



FINANCE AND GRACE TRAINING

Rodrigo Ubierna, Senior Finance and Control Officer
Egle Puodziukaite, Finance and Control Officer

23 January 2020 Financial Mechanism Office **Agenda**

09:30 - 09:45 Welcome

09:45 - 10:30 Eligibility of expenditures

10:30 – 11.00 Verification of Projects

11:00 - 11:30 Coffee break

11:30 - 12:30 Financial reporting – IFRs and forecast of likely payments

12:30 - 13:45 Lunch Break

13:45 - 14:45 GrACE - training (IFR, forecast of likely payments)

14:45 - 15:30 GrACE exercise – IFR

15:30 - 16:00 Q&A and Wrap-up

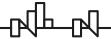
ELIGIBILITY OF EXPENDITURES



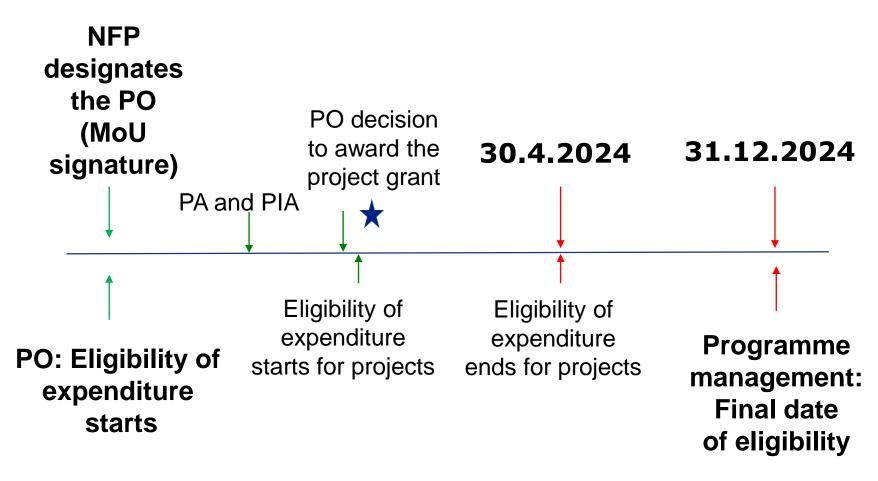
ELIGIBILITY OF EXPENDITURES

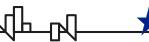
Where to look for the eligibility rules?

- Chapter 8: Eligibility of expenditures
 - ✓ Reg. Art 8.1: Eligible expenditures of a programme
 - ✓ Reg. Art 8.2: General principles
 - ✓ Reg. Art 8.3: Eligible direct expenditures in a project
 - ✓ Reg. Art 8.4: Standard scale of unit cost
 - ✓ Reg. Art 8.5: Indirect cost in projects
 - ✓ Reg. Art 8.8: Fund for bilateral relations
 - ✓ Reg. Art 8.10: Management cost incurred by PO
- PA Annex II Special rules on eligibility of costs
- Applicable national and EU legislation (e.g. tax, social legislation, accounting rules)
- Financial guidance (examples)



ELIGIBILITY OF EXPENDITURES - Timing





Unless a later date is provided in the PA, PIA or project contract

ELIGIBILITY OF EXPENDITURES

Management costs of the PO (art 8.10)

In accordance with the

- i) Regulation
- Proportionate
- Necessary
- Within the management cost budget stated in the Programme Agreement

Payments to projects (8.3)

In accordance with the

- i) Regulation
- ii) PA
- iii) Project contract



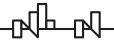
ELIGIBILITY OF EXPENDITURES – Lump sums

Fund for bilateral relations: travel and subsistence allowances (Art 8.8.2)

Travel and subsistence for staff taking part in project (Art 8.3.1)

Proportionality
Based on defined rules
approved by:

- > NFP for BF
- > PO for the projects



ELIGIBILITY OF EXPENDITURES – Indirect cost (Art 8.5)

Actual indirect cost (analytical accounting system)

A flat rate of up to 25% of total direct eligible costs (excluding subcontracting)

A flat rate of up to 15% of the directly eligible staff cost (without calculation)

A flat rate applied to direct eligible costs based on existing methods and corresponding rates...

Specific provisions for international organisations or bodies or agencies

Options available for the POs -> PIA

Options available for the PPs & Partners -> contract, partnership agreement

ELIGIBILITY OF EXPENDITURES – Scales of unit cost (Art 8.4)

1) In accordance with the rules of application of corresponding scales of unit costs applicable in European Union policies for similar type of project of PP or partner

2) In accordance with the rules for application of corresponding scales of unit costs applied under schemes for grants funded entirely by the Beneficiary State where the PP or partner is located, or the Donor State where the dpp is located, for similar types of projects and entities involved

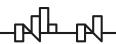


ELIGIBILITY OF EXPENDITURES

Key messages:

- Understand the eligibility rules
- In case of doubt, contact the FMO
- The rules on eligibility of expenditure apply to all cost of the project and not only to the grant amount
- Important to share eligibility information with project promoters and project partners

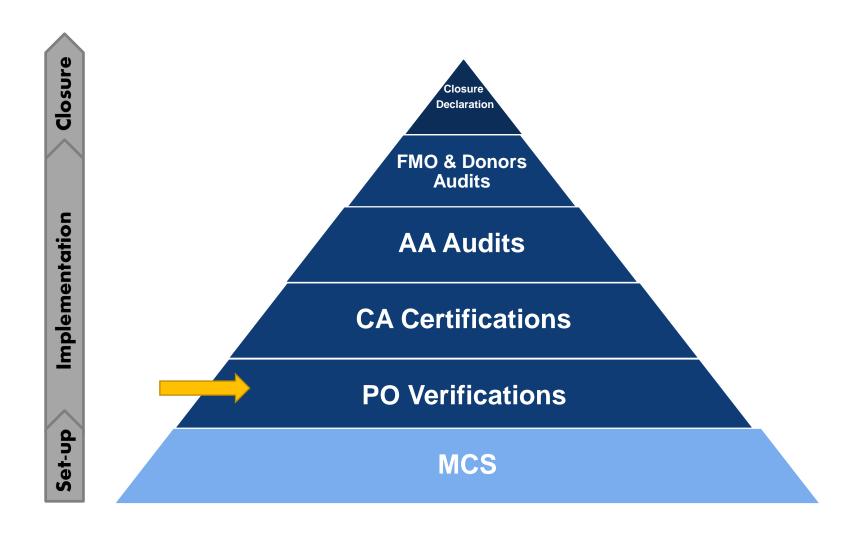




VERIFICATIONS OF PROJECT EXPENDITURE

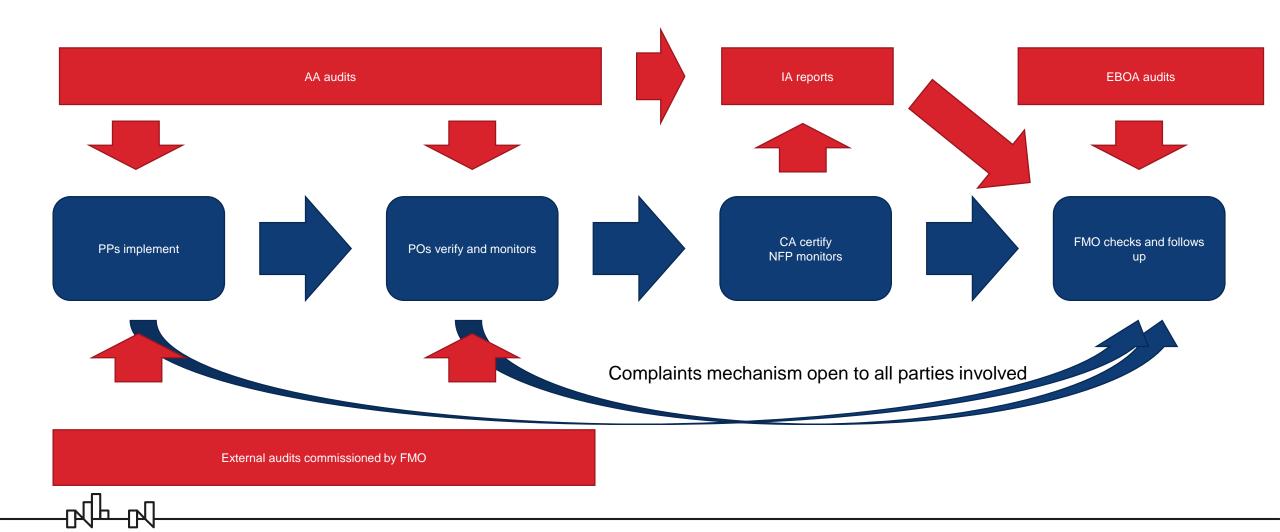


FMs 2014-2021 Assurance Framework





Key Stakeholders in charge of financial management and control



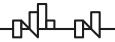
VERIFICATIONS OF PROJECTS

Administrative verifications
(desk checks) in respect of incurred expenditure reported by PPs

- ***** Each financial report submitted by the PP
- **❖** Sampling of transactions/items for detailed checks allowed

On- the-spot verification

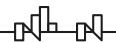
❖ Sampling for the selection of projects and transactions/items for detailed checks allowed



PO: Verifications – desk checks

- ✓ Before approval of the reports
- ✓ Adequacy of supporting documents - audit trail
- ✓ Compliance with the Regulations, the PA as well as the applicable national and EU laws (e.g. legislation on the environment, public procurement and state aid)
- ✓ Compliance of incurred expenditures with all the eligibility rules
- ✓ No double funding



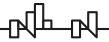


PO: Verifications – on-the-spot checks

On-the-spot verifications should be carried out in order to check in particular:

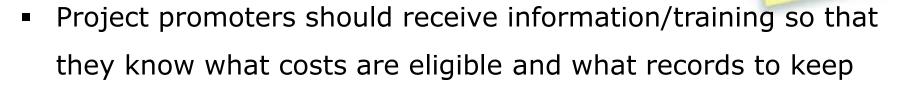
- ✓ The reality/physical existence of the project.
- ✓ Accuracy of information regarding the physical and financial implementation of the project
- ✓ Delivery of the product or service
- ✓ Respect of the rules on publicity and visibility
- ✓ Existence of original supporting documents



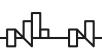


VERIFICATIONS OF PROJECTS

Key messages:



- Give feedback a good open dialogue between the PO and project promoters helps to build trust, identify and overcome risks, and improve delivery.
- Lack of communication is de-motivating.
- Document your verification activities (checklist)
- Sampling methods allowed





VERIFICATIONS OF PROJECTS

Records

Using checklist – Why?

- ✓ Ensures that all relevant aspects are covered in sufficient detail
- ✓ Can be used as an 'aide memoire' particularly in complex areas
- ✓ Enables review and quality control checks
- √ Issues are readily identified
- ✓ Aids reporting, follow-up and closure
- ✓ Avoid asking irrelevant questions
- ✓ Provides an audit trail of the verification process



Coffee break



FINANCIAL REPORTING

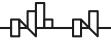


Financial Reporting

What are the PO responsibilities for the financial reporting?



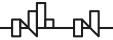
- Interim financial reports (IFRs)
- A <u>forecast</u> of likely payment applications
- Project-specific statistical data to maintain the reporting database;
- Provide the Certifying Authority all necessary information
- Programme Agreement requirements



Where to find information?



- Regulation on the implementation of the Financial Mechanism 2014-2021
- Programme Agreement
- Guidelines and Guidance (Financial Guidance)
- FMO Templates

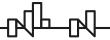


INTERIM FINANCIAL REPORTS



What should the IFRs be based on?

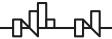
- Reporting on use of funds
- Pre-financing requests for the next period
- Outputs/Outcomes (September IFR)
- Interest earned (March IFR)



What should the IFRs be based on?

Reported incurred expenditure in the IFRs should be on basis of:

- Expenditure incurred directly by the PO on Programme Management
- Payments to projects by the PO under the outcomes
- Recoveries from Projects due to corrections



- Proposed expenditure What amount will be paid by the FMO?
- The amount to be paid ≠ Proposed amount
 - Incurred vs Disbursed to-date
 - Expected amount to be incurred before the next reporting period

		Total
Proposed for period Nov 19 - Apr 20		€ 1,000,000
Amount paid in previous payments	€ 800,000	
Reported incurred Jan 19 - June 19	€ 400,000	
Expected to be incurred Jul 19 - Oct 19	€ 200,000	
- Expected cash balance at the start of period for the proposed expenditure	€ 200,000	€ 200,000
= Amount to be paid		€ 800,000



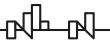
What should the IFRs be based on?

