of knowledge, technology, experience and best practices between Project Promoters and entities in the Donor States. Furthermore two (2) out of the 18 approved research projects (under the call Strengthened research capacity in the BS) have partnerships with Icelandic partners and four (4) with Norwegian partners. These partnerships also contribute to the promotion of networking, sharing and transfer of knowledge, between Project Promoters and entities in the Donor States.

GR08: Due to the increase of migration flows, Solidarity Now and its NGO partners in Greece (PRAKSIS, ARSIS, TFC, NCR) in cooperation with selected Norwegian NGOs such as NRC and NPAID, set up a team of experts with the objective to assess the situation on the Greek islands of Rhodes, Tilos, Kos, Samos and Lesvos within the framework of the current emergency. The jointed assessment was successfully repeated September the 3rd. A repeated visit of OSIFE and SN Director in Lesvos was held in 22 of September.

The assessment in which Solidarity Now Staff, along with Norwegian partners and local partners carried out, confirmed serious deficiencies in first line (e.g. Rescue, Health, Essential Services, care for vulnerable people) and second line reception (Protection related). An Assessment Report was produced as an outcome of this effort, including useful mapping, contacts and recommendations, in order for the Greek state and international stakeholders to better frame and plan their future moves. Apart from the assessment, the bilateral activity involved the production of a video documenting the situation on the islands from the perspective of migrants and refugees.

Solidarity Now organized a presentation of the results titled “Evaluation Report and Assessment Results” at Asylum Service Center in Ffourarcheio premises on January 27th where it presented the results and the video production was also shown.

The bilateral activity of the project “Tackling Poverty and Social Marginalization” is still under discussion by the Municipality of Athens and the Municipality of Oslo.

The bilateral activity between the Greek Ombudsman and the relevant bodies in Norway (e.g. Parliamentary Ombudsman) is still under discussion.

As a conclusion, the funds for bilateral relations at national and at programme level seem to have a great impact on the cooperation between countries’ institutions and individuals,

through formal partnerships or through more ad hoc exchange actions. More concrete results are expected in 2016, when the majority of the projects will be implemented. Wider effects are also expected to happen in the future as a result of institutions working together and finding common ground for extending their cooperation beyond the projects and programmes.

UPDATE

GR01 (BFNL): *There was a progress in the discussions of the Bilateral Fund Committee concerning the final list of projects (PP and Donor Partners) that will be implemented until the end of 2018. The project "Identification of best practices within the Norwegian Social Inclusion Model" is now implemented and 2 seminars (one in Greece and one in Norway) already took place. The project "Cooperation in Harbor Management" and the project "Engaging Youth in politics" are not going to be implemented (no response by DPP). 3 new projects ("Safety of the offshore oil and gas sector", "Geothermal Development" with a Norwegian DPP instead of Icelandic and "Academic cooperation") are ready to start.*

GR02: *An open call for bilateral relations addressed to Project Promoters, which was making use of the bilateral fund in order to facilitate networking, exchange, sharing and transfer of knowledge, technology, experience and best practice, between entities in the Beneficiary states and entities in the Donor States was issued in 2016. The process for funding bilateral activities under the bilateral fund is on progress.*

GR03: *The Accession Decisions for the ten (10) projects were modified on June 6th to include the bilateral relations sub-projects to be implemented by Project Promoters in cooperation with entities from Donor countries (5 Norway and 3 Iceland).*

GR04: *8 bilateral initiatives were approved and implemented under the two first calls for measure (b). The majority of bilateral initiatives (5) involved an organization from Norway, 2 involved an organisation from Iceland and 1 initiative an organisation from Liechtenstein. Additionally, the Operator organised a thematic trip to Iceland for 4 NGOs interested in dealing with people with autism, elderly, people with mental disabilities and young with delinquent behavior and former prisoners. 4 applications, 2 in relation to Norway and another 2 in relation to Iceland, have already been submitted and approved under the third call. Overall, the bilateral fund provided a useful incentive for developing partnerships between civil society in Greece and entities from the donor states. From a survey conducted by the Operator, most beneficiaries consider their bilateral initiative as contributing to increased access to participation in regional and international networks and increased access to valuable professional or technical skills.*

GR06: *The PO together with UDI successfully organized a two-day International Conference in April which aimed to present all aspects of migration in Greece. "MiGR2016 - Migration Flows in Greece: the way ahead" which was attended by the political leadership of Greece and Norway and other stakeholders, contributed to the better understanding of the migration crisis in Greece while reinforcing the close cooperation between Norway and Greece.*

GR07: All projects (including these that have bilateral relations) are in progress. The total amount disbursed in 2016 for bilateral relations (as advance payment) is 16.577,38 €. All the projects applied for and granted an extension of end date (between 31/10/16 and 31/03/2017).

3. REPORTING ON PROGRAMMES

3.1 Overview of Programme status

2015 has been a crucial year for EEA Grants 2009-2014 implementation, which was characterized by increased activity in all programmes. All the open calls were finalized and a total of 128 projects (of which 17 have a DPP) are now being implemented.

Programme	Total budget	Funds transferred by the FMO (Dec 2015)	% disbursed	Total expenditures incurred by the PO/FO (31 December 2015)	% absorption
	EEA/Norway	EEA/Norway		EEA/Norway	
GR01	1.071.220*	330.000	42,79	74.378	6,94
GR02	9.510.000*	1.120.725	11,78	346.587	3,64
GR03	9.510.000	2.160.937	22,72	312.198	3,28
GR04	7.340.000	6.646.425	90,55	4.109.111	55,98
GR05	8.349.367*	7.855.142	63,69	6.747.908	80,82
GR06	11.855.042	5.201.984	43,88	2.186.548	18,44
GR07	2.996.311	1.450.509	48,41	15.509	0,52
GR08	4.265.217	3.056.362	71,66	2.726.354	64
TOTAL	54.897.157	27.822.084	50,68	16.518.593	30

*Under modification.

The incurred expenditure of GR05 is a estimation of NFP

Due to the severe delay of the implementation of projects (open calls, selection of projects, transfer of funds to the Pos/PPs, capital controls, etc) the FMO imposed since August a provisional withholding of payments. The problems of the previous years have been resolved and all EEA Grants programmes are normally financed. Moreover, according to a new piece of legislation, funds transferred from the donors to the Greek treasury are now being “ring-fenced”, thereby guaranteeing the smooth payments to the promoters. The advance payments to the recently contracted projects (in GR02, GR03 and GR07) are

expected to be made in the beginning of the year 2016. The disbursements from FMO are expected to start again.

UPDATE (data 15/9/2016):

Programme	Total budget	Funds disbursed by the FMO (15.9.16)	% disbursed	Total expenditures incurred by the PO/FO (15.9.16)	% absorption
	EEA/Norway	EEA/Norway		EEA/Norway	
GR01	771.220	420.000	54,5	149.332	19,4
GR02	6.495.000	5.263.200	81,04	1.600.731	25
GR03	9.510.000	5.764.728	60,6	913.906	10
GR04	7.340.000	7.064.241	96,2	6.205.948	84,55
GR05-GR50	12.333.375	8.963.505	72,7	7.284.249*	59,06
GR06	11.855.042	6.827.225	57,6	4.452.443	37,6
GR07	2.996.311	1.594.342	53	1.203.527	40,17
GR08	4.265.217	4.265.217	100	2.726.354*	63,9
TOTAL	55.566.165	40.162.458	72,3	24.536.472	44,2

*30/4/2016

3.2 Individual Programme summaries

GR02 'Integrated marine and inland water management'

Three calls for submission of proposals – each one is related to one of the 3 outputs of outcome 1 - were published by the Programme Operator in 2014, with deadline for submission of proposals the 6th of February 2015. The selection procedure took place according to the terms described in the calls with no particular problems. The financed projects are expected to contribute to the output targets, in particular they are expected to overcome the output 1 and output 2 targets, by far.

Twelve (12) projects were contracted in September 2015 covering the indicator targets for outcome 1 and implementation was initiated.

The predefined project application was submitted and positively evaluated in 2014 and the project contract was signed in January 2015. The project is implemented by five (5) sub-contracts: four (4) procurements and one (1) in –house implementation. The project is under implementation.

The Small Grant Scheme II granted 12 scholarships. Following delays in implementation, the Small Grant Scheme I will not be implemented, due to the transfer of the available funding to GR05, agreed in the annual meeting of the 4th November 2015.

SGS II N° of Scholarships	Country	Level of Studies
5	Norway	PhD
4	Norway	Post-Doc
1	Iceland	PhD
1	Iceland	Post-Doc
1	Liechtenstein	Post-Doc

All projects are at an early stage of implementation concerning achievements towards the objectives of reducing economic and social disparities. The PO contracted the projects in due time, to obtain one year extension in implementation. The new deadline of implementation of the projects for outcome 1 and 2 was set on the 30 April 2017.

Strong and substantial bilateral relationships are established through the selected projects. These relationships are characterized by cooperation between institutions, academia, civil society and public sector. Although the Programme is in the initial phase of implementation the PO estimates that the four distinctive results will contribute more or less equally to the strengthening of the bilateral relations.

UPDATE:

In July 2016 a modification of the PA took place, according to the annual meeting of 4th November 2015 decisions for reduction of the GR02 Programme and reinforcement of the GR05 budget. The Programme grant was deducted by 3.015.000 euros.

All the projects are under implementation. Also, the PO developed the annual on-the-spot verification programme so that the PO can ensure the legality and regularity of declared expenditure and a more accurate distribution of on the spot verifications. The annual on-the-spot verification programme includes all the projects. Two on-the-spot verifications have been carried out, one for the project: "Supply of portable desalination unit in Oia village", in June 2016 and one for the predefined project at the premises HCMR, in July 2016. Furthermore the PO and IKY were audited by the Audit Authority (EDEL) in May 2016. The final audit report has been produced for the IKY audit, while the final audit report for the PO audit is expected to be finalized.

