



Programme preparation process: Concept Note and Programme Agreement

EEA and Norway Grants 2014-2021

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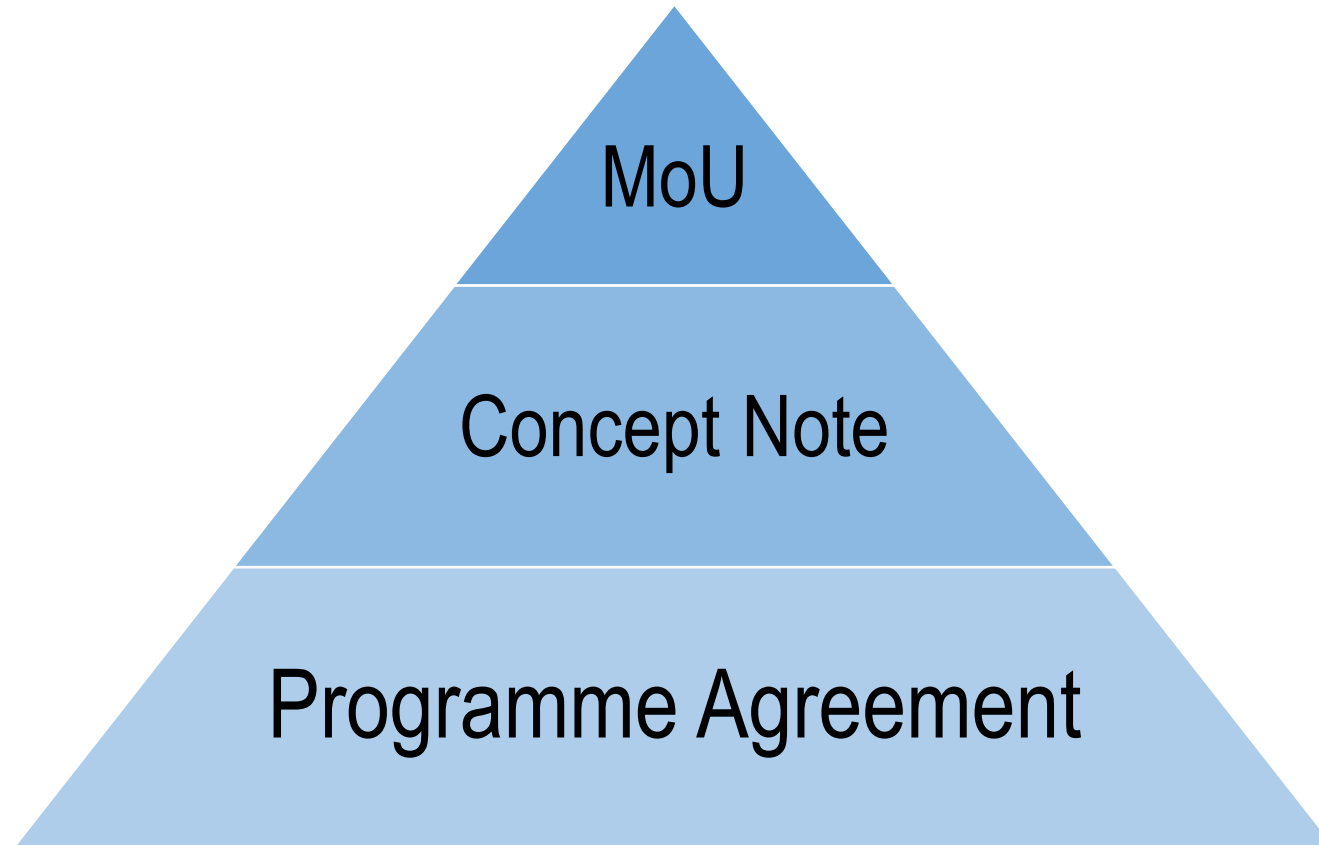
EEA/Norway Grants 2014-21

- Build on the successes of the 2009-2014 period
- Improve what can be done better
 - ✓ Speed up programme development
 - ✓ Reinforce results-based approach



HEADLINE

Level of detail increases from the MoU to the Programme Agreement





Concept note



**CONCISE
COOPERATION
CONSULTATION**

Concept note (WHY?)

- **Quality at Entry -> Good and relevant programmes**
- **Speed up the programme development process**
- **Bottom up approach – Cooperation and consultation – best use of stakeholder expertise**
- **Early identification of risks – results framework**
- **Avoid losing time by getting clarity in the programmes scope and planned results in the head of the process**
- **Good planning/clarity**

Concept note (process/content/what/who)

- Describes the **development process** concept note (**quality at entry**)
- Describes expected contribution of programme to objectives EEA and Norway Grants
- Explains the **challenges/needs addressed and results** (output and outcome) to be achieved (justification)
- Indicates how **special concerns and common values** will be addressed
- Shows **who will benefit** and how
- Describes **bilateral ambitions**

Concept note (process/who)

- Drafted by the PO in cooperation with the FMO and, where relevant, DPP and IPO
- Submitted through the NFP
- Kick-off meeting
- Training, including guidelines
- Stakeholder consultation

