

EEA and Norwegian Financial Mechanisms 2009-2014

This template is drafted to encourage and guide the Programme Operators to produce concise, results-based programme reports that will give an account of progress and results that contribute to the expected outcomes and the programme objective. This template will help to ensure that the requirements of the Programme Operators Manual (POM) are met.

Checklist questions before submitting the Annual Programme Report	YES	NO
<i>Has the Annual Programme Report template (from the POM) been used?</i>	×	
<i>Have all the sections in the Annual Programme Report been addressed, including any relevant Horizontal concerns?</i>	×	
<i>Does the executive summary serve as a stand-alone document?</i>		×

ANNUAL PROGRAMME REPORT
EEA and Norwegian Financial Mechanisms 2009 – 2014

for the period/year 2013

Beneficiary State	Poland
Program title	Strengthening Schengen cooperation and combating cross-border and organised crime, including trafficking and itinerant criminal groups
Programme number	PL 15
Grant rate awarded	85%
Grant awarded (euro)	10 000 000 EURO
Date of Donor commitment	February 12 th 2013
Programme completion date	April 30 th 2017

1. Executive summary

The Programme Proposal was accepted by Donors on February 12th 2013 and on April 15th 2013 an Agreement between Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of the Regional Development of the Republic of Poland concerning the Programme PL 15 “*Strengthening Schengen cooperation and combating cross-border and organised crime, including trafficking and itinerant criminal groups*” was signed. On August 19th 2013 an adequate Agreement was signed by the Ministry of the Regional Development of the Republic of Poland and the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Poland.

The Call for proposals was published on September 30th 2013. Deadline of the call for proposals was set on January 8th 2014 but after several applicants’ requests, the deadline was prolonged till January 17th 2014.

During the call of proposals, on November 18th 2013, the training for applicants took place in the headquarter of the Ministry of the Interior.

On December 12th 2013 the Ministry of the Interior, as the Operator of the Programme PL 15 organized the opening conference related to project implementation in the area of “*Strengthening Schengen cooperation and combating cross-border and organised crime, including trafficking and itinerant criminal groups*” within the Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2009-2014. The participants of the conference, among others, included the Ambassador of the Kingdom of Norway in Poland, representatives of the Embassy of Kingdom of Norway in Poland and representatives of potential beneficiaries and institutions co-operating with the Ministry of the Interior with the Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2004-2007 implementation process.

Two pre-defined projects foreseen to be implemented within the Programme have been consulted and prepared in 2013 and are expected to be submitted in 2014.

In 2014 it is also foreseen to select the applications qualified to be granted financing and to sign agreements with beneficiaries. It will allow to begin implementation of the projects, which will contribute to achievement of outputs and outcomes of the Programme.

Activities aiming at achievement of general goals of the NFM at this stage of implementation of the Programme concentrated mostly on proper conduction of the call for proposals (including preparation of documentation for the applicants). It is foreseen

that activities implemented within the selected projects shall contribute to a decrease of crime rate and also increase the level of security of the Schengen area. This shall facilitate entrepreneurship due to a more favourable business environment. Experience so far shows that in the long run such activities might positively influence GDP growth and creation of new workplaces as well locally as nationally. That is how implementation of the Programme will contribute to achievement of the goal of reduction of social and economic disparities within the EEA area. Bilateral relations between Norway and Poland were supported by the Programme Operator at the level of call for proposals, where additional points were given to applicants declaring partnerships with Norwegian entities.

Management of the Programme issues were negotiated in 2013 by the Programme Operator. The goal was to arrange cooperation details between PO and an Intermediate Body (at that time Implementing Agency for European Programmes – IAEP, mentioned in the Memorandum of Understanding). Unfortunately, due to organisational changes, signing of a financial agreement between PO and IAEP, determining the scope of responsibilities, turned out to be unfeasible. In 2014 the PO intends to sign an agreement with the newly created successor of the IAEP, which is the European Projects Support Centre. The Centre shall be entrusted with control tasks related to projects selected within the Programme. This however implies modification of basic NFM documents such as Memorandum of Understanding or agreement between National Contact Point and the Programme Operator, which might significantly extend the process of elaboration and acceptance of the final version of the Management and Control System and audit trail documentation as well as negatively influence the efficiency of the management of the Programme.

