

ADDENDUM

to

EEA Financial Mechanism 2009-2014

PROGRAMME AGREEMENT

for the financing of the Programme “EEA Scholarship Programme”
hereinafter referred to as the “Programme Agreement”

between

The Financial Mechanism Committee
Established by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway
hereinafter referred to as the “FMC”

and

The Government Office of the Slovak Republic,
hereinafter referred to as the “Focal Point”,
representing Slovakia,
hereinafter referred to as the “Beneficiary State”

together hereinafter referred to as the “Parties”

Article 1

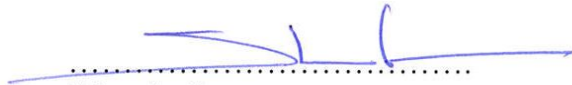
1. The Annexes to the EEA Financial Mechanism Programme Agreement for the financing of the Programme SK06 “EEA Scholarship Programme” are replaced by the Annexes sent with this addendum.
2. The modifications contained in the new versions of Annex I and Annex II to the Programme Agreement entered into force on the 7 January 2015.

Article 2

This addendum and the Annexes accompanying it constitute an integral part of the Programme Agreement. Except from the modifications stated above, the Programme Agreement remains unchanged.

Signed in Brussels on.....^{26/1/2015}.....

For the FMC



Stine Andresen
Director
Financial Mechanism Office

Signed in^{13/3/2015 Bratislava}..... on.....

For the Focal Point



Igor Federič
Head
Government Office of the Slovak Republic



Annex I - Programme Decision

1. Expected Outcomes & Indicators for Outputs

Expected Outcome(s):

Increased and strengthened institutional cooperation at all levels of the education sector (school education, higher education, vocational training/education and adult education) between Beneficiary and EEA EFTA States

Output

Mobility programme for institutional cooperation effectively implemented

Output indicator(s)	Baseline	Target	Source of Verification
Increased awareness among institutions	0	25	Interim and final reports of PO; attendance lists
Number of institutional cooperation project applications received by PO	0	25	Interim and final reports of PO; lists of received project applications
Number of promotional events where EEA/NRW Grants scholarship programme was presented	0	17	Interim and final reports of PO; attendance lists

Output

Joint projects identified and implemented by partner institutions

Output indicator(s)	Baseline	Target	Source of Verification
Number of bilateral partnership agreements	0	13	Interim and final reports of the project promoters; on-site monitoring
Number of projects	0	13	Interim and final reports of the PO; no of grant agreements between the PO and project promoters

Expected Outcome(s): Increased higher education student and staff mobility between Beneficiary and EEA EFTA States

Output

HE mobility programme promoted effectively among institutions and beneficiaries selected on a competitive basis

Output indicator(s)	Baseline	Target	Source of Verification
Increased awareness among HE institutions	0	11	Interim and final reports of PO; attendance lists
Number of mobility project applications received by PO	0	11	Interim and final reports of PO; list of received project applications
Number of promotional events where EEA/NRW Grants scholarship programme was presented	0	17	Interim and final reports of PO; attendance lists

Output

Agreements for HE student and staff mobility formalized / existing agreements enhanced

Output indicator(s)	Baseline	Target	Source of Verification
Number of mobile students as part of new or existing mobility agreements	0	36	Interim and final reports of the project promoters; individual mobility reports
Number of mobile staff (including teachers) as part of new or existing mobility agreements	0	13	Interim and final reports of the project promoters; individual mobility reports

2. Conditions

2.1 General

1. The Grant Offer is subject to any comments or observations made by the European Commission in relation to the screening process.
2. Bilateral, outcome and output indicators shall be reported on in the annual programme report. More qualitative bilateral indicators reflecting the increased country and education sector knowledge of the cooperating countries shall be developed.

2.2 Pre-eligibility

Not applicable.

2.3 Pre-payment

Not applicable.

2.4 Pre-completion

Not applicable.

2.5 Post-completion

Not applicable.

2.6 Other

Not applicable.

3. Eligibility of costs**3.1 Eligibility of costs - period**

Eligibility of costs (excluding prog prep costs): 07/10/2013-30/04/2017

Eligibility of programme proposal preparation costs: 31/01/2013-06/10/2013

3.2 Grant rate and co-financing

Programme estimated total cost (€)	€2,255,882
Programme estimated eligible cost (€)	€2,255,882
Programme grant rate (%)	85.0000%
Maximum amount of Programme grant (€)	€1,917,500

3.3 Maximum eligible costs (€) and Advance payment amount (€)

Budget heading	Eligible expenditure	Advance payment*
Programme management	€225,588	€55,668
Increased and strengthened institutional cooperation at all levels of the education sector (school education, higher education, vocational training/education and adult education) between Beneficiary and EEA EFTA States	€1,702,520	€0
Increased higher education student and staff mobility between Beneficiary and EEA EFTA States	€254,656	€0
Fund for bilateral relations	€33,839	€20,302
Complementary action	€28,000	€5,600
Preparation of programme proposal	€11,279	€11,279
Reserve for exchange rate losses	€0	€0
	€2,255,882	€92,849

* The advance payment is composed of €78,922 in grant amount and €13,927 in co-financing.