In June (22-24) 2016 the PO organized a three-day event under "Complementary Actions" in Athens. The aim of the event was to exchange experiences and good practices related to the implementation of Programmes within Programme Area Integrated Marine and Inland Water Management (02), from Bulgaria, Estonia, Lithuania, Portugal and Greece.

GR03 'Renewable Energy'

PO CRES published the results of the Open Call on the GR03 programme on May 28th 2015 on the GR03 programme website. Ten projects were approved and registered in the GR03

programme. The total available budget for Project Promoters under the category "A less carbon dependent economy" (€9,664,659) suffices for the funding of projects having been ranked no. 1-7 (€9.355.576,56), leaving the amount of €309.082,44 unallocated.

Projects having been ranked no. 8-10 are those which have received positive evaluation in Stage B, but cannot be funded due to insufficient funds. The integration of these Projects in the GR03 Programme was granted under the condition that savings due to discounts on public tenders published by the Promoters of Projects classified in positions 1-7 will arise.

Project implementation started in September 2015 with the tender pre-approval process. Project Promoters were asked to send the tender documents and permits until September 2015. PO CRES has been reviewing the tender documents sent by Project Promoters. The process is expected to be completed in February 2016.

Possible risks that may emerge include problems in the bidding procedure for contracting the projects. The probability of high discount rates in tender bids received during the tendering procedure that may undermine the quality of the subprojects delivered by contractors. Due to budget inadequacy, projects ranked no.8-10 face the risk of not being implemented because of a tighter time schedule.

The estimated output values to be achieved after the completion of all projects are presented below.

Output indicator	Unit	Target value
1. Estimated renewable energy production	MWh/year	7,000
1.1. Estimated RES electricity production	MWh/year	2,915
1.2. Estimated RES consumption	MWh/year	1,085
1.3. Estimated RES heat production	MWh/year	3,000
2. Estimated CO2 emissions reduction and/or avoidance (tones/year)	tones/year	4,900

The amount of €156,659.00 is available under the category "Fund for Bilateral Relations" and will be transferred to all 10 Project Promoters for implementing their proposed Projects on Bilateral Relations.

No.	Project Promoter	Proposed Title of Bilateral Project	Budget (€)
1	Region of Western Macedonia	<i>Bilateral Relations of the Region of Western Macedonia with Donor Countries on RES issues in the framework of the EEA FM 2009-14 / GR-03</i>	19,368.37
2	Democritus University of Thrace	<i>Bilateral Relations of the Region of the Democritus University of Thrace with Donor Countries on RES issues in the framework of the EEA FM 2009-14 / GR-03</i>	21,805.92
3	Municipality of Andros	<i>Bilateral Relations of the Municipality of Andros with Donor Countries on RES issues in the framework of the EEA FM 2009-14 / GR-</i>	11,211.56

No.	Project Promoter	Proposed Title of Bilateral Project	Budget (€)
		03	
4	Centre for Social Protection and Solidarity, Education and Environment – Polykoinoniko (Alexandroupolis)	<i>Bilateral Relations of Polykoinoniko with Donor Countries on RES issues in the framework of the EEA FM 2009-14 / GR-03</i>	9,194.91
5	Agricultural University of Athens	<i>Bilateral Relations of the Agricultural University of Athens with Donor Countries on RES issues in the framework of the EEA FM 2009-14 / GR-03</i>	10,066.70
6	Municipality of Nea Ionia	<i>Bilateral Relations of the Municipality of Nea Ionia with Donor Countries on RES issues in the framework of the EEA FM 2009-14 / GR-03</i>	20,504.74
7	General Hospital Mamatsio-Bodossakio	<i>Bilateral Relations of the General Hospital Mamatsio-Bodossakio with Donor Countries on RES issues in the framework of the EEA FM 2009-14 / GR-03</i>	22,551.27
8	Municipality of Karpenissi	<i>Bilateral Relations of the Municipality of Karpenissi with Donor Countries on RES issues in the framework of the EEA FM 2009-14 / GR-03</i>	11,310.25
9	Organization for the Development of Crete S.A.	<i>Bilateral Relations of OAK S.A. with Donor Countries on RES issues in the framework of the EEA FM 2009-14 / GR-03</i>	19,906.05
10	Municipal Organization for Sports, Tourism, Environment and Culture (DOPPAT) of Nafplio	<i>Bilateral Relations of DOPPAT Nafplio with Donor Countries on RES issues in the framework of the EEA FM 2009-14 / GR-03</i>	10,739.24

UPDATE:

After reviewing the submitted tender documents, PO CRES started giving tender pre-approval to the sub-projects of Project Promoters 1-7. Tenders were continued in 2016. In April tender pre-approval was given for the Project which has been ranked no. 8 (Municipality of Karpenissi), as a result of savings achieved in the tendering procedures launched by Projects Promoters ranked no. 1-7. By the end of August the majority of the sub-projects were contracted and started to incur expenditures. Tendering procedures are being concluded and the remaining sub-projects are being contracted.

It is worth noting that competition in the tenders was high; The slight delay observed in the tender procedures is attributed to the submission of appeals in many cases, which have been administered.

PO CRES has reviewed the tender documents of Projects 9 and 10 and the launching of the tender process is awaited as long as sufficient savings occur due to discounts on public tenders published by Projects Promoters ranked no.1-8.

Payments to Project Promoters are being processed regularly and the processes of payment monitoring and administrative verification are applied successfully. On-site verification visits are being prepared. Dissemination actions and materials by PPs are being prepared.

The Accession Decisions for the ten (10) projects were modified on June 6th to include the bilateral relations sub-projects to be implemented by Project Promoters in cooperation with entities from Donor countries.

The findings from the audits performed by the Financial Audit Committee in 2015 on the subprojects "Management Cost", "Preparation of Programme Proposal" and on the Management and Control System, have almost closed. The amount of €3.869,75 has been recovered. The amount of €3.748,59 (for Preparation cost) is still pending, since the AA did not issue the relevant Decision.

GR04 'Funds for NGOs'

All projects selected under the NGO Programme "We are all Citizens" were under implementation in 2015. 36 projects (20 large and 16 smaller) were selected under the second round of calls, which was concluded in the first quarter of 2015. The second round of calls included the call on democratic values, including human rights and the call on NGO capacity building. The second call attracted a total of 143 applications. The overall demand for the two calls was approximately € 20 million, which was 8 times the amount available (€ 2,6 million). Overall, the interest of the civil society organizations was high, with the call on provision of social welfare services attracting the majority of applications throughout the Programme

By the end of 2015, 18 projects have been completed, with all of them achieving, and in many cases, surpassing the contracted targets. In particular, in 2015, more than 24,000 socially vulnerable people (such as children in impoverished rural and remote areas, mental health patients, elderly, people with disabilities, Roma, HIV-AIDS patients, LGBT, migrants and refugees, unaccompanied children, victims of hate crime, multiple sclerosis and cancer patients) have benefitted; more than 24,000 individuals have participated in projects that promote the culture of volunteerism and community mobilization and more than 10,000 pupils have increased their knowledge and understanding on environmental issues, such as water management and national wildlife protection.

Regarding Bilateral Relations, the second call for measure (b) was launched on 28 April 2015 and remained open within 2015, providing extra funding to project promoters selected under the second round of calls. Within the reporting period, a total of €21,454 have been absorbed and another €13.855 have been budgeted. At this rate, it was expected that the allocation to measure (b) would not be entirely spent. The FO, in close collaboration with the FMO, has considered alternatives for absorbing the funds with a view to promoting bilateral relations, such as organizing thematic trips to the donor states with the participation of several project promoters.

The Programme has given a central emphasis to NGO capacity development across organizational, sectoral and institutional levels. In 2015 the NGO capacity building

programme included 15 days/ 120 hours of training activities, organizational mentoring, the creation of an e-learning platform (www.ngodynamo.org) and the promotion of best-practice sharing and networking between project promoters. The programme was concluded in December 2015 in a one-day event that was organized together with the European Venture Philanthropy Association. This Programme is promoting and coordinating a new ecosystem for NGO capacity building in Greece, for example through the establishment of an informal 'NGO Capacity Building Network'. As a direct result of this outreach to other interested stakeholders, the Bodossaki Foundation recently launched an innovative new NGO incubator in partnership with the municipality of Athens. 'Social Dynamo' will function as a sustainable hub for NGO capacity building in Greece, eventually to be housed by the municipality, and will offer training, technical support and networking, in collaboration with many stakeholders, including from the private sector.

28 projects were audited by independent auditors commissioned by the Programme. Few inconsistencies were found in a small number of financial reports and have been addressed in close collaboration with project promoters. No irregularities were committed within the reporting period. A total of 147 monitoring visits were made, with 26 conducted outside the region of Attica, and in rural and remote areas. The problem of insufficient liquidity that certain project promoters (especially small NGOs located in rural and remote areas) encountered in 2014 was resolved in 2015, following a PIA modification that allowed for an increase of the amount of advance payment to project promoters that reached the 30% of the given amount.

The projects are expected to be successfully concluded by April 30, 2016 and the Programme to reach and surpass its goals by its completion date.

UPDATE:

All 76 projects funded under the NGO Programme "We are all Citizens" were concluded by April 30, 2016. An additional call to support ongoing project activities was launched in December 2015, in order to absorb remaining funds of already completed projects (approximately 60,000 euros). 38 applications were submitted and 8 projects were contracted in the beginning of 2016. All additional activities were concluded by April 30, 2016.

