

SMALL GRANT SCHEME CALL FOR PROPOSALS
LOCAL DEVELOPMENT, POVERTY REDUCTION AND ROMA INCLUSION
(SK - ROMA INCLUSION AND EMPOWERMENT)
 Norway Grants 2014 – 2021
SLOVAKIA

1. BASIC DATA AND CONDITIONS

The objective of the call is to support capacity-building of smaller local organisations through the implementation of grassroots initiatives and the replication and enhancement of proven good practices in the field of local development and the social inclusion of marginalised Roma communities¹ in fields of Health, Education, Employment, Housing, and Non-discrimination, with primary focus on **Non-discrimination**.

Call launching:	18 November 2020
Call closure:	01 March 2021, 23:59 CET
Call number:	LDI03
Programme outcome(s):	Social inclusion of marginalized Roma communities enhanced
Programme output(s):	Services to marginalized Roma communities provided Capacities of organisations active in social inclusion of marginalised Roma communities increased
Maximum grant to be applied for:	EUR 200,000
Minimum grant to be applied for:	EUR 25,000
Co-financing:	For public sector entities and non-governmental organisations ² , co-financing is not required. At least 10% for social partners ^{3,4} and other non-for-profit organizations. At least 15% for private sector entities and other entities.
Total allocation:	EUR 1,247,059
Announced by:	Ministry of Investments, Regional Development and Informatization of the Slovak Republic
Eligible applicants:	In accordance with Article 7.2.1 of the Regulation on implementation of the Norwegian Financial Mechanism (“the Regulation”), i.e.: Any entity, public or private, commercial or non-commercial and non-governmental organisations, established as a legal person in the Slovak Republic are considered eligible project promoters.

¹ For the purpose of this call, a marginalised Roma community is a community (concentration) listed in the Atlas of Roma Communities, either in its version from 2013 or in its more recent versions from 2019.

² For the purposes of the call “Non-governmental organization” (hereinafter referred to as NGO) is defined as a non-profit organization established as a legal entity, having a non-commercial purpose, independent off local, regional and central government, public entities, political parties and commercial organizations. Religious institutions and political parties are not considered NGOs.

³ For the purposes of the call “Social partners” are defined as representatives of employers’ organizations and trade unions.

⁴ In case of social partners (or NGOs, if applicable), in-kind contribution in the form of voluntary work may constitute up to 100% of the co-financing.

Eligible partners:	In accordance with Article 7.2.2 of the Regulation, i.e.: Any public or private entity, commercial or non-commercial, as well as non-governmental organisations established as a legal person either in Norway, Beneficiary States ⁵ or a country outside the European Economic Area that has a common border with the respective Beneficiary State ⁶ , or any international organisation or body or agency thereof, actively involved in, and effectively contributing to, the implementation of a project, are considered eligible project partners.
Further conditions:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Projects must include cost-efficient and sustainable measures reflecting at least one out of the five areas (Health, Housing, Education, Employment, Non-discrimination). The area of Non-discrimination is mandatory and must be included in any of the supported projects. 2. Projects must include activities replicating proven good practices previously carried out in marginalized Roma communities. 3. Projects must include grassroots initiatives led by Roma or directly supporting Roma inclusion. 4. Multi-stakeholder partnerships⁷ of entities / actors active in the social inclusion of marginalised Roma communities shall be established or supported under the projects. 5. The mandatory attachments to the Grant Application are: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) the Budget, b) Questionnaire. 6. This call is primarily intended to support soft measures, not hard measures⁸ such as infrastructure. 7. Projects shall be implemented in line with applicable state aid rules.
Funding source(s):	Norway Grants and State Budget of the Slovak Republic

2. EXPECTATIONS AND RESULTS FRAMEWORK

The main ambition of this Call is to support local interventions close to/within the marginalised Roma communities. The scheme may foster the sustainability of institutions/activities originally funded in other projects (supported by EEA/Norway Grants or other public sources) and support capacity of local stakeholders, as well as to allow for replication and/or enhancement of outputs from these projects, provided that the intervention areas of support (Health, Education, Employment, Housing and Non-discrimination) are complied with. Projects shall actively engage Roma into implementation responding to the needs of the marginalized Roma community and promoting the partnership principle.

