Work Plan

FUND FOR BILATERAL RELATIONS

(In accordance with Article 2.6 of the Bilateral Fund Agreement and Article 4.9 of the Regulations on the implementation of the EEA and Norwegian Financial Mechanisms 2021-2028)

BF work plan Estonia 2021-2028

(Version 2.0 adopted on 19.02.2026 by Joint Committee on Bilateral Fund)

1. Objective and priorities

Enhanced cooperation and improved mutual knowledge and understanding between Donor and Beneficiary States.

Bilateral relations between the Donor States – Iceland, the Principality of Liechtenstein and the Kingdom of Norway – and the Republic of Estonia shall be strengthened with the aim of stimulating and developing long-term cooperation in line with the Regulations (Chapter 4) and the Bilateral Guideline.

The priority areas of the Bilateral Fund at national level 2021-2028 in Estonia:

- promotion of core European values, such as respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and the respect for human rights for all people, regardless of their racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation or gender identity;
- cybersecurity and digitalization;
- foreign policy cooperation;
- equality and equal treatment.

Initiatives within the scope of the EEA and Norway Grants programmes in Estonia – Green Transition, Crisis Preparedness, Green ICT, Public Health – shall not be prioritized for financing from the Bilateral Fund at national level.

Strong bilateral cooperation is paramount in the initiatives under the Bilateral Fund. Both the Beneficiary State entity and the Donor State entity should have clear, meaningful and active roles in the cooperation. Both should have high motivation, and benefit from the cooperation. Partnerships are expected with proportional contribution and involvement from both sides.

Bilateral cooperation initiatives from the previous periods of the Bilateral Fund can only be considered for renewed funding if the new initiative aims at a new quality in the bilateral cooperation or involves new partners.

2. Implementation system

The National Focal Point (NFP) is responsible for the management of the Bilateral Fund at national level.

The Joint Committee for the Bilateral Fund (JCBF) is the decision-making body for the Bilateral Fund and responsible for allocating funds to bilateral initiatives at national level. Decisions by the JCBF shall be taken by

consensus between the members of the Committee. In case no consensus can be reached, the decision shall be taken by the Financial Mechanism Committee (FMC).

The JCBF shall be chaired by the NFP and composed of representatives from the Donor States, including the embassies of the Donor States, and from the Beneficiary State, including the respective ministry of foreign affairs.

The JCBF shall meet at least once a year. The NFP is responsible for organizing the meetings.

Dates (tentative, if in the future) of the meetings:

1. 27th of October 2025
2. 16th of February 2026

The procedures regarding the meeting, the decisions, the Work Plan, the allocations are stipulated in the Bilateral Fund Agreement (articles 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7) and further explained in Bilateral Guideline (article 5).

The NFP shall promote the Bilateral Fund at national level with predefined initiatives and without open calls. The NFP shall provide accessible information on how to propose predefined initiatives on the NFP website, to ensure equal opportunity and enhance the chances to get good proposals. In case of low interest, the NFP will actively promote the Bilateral Fund and encourage initiatives through the cooperation networking events, information lists, meetings with possible project promotors and Donors. No bilateral initiatives carried out by the NFP are foreseen.

All bilateral initiatives should have participation of at least one Beneficiary State entity and one Donor State entity.

The proposed initiatives are expected to have a budget between 50 000 – 100 000 euros and a duration of 1-3 years preferably.

Bilateral initiatives do not require any co-financing. A state aid assessment shall be made of all initiatives.

JCBF can decide upon necessary exceptions, e.g. due to the limits of the donor shares. Ministry of Justice and Digital Affairs Estonia initiative "Preparation and implementation of cybersecurity teaching materials for general schoolteachers - assessment on digital and cybersecurity competences" (EST & NO CyberEd) proposal is considered a pre-defined exception.

200 000 euros from the whole budget of the Bilateral Fund at national level will be reserved for 2027.

