

ANNUAL PROGRAMME REPORT

FM14-21

Slovakia

SK-INNOVATION Business Development, Innovation and SMEs

2021

A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The implementation of the programme under programme area PA01 Business Development, Innovation and SMEs shall support Slovak enterprises to achieve their increased competitiveness within the two programme focus areas. This outcome shall be achieved by implementing three calls for proposals.

The Call for Proposals within Small Grant Scheme Support for newly established businesses (start-ups) (BIN SGS01) financed from the Norwegian Financial Mechanism was launched 29 June 2020 and closed on 23 October 2020. There were 31 project applications received in the total required amount of €5 264 122,74. 6 of them were selected and granted with total amount of €963 387.

The Call for Proposals on the Support of Innovation and Business Development (BIN 01) financed from the Norwegian Financial Mechanism was launched on 17 June 2021 and closed on 17 September 2021. There were 25 project applications submitted in the total required amount of €20 364 783,85. The PO issued the decision on support of 13 applications in total amount of €9 463 704 in December 2021. Out of 13 applications, 4 of them will be carried out with Norwegian project partners.

The Call for Proposals on the Support of Innovation and Business Development (BIN 02) financed from the EEA Financial Mechanism was launched on 30 July 2021 and closed on 4 October 2021. There were submitted 35 project applications in the total required amount of €18 235 711,09. 14 applications have Norwegian partners. On 4 February 2022 the Selection Committee will submit the list of recommended projects for approval to the Programme Operator (PO) who will make a final decision in April 2022.

Within the programme area „Education, Scholarships, Apprenticeships and Youth Entrepreneurship" (PA03) the outcome „Education and Employment potential enhanced in Slovakia in Green Industry Innovation and Welfare and Ambient Assisted Living Technologies" shall be supported by two calls for proposals within the Small Grants Scheme. The Call for Proposals for Institutional cooperation between Higher education institutions, Upper-secondary schools and private sector (BIN SGS02) financed by the Norwegian Financial Mechanism was launched on 30 November 2021 with closure 28 February 2022. The Call for Proposals for International mobility between Higher education institutions, Upper secondary schools and Private sector (BIN SGS03), financed by the EEA Financial Mechanism has been prepared by the Programme Operator to be launched in April 2022.

The Programme Operator launched two calls for proposals within the Fund for Bilateral Relations (BIN BF03 and BIN BF02). In 2021 4 grant applications were submitted under BIN BF03 announced on 18 August 2021, out of which 3 were rejected and one will be contracted in 1Q 2022. Call closure is planned on 31 December 2022. Call BIN BF02 was published on 22 November 2021 and call closure is planned on 31 December 2023. The PO has not received any applications under this call by the end of 2021.

In cooperation with the DPP Innovation Norway, the PO organized one match-making event "Slovakia - Webinar and Matchmaking" focusing on partners search for the announced business calls - BIN 01 and BIN 02. The cooperation with all DPPs was very fruitful and intensive,

either in organizing and preparing digital matchmaking events and cooperation committee meetings, in participation on the selection committees and providing advice or consultation upon PO's request.

Publicity and visibility of the Programme has been in line with the PO's Communication Plan. The Programme Operator closely cooperates and coordinates its activities with the National Focal Point, the Donor Programme Partners (DPPs) and the Norwegian Embassy. As the PO announced 5 calls for proposals in 2021, the communication campaign was intensive with the PO's website and FB page serving as a basic communication platform. The Programme Operator together with its programme partners managed to tackle the delays in the programme implementation and moved forward significantly over the last year.

The continuing COVID-19 pandemic and The Resilience and Resilience Plan, approved in 2021 as a comprehensive package of reforms and investments that will run until 2026 are the key factors which formed the business environment in 2021 and will affect the Slovak economy in the coming years.

B. PERFORMANCE

1. Programme context

The development in the programme areas was mostly affected by the continuing COVID-19 pandemic which has significantly changed all areas of social and economic life in the country. Several changes effect immediately, others will manifest themselves gradually. One of the most serious immediate impacts is the general loss of credibility and basic confidence in decisions at all levels following non-systemic measures taken to address the crisis and thus affecting many areas of the social and economic environment.

In the business sector, the current pandemic situation hits mainly SMEs, accounting for 99.9 % of the total number of business entities in Slovakia, providing employment opportunities in the corporate economy for almost 75 % of the active workforce and contributing more than 50 % to gross production and value added.^[1] The financial state of all enterprises is very unstable, the situation does not allow them to predict or stabilize and no longer creates the preconditions for their development.

Since the end of March 2020, the Government of the Slovak Republic implements measures aimed at mitigating the economic impacts of the pandemic. Direct aid measures for SMEs are designed to maintain jobs within the so-called "First Aid." In parallel with these measures, the amendment to the Social Insurance Act made it possible to postpone or waive social security contributions for some employers. Financial support through the "First Aid" measures were distributed by the end of 2021, although since July, the amount and provision of contributions have been linked through the so-called „Covid Automat“ depending on the development of the epidemic situation in the regions.

According to data of the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic for 2021, „First Aid“ measures were used the most intensively by micro-enterprises, the share of

small enterprises in drawing "First Aid" was the most stable and the overall aid in amount of almost € 2,2 billion was provided. This amount supported about a third of all jobs in the economy. The aid continues to flow mainly to industrial production, wholesale and retail trade, accommodation and food services, and construction, as confirmed by data for 2021.^[2] However, uncertainty about the further development of the pandemic situation increases the demand for state support schemes.

Among the negative economic factors is the situation on the labour market with growing minimum and average wages and rising prices of material and energy inputs, as well as global supply disruptions, with a direct impact on the growth of their prices. All these factors, together with changes in global markets, threaten the competitiveness of the Slovak economy. Slovakia has long been at high risk in the areas of education, science, research, innovation and health, causing extreme regional disparities. These are the areas in which Slovakia lags behind the most, and for which the European Commission has repeatedly recommended intensifying reform efforts.^[3] The pandemic has only exacerbated the situation.

In the area of education, the spread of COVID-19 pandemic has continued to impede access to in-person education in 2021 as the country experienced periods of full school closure, thus making the access to the internet, technology and the motivation of the students an important factor for the prevention of the loss of knowledge. Socio-economic status proved to have significant impact on students' participation in education as well as their learning outcomes. Large differences in educational attainment thus affect the future job opportunities and cause starker earnings inequality.^[4] There is no willingness to close all the schools again (primary and secondary schools), hence individual classes are closing in accordance with the local pandemic development. The situation at universities is diverse; some have returned to in-person classes; others are still operating online.

The impact of the pandemic on the economy has raised concerns about the prospects of young adults, especially those leaving education earlier than others. According to the Eurostat data available for 2021, the unemployment rate of low educated people is almost 36 % in Slovakia.^[5] As stated by the OECD, the regional variation in employment rates shows a difference of 24 percentage points in the employment rate of adults with below upper secondary education between different regions of the country compared to 6 percentage points for tertiary-educated adults. The share of 18-24 year-old NEETs was 13.8 % in 2020 with expected slightly increasing trend in the second year of pandemic (no data for 2021 available to date). The difference in the share of 18-24 year-old NEETs between regions with the highest and lowest value is 10 percentage points, compared to 11 percentage points on average across OECD countries.^[6]

As stated by OECD, international student mobility at the tertiary level has risen steadily reaching about 9% of tertiary students in 2019 (no later data available). The largest share of foreign tertiary students studying in the Slovak Republic comes from the Czech Republic.