- Outcomes (September IFR)
- Interest earned (March IFR)
- Checklist and Certification



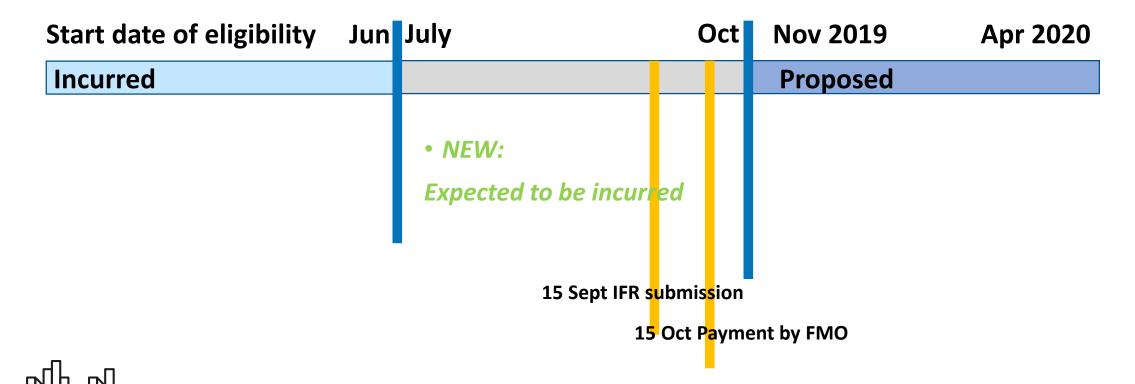
What are the changes in the IFR content?

- Register payment to projects
- Less budget lines to report (Programme preparation costs, Complementary action...)
- Amount to be paid ≠ proposed amount (cash balance taken into account)
- No retention amount applied to each payment
- Report the Interest earned together with the IFRs
- Outcomes section
- Two reporting periods.



What about reporting periods?

Incurred	1.January - 30. June	1. July - 31. December
Proposed	1. November - 30. April	1. May - 31. October
Reporting	15. September	15. March
Payment	15. October	15. April



When will the PO receive funds?

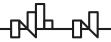
Pre-conditions

- ✓ The FMO acknowledge the management and control systems at National level
- ✓ The programme agreement and programme implementation agreement are signed.

Interim financial reports (IFRs)

- Fixed deadline for reporting and fixed payment dates
- FMO can withhold payments in case of delayed or incomplete reporting

The FMO will transfer the funds to the national account (CA)



FORECAST

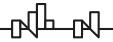


Financial Reporting - Forecast

Why?

- Important for Donor states and FMO budgetary and cashflow planning
- Shall be submitted to the FMO 4 times a year
 - 20th February
 - 20th April (new)
 - 20th September
 - 20th November (new)
- Be realistic!
- Provide info why the forecast has changed since previous estimate
- Each forecast should be updated and reviewed carefully as this input is important for the Donors.

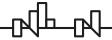




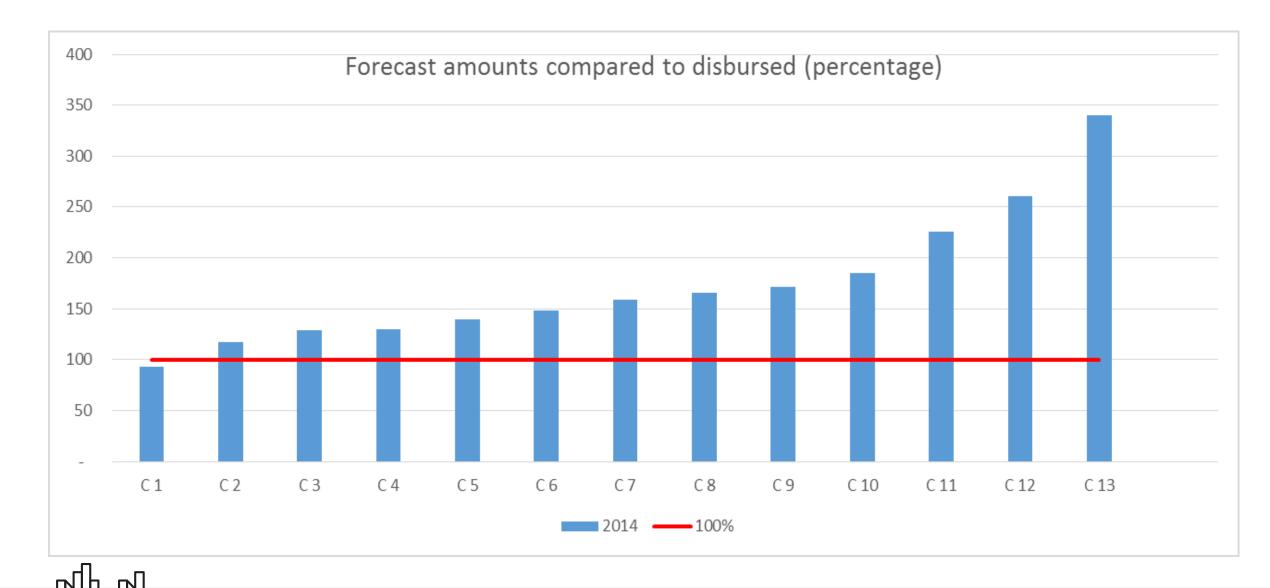
Financial Reporting - Forecast

Format

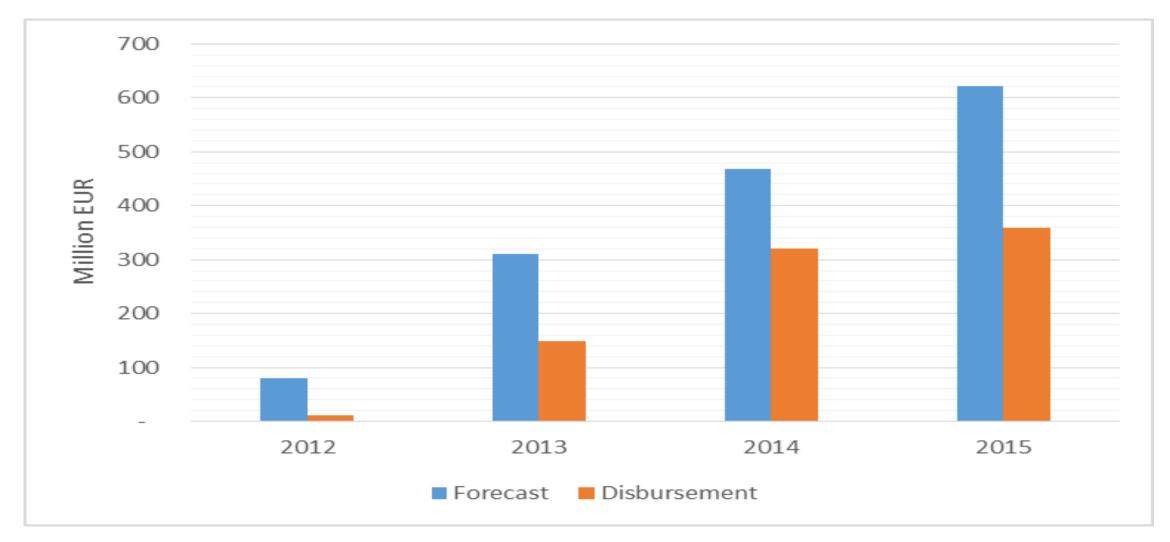
- During the current year the estimated total payment application for that year should be submitted, including already paid amounts in the year.
- Only the amount to be paid by the FMO.
- Several aspects and variables. Should be looked into, e.g.:
 - Paid and incurred amounts year-to-date;
 - Planned/open call(s)
 - Planned disbursements, advance payments
 - Delays during the implementation
 - Financial reporting periods



FINANCIAL REPORTING - FORECAST



FINANCIAL REPORTING - FORECAST







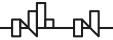
Q&A





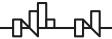
Introduction to GrACE

EEA and Norway Grants 2014-2021



Content

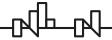
- What is GrACE
- How to access GrACE
- Introduction to main modules
 - Dashboard
 - Grants



What is GrACE

- Grants Administration and Collaboration Environment
- Web-based system accessible through any web-browser
- Used for the management of EEA and Norwegian Financial Mechanisms 2014-2021
- To be used by stakeholders working with the Grants (Donor and Beneficiary State entities and the FMO)





How to Access

https://grace.eeagrants.org/

• <u>First login</u>: you will receive an email with a link to the create password page





Change your password

You can reset your password for your account by completing this form.

Enter new password		
Confirm new password		

Password must meet 3 of the following requirements:

At least **one letter** a, b, c, ... z

At least **one capital letter** A, B, C, ... Z

At least **one number** 0, 1, 2, ... 9

At least **one punctuation symbols** . ,!?'"-:;

At least **one special letter** # \$ % & () ` * + < = > @ ^_{ { | } } ~ \/

Be at least **8 characters**

Submit

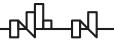




https://grace-demo.eeagrants.org/

IFR - Grace log-in:

- Username: email address
 - Password: demo14-



Grace Training Environment

Login information table

Address: https://grace-demo.eeagrants.org/

Username: email address

• Password: demo14-

Audit Authority

aalatvia@grace.lv

Certifying Authority

ca1latvia@grace.lv

ca2latvia@grace.lv

NFPs

nfp1latvia@grace.lv

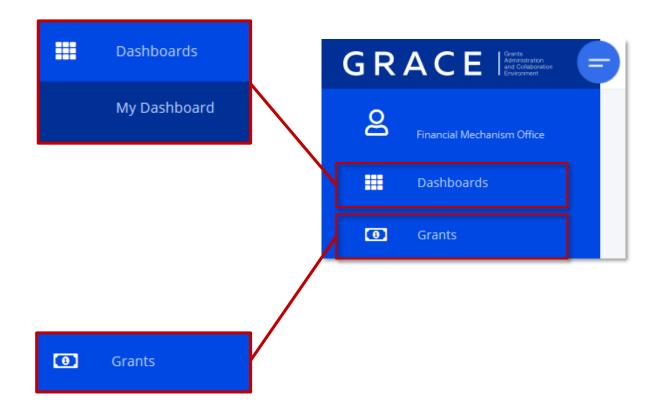
nfp2latvia@grace.lv

Programme	User1	User2
<u>LV-BF</u>	nfp1latvia@grace.lv	nfp2latvia@grace.lv
<u>LV-CLIMATE</u>	PO1LATVIA@grace.lv	PO2LATVIA@grace.lv
LV-CORRECTIONAL	PO3LATVIA@grace.lv	PO4LATVIA@grace.lv
LV-HOMEAFFAIRS	PO7LATVIA@grace.lv	PO8LATVIA@grace.lv
<u>LV-INNOVATION</u>	PO9LATVIA@grace.lv	PO10LATVIA@grace.lv
LV-LOCALDEV	PO11LATVIA@grace.lv	PO12LATVIA@grace.lv
LV-RESEARCH	PO13LATVIA@grace.lv	PO14LATVIA@grace.lv
<u>LV-TA</u>	nfp3latvia@grace.lv	nfp4latvia@grace.lv



Introduction to Main Modules - External

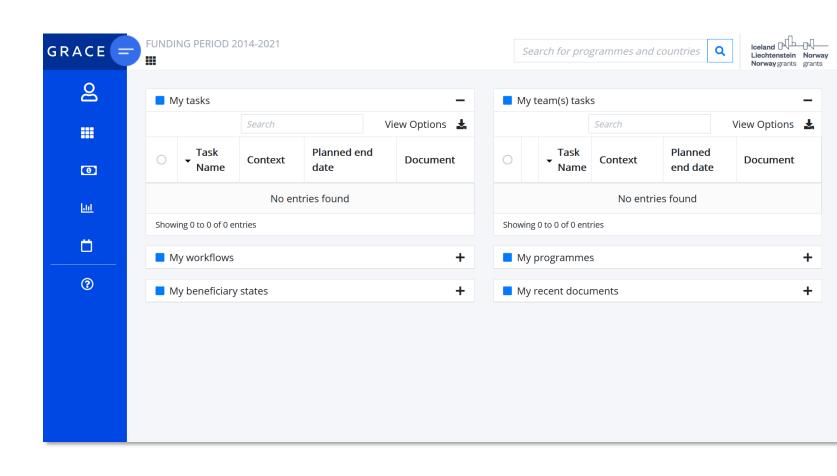
- Dashboard
- Grants





Dashboards - My Dashboard

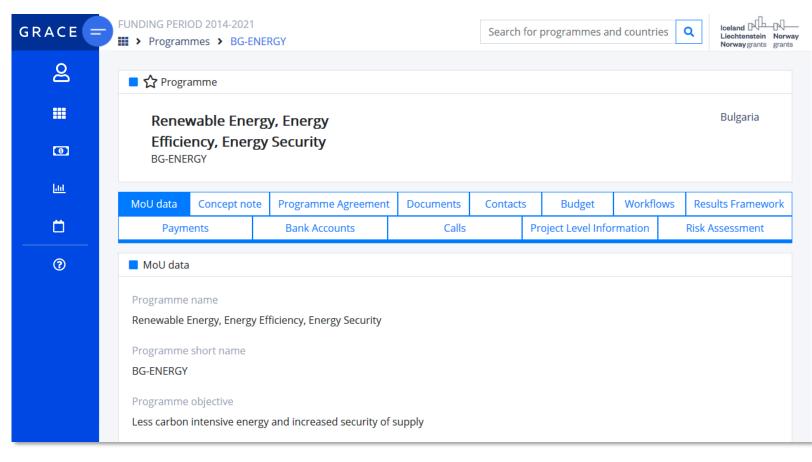
- Starting page
- Placeholder for personal tasks and team tasks
- Links to your programmes
- Customizable