⁵ For the full list of the Beneficiary States consult the document Agreement on the Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2014-2021

https://eur-lex.europa.eu/resource.html?uri=cellar:02eed2b7-da51-11e5-8fea-01aa75ed71a1.0011.02/DOC_3&format=PDF

⁶ Ukraine

⁷ Multi-stakeholder means partnership between organisations from different sector (public sector, civil society sector, private sector etc.).

⁸ For the purposes of the Programme the infrastructure (hard measures) are defined as any activities that require a building permit/a building announcement or purchase of buildings or estates.

It is expected that at least 400 Roma living in a marginalised Roma community(ies) will be provided with services under the projects. It is also expected that the mutual relationships among communities (Roma and non-Roma) will improve, the level of mutual respect will increase at the local level, inter alia through the implementation of gap-bridging activities (at least one gap-bridging activity is expected under each project).

The supported projects shall implement **cost-efficient** and **sustainable** measures. Therefore, projects should primarily be based on the replication and/or enhancement of proven good practices.

Establishment of a new or support of an existing service centre⁹ providing services to a marginalized Roma community (including Community Centre¹⁰) is an optional part of the project. Costs on infrastructure, if any, should primarily be focused on smaller scale repairs.

Projects supported under this Programme contribute to the Programme Objective defined as *“Strengthened social and economic cohesion”*. Projects supported under this Call contribute to Programme Outcome defined as *“Social inclusion of marginalized Roma communities enhanced and to two outputs 2.1 Services to marginalized Roma communities provide and 2.2 Capacities of organisations active in social inclusion of marginalised Roma communities increased.*

In the Application Form, applicants are obliged to set baseline and target values for the following Programme Indicators¹¹:

Outcome indicators:

- Number of Roma people¹² using supported services¹³ (disaggregated by gender, age)
- Share of people living in the marginalised Roma communities in project intervention area receiving services

Output Indicators:

- Number of joint activities between Roma and non-Roma. This is an optional indicator.
- Number of Roma people working in the centres. This is an optional indicator.
- Number of marginalized Roma communities provided with services. Marginalized Roma community has to be supported under each project. Any support, including advocacy, awareness-raising activities, outreach, citizen activism etc. provided to the marginalized Roma community is considered services for the purpose of this call and indicator.

⁹ For the purpose of this Call, Service Centre shall mean a facility or set of facilities in which the services for Roma will be provided.

¹⁰ As defined under the Act no 448/2008 Coll. on Social Services.

¹¹ The definitions of the indicators are stated in the Guideline for applicants.

¹² Roma living in a marginalised Roma community(ies) are meant.

¹³ For the purpose of this Call, services shall mean any support, including advocacy, awareness-raising activities, outreach, citizen activism etc. provided to the marginalized Roma communities.

- Number of entities/actors active in the social inclusion¹⁴ of marginalised Roma communities supported. At least two entities/actors active in the social inclusion of marginalised Roma communities shall be supported under each project.
- Number of good practices replicated in marginalised Roma communities. At least one good practice in marginalised Roma communities shall be replicated under each project.
- Number of multi-stakeholder partnerships established or supported¹⁵. Within all projects supported a multi-stakeholder partnership shall be established or supported.

No baseline values are required for output indicators, as all of them should automatically be set to zero.

The full results framework of the programme is listed in the Annex I to the Programme Agreement for financing the Programme "Local development, Poverty Reduction and Roma Inclusion" concluded between Slovakia and Norway and published at www.eeagrants.sk.

3. SELECTION CRITERIA AND PRIORITISED PROJECTS

Priority shall be given to:

- Projects implementing **cost efficient** and **sustainable** measures and applying integrated approach (i.e. addressing more than one thematic area of intervention among health, education, employment, housing and non-discrimination components),
- Projects with more diverse structure of measures (components) and stakeholders,
- Projects focused on children and youth,
- Projects the content of which has been consulted and developed together with the Roma community,
- Projects the scope of which is implemented by Roma stakeholders,
- Projects that follow up or build up on the already existing initiatives and good practices and are in line with community needs,
- Projects involving marginalised Roma community located in one of the Least Developed Districts¹⁶,
- Projects implemented in partnership with entities from Norway,
- Projects with high quality multi-stakeholders cooperation,
- Projects with sustainable grassroots initiatives, mobilising individuals from the Roma marginalised community and working towards systemic change.