In the beginning of 2016, the organizational capacity levels of the project promoters were individually assessed following the completion of the Capacity Building programme in December 2015. In total, 62 of the 65 organizations (95%) demonstrated improved capacity. In their final evaluation of the CB program, 95% of organizations rated the programme as 'very good' or 'excellent' and 87% stated that they had made new contacts as a result of their participation in the program. As a legacy of the program, all of the learning resources are freely available online through the e-learning platform (www.ngodynamo.org). In order to promote exchange of experience in the area of capacity building, the Bodossaki Foundation, in collaboration with the FMO, organized a 2 day workshop in Athens on 9-10 June 2016, which was attended by representatives of 13 of the NGO Programme Fund Operators.

The two calls for measure (b) remained open until February 2016. The first call provided extra funding to project promoters selected under the first round of calls, while the second call for measure (b) provided funding to project promoters selected under the second round of calls. In May 2016, a third call for proposals under measure (b) was announced providing the opportunity to all Greek NGOs (not just project promoters) to partner with Donor State entities. This call will remain open until 31 October 2016 and activities can be completed until 15 December 2016.

Through the Programme's Complementary Actions, a series of activities on combatting hate speech were organized. In March 2016, the approval of the Ministry of Education for the use of "Bookmarks" in primary and secondary schools was secured. Subsequently, a print copy of "Bookmarks" was shared with most of the 100 schools of all levels from all over the country. On 8-9 April 2016, "BlogMarks", a training seminar on combating hate speech online through human rights education attended by 25 NGO staff members, educators in non-formal education and bloggers was organized. In addition, the series of discussion "Say No to Hate, Yes to Dialogue" took place in March, April, June and September 2016. A workshop on "Microfinance and Social Enterprises" was organized in March 2016 in collaboration with the EIB Group. Also the production of a gender-mainstreaming manual was initiated with the signing of an agreement with its authors; a first draft for the Roma photography project to be part of the Programme closing event was completed; the manual "Mirrors" on combating anti-gypsyism was submitted for quality control to the Council of Europe; and preparatory work was done on this year's participation to the "Break the Chain" anti-trafficking festival.

The Programme's systems audit was conducted in May / June 2016. A financial audit of four project promoters that have received multiple project grants from the NGO fund was also concluded without any serious findings in June 2016. A major irregularity (a case of double funding and fraud) was committed within 2016, at project level and was reported to the FMO without delay. No irregularities were committed at Programme level.

An evaluation of the Programme was conducted in June 2016, where the opinion of all project promoters was requested through an online survey addressed to project coordinators. The response rate was 87%. In total, 57 project promoters replied to the survey, with the following results: 96,5% expressed their absolute or high satisfaction with the Programme and the FO, 89,5% responded that the Programme gave them the opportunity to greatly develop and strengthen their organizational capacity, 91,5% responded that the Programme provided them the opportunity to promote their work in new audiences, while 96,5% responded that they would participate again in a next EEA Grants NGO Programme.

The Programme's closing event is planned for 18 and 19 November 2016 and will combine the formal presentation of the Programme's results, together with an NGO Festival open to the general public and educational activities for pupils. The aim is to showcase the Programme's results and the Grants' contribution to the strengthening of the Greek civil to the general public.

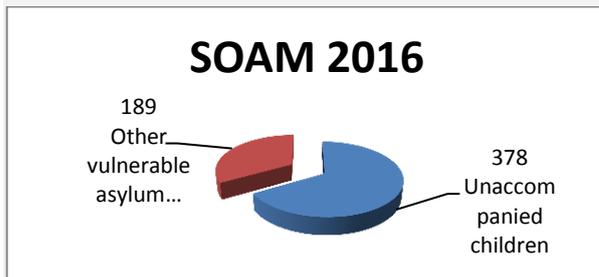
GR05 "Address urgent needs for the reception and screening of new arrivals and for the accommodation of vulnerable groups. Assistance to voluntary returns"

The year 2015 was characterized by the full deployment of the activities of the programme, especially concerning the functioning of the shelters. The four shelters that are operated by Médecins du Monde, Praxis, and the Stegi-plus all report intensive activities, an increase in the number of persons accommodated and offered assistance, but also a high turnover rate. Also, intensive collaboration with the relevant public services, such as the Health system, Asylum etc. is reported. Equally, the communication activities, aiming both at the integration of the shelters in their surroundings, as well as the diffusion of knowledge regarding their existence and sources of financing, were intensified. The extension by one year of the duration of the programme, and the subsequent increase in the funding available, following transfers from other programmes, will secure the timely and orderly completion of all projects.

UPDATE:

According to IOM, during 2015 and for at least 5 months, despite the large flows of migrants there was a constant movement towards the Northern borders of Greece with FYROM that were open at the time. As a result the unaccompanied children were staying at the RCs for very short time, in some cases just for few hours, while adults were not applying for asylum in Greece, which is a prerequisite for being placed in a RC, or those being already asylum seekers decided to take advantage of the open border and travel onwards.

In October 2013 the first beneficiaries stepped in SOAM RCs and in April 2016 the first phase of SOAM Programme was completed with the full operation of 4 Reception Centres (RCs) for vulnerable asylum seekers and unaccompanied children. The following graphic reflects the numbers for 2016:



The SOAM Programme received an approval for extending its actions until April 2017 for all 4 RCs that were fully operational during its first phase.

GR06 ‘Capacity building of national asylum and migration management systems’

Despite the unprecedented rise in migrants’ arrivals, especially in the eastern maritime borders, the Programme registered significant progress. The PO was able to timely propose and proceed to adjustments that secured improvements concerning implementation and reaching the targets set.

This was done while Greece had to respond to the migration crisis on a day-to-day basis, thus delaying the formulation of a coherent policy. However, thanks to the DPP, the UDI, and the frequent secondment of one official to Athens, a culture of risk appetite was installed, helping to foresee and deal with the difficulties ahead. This collaboration with the DPP is the main aspect of the bilateral relations of the programme. The two parties held three Cooperation Committees, and organized an experts’ meeting on AVR with significant participation from the Norway, Greece, as well as other beneficiary countries (see section 2.2).

As far as the projects are concerned, the First Reception Centre (FRC) in Fylakio is operational and is about to reach all the targets set concerning the number of persons accommodated (already 5.211, the target being 9.210), and unaccompanied children (413, the target being 410). All persons receive information about their right to seek asylum. The main difficulties concern the administrative delays in procurement procedures, or tenders that receive no bids and have to be repeated, and the continued lack of renovation of a part of the Fylakio.

The Asylum Service, for its part, has doubled its capacity in terms of quality and time: almost 13.500 decisions on international protection were taken at first instance in 2015, compared to 8.600 in 2014; the number of asylum applications rose from 9.500 to 13.200 approximately. The AS hired and trained 31 persons and reduced the period for a first decision to 4 months, while instituting a fast track procedure for Syrians. The target of

48.000 decisions on international protection however of still far, because Greece is seen as a transit country and the refugees do not want to apply for asylum in the country.

For the rest, a series of adjustment measures were taken, in order to enhance the programme's effectiveness. The third project, namely the temporary accommodation and care for unaccompanied minors, was transferred to the programme GR05, after recognizing the delays and in order to avoid a de facto annulment (see section 3.2). The procedure, resulting in the transfer of € 670.000 from GR06 to GR05, was accepted by the FMC, along with a series of other budget transfers between programmes, despite the fact that it is not foreseen in the EEA Grants Regulation.

Following an internal budget reallocation and in close cooperation with the DPP UDI, the PO proceeded to include two new predefined projects in the programme, namely "Covering the operational costs of the FRC in Lesvos" and "Covering the operational costs for the two First Reception Mobile Units" (currently operating in Lesvos and Samos islands). The two projects have not yet produced results, as they are planned to start in March 2016.

The extension for one year, which was granted to the programme, will facilitate full implementation of all foreseen activities. The PO applies risk evaluation methods, and has made the necessary adjustment moves up to now.

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

PROGRAMME AGREEMENT (status until 31/12/2015)		
	Total Payments (2015)	National Contribution (15%)
OUTCOME 1/Covering the operational cost of the First Reception Centre, Fylakio/Evros	568.371,48	85.255,72
OUTCOME 2/Assistance to Asylum Service	1.590.412,84	238.561,93
OUTCOME 1/ Covering the operational cost of the First Reception Centre Lesvos Moria	0	0
OUTCOME 1/ Covering the operational cost of two First Reception Mobile Units	0	0
TOTAL	2.158.784,32	323.817,65

UPDATE:

Early in 2016 new procurement procedures for supplies and services had to be initiated under Project #1 for the Reception and Identification Center in Fylakio. However, public procurement processes have been again delayed for many reasons.

The RIC in Fylakio, although designed to house 240 beneficiaries, continued to face operational limitations due to the non-operation of one of the four wings (wing D) due to lack of maintenance. Moreover, the Hellenic Police, which has been in charge of security at the

RIC since May, had temporarily set an upper limit of 70 beneficiaries, a measure which was withdrawn in August.

The material standard of the Center improved during summer, so did the interaction between staff and beneficiaries through the provision of creative work programmes both for adults and for unaccompanied minors.

The lack of open reception capacity for unaccompanied minors through EKKA is a matter of great concern. 3,574 unaccompanied minors have been identified in Greece during the first eight months of 2016, while only 800 open accommodation places are currently available. UAMs often stay at the RIC in Fylakio longer than the maximum of 25 days. To mitigate this, the PO is in close cooperation with the NFP and RIS in order to transfer UAMs to open accommodation facilities in northern Greece.