Students from low and lower-middle income countries are generally less likely to study abroad.^[7]

A vivid debate has been provoked by the decision of the Government to the announced reform of the education system. The reform should concern several areas with the intention to support the practice-oriented education and to enhance innovations and modernisation. A special attention has been paid to the reform focusing on the tertiary education. Several universities have publicly expressed their discontent in fear of restrictions of academic freedoms and politisation of the academic institutions.

In response to the crisis caused by the pandemic and its economic implications the Recovery and Resilience Plan (RRP) for the Slovak Republic under the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) of the EU was approved in July 2021 with the implementation period until 2026. RRP is, however, also a response to the long-term systemic shortcomings of the Slovak economy. It consists of reforms and investments that have the potential to enable Slovakia to start catching up with the EU average again. The EU will provide up to € 6,3 billion to support the implementation of the crucial investment and reform measures outlined in the RRP. The plan could lead to a gross domestic product (GDP) gain of 1.3-2.1 % by 2026.^[8]

A boost to education, science and healthcare shall increase the country's attractiveness for doing business and create more opportunities across the country. The strong emphasis of the RRP is particularly on green and digital solutions, which shall improve the competitiveness of businesses and the quality of public services. RRP devotes the largest share of 43 % of its total allocation to measures that support climate objectives - new renewable energy capacities, energy efficiency, greening of private and public buildings, developing new infrastructure for electric vehicle charging points, public transport, decarbonisation of industry and adaptation to climate change. Another 21 % of its total allocation goes to measures that support the digital transition. This also includes investments in the digital transformation of education and healthcare, together with support for enhancing the digital technologies available to businesses, particularly SMEs. Amount of € 102 million is devoted for digitalisation of businesses - building a supercomputer and a network of digital hubs to assist businesses with digitalising their processes; providing training for digital skills.

Research, development and innovation are also addressed with comprehensive measures that are expected to tackle the most important shortcomings. These include the low quality and inclusiveness of education, fragmented research, development and innovation policy coordination, insufficient public-private cooperation, and weak research, development and innovation performance. For enhancing community-based social care capacities an investment of € 193 million to long-term care for those in need through focusing more on community based solutions shall be disbursed.^[9]

During 2021 an amendment to the Labour Code and some other employment-related laws were approved. Among the most important changes, the amendment modifies the conditions under which employees may perform work from home, gives employees the right to choose between meal vouchers and a direct meal allowance, or introduces a rather controversial option for employers to unilaterally terminate the employment relationship once the

employee has reached 65 years of age as well as the eligibility age for retirement pension. Most provisions of the amendment came into effect on 1st March 2021.

The adoption of the "regulatory brake" during 2021 with further extension in 2022 is intended to reduce bureaucratic burdens for businesses. The system of a „one in one out“ rule which will expand to a „one in two out“ from January 2022 means a duty of the authorities to introduce new obligation for entrepreneurs with the abolition of an unnecessary one at the same time and with the abolition of two from January. This shall also mean significant reduction of the business costs.

After a deep recession in 2020, economic activity in Slovakia has rebounded. However, supply disruptions, changes of the labour market and low predictability of the pandemic development are making the future pace of the recovery more uncertain. An ambitious RRP and substantial inflows of EU funds provide a unique opportunity to strengthen the economy, but effective and timely implementation will require continued efforts to improve public procurement and public investment management. To revitalise the economic convergence process and make growth more inclusive and sustainable, policies to promote adequate skills, foster domestic innovation capacity, and less environmentally harmful activities are needed.

[1] <http://monitoringmsp.sk/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Male-a-stredne-podnikanie-v-cislach-2020.pdf>

[2] https://institutsocialnejpolitiky.sk/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/ISP_2022_Prva_pomoc_update20_final.pdf

[3] <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1584543810241&uri=CELEX:52020SC0524>

[4] <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/d8cc1985-en/index.html?itemId=/content/component/d8cc1985-en>

[5] <https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/data-insights/35-how-many-low-educated-adults-are-employed#group-details>

[6] <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/d8cc1985-en/index.html?itemId=/content/component/d8cc1985-en>

[7] Ibid.

[8] <https://www.planobnovy.sk/>

[9] <https://www.planobnovy.sk/>

2. Programme results

Outcome 1: Increased competitiveness of Slovak enterprises within the focus areas: Green Industry Innovation and Welfare Technology and Ambient Assisted Living technologies

Description and analysis of results

During the year 2021, the Programme Operator announced five calls for proposals and completed the selection process for one small grant scheme announced in 2020. All announced calls support implementation of bilateral partnerships with entities from donor countries.

Programme Operator published two major calls within the business programme area:

The Call for Proposals on the Support of Innovation and Business Development (Call Code BIN 01), financed from the Norway Grants and the state budget of the Slovak Republic with allocation of €11 578 235, was published on 17 June 2021 and closed on 17 September 2021. There were submitted 25 applications, out of which 8 have Norwegian partners which represents 1/3 of submitted projects. The PO supported 13 applications, 4 of them will be carried out with Norwegian project partners.

The Call for Proposals on the Support of Innovation and Business Development (Call Code BIN 02), financed from the EEA Grants and the state budget of the Slovak Republic with allocation of €5 415 882, was published on 30 July 2021 and closed on 4 October 2021. There were submitted 35 applications, out of which 14 have Norwegian partners, which represents 40% of submitted projects. The formal and expert projects evaluation was concluded by the end of year 2021, the selection committee meeting will be held on 4 February 2022.

The support under both calls is provided for projects contributing under the green industry innovation area to the development and establishment of innovative technologies, processes and products, employment growth, reduction of CO₂ emissions and waste production, use of new materials, intelligent construction solutions, innovations in transport etc. In the area of welfare technologies and ambient assisted living establishment of products and services that help people with various disabilities, systems for vital functions monitoring and technologies for medical care suitable for households, intelligent textiles and houses, can be supported.

Based on information from the submitted applications under the calls BIN 01 and BIN 02 majority of the applicants declared that they found their donor partners through an independent search and based on previous cooperation. Four bilateral partnerships came out as a result of match-making events, one through the DPP's database and two with the assistance of the PO and DPP.

In September 2021 the selection process for Call of [Small Grant Scheme for supporting of newly established businesses \(start-ups\) \(BIN SGS01\)](#) with allocation €1 058 824 was completed. Out of 31 received applications, 6 projects were approved in the total amount of €963 387. 4 projects will be implemented with Norwegian partners. The PO completed contracting process in November 2021 and promoters could start their projects implementation in December 2021.

Indicators: Outcome 1, Outputs 1.1-1.3

None of the indicators for Outputs 1.1-1.3 outlined in the Expected programme results for 2021 could be reported as the approved projects within the Call BIN SGS01 were contracted in

November 2021 and the first Interim Project Reports will be sent in March 2022 (four projects) and in April 2022 (two projects). Based on the communication between the PO and project promoters and data provided by the approved projects and projects to be supported, the target values of the indicators related to this outcome should be achieved.