¹⁴ The area of social inclusion includes increasing the employment and educational level of members of the marginalized Roma communities and improving their conditions with regard to the solutions in the area of education, housing, work, health, culture and language; and improvement of overall social conditions, environment and rational use of resources.

¹⁵ Multi-stakeholder means partnership between organisations from different sector (public sector, civil society sector, private sector etc.).

¹⁶ For the purpose of this Call, Least Developed Districts are those districts that were listed on the List of the Least Developed Districts issued in the quarter in which the Project Application was submitted. They are also listed on the website <https://www.nro.vicpremier.gov.sk/>.

It is highly unlikely that one project will meet all the priorities of this Programme. It is therefore highly recommended to focus on the priorities resulting from your needs. The aim of the Programme and the Call is to support good quality projects, not projects including all the priorities without appropriate quality. For the success of the whole Programme, it is important that some projects contribute to certain priorities and other projects contribute to different ones.

Selection criteria, reflecting the above mentioned priorities, have been published along with the Call.

4. ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

The project grant should primarily be used for **Non-discrimination activities, such as:**

- advocacy, awareness-raising and outreach to citizens,
- citizen activism, volunteering and civic participation,
- countering hate speech (antigypsyism and racism against Roma), including support to networks working with hate crime victims,
- networking between NGOs, public and private sector entities in order to enhance the local situation,
- civic education and trainings, working with citizens, participation in local decision-making,
- activities focused on empowerment of Roma girls and women,
- prevention of all forms of violence,
- activities focused on equal treatment, desegregation and non-discriminatory practices in diverse spheres of live of people living in marginalised Roma communities,
- community research and analysis to inform local and regional policy-makers about the situation in a particular marginalised Roma community,
- intercultural dialogue, including platforms for minority/majority interaction, dialogue between generations.

Synergy with other areas of the Programme (Health, Education, Employment, Housing) is encouraged and prioritised.

Within all projects, surveys shall be conducted at the beginning and at the end of the project, in order to identify the following baseline and target values:

- “Share of majority population in intervention area accepting Roma”

Project Promoters shall follow instructions of the Programme Operator in this regard.

The Programme Operator monitors the situation with COVID-19 and responds to the current situation. The Programme Operator duly considers "force majeure" cases and acts within its limits and conditions of implementation in the Beneficiary State. An appropriate help and flexibility will be taken in order to

continue with smooth and successful project implementation. More information can be found on www.eeagrants.sk.

The Programme Operator strongly advises the applicants to take the potential situation when the COVID-19 pandemic will still not be over at the time of project implementation into account, when developing the Project Application and to consider, as part of the project risks, this potential situation and the ways in which the project will mitigate the risks related to it.

5. ELIGIBLE EXPENDITURES

Except for the so-called “excluded expenditures” listed in Article 8.7 of the Regulation, all types of expenditures may be eligible, provided that they meet the conditions listed in this Call and in Article 8.2, 8.3 and 8.5 of the Regulation¹⁷.

Unless a later date is provided in the project contract, expenditures are eligible as of the date on which the Programme Operator decides to award the project grant. The Programme Operator shall in the same decision fix the final date of eligibility which shall be no later than either one year after the scheduled completion of the project or the date referred to in paragraph 3 Article 8.13 (currently 30 April 2024) of the Regulation, whichever is earlier.

The inclusion of an expenditure item in a project budget approved by the Programme Operator cannot be considered as a prerequisite of its eligibility.

Costs on infrastructure, if any, should primarily be focused on smaller scale repairs.

The grant rate of the projects is up to 100% in case of public sector entities and NGOs, up to 90% in case of social partners and other non-for-profit organizations, and up to 85% for private sector entities and other entities, provided that the state aid rules have been complied with.

In case of projects where the Project Promoter is a social partner (or NGO, if applicable), in-kind contribution in the form of voluntary work may, in accordance with Article 6.4.5 of the Regulation, constitute up to 100% of the co-financing.

