

Implementation of the Structural Funds in Bulgaria

Monthly Brief,

April 2010

Horizontal issues and legislative procedures

- On 14 April 2010, the Council of Ministers adopted Decree No 70/2010 on Coordination in Management of EU Funds. The Decree sets up the functions of the Minister on Management of EU Funds and describes the mechanism on political and operational coordination of the European Funds. With this Decree the general responsibility for the system for management of EU Funds is transferred from the Minister of Finance to the Minister on Management of EU Funds. The Decree also provides for the establishment of Council on Coordination and Management of EU Funds, which to replace the current Council on Management of EU Funds and regulates the functions of the Central Coordination Unit (CCU).
- During the same session the Council of Ministers adopted also Decree No 69/2010, amending Council of Ministers Rules of Procedures. The Decree separates and defines the functions of the three directorates in CoM Administration performing the functions of Central Coordination Unit. The Decree provides also the transfer of OP Technical Assistance from the Ministry of Finance to the CoM Administration.
- The amended CoM Rules of Procedures foresees that Programming of EU Funds Directorate within CoM Administration will be responsible also for elaboration of National Programming Document (NPD) laying down the national development strategy for the period 2011-2020. CCU has already drafted a concept for NPD elaboration, which was approved by the CoM.
- The Council of Ministers adopted also Decree on Salaries in the budgetary sector. According to the Decree provisions the civil servants involved in managing of EU funds is envisaged to receive double salaries. The extra salary of the experts responsible for managing EU Structural Instruments will be covered by OP's Technical Assistance. Within the scope of Decree are included also the Central Coordination Unit and the directorate, responsible for EU Funds within the Agency 'Road Infrastructure', the AFCOS, the Internal Audit Units and additionally up to ten servants selected within the relevant administrations directly involved in EU funds management.
- An inter-ministerial working group for optimization of CoM Decree No 121/2007 had been established by order of the Minister for Management of EU funds. Three meetings of the working group were conducted. The amendments of the Decree aim at optimizing the procedures and providing for more publicity and transparency. An appeal procedure is also included. The draft will be published on www.eufunds.bg for public discussion.
- An interministerial working group, which to optimize and simplify the provisions of CoM Decree No 55/2007 lying down the Rules on Grants Award and Selection of contractors by private bodies, was established. An appealing procedure under the CoM Decree No 55/2010 is developed and the amendments are prepared, aimed at achieving improvements for fast, clear, effective and transparent provisions of the Decree. The draft document will be published on www.eufunds.bg for public discussion.

- A permanent working group on Public Procurement had been established and constitutive meeting was held on May 3. The formal establishment of the body will shortly follow. The group will act as an Advisory Body for OP MAs on the issues of programmes' implementation related to the legal framework in the field of Public Procurement. It includes representatives from Public Procurement Agency, Public Financial Inspection Agency, Bulgarian National Audit Office, Certifying Authority, Audit Authority, Commission on Protection of Competition, and all Managing Authorities of the Operational Programmes, co-financed by EU funds.
- The Central Coordination Unit has organised and hosted a meeting between the Managing Authorities of the Operational Programmes, co-financed by EU Funds, and the National Statistical Institute. The main goal of the meeting was to create conditions for increasing the information security for starting up schemes and procedures for the programmes, co-financed by EU Funds. Moreover, it was aimed at facilitation of implementation progress reporting (on the level of individual project, procedure/measure and programme).
- The Government considers elaboration of a special piece of legislation to deal with the process of verification of expenditures under the projects financed by the OP's. It should unify and shorten the time frames in which the Intermediate Bodies/Managing Authorities verify the expenditures' eligibility. This is expected to result in acceleration of disbursement process and therefore will increase the absorption rate.
- A special working group with the task to review the possibilities for financing projects under the OPs related with the activities the Ministry of Interior was established. The working group includes representatives of the Central Coordination Unit, Ministry of Interior and MAs of OPs. The working group has to make an analysis of the current possibilities and if there is a need to recommend possible changes in the legislation and OPs in order to expand the access to financing from the European funds for the structures of the Ministry of Interior.
- On 09 April 2010 a seminar on the implementation of EU Directives on Public Procurement was conducted. The seminar was attended by representatives from municipalities, the MAs, the IBs, the CA, and the CCU. The following issues were covered: selection and award criteria for public procurements, negotiated procedure without publication of a contract notice, exclusion of a candidate from a tendering procedure, conflict of interest, award of contracts not fully subject to the Public Procurement Directives, implementation of the remedies directive. The lecturers were Mr. Athanasios Balodimos and Mr. JordanTudjarov from the Directorate-General for the Internal Market and Services.
- On 16 April 2010 a meeting between representatives of The General Department of Archives at the Council of Ministers, Central Coordination Unit and all Managing Authorities of the Operational Programmes was held. During the meeting the possibility for establishing and financing a General Archive for all OPs was discussed. The establishment of the archive and its service could be financed through OP Technical Assistance.