The Programme Operator agreed on termination of one project contract with the promoter of the project No. BIN SGS01_2020_010 due to non compliance with the state aid conditions. The project promoter received funding in 2021 from another resources, subjects to de minimis aid rules, thus exceeding de minimis aid limit per undertaking over the period of 3 fiscal years. The project agreement is to be terminated in February 2022. Once the PO receives signed agreement on the termination of the project contract, the Programme Operator will send the grant offer letter to the first applicant on the reserve list recommended by the Selection Committee and approved by the Programme Operator on 10 September 2021.

Indicators: Outcome 1, Output 1.4 Start-ups supported for business growth

6 start-ups were supported for business growth (within the Call BIN SGS01) out of target value 6 set in the Programme Agreement.

Pre-defined project(s)

N/A

Outcome 2: Education and Employment potential enhanced in Slovakia in Green Industry Innovation and Welfare and Ambient Assisted Living technologies

Description and analysis of results

The PO published one small grant scheme of the education component – Call for proposals for institutional cooperation between higher education institutions, upper-secondary schools and private sector (**BIN SGS02**) with the allocation €2 470 588. The call is open since 30 November 2021 and will be closed 28 February 2022. One of the call's condition is a partner from the donor state, i.e. Norway. The second small grant scheme of the education component for supporting international mobility between higher education institutions, upper-secondary schools and private sector (**BIN SGS03**) with allocation €1 058 824 is planned to be published on 13 April 2022. The call is financed by the EEA grants.

Indicators: Outcome 2, Outputs 2.1-2.2.

As the above mentioned calls have not been closed/announced yet, none of the indicators outlined in the Expected programme results under Outcome 2 could reported for 2021.

Pre-defined project(s)

N/A

Bilateral Outcome: Enhanced collaboration between beneficiary and donor state entities involved in the programme

Analysis of bilateral relations and achievements

In 2021 the implementation of the SK-Innovation programme was carried out in cooperation with the Donor Program Partners (DPPs), whose role is among others to help to develop and strengthen bilateral relations. The DPPs for the Programme are: Innovation Norway, Norwegian Directorate for Higher Education and Skills (HK-dir, Norway), National Agency for International Education Affairs (AIBA, Liechtenstein).

The Programme Operator launched two calls for proposals within the Fund for Bilateral Relations. **BIN BF03** - Call for proposals for bilateral initiatives under the business part of the Programme and **BIN BF 02** - Call for proposals for bilateral Initiatives under the education component. The PO has designed a specific format of bilateral calls to make for applicants simple to apply for the support of various types of bilateral activities. Applicants can apply either for a travel grant or for the support of small-scale bilateral initiatives within one call. Due to the ongoing pandemic travel restrictions and constantly changing travel conditions, the activities can be implemented online or in person.

BIN BF03 - Call for proposals for bilateral initiatives was announced on 18 August 2021 with allocation of €70 000. In 2021 4 grant applications were submitted, out of which 3 were rejected and one was proceed to expert evaluation which should be concluded in January 2022. Call closure is planned on 31 December 2022.

BIN BF02 - Call for proposals for bilateral initiatives under the education component with allocation of €50,000 was published on 22 November 2021. Call closure will be on 31 December 2023. The PO has not received any applications by 31 December 2021.

In 2021 PO co-organized digital "Slovakia - Webinar and Matchmaking" event with DPP Innovation Norway on 24 August 2021, for Slovak participants only. Matchmaking was primarily focused on subjects aiming to submit partnership projects under one of the announced business calls - BIN 01 or BIN 02 or under the call for bilateral initiatives BIN BF03. The matchmaking was attended by 28 participants, out of which were 16 Slovak, 10 Norwegian and 2 Icelandic entities. Also thanks to the matchmaking, a total of 22 projects with a donor project partner were submitted under the BIN 01 and BIN 02 calls.

Based on experience the Programme Operator considers matchmaking events as an effective tool for creating and developing project partnerships. PO appreciates professional support and cooperation with Innovation Norway as it would have been challenging for the PO to hold a similar bilateral events due technical and capacity reasons.

Indicator: Bilateral Outcome

As the implementation of projects has not started in 2021, none of the Bilateral Outcome indicators could be reported.

Indicator: Bilateral Outcome, Output 2 – Bilateral partnership promoted, Number of projects involving cooperation with a donor project partner

Within the Call BIN SGS01 (supported by NFM) 4 start-ups have started implementation of their projects with Norwegian project partners (Integrate Renewables AS, Høgskole for Grøn Utvikling, Infiniwell AS, ICB Digital AS).

As the target value of this indicator is 12, the PO anticipates to meet this target once approved projects from all calls for proposals on programme will be implemented.

The PO communicates with the DPPs through the Cooperation Committee (CC) meetings or DPP/PO meetings. The PO, in cooperation with DPPs, organizes at least two CC meetings per year. The CC meeting, held on 5 May 2021, was due to the COVID-19 pandemic restriction held online. The other CC meeting took place on 26 October 2021 in Bratislava, in person. In urgent or ad-hoc cases the CC meetings can be organized per rollam, esp. for reviewing the calls texts. DPPs provide the PO professional support in form of consultations and ad hoc online meetings as well.

On 14 December 2021 online DPP/PO seminar was organized by HK-dir and AIBA to discuss lessons learned from the implementation of the education component and how to transform them into the education programme in the new programming period.

3. Implementation

Cooperation with International Partner Organisations (IPOs) Compliance with Programme Agreement conditions

General condition no. 1 stated in the Annex I of the Programme Agreement will be taken into consideration after the finalisation of selection process of projects under the call BIN 02.

General condition no. 2 stated in the Annex I of the Programme Agreement will be taken into consideration after the finalisation of selection process of projects under the call BIN 02.

General condition no. 3 stated in the Annex I of the Programme Agreement concerns all calls for proposals under the programme.

The specific means for implementation of obligation to maintain any buildings purchased, constructed, renovated or reconstructed under the project for at least 5 years following the completion of the project shall be specified in the project contract, if such case shall arise.

The special rules stated in the Annex II – Operational rules of the Programme Agreement were specified in the text calls for proposals for educational component BIN SGS02 launched

on 30 November 2021 with closure 28 February 2022 and are included in already prepared Call BIN SGS03 which will be sent for approval to the DPPs and the NFP in 1Q 2022.

The Programme's special concerns stated in the Memorandum of Understanding have been incorporated in the Programme's Concept Note, the Programme Agreement and in the respective calls for proposals as following:

- all calls for proposals aim at the main focus areas: Green Industry Innovation and Welfare and Ambient Assisted Living;
- allocation for the education part is €3 529 412 i.e. 15% of the total eligible expenditures;
- both agencies, HK-dir and AIBA, have been involved in the preparation and implementation of the educational component within their role of the DPPs as members of the Cooperation Committee and through the DPP/PO bilateral meetings;
- calls for proposals within the business part of the Programme (BIN SGS01, BIN 01, BIN 02) address young and female entrepreneurs, as a prioritised target group by adding extra 2 points in the evaluation of the content-related criteria of the submitted applications.

Cooperation with International Partner Organisations (IPOs)

N/A

C. LEARNING

1. Monitorings carried out

The requirements of the Programme Operator regarding the monitoring are set in the Programme Agreement and the Programme Implementation Agreement. Specific procedures of the Programme Operator are described in the internal management documents of the Programme Operator.