Under Project #2 EEA funding continues to provide for interpretation services as well as a number of staff which according to estimations by the Asylum Service have contributed to an increase of 20-25% in the number of cases processed. The Asylum Service has carried out from June 9 to July 30 a mass pre-registration exercise, whereby 27,592 people, among them 1,225 unaccompanied minors, were identified. A new proposal for reallocating an amount of €2,600,000 to the AS is under discussion with the FMO.

As regards Project #4 EEA funding provides for the operational costs of the RIC in Lesvos and several subprojects are expected to be implemented in the following months, including the reconstruction of the Center's third wing. Project #5, Covering the costs for RIS Mobile Units A & B has been adversely affected by administrative delays.

Programme GR06 registered significant progress in terms of payments, following the normalization of the procedure after the imposition of capital controls. A total amount of €2.581.850,04 was paid from January to August 2016.

As regards the progress achieved in terms of the Programme's indicators, under PDP#1 10.485 TCNs and 566 unaccompanied children have been accommodated at the RIC, well exceeding the Project's indicators (9.210 and 410 respectively). The Asylum Service has reached the number of 18.507 decisions on international protection claims taken at first instance, while the asylum requests received and processed within the RIC in Fylakio are 886. Admittedly, indicators set for PDP#2 (48.000 decisions and 1.700 requests respectively) do not reflect the AS's administrative capacity, however significant progress is expected to take place during the upcoming final phase of the Project. For PDP#4, 591 TCNs and 521 unaccompanied children have been accommodated, while 6.218 TCNs have been 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 – Rev 11/02/2016 -GR 06

	<i>Total Payments (01/01/2016- 31/08/2016)</i>	<i>National Contribution (15%)*</i>
<i>GR06-0001 (Covering the operational cost of the First Reception Centre, Fylakio/Evros)</i>	<i>934.542,63 €</i>	<i>140.181,39 €</i>
<i>GR06-0002 (Assistance to Asylum Service)</i>	<i>1.490.673,02 €</i>	<i>223.600,95 €</i>
<i>GR06-0003 (Covering the operational costs for two First Reception Mobile Units)</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>GR06-0004 (Covering the operational costs of the First Reception Centre, Lesvos)</i>	<i>14.534,97 €</i>	<i>2.180,25 €</i>
<i>TOTAL</i>	<i>2.439.750,62 €</i>	<i>365.962,59 €</i>

**The amount of 365.962,59 €, that corresponds to the 15% of national contribution, was attributed by the national budget since the 2 Project Promoters of the GR06 Programme are public entities.*

GR07 'Academic research'

The selection of projects was completed under all three outputs "Local and regional initiatives to reduce national inequalities and to promote social inclusion", "Mainstream gender equality and promoting work-life balance", "Promotion of diversity in culture and arts within European cultural heritage" on 13/7/2015. In total 103 applications (34 included also a proposal for bilateral relations) were submitted and 18 (8 of which will be financed by the bilateral fund) were approved. During the evaluation process GSRT took every measure to assure avoidance of discrimination on the grounds of gender and to promote equality between women and men. Among selected projects the number of female Greek researchers involved reaches 113. All (18) project contracts were signed in the beginning of September 2015. The relevant information was entered in DORIS and an extension of the eligibility period was granted by the FMO. Except of the 8 above mentioning projects financed by the Fund for bilateral relations, 6 more projects will be implemented with partners from the Donor States.

Concerning the principles of good governance in the planning and implementation of the Programme the GSRT took every measure to assure the integrity of the implementation procedure. Targets of the Programme outputs set out in the Programme proposal were met with a minor deviation from the original plan.

The NFP has been closely monitoring the programme, offering help in resolving outstanding issues, such as payment procedures and other administrative difficulties.

UPDATE:

All projects are in progress and no problems have been reported so far. Advance payment disbursed to projects in period Jan 2016 - Apr 2016 is 1.270.527€. During June 2016 all projects applied for and were granted an extension of end date. According to new signed contracts the end dates are scattered between 31/10/2016 and 31/3/2017. The on the spot verifications will start in the immediate future. The General Secretariat for Research and Technology (PO) monitors project progress through reports (every 4 months on implementation) and personal communication. Until now (last report received September 2016), there is no increased risk detected of not achieving programme results.

GR 08 ‘Solidarity and Social Inclusion in Greece’

During 2015 the programme set off with all activities becoming a reality at the beginning of the year. The activities of the Greek Ombudsman have been decided and are at the initial stages at the time of the drafting of this report. The project has significantly evolved in 2015 showing remarkable results in reaching larger numbers of beneficiaries than expected in a number of services, and in the form of cooperation between project partners.

The cooperation between the two main Promoters, KYADA and Solidarity Net as well as the other implementing partners and third parties has been exemplary until now and can serve as best practice example for other interventions focusing on poverty alleviation in Greece and other beneficiary countries.

Finally the two project promoters are investigating ways in which the two projects can be hosted under a single operation in the future in order for beneficiaries to receive a holistic and single assistance point to their needs either in the form of service provision or items, vouchers etc.

The main challenges and risks encountered were mostly related to interactions with the public services i.e. for approving budget lines but as these were expected by both the promoters and the FO, they have been dealt with effectively and without derailing the projects.

Project “Tackling Poverty and Social Marginalization” (Promoter: KYADA)

In respect to voucher distribution, during the six distributions implemented so far, 33.029 vouchers were given to an average of 3.700 beneficiaries and thus amounting to circa 71.2% of all vouchers available (46.368) and 75.3% of the target number (43.844).

In respect to street-work, from 13/3/2015 which marked the actual street work launch, until the end of the year, the team approached 493 persons and followed up on 65 individual cases, while it provided practical assistance to 113 persons. Furthermore, a detailed comprehensive report with the results of the street-work operation so far (including statistics, conclusions, challenges faced and proposals) was prepared and is further elaborated in collaboration with Public Issue. Finally, the street-work team provided to KYADA a list of 29 beneficiaries meeting the predefined criteria for admission to the MoA shelters and, following this, 2 beneficiaries benefited.

The challenge for the certification of costs of KYADA for the project by Greek authorities remain where costs approval takes longer than expected therefore delaying payments.

KYADA has established partnership agreements with the following organisations:

NGO Metadrasi, OKANA, NGO Positive Voice, (Thetiki Foni), NGO Center for Life (Kentro Zois), Public Issue S.A., NGO Mission Anthropos (Apostoli Anthropos), The Samaritans Section of the Hellenic Red Cross, EDENRED), NGO Doctors of the World, the National Centre for Social Solidarity (EKKA - public entity), Sympraxis – private company), Pavla S.A. (private company).

Project “Supporting Solidarity Now” (Promoter: Foundation SolidarityNet).

The project is progressing as planned where in a number of services the numbers have overpassed their targets. The Solidarity Centre has also brought implementing partners together in expanding their services, testing new activities and contributing to common efforts. The synergies and collaborations were strengthened with the organisation of several joint events. Examples are NCR and TFC organising joint presentation in schools and distributions of TOMs Shoes, PRAKSIS Employability and ARSIS Legal Aid having a regular collaboration to promote working permit rights for asylum seekers. ASC is gradually becoming a Centre of interaction and networking between NGOs and not only project partners. Besides the several, parallel networking meetings taking place in ASC by Partners, SN organizes and hosts discussions (such as the one following the island assessment) or meetings with wide participation such as the UNHCR 8th Humanitarian Actors’ Coordinators Meeting on 30/9 with a focus on migration. Supplementary activities (such as Accountant Support or Distributions) produce a considerable number of beneficiaries who certainly assist in positioning ASC as one of the main actors providing relief aid in the centre Athens.

The project in 2015 has seen a stabilization of visits and upward trend to beneficiaries and visits for all services which continues to keep figures in a promising rate for successful deliverables.

Solidarity Now has signed the partnership agreements with project partners i.e. PRAXIS, ARSIS, Network for Children’s Rights, Together for Children. Additionally it achieved the 6 agreements on 2015, including security services, asylum, services, reparation works, providing food vouchers and support of actions against homophobia and transphobia.

In brief the achieved outcomes in 2015 are summarized below.

Expected Outcome	Outcome indicator	Indicator value		Source of verification
<i>Measures for groups vulnerable to social and economic exclusion established or strengthened</i>	Number of entities cooperating in the field of public and private services	Baseline 0	Target 15	8 entities cooperating within the programme from the public, NGO and private sector in 2014 15 additional entities cooperating in 2015 (23 entities in total)
	Number of persons that have been socially and economically stimulated through assistance of the programme	0	37,792	Total 31.953 persons serviced by the programme in 2015

UPDATE:

The Greek Ombudsman (Synigoros tou politis) implemented an action on the protection of human rights and discrimination and organised a series of events on the issue (two conference type events). Six GO annual reports on discrimination and gender equality were translated in English. Additional information leaflets were produced and made available in Greek, English, Arabic, and Albanian. The GO also carried out four interventions in Roma settlements, and organised an experts workshop for an imminent publication on the Ombudsman's intervention on hate speech cases.

On 9-2-2016 a press conference and publicity event on the work of the GO regarding the legal and social guide on rights and benefits for the vulnerable groups was organized. The guide was distributed to the participants. The new site was also presented to the attendees (www.synigoros-solidarity.gr).

Field research was carried out in 3 hot-spots of multiple deprivation, 5 neighbourhoods in total, in the wider Athens region, namely central Athens (Ano Patisia, Kispeli/Agios Panteleimonas), municipality of Agios Ioannis-Renti, municipality of Perama. A conference was organized to present the field research and the findings, with active participation of the respective Mayors, 3 European Ombudsman offices, central and local Urban planning offices, social policy departments of local authorities, NGOs active around housing and social policy issues, (approximately 80 participants). Two radio spots for vulnerable groups were created practices.