For the purpose of this Call, equipment¹⁸ shall be considered costs of non-current (long-term) tangible and intangible assets according to the applicable accounting standards of the country where the applicant and/or project partner is established and according to generally accepted accounting principles.

Project partners from Norway and other eligible project partners apart the project partners from Slovakia may opt to submit proof of expenditure by way of an independent audit report. It is highly

¹⁷ The more information can also be found in the [Guideline for Applicants](#).

¹⁸ Where new or second hand equipment is purchased, only the portion of the depreciation corresponding to the duration of the project and the rate of actual use for the purposes of the project may be considered eligible expenditure. The entire purchase price of that equipment may only be eligible in case the PO determines that the equipment is an integral and necessary component for achieving the outcomes of the project by way of exception from the rule.

recommended that project partners from Norway or Beneficiary States indeed opt to use this possibility and that they indicate the costs related to these audits into the Budget. For further information, see Article 8.12 of the Regulation.

6. RECOMMENDED MILESTONES AND TIMEFRAME

The Programme Operator highly recommends that the projects comply with the following time-frame:

Event/Milestone	Expected date
Call closure	March 2021
Project contract signed	November 2021
Project activities started	December 2021
Project completed	December 2023

As indicated in the table above, the entire selection process will last approximately 9 months.

7. PARTNERSHIP

Partner is a legal entity actively involved in, and effectively contributing to, the implementation of a project. It shares with the applicant a common economic or social goal which is to be realised through the implementation of the project.

Entities established by the public sector applicant or its public sector partner as their budgetary or contributory organisations, or in a similar relation, should not be involved in the project as partners. However, it is highly advisable that these institutions are listed in the project as cooperating entities. In this case, it is essential that the related expenditure borne by the public sector applicant or its public sector partner that do not represent the **final** use of public resources (such as re-granting in the form of subventions/donations or other transfers) must be supported by receipted invoices or alternatively by accounting documents of equivalent probative value declaring the **final use** of public resources.

An example of suitable partnership is a situation in which the applicant is a Community Centre, another one is a school and another one is a municipality or an NGO running a leisure time centre or summer camps. A poor example of a partnership is a situation in which the partner provides services for the applicant. This, in fact, is not a partnership within the meaning of this Call; this would be a business relation. Project partners are expected to actively contribute to the development of the Project Application, and this as well as their role in the project should be very clearly reflected and elaborated in the Project Application.

In a working partnership, the partner has its own budget and activities he is responsible to meet. However, it is very important to realise that the applicant is responsible for all commitments and irregularities of the partner in relation to the Programme Operator.

Partnership statement, letter of intent or other similar documents proving the partner's interest in participating in the project shall be submitted along with the Project Application. The document should be signed and submitted as a scanned version.

After the Project Application is approved, draft **partnership agreement** shall be submitted. The partnership agreement shall be drafted in line with the point 7.7 of the Regulation. The draft agreement is subject to the Programme Operator's screening before it is concluded. **It is neither necessary nor recommended to enter into partnership agreement before the project is approved!** Signed partnership statement, letter of intent or other similar document shall be seen as sufficient expression of interest of the applicant and its partner to jointly implement the project.

The number of partners receiving support under the project is limited to 4. Other entities involved in the project can be mentioned in the Project Application as cooperating entities.

Partnership with Donor entities

One of the two main objectives of the Norway Grants is to strengthen the cooperation with the Norwegian entities. Partnership projects with organisations from Norway are strongly encouraged. Under this call, any public or private entity, for profit or not-for-profit, as well as non-governmental organisations established as legal entities in Norway, are eligible to apply as donor project partners.

Project partners from Norway shall be actively involved in the development of the project and effectively contribute to its implementation. The eligible activities in cooperation with the project partner from Norway within the project are e.g. skills sharing, examples of good practise and know-how transfer, joint workshops, study trips, studies and other bilateral activities supporting the objective, outcome and outputs achievement.

To facilitate the identification and establishment of partnerships between Slovak and Norwegian entities, the Programme Operator plans to open for the possibility to apply for a grant. These activities will be able to be funded under the Programme Bilateral Fund, which will provide small grants up to **2,500 EUR**, covering mainly the related travel costs.