In 2021 the Programme Operator has not carried out any monitoring as the projects under the Call BIN SGS01 were contracted at the end of November 2021 and therefore there was no reason to carry out a formal/regular monitoring. However, the PO has been in contact with the project promoters of the Call BIN SGS01 via phone and emails, and has consulted with them questions connected with the start of project implementation and any challenges, such as the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

The year 2022 will be the starting point for the monitoring activities. The projects under the Call BIN01 will be contracted in March 2022 and Call BIN02 in June 2022, hence the Monitoring Plan contains only the primary scope of the compliance-based monitoring for the projects of these two Calls.

In line with the Annex 1 of the Programme Implementation Agreement, the PO carried out the risks analyses of the selected projects in BIN SGS01 and BIN 01 according to the procedure

described in the Programme's internal management documents. The Monitoring Plan includes monitoring of results and risks identified to spot potential threats and problems in advance in order to ensure these are mitigated at the early stages of projects' implementation and that the projects' progress is meeting its outcome and outputs for the overall smooth implementation of the Programme.

The Monitoring Plan reflects basic rules for selecting the sample for each type of monitoring. The PO plans to carry out also the on-site monitoring if the pandemic situation allows. After concluding the individual project contracts of all projects of the Programme in the course of 2022, the Monitoring Plan shall be updated and amended.

The Monitoring Plan for the year 2022 is in the Annex 5 to the Annual Programme Report.

2. Evaluations carried out

As of 31 December 2021, no evaluation of the Programme according to the Article 10.1 of the Regulations has been carried out.

3. Lessons learned from monitoring, evaluation and implementation

The year 2021 was marked, as the previous year, by a global pandemic connected with COVID-19. The PO adopted to the changing situation by using new digital tools and IT equipment for communication in order to give more possibilities to work from home. Despite of these measures, there were delays in the programme implementation due to the pandemic leaves of some of the PO's employees.

In addition to this, the current improved conditions of the labour market in favour of the employees and the massive recruiting of the experienced staff for the implementation of the Recovery and Resilience Plan (RRP) for the Slovak Republic in 2021, caused significant fluctuations of the employees affecting also the Programme Operator who had to re-fill 4 of the positions during 2021. As this caused a heavy workload to the remaining staff, the PO decided to hire an extra project manager for managing the submitted applications from the business calls. Nevertheless, also thanks to the NFP's regular monitoring, in 2021 the programme implementation has successfully caught up most of the delays from 2020 and was able to meet the newly set up milestones of the programme implementation.

The results of the three Calls of the business part of the programme show differences between the absorption capacity, interest of applicants to implement a project under the conditions set in the Calls - particularly the number and quality of projects submitted in the two focus areas: „Green Industry Innovation“ and „Welfare Technology and Ambient Assisted Living Technologies“.

While the total amount of project grant applied for under the Call BIN SGS01 was five times and under the Call BIN02 three times higher than the available allocation, the Call BIN01 total grant application did not reach the double of the allocation. The reason seems to be partly in the restricting conditions of the state aid applicable for BIN01 and BIN02 in comparison to de minimis scheme applied under the Call BIN SGS01; in differences in the length and timing of the calls (BIN SGS01 open for 4 months, BIN01 open for 3 months, mainly during summer

holidays, BIN 02 open for over 2months) and in similarity of Calls BIN01 and BIN02 allowing the applicants who did not manage to submit an application to BIN01 to submit an application under BIN02 thus having the double time for project preparation. The share of applications within each focus area is in line with the ratio of the allocation for each Programme area as there is more than 50% of submitted applications within the area Green Industry Innovation.

As regards the implementation of the Fund for Bilateral Relations, the situation was similar to the previous year 2020, with few applications submitted for the search and development of project partnerships for the open calls for proposals. Due to pandemic travel restrictions to donor states and Slovakia and unforeseen situations, the PO prepared both bilateral calls that can support bilateral initiatives carried out virtually or in person. This was a flexible and adaptable way to respond to the unstable pandemic conditions.

D. ANNEXES

- 1. Updated achievements in the results framework**
- 2. Communication summary**
- 3. Overview of contracted projects**
- 4. Risk management**
- 5. Monitoring plan**
- 6. Evaluation report**
- 7. Agreement conditions**

Annex 1: Updated achievements in the results framework

Objective: Increased value creation and sustainable growth								
Outcome 1: Increased competitiveness of Slovak enterprises within the focus areas: Green Industry Innovation and Welfare Technology and Ambient Assisted Living technologies								
Indicator	Unit of measurement	Baseline	Achievements until end of previous reporting period	Achievements until end of December 2021			Target	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Value		
Estimated annual growth in turnover	Percentage	N/A	-	0	0	-	3.00 %	Contracted projects have started implementation in 12/2021, no achieved results could be reported under to this indicator.
Estimated annual CO2 emission reductions (in tons)	Annual number	0	-	-	-	0	6,000	Contracted projects have started implementation in 12/2021, no achieved results could be reported under to this indicator.
<i>Financial Mechanism</i>								
<i>EEA Grants</i>	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Norway Grants</i>	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
Estimated annual collection of waste from production and operational processes for re-use or recycling (in tons)	Cumulative number	TBD, The Programme Operator shall submit to the FMO the baseline value, together with a description of the data collection	-	-	-	0	15,000	Selection of projects hasn't been concluded yet.

		method used, no later than six months after the finalization of the selection of projects under the last relevant call for proposals. The updated baseline value shall be agreed upon through a modification of the programme agreement.						
Estimated annual decrease of energy consumption (in MWh)	Annual number	0	-	-	-	0	1,000	Contracted projects have started implementation in 12/2021, no achieved results could be reported under to this indicator.
Estimated annual growth in net operational profit	Percentage	N/A	-	0	0	-	3.00 %	Contracted projects have started implementation in 12/2021, no achieved results could be reported under to this indicator.
Estimated re-use of waste for other production processes (in tons)	Cumulative number	TBD, The Programme	-	-	-	0	10,000	Selection of projects hasn't been concluded yet.

		Operator shall submit to the FMO the baseline value, together with a description of the data collection method used, no later than six months after the finalization of the selection of projects under the last relevant call for proposals. The updated baseline value shall be agreed upon through a modification of the programme agreement.						
Number of jobs created	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	-	25	Contracted projects have started implementation in

									12/2021, no achieved results could be reported under to this indicator.
<i>Financial Mechanism</i>									
<i>EEA Grants</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Norway Grants</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Gender</i>									
<i>Female</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Male</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Not specified</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Age</i>									
<i>Children and youth (0-17)</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Young adults (18-29)</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Adults (30-64)</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Elderly (65+)</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Not specified</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Number of products or services commercialized (new to the market)	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	-	-	3	Contracted projects have started implementation in 12/2021, no achieved results could be reported under to this indicator.
<i>Sector</i>									
<i>Green</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Blue</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>ICT</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Welfare/ambient</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Not specified</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Number of innovative technologies/processes/solutions applied (new to the enterprise)	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	-	-	7	Contracted projects have started implementation in 12/2021, no achieved results could be reported under to this indicator.
<i>Sector</i>									

