

CZ-HEALTH

ANNUAL PROGRAMME REPORT 2020: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The programme Health has been running in the Czech Republic since 2019. The Programme Operator approved the remaining two pre-defined projects in early 2020 and so all three predefined projects are under implementation.

The Covid-19 pandemic has influenced three pre-defined projects in 2020 with regard to measures adopted by the Czech Government to prevent the further spread. Some activities have been postponed. PDP 1 is about to start, relevant legal act/agreement have not yet been signed. PDP 2's Project Promoter - National Institute of Public Health stood in the first Covid line in spring time, staff partly helped to the Ministry of Health and was affected by Covid-19. Despite the circumstances the project has been still running and all delays were minimized. PDP 3 – The Patient Hub was also hit by the Covid – 19 pandemic. The project promoter is actually working on the project modification. The Hub (as a meeting point of patients and other stakeholders) and the training need to be moved to the online world.

The Open Call 1 for proposals, Mental Health of Children was launched in May 2020. Projects are now in the process of selection. The open Call 2 for proposals, Prevention of communicable and non-communicable diseases, was launched in July 2020 and projects are now in the process of selection as well.

The Open Calls 1 – 3 for proposals of small grant scheme projects are under the preparation.

Two Programme Agreement modifications have been submitted to FMO during the year 2020. The definition of eligible applicants within Calls 1 and 2 was changed. The amount of the grant rate was increased from 90 % up to 100 % for NGOs applicants, which helped NGOs to overcome the very difficult pandemic situation. The fourth Programme Agreement modification has been consulted with FMO in December 2020. It concerns the allocation of the reserve from MoU (increase by 495 000 EUR) and the reallocation of the savings from Open Call 2 into Open Call 1 (292 532 EUR).

As far as lessons learned are concerned, the PO considers flexibility and good communication among the Programme Operator, the National Focal Point, the Partners and the Financial Mechanism Office as crucial when facing the Covid-19 pandemic. The Health programme stakeholders managed to organize all the necessary meetings online and their mutual communication was very smooth.

Regarding risks, the despite the delay in the implementation of bilateral activities and some activities within pre-defined projects due to the COVID-19 safety restrictions, actual state of implementation of pre-defined projects is satisfactory. Risk related to the insufficient programme absorption capacity is lower, because the Open Calls 1 and 2 are actually in selection process and great interest was confirmed in the Open Call 1. Budget for both Open Calls was fully used (savings from the Open Call 2 was transferred to the Open Call 1 after consultation with FMO).

During 2020, there have not been any bilateral study visits organized (due to the safety restrictions). All bilateral activities had to be postponed for the following years. However, all stakeholders are in touch via online tools.