In 2014 the Programme Operator shall take the necessary measures to develop efficient cooperation mechanisms with the Council of Europe in order to reach a compromise as far as implementation of one of the pre-defined projects is concerned.

2. Programme area specific developments

The Programme Operator confirms the necessity of implementation of tasks foreseen in the programme proposal aiming at counteracting organised and cross-border crime. It is necessary to reduce the economic and social pressure connected with an increased crime level, especially in the cross-border area.

Due to the fact, that the call for proposals lasted until 17th of January 2014, there are no data allowing for proper assessment of achievements in the Programme area.

3. Reporting on Programme outcome

Due to the fact, that the call for proposals lasted until 17th of January 2014 the Programme Operator does not know the results of projects planned to be achieved by the applicants. Therefore the current stage of Programme implementation does not allow for a thorough output and outcome analysis.

Progress on horizontal concerns

At the current stage of the Programme implementation the Programme Operator is not

able to report on progress on horizontal concerns.

4. Reporting on outputs

4.1 [Give a summary and analysis of how the selected projects have contributed or are contributing to each of the Programme outputs set out in the Programme proposal. Analyse progress towards the defined outputs, and explain any deviation from the plan.

Due to the fact, that the call for proposals lasted until 17th of January 2014 the Programme Operator does not know the results of projects planned to be achieved by the applicants. Therefore the current stage of Programme implementation does not allow for a thorough output and outcome analysis.

4.2 Give a summary of the implementation of each pre-defined project. When projects have been completed give a summary of their actual contributions to the output targets.

At the time of submitting the Annual Report none of the pre-defined projects have started yet.

4.3 Give a summary of the implementation of small grant schemes. If this is a Final Report, provide a summary of their actual contributions to the Programme output.

The small grant scheme is not implemented under the PL 15 Programme.

5. Project selection

On September 30th 2013 the call of proposals related to the Programme PL 15 "Strengthening Schengen cooperation and combating cross-border and organised crime, including trafficking and itinerant criminal groups" was published. The call for proposals lasted until 17th of January 2014. Until the end of 2013 no applications were submitted.

6. Progress of bilateral relations

In line with the Regulations the PO established the Bilateral Fund at the programme level and reserved part of that Fund on activities initiated by the PO. The applicants have been obligated by the PO to implement such scope of activities within the Bilateral Fund, which will be consistent with other project activities.

During the call for proposals, together with the Embassy of Norway in Poland, the PO supported the process of establishing contacts, sharing and transfer of knowledge, information and experience and best practices among applicants and Norwegian entities. The PO acted also as a middleman in the process of searching for Norwegian Partners to participate in projects submitted by the applicants.

The assessment of the applications submitted during the call for proposals additionally awards applicants, who declared implementation of projects with a Norwegian Partner.

Complementary action

Not applicable.

7. Monitoring

The end of negotiations, confirmed with the Agreement concerning the Programme PL 15 “*Strengthening Schengen cooperation and combating cross-border and organised crime, including trafficking and itinerant criminal groups*”, signed between Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of the Regional Development of the Republic of Poland allowed for publication of the open call of proposals. Therefore the monitoring activities in 2013 were focused mostly on assuring proper conduction of the call for proposals. Due to a probable very limited advancement of projects selected for financing, the Programme Operator has not foreseen any regular on the spot visits in 2014. However, on the basis of verification of periodic reports and payment applications, the PO shall perform a constant risk analysis for each project. The analysis will be considered as basis for conduction of ad hoc monitoring visits, depending on problems and issues raised. Additionally the monitoring activities in 2014 will include a day-to-day control of project progress (desk monitoring). The above mentioned monitoring activities will also be conducted with reference to pre-defined projects, if their implementation start in 2014. The monitoring plan for 2014 (attached to the report) contains minor changes compared to the version of the plan attached to the Programme Proposal.