3.4 Retention of management costs

Retention of management costs - percentage of the management costs	10.00%
Retention of management costs - planned Euro value	€19,175

3.5 Small Grant Scheme

Not applicable

Annex II - Operational Rules

1. Eligibility

1.1 Eligible measures (sub-measures if any):

The Programme Operator is SAIA, n. o. (Slovak Academic Information Agency).

The Donor Programme Partners (DPPs) are the Icelandic Centre for Research (RANNIS), Iceland, the National Agency for International Education Affairs (AIBA), Liechtenstein, and the Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Education (SIU), Norway.

The programme aims to increase higher education student and staff mobility between Slovakia and the Donor States, and to strengthen inter-institutional co-operation between higher and secondary level education institutions in Slovakia and the Donor States.

Within the programme the following four measures will be supported (this measures are referred to in accordance with the numbering contained in Annex IX of the Scholarship Guidelines):

- Measure 1: Preparatory visits (Fund for bilateral relations at programme level).

Target group: Slovak higher education institutions and upper secondary schools and their potential partners in Donor States, in accordance with the Guidelines for Scholarship programmes.

- Measure 2: Mobility projects in higher education

Target group: Students and academic staff in Slovakia and Donor States.

This measure consists of two components:

- o Sub-measure a): Long-term student mobility at all levels (Bachelor, Master, PhD)
- o Sub-measure b): Short-term teaching assignments of academic staff.

- Measure 4: Inter-institutional cooperation projects between higher education institutions in Slovakia and the Donor States.
- Measure 5: Inter-institutional cooperation projects in education/training between upper secondary schools in Slovakia and the Donor States, including other types of partner organisations from Slovakia and the Donor States.

1.2 Eligible applicants:

The rules on the eligibility of applicants are set in Article 6.2 of the Regulation. Institutions apply for project funding. Individual applicants apply to their home institutions.

The following specifications apply to this programme:

Measure 1:

Applicants are Higher education institutions (HEIs) and upper secondary schools in Slovakia and Donor States.

Measure 2:

Applicants are Higher education institutions (HEIs) having at least one partner HEI in a Donor State. Both must hold an Erasmus University Charter. Students and academic staff apply to their home institution.

Measure 4:

Applicants are Higher education institutions (HEIs) having at least one partner HEI in a Donor State. Slovak HEIs and external education institutions authorised to train PhD students as well as other entities authorised to provide education at the higher education level in the Donor States can also participate as additional partners.

Measure 5:

Applicants are upper secondary schools having at least one partner upper secondary school in a Donor State. Slovak HEIs and upper secondary schools as well as HEIs and other entities authorised to provide education at the higher education level in the Donor States can also participate as additional partners.

1.3 Special rules on eligibility of costs:

Chapter 7 of the Regulation contains the rules on eligibility of costs. The following specifications apply:

- A flat rate for indirect costs is approved at programme level, an acceptable methodology has been provided.
- A flat rate of up to 20% will be allowed for indirect costs at project level. The methodology for the calculation of the indirect costs shall be specified in the project contract between the Programme Operator and the Project Promoter.
- In-kind will not be eligible.

2. Financial parameters

2.1 Minimum and maximum grant amount per project:

Measure 1: The maximum amount of grant assistance applied for under the bilateral fund is € 4,500 per visit.

Measure 2:

The minimum amount of grant assistance applied for per project is €25,000; the maximum amount is €100,000.

- Sub-measure a): Student mobility

Scholarships of 3-12 months (for PhD students 1-12 months) shall be granted.

For mobility from Donor States to Slovakia, the monthly rate shall be €600. The minimum amount of grant assistance applied for is €600; the maximum amount is €7,200. In addition, the travel costs and travel insurance of up to €700 shall be covered based on actual incurred expenditures.

For mobility from Slovakia to the Donor States, the monthly rate shall be €1,125. The minimum amount of grant assistance applied for is €1,125; the maximum amount is €13,500. In addition, the travel costs and travel insurance of up to €700 shall be covered based on actual incurred expenditures.

- Sub-measure b): Mobility of academic staff

Scholarships of 3 days to 6 weeks shall be granted.