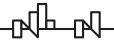




Dashboard - Programmes

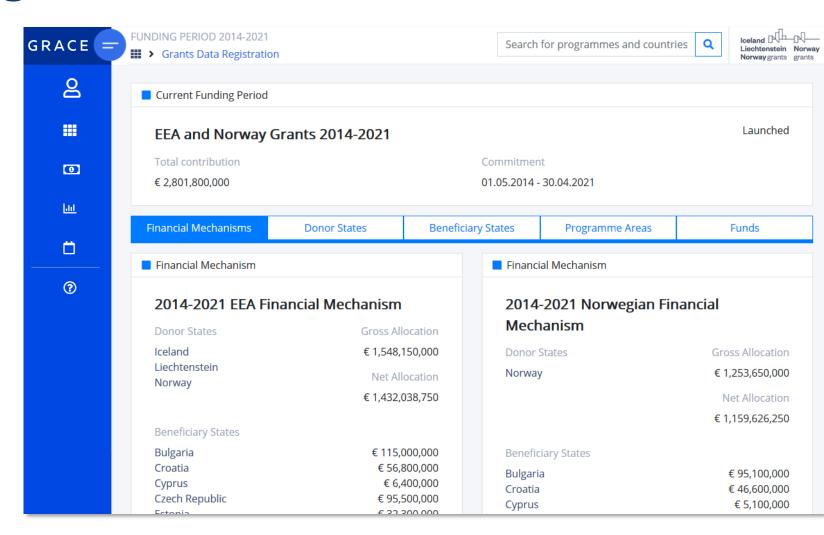
- Entry point to programmes
 - Programme
 Agreements, payments
 (IFRs, advances),
 programme contacts,
 projects, ...

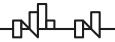




Grants – Data Registration

- Place with information on all aspects of the Grants:
 - Allocations to beneficiary states
 - Donor States
 - Programme Areas
 - Funds



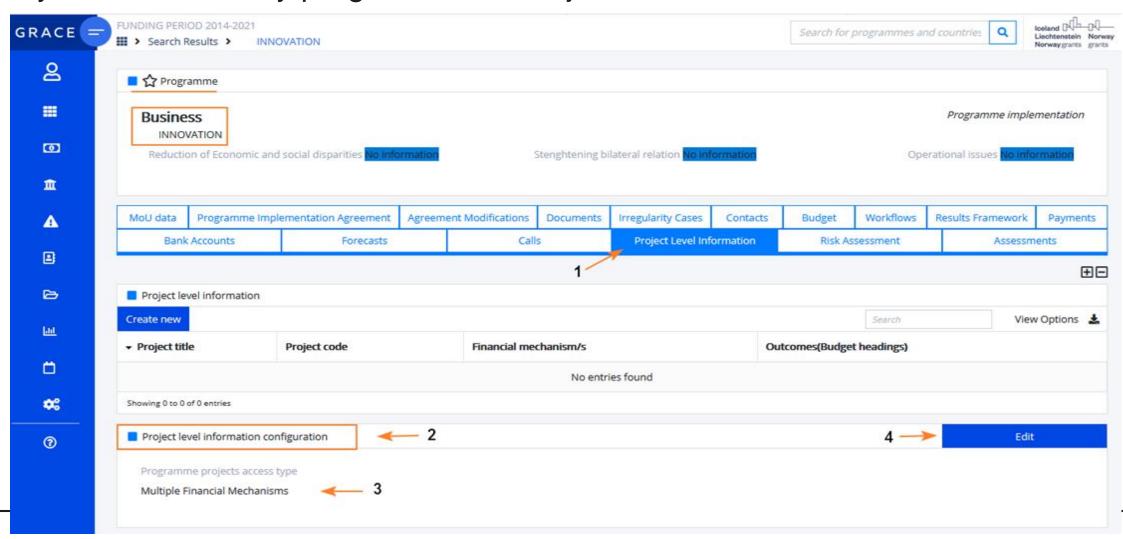


Registering Projects in GrACE



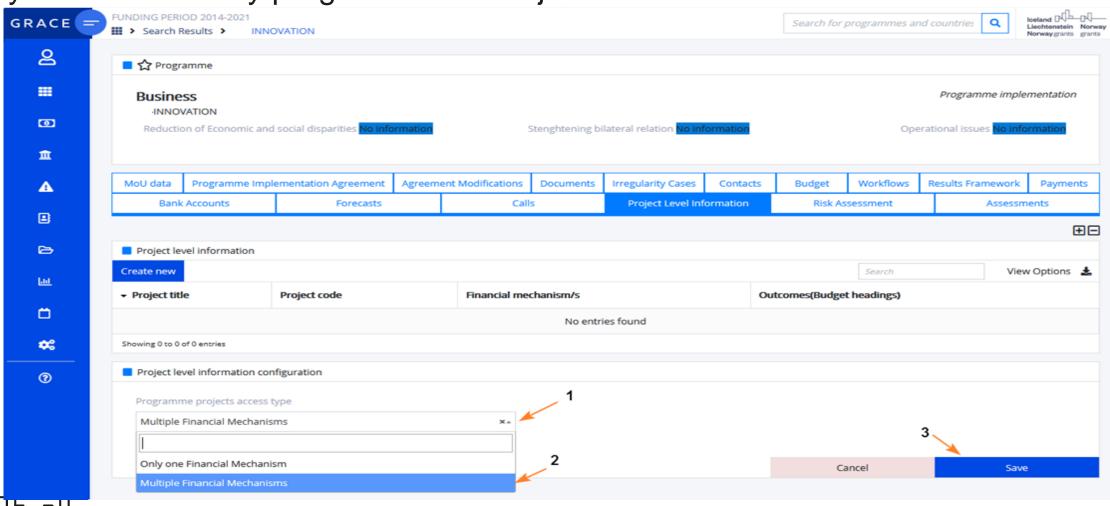
Project Level Information (PLIs)

My dashboard > My programmes > Project level information > Create new

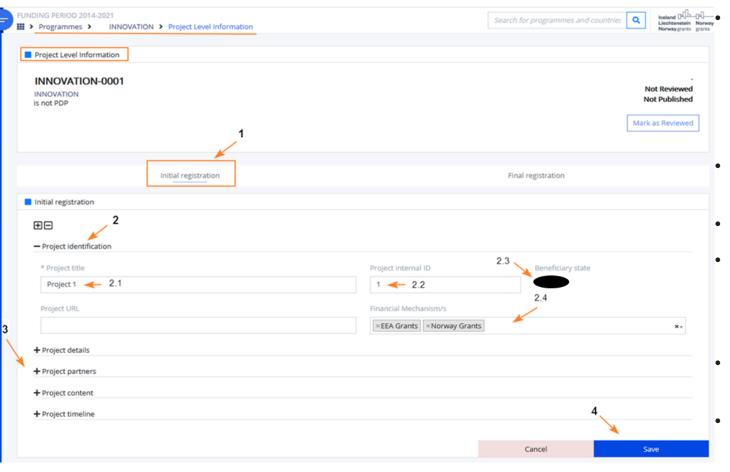


Registering Project Level Information (PLIs)

My dashboard > My programmes > Project level information > Create new



Project Level Information (PLIs) – Project Identification

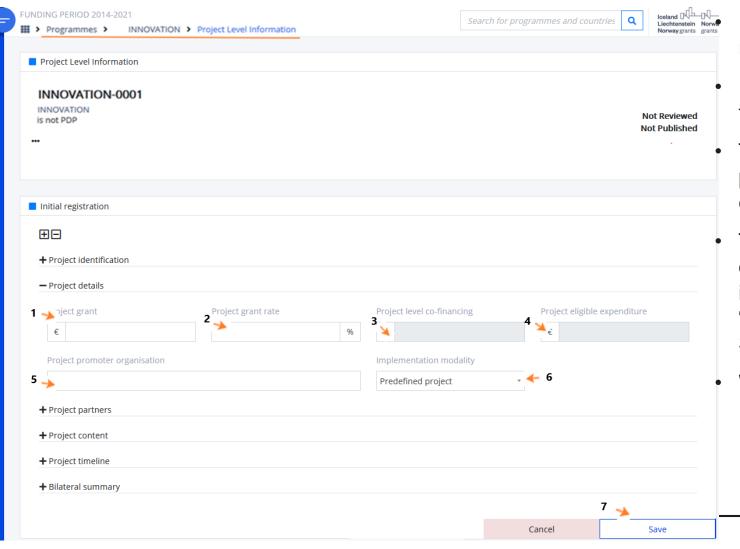


The system opens the empty form for the PLI and the user fills the initial data in the **tab** "Initial registration" (1) in sections: Project identification (2), Project details, Project partners, Project content and Project timeline (3). When ready with the entry – click Save (4).

- Each section may be expanded or collapsed using the buttons "+" or "-".
- Useful tips:
- Some information in the sections is mandatory (2.1), other is optional (2.2) or is prefilled and cannot be changed (2.3) or is prefilled but may be changed (2.4).
- When there's only one FM in the programme (e.g. EEA Grants), it is prefilled.
- In Project partners (1-2-3), the field **Country** for other project partners is **prefilled** (4) with the same country as the beneficiary country and **allows** the users to **change** it when needed.



Project Level Information (PLIs) – Project Details



In the (1) project grant, the users inserts the right amount.

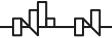
- In the **(2)** project grant rate, the user inserts the percentage.
- The **(3)** project level co-financing and the **(4)** project eligible expenditure are automatically calculated by the system.
- The user inserts the **(5)** project promoter organization and **(6)** choose one of the implementation modality between "Predefined project", "Call/Small Grants Scheme", "Financial Instruments".
- When ready with the entry click (7) Save.

The IFR in Grace

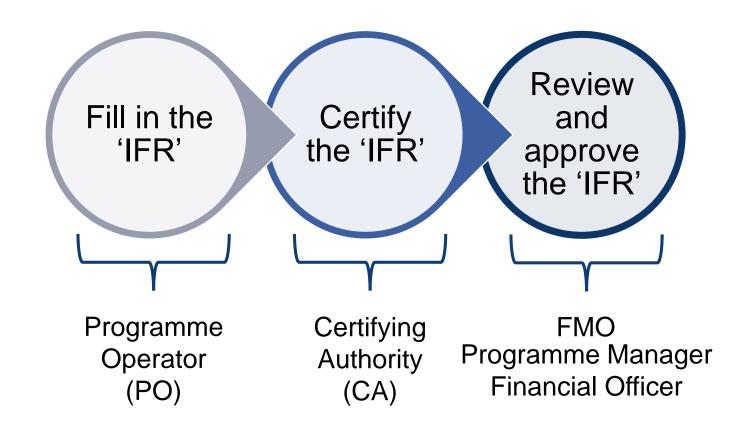


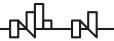
Content

- Registering projects
- The IFR in GrACE
 - Fill in the IFR
 - Certify the IFR
 - Review and Approve the IFR



Steps in the IFR Process in GrACE





Filling in the IFR

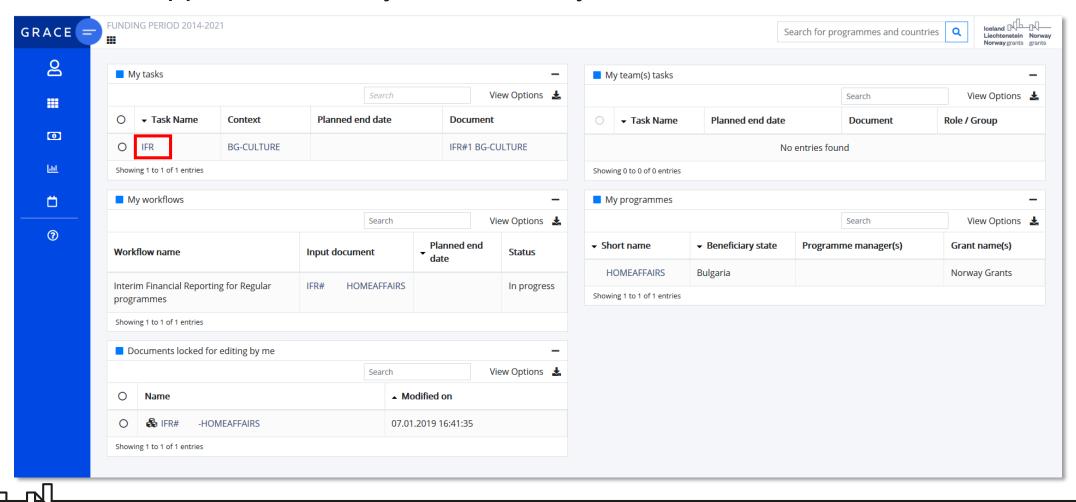
Programme Operator (PO)