Project "Tackling Poverty and Social Marginalization"

In respect to voucher distribution, during the two final distributions (February and March/April 2016), 13.129 vouchers were delivered to an average of 3793 beneficiaries. In total the initial target of 43.844 was surpassed (105%) and reached the 99% of all vouchers available (46.368). In respect to street-work, during 2016 the team approached 72 homeless people (including 10 follow ups). Up until 30/4/2016 they had approached overall 578 homeless people and drug users (including 82 follow up). A comprehensive survival guide for the homeless was produced and a unique report on the homeless in Athens was prepared. The PC has participated in an academic conference organized by the National Centre for Social Research and the Technological Institute of Athens on 24/02/2016 in Athens, presenting the project and the Streetwork results.

For the projects final event that took place on 30/05/2016 a press kit has been prepared including a report with the projects results, a CD with the Streetwork survey, a Video presenting the project's impact and testimonies by the beneficiaries and a brochure presenting KYADAs work and scope.

The project "Supporting Solidarity now" was completed in 2016 with startling results.

Health services: All 8 specialized medical services offered. 15164 Individuals served (Initial Target: 15500 Beneficiaries), 59972 visits (Initial Target: 15500 Beneficiaries) etc.
Employability: 1996 Individuals served (Initial Target: 1500 Beneficiaries); 10352 Sessions completed (Initial Target: 4500 Sessions/Services); 310 beneficiaries (27,6% . Success stories available at: <http://www.praksisemployability.gr/index.php/GR/>)

Legal: Services were offered as planned (coverage of targets up to 354%) -2658 Beneficiaries Served -1567 Cases (Initial Target: 720); 3294 Visits carried out (Initial Target: 3000) and strong advocacy component present throughout implementation

Day Care Centre for Children was a successful project: 2906 Individuals were served (Initial Target: 2400 Beneficiaries

Helpline Services: 15836 (Initial Target: 12000 Beneficiaries). 200 parents

4. MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION

4.1 Management and control systems

Significant improvements in the procedures and legal framework took place during 2015. They mainly concern the fulfillment of regulatory obligations and the adaptation to the crisis environment by providing responses to new needs while securing effectiveness and absorption.

This year was the period of development and submission to the FMC of the detailed descriptions on Management and Control Systems for all Programme Operators. Due to the differences in the legal framework applying to each PO, each PO had to draft a separate MCS. The NFP had previously sent uniform guidelines to the POs, in order to abide by minimum common standards. The MCS of the four Programmes were submitted to the FMO accompanied by a report and an opinion by Audit Authority, according to the provisions of art. 4.8 of the Regulation, on the dates presented in the following table:

Programme	Actual date of submission MCS
GR 02	14/5/15
GR03	6/3/15
GR06	14/1/15
GR07	8/4/15

The English versions were also submitted, simultaneously or later, during 2015. An exchange of correspondence between the POs and the FMO is still taking place, concerning some clarifications on the MCS. Some of the POs had to update the MCS (second & third versions). By the beginning of 2016, GR02 and GR03 had completed and acknowledged MCS, while GR06 and GR07 were still in various stages of the procedure.

The Audit Authority is aware of all these changes and will take them on board when its audits are being carried out. Moreover all these changes will be described in the next annual report that will be submitted by the Audit Authority on December 2016. According to the opinion of the AA for the year 2015, the MCS applied to the programmes functioned effectively, so as to provide reasonable assurance to the correctness of the statements of expenditure submitted to EEA FM.

Finally, an extension of one year was granted to all projects (within the programmes) that were registered by 15 September, Europe-wide, as well as to the asylum and migration programmes (GR05 and GR06).

4.2 Compliance with EU legislation, national legislation and the MoU

The NFP is closely monitoring all programmes and collaborates with other administrative services in order to verify that the national and EU legislation are followed in all circumstances. Meetings with the PO are held on a regular basis, sometimes attended by a representative of the Norwegian Embassy or a member of the FMO staff or a monitoring agent.

Serious delays in payments from the Public Investments Programme due to the financial situation of Greece last summer resulted in a provisional withdrawal of payments from the EEA Grants mechanism to Greece in August. Payments resumed in September 2015, and the situation returned to normal by the end of the year.

It is necessary to point out that in order not only to assure that all inflows will cover the expenses of the targeted programmes but also the smooth liquidity of them, a Common Ministerial decision was issued. This decision 85335 (OJ B' 1706, 14.08.2015) foresees the ring-fencing of all the incoming revenues achieving best results.

Concerning the implementation framework, the Annexes A & B of MOU were proposed and agreed with the FMC to be amended twice (in June and December of 2015). Specifically the first revision concerns the new government structure especially the chart (names of Ministries & organizational structure of some POs), the cancellation of the predefined project under the programme area "Renewable Energy" and the clarification of the separation of functions between the Certifying Authority and the NFP, since both belong to the same General Secretariat.

The second revision was initiated both by the NFP/GR06 PO and the Norwegian Ministry of EEA Grants and EU Affairs, following a visit of the former Minister Mr. Helgesen in Greece. The NFP, realizing the difficulty of the original PO to establish and run the shelters for unaccompanied minors, had proposed to exceptionally reallocate the physical and economic substance from GR06 to GR05. Minister Helgesen proposed to Greek Minister Charitsis to reallocate unabsorbed funding from various programmes to GR05. The proposal resulted in a comprehensive review of all programmes by the General Secretary and a subsequent reallocation of € 3,985 million to GR05, which was formalized in a revised MOU in December 2015. The change guarantees funding for various shelters run or supervised by the IOM and is expected to contribute to other actions in the framework of the asylum, migration and voluntary returns. Especially for GR02, the FMC has confirmed that, because of the lack of previous assessment conducting to the proposal for the budget decrease, it will compensate any amounts that might be needed at a later stage and that are not available due to the reallocation, by the next financial mechanism, for up to € 2 million.

It is worth noting that the reallocation was an exceptional procedure not foreseen by the Regulation. The FMC showed flexibility and understanding in order to respond to exceptional circumstances, while setting a precedent that may be useful in the future too.

Irregularities

No irregularities were reported in 2015, for the programmes monitored by the NFP. A preliminary finding from the audit in GR03 is being examined and is to be reported in the first report of the year 2016.

UPDATE:

One complaint has been received in the complaint mechanism (for the appointment of a researcher in one project of the GR07 programme). After the examination of the complaint by the PO, the PP repeated the procedure for this specific appointment (no payments were involved).

The Q1 and Q2 Quarterly reports of 2016 included 7 cases of irregularities (5 of them are already closed). 6 of the cases were reported in continuation of the training seminar that took place in Athens for the irregularities and concerned mainly payments that were detected and corrected by the CA before inclusion of the expenditure concerned in the statement of actual expenditure incurred in an IFR.

The FO of the GR04 programme, based on the article 5.13 of the regulation and the programme agreement, reported to the FMO a major irregularity (a case of suspected double funding and fraud) that was committed within 2016, at project level.

4.3 Audit, monitoring, review and evaluation

The Audit Authority submitted the audit strategy in April 2015 & the 1st amendment followed in May 2015. Based on this Strategy the Audit Authority proceeded in 2015 to the following audits on systems and operations:

Systems: National Focal Point, Programme Operators of GR03 and GR06

Operations: Preparation of programme proposal and management cost of GR03 programme, Management cost of GR06 programme.

From the overall evaluation of the results of the system audits it was found that the systems of the 3 audited services/directorates are functioning, certain light improvements are required (mainly the operation of country's Information system). From the overall evaluation of the results of the operations audits only one material finding was identified in GR03 (non adaptation of the remuneration cost of staff employed in the programme). The audit plan for the year 2016 includes 3 new systems audits on CA, NPF and the PO of GR02 and 3 operations audits (projects).

The NFP continues to organize meetings with the POs in order to monitor, coordinate and guide them and at the same time to collect from the programme Operators information on programme implementation.

A Monitoring Committee was organised in October 2015 as per art 4.4 of the Reg. The NFP was informed regularly on each projects progress and evaluated on a regular basis programme timetables (now in Excel form, in the future through MIS). More specifically during 2015, the POs of the programmes GR02, GR03 and GR07 paid special attention to conducting all procedures foreseen in the MCS, in order to pre-approve tenders (or in the case of GR08 to issue the official budgeting decision). All contract documents tendered were pre-approved by the POs before publication of the official call for each sub-project. All POs are further planning to conduct in situ verifications of projects.

GR03 is planning to conduct two in situ verifications of projects within the implementation period (2016 and 2017).

GR06 conducted in situ verifications in each of its PP and plans to continue in 2016 and 2017.

In September of 2015 the NFP sent guidance to the POs for the exceptional extension of the final date of the eligibility of selected projects due to the late implementation progress and then the NFP performed visits to the POs in order to access if the correct project level information has been inserted in DORIS.

Finally based on the remarks included in the Transparency International Corruption Risk Report the NFP made the web sites section “Complaints Mechanism” more visible. The email box alert-eeagrants@mneec.gr was established in 2015 and serves as one of the main tools of the Complaint Mechanism.

UPDATE:

In 2016 the Audit Authority carried out 6 new audits on systems and operations/projects. The final reports are pending. The NFP for the Fund of Bilateral Relations, the Certifying Authority, and the PO of GR02 were audited as systems. Moreover in collaboration with the FMO a training seminar on irregularities took place in May, the AA, CA and POs were invited. Technical meetings were organized by the NFP and one of the topics was the new management information system. During the period January - August 2016 the Contractor of the EEA Grants MIS system in close cooperation with the Special Service for MIS (EYD OPS) has delivered the initial MIS version, giving access for data entry to the POs and PPs. Data entry is on-going and will be completed by December 2016.

