

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EEA FINANCIAL MECHANISM
2009-2014

between

ICELAND,
THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN,
THE KINGDOM OF NORWAY,
hereinafter referred to as the “Donor States”

and

THE HELLENIC REPUBLIC,
hereinafter referred to as the “Beneficiary State”

together hereinafter referred to as the “Parties”,

WHEREAS Protocol 38b to the EEA Agreement, incorporated into the EEA Agreement by the Agreement between the European Union, Iceland, the Principality of Liechtenstein and the Kingdom of Norway on the EEA Financial Mechanism 2009-2014, establishes a financial mechanism (hereinafter referred to as the “EEA Financial Mechanism 2009-2014”) through which the Donor States will contribute to the reduction of economic and social disparities in the European Economic Area;

WHEREAS the EEA Financial Mechanism 2009-2014 aims to strengthen relations between the Donor States and the Beneficiary State to the mutual benefit of their peoples;

WHEREAS by decision of the Standing Committee of the EFTA States No. 5/2010/SC of 9 December 2010 the Donor States have given the Financial Mechanism Committee, established by a decision of the Standing Committee of the EFTA States No. 4/2004/SC of 3 June 2004, a mandate to manage the EEA Financial Mechanism 2009-2014;

WHEREAS the enhanced co-operation between the Donor States and the Beneficiary State will contribute to securing a stable, peaceful and prosperous Europe, based on good governance, democratic institutions, the rule of law, respect for human rights and sustainable development;

WHEREAS the Parties agree to establish a framework for cooperation in order to ensure the effective implementation of the EEA Financial Mechanism 2009-2014;

the Parties HAVE AGREED on the following:

Article 1 Objectives

1. The overall objectives of the EEA Financial Mechanism 2009-2014 are to contribute to the reduction of economic and social disparities in the European Economic Area and to the strengthening of bilateral relations between the Donor States and the Beneficiary States through financial contributions in the priority sectors listed in paragraph 2. Accordingly, the Parties to this Memorandum of Understanding shall endeavour to select for funding programmes that contribute to the achievement of these objectives.

2. The financial contributions shall be available in the following priority sectors:

- (a) Environmental protection and management;
- (b) Climate change and renewable energy;
- (c) Civil society;
- (d) Human and social development; and
- (e) Protecting cultural heritage.

Academic research may be eligible for funding in so far it is targeted at one or more of the priority sectors.

Article 2 Legal Framework

This Memorandum of Understanding shall be read in conjunction with the following documents which, together with this Memorandum of Understanding, constitute the legal framework of the EEA Financial Mechanism 2009-2014:

- (a) Protocol 38b to the EEA Agreement on the EEA Financial Mechanism 2009-2014;

- (b) the Regulation on the implementation of the EEA Financial Mechanism 2009-2014 (hereinafter referred to as the “Regulation”) issued by the Donor States in accordance with Article 8.8 of Protocol 38b;
- (c) the programme agreements that will be concluded for each programme; and
- (d) any guidelines adopted by the Financial Mechanism Committee in accordance with the Regulation.

Article 3 **Financial Framework**

1. In accordance with Article 2 of Protocol 38b, the total amount of the financial contribution is € 988.5 million in annual tranches of € 197.7 million over the period running from 1 May 2009 to 30 April 2014, inclusive.
2. In accordance with Article 5 of Protocol 38b, a total of € 63,400,000 shall be made available to the Beneficiary State over the period referred to in Paragraph 1.
3. In accordance with Article 8.7 of Protocol 38b and Article 1.8 of the Regulation, the management costs of the Donor States shall be covered by the overall amount referred to above. Further provisions to this effect are set out in the Regulation. The net amount of the allocation to be made available to the Beneficiary State is € 58,645,000.