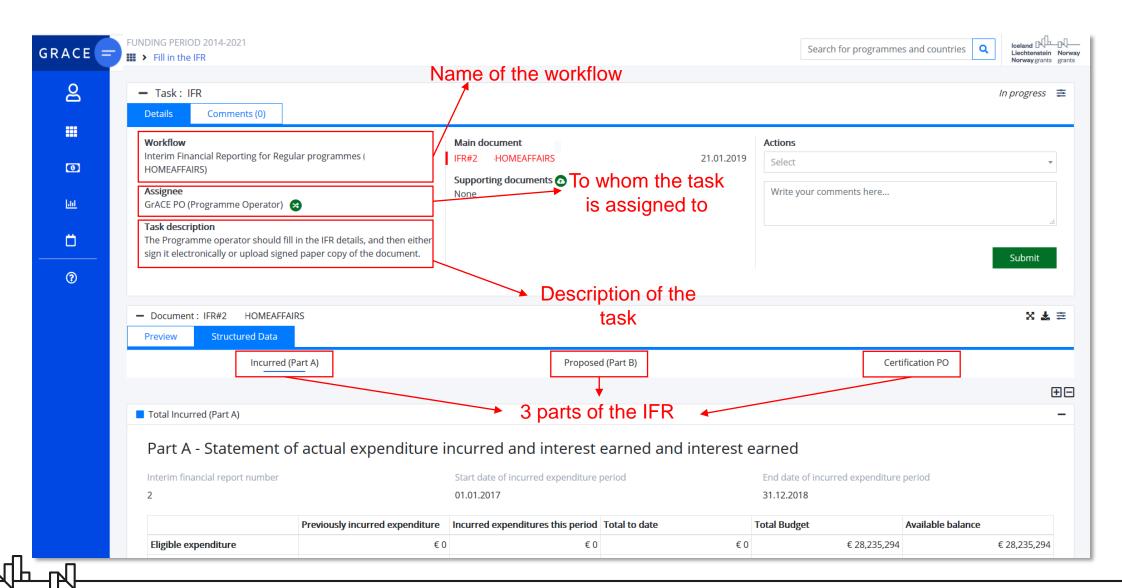


Accessing the IFR Task

The task will appear under 'My tasks' on 'My dashboard'



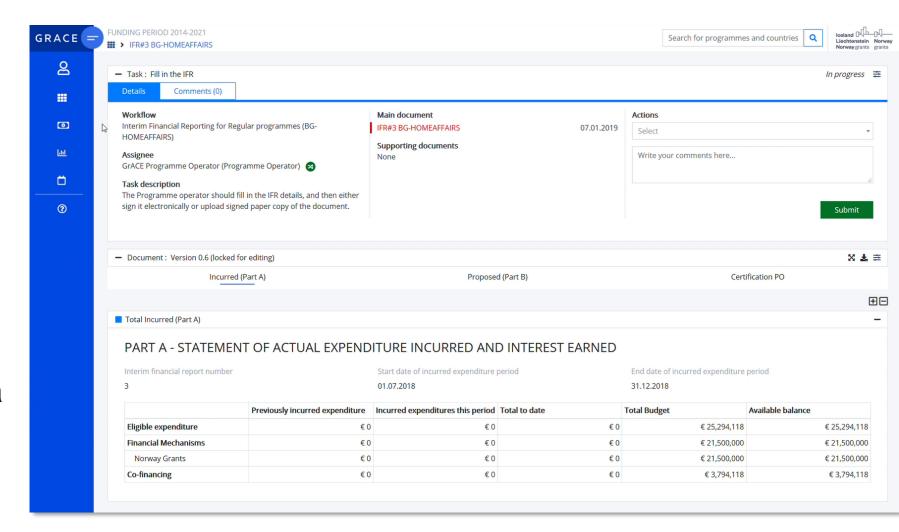
Task - IFR

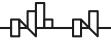


Part A – Incurred Expenditure and Interest Earned

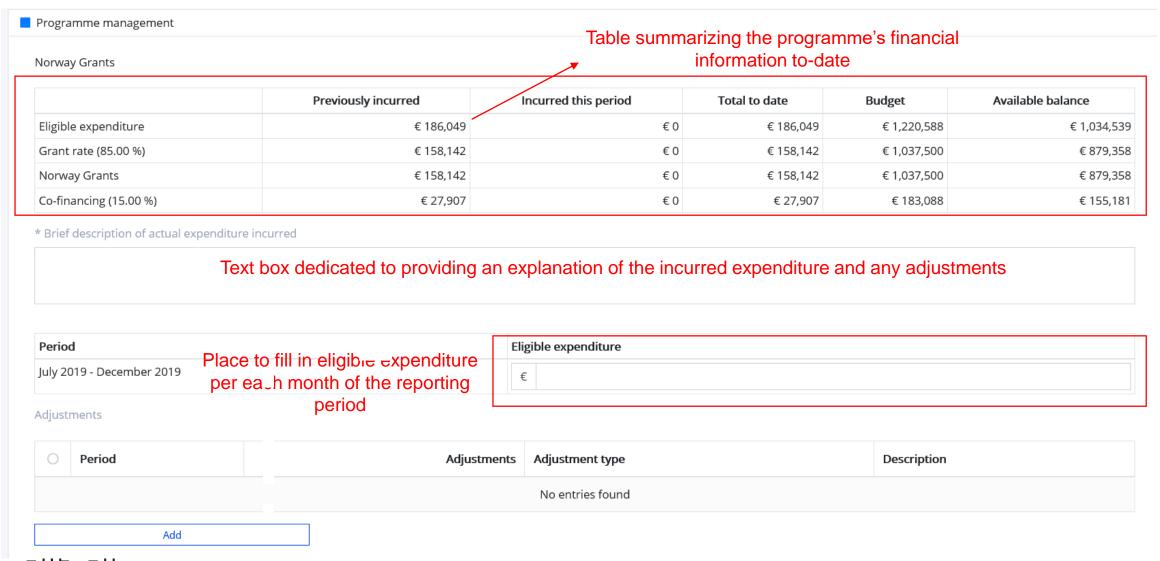
- Section for:
 - Programme management
 - Each outcome
 - Interest earned

 Each section has a separate edit button, only one section at a time can be edited



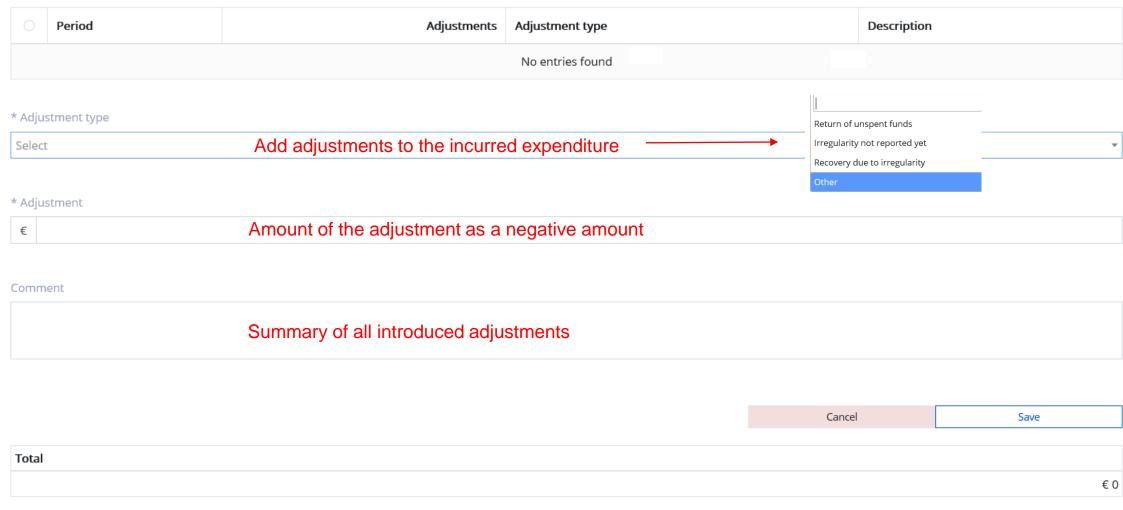


Part A – Programme Management (1)



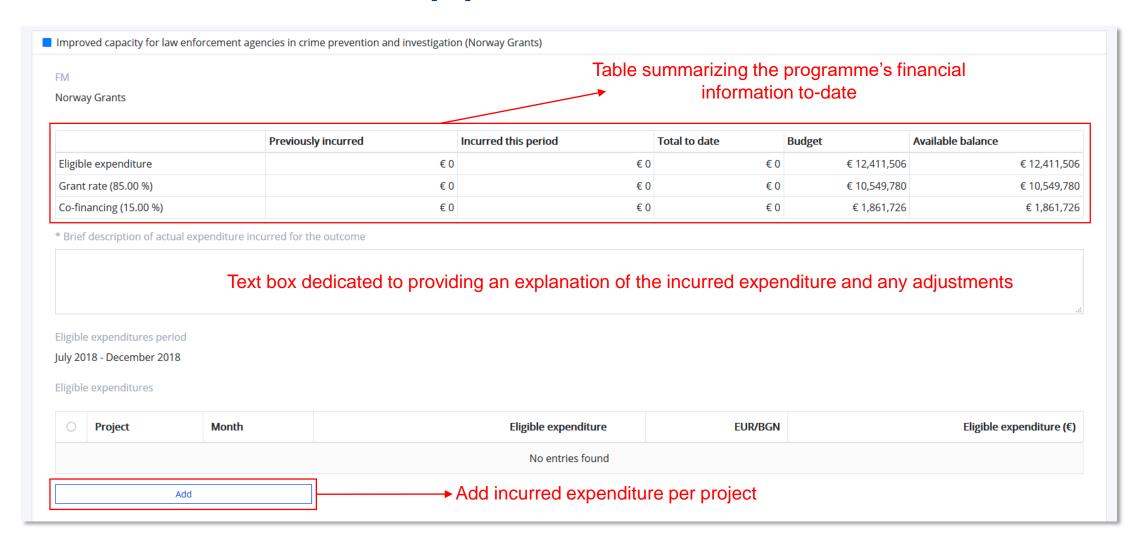
Part A – Programme Management (2)

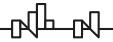
Adjustments



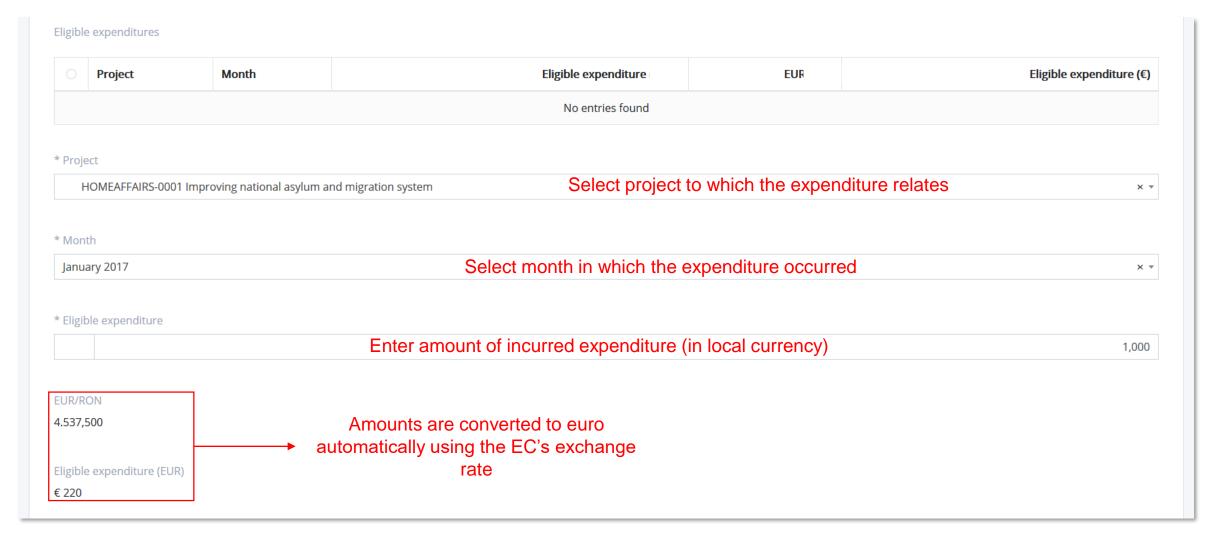


Part A - Outcomes (1)