8. Need for adjustments

The assumptions made for the Programme “*Strengthening Schengen cooperation and combating cross-border and organised crime, including trafficking and itinerant criminal groups*” did not change, therefore there was no need to adjust the Programme.

9. Risk management

The risk assessment has been presented in a separate attachment.

10. Information and publicity

During the reporting period the Programme Operator organised the opening conference of the Programme “*Strengthening Schengen cooperation and combating cross-border and organised crime, including trafficking and itinerant criminal groups*” as well as conducted a training for potential applicants interested in projects implementation. Programme Operator also purchased the promotional materials and developed the bilingual web site www.fundusze.msw.gov.pl.

11. Cross-cutting issues

During the reporting period the Programme did not have any major impact on the crosscutting issues. Preparation of the Programme Proposal, all the documentation necessary for swift management of the Programme and organization of the call for proposals have all been performed with full respect of the rule of good governance and gender equality.

12. Attachment to the Annual Programme Report

[Monitoring Plan, see section 7.3 in the Programme Operators' Manual.

Risk assessment of the programme, see proposed template in Annex to the annotated template to the Annual Programme Report]

- Monitoring Plan
- Risk assessment of the Programme

Programme Operator signature

	For the Programme Operator	Optional second signature												
Name	Grzegorz Polak													
Signature														
Position	Director of the EU & International Cooperation Department, Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Poland													
Date	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <tr> <td>day</td> <td>month</td> <td>year</td> </tr> <tr> <td>10</td> <td>02</td> <td>2014</td> </tr> </table>	day	month	year	10	02	2014	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <tr> <td>day</td> <td>month</td> <td>year</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	day	month	year			
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Annex: Risk assessment of the programme

Programme #	Type of objective ¹	Description of risk	Likelihood ²	Consequence ³	Mitigation planned/done
PL 15	Cohesion (Programme) outcomes: Development and improvement of structures, systems and technical equipment in order to improve the implementation of the Schengen acquis	Organisational problems related to difficulties with conduction of the public procurement procedures in accordance with the foreseen schedule	2	3	Development of project schedule including time for possible protests, careful preparation of tender documents
PL 15	Bilateral outcome(s): Improved capacity to prevent and combat cross-border and organized crime, including trafficking in human beings and itinerant criminal groups	Changes in the legal system which negatively influence implementation of activities	1	2	Constant monitoring of legal status of acts influencing implementation of activities
PL 15	Operational issues: Improved cooperation between the authorities and relevant stakeholders, including non-governmental organisations, in assisting victims of trafficking	Delays in initiation of the structures due to the complexity of process integrating various institutions	3	2	Provision of all the necessary assistance to the regional institutions by the MIA
PL 15	Operational issues: Improved cooperation between the authorities and relevant stakeholders, including non-governmental organisations, in assisting victims of trafficking	Delays in signature of agreements with a pre-defined Project partner (Council of Europe)	3	3	Provision of all the necessary assistance by the programme Operator with reference to the conducted process of negotiations
PL 15	Operational issues: Programme management	The necessity to modify the Memorandum of Understanding and agreements concerning implementation of the Programme due to organizational changes	3	3	Support of the proces of modification of necessary documentation, elaboration of additional management mechanisms

¹ The risks should be categorised in one of 3 ways, depending on whether it poses a risk to the cohesion objective, the bilateral objective, or is more of an operational issue.

² Each risk should be described as to whether it poses a risk to the cohesion outcomes (programme outcomes), the bilateral outcome or crucial operational issues 4 = Almost certain (75 – 99% likelihood); 3 = Likely (50 – 74%); 2 = Possible (25 – 49%); 1 = Unlikely (1 – 24%)

³ Assess the consequence(s) in the event that the outcomes and/or crucial operations are not delivered, where 4 = severe; 3 = major; 2 = moderate; 1 = minor; n/a = not relevant or insignificant.