

BROAD VARIETY OF SUPPORTED PROJECTS AND FUNDS

Cross-border training in Hungary

The Szeged Centre for Security Policy makes use of support from the Norway Grants to train representatives of civil society organizations, professional organisations and local authorities from South-East Europe and Ukraine. The courses provided will have two principle strands: 'Municipalities, EU regionalism and institutional reforms' and 'The role of NGOs in the promotion of democratisation and regional security'.

Good governance at the regional level in Slovakia

By developing methods for good governance in higher territorial units, this project aims to increase the quality of regional governance in Slovakia. Activities focus on regional development, and encompass among others an analysis of the existing regional governance, as well as the development of a model of good governance for self-governing regions.

Cooperation between local and regional partners in Lithuania and Norway

A regional development fund has been established to support transfer of Norwegian know-how and good practices to Lithuanian local and regional level institutions and encourage exchange of experience between Lithuanian and Norwegian institutions. The Latvian interior ministry will channel funding to bilateral projects aiming to develop and strengthen regional policy in Lithuania.

Strengthening local and regional development in Estonia

With a total value of almost €3.7 million, the fund "Strengthening of local and regional development" is the largest in any country within the field of regional policy. Enterprise Estonia will re-grant funding to projects aiming to strengthen capacity building in local administrations, improvement of the local business environment and know-how centres for the utilization of traditional skills.

Promotion of public private partnerships in Latvia

This fund aims to establish public private partnership (PPP) contracts between beneficiaries of the fund and private partners. The Investment and Development Agency will re-grant funding to introduce alternative options of financing, construction and operation of public infrastructure in order to improve access, quality and efficiency of public services at the national and regional level in Latvia.

Polish-Ukrainian distance learning centre

A Polish-Ukrainian Centre of Public Education in Kraśnik, Poland shall facilitate the introduction of local partnership models in Poland and Ukraine, as well as provide distance-learning based training of public administration and civil society organisations. The intention is to develop cross-border cooperation and to improve local and regional administration in the two countries.



The Polish-Ukrainian Centre of Public Education aims to strengthen ties between Poland and Ukraine through training and cultural activities.

In May 2004, the European Economic Area (EEA) was expanded to include the ten new Member States of the EU, with a further enlargement to include Bulgaria and Romania in 2007. At the same time the three non-EU members of the EEA - Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway - established the EEA and Norway Grants to support social and economic cohesion within the enlarged EEA.

The 30 members of the EEA share access to the Internal Market, characterised by the free movement of goods, services, capital and persons.

Over the five-year period 2004-2009, the EEA and Norway Grants will make available €1.3 billion to 15 beneficiary states in the EU. Norway provides 97% of this funding. Projects are supported in a wide range of priority sectors such as protection of the environment, conservation of the European cultural heritage, health and childcare, and development of human resources.

EEA AND NORWAY GRANTS

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REGIONAL & CROSS-BORDER FACT SHEET