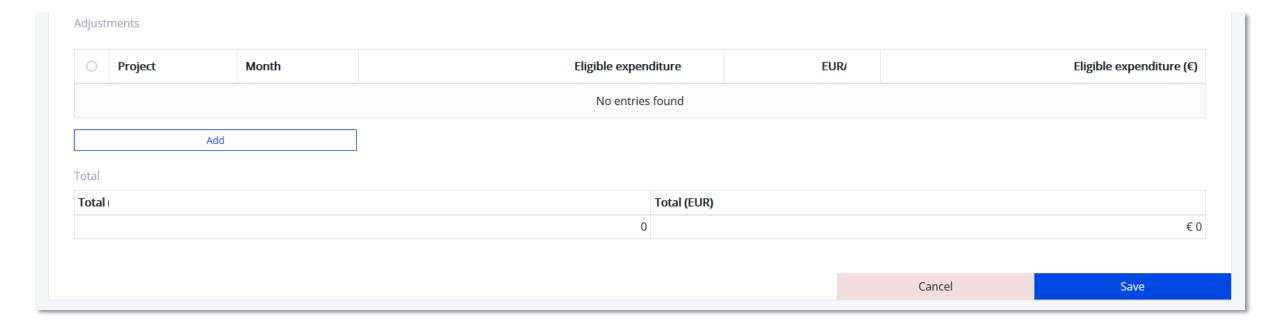


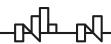
Part A – Outcomes (2)



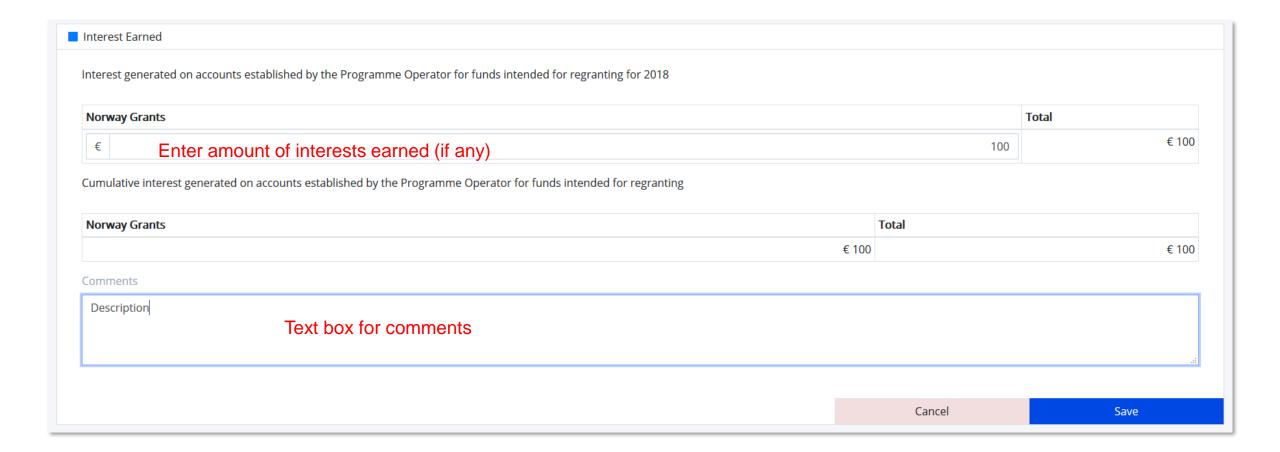


Part A – Outcomes (3)





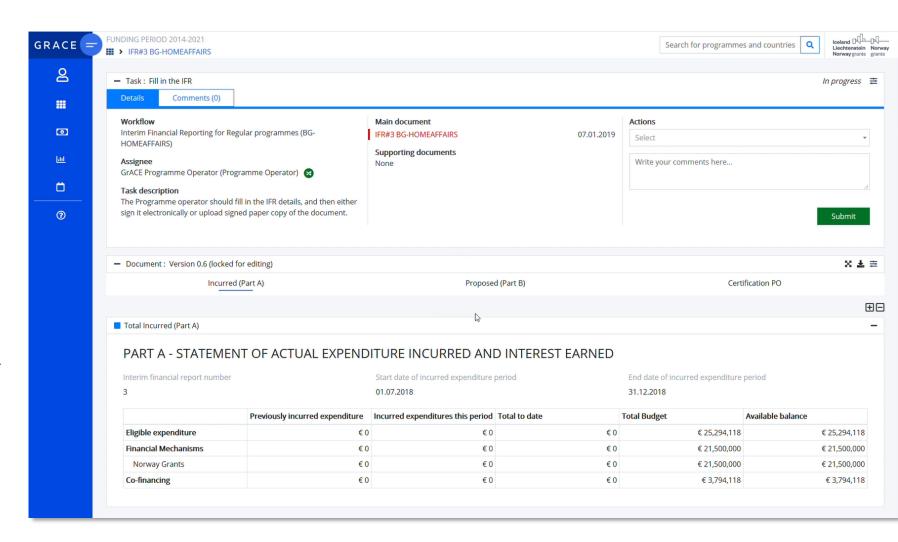
Part A – Interest Earned





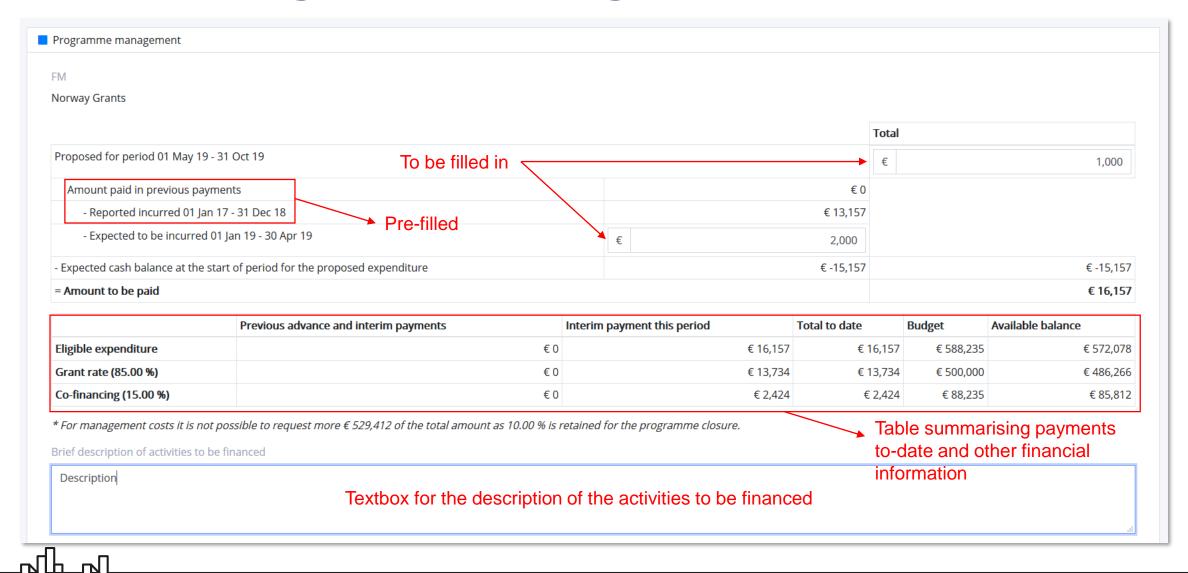
Part B – Proposed Expenditure

- Section for:
 - Programme management
 - Each outcome
- Each section has a separate edit button, only one section at a time can be edited



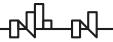


Part B – Programme Management



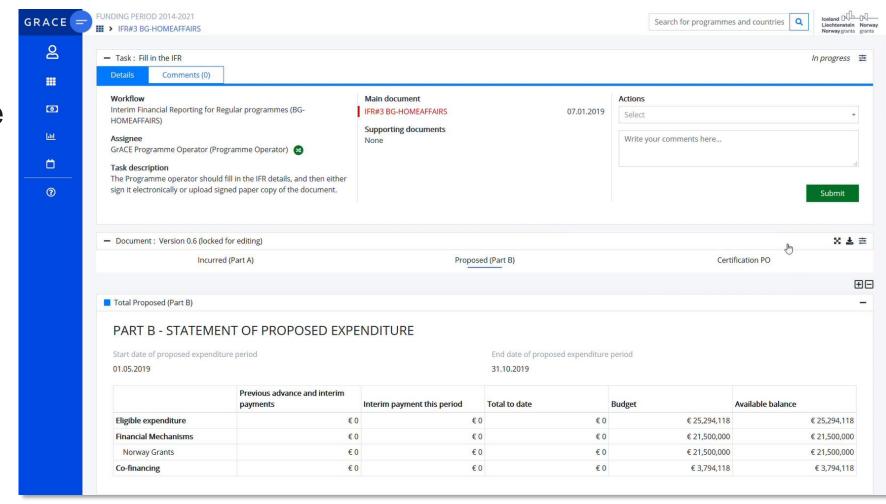
Part B – Outcomes

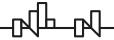
					Total	
Proposed for period 01 May 19 - 31 Oct 19					€	2,000
Amount paid in previous payments				€0		
- Reported incurred 01 Jan 17 - 31 Dec 18				€0		
- Expected to be incurred 01 Jan 19 - 30 Apr 19			€	3,000		
Expected cash balance at the start of period for the proposed expenditure				€ -3,000	€ -3,000	
= Amount to be paid						€ 5,000
	Previous advance and interim payments	Interim	payment this period	Total to date	Budget	Available balance
Eligible expenditure	€ 0	€ 5,000		00 € 5	.000 € 5,882,35	3 € 5,877,353
Grant rate (85.00 %)	€ 0	€ 4,250		50 € 4	250 € 5,000,00	0 € 4,995,750
Co-financing (15.00 %)	€ 0	€ 750		50 €	750 € 882,35	3 € 881,603
rief description of activities to b	e financed					



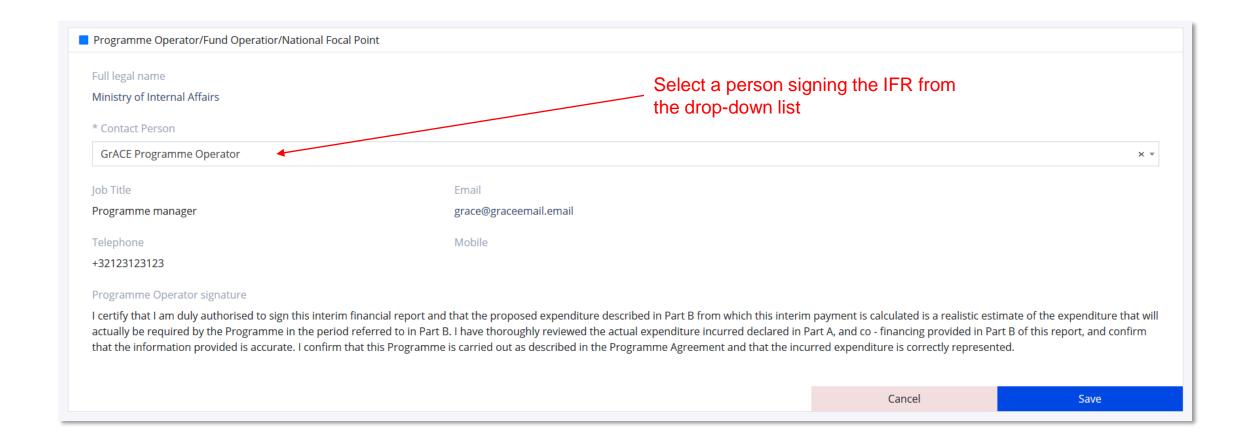
Certification PO

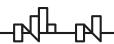
- Three sections:
 - Contact information for the programme
 - Questionnaire
 - Signatures