<i>Green</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Blue</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>ICT</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Welfare/ambient</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Not specified</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Number of innovative technologies/processes/solutions developed	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	-	5	Contracted projects have started implementation in 12/2021, no achieved results could be reported under to this indicator.
<i>Financial Mechanism</i>								
<i>EEA Grants</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Norway Grants</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Sector</i>								
<i>Green</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Blue</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>ICT</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Welfare/ambient</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Not specified</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Number of Intellectual Property Rights (Copyright, Trademark, Patents) applications submitted	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	-	3	Contracted projects have started implementation in 12/2021, no achieved results could be reported under to this indicator.
<i>Financial Mechanism</i>								
<i>EEA Grants</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Norway Grants</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Share of Enterprises' staff who declare better skills/competencies in their field	Percentage	N/A	-	Reported 2022, 2024			65.00 %	-
Survival rate of start-ups measured 1 year from the last day of the eligibility period of the projects	Percentage	N/A	-	-	-	-	25.00 %	Contracted projects have started implementation in 12/2021, no achieved results

								could be reported under to this indicator.
Output 1.1: Enterprises supported to develop innovate green technologies, processes, solution, products or services								
Indicator	Unit of measurement	Baseline	Achievements until end of previous reporting period	Achievements until end of December 2021			Target	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Value		
Number of large enterprises supported to apply green technologies/processes/solutions	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	-	1	Contracted projects have started implementation in 12/2021, no achieved results could be reported under to this indicator.
Number of large enterprises supported to commercialise green technologies/processes/solutions	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	-	1	Contracted projects have started implementation in 12/2021, no achieved results could be reported under to this indicator.
Number of large enterprises supported to develop green technologies/processes/solutions	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	-	1	Contracted projects have started implementation in 12/2021, no achieved results could be reported under to this indicator.
Number of SMEs supported to apply green technologies/processes/solutions	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	-	3	Contracted projects have started implementation in 12/2021, no achieved results could be reported under to this indicator.
<i>Financial Mechanism</i>								
<i>EEA Grants</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Norway Grants</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Number of SMEs supported to commercialise green technologies/processes/solutions	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	-	2	Contracted projects have started implementation in 12/2021, no achieved results

								could be reported under to this indicator.
<i>Financial Mechanism</i>								
<i>EEA Grants</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Norway Grants</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Number of SMEs supported to develop green technologies/processes/solutions	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	-	4	Contracted projects have started implementation in 12/2021, no achieved results could be reported under to this indicator.
<i>Financial Mechanism</i>								
<i>EEA Grants</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Norway Grants</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Number of young and female entrepreneurs supported	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	-	4	Contracted projects have started implementation in 12/2021, no achieved results could be reported under to this indicator.
Output 1.2: Enterprises supported to green their business operations								
Indicator	Unit of measurement	Baseline	Achievements until end of previous reporting period	Achievements until end of December 2021			Target	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Value		
Number of large enterprises supported to improve energy efficiency	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	-	4	Contracted projects have started implementation in 12/2021, no achieved results could be reported under to this indicator.
Number of SMEs supported to improve energy efficiency	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	-	8	Contracted projects have started implementation in 12/2021, no achieved results could be reported under to this indicator.

<i>Financial Mechanism</i>								
<i>EEA Grants</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Norway Grants</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Output 1.3: Enterprises supported to innovate welfare and ambient assisted living technologies, solutions and processes								
Indicator	Unit of measurement	Baseline	Achievements until end of previous reporting period	Achievements until end of December 2021			Target	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Value		
Number of large enterprises supported to apply ambient assisted living/welfare technologies/processes/solutions	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	-	3	Contracted projects have started implementation in 12/2021, no achieved results could be reported under to this indicator.
Number of large enterprises supported to commercialize ambient assisted living/welfare technologies/processes/solutions	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	-	1	Contracted projects have started implementation in 12/2021, no achieved results could be reported under to this indicator.
Number of large enterprises supported to develop ambient assisted living/welfare technologies/processes/solutions	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	-	1	Contracted projects have started implementation in 12/2021, no achieved results could be reported under to this indicator.
Number of SMEs supported to apply ambient assisted living/welfare technologies/processes/solutions	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	-	4	Contracted projects have started implementation in 12/2021, no achieved results could be reported under to this indicator.
<i>Financial Mechanism</i>								
<i>EEA Grants</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Norway Grants</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Number of SMEs supported to commercialize ambient assisted living/welfare technologies/processes/solutions	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	-	1	Contracted projects have started implementation in 12/2021, no achieved results could be reported under to this indicator.
<i>Financial Mechanism</i>								
<i>EEA Grants</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Norway Grants</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Number of SMEs supported to develop ambient assisted living/welfare technologies/processes/solutions	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	-	4	Contracted projects have started implementation in 12/2021, no achieved results could be reported under to this indicator.
<i>Financial Mechanism</i>								
<i>EEA Grants</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Norway Grants</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Number of young and female entrepreneurs supported	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	-	4	Contracted projects have started implementation in 12/2021, no achieved results could be reported under to this indicator.
Output 1.4: Start-ups supported for business growth								
Indicator	Unit of measurement	Baseline	Achievements until end of previous reporting period	Achievements until end of December 2021			Target	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Value		
Number of start-ups supported	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	6	6	Under the Call BIN SGS01 6 start-ups were supported, starting their projects implementation in 12/21 (4 under the focus area GII: BIN SGS01_2020_026 - noire Energy; BIN SGS01_2020_030 –

								Sky Gardens; BIN SGS01_2020_023_Zachráň včely; BIN SGS01_2020_012 – WAKIVAKY. 2 under the focus area WT/AAL: BIN SGS01_2020_010 – S-Case; BIN SGS01_2020_003 – INTELLOPE).
Outcome 2: Education and Employment potential enhanced in Slovakia in Green Industry Innovation and Welfare and Ambient Assisted Living technologies								
Indicator	Unit of measurement	Baseline	Achievements until end of previous reporting period	Achievements until end of December 2021			Target	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Value		
Number of businesses who self-rate the programme as having added value, regarding employment of apprenticeships (on a scale of 1-5)	Cumulative number	0	-	Reported 2022, 2024			10	-
Number of education institutions offering new courses / modules in environmental technologies	Cumulative number	0	-	Reported 2022, 2024			4	-
Number of people who remain employed in the chosen sector after apprenticeships	Cumulative number	0	-	Reported 2022, 2024			25	-
Number of people who remain working in the chosen sector after mobility	Cumulative number	0	-	Reported 2022, 2024			15	-
Percentage of participants who declare improved skills and competencies	Percentage	N/A	-	Reported 2022, 2024			70.00 %	-
Output 2.1: International mobility supported								
Indicator	Unit of measurement	Baseline	Achievements until end of previous reporting period	Achievements until end of December 2021			Target	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Value		

Number of apprenticeships supported between Donor States and Slovakia in SMEs or other businesses	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	-	20	No projects have been contracted in 2021 contributing to this indicator.
<i>Financial Mechanism</i>								
<i>EEA Grants</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Norway Grants</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Gender</i>								
<i>Female</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Male</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Not specified</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Number of staff from beneficiary states in exchanges	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	-	15	No projects have been contracted in 2021 contributing to this indicator.
<i>Financial Mechanism</i>								
<i>EEA Grants</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Norway Grants</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Donor State</i>								
<i>Norway</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Iceland</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Liechtenstein</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Not specified</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Gender</i>								
<i>Female</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Male</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Not specified</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Type of exchange</i>								
<i>Online</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Physical</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Not specified</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Number of staff from donor states in exchanges	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	-	10	No projects have been contracted in 2021 contributing to this indicator.

