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)

Bilateral Fund Work Plan Greece 2021-2028

(Version 1.0 adopted on 15.06.2026 by Joint Committee on Bilateral Fund)

1. Objective and priorities

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

Please state the bilateral objective and outline any priorities identified by the Joint Committee for the Bilateral Fund. Priorities could be e.g. key areas or upcoming large events.

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

According to the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), signed on 20 of March 2026, between Greece and the Donor States, a Fund for Bilateral Relations (FBR) at national level with the amount of €2,202,884 was established for the whole implementation period (until April 2032), in order to support activities aiming at strengthening bilateral relations between the Donor States and the Beneficiary States, in line with Article 4.5 of the Regulation.

The BFNL is regulated by the applicable provisions of the Regulation of Implementation of the EEA Financial Mechanism for 2021-2028 (Regulation), the Agreement on the Fund for Bilateral Relations, signed on 2 June 2026 by the Deputy Minister of Economy and Finance, between the Greek National Focal Point (NFP) and the Financial Mechanism Committee (FMC), and by the Bilateral Guideline 2021-2028.

For the 2021-2028 period, the ambition is to further expand the bilateral relationship between Greece and the Donor States, building upon the strong foundation established during the previous implementation phase. Many beneficiaries have expressed interest in maintaining these partnerships and expanding the exchange of knowledge on specific thematic priorities. In addition, prospective beneficiaries who were constrained by the brief application windows in the past have developed mature concepts for bilateral engagement, leading to the emergence of new areas of interest and opportunities for cooperation.

Consequently, priority will be given on two levels: first, to sustaining and deepening existing partnerships, and second, to facilitating the entry of new stakeholders with mature project ideas that can further enhance bilateral cooperation. The BF serves as a strategic and flexible instrument to realize this ambition through

bilateral initiatives that will strengthen policy exchange and enhance established cooperation between key stakeholders in Greece and the Donor States.

The BFNL will support initiatives primarily in the priority sectors, as defined in the Regulation and the MoU:

- European green transition
- Democracy, rule of law and human rights
- Social inclusion and resilience

Further to the policy areas supported through programmes by the MoU, the Bilateral Fund might, in principle, be open to all thematic areas across all sectors that demonstrate and justify mutual interest, benefit, and ground for bilateral cooperation.

Thus, policy areas of common interest and enhanced potential for bilateral cooperation between the Donor States and Greece include the following:

- Innovation and Blue Economy
- Digital Transformation and AI Integration
- Energy Security and Renewable Energy Sources
- Civil Society Empowerment and Active Citizenship
- Public Health Challenges and Healthcare Systems Resilience
- Cultural Heritage and Creative Industries
- Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation
- Research and Academic Cooperation

According to Article 4.5 of the EEA FM 2021-2028 Regulation on eligible expenditures, the support under the BFNL can be directed at the following type of activities:

1. the search for partners for Donor partnership projects prior to or during the preparation of a project application, the development of such partnerships and the preparation of an application for a Donor partnership project;

2. networking, exchange, sharing, and transfer of knowledge, technology, experience, and best practice between entities in Beneficiary States and entities in the Donor States and, if relevant, international organisations, provided at least one entity within the Donor States is involved in the activity;
3. activities aiming at strengthening cooperation and exchanging experiences and best practices between the Programme Operators and similar entities within the Beneficiary States and Donor States and, if relevant, international organisations, provided at least one entity within the Donor States is involved in the activity; and
4. any other activity aiming at strengthening bilateral relations between the Donor States and the Beneficiary States.

2. Implementation system

Please include a brief description of the implementation system for the Bilateral Fund. The modalities for allocating funds should be outlined, e.g.calls, pre-defined activities, activities carried out by the NFP.

The BFNL is managed by the Special Service of Planning, Coordinating and Monitoring of the Implementation of Financial Mechanisms of the EEA, in the Ministry of Economy and Finance in Greece, which plays the role of the National Focal Point for the EEA FM, and falls under the Management and Control System at the national level, set in effect by a Joint Ministerial Decree, accompanied by a Manual of Procedures. At the national level, the MCS transposes the EEA Grants 2021-2028 Regulation and sets the implementation framework's national provisions. The Manual of Procedures sets the procedures, workflows, and templates for the day-to-day implementation.

The BFNL will be administered by the Joint Committee for the Bilateral Fund (JCBF), chaired by the NFP and composed of representatives of Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Greece, and the FMO as observer.

The primary role of the JCBF, its composition, organization of meetings, and other tasks, are detailed in the Bilateral Fund Agreement. Dates of JCBF meetings are to be settled in dialogue with all JCBF members.

The NFP, in consultation with the Donors, prepares a draft Work Plan (WP) for the Fund for Bilateral Relations, based on ideas discussed and initiatives of bilateral interests identified by the JCBF.

The funds may be distributed through activities carried out by open calls or pre-defined initiatives.

As regards the initiatives selected via open call(s), the NFP is responsible for organizing the calls for proposals and drafting the call text, including eligibility criteria, according to the provisions of the Work Plan. The JCBF and the FMO shall be consulted on the call text (the comments received shall be duly taken into consideration). The open call follows the selection procedure for calls for proposals with a maximum grant amount per project of up to 100.000€, with adaptions whenever needed. The calls shall be published on the websites of the NFP and the EEA Grants and be advertised as widely as possible. Rules for awarding funds shall be agreed upon by the JCBF.

Furthermore, the NFP will organize online and/or in-person events to inform potential entities about the open call opportunities, as well as provide technical details for the submission of proposals prior to the launch.

The NFP in collaboration with the JCBF during the first meeting, proposed the first draft Work Plan on which all members elaborated on specific issues such as:

- Modalities in implementation
- budget allocations and open call(s)
- the maximum grant amount per project (the proposal of NFP is 100.000)
- Donor shares
- other

BFNL payments are described in Article 3.4 of the BF Agreement.

3. Donor Shares and Donor Priorities

The Donor Shares for the Bilateral Fund under the EEA Financial Mechanism were approved at the FMC level. The allocation of contributions by each Donor Country at the national level is as follows:

Iceland: EUR 117,014

Liechtenstein: EUR 150,000

Norway: EUR 1,935,870

Please include the individual Donor shares (in Euros) and any priorities indicated by the Donors.

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

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	
Pre-defined activities (total budget for planned pre-defined activities at national level)	€ 0	
Funds still to be allocated	€ 2,202,884	
Total	**€ 2,202,884**	