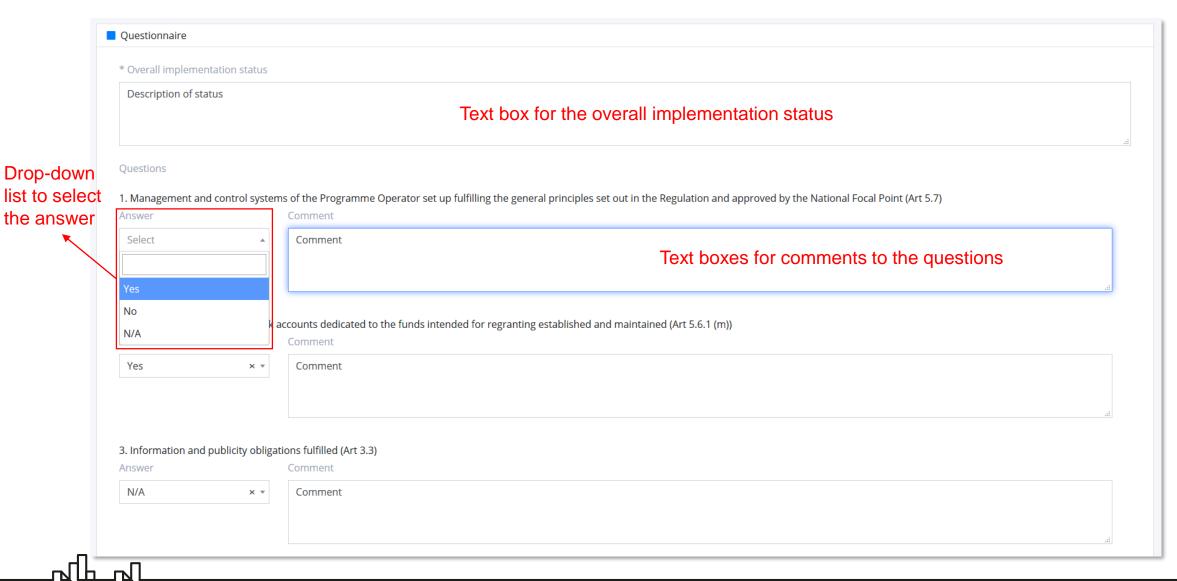


PO Certification – Contact Person

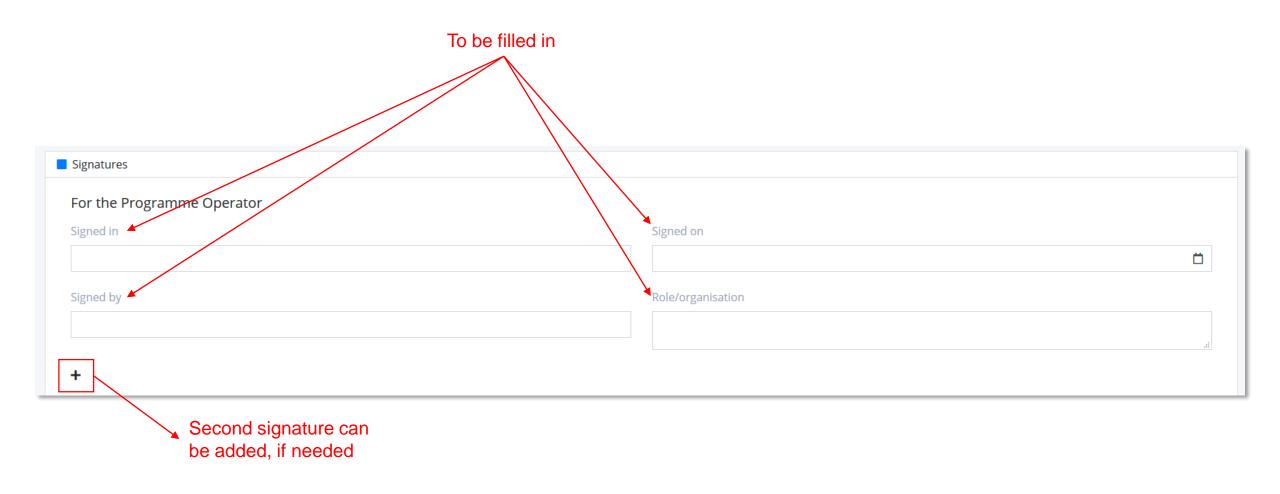




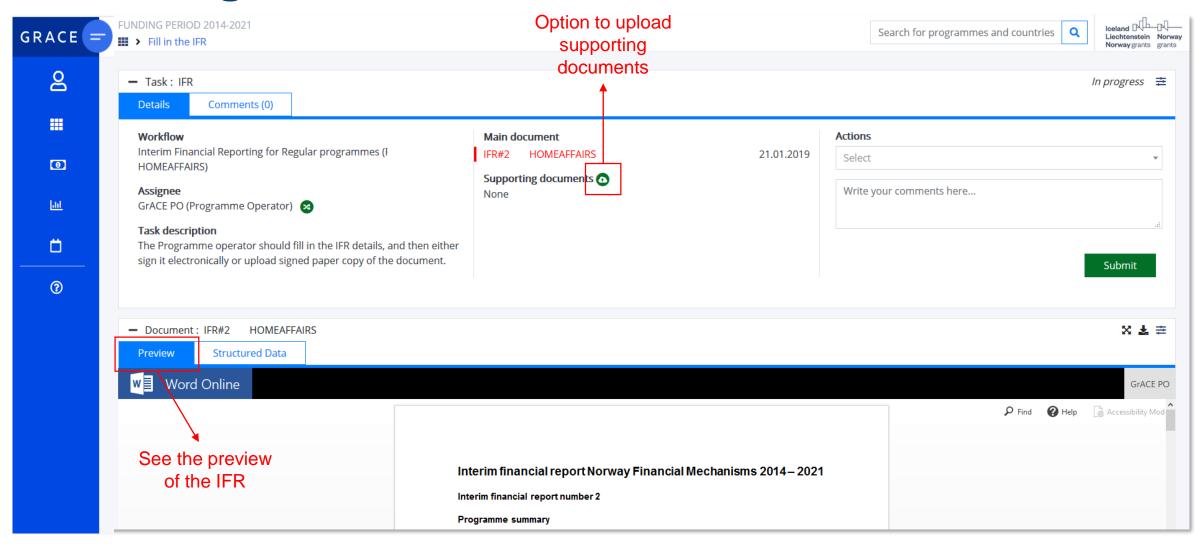
PO Certification – Questionnaire

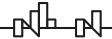


PO Certification – Signatures

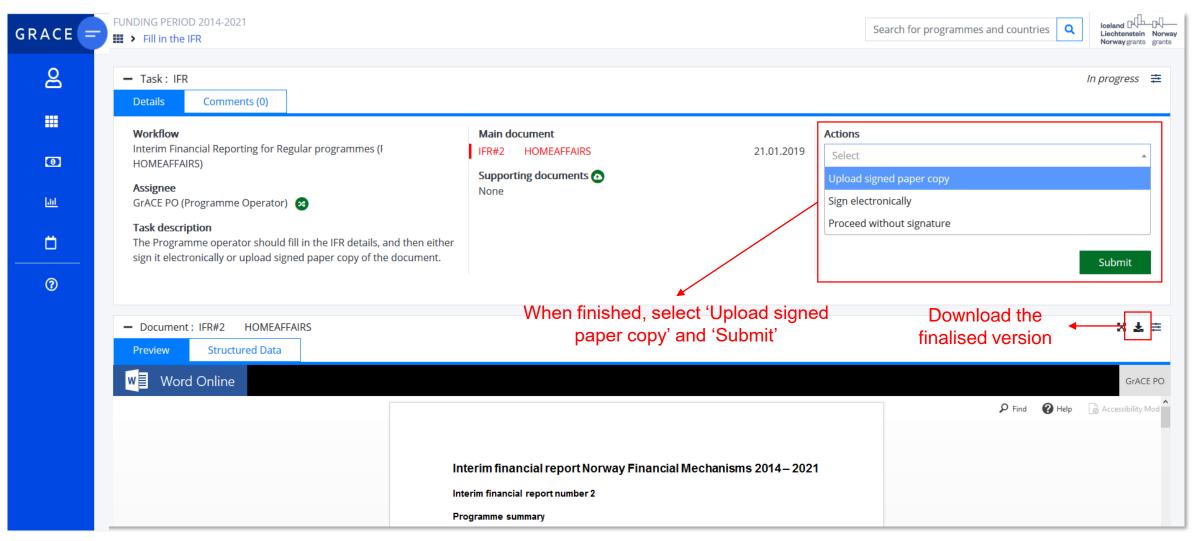


Finalising the IFR





Submitting the IFR to the CA (1)

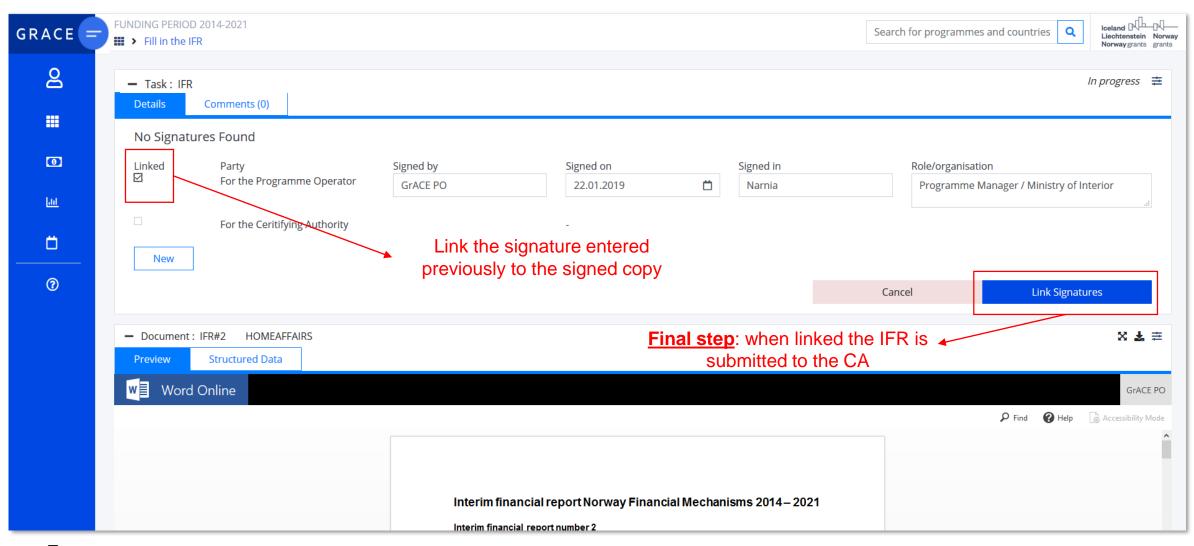




Submitting the IFR to the CA (2)



Submitting the IFR to the CA (3)



Certify the IFR

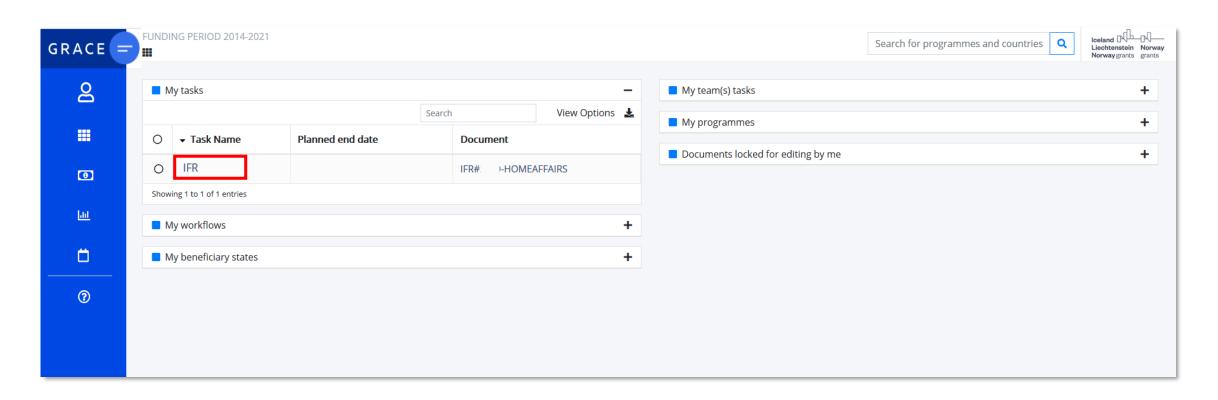
Certifying Authority (CA)





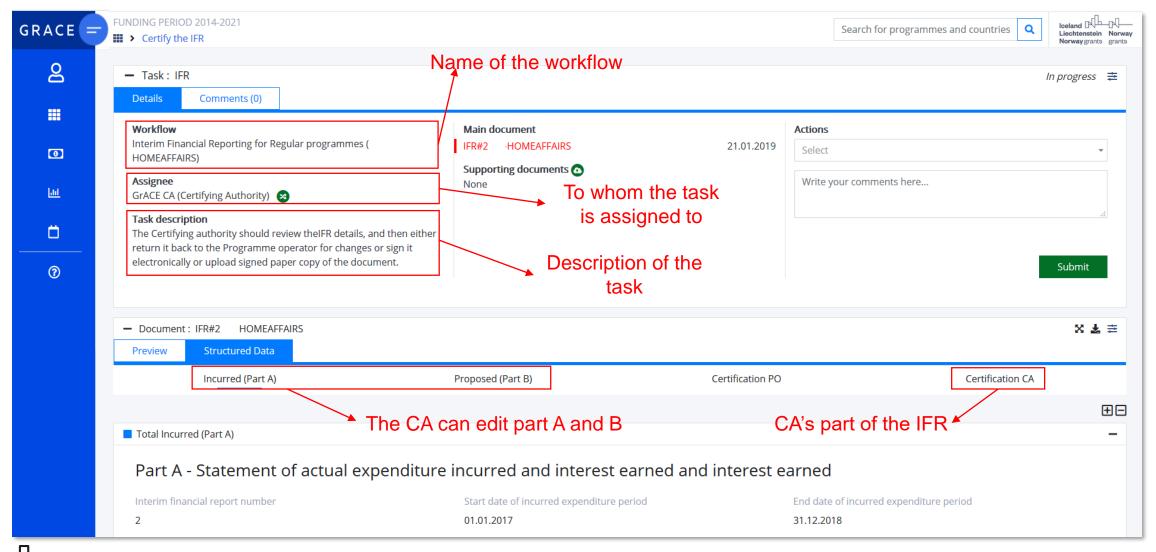
Accessing the IFR Task

The task will appear under My tasks on My dashboard



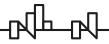


IFR Task – Certify the IFR



Certification CA – Certification of actual exp...