Article 4 **Roles and responsibilities**

1. The Donor States shall make funds available in support of eligible programmes proposed by the Beneficiary State and agreed on by the Financial Mechanism Committee within the priority sectors listed in Article 3.1 of Protocol 38b and the programme areas identified in Annex B of this Memorandum of Understanding. The Donor States and the Beneficiary State may consult on possible and specific programmes before a formal programme proposal is submitted to the Financial Mechanism Committee.
2. The Beneficiary State shall assure the full co-financing of programmes that benefit from support from the EEA Financial Mechanism 2009-2014 in accordance with Annex B and the programme agreements.
3. The Financial Mechanism Committee shall manage the EEA Financial Mechanism 2009-2014 and take decisions on the granting of financial assistance in accordance with the Regulation.
4. The Committee shall be assisted by the Financial Mechanism Office (hereinafter referred to as the “FMO”). The FMO shall be responsible for the day-to-day operations of the EEA Financial Mechanism 2009-2014 and shall serve as a contact point.

Article 5 **Designation of authorities**

The Beneficiary State has authorised a National Focal Point to act on its behalf. The National Focal Point shall have the overall responsibility for reaching the objectives of the EEA Financial Mechanism 2009-2014 as well as for the implementation of the EEA Financial Mechanism 2009-2014 in the Beneficiary State in accordance with the Regulation. In accordance with Article 4.2 of the Regulation, the National Focal Point, the Certifying Authority, the Audit Authority, and an appropriate national entity responsible for the preparation and submission of irregularities reports are designated in Annex A.

Article 6
Multi-annual Programming Framework

1. In accordance with Article 2.1 of the Regulation, the Parties have agreed on an implementation framework consisting of the following financial and substantive parameters:
 - (a) a list of agreed programme areas, the financial contribution from the EEA Financial Mechanism 2009-2014 by programme area;
 - (b) identification of programmes, their main focus and outcomes, as appropriate, as well as any specific concerns relating to target groups, geographical areas or other issues;
 - (c) identification of programme operators, if appropriate;
 - (d) initiatives to strengthening the bilateral relations between the Donor States and the Beneficiary State, including the identification of programme areas in which donor partnership programmes as referred to in Article 3.2 shall be prepared, the designation of donor programme partners, the allocation of funds for such programmes, and programmes, or component thereof, that are dedicated exclusively to donor partnership projects;
 - (e) in specific cases, the identification of pre-defined projects to be included in relevant programmes;
 - (f) identification of small grant schemes, as appropriate.
2. The implementation framework is outlined in Annex B.

Article 7
Annual meetings

In accordance with Article 2.3 of the Regulation an annual meeting shall be held between the FMC and the National Focal Point. The annual meeting shall allow the FMC and the National Focal Point to examine progress achieved over the previous reporting period and agree on any necessary measures to be taken.

Article 8
Modification of the annexes

1. Annex A may be subject to review at the annual meetings. Amendments to Annex A agreed upon at the annual meetings do not require a formal change to this Memorandum of Understanding. Such amendments shall be confirmed through an exchange of letters between the FMC and the National Focal Point.
2. Annex B may be changed through an exchange of letters between the FMC and the National Focal Point.

Article 9
Control and Access to Information

The Financial Mechanism Committee, the EFTA Board of Auditors and their representatives have the right to carry out any technical or financial mission or review they consider necessary to follow the planning, implementation and monitoring of programmes and projects as well as the use of funds. The Beneficiary State shall provide all necessary assistance, information and documentation.

Article 10
Governing Principles

1. The implementation of this Memorandum of Understanding shall in all aspects be governed by the Regulation and subsequent amendments thereof.
2. The objectives of the EEA Financial Mechanism 2009-2014 shall be pursued in the framework of close co-operation between the Donor States and the Beneficiary State. The Parties agree to apply the highest degree of transparency, accountability and cost efficiency as well as the principles of good governance, sustainable development, gender equality and equal opportunities in all implementation phases of the EEA Financial Mechanism 2009-2014.
3. The Beneficiary State shall take proactive steps in order to ensure adherence to these principles at all levels involved in the implementation of the EEA Financial Mechanism 2009-2014.