For mobility from Donor States to Slovakia, a daily allowance rate of €100 shall apply for travels of up to 10 days. For longer travels, the monthly rate of €1,000 shall apply. The minimum amount of grant assistance applied for is €300; the maximum amount is €1,500. In addition, the travel costs and travel insurance of up to €700 shall be covered based on actual incurred expenditures.

For mobility from Slovakia to the Donor States, a daily allowance rate of €210 shall apply for travels of up to 10 days. For longer travels, the monthly rate of €2,100 shall apply. The minimum amount of grant assistance applied for is €630, the maximum is €3,150. In addition, the travel costs and travel insurance of up to €700 shall be covered based on actual incurred expenditures.

For people holding a disability certificate, scholarships may be increased by up to 40%, however the maximum amount of grant assistance applied for per project shall not be exceeded.

On a project level for the organisation of mobility, a lump sum of 10% of total direct costs for sub-measures a) and b) shall be granted.

Measure 4:

The minimum amount of grant assistance applied for is €50,000; the maximum amount is €120,000.

Measure 5:

The minimum amount of grant assistance applied for is €30,000; the maximum amount is €100,000.

2.2 Project grant rate:

Measure 1:

Grants from the Programme will cover 100% of total eligible project costs.

Measure 2:

Grants from the Programme will cover 100% of total eligible project costs.

Measures 4 and 5:

Grants from the Programme will not exceed 90% of total eligible project costs. The remaining costs of the project shall be provided or obtained by the Project Promoter.

3. Selection of projects

3.1 Selection procedures:

For all measures:

The selection procedures shall be in accordance with Article 6.5 of the Regulation. The Programme Operator carries out an assessment of the administrative and eligibility criteria.

Content assessment:

Measure 1 and 2:

In accordance with Article 6.5.8 of the Regulation, the selection procedure shall be in line with Article 6.5 of the Regulation, with the following exception: As regards the expert assessment under Article 6.5.2 of the Regulation, the Programme Operator will use

employees of SAIA n. o.

Measures 4 and 5:

The selection procedure will be carried out in accordance with Article 6.5.2-6.5.6 of the Regulation.

3.2 *Open calls and availability of funds (including number of calls, duration of calls, and estimated size):*

Measure 1:

There shall be two calls for applications, one in the first quarter of 2014 and one in the fourth quarter of 2014, making available at least €25,380. The calls shall be open at least for 3 months.

Measure 2:

There shall be one call for applications, in the second half of 2014. This call shall make available €600,000 in total. The call shall be open at least for 2 months. Any unused funds from this call will be reallocated to the last call under measure 4 and 5.

Measures 4 and 5:

The calls for measures 4 and 5 will be launched jointly. There shall be two calls for applications, which shall be launched not later than in the second quarter of 2014 and in the first quarter of 2015, respectively. These calls shall make available at least €1,357,176 in total. The first call shall make available €814,306 of the budget, the second call shall make available €542,870 plus any means that could not be allocated in the first call and/or funds that are reallocated from measure 2. The calls shall be open at least for 2 months.

3.3 *Selection criteria:*

Measure 1:

The application shall be submitted within the call publication period on a continuous basis, but at least one month before the planned mobility. Each application is assessed in terms of its form based on the administrative compliance criteria and the applicant's eligibility criteria and, subsequently, in terms of its content.

Selection criteria include:

Administrative and eligibility criteria:

- formal completeness, submission of application
- eligibility of the applicant's and the potential partners' organisations
- objective and scheduled activities
- compliance with financial limits, eligibility of expenses
- duration of mobility

Content-related criteria

- objective and content of the visit/planned meeting agenda and its link to the overall objective of the EEA Scholarship Programme in Slovakia
- a brief outline of the topic for future cooperation and its link to the topics and measures of the EEA Scholarship Programme in Slovakia
- compatibility of the professional focus of the organizations
- composition of the visit/meeting participants
- clear and justified budget
- invitation letter/certificate of the intention to establish cooperation and participate in a meeting

Measure 2:

Selection criteria include:

Administrative and eligibility criteria:

- formal completeness, submission of application
- eligibility of the applicant's and the potential partners' organisations
- objective and scheduled activities
- compliance with financial limits, eligibility of expenses
- duration of mobility and project duration
- Erasmus University Charter holder

Content-related criteria

- contribution of the project to overall EEA Grants objectives
- contribution to national and institutional policies
- promotion of project activities
- selection procedures of scholarship holders
- project management and management of mobilities

Measures 4 and 5:

Administrative and eligibility criteria:

- formal completeness, submission of application
- eligibility of the applicant's and the potential partners' organisations
- objective and scheduled activities
- compliance with financial limits, eligibility of expenses and co-financing commitment
- project duration

Content-related criteria

- fulfilment of the main objectives of the call and contribution of the project to the overall objectives of the EEA Grants
- feasibility of the project
- involvement of partners from target countries and appropriate share of all partners in the activities proposed in the project
- promotion of project activities and results
- clear and justified budget (financial feasibility) and project management
- cross-cutting issues sufficiently addressed

The selection criteria will be further developed by the Programme Operator together with one or all the DPPs and will be further discussed in the Cooperation Committee. The final selection criteria will be included in the text of the call for proposals.

