

**The Summary of the Minutes**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Meeting of the EEA and Norway Grants 2009-2014**

**Date**

13<sup>th</sup> November 2013, 10:00 a.m.

**Venue**

The Government Office of the Slovak Republic, Hotel Bôrik Bratislava, conference room A215

**Agenda**

<b>10:00 – 10:15</b>	<b>Opening remarks</b>
<b>10:15 – 10:30</b>	<b>Status/ Presentation of the Strategic Report</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Progress achieved in 2013 (presented by the FP)</li> <li>• Financial progress achieved in 2013 (presented by the CA)</li> </ul>
<b>10:30 – 11:45</b>	<b>Management and implementation (incl. changes to the MoU)</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion on the proposed formal changes to the Annexes A of Memoranda of Understanding</li> <li>• Publicity</li> </ul>
<b>10:45 – 11:30</b>	<b>Programmes and Risk assessment</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentation of programmes</li> <li>• Presentation of the risks identified</li> <li>• Discussion on the risks identified</li> <li>• Discussion on the possible extension of reallocation and eligibility deadlines</li> </ul>
<b>11:30 – 11:40</b>	<b>Bilateral Relations and Issues</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Bilateral Fund – Work plan 2014 presentation</li> <li>• National Bilateral Fund – discussion on FP and donors priorities</li> </ul>
<b>11:45 – 11:55</b>	<b>Horizontal concerns and Roma Inclusion</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Donors view on horizontal concerns</li> </ul>
<b>11:55 – 12:00</b>	<b>Closing Remarks</b>

**General**

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Meeting was aimed at examining progress achieved over the years 2012 and 2013 and discussing the Strategic Reports including their updates as well as further steps to be taken during the upcoming period of the EEA and Norway Grants implementation in Slovakia.

On the occasion of the Annual Meeting, the Programme Agreement for the financing of the Programme "Conservation and Revitalisation of Cultural and Natural Heritage & Promotion of Diversity in Culture and Arts within European Cultural Heritage" was concluded.

A site visit was organised in village Rusovce. The attendants have visited the Manor House and the Servants House. The renovation of the Servants House and parts of the surrounding park has been selected as a pre-defined project under the Culture Programme.

**Summary**

**Opening**

Short opening speeches were delivered. The National Focal Point (NFP) suggested finishing the agenda a bit earlier due to a signing of the Programme Agreement for Culture Programme taking place in the early afternoon. Concerning the Strategic Report for 2012, the NFP summarized that they had been approved by the Monitoring Committee before their submission to the Donors. The comments provided by the donors were taken into account and the Strategic reports were updated. The NFP also prepared a risk analysis summarizing the risks identified in the Programmes implemented in Slovakia.

## State of play and Presentation of the Strategic Reports

A general overview of all programmes, except those which are operated by the Innovation Norway and the Financial Mechanism Office (FMO) was presented by the NFP through the following preliminary statistics:

- Programme Agreements and Project contracts
  - ✓ Programme Agreement for Scholarship Fund is the only one that left to be signed
  - ✓ the first Project Contract concerning the pre-defined project within the Social Inclusion Programme had been signed just before the Annual Meeting
- Calls for proposals
  - ✓ seven calls for proposals were launched within six programmes and six of them have already been closed
- Applications
  - ✓ 155 applications were received ( $\frac{2}{3}$  were submitted within two Small Grant Schemes focused on primary and secondary schools)
  - ✓ most of the received applications came from the eastern part of Slovakia
  - ✓ 76 applications were submitted by Public Sector Institutions, 14 by NGOs and 8 by Private Sector Institutions
  - ✓ within all implemented programmes, except of the Domestic and Gender based Violence Programme, the number of applications is sufficient to cover the Calls allocations.
- Bilateral relations
  - ✓ of 137 project partners within Small Grant Schemes' projects 26 are from Donors states
  - ✓ of 26 project partners within big projects are 13 from the Donors states

The Donors thanked for a good situation overview of the programmes and appreciated the strategic and analytical approach presented. As regards the Strategic Reports, the Donors considered them, including their update and the extensive risk assessment, as valuable information, however, they suggested preparing more focused and shorter version of the document for the next time. Regarding the bilateral relation, they were pleased to see that a lot of donor partners are involved in the projects.

## Management and implementation

### Capacity

The NFP informed that the capacities of the Department of EEA and Norway Grants will be strengthened to meet the reporting requirements and that the Unit for Strategic Actions was created as of 1st November 2013 for this purpose. The NFP also pointed out that cooperation with other employees at the Government Office and experts from the relevant line Ministries has shown as a good model also for the next EEA and Norway Grants period.

The Donors appreciated the establishment of the new organizational unit focusing on monitoring and reporting.

### Amendments to the Memoranda

The Donors took the organizational and names changes made within the CA and the NFP into consideration and agreed with the amendment of the Annex A of the Memoranda.

### Publicity

The Donors were pleased to see that the NFP followed up on the communication strategy in a good manner. In this respect, a close cooperation between the NFP and the Norwegian embassy to promote the Grants was appreciated as a very important aspect in achieving the common goals.

### Financial Issues

Regarding the financial issues, the CA informed that no problem has occurred yet. The CA already received the advance payments for all programmes, except of SK06 (Scholarship fund) and SK05 (Culture programme).

### Programmes

The NFP briefly informed about the status of each programme.

In respect of the overview provided, the Donors appreciated a good progress made in all of the Programmes.

They also appreciated that the launching conference for Culture programme was going to be held on the next day.

### **Bilateral Fund at the national level**

The NFP informed that the work plan for Bilateral Fund was approved and the first meeting of bilateral committee was already held.

Mr Erdal welcomed the strong donor involvement in the bilateral fund and the ambition to increase contacts with Iceland and Liechtenstein. Regarding the bilateral relation, the Donors mentioned that the cooperation within the programmes is working very well. In respect of the Slovak EU Presidency, the Donors proposed to set aside funds for an activity during the Slovak EU Presidency in 2016.

### Closing remarks

The Donors approved the Strategic Reports including the updates.

Both parties - NFP and the Donors thanked each other for a fruitful meeting.