Concerning the evaluation plan of the NFP, as per art. 9.1 of the Regulation, the NFP is planning to proceed to independent ex- post evaluations of possibly two Programmes in early 2017. The evaluations could also assist in drawing useful conclusions for the next (2014-2021) financial mechanism. Therefore, in 2016, only the preliminary steps, such as the establishment of the Terms of Reference and possibly the launching of the tender will be taken. Contact with the relevant evaluation unit of FMO has already been established.

The 2nd Meeting of the Monitoring Committee was organized in 22/3/2016. The NFP continues the close monitoring of all POs and organizes technical meetings for various implementations issues, e.g. the new Management Information System (OPS-EOX), the seminar for irregularities in May 2016 in collaboration with FMO etc.

4.4 Information and publicity

A qualitative step forward was achieved concerning the visibility of the EEA Grants in Greece. This is not only the result of the NFP’s efforts, but of a joint effort undertaken by all the POs and the FOs. Also, a closer collaboration with the Norwegian Embassy in Athens is maintained.

The communication consultant that was hired in late 2014 presented a comprehensive work plan for the year, which included publicity according to the milestones for each PO. During 2015 the NFP enriched the internet site eeagrants.gr and the Twitter® and Facebook® accounts (already 650 followers). The main communication activity consisted of Press Releases and follow up, in order to achieve a maximum coverage. All major activities were made public this way (i.e. ministerial visits, the progress in the negotiations of the 2014-2021 Agreement, Programme or MOU amendments).

It is also worth noting that all POs issued or finalized their calls and had to proceed to extensive publicity in order to meet the requirements and promote public awareness of the EEA Grants. Equally, all POs organized informational activities, in order to present the results of their calls, and to inform the project promoters about their obligations. Below is a picture from the GR03 seminar to the selected PP:



The FO also contributed to raising awareness about the EEA Grants. The Bodossaki Foundation even organized a major activity, by dressing the Athens city busses with the EEA Grants logos and basic information about the programme:



Below is a photo from the Frouaracheio, where the official opening was celebrated in March 2015:



UPDATE:

Finally promoting the contribution of the EEA Grants and generating publicity around the Programme GR04, all 76 projects implemented around Greece, as well as the contribution of the Grants to the strengthening of civil society has been at the core of the FO's efforts. In addition to some 500 press, media and TV clippings grained, the FO has launched four short films in 2016 that highlight human stories of direct or indirect beneficiaries through the Grants. The four films, i.e. "We are all citizens of the world", "We are all one family", "We are all creators" and "We are all citizens against depression" are now available via the web and social media and will sum up to a documentary around the Programme that will be aired at the end of 2016, and also in the Programme's Closing Event. Stories have also inspired the digital edition of "Our little stories book", an account of key stories generated by visits to project promoters around the country.

GR08: *During December, a renowned journalist from one of the TV channels of national reach has interviewed the Streetworkers and presented their work in a TV show that was broadcasted in mid-January by Star Channel. The PC has been hosted in two radio shows on 31/5 & 01/6 and in one TV show, in order to speak about the survey results of the streetwork. 4 advertising campaigns in social media including several postings on Together for Children social media channels and on TfCs newsletter (8.000 subscribers) and TV Spot produced https://youtu.be/_CDagwWnob4 (tv spot) and <https://youtu.be/feFXkpyF16Y> (video).*

4.5 Work plan

1. NFP's close monitoring of all POs (at least bimonthly meetings with the POs) to ensure proper monitoring of projects in order to address the outcomes of the EEA Grants in time.
2. Special ad hoc meetings concerning payments or other implementation issues through the Public Investment Programme.
3. Intensification of communication activities (possibly a second communication event organised by the NFP). Expected increasing number of events, workshops and bilateral relations.
4. Organising the Annual Meeting in Athens (in Nov 2016) and preparing -if necessary- a mid-annual meeting.
5. Organising the 2nd Meeting of the Monitoring Committee (Mar 2016).
6. Organising the regular Meeting of the Bilateral Fund Committee (Oct 2016).
7. Visits of NFP to specific projects, in order to acquire first-hand knowledge of the progress.
8. Cooperation Committees of GR06.
9. Audits and on the spot verifications by the Audit Authority on Programmes and Projects.
10. Active participation in the negotiations for the MoU and programmes of the next programming period, 2014-2021 (new Regulations adopted in Sep 2016). The proposal will also include managerial and administrative simplifications that will allow for a smoother implementation.
11. Concerning the evaluation plan of the NFP, as requested in the art. 9.1 of the Regulation, the NFP is planning to proceed to independent evaluations of the Programmes in early 2017. The evaluations will also help to prepare the Programmes of the next financial mechanism. Therefore, in 2016, only the preliminary steps, such as the establishment of the Terms of Reference and possibly the launching of the tender will be taken.

UPDATE:

*The 2nd Meeting of the **Monitoring Committee** was organized in 22/3/2016. The NFP continues the close monitoring of all POs and organizes technical meetings for various implementations issues, e.g. the new Management Information System (OPS-EOX), the seminar for irregularities in May 2016 in collaboration with FMO etc.*

*The **mid Annual Meeting** took place in May 2016.*

*The 3rd **Bilateral Fund at national level Committee** meeting was organized in April 2016 and the 4th meeting is planned for October 2016. A visit of the NFP to the predefined project of GR02 Programme was organized in July of 2016. The transfer of funds for Programme GR01, GR02 & GR06 to the GR0 took place in 2016.*

The Annual Meeting for 2016 is planned for November 2016.

In relation to the preparation of the new 2014-2021 period, the NFP has sent input and remarks to the FMO for the new draft regulation on EEA Grants (2014-21), the Blue Book and the guidelines for research.

5. SUMMARY LIST OF ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- The limited time for the actual programme implementation and distribution of grants (organization of call of proposals, evaluation of proposals, payments, monitoring, audits, evaluations etc.) despite the extension given by FMO, was a significant problem in 2015 that will persist in 2016. This situation puts a lot of pressure on the POs and PPs to achieve the results agreed at Programme level. The NFP is closely monitoring and acts as a facilitator when possible.
- The short implementation period also has a significant effect on achieving the bilateral objective. In fact, the freezing of the BFNL has caused significant delays, and coupled with the fact that some of the promoters are unable to implement, hence a need to replace them, or change the projects has arisen, it may be difficult to implement all the planned activities in time and in a satisfactory way.
- Already all the programmes are run with the assumption that no further delays will occur, in which case the results will be jeopardized. The NFP and the PO are closely collaborating in order to prevent any further delays, but not all circumstances are under control.

UPDATE:

Annexes A & B: RISK ASSESSMENT

Annex A: risk assessment at national level

Type of objective	Description	Likelihood	Consequence	Mitigation planned/done
Operational	Risk of unexpected administrative delays	Possible	Major It is added to the general delays	Better coordination at ministerial level and better cooperation between internal structures Good coordination and governance in major PO and PP level.
Bilateral	Worsening of bilateral relations due to inability of payments on the part of the 01 PO (the NFP) <i>UPDATE: Issue no longer existing.</i>	Possible	major	Efforts to speed up the payments issue.

Annex B: risk assessment at programme level

Programme	Type of Objective	Description	Likelihood	Consequence	Mitigation planned/done
II programmes monitored by the NFP + 08	Operational/Bilateral	Delays in implementation, due to late start, lengthy procedures.	likely	Major The Programmes will be fully implemented, as the State will have contracted the relative obligations. But they will not be financed by the EEA Grants, thus affecting the impact and visibility of the Grants.	Close monitoring by the NFP, in situ visits and provision of help. Sound time management. Providing the POs and PPs with the adequate tools for tackling with administrative problems.
01	Bilateral/Operational	Inability to proceed to quick payments	Likely	Major Impossibility to implement the programme, including the BFNL. No progress in bilateral relations, or technical assistance actions	Continuous pressure from the National Focal Point to the competent authorities in order to speed up the whole procedure.
02	Cohesion	Delays in projects' implementation due to late contracts signing, following delayed signing of the PA. Unfinished projects or poor quality.	Likely	Major	Action had been taken during 2015 by the modification of the programme budget. Close monitoring of implementation. Update: In situ verification and in situ financial monitoring of projects will start from 2016 till the end dates of projects.
03	Cohesion	Delays in projects'	Likely	Major	Overbooking in selected

		implementation due to late contracts signing. Unfinished projects or poor quality.			projects on national budget's account. Close monitoring of implementation.
06	Operational	Double Funding	likely	Minor	Special audits and control.
	Cohesion	Delays in implementation due to overwhelming pressure on administrative capacity – changes in international treaties	Most probable	Major	Good governance at national level (P.A.)- budget reallocation within the programme. Update: Budget reallocation negotiations started from Spring 2016 and concluded end of October 2016. However the risk level remains high due to limited implementation time.
07	Cohesion	Delays in projects' implementation due to late contracts signing. Unfinished projects or poor quality.	Likely	Minor	Close monitoring of the PO. Update: The risk during the first semester of 2016 was minimized as contracts were signed and implementation was streamlined in all projects.
08	Operational	Double Funding	likely	Minor	Special audits and control