All measures: Social sustainability issues, in particular initiatives that help combat discrimination and intolerance, shall be reflected in the selection criteria in the open calls and shall be reported on to the Donors.

4. Payment flows, verification of payment claims, monitoring and reporting

4.1 Payment flows

Payments towards the Project Promoter will be in the form of advance payments, interim payments and a final balance payment in the form of a reimbursement of incurred expenditure. Payments to projects are made on the basis of approved interim reports. The Programme Operator shall ensure that funds are available for payments to the projects in a timely manner.

Project Promoters can receive an advance payment of up to 80% of the grant awarded. The Project Promoter may receive additional interim payments which combined do not exceed 90% of the grant awarded, provided that at least 40% of the total project costs have been incurred. The remaining 10% of the contribution will be paid to the Project Promoter after the approval of the final balance report by the Programme Operator.

4.2 Verification of payment claims

Verification and approval of Interim Project Reports is conducted by the Programme Operator and will be based on information on incurred expenditure, financial status and project progress contained in the Interim Reports, and on additional information to be submitted together with the reports.

As part of payment claim verification, the Programme Operator may carry out on-the-spot checks to account for reported incurred expenditure in Projects.

In line with Article 7.13.3 of the Regulation, a report by an independent and certified auditor, certifying that the claimed costs are incurred in accordance with this Regulation, the national law and accounting practices of the project partner's country, shall, subject to Article 7.13.5 of the Regulation, be seen as sufficient proof of costs incurred by a project partner whose primary location is in a Donor State. The same applies to international organisations.

The procedure for verification of interim project reports, periodicity of reporting periods, and deadlines for reporting outlined in the programme proposal will further be detailed in the description of the Programme Operator's management and control systems according to Article 4.8.2 of the Regulation.

4.3 Monitoring and reporting

The system for ongoing monitoring and material verification of approved projects shall be set up by the Programme Operator so as to ensure compliance with agreed procedures, in order to verify progress and the early detection of potential problems allowing for timely introduction of corrective measures. The aim of the monitoring shall be to compare the progress made in the implementation of projects with the expected objectives and outcomes of the projects.

The Programme Operator shall continuously monitor all approved projects using various elements of monitoring such as:

- Advising Project Promoters via e-mail, telephone and other means
- Organising seminars for Project Promoters

- Assessing reports submitted by Project Promoters
- Carrying out monitoring visits to Project Promoters and Project Partners

Information on monitoring and reporting as outlined in the programme proposal will further be detailed in the description of the Programme Operator's management and control systems according to Article 4.8.2 of the Regulation.

5. Additional mechanisms within the programme

5.1 Funds for bilateral relations

The bilateral fund shall be used for Measure 1 and for covering expenses of participation of individuals from Slovak HEIs, upper secondary schools and/or external education institutions authorised to train PhD students in contact making seminars organised by DPPs or other relevant entities. Up to 25% of the bilateral fund shall be used to cover expenses of participation in contact making seminars. The funds remaining from the allocation to participation in contact making seminars shall be allocated to the second call under Measure 1. Contact making seminars shall support the search for project partners in order to prepare applications for one or several of the other measures under the programme.

Detailed information regarding measure 1 is provided under the relevant sections of this Annex II.

Measure 1 will support the search for partners prior and parallel to the preparation of applications for one or several of the other measures under the programme. Preparatory visits may take place as a purely bilateral cooperation between two institutions/faculty staff, or as a meeting between several institutions.

5.2 Complementary action

Complementary action shall be organised in accordance with Article 7.11 of the Regulation.

5.3 Reserve for exchange rate losses

Not applicable.

5.4 Small Grant Schemes

Not applicable.

6. Pre-defined projects

Not applicable.

7. Modification of the programme

Any modifications of the Programme will follow the rules set forth in the Regulation and in Article 2.9 of the Programme Agreement.

8. Programme proposal version

Any reference to the Programme Proposal in this Programme agreement shall be interpreted as a reference to the version signed by the Programme Operator on 31 January 2013 and shall include all subsequent correspondence and communication between the Donors, the Financial Mechanism Office, the National Focal Point and the Programme Operator.

9. Miscellaneous

Not applicable.