Article 11
Entry into Force

This Memorandum of Understanding shall enter into force on the day after the date of its last signature.

This Memorandum of Understanding is signed in four originals in the English Language.

Signed in on
For Iceland

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Signed in on
For the Hellenic Republic

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Signed in on
For the Principality of Liechtenstein

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Signed in on
For the Kingdom of Norway

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National management and control structures

1. National Focal Point

The Independent Unit of Planning, Coordination and Monitoring of the Implementation of the Financial Mechanisms of the European Economic Area (EEA FM) shall act as the National Focal Point. The National Focal Point is an independent unit reporting directly to the General Secretary for Public Investments and the National Strategic Reference Framework (NSRF) of the Ministry of Economy, Infrastructure, Maritime Affairs and Tourism. The power of signature for the National Focal Point is delegated by ministerial decision.

The roles and responsibilities of the National Focal Point are stipulated in the Regulation, in particular Article 4.3 thereof.

In addition, the National Focal Point shall be responsible for certain tasks assigned to the Programme Operator under the Regulation. These tasks shall be detailed in the programme agreement and be identical for all relevant programmes. This additional role of the National Focal Point shall not affect the responsibilities of the Programme Operator related to the policy, strategic and/or bilateral aspects of the implementation of the programme.

This additional role does not apply to programmes for which the Programme Operator is designated in accordance with Article 5.13 of the Regulation.

2. Certifying Authority

The Single Paying Authority, which is a directorate *within* the General Secretariat for Public Investments and the NSRF within the Ministry of Economy, Infrastructure, Maritime Affairs and Tourism, shall act as the Certifying Authority. The Head of the Single Paying Authority shall be the Head of the Certifying Authority. The Head reports to the Secretary General for Public Investments and the NSRF; however, by ministerial decision, the power of signature is delegated directly to the Head of the Certifying Authority, thus safeguarding the independence of the Certifying Authority vis-à-vis the National Focal Point.

The roles and responsibilities of the Certifying Authority are stipulated in the Regulation, in particular Article 4.5 thereof.

3. Audit Authority

The Financial Audit Committee, which is an independent body of the General Secretariat of Fiscal Policy within the Ministry of Finance, shall act as the Audit Authority. The General Director for Management and Control of EU Co-financed Programmes shall be the Head of the Audit Authority.

The roles and responsibilities of the Audit Authority are stipulated in the Regulation, in particular Article 4.6 thereof.

The Audit Authority shall be functionally independent of the National Focal Point and the Certifying Authority.

4. National public entity responsible for the preparation and submission of irregularities reports

The National Focal Point shall be responsible for the preparation and submission of irregularities reports.

The roles and responsibilities of the National Focal Point related to the preparation and submission of irregularities reports are stipulated in the Regulation, in particular Article 11.3 thereof.