Please, be aware that:

1. It is necessary to apply for these funds before the expenses have been incurred.
2. The grants will be disbursed in the form of reimbursement.

When searching for a suitable partner in Norway, the applicants may use one of the following tools:

1. Sending an inquiry with short description of the project to eeagrants@vlada.gov.sk. Such request will be shared with the Royal Norwegian Embassy to Slovakia.
2. Direct contact with entities listed on the List of potential partners, published at [directlink¹⁹](#).

¹⁹ It is recommended to complete the Norwegian partners search form provided in the call Annexes if you contact the identified potential partners or the Programme Operator.

Further information will be able to be found in the **Call for bilateral activities**, to be published at www.eeagrants.sk²⁰.

8. SELECTION PROCEDURES

The project evaluation and award of grants shall be in accordance with Article 7.4 of the Regulation.

The Programme Operator shall be responsible for project evaluation and for the award of grants.

The Programme Operator shall review the Project Applications for compliance with administrative and eligibility criteria. Applicants whose Project Applications are rejected at this stage shall be informed and given a reasonable time to appeal that decision.

Each Project Application that meets the administrative and eligibility criteria shall be reviewed by two experts: one of these experts shall be appointed by the Programme Operator and the other shall be appointed by the International Partner Organisation (IPO). The experts shall be impartial and independent of the Programme Operator and the Selection Committee.

The experts shall separately score the project according to the selection criteria published with the call for proposals. For the purposes of ranking the projects, the average of the scores awarded by the experts shall be used.

If the difference between the scores given by the two experts is more than 30% of the higher score, a third expert shall be commissioned by the Programme Operator to score the project independently. In such cases the average score of the two closest scores shall be used for the ranking of the projects.

The Programme Operator shall establish a Selection Committees that shall recommend the projects to be funded.

The Selection Committee shall consist of at least 3 persons possessing the relevant expertise. At least three of them shall be external to the Programme Operator and the IPO. The IPO, the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the National Focal Point shall be invited to participate in the meetings of the Selection Committee as observers.

The Programme Operator shall provide the Selection Committee with a list of the ranked projects. The Selection Committee shall review the ranked list of projects. It may modify the ranking of the projects and stipulate conditions for support in justified cases. The Selection Committee can mainly give priority to the projects enabling to achieve the target values of the indicators, to cover the certain geographical regions lagging behind; and clearly defined less privileged target groups. The justification for the modifications shall be detailed in the minutes of the meeting of the Selection Committee. If such a modification results in a project's rejection, the affected applicant shall be informed in writing about

²⁰ The call for bilateral activities will be launched only if there are suitable conditions for travelling. Please follow the Programme Operator's web page www.eeagrants.sk for the information.

the justification for the modification. The Selection Committee shall submit the list of recommended projects to the Programme Operator.

The Programme Operator shall verify that the selection process has been conducted in accordance with the Regulation and that the recommendations from the Selection Committee comply with the rules and objectives of the programme. Following such verification, the Programme Operator shall, based on the recommendation of the Selection Committee, make a decision on which projects shall be supported. Prior to making such decision, an on the spot visit may be carried out by the Programme Operator when construction works or purchase of special equipment are foreseen in the project. If, in exceptional cases, the Programme Operator modifies the decision of the Selection Committee or suggests modification of the project, it shall inform the Selection Committee and the applicants affected and provide them with a justification.

The Programme Operator shall notify the applicants about the result of the selection process within a reasonable time and publish the results.

9. FINANCING AND REPORTING

Payments of the project grant shall take the form of advance payment, interim payments and a final payment. The level of advance payment to projects shall be set out in the project contract. The maximum level of advance payment shall be linked to the project budget and duration as follows:

Project implementation duration ²¹	Advance payment	1 st Interim payment	2 nd Interim payment	3 rd Interim payment	Final payment ²²
Less than 24 months	20%	40%	35%	-	5%
24-36 months	15%	30%	25%	25%	5%

The advance payment shall be paid following the signature of the project contract. Subsequent payments shall be paid after the approval of project interim reports. The final payment shall be paid after approval of the final report.