<i>Financial Mechanism</i>								
<i>EEA Grants</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Norway Grants</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Donor State</i>								
<i>Norway</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Iceland</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Liechtenstein</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Not specified</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Gender</i>								
<i>Female</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Male</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Not specified</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Type of exchange</i>								
<i>Online</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Physical</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Not specified</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Number of students from beneficiary states in exchanges	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	-	25	No projects have been contracted in 2021 contributing to this indicator.
<i>Financial Mechanism</i>								
<i>EEA Grants</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Norway Grants</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Donor State</i>								
<i>Norway</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Iceland</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Liechtenstein</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Not specified</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Gender</i>								
<i>Female</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Male</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Not specified</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Type of exchange</i>								

<i>Online</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Physical</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Not specified</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Number of students from donor states in exchanges	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	-	15	No projects have been contracted in 2021 contributing to this indicator.
<i>Financial Mechanism</i>								
<i>EEA Grants</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Norway Grants</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Donor State</i>								
<i>Norway</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Iceland</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Liechtenstein</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Not specified</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Gender</i>								
<i>Female</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Male</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Not specified</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Type of exchange</i>								
<i>Online</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Physical</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Not specified</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Output 2.2: Institutional Cooperation Supported								
Indicator	Unit of measurement	Baseline	Achievements until end of previous reporting period	Achievements until end of December 2021			Target	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Value		
Number of apprentices supported in Slovakia within SMEs or other organisations/institutions	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	-	20	No projects have been contracted in 2021 contributing to this indicator.
<i>Financial Mechanism</i>								

<i>EEA Grants</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Norway Grants</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Gender</i>								
<i>Female</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Male</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Not specified</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Number of institutions developing curricula related to Green Industry Innovation, or Welfare and Ambient Assisted living	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	-	3	No projects have been contracted in 2021 contributing to this indicator.
Number of institutions engaged in cooperation at higher education and upper secondary level	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	-	10	No projects have been contracted in 2021 contributing to this indicator.
Number of participants in workshops organized to share experiences regarding youth apprenticeships and new methods of education and engaging youth	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	-	50	No projects have been contracted in 2021 contributing to this indicator.
Number of SMEs and other enterprises engaged in institutional cooperation at higher education and upper secondary level	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	-	10	No projects have been contracted in 2021 contributing to this indicator.
Bilateral Outcome: Enhanced collaboration between beneficiary and donor state entities involved in the programme								
Indicator	Unit of measurement	Baseline	Achievements until end of previous reporting period	Achievements until end of December 2021			Target	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Value		
Level of satisfaction with the partnership	Scale 1-7	TBD, Survey to be carried out by the FMO	-	-	-	-	4.50, Target is ≥4.5, and an increase on the	No projects have been contracted in 2021 contributing to this indicator.

							baseline value	
<i>Financial Mechanism</i>								
<i>EEA Grants</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Norway Grants</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>State type</i>								
<i>Beneficiary State</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Donor State</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Not specified</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Level of trust between cooperating entities in Beneficiary States and Donor States	Scale 1-7	TBD, Survey to be carried out by the FMO	-	-	-	-	4.50, Target is ≥4.5, and an increase on the baseline value	No projects have been contracted in 2021 contributing to this indicator.
<i>Financial Mechanism</i>								
<i>EEA Grants</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Norway Grants</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>State type</i>								
<i>Beneficiary State</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Donor State</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Not specified</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Share of cooperating organisations that apply the knowledge acquired from bilateral partnership	Percentage	N/A	-	-	-	-	50.00 %	No projects have been contracted in 2021 contributing to this indicator.
<i>Financial Mechanism</i>								
<i>EEA Grants</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Norway Grants</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>State type</i>								
<i>Beneficiary State</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Donor State</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

<i>Not specified</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Share of donor business partnerships which continue after project implementation period	Percentage	N/A	-	-	-	-	30.00 %	No projects have been contracted in 2021 contributing to this indicator.
Bilateral Output 1: Donor cooperation enhanced								
Indicator	Unit of measurement	Baseline	Achievements until end of previous reporting period	Achievements until end of December 2021			Target	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Value		
Number of new jointly registered applications for Intellectual Property Protection (Copyright, Trademark, Patents)	Cumulative number	N/A	-	-	-	-	2	No projects have been contracted in 2021 contributing to this indicator.
<i>Financial Mechanism</i>								
<i>EEA Grants</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Norway Grants</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bilateral Output 2: Bilateral partnerships promoted								
Indicator	Unit of measurement	Baseline	Achievements until end of previous reporting period	Achievements until end of December 2021			Target	Comment
				Numerator	Denominator	Value		
Number of projects involving cooperation with a donor project partner	Cumulative number	0	-	-	-	4	12	Under the Call BIN SGS01 4 projects involve cooperation with Norwegian project partner (BIN SGS01_2020_003-ICB Digital AS, BIN SGS01_2020_010-Infiniwell AS, BIN SGS01_2020_026-Integrate Renewables AS, BIN SGS01_2020_030-Høgskole for Grøn Utvikling
<i>Financial Mechanism</i>								

<i>EEA Grants</i>	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Norway Grants</i>	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	-
<i>Donor State</i>								
<i>Norway</i>	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	-
<i>Iceland</i>	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Liechtenstein</i>	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Not specified</i>	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-

Annex 2: Communication summary

1. Best practice examples

Contracted projects have started implementation in December 2021, therefor the Programme Operator can't give any best practice example.

2. Best bilateral cooperation examples

As of the 31st December 2021, none of the approved initiatives within the bilateral calls for proposals have been implemented. Therefor Programme Operator can't give any best practice example.

3. The programme in a nutshell

What is the added value of this programme?	In this phase of the programme implementation, the PO sees the added value of the programme in declared cooperation of private entities with academic community and non-governmental organisations in research and development of innovative technologies and services.		
Include up to two quotes about this programme. Please include the name, last name and title of the person.	Quote 1		
	The PO has not received any quote about the programme.		
	Author	Name	Title
	-	-	-
	Quote 2		
-			
Author	Name	Title	
-	-	-	

4. Visibility of the Grants and the Donors

To make the programme and the Grants visible, the PO has used the tools as defined in the Communication Plan. As the PO announced 5 calls for proposals in 2021, the communication campaign was intensive, focused on potential applicants, professionals and general public, as well as the partners from donor states.

PO's website and FB page served as a basic platform for communication where information on calls, info seminars and matchmaking events were published and regularly updated in both Slovak and English languages. The National Focal Point, the Norwegian Embassy in Bratislava and DPPs provided the PO significant support in disseminating information through their websites and FB pages.

Three calls for proposals (BIN 01, BIN 02, BIN SGS02) were promoted through advertising in the national and regional media. The press release informing about the announcement of all three calls was sent to the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic and a direct email with a request to spread information about the Call BIN SGS02 among education institutions was sent to the state secretary of the Ministry of Education.

The cooperation of the PO with umbrella organizations throughout Slovakia was very beneficial in order to reach relevant target groups. Umbrella organizations addressed their members directly with information on announced calls and events supported by the EEA and Norway Grants.

In 2021, the PO has communicated and promoted the following main activities and events:

- Call BIN 01 - announcement of the call opening (17.06.2021), call closure (17.09.2021) and call results (22.12.2021);
- Call BIN 02 - announcement of the call opening (30.07.2021) and call closure (04.10.2021);
- Call BIN BF03 – announcement of the call opening (18.08.2021);
- Call BIN SGS01 – announcement of the call results and information on supported projects (10.09.2021);
- Call BIN BF02 – announcement of the call opening (22.11.2021);
- Call BIN SGS02 – announcement of the call opening (30.11.2021);
- Two information seminars for Call BIN 01 (07.07.2021, online) and Call [BIN 02](#) (12.08.2021, online);
- One digital matchmaking event “Slovakia - Webinar and Matchmaking” organized by DPP Innovation Norway (IN), on 24 August 2021 for SK-Innovation Programme. 16 Slovak participants had possibilities to meet potential partners from Norway (10 entities) and Iceland (2 entities).