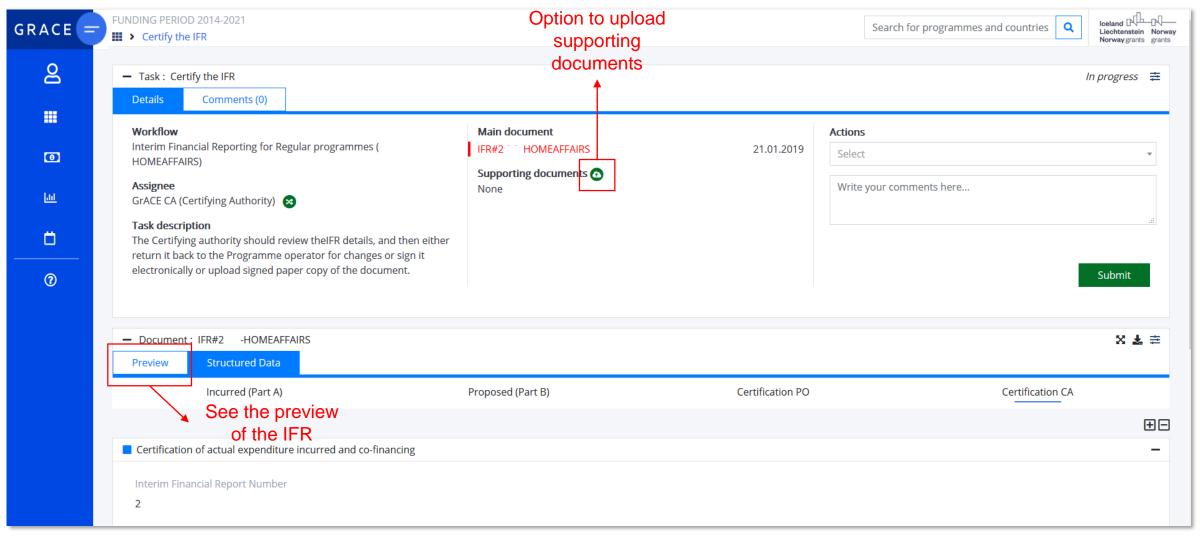
Certification of actual expenditure incurred and co-financing Interim Financial Report Number Start date of incurred expenditure period End month of incurred expenditure period 01.01.2017 31.12.2018 Actual expenditure incurred this period € 13,378 Start date of proposed expenditure period End month of proposed expenditure period 01.05.2019 31.10.2019 Co-financing committed to date € 3.207 Co-financing for incurred expenditure paid € 2,007 Interest earned 2019 € 100 The Certifying Authority hereby certifies that: (i) the summary of eligible expenditure submitted by the Programme Operator is in full conformity with the supporting documents; (ii) the supporting documents have been examined and found to be authentic, correct and accurate; (iii) the summary of eligible expenditure is based on verifiable accounting which is in compliance with generally accepted accounting principles and methods; (iv) the summary of eligible expenditure falls within eligible expenditure under the Regulation for the implementation of the EEA / Norwegian Financial Mechanisms 2014-2021; (v) the summary of expenditure is incurred as part of the implementation of the Programme in accordance with the Programme Agreement;

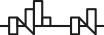


Certification CA – Signature

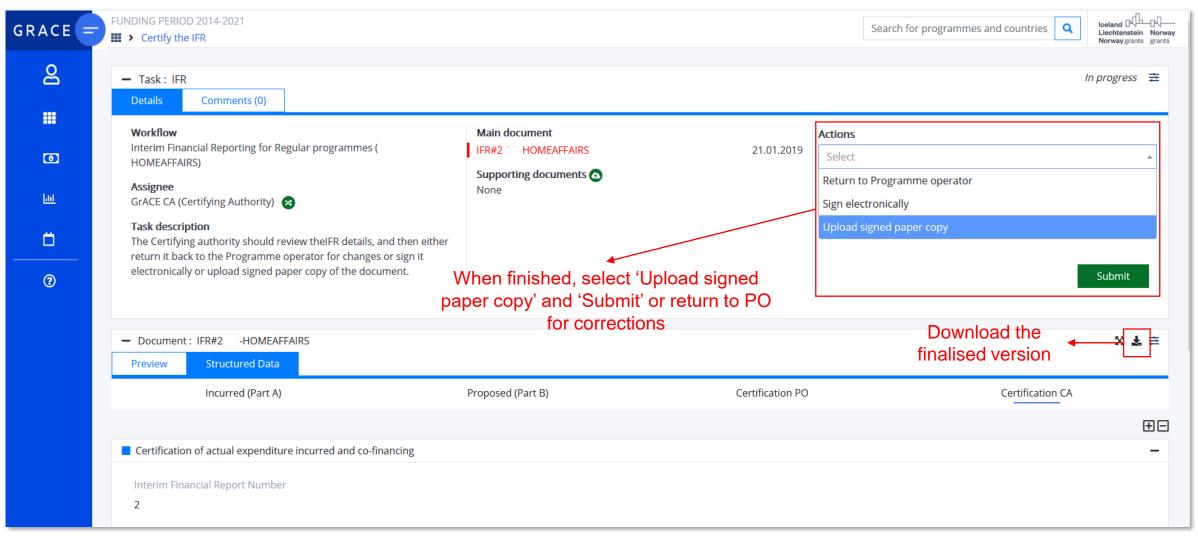


Finalising the Certification of the IFR





Submitting the IFR to the FMO (1)

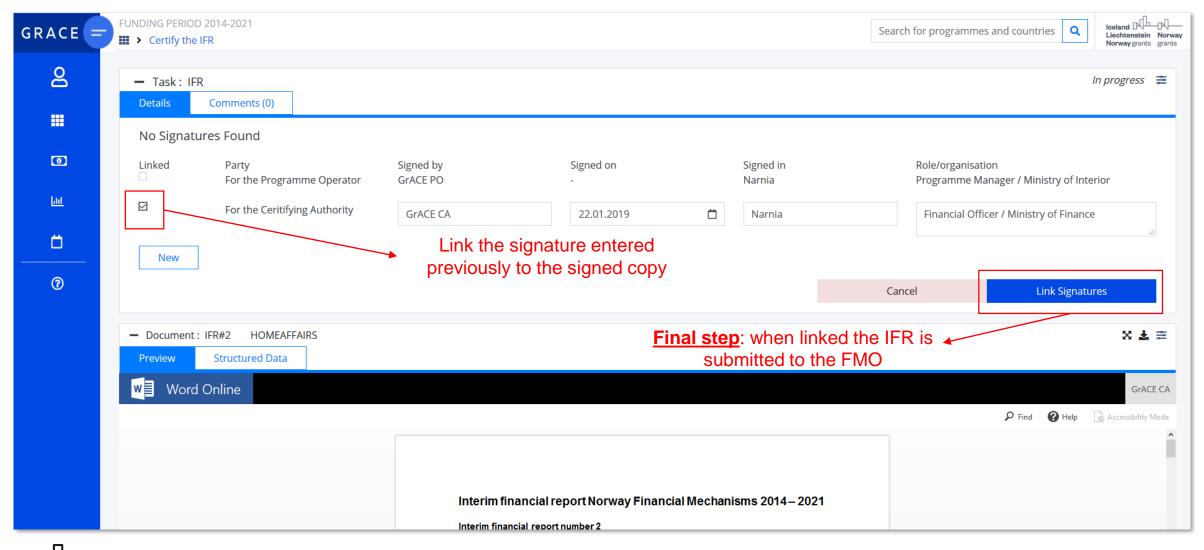




Submitting the IFR to the FMO (2)



Submitting the IFR to the FMO (3)



Review and Approve the IFR

FMO

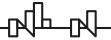




Reviewing and Approving the IFR

 The IFR is submitted to the FMO and reviewed by the Programme Manager and the Financial Officer

- Following the review:
 - Returned to the CA or PO
 - Proposed expenditure modified by the FMO
 - Approved and paid
- Once paid the CA and PO receive an email notification (to be implemented)





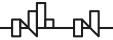
Q&A



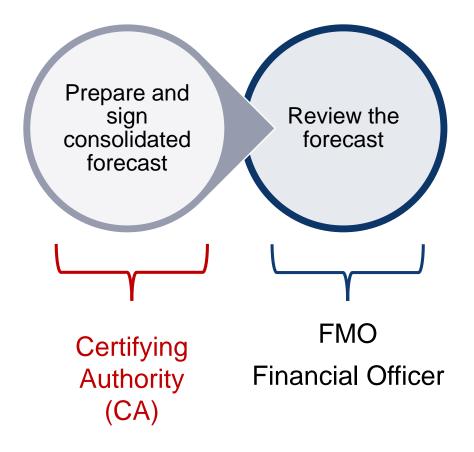


Preparing and Submitting the Forecast in GrACE

EEA and Norway Grants 2014-2021



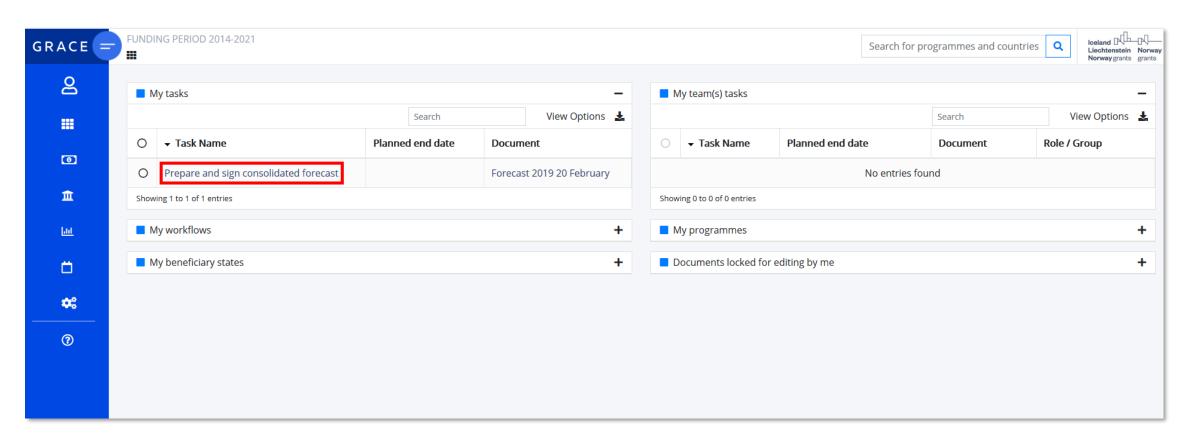
Steps in the Forecast Process





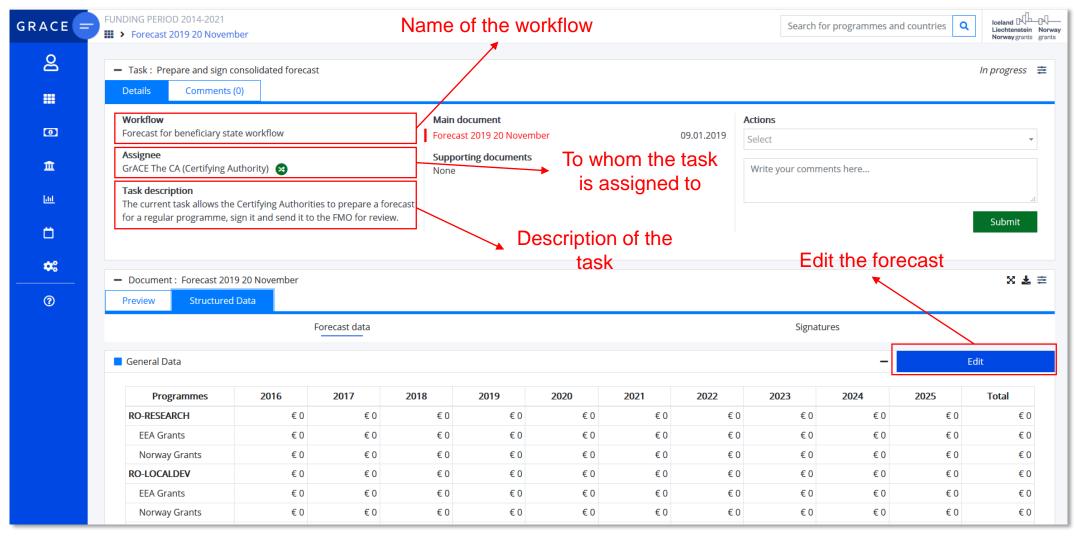
Accessing the Forecast Task

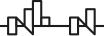
The task will appear under My tasks on My dashboard



