

External Evaluation of the Greenland Decision

Short Summary

This evaluation of the Greenland Decision (GD) will feed into the Mid-Term Review of the European Union's 2014-2020 External Financing Instruments (EFIs), taking place in 2017. During the period 2014-2020, the EU will use the GD instrument to channel € 217.8 million to Greenland. The objective of the instrument is to preserve close and lasting links between the parties while contributing to sustainable development in Greenland. The instrument also has an explicit political ambition: to ensure policy dialogue on global issues of mutual interest.

Relevance: The GD instrument is relevant to maintaining close links between the EU and Greenland, and to the EU priority of maintaining EU fishing rights in Greenlandic waters. The programming choice of the education as the focal sector has also been relevant to beneficiaries' needs in Greenland. The instrument-level ambition of having policy dialogue corresponds with EU priorities, as stated in key policy documents. However, the EU and Greenland have not demonstrated concrete interest in policy dialogue on wider policy issues.

Effectiveness, impact and sustainability: The instrument has contributed to improving educational attainment and administrative capability in Greenland. There are however no results yet with regard to diversification of the Greenlandic economy. A framework for policy dialogue has not been established, and there are limited convergences on wider policy issues between EU and Greenland in the period observed.

Efficiency: Efficiency gains relate to reporting requirements, which have been reduced and adapted to the Greenlandic context in this programming period.

Added value of the EU support compared with the Danish block grant: The EU adds value through its budget support and the conditions linked to this modality, which has strengthened the ability of the Greenlandic administration to plan and implement policies.

Coherence, consistency, complementarity and synergies: There is limited interface with other EFIs due to the specific and essentially political nature of the instrument, as well as the unique situation of Greenland itself.

Conclusion 1: The instrument is the result of a political settlement. It is a specific EFI that can only be understood against the background of the historical and political relationship between the EU and Greenland and Denmark, and the evolving interests of all stakeholders

Conclusion 2: The instrument triggered positive dynamics. It has ensured that Greenland is receptive to the EU playing a more prominent role in the Arctic, and to the EU having a better understanding of the special circumstances of the people living in the Arctic region.

Conclusion 3: The development aspects of the partnership have been relatively effective and efficient in contributing to sustainable development in Greenland, with strong ownership on the Greenlandic side in line with the development effectiveness agenda. The ownership could, however, have been broadened out to a wider stakeholder group – for example, civil society in Greenland.

Conclusion 4: The partnership has been less successful in responding to global challenges and developing a proactive agenda for the pursuit of mutual interests (as called for by the 2014 Council Decision). This is due to limited interests and incentives demonstrated by both the EU and Greenland with regard to setting up a functional framework for engaging in a structured, regular and result-oriented policy dialogue (beyond education).

Conclusion 5: There is scope for deepening the political partnership between the parties involved in the near future, provided that the practice of dialogue can be improved through better identification and articulation of interests, the development of a suitable dialogue framework, and a clear allocation of roles and responsibilities (particularly on the EU side).

Recommendation: Consideration may be given to broadening out the bi-annual policy dialogues on education to include wider contextual issues and to adjusting some of the indicators and targets in the instrument and in the programming document. The EU should also consider rethinking *how* the instrument can better deliver on the wider political aims of the partnership, seize new opportunities, and ensure the continuing relevance of the instrument beyond 2020.