The PO considers the communication and cooperation with the National Focal Point as very professional and supportive. The NFP shares information regarding PO’s activities through its communication channels (web, FB).

At the beginning of 2021 the PO became a member of the Communication Network of the Grants initiated and led by the NFP. It is a platform where POs could exchange information, raised questions and got answers in the field of communication and publicity of the EEA and Norway Grants. On 27 April 2021 the PO attended training and seminar on publicity and social networks organised by the FMO and the NFP under the Communication Network.

5. Media coverage

Example 1

Coverage	Type	National
Description	During the year 2021 3 articles were published in the national electronic medium sme.sk in the economic section (6 July, 18 August, 14 December) in connection to calls for proposals announcement (BIN 01, BIN 02, BIN SGS02).	

Relevant links	<p>BIN01: https://tlacovespravy.sme.sk/c/22694850/vyzva-na-podporu-inovacii-a-rozvoja-podnikania-je-vyhlasena.html</p> <p>BIN 02: https://tlacovespravy.sme.sk/c/22722974/druha-vyzva-na-podporu-inovacii-a-rozvoja-podnikania-vyhlasena.html</p> <p>BIN SGS 02: https://tlacovespravy.sme.sk/c/22800643/vyzva-na-rozvoj-vzdelavania-pre-vysoke-a-stredne-skoly-vyhlasena.html</p>
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Example 2

Coverage	Type	Regional
Description	Media coverage at the regional level was provided through the spots at Radio WOW. The spots broadcasted on 6-8 July 2021, 18-20 August, 15-17 December 2021, provided information on the possibility to submit projects to open calls BIN 01, BIN 02 and BIN SGS02.	
Relevant links	The spots broadcasted in radio WOW can be sent via email upon request.	

6. Website and social media

6.a. Links to the programme website and social media accounts

Link to programme website					
http://www.vyskumnaagentura.sk/en/pro...					
Total number of page views in the reporting year		Change, compared to last year (in absolute numbers)	Total number of unique visitors in the reporting year		Change, compared to last year (in absolute numbers)
30488		18084	12382		4831
Specific link or handle for the account	Posts published in the reporting year	Total likes in the reporting year	Total comments in the reporting year	Total shares/Retweets etc. in the reporting year	Followers gained since programme launch
Facebook	https://www.facebook.com/people/Rozvoj-obchodu-inov%C3%A1ci%C3%AD-a-MSP/...				
	29	54	5	32	98

6.b. Results of website and social media activities

The PO's website has been regularly updated and is fully functional in the Slovak and English versions. It serves as a basic platform for informing potential applicants, project promoters and the public about the programme, calls, information seminar, matchmaking events etc. Information from the website are shared via PO's FB page.

It was very beneficial to share information with the National Focal Point, the DPPs and the Norwegian Embassy, thanks to which the PO achieved a synergic effect in disseminating of information on social network. Based on the information from the submitted applications (through the calls BIN 01 and BIN 02), most of the applicants learned about the calls from the NFP's webpage (72%) and PO's webpage (25%). The rest of the applicants had as a source of information conferences and media.

The number of FB fans increased slightly when calls were published. Posts and articles about announced calls, infoseminars and matchmaking events formed the main content of an FB site in 2021. The PO anticipates higher number of visits and bigger interaction on social media platform in 2022 when supported projects will be implemented.

7. Visuals

As of the 31st December 2021, there were no visual products produced by PO and relevant for communication purposes.

Annex 3: Overview of contracted projects

Outcome	Projects	#	# of donor project partners	Amount contracted	% of outcome budget contracted
Outcome 1: Increased competitiveness of Slovak enterprises within the focus areas: Green Industry Innovation and Welfare Technology and Ambient Assisted Living technologies	Pre-defined	0	0	€ 0	0.00 %
	Contracted through open calls	0	0	€ 0	0.00 %
	Contracted through small grants scheme	6	4	€ 963,387	5.34 %
	Total Outcome 1	6	4	€ 963,387	5.34 %
Outcome 2: Education and Employment potential enhanced in Slovakia in Green Industry Innovation and Welfare and Ambient Assisted Living technologies	Pre-defined	0	0	€ 0	0.00 %
	Contracted through open calls	0	0	€ 0	0.00 %
	Contracted through small grants scheme	0	0	€ 0	0.00 %
	Total Outcome 2	0	0	€ 0	0.00 %
Programme	Total	6	4	€ 963,387	4.46 %

Annex 4: Risk management

Programmatic risks						
Risk description	Risk related to	Likelihood	Consequence	Risk score	Response type	Validity
Insufficient use of means from the Fund for Bilateral Relations and difficulties in fulfilling the condition of bilateral project partnerships (educational component) due to pandemics COVID-19	Strengthening bilateral relations	3	3	3.00	Mitigate	
	Description of planned response	Finding other ways of bilateral cooperation in online space (e.g. on-line activities – counselling/trainings; conferences; Enhance skills and access to tools enabling participants (potential applicants and partners) to communicate efficiently in virtual space)				
	Description of actual response	The PO prepared calls for proposals under the Fund for bilateral relations and the education component for activities that can be implemented in persons as well as online.				
	Planned future response	The PO envisages moderation of travel pandemic restrictions connected to vaccination policy in the respective countries and thus the PO expects more initiatives to be submitted under the bilateral calls.				
Discrepancy between expected programme outcomes and achieved results of implemented project	Both objectives	2	2	2.00	Mitigate	
	Description of planned response	Appropriate call setup, selection criteria, monitoring of approved projects under all calls for proposals taking into consideration targets in the results framework at the programme and project level.				
	Description of actual response	The PO prepared the announced calls for proposals in line with the Programme Agreement and directed applicants and project promoters in setting up achievable targets.				
	Planned future response	The PO will undertake monitoring of contracted projects focusing also on meeting the setup targets in order to mitigate any discrepancy during the project implementation, if any.				
Insufficient number of applications	Both objectives	2	2	2.00	Mitigate	

	Description of planned response	Information seminars for applicants after launch of each call for proposals. Other communication channels will be used to attract potential applicants (webpage, FB, direct mailing, participation at conferences, seminars related to EEA and Norway Grants).				
	Description of actual response	The PO organized information seminars, match-making event, direct mailing to umbrella organisations, relevant ministry and promotion in media and on social networks with the aim to advertise the calls in broad public.				
	Planned future response	Before the announcement of the last call for proposals, the PO will promote the call through the direct mailing, match –making event, promotion on social networks and the relevant ministry.				
Low number of innovative projects submitted	Reducing social and economic disparities	2	2	2.00	Mitigate	
	Description of planned response	Use of targeted communication to promote the innovation component focusing on electronic media and portals aimed on innovations and business development; using communication network of Grants; the PO’s communication tools such as web, FB, newspaper adds, press releases, direct mailing. Using these tools in connection with launching of calls for proposals, information seminars, match-making events and informing on achieved programme/project results.				
	Description of actual response	The PO communicated aims and objectives of respective calls through information seminars, match-making events, social media. The PO has instructed the expert evaluators to focus on the innovation element of the evaluated projects.				
	Planned future response	The PO will undertake regular monitoring of the contracted projects in order to complete the implementation of their projects in line with the project contracts and project applications.				
Change of legislative environment	Both objectives	3	2	2.45	Accept	
	Description of planned response	Promptly up-date of documents intended for applicants/promoters (e.g. calls, guidelines for promoters etc.), publication of up-to-date information on webpage, up-date of internal documents.				