DECEMBER 2008

Regional development & Cross-border activities

Supporting European regional development

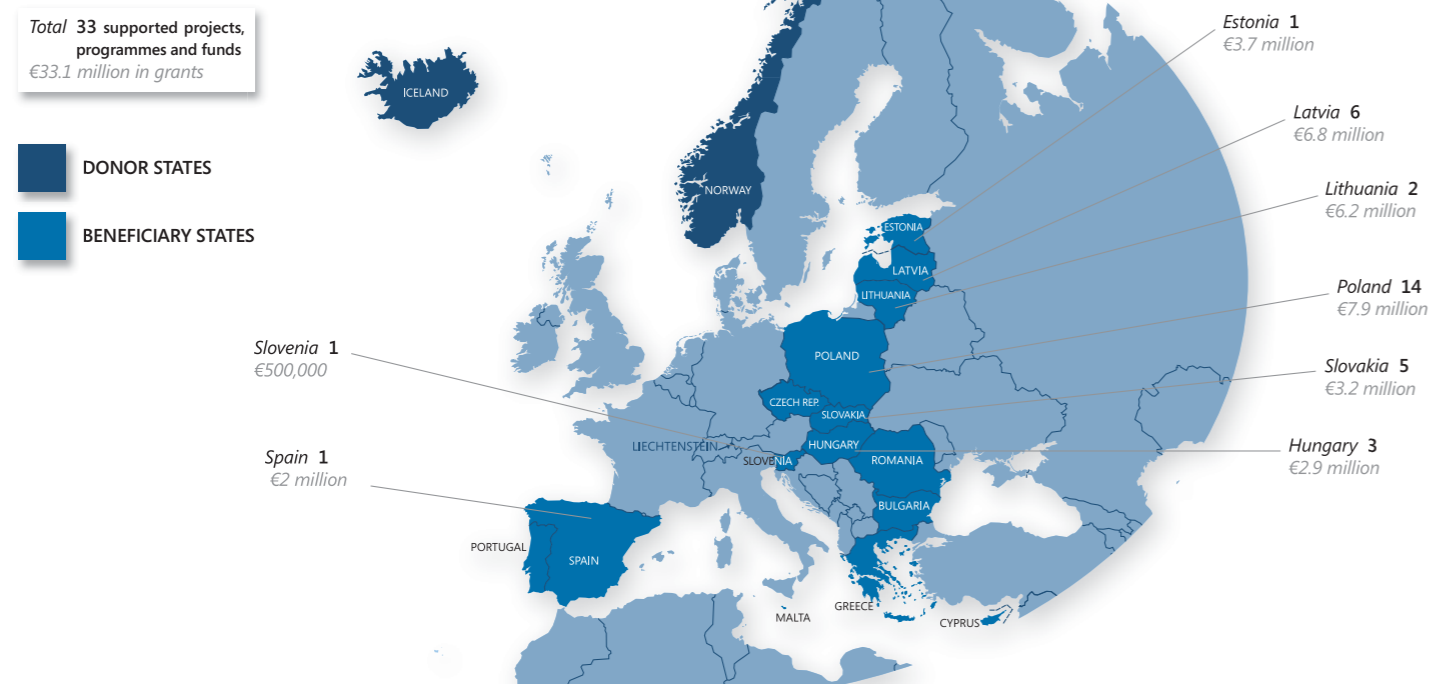
Cooperation between regions, within and across national borders, is a powerful force for social and economic development, realising mutual benefits by transferring resources, knowledge and experience from one region to another. Support to regional policy and cross-border activities thus play a natural role in the overall effort of the EEA and Norway Grants to reduce economic and social disparities in Europe.

Projects and funds classified as regional policy and cross-border activities normally include the active involvement of local stakeholders. Furthermore, they often have an interregional and transnational outreach, bringing together organisations and institutions in neighbouring regions and countries. Through combining these two factors, benefits are realised far beyond the specific output of individual activities. By encouraging networking and communication between regions at home and abroad, a fertile ground is made for further cooperation in the future.

Typical activities support capacity building and transfer of knowledge rather than investments in physical infrastructure. Elements of both regional policy and cross-border activities are often blended together in the same project or fund, as cross-border regional cooperation. The majority of these activities bring project promoters in the beneficiary states together with partners in Ukraine.



CROSS-BORDER ACTIVITIES AND REGIONAL POLICY BY COUNTRY



BENEFICIARIES

Support from the EEA and Norway Grants to regional policy and cross-border activities has been granted to projects and funds in eight beneficiary states, bringing together actors in 19 countries through cross-border cooperation.

Latvia has allocated a substantial proportion of its programme towards regional policy and cross-border projects. Together with one regional policy fund, these projects account for more than 12 percent of the total grant volume in Latvia.