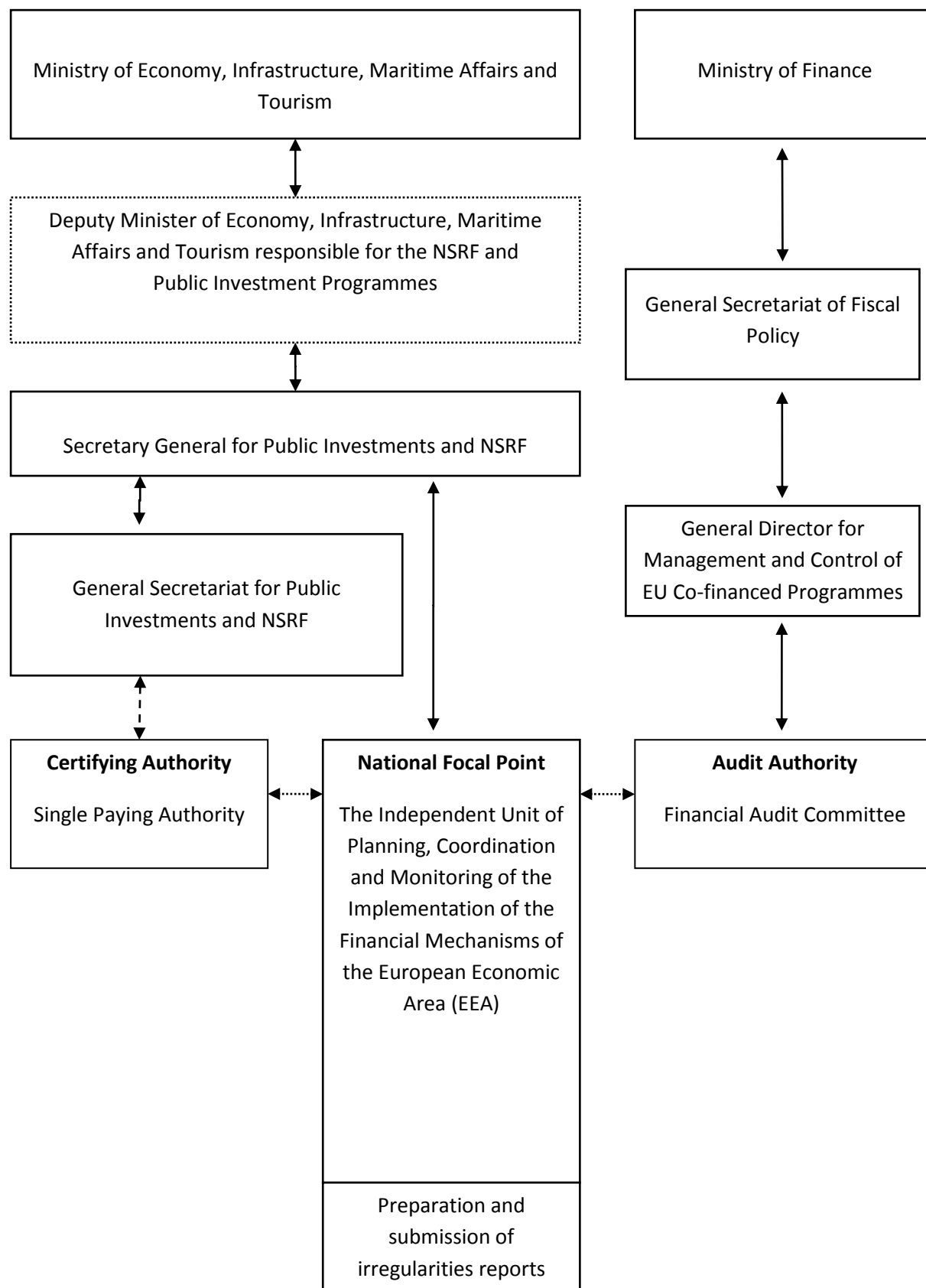
5. Monitoring Committee

The Monitoring Committee shall be established within six months of the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding. Its role is stipulated in the Regulation, in particular Article 4.4 thereof.

6. Strategic Report and annual meetings

In accordance with Article 2.2 of the Regulation, the National Focal Point shall annually submit to the FMC a Strategic Report on the implementation of the EEA Financial Mechanism 2009-2014 in the Beneficiary State. The Parties shall endeavour to hold the annual meeting in the month of October every year.

7. Organigram



Implementation framework

In accordance with Article 2.1 of the Regulation, the Parties to this Memorandum of Understanding have agreed on an implementation framework outlined in this annex.

1. Financial parameters of the implementation framework

Hellenic Republic	EEA FM contribution
Programme area	
Integrated Marine and Inland Water Management	€ 6,495,000
Renewable Energy	€ 9,510,000
Funds for Non-governmental Organisations	€ 7,340,000
Institutional Framework in the Asylum and Migration Sector	€ 24,188,417
Research within Priority Sectors	€ 2,996,311
Local and Regional Initiatives to Reduce National Inequalities and to Promote Social Inclusion	€ 4,265,217
Other allocations	
Technical assistance to the Beneficiary State (Art. 1.9)	€ 454,220
Reserve for projects under FM 2004-09 (Art. 1.10.2)	€ 3,078,835
Fund for bilateral relations at national level (Art. 3.5.1)	€ 317,000
Net allocation to the Hellenic Republic	€ 58,645,000

2. Specific concerns

Bilateral relations between the EEA EFTA States and the Hellenic Republic shall be strengthened with the aim of stimulating long-term cooperation, including through partnership at project level in all programme areas supported.