	Description of actual response	Regular monitoring of relevant legislative changes. If needed, the PO updates guidelines for project promoters and other relevant documents.				
	Planned future response	Regular monitoring of relevant legislative changes. If needed, the PO will update the relevant documents, publish the information on the PO's webpage and inform the project promoters.				
	Both objectives	2	3	2.45	Mitigate	
Lack of time for project implementation	Description of planned response	Good monitoring plan and risk analyses of projects. The PO will prepare a monitoring plan in reasonable time before the projects are contracted. This plan will focus on monitoring of results, on risk, financial control and overall assessment of project progress.				
	Description of actual response	During the project contracting period, the PO has discussed with project promoters the length of project implementation in order to have enough time for completing projects in line with the applications and project contracts.				
	Planned future response	The PO will undertake regular monitoring of contracted projects in order to complete the implementation of their projects in line with project contracts.				
Operational risks						
Risk description	Risk related to	Likelihood	Consequence	Risk score	Response type	Validity
Insufficient institutional and management capacities in the PO level	Both objectives	2	2	2.00	Mitigate	
	Description of planned response	A capacity plan will ensure sufficient capacities during the entire programme implementation. Ensuring capacity building for improvement of skills and resources of PO's staff through targeted trainings and workshops, participation on trainings organized by the Research Agency to improve employees' management, institutional and IT skills.				
	Description of actual response	The Research Agency provided weekly internal trainings, such as improvement of IT skills, internal procedures, conflicts solutions, as well as providing IT equipment to enable work from home. Although the PO struggled with staff fluctuation, the PO replaced the leaving staff with new employees in timely manner. The PO has provided training and ongoing support to 4 new employees in order the PO delivers its tasks in time and good quality.				

	Planned future response	The Research Agency is preparing an action plan for stabilisation of employees. The PO will mitigate staff fluctuation by providing possibilities to work from home, respond in timely manner to replace leaving staff members and regularly communicates with staff members.				
Long period for obtaining permits needed for projects implementation in areas of GII and WT (application of technology)	Both objectives	2	3	2.45	Accept	
	Description of planned response	During the projects evaluation, the PO will look into identification of permits needed and ensure that the process of applying for permits in terms of time and content is feasible also in regards to possible prolongation of time for obtaining permits due to COVID-19 effects.				
	Description of actual response	As the contracted projects have started its implementation in December 2021, the PO can't assess this risk.				
	Planned future response	The PO will undertake monitoring of the contracted projects in order to complete the implementation of their projects in line with project contracts and project applications and will be in regular contact with project promoters in order to be informed about possible delays in obtaining permits.				
Shortcomings and mistakes in the public procurement	Both objectives	2	3	2.45	Mitigate	
	Description of planned response	Info seminars about public procurements procedures, clear PP guidelines and consultations during tender preparations will be organized for applicants.				
	Description of actual response	As the contracted projects have started its implementation in December 2021, the PO can't assess this risk.				
	Planned future response	The PO will attend the training on PP due to new amendment of the public procurement law. The PO will provide consultations on PP to project promoters in cooperation with the unit of public procurement of the Research Agency.				
Lack of professional evaluators	Reducing social and economic disparities	2	2	2.00	Mitigate	

	Description of planned response	Up-to-date of expert evaluators database to maintain the sufficient number of professional evaluators for the programme.				
	Description of actual response	The PO has created a broad database of expert evaluators in respective knowledge areas and open a call for expert evaluators.				
	Planned future response	The PO will use the database of the expert evaluators and up-to-date this database by evaluators submitted through the open call.				
Impact of COVID-19 restrictions	Both objectives	2	3	2.45	Mitigate	
	Description of planned response	Adapt to the insufficient PO capacities due to COVID-19 sick leaves and informing in time the NFP and DPPs about possible delays in the programme implementation (such as launch of the calls for proposals, assessment of applications etc). Follow up developments with COVID-19. Continue to use online space for communication on programme and project level with donors, programme partners, project promoters. Assess and monitor projects implementation, maintain up-to-date communication with project promoters.				
	Description of actual response	Due to delays in the programme implementation caused by COVID restrictions and insufficient staff, the PO and the NFP agreed on setting up new milestones of the programme implementation and on regular monitoring by the NFP of their achievements.				
	Planned future response	The PO will follow the set up milestones of the programme implementation. The PO will follow the projects implementation progress through regular monitoring and ad hoc communication with project promoters will mitigate possible delays in projects implementation connected to the COVID-19 restrictions. The PO will follow the actual situation on the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions				
Insufficient capacity to perform public procurement controls that may affect the speed of projects implementation	Both objectives	2	3	2.45	Mitigate	New
	Description of planned response	To take measures on the level of the Research Agency and the PO to have enough trained staff members on public procurement or use external capacities for performing the PP controls, if needed.				

Overall risk of the programme				
	Likelihood	Consequence	Risk score	
OVERALL RISK OF THE PROGRAMME	2	3	2.45	

Annex 5: Monitoring plan

Please note this Annex is uploaded separately and is not visible in this document. Please download and print separately if needed.

Annex 6: Evaluation report

Not Available

Annex 7: Agreement conditions

General	
Condition	Fulfilled status
<p>1. For outcome 1 indicators “Estimated annual collection of waste from production and operational processes for re-use or recycling (in tons)” and “Estimated re-use of waste for other production processes (in tons)”, where the baseline value is “to be determined” (TBD), the Programme Operator shall submit to the FMO for approval the baseline value, together with a description of the data collection method used, no later than 6 months after the selection of projects under the last relevant call for proposals. The updated baseline value shall be agreed upon through a modification of the programme agreement.</p>	<p>Is condition fulfilled? - N/A Comment The selection of related projects has not been finalized yet.</p>
<p>2. The results framework (esp. Output level indicators under Outcome 1) may be revised after the selection process is concluded. The updated results framework shall be agreed upon through a modification of the programme agreement.</p>	<p>Is condition fulfilled? - N/A Comment The selection of related projects has not been finalized yet.</p>

<p>3. The National Focal Point shall ensure that the Programme Operator ensures that project promoters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep any buildings purchased, constructed, renovated or reconstructed under the project in their ownership for a period of at least 5 years following the completion of the project and continue to use such buildings for the benefit of the overall objectives of the project for the same period; • Keep any buildings purchased, constructed, renovated or reconstructed under the project properly insured against losses such as fire, theft and other normally insurable incidents both during project implementation and for at least 5 years following the completion of the project; and • Set aside appropriate resources for the maintenance of any buildings purchased, constructed, renovated or reconstructed under the project for at least 5 years following the completion of the project. The specific means for implementation of this obligation shall be specified in the project contract. 	<p>Is condition fulfilled? - Yes Comment</p> <p>The PO will specify this condition in the project contract, if relevant.</p>
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