



**Summary of the Minutes  
5<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the EEA and Norway Grants 2009-2014**

**Date:**

18<sup>th</sup> November 2015

**Venue:**

Hotel Bôrik Bratislava

**Agenda:**

<b>10:00 – 10:15</b>	<b>Opening remarks</b>
<b>10:15 – 10:45</b>	<b>Status / Presentation of the Strategic Report of implementation EEA FM and NFM</b> • Presentation by National Focal Point
<b>10:45 – 11:15</b>	<b>Status of programme implementation</b>
<b>11:15 – 12:00</b>	<b>Risk, irregularities and public procurement</b> • Risk assessment • Irregularities and public procurement
<b>12:15 – 12:30</b>	<b>Financial Progress</b> • Presentation by Certifying Authority
<b>12:30 – 13:00</b>	<b>Bilateral Relations</b> • Information and communication • Roma Inclusion
<b>13:00 – 13:15</b>	<b>Other &amp; closing remarks</b>
<b>14:15 – 14:45</b>	<b>Transfer to St. Michael Baroque Chapel in Borinka (predefined project Pro Monumenta)</b>
<b>14:45 – 16:30</b>	<b>Site visit</b>

**General**

The 5th Annual Meeting was aimed at examining progress achieved over the year 2015, discussing the Strategic Report 2014, the updated Strategic Report 2014 and further steps to be taken in the upcoming period of the implementation of the EEA and Norway Grants in Slovakia. A site visit of a predefined project “Pro Monumenta” took place during the Annual Meeting. This project falls within the program SK05 Conservation and Revitalisation of Cultural and Natural Heritage & Promotion of Diversity in Culture and Arts within European Cultural Heritage and was presented in a nearby village Borinka just after the annual meeting.

**Summary**

**Opening**

A short opening speech was made by the representative of the Focal Point. In the introduction, representative of the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs appreciated that the programmes are proceeding well with an efficient management and was looking forward to discuss different issues.

**Status / Presentation of the Strategic Report of implementation EEA FM and NFM**

Representatives of the Focal Point presented an update of the Strategic Report covering period from January 2015 till September 2015. The time constraints with the coming end of the programme period have been successfully remedied also thanks to the decision of the Donors to extend the eligibility deadline for several projects until April 2017. More than 151 projects have been contracted with 80 % of the available funds.

The Focal Point is satisfied with number of donor project partners (approx. 1/3 of the projects have donor partners), appreciates the help of DPPs with the bilateral activities so far and understands that the capacity of Norwegian institutions to participate in partnership projects is limited.

**Status of programme implementation**

Management and capacity

The NFP reiterated its positive view of the efficiency of the current centralised system. The planned staff reinforcement was done and 3 new employees were hired to help the Programme Operator until 30.4.2017. The cooperation with the Audit Authority and Certifying Authority is very good.

#### Information and communication

The web-page is the strongest tool to inform and promote the grants. Several important events took place during the year like trip of Slovak students to Norway under the Adaptation to Climate Change programme (SK02), the roundtable discussion within SK04 Programme, a study visit to Norway in the SK07 Green Industry Innovation programme, the GII pre-defined project and the CBC Forum in Kosice in November 2015.

#### **Programmes**

The NFP closely informed on the status of implementation of the programmes, on particular difficulties and highlights, measures taken to overcome barriers and positive developments.

#### **Risk, irregularities and public procurement**

Representatives of the Department of Public Procurement Control from the Government Office briefly informed about their role in the verification of the public procurements regarding the grants.

#### **Financial Progress**

The Certifying Authority presented some actual financial figures from the updated Strategic Report as well as the up-to-date information. The total disbursement from the FMO represents 67,04 % of the total allocation and the total percentage of incurred expenditure reported to the FMO reached 27,89 % which a great progress.

#### **Bilateral Relations**

##### Bilateral Funds (BF) at Programme level

Along with all calls for proposals the announcements of the Measure A of the Bilateral Fund were launched in previous periods with some savings. The unspent allocation from Measure A should be reallocated to the Measure B, which was opened in 2015.

##### Bilateral fund at National level

The NFP informed about the implementation of the Bilateral funds at national level for 2014 and 2015. In the 2014 call 15 applications were submitted in total and 10 of them were approved. The call for the Bilateral Fund 2015 was launched in August 2015, and so far 2 applications were received. The scope of the Bilateral fund remained unchanged; however the scope of the particular components was extended.

There are 3 planned predefined activities for 2016. First is the Bjørnson's monument in Košice with a budget of €35 000, second is the Slovak-Icelandic Geothermal Cooperation (€20 000) which will be included in the updated Work Plan, to be sent to the FMO, and the third is the Conference/ conferences related to the Slovak Presidency of the EU, with a total budget of €100 000.

#### **Roma Inclusion**

For the Donors, it was crucial that the Focal Point sees Roma inclusion as a general concern which is actively integrated into relevant programmes. Two roundtable discussions were good examples where all the stakeholders.

#### **Conclusions**

- The Donors approved the Strategic Report for 2014 and its update.