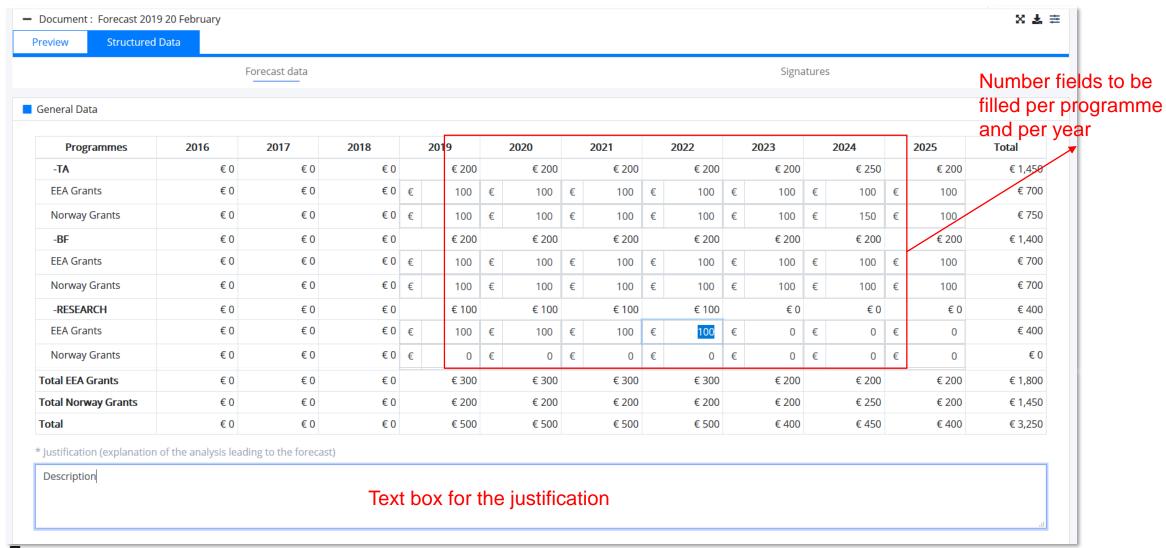


Forecast Task – Certifying Authority (CA)

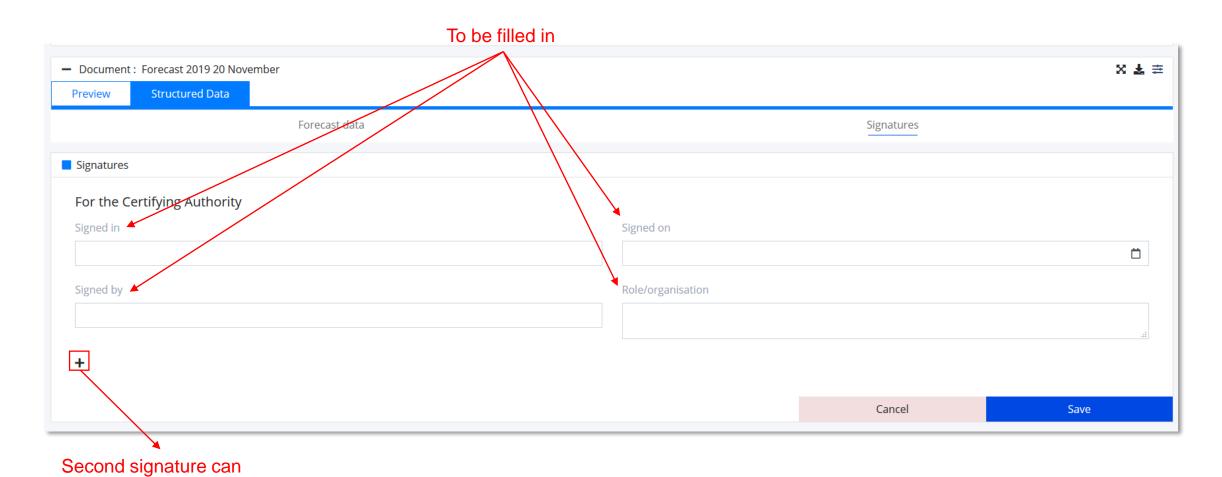




Filling in the Forecast



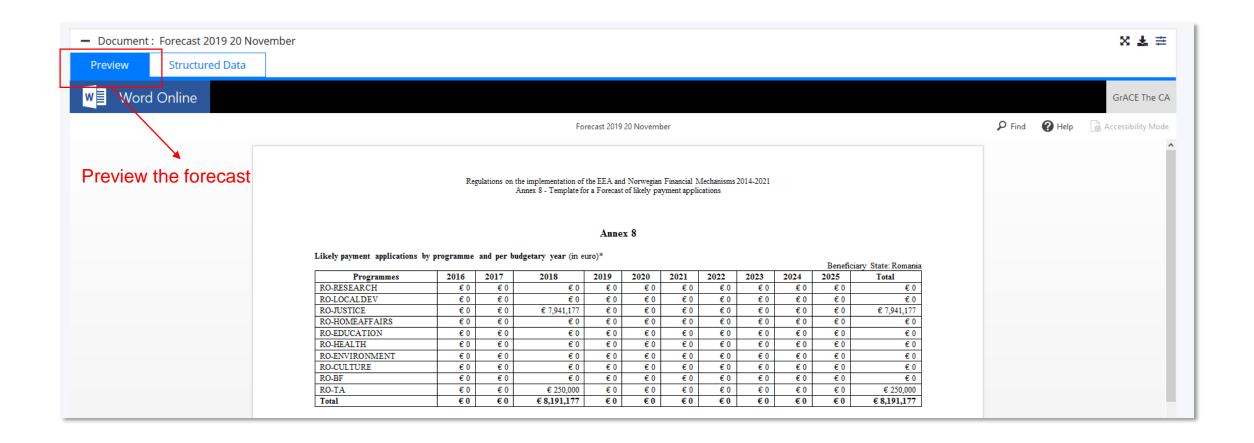
Signing in the Forecast





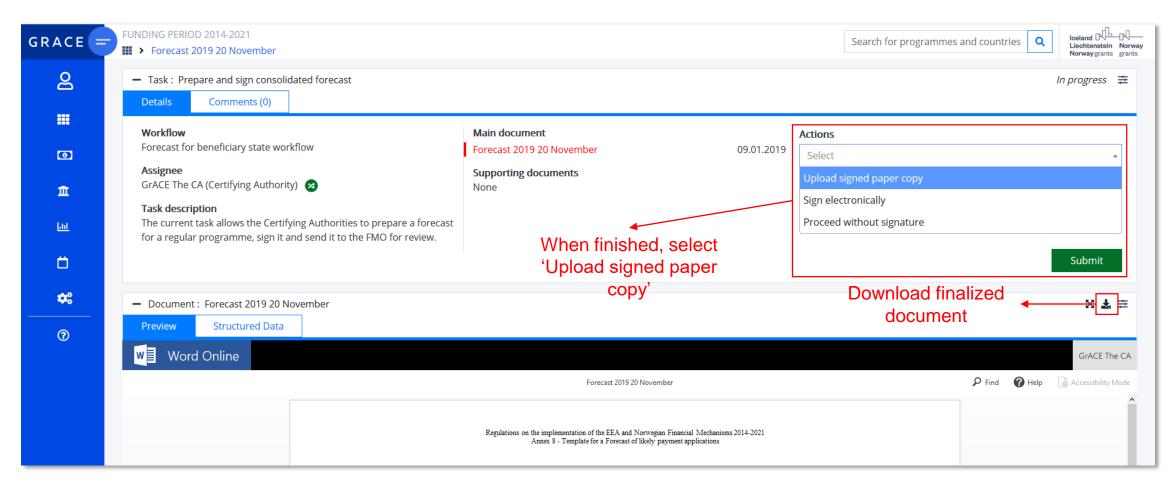
be added, if needed

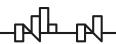
Preview of the Forecast



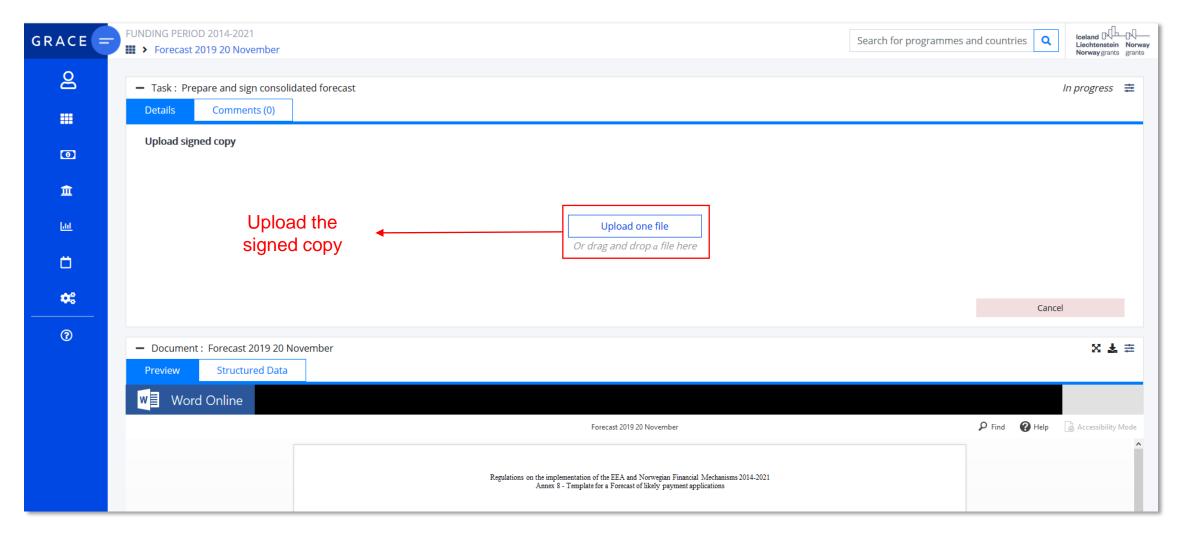


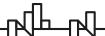
Finalising and Submitting the Forecast (1)



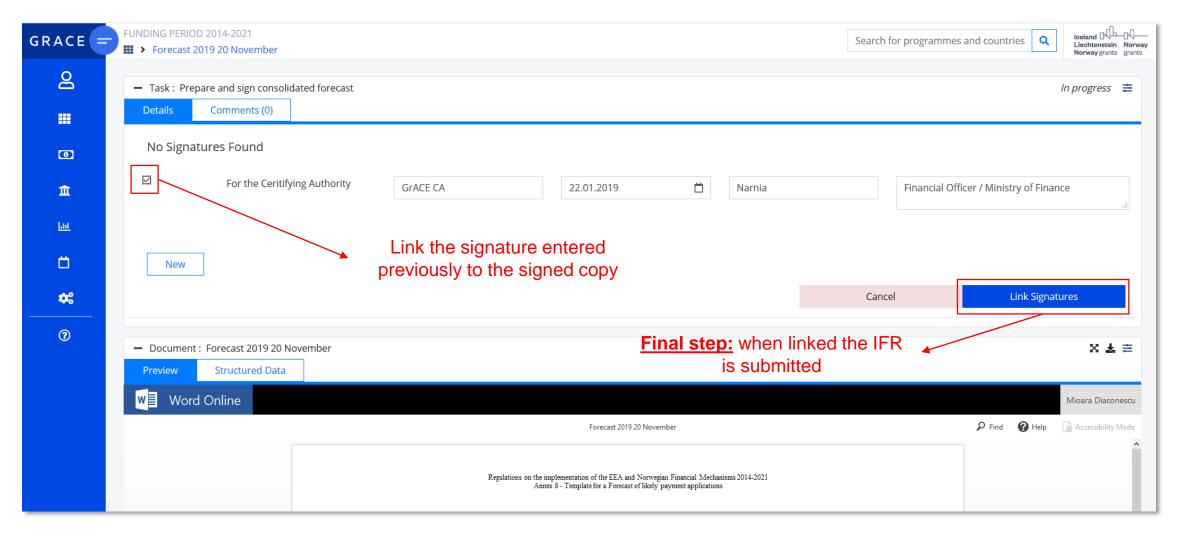


Finalising and Submitting the Forecast (2)





Submitting the Forecast to the FMO (3)







Q&A





Other useful documents

- Financial management and reporting: Guidance on how to carry out financial management and reporting under the EEA and Norwegian Financial Mechanisms for 2014-2021: Financial Guidance - 2014-2021 (PDF)
- Selection Procedures: Best practice on project selection procedures (<u>Download (PDF)</u>)
- **Procurement:** EC Guidance EC public-procurement-guidance-for-practitioners-2018 on avoiding the most common errors in projects funded by the European Structural and Investment Funds.
- Grace User manual for Interim Financial Report (July 2019 V.2)

