

CZ-CULTURE

ANNUAL PROGRAMME REPORT 2022: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The year 2022 has been the fourth year when the Programme Culture was running. With 115 projects in project implementation and allocation EUR 35 million it is one of the biggest programmes in the Czech Republic in EEA Grants Financial Mechanism 2014-2021. Some of the projects from first round of calls starting the project activities in winter 2020 and spring 2021 have successfully finished implementation and are working on final administrative steps while the projects from the second round of calls are in an early phase of implementation. Expected results based on seven closed calls and one pre-defined project Lety show high quality projects and that the planned programme target values of outcomes and outputs will be achieved and some even exceeded.

The project activities in the pre-defined project *“Building of a memorial to the victims of the Roma holocaust in Lety”* have finally started after the approval of the grant application in February 2022. The demolition of the former pig farm representing the first part of the project (covered from national sources) should be completed by 15 January 2023 thus the construction works for establishing the memorial and visitor centre can start afterwards. Regardless of the delays and several obstacles the deadline of project implementation April 2024 will be met.

In order to strengthen the bilateral relations between the Czech Republic and Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway bilateral partnerships with at least one entity from the Donor States were set up in total of 89 projects, which means approximately 80 % of all projects. In general the cooperation between partners is working and appreciated although the Programme Operator with the help of the Donor Programme Partners had to deal with change of the project partners in several cases.

All relevant information and the visibility of the programme is ensured via the EEA Grants website www.eeagrants.cz/en/programmes/culture. Social media such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter cover interesting stories, news and invitations to projects events and activities. The Programme Operator hired a professional photographer to visit selected projects in order to have a set of quality photos documenting the project implementation and achievements.

The overall risk of the programme has not changed much compared to the previous period. Some partial risks were successfully mitigated or even fully eliminated (PDP Lety – insufficient political will and support; PDP Lety - direct dependence on comprehensive preparatory works (demolition and liquidation of environmental burdens). As for the COVID-19 issue, the problems were mostly solved, the epidemic situation has improved and the promoters learned how to cope with restrictions and delays associated with the safe mode. On the contrary, a new risk that arose in 2021 “Increased prices of construction materials, unavailability of construction workers and high inflation and energy crises in Europe” has deepened with start of the War in Ukraine in February 2022 and provides now a very negative impact on projects in both Outcomes (with more endangered projects within the call CH1 with construction works).