Annex - Strategic report attachment 1

22-Feb-16

Applications in Greece

Reporting year 2015

Calls for Proposals

Applications for GR02 Integrated marine and inland water management

Calls for proposals	2014			2015			Total		
	Received	Partnership	Projects Contracted	Received	Partnership	Projects Contracted	Received	Partnership	Projects Contracted
Predefined in MoU						1			1
Educational programmes in primary and secondary education in marine and inland water management	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
More integrated management of marine and inland water resources	0	0	0	91	23	12	91	23	12
Scholarships for postdoctoral research or part of doctoral (PhD) studies in the field of Integrated Marine and Inland Water Management in Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein, 2014-2015	0	0	0	13	0	12	13	0	12
Total	0	0	0	104	23	25	104	23	25

Open call related outcomes:

- Increased awareness of and education in integrated marine and inland water management
- More integrated management of marine and inland water resources

Predefined project measures:

- Infrastructure development and provision of equipment
- Provision of services

Applications for GR03 Renewable energy

Calls for proposals	2014			2015			Total		
	Received	Partnership	Projects Contracted	Received	Partnership	Projects Contracted	Received	Partnership	Projects Contracted
RES Systems in Local Communities Call 1 & Pre-Defined Project	67	0	0	0	0	10	67	0	10
RES Systems in Local Communities Call 2 (Only if there is an unallocated amount from call 1)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	67	0	0	0	0	10	67	0	10

Open call related outcomes:

- A less carbon-dependent economy

Applications for GR04 Funds for Non-governmental Organisations

Calls for proposals	2014			2015			Total		
	Received	Partnership	Projects Contracted	Received	Partnership	Projects Contracted	Received	Partnership	Projects Contracted
Democracy, Transparency, Good Governance and Citizen Participation	86	5	9				86	5	9
Human Rights, including minority rights, especially the Roma, immigrants, racism and hate crime, gender equality and gender-based violence and trafficking	124	4	0				124	4	0
Social inequalities, poverty, social exclusion (including in rural areas) and provision of basic welfare services	218	10	31				218	10	31
Strengthened capacity of NGOs and an enabling environment	143	3	0				143	3	0
Advocacy and watchdog role developed				0	0	0	0	0	0
Democratic values, including human rights, promoted				0	0	24	0	0	24
Provision of welfare and basic services to defined target groups increased				0	0	0	0	0	0
Strengthened capacity of NGOs and an enabling environment for the sector promoted				0	0	12	0	0	12
Total	571	22	40	0	0	36	571	22	76

Open call related outcomes:

- Democratic values, including human rights, promoted
- Advocacy and watchdog role developed
- Strengthened capacity of NGOs and an enabling environment for the sector promoted

- Provision of welfare and basic services to defined target groups increased

Applications for GR05 Address urgent needs for the reception and screening of new arrivals and for the accommodation of vulnerable groups. Assistance to voluntary returns.

Calls for proposals	2011			2012			2014			Total		
	Received	Partnership	Projects Contracted									
Predefined in MoU			1			1						2
CALL FOR PROPOSALS FOR NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS REGISTERED IN GREECE IN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE "SOAM PROGRAMME"							5	0	3	5	0	3
Total			1			1	5	0	3	5	0	5

Open call related outcomes:

- Well-functioning asylum system in place, enabling asylum-seekers to bring forward their claim for international protection, have their claim processed in due time and be offered accommodation during the processing of their case, or to return voluntary to their country of origin

Predefined project measures:

- Capacity-building
- Information and awareness raising
- Infrastructure development and provision of equipment
- Capacity-building
- Information and awareness raising
- Provision of services

Applications for GR06 Capacity building of national asylum and migration management systems

Calls for proposals	2014			Total		
	Received	Partnership	Projects Contracted	Received	Partnership	Projects Contracted
Predefined in Programme Proposal			2			2
Total			2			2

Predefined project measures:

- Capacity-building
- Provision of services

Applications for GR07 Research

Calls for proposals	2014			2015			Total		
	Received	Partnership	Projects Contracted	Received	Partnership	Projects Contracted	Received	Partnership	Projects Contracted
Open Call for the Programme "Diversity, inequality and social inclusion	103	17	0	0	0	18	103	17	18
Total	103	17	0	0	0	18	103	17	18

Open call related outcomes:

- Strengthened research capacity in the Beneficiary States

Applications for GR08 Solidarity and Social Inclusion in Greece

Calls for proposals	2014			Total		
	Received	Partnership	Projects Contracted	Received	Partnership	Projects Contracted
Predefined in MoU			2			2
Total			2			2

Predefined project measures:

- Education and training
- Information and awareness raising
- Infrastructure development and provision of equipment
- Provision of services

Bilateral Calls for Proposals

Applications for GR04 Funds for Non-governmental Organisations

Calls for proposals	2015			2014			Total		
	Received	Partnership	Projects Contracted	Received	Partnership	Projects Contracted	Received	Partnership	Projects Contracted
Bilateral relations measure B_on-going call (2)	2	2	2	0	0	0	2	2	2
Bilateral relations measure A_Call (2)	0	0	0	11	4	0	11	4	0
Bilateral relations measure B_on-going call (1)	4	4	3	1	0	0	5	4	3
Bilateral relations measure A_Call (1)	0	0	0	22	6	2	22	6	2
Total	6	6	5	34	10	2	40	16	7

Open call related outcomes:

- Democratic values, including human rights, promoted
- Advocacy and watchdog role developed
- Strengthened capacity of NGOs and an enabling environment for the sector promoted
- Provision of welfare and basic services to defined target groups increased

Applications for GR05 Address urgent needs for the reception and screening of new arrivals and for the accommodation of vulnerable groups. Assistance to voluntary returns.

Calls for proposals	2014			Total		
	Received	Partnership	Projects Contracted	Received	Partnership	Projects Contracted
Asylum programme 1 fund managed by UDI	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	0	0	0	0	0

Open call related outcomes:

- Well-functioning asylum system in place, enabling asylum-seekers to bring forward their claim for international protection, have their claim processed in due time and be offered accommodation during the processing of their case, or to return voluntary to their country of origin

Predefined project measures:

- Capacity-building
- Information and awareness raising
 - Infrastructure development and provision of equipment
- Capacity-building
- Information and awareness raising
- Provision of services

Annex - Strategic report attachment 2 & 3

Prepared on 22-Feb-16

Projects with donor project partners in Greece

GR02 - Integrated marine and inland water management

Project id	Project Name	Pre-defined project	Donor state	Donor project partner	Type of organisation
GR02-0001	Recording of and Technical Responses to Coastal Erosion of Touristic Aegean island beaches	No	Norway	Center for International Climate and Environmental Research	University, college or other teaching institution, research institute or think-tank
GR02-0006	IMPROVING KNOWLEDGE AND INCREASING AWARENESS FOR WETLAND RESTORATION IN ATTICA REGION	No	Norway	Norwegian Institute of Bioeconomy Research	National agency
GR02-0008	Improving the knowledge in determining the minimum water level and flow of water bodies	No	Norway	Norwegian Institute of Bioeconomy Research	National agency
GR02-0009	Innovative solutions to climate change adaptation and governance in the water management of the Region of	No	Norway	Norwegian Institute for Water Research	University, college or other teaching institution, research institute or think-tank

	Crete - AQUAMAN				
GR02-0012	Marine Spatial Planning in the Aegean Sea for the protection and conservation of biodiversity	No	Norway	Institute of Marine Research	University, college or other teaching institution, research institute or think-tank
GR02-0014	Integrated environmental study and mapping for the improvement of the river basin management plans and the coastal zone of river Sperchios (acronym: SPERCHIOS)	No	Norway	Norwegian Institute of Bioeconomy Research	National agency
Projects with donor project partners 6 out of 14 (42.9%) (Figures include SGS and predefined.)			Planned grant amount for projects with donor project partners € 1,902,534		

GR04 - Funds for Non-governmental Organisations

Project id	Project Name	Pre-defined project	Donor state	Donor project partner	Type of organisation
GR04-0008	Fight Hate Crime Now	No	Norway	The Norwegian Centre against Racism	Service provision organization (NGO)
GR04-0014	Self-help, Networking and Therapeutic Support in coping with depression at urban and isolated areas	No	Norway	NORDLAND HOSPITAL TRUST	National agency
GR04-0038	Guardianship Network for Unaccompanied Minors	No	Norway	VERGEFORENINGEN FØLGESVENNEN (THE ASSOCIATION OF GUARDIANS, THE COMPANION)	Other type of NGO
GR04-0044	Break the bonds of fear – Say no to hate: Information and awareness raising campaign against hate speech	No	Norway	The European Wergeland Center (EWC)	Other type of NGO
Projects with donor project partners 4 out of 76 (5.3%)			Planned grant amount for projects with donor project partners € 609,261		

GR07 - Research

Project id	Project Name	Pre-defined project	Donor state	Donor project partner	Type of organisation
GR07-0007	Gender Equality in the Workforce: Reconciling work, private and family life in Greek Industries	No	Iceland	University of Iceland	University, college or other teaching institution, research institute or think-tank
GR07-0009	Innovation and Employability for Women	No	Norway	EUROPEAN CENTRE FOR WOMEN AND TECHNOLOGY-ECWT	Umbrella organization / Network of NGOs
GR07-0010	Teacher support confronting social inequalities - TOCSIN	No	Iceland	University of Iceland	University, college or other teaching institution, research institute or think-tank
GR07-0013	Establishment of a Supporting Mechanism for the Development and Promotion of Social Entrepreneurship in Mountainous Areas	No	Norway	Norwegian Institute of Wood Technology	Other
GR07-0014	HEALTH INEQUALITIES AMONG MIGRANT POPULATION	No	Norway	Norwegian University of Science and Technology	University, college or other teaching institution, research institute or think-tank
GR07-0017	Participatory Action Research to Address Un-Under-Employment at the local level	No	Norway	Oslo and Akershus University College of Applied Sciences	University, college or other teaching institution, research institute or think-tank
GR07-0018	Work-life balance in the context of changing families and labour market in Greece	No	Iceland	University of Iceland	University, college or other teaching institution, research institute or think-tank
Projects with donor project partners 7 out of 18 (38.9%)			Planned grant amount for projects with donor project partners € 1,136,360		