The appraisal of Programme Proposals will take due account of relevant human rights- and governance-related standards of the Council of Europe (such as those monitored by CPT, GRECO, GRETA, ECRI etc.), including the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

3. Substantive parameters of the implementation framework

The programmes described below are to be prepared and, subject to FMC approval, implemented in the Beneficiary State.

A. Programme Area: Integrated marine and inland water management

Programme: Integrated marine and inland water management

Objective: Good environmental status in European marine and inland waters

Programme Operator: Special Agency for Coordination of Environmental Projects within the Ministry of Reconstruction of Production, Environment and Energy

Pre-defined project: "Implementation of an integrated marine monitoring programme"

Specific concerns: Further details of the pre-defined project shall be decided upon in the programme proposal.

B. Programme Area: Renewable energy

Programme: Renewable energy

Objective: Increased share of renewable energy in energy use

Programme Operator: Centre for Renewable Energy Sources and Saving (CRESS)

C. Programme Area: Funds for Non-Governmental Organisations

Programme: Fund for Non-governmental Organisations

Objective: Strengthened civil society development and enhanced contribution to social justice, democracy and sustainable development

Programme Operator: The Financial Mechanism Office is entrusted with operating the programme in line with Article 5.13 of the Regulation.

Specific concerns: The specific needs of migrants and Roma shall be addressed.

D. Programme Area: Institutional Framework in the Asylum and Migration Sector

Two programmes shall be implemented under this programme area. € 12,333,375 (50.99%) shall be allocated to Programme (1) and € 11,855,042 (49.01%) to Programme (2).

(1) Programme: Address urgent needs for the reception and screening of new arrivals and for the accommodation of vulnerable groups. Assistance to voluntary returns.

Objective: Ensure the existence of a functioning national migration management system that safeguards the right to seek asylum and gives special attention to the situation for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC)

Expected outcome: Well-functioning asylum system in place enabling asylum-seekers to bring forward their claim for international protection, have their claim processed in due time, and be offered accommodation during processing of their case, or to return voluntary to their country of origin

Programme Operator: The Financial Mechanism Office is entrusted with operating the programme in line with Article 5.13 of the Regulation.

Donor programme partner: The Norwegian Directorate of Immigration (UDI)

<i>Specific concerns:</i>	The programme shall have two components: a) The programme shall provide grants to fund the running cost of reception centres run by NGOs. The NGOs shall be selected through an open call. The FMO shall contract a fund operator to run this programme component. b) Two pre-defined projects (see below). The programme shall be 100 percent funded by the EEA Financial Mechanism 2009-2014.
<i>Pre-defined projects:</i>	1) Voluntary returns of asylum seekers shall be assisted by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM). The IOM is the Project Promoter. 2) Grants to the UNHCR in order for the organisation to be able to continue its support to the Greek authorities in implementing the Action Plan on Migration Management. The UNHCR is the Project Promoter.
<i>(2) Programme:</i>	Capacity building of national asylum and migration management systems
<i>Objective:</i>	Ensure the existence of a functioning national migration management system that safeguards the right to seek asylum and gives special attention to the situation for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC)
<i>Expected outcomes:</i>	Strengthened institutional framework to ensure legal protection and care for the most vulnerable group of migrants, namely unaccompanied children Well-functioning asylum system in place, enabling asylum-seekers to bring forward their claim for international protection, have their claim processed in due time and be offered accommodation during processing of their case, or to return voluntary to their country of origin
<i>Programme Operator:</i>	European and Development Programmes Division within the Ministry of Interior and Administrative Reconstruction
<i>Donor programme partner:</i>	The Norwegian Directorate of Immigration (UDI)
<i>Specific concerns:</i>	The programme shall address the specific needs for first reception centres / screening centres including the provision of medical care for new arrivals.