Steps NFP for concept note

- **Set goal and goal related tasks** → Art. 6.1: on the basis of the MoU the **PO** shall develop concept note **defining scope and planned results** for each programme
- **Take account of process** → Note that the development is a **consultative** process: the concept note shall be prepared in **cooperation** with the FMO and in **consultation** with relevant stakeholders, in particular DPP and IPOs where relevant (the FMO will facilitate with resources)
- **Communicate with PO on assignment and timeline** → the concept note must be submitted **through the NFP** to the **Donors** within 6 months of the designation of the PO (Art. 5.2)
- **Identify resources needed at and check if these are in place, check progress** → NFP and PO level

Steps PO preparation of the concept note

- Develop plan for concept note including milestones (deliverables)
- Map stakeholders and possible ways of consulting
- Start planning kick – off
- Identify training needs
- Needs assessment in the Programme Area

Stakeholder consultation

- Consultation is a two-way, interactive process.
- Stakeholder consultation offers the space to clarify information, raise issues, discuss ideas and options.
- Consultation mainly follows after establishing the topic/issue and mapping possible stakeholders (assessment of the level of interest/consultation strategy)
- The chosen consultation methods need to take account of ways to provide information to the broader community, and to provide various opportunities for people who have a specific interest in the topic to take part in the consultation (this contributes to having the right means in place to address the issue at stake).

Results framework

- Backbone of any programme – should be drafted before the narrative
- Template provided, as well as step-by-step guidance (Results Guideline)
- No longer pre-defined outcomes – POs define outcomes (not too many)
- Each outcome to have 1 or more outputs
- Logical link between outputs → outcomes → objective is crucial
- Identify risks (though not a formal requirement in the Concept Note, start assessing risk already now, against the results framework)

Concept note (modalities)

- Calls for proposals
- Small Grant Schemes
- Pre-defined Projects (if relevant Annex I CN)
- Financial Instruments (if relevant Annex II CN)
- Financial parameters for projects

Concept Note – Budget

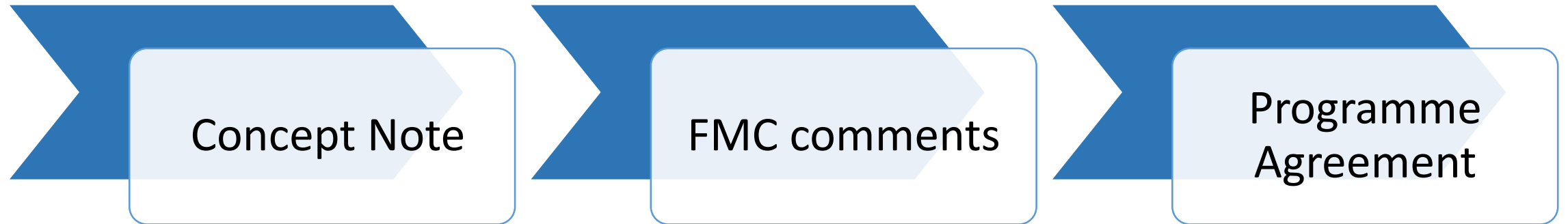
- As in 09-14 programme budget will be towards outcomes
 - Management costs
 - Outcome 1
 - Outcome 2
- Outcomes can be financed from both mechanisms
 - Up to PO to suggest the allocations.
 - Restrictions can be defined in the MoU
- Grant rate can be set for each budget line
 - Normally it should be the same for all unless MoU indicates otherwise

Concept Note – Budget

Defined by PO

PA	Budget heading	EEA Grants	Norway Grants	Total grant	Programme grant rate	Total eligible expenditure
PM	Programme Mgmt	€100,000	€100,000	€200,000	85.00%	€235,294
PA2	Outcome 1	€900,000	€0	€900,000	85.00%	€ 1,058,824
PA4	Outcome 2	€0	€900,000	€900,000	85.00%	€1,058,824
	Total	€1,000,000	€1,000,000	€2,000,000	85.00%	€2,352,941