Greece - Summary

Project grant amount total

€ 46,451,611

Number of projects	127
Number of projects with donor project partners	17
Proportion of projects with donor project partners	13.39 %
Number of programmes *	7
EEA and Norway grants committed	€ 54,897,157
* Excluding Technical assistance programmes and PA22	

Annual report 2015
Technical Assistance Agreement
EEA Grants 2009-2014

OVERVIEW OF MAIN ACTIVITIES

The National Focal Point in 2015 carried out the following activities:

For the programming period 2009-2014:

- Organization of meetings with POs for the implementation of programmes and preparation of documents for the financial and technical monitoring of projects (timetable of projects), of audits/on the spot verifications and of appeals.
- Establishment of the Monitoring Committee and organization of the first meeting (20/10/2015).
- Organization of the 5^h Annual Meeting in Athens on 4.11.2015 and a visit to the Asylum Service on 5.11.15.
- Open call for the set up and maintenance of the Monitoring Information System for EEA Grants in Greece (12.1.2015). The contract was signed on 26.8.2015 and the study of implementation was delivered in December.
- Solving of the problem concerning the execution of payments of TA and Bilateral Fund through the appointment of the accounting officer (May 2015).
- Audited on GR01 system (Function as NFP) by the Audit Authority.
- Open call for the staffing of NFP.
- Intensification of communication activities.

For the programming period 2004-09:

- The introduction of a legislative provision in national law in order to pay projects of the period 2004-09 (remaining national contribution). Closure of all pending issues following completion of payments.
- Submission to FMO of "Project Completion Report – PCR" of Project EL0054 "Rehabilitation of cultural neighborhood – landscape gardening, restoration of buildings & conservation of the Byzantine walls of Thessaloniki /EEA Grants 2004-2009".
- An on the spot verification of the project "EL 054".

BUDGET OVERVIEW

The implementation of the previous year's TA budget was not executed as planned due to the problem caused by the modification of the organizational structure of NFP (as Independent Unit of the Ministry) and especially the absence of an accountant that had as consequence the delay in the payments of TA. The first payments took place in October of 2015. Till the end of February of 2016 79.000 euros were paid for expenditure incurred in 2015. The disbursements from FMO were 190.000 euros, in other words 42% of these were absorbed in a period of 4 months. For the coming year the planned expenditure will be reduced by 30.000

euros since the payment for the additional management systems (MIS) will be 95.000 instead of 125.000 euros. The remaining amount will be paid in 2017 for the maintenance of the system.

PROCUREMENTS

During 2015 a major procurement procedure was carried out: “ Tender procedure for the conclusion of a contract for the development and maintenance of an Information System for the implementation of EEA GRANTS 2009-2014”.The call for tenders was issued on 12 January 2015 and the whole task was delegated and carried out by the Special Service for the Management Information System (Ministry of Economy, Development and Tourism).

The procedure was concluded on 19 of May 2015 and the contractor is the Greek company “INTRASOFT INTERNATIONAL SA” who will develop the Information System for EEA GRANTS by September 2016 and will assure its maintenance for another 24 months after delivery.

The contract cost is 142.680 euros and a first payment to the contractor of 23.616 euros has been made on 22 December 2015.

STAFFING

After the Publication of the Presidential Decree 116 on November 3rd 2014 the NFP has a new organizational structure as an Independent Unit under the General Secretariat for Public Investment of the Ministry of Economy, Development and Tourism. As a result of the new structure the two appointed desk officers through the 1st open call in 2014 (Mrs. Kaza and Mrs Mavridou) were appointed to other services, as well as the desk officer from MOU.S.A. On March a new desk officer was appointed (Mrs. Pliaka) and second one on October (Mr. H. Alexopoulos). On June 24th there was a second open call for expression of interest from the public sector regarding NFP staffing that was fruitless. Following a systemic audit, the Audit Authority has requested that all the necessary actions being taken and the process is ongoing.

Staff working in the EEA Grants during 2015:

National Focal Point: Independent Unit of the Ministry of Economy, Development & Tourism (new title since September 2015)				
Name of staff	Official position	Main tasks	Level of effort (% of working time)	Funded through the Grants (Y/N)
Mrs. Anastasia Panopoulou	Head of Independent Unit of the Ministry of Economy, Infrastructure, Maritime Affairs & Tourism for the European Economic Area	All programmes	100%	N
Mrs A. Pliaka	Desk officer	GR07,GR01, Bilateral	Since February 100%	N
Mr. H. Alexopoulos	Desk officer	GR03,02, GR01, Bilateral	Since October 100%	N

Mrs. Eugenia Fotoniata	Desk officer	GR03,GR02	Till March 100%	N
Miss Vicky Kaza	Desk officer	GR06,GR01, Bilateral	Till March 100%	N
Miss Elisabeth Mavridou	Desk officer	GR03,GR02	Till June 100%	N
Certifying Authority:				
Name of staff	Official position	Main tasks	Level of effort (% of working time)	Funded through the Grants (Y/N)
Katsaros Ioannis	Staff Member of Unit A	Desktop controls, Financial Management of Programmes GR01, GR02 and GR03 at the level of C.A.	70%	N
Gravias Ioannis	Staff Member of Unit A	Desktop controls, Financial Management of Programme GR06 at the level of C.A.	50%	N
Kastani Vasiliki	Staff Member of Unit A	Desktop controls, Financial Management of Programme GR07 at the level of C.A.	50%	N
Alesta Vasiliki	Head of Unit A, deputy head of CA.	Horizontal issues concerning all EEA 2009-2014 Programmes.	10%	N
Audit Authority: EDEL				
Name of staff	Official position	Main tasks	Level of effort (% of working time)	Funded through the Grants (Y/N)
Mrs Tountopoulou Yiolanda	Head of "Planning & Evaluation of Audits" Directorate (DSAE)	Overall supervision of directorate's deliverables relating to EEA FM (i.e. Annual Audit Report & Opinion, Audit Strategy, Follow-Up)	2%	N
Mrs Margioli Maria	Head of Unit C "Strategy & Methodology" Unit (DSAE)	Day to day supervision of Unit's deliverables relating to EEA FM	5%	N

		(i.e. Update of Audit Manual, Update of Audit Strategy, Sampling of operations to be audited, Subsampling on operations, Analysis of error rates)		
Mrs Liatsopoulou Evgenia	Head of Unit B “Monitoring, Reports and Corrective Actions” (DSAE)	Day to day supervision of Unit’s deliverables relating to EEA FM (i.e. Annual Audit Report & Opinion, Follow-up of findings)	6%	N
Mrs Katsantoni Sofia	Desk Officer – Unit C (DSAE)	Updating audit Manual, Updating Audit Strategy, Sampling of operations to be audited, Subsampling on operations, Analysis of error rates	10%	N
Mrs Panagopoulou Vassiliki	Desk Officer – Unit B (DSAE)	Desk review of the submitted description of the Management and Control System of two (2) EEA Programmes, in order to issue the compliance assessment report and opinion, in line with article 4.8 of the Regulation	10%	N
Mrs Triantafyllopoulou Evgenia	Desk Officer – Unit B (DSAE)	Desk review of the submitted description of the Management and Control System of two (2) EEA Programmes, in order to issue the compliance assessment report	10%	N

		and opinion, in line with article 4.8 of the Regulation		
Mrs Balantina Eirini	Desk Officer – Unit B (DSAE)	Follow up of findings for system and operation audits. Draft Annual Control Report submitted to EEA FM Committee by end of December 2015.	5%	N
Mrs Papamihalopoulou Areti	Desk Officer – Unit B (DSAE)	Follow up of findings for system and operation audits.	2%	N
Mr Alexopoulos Panagiotis	Head of “Audit of Co-financed Programmes” Directorate (DEDSP)	Overall supervision of directorate’s deliverables relating to EEA FM	5%	N
Mrs Niarchakou Eleni	Head of Unit E “Planning & Audit” (DEDSP)	Planning and supervision	30%	N
7 Auditors	Unit E (DEDSP)	Unit E performs system and operations audits to verify the effective functioning of the management and control system	30%	N
Name of national entity (irregularities): Independent Unit of the Ministry of Economy, Development & Tourism				
Name of staff	Official position	Main tasks	Level of effort (% of working time)	Funded through the Grants (Y/N)
Anastasia Panopoulou	Head of Independent Unit of the Ministry of Economy, Infrastructure, Maritime Affairs & Tourism	Report of Irregularities	1% No irregularities were spotted.	N

THE COMING YEAR

- Close monitoring of all POs (at least bimonthly meetings with the POs) to ensure proper monitoring of projects in order to address the outcomes of the EEA Grants in time.
- Intensification of communication activities (possibly a second communication event organized by the NFP). Expected increased number of events, workshops and bilateral relations.

- Organization of the Annual Meeting in Athens (in October 2016) and preparation -if necessary- of a mid-annual meeting.
- Organization of the 2nd Meeting of the Monitoring Committee (scheduled for 22 March).
- Organization of the regular Meeting of the Bilateral Fund Committee.
- Visits of NFP to specific projects, in order to acquire firsthand knowledge of the progress.
- Launch, towards the end of the year, an open call for the evaluation of the programmes.
- Audits by the Audit Authority on Systems of POs and Projects.
- Active participation in the negotiations for the programmes of the next programming period, 2014-2021.