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The NFP shall report on the use of the Bilateral Fund at national level in the Interim Financial Reports (IFR), the annual and Final Country Reports and in the Annual Meetings.

3. Donor Shares and Donor Priorities

For the EEA Financial Mechanism, the Donor shares are as follows:

Iceland	€40.275
Liechtenstein	€100,000
Norway	€666,296

For the Norway Financial Mechanism, the Bilateral Fund at national level amounts to €697,216.

4. Open calls

Title	JCBF approval date	Amount available	Applications received	Total grant applied for	Applications approved for funding	Total grant awarded

5. Predefined bilateral initiatives

Code	EE-BI001		
Title	Preparation and implementation of cybersecurity teaching materials for general schoolteachers - assessment on digital and cybersecurity competences - EST & NO CyberEd		
Status	On-going		
Date of approval by JCBF	21/01/2026		
Grant awarded from Bilateral fund	€ 559,554		
Implementation period	22/01/2026 - 30/09/2028		
Promoter	Ministry of Justice and Digital Affairs of Estonia (EE), info@justdigi.ee		
Type of Initiative	Study tour, Workshop or seminar, Other		
Share of Donor states		**Amount**	**Percent (%)**
	Norway	€ 559,554	100.00 %
Amount incurred			
Description:			
What issues or challenges does the initiative aim to address?	The background of the initiative lies in the urgent need to strengthen digital and cybersecurity competences (DCC) and skills and cyber hygiene across the education system, particularly for teachers. In the past, the DCC and skills of students, but not teachers, have been studied, yet the current national curriculum lacks clear learning outcomes for developing cybersecurity skills.		
What does the initiative aim to do?	The main aim of the project is to prepare and implement cybersecurity teaching materials at general education schools, with the goal to develop digital and cybersecurity competences (DCC) and skills and to foster the next generation in the field of cybersecurity. In course of the project, input for the preparation of study materials and substantive		

	proposals for the development of DCC and skills in the respective target groups will be prepared. The aim is to co-develop and implement teaching materials aligned with national curriculum and to foster the next generation of cybersecurity-aware students and teachers. Activities include curriculum workshops, the development of learning outcomes and materials, seminars and study visits in both countries (Estonia and Norway), and concluding events. Based on the assessment and survey on digital skills and cybersecurity of Estonian teachers, one of the expected results of the program is substantive study materials and supportive learning outcomes for teachers of general education, which can be applied both in Estonia and elsewhere. The broader objective of this action is to introduce both teachers and students to basic cyber hygiene competences and knowledge. The output of this activity is to promote interest in the field of cybersecurity and the relevant professions.
What bilateral benefits does the initiative aim to achieve?	One of the objectives of the initiative is to analyse Estonia's and Norway's experiences and examples in developing digital and cybersecurity competences (DCC) and skills at the general education level, as well as to mediate experiences and challenges among teachers. Therefore, exchange of experience and knowledge between partners is very important in this initiative.
What is the expected role of the individual partners?	Donor partner will be engaged in all activities - study trips are both in Estonia and Norway; surveys will be conducted on Estonian and Norwegian teachers' and students' digital competences and cybersecurity skills; development and implementation of supportive study materials in Estonian and Norwegian for both Estonian and Norwegian teachers and students.
Main results:	
What issues or challenges did the initiative aim to address?	
What did the initiative do?	
What bilateral benefits did the initiative achieve, and for whom?	

What was the role of the individual partners?	

Code	EE-BI002		
Title	Grassroots Football Coaching Course Estonia (GFCC): Advancing Gender Equality through Inclusive Grassroots Football		
Status	On-going		
Date of approval by JCBF	19/02/2026		
Grant awarded from Bilateral fund	€ 96,626		
Implementation period	20/02/2026 - 31/12/2027		
Promoter	Football Association of Norway (NO), nff@idrettsmail.no		
Type of Initiative	Capacity building and short-term training, Workshop or seminar, Other		
Share of Donor states		**Amount**	**Percent (%)**
	Norway	€ 96,626	100.00 %
Amount incurred			

Description:

What issues or challenges does the initiative aim to address?