An advance payment, if any, of a percentage of the total grant amount shall be paid within 15 working days from the submission of a request or within the period set in the project contract.

The interim payments shall be paid within 1 month after the approval of project interim reports.

²¹ The project contract may set suspensive conditions related to advance, interim and/or final payments. In justified cases, at the Programme Operator's discretion, a project promoter may receive extraordinary payments to ensure sufficient funds for the projects during the implementation so as to avoid any liquidity problems, provided that the Programme Operator has sufficient capacity to proceed with these payments.

²² Retention may be applied at the end of the implementation or pro rata from each advance payment and interim payments.

Upon approval of the final project report a final balance payment, if applicable, shall be made within 1 month.

10. STATE AID

The Programme Operator shall, in line with Article 8.16 of the Regulation, ensure that any public support under the Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2014-2021 complies with the procedural and substantive state aid rules applicable at the time when the public support is granted. Based on an overall assessment of the measures to be implemented within the call, these are of purely local nature and as such are not liable to affect trade between Member States, irrespective of the legal form of the applicant. As a result, there is no need to examine the other cumulative conditions for the existence of State aid within the meaning of Article 107(1) TFEU, provided that conditions listed in the template of the Questionnaire attached to this Call are met.

The Programme Operator may, prior to the award of the grant, request information similar to those listed in Annexes 1 to 3 of the [Methodological Guidance on Cases not Subject to State Aid](#) Rules, issued by the Antimonopoly Office of the Slovak Republic.

For more information, the applicant may consult the documents published by the Antimonopoly Office of the SR at <https://www.antimon.gov.sk/metodicke-usmernenia/>.

Before approving a project application, the Programme Operator will carry out a state aid test.

11. PROJECT APPLICATION SUBMISSION AND EVALUATION

Project Applications shall be prepared in English and submitted electronically via the [web application](#) until the date and time of the call closure specified in Chapter 1 of this Call (Basic data and conditions). The Application Form can be found at [here](#) and the Guideline for Applicants [here](#).

The following mandatory attachments shall be submitted along with Project Application:

1. Budget (template is attached to this Call);
2. Questionnaire (template is attached to this Call);

The date and time of the submission of the Project Application is identical to the date and time of its receipt by the server of the Programme Operator.

The Project Application does not need to be signed. Signature shall be required prior to the conclusion of the project contract.

The Project Application and the Budget should be submitted as XLS or XLSX files. Other annexes should be submitted as PDF files to prevent accidental loss of data.

The size of an attachment must not exceed 2MB!

Four optional attachments may be submitted along with the Project Application.

12. FURTHER INFORMATION

Please note that all applicants are required to disclose any consultant involved in the preparation of the Project Application²³ in the Project Application Form.

There is no legal entitlement to the Project Grant.

Before and during preparation of a Project Application the applicant is strongly advised to comply with the following documents, as amended:

- Guideline for Applicants
- Guideline for Project Promoters and Project Partners
- Project contract template

Further recommended documents are:

- Programme Agreement for the financing of the Programme “Local Development, Poverty Reduction and Roma Inclusion”;
- Regulation on the implementation of the Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2014 – 2021;
- Guidelines, instructions and other documents published by the Financial Mechanism Office, National Focal Point and Ministry of Finance of the SR (Certifying Authority).

These documents are published on the websites www.eeagrants.sk / www.norwaygrants.sk and/or www.eeagrants.org. The Programme Operator may also introduce the FAQ section, if relevant.

Link to the website of the National Focal Point with information on how to submit complaint is here: [complaints](#).

The Programme Operator can be contacted for queries by:

- e-mail: eeagrants@vlada.gov.sk (the request needs to be linked to the call – by call code LDI03; questions received by e-mail will be responded within 10 days);
- phone: +421-2-209 25 516.

13. CALL ANNEXES

1. Application Form
2. Budget template
3. Questionnaire
4. Selection Criteria

²³ Staff of the National Focal Point, Programme Operator, DPPs or other programme partners providing general advices on the EEA & Norway Grants programmes as part of their public duties should not be listed on the list of consultants.

5. Selection Committee Statute and Rules of Procedures
6. Norwegian partners search form (not binding)