E. Programme Area: Research within Priority Sectors

<i>Programme:</i>	Diversity, inequalities and social inclusion
<i>Objective:</i>	Enhanced research-based knowledge development in the Beneficiary States
<i>Programme Operator:</i>	The General Secretariat for Research and Technology / Ministry of Culture, Education and Religious Affairs
<i>Specific concerns:</i>	The research programme intends to address cultural diversity, economic and gender-based inequality and questions related

to social inclusion (programme areas ‘Local and Regional Initiatives to Reduce National Inequalities and to promote Social Inclusion’; Mainstreaming Gender Equality and Promoting Work-Life Balance’; and ‘Promotion of Diversity in Culture and Arts within European Cultural Heritage’).

1-2% of the programme cost shall be used for mobility of researchers and PhD students and to facilitate their return to their home institution.

F. Programme Area: Local and Regional Initiatives to Reduce National Inequalities and to Promote Social Inclusion

Programme: Solidarity and Social Inclusion in Greece

Objective: Strengthened social and economic cohesion at national, regional and local levels.

Expected outcome: Regions and urban areas are cooperating in the fields of public and private services, and business development and innovation, to stimulate social and economic development.

Programme Operator: The Financial Mechanism Office is entrusted with operating the programme in line with Article 5.13 of the Regulation.

Pre-defined projects:

- 1) “Tackling poverty and social marginalization”
 The Project Promoter shall be KYADA under the Municipality of Athens.
- 2) “Supporting Solidarity Now”
 The Project Promoter shall be the Open Society Foundation.

4. Projects under the EEA Financial Mechanism 2004-2009 funded through the reserve referred to in paragraph 2 of Article 1.10 of the Regulation

Name and number of project	Amount from reserve
EL0016 – Care services for disadvantaged families	€ 258,244
EL0022 – Protection and rehabilitation of water and forest resources of the prefecture of Rudopi	€ 442,460
EL0026 – Sea water desalination unit at the island Agathonissi, using RES for power supply and simultaneous heating of public buildings	€ 69,080
EL0031 - Improving the Reclamation and Reuse of the Organic Fraction of Municipal Solid Wastes in Agriculture and Environmental Applications	€ 307,585
EL0035 - Pilot Integrated Intervention: Fire Protection and Regeneration of Afflicted Areas in the Prefecture of Messinia	€ 356,630
EL0040 - Development and implementation of tools towards and integrated coastal zone management of Thermaikos Gulf: pilot implementation in the west coastal zone	€ 207,174

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EL0042 – Establishment of the historical medical museum of the prefecture of Chios	€ 130,773
EL0047 - Restoration of the forests on Mount Parnonas and conservation guidelines for Mount Taygetos in Lakonia	€ 166,131
EL0054 – Rehabilitation of Cultural Neighbourhood – Landscaping gardening, restoration of buildings and conservation of Byzantine Walls of Thessaloniki	€ 347,216
EL0059 - Restoration of the mother superior’s quarters and refectory of the holy monastery of the “Dormition of the Virgin” Kechrovouni Tinos	€ 150,858
EL0067 - Evaluation of the biosafety of child food of animal origin in Greece	€ 53,421
EL0070 - Greece – International School of Culture and Communication	€ 65,782
EL0075 - Innovation center of Crete: emphasizing the management of natural resources	€ 219,406
EL0081 - Development of an Expert system for data collection and processing, focusing on early diagnosis and therapy of Neurodegenerative Diseases (Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, Myasthenia)	€ 162,847
EL0086 – Scholarship Mobility Fund (managed by NTUA)	€ 141,228
Total amount	3,078,835