Estonian Football Association (EJL) has adopted a strategic action plan aimed at strengthening women's football and increasing girls' participation, supported by improved coordination, guidance, and collaboration with clubs nationwide. However, the availability of qualified female coaches remains a critical prerequisite for achieving these ambitions.

Football Association of Norway (NFF) has more than 20 years of international experience delivering structured grassroots programs and women-only coaching education in multiple regions, with a clear focus on inclusion, safe sport, and sustainable local structures for girls' participation.

In football, structural gender imbalances persist, particularly at grassroots level, where girls' access to organised activity is often limited by a lack of female role models, qualified coaches, and inclusive local structures. This initiative responds to the following challenge:

	unequal opportunities for girls and women to participate and take leadership roles in grassroots football. By increasing the number of qualified female coaches and strengthening inclusive local activity structures, the project contributes directly to gender equality. Improved physical and mental health outcomes for girls are recognised as important secondary effects of increased participation in safe, regular football activity. EU indicators shows that girls across Europe are on average less physically active than boys.
What does the initiative aim to do?	The overall aim of the initiative is to advance gender equality by strengthening women's access to education, leadership, and participation in grassroots football, through the implementation of a women-focused coaching course program that increases girls' (aged 6–16) opportunities to participate in safe, inclusive local football activity in Estonia. There will be two coaching courses, one in 2026 and one in 2027. Specific objectives: 1. Increase women's participation and leadership in grassroots football by training and certifying female coaches through NFF's internationally tested GFCC program (aligned with grassroots/UEFA C principles). 2. Strengthen inclusive and safe grassroots environments by integrating safeguarding principles and rights-based coaching practices into coach education. 3. Expand girls' access to organised football activity by using practical course elements, including Girls' Football Festivals and a structured practice period, as recruitment and activation arenas. 4. Promote gender equality and equal opportunities through visibility, communication, and role modelling, using football's strong societal platform. 5. Lay the foundation for a long-term partnership between NFF and EJL, positioning the course program as the first step in a broader cooperation on women's coaching, leadership pathways, and grassroots development.
What bilateral benefits does the initiative aim to achieve?	NFF and EJL have already signed a Memorandum of Understanding expressing their mutual intention to cooperate on the development of girls' and women's football. This application concerns the initial phase of a broader, long-term partnership between NFF and EJL. While the

	present project focuses specifically on gender equality through two coaching course cycle, it is designed as a strategic entry point to a multi-year cooperation encompassing additional female coaching courses and leadership programs, as well as organisational development initiatives. NFF and EJL share a clear intention to build a value-based partnership grounded in democratic values, human rights and non-discrimination, health, gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, safeguarding, and inclusion of vulnerable groups. As such, the project forms an integral part of a coherent, long-term approach to strengthening gender equality through grassroots football in Estonia.
What is the expected role of the individual partners?	It is an equal partnership where both organisations contribute to every activity in the project.
Main results:	
What issues or challenges did the initiative aim to address?	
What did the initiative do?	
What bilateral benefits did the initiative achieve, and for whom?	
What was the role of the individual partners?	

Title	**Small initiatives**
Grant awarded from Bilateral fund	
Amount incurred	

6. Activities carried out by the NFP

Title	Small initiatives
Grant awarded from Bilateral fund	
Amount incurred	

7. Summary

Please note that this budget follows the structure of the IFR template.

Title	Budget	Comments
Activities carried out by the NFP	€ 0	No bilateral initiatives carried out by the NFP are foreseen.
Pre-defined activities (total budget for planned pre-defined activities at national level)	€ 656,180	EE-BI001; EE-BI002
Funds still to be allocated	€ 847,607	
Total	**€ 1,503,787**	