Projects

As of late November 2008, 33 individual projects in eight beneficiary states have been approved. The approved projects target regions' development opportunities through increased exchange of know-how and strengthened cooperation among local and regional stakeholders. Ten of the 33 projects also have a cross-border element. A majority of the cross-border projects involve local or regional public bodies and NGOs. The cross-border component has resulted in projects such as a Polish-Ukrainian Centre of Public Education in the city of Kraśnik, providing distance learning courses to local administration and civil society leaders in both Poland and Ukraine.

Transferring experiences of the Visegrad group to the Western Balkans and GUAM

Project promoter: International Centre for Democratic Transition (ICDT)
Grant: € 400,000

The project sets forth to transfer experiences from the cooperation within the Visegrad group (the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia) to the Western Balkans and the GUAM countries (Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and Moldova). The overarching idea is to contribute to partnership and regional cooperation at the external borders of the EU. The project includes regional workshops and a study on how best to facilitate interregional cooperation.

Funds and programmes

Funds and programmes to support regional policy and cross-border activities have been established in Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Slovakia. Of these, four are specifically targeted towards cross-border activities. Some of these funds support development of public private partnerships (PPPs), local administration capacity building and training of civil society organisations. Actors from Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway can also participate in these funds.

Regional cooperation between Lithuania and Norway

Fund intermediary: Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Lithuania
Grant : €3,000,000

The fund provides small grants to bilateral projects between institutions at the local and regional level. The aim is to facilitate the transfer of Norwegian know-how and good practices to Lithuania, as well as to encourage exchange of experience between institutions in the two countries. Grants are awarded to projects that contribute to developing regional policy in Lithuania and strengthen cooperation between counterparts in Lithuania and Norway.



A cross-border cooperation centre has been established to promote interaction between NGOs, businesses and municipalities in the Carpathian region.

PROJECT FOCUS

Five nation cooperation in the Carpathian Region

With a close to €400,000 contribution from the Norway Grants, the Carpathian Foundation has established a cross-border cooperation centre for the Carpathian Region. The centre, known as the Carpathian House, aims to spur development in one of Europe's poorest regions.

Located in Sanok in south-eastern Poland, the Carpathian House brings together actors from Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Ukraine. The centre includes conference-, seminar- and exhibition facilities, and shall promote cross-border interaction between NGOs, businesses and municipalities in the five countries. In addition to study trips, seminars and conferences, the centre aims to present the Carpathian region through a joint exhibition in the Sanok house.

"We want to show everything which is valuable and important from the point of the local populations in the Carpathian area", says Zofia Kordela-Borczyk, executive director of the Carpathian Foundation - Poland.

PARTNERSHIP PROJECTS

Bilateral partnership projects between the beneficiary states and Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway are possible under the EEA and Norway Grants. The regional development and cross-border project portfolio includes 9 approved partnership projects with Norwegian entities.

Mapping and developing civic competences in Poland

Warsaw University intends to develop a diagnosis of the civic competences in Polish regions, with the overall objective of promoting local and regional development. Among activities included in this project are quantitative and qualitative social research, workshops, conferences and seminars. The project will be implemented in partnership with Østfold University College, Norway.

Cultural cluster development in Poland

BWA Gallery in Bielsko-Biala, Poland, will develop culture- and creativity clusters, aimed at promoting regional development. The project will employ best practice from Norway and will be undertaken in partnership with Oslo Teknopol, Norway.

Exchange of information on the Vistula Lagoon, Poland

The Institute for Meteorology and Water Management will set up a structure for Polish-Russian co-operation on collecting and exchanging information on the ecosystem status of the Vistula Lagoon. The project will be undertaken in partnership with the Norwegian Institute for Water Research.

Packaging as a stimulus for economic growth in Poland

Through the development of a packaging database system, the Polish Packaging Research and Development Centre aims to increase the competitiveness of the horticultural sector in Mazovia and the six surrounding voivodships (provinces). The project is implemented in partnership with Østfold Research Foundation and the Norwegian Packaging Association.