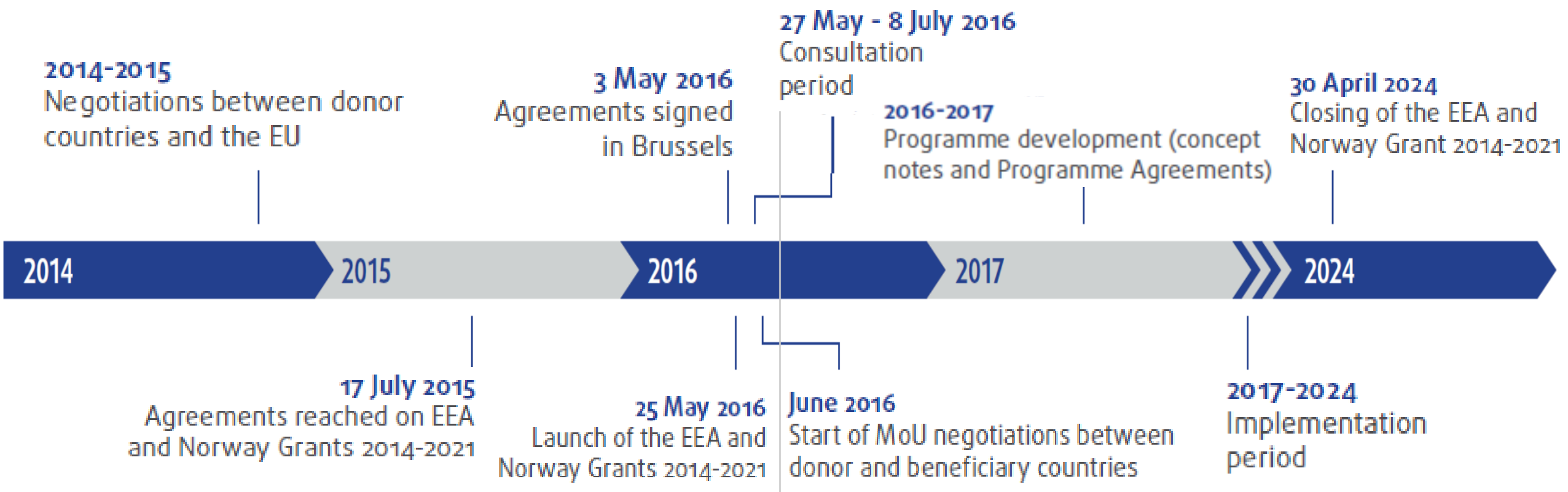
The Concept Note



Process concept note

- **Concept note** is submitted by the **PO** to the **NFP**. The **NFP** submits it to the **Donors**
- **Donors** assesses the concept note
- Any **comments** made by the **Donors** shall be **taken into account** in the further preparation of the programme
- The **Donors can reject the concept note** → re-submission within 2 months from date of rejection
- The **NFP** may – as an alternative and within the same deadline – **propose a different use of the funds** (this must comply with paragraph 6, Art. 6.9)

TIMELINE FOR THE EEA AND NORWAY GRANTS 2014-2021



Process Programme Agreement



- The **FMO** prepares the **draft programme agreement** on the basis of the concept note and the comments of the Donors
- The agreement sets out the **terms and condition of the operation** of the programme as well as the **roles and responsibilities** of the parties
- The **beneficiary country** supplies any **supplementary information** requested (e.g. risk assessment and mitigation analysis, information on management of the programme, where relevant detailed information on pre-defined projects, communication plan)

Process Programme Agreement cont.

- **PA** to be finalised within **6 months** of the date of submission of the concept note
- Donors may **approve or reject** a PA. It may set conditions or require modification
- **PA concluded** between **Donors** and **NFP**

Drafting

- Similar to Programme Agreements 2009-2014
- Information requested for 'due diligence'
- Selected, high-level parameters to be included in PA
- Drafting responsibility of FMO, with input from POs and NFPs

Risk assessment and mitigation analysis

- Risk assessment to be conducted against the programme's results framework
- Risks need to be concrete and not identified in abstract (such as “staff”)
- A concrete response to each risk is to be described (in most cases: mitigation actions)
- Template is provided in the Results Guideline and is mandatory

Communication Plan



- Annex 3 to Regulation
- Communication Plan to be prepared at same time as draft PA
- Only basic information to be included in PA

Information on modalities

- Last chance to further define:
 - ✓ Eligibility of applicants
 - ✓ Eligibility of costs
 - ✓ Eligibility of overheads

- Finalise plans for calls for proposals

Selection of Projects - procedure

- ✓ No set process this time
- ✓ 09-14 procedure presumed to be a good one
- ✓ PO responsible for ensuring selection in line with:
 - ✓ good governance
 - ✓ transparency
 - ✓ equality
 - ✓ efficiency
 - ✓ zero tolerance towards corruption

Selection of Projects – cont.

- ✓ Description of proposed selection procedures
 - Clear description - Experience - Compliance with principles of implementation
- ✓ Clarify involvement of DPPs / IPOs
 - Agree process in case of bilateral calls
- ✓ PA may require specific selection procedure

Programme Management

- Structures
 - ✓ Entities involved
 - ✓ Division of tasks
 - ✓ Programme Partners/Implementing Agencies, if applicable
- Management cost budget
 - ✓ Structured according to PO mgmt. cost eligibility
 - ✓ Include background calculations

Programme Management cont.

- Payments, verification and monitoring
 - ✓ Describe payment flow (based on pre-financing/reimbursement)
 - ✓ Explain how verification of incurred costs will happen
 - ✓ Proof of expenditure requirements, reflect arrangements for donor partners
 - ✓ Monitoring arrangements

Pre-defined Projects

- More in-depth information:
 - ✓ Description of objectives and activities
 - ✓ Entities involved
 - ✓ Detailed budget
 - ✓ Timeline

Financial Instruments

- To be designed and assessed on a case-by-case basis
- All necessary modalities to be reflected in PA
- Identify elements of the Regulation that will not apply

Get prepared!



- Programme Implementation Agreement – NFP to warrant
- MCS (National and Programme level)
- National Regulatory Framework

Thank you!

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