Information and publicity measures

- During the period, the Managing Authorities of the Operational Programmes reviewed and updated the contents of their websites and started improving their English versions. Operational Programme "Administrative Capacity" held four information days in the cities of Plovdiv, Sofia and Gabrovo regarding its newly launched calls for proposals.

Certifying Authority

- In April 2010 the Certifying Authority submitted to the European Commission certified statements of expenditure and applications for payment under OP Transport, OP Regional Development, OP Competitiveness of the Bulgarian Economy and OP Administrative Capacity. The interim payment expected to be received from the Commission on this basis, amounts to 37.3 MEURO totally.
- In April 2010 the Certifying Authority resubmitted the two certificates from 2009 for the certified expenditure under European Regional Development Fund under OP Environment. In addition, the Certifying Authority submitted to the European Commission new certified Statement of expenditure and Application for payment under OP Environment for the certified expenditure under European Regional Development Fund as of 31.12.2009. The total requested amount from the European Commission under OP Environment is 1.1 MEURO.
- In compliance with Article 76, point 3 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 in April 2010 the Certifying Authority ensured the preparation and submission to the Commission of provisional forecasts of the envisaged Applications for payment for the current financial year and the subsequent financial year. For the seven Operational Programmes under SCF those forecasts were submitted to the European Commission through electronic system SFC 2007 and for Cross-Border Cooperation programmes on external borders of the EU they were submitted on paper versions.
- In April 2010 the Certifying Authority performed thorough analysis on the Government measure to increase of the advance payments to beneficiaries to 40% (20% in case of major projects in accordance with Article 39 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006) in order to accelerate the EU fund absorption.
- Regarding the functions of the National Fund Directorate as a Body responsible for receiving funds, the smooth payment process down the cascade to the final beneficiaries is a major priority. In April 2010, the National Fund Directorate approved requests for funds from the MA for the amount of 42.10 mln. euro under Operational Programmes - Administrative Capacity, Development of the Competitiveness of the Bulgarian Economy, Human Resources, Regional Development, Technical Assistance, Environment EFRD/CF and Transport EFRD.

Audit Authority

- Audits were conducted on operations under OP Regional Development, OP Transport, OP Competitiveness of Bulgarian Economy, OP Administrative Capacity and OP Human Resources Development”. Desk reviews and on the spot checks of the Beneficiaries were also conducted.
- System audits of OP “Environment” and the Certifying Authority (National fund Directorate) at the Ministry of Finance – field work phase.
- Three-days training seminar (7-9 April 2010) with the Audit Authority for ERDF of the Netherlands. The seminar was financed by MATRA Programme.
- Audit of DG Regional Policy of EC on the Winding up declaration of Sofia Airport. The Audit mission finished successfully without any major observations. Regarding the Audit Authority 3 minor observations were formulated.

- Finalization of 3 Audit Reports under ISPA/CF: system audit at the Managing Authority in MoEW, audit on project 2000/BG/16/P/PE/002 Set of 5 Regional Waste Disposal Sites (Montana, Ruse, Pernik, Sevlievo, Silistra, Sozopol) and audit on project 2006/BG/16/P/PA/001 - Technical assistance for Project Preparation in the Environmental Sector in Bulgaria. The final reports were sent to DG Regional Policy in April 2010.
- Finalization of 1 Audit Report under OP Technical Assistance - audit for independent assessment of remuneration and other allowances paid to carry out activities under OPTA to civil servants, employees on labour contract and/or other. The final reports were sent to DG Regional Policy in April 2010.

Operational Programmes

OP Transport

- Monthly progress meeting held on 20 April 2010.

Application forms (AF)

- Final draft of the Application form for Construction of Trakia Motorway project –Lots No's 2, 3 and 4 are under review by MA and JASPERS. MA sent comments to RIA to be reflected in the final version of the AF. It is expected AF to be sent to the EC in May.

Tender procedures

- The deadline for submission of offers for selection of contractor for „Preparation of Investment project for the third diameter of Sofia Metro- “Knyazhevo” residential area – CCP – ”Botevgradsko shose” blvd” - for “light metro” expired on 26.04.2010 and evaluation of the offers started on the same day.
- Deadline for submission of offers for selection of contractor for “Elaboration of model for managing of infrastructure projects under OP Transport” ” expired on 06.04.2010 and evaluation of the offers started on 7 April 2010.
- The deadline for submission of offers for selection of contractor for additional design and construction of the object: Trakia motorway / A-4 /" Orizovo - Burgas "section: Lot 3 Nova Zagora – Yambol” expired on 26.04.2010. The evaluation of offers is on-going.
- The tender documents for Lot 4 are submitted to the MA for approval in the beginning of March 2010. The announcement for Lot 4 tender procedure is published on 12 April 2010.

On-going tender procedures:

- Evaluation of offers for Selection of the Contractor for supervision of Implementation of: Additional design and construction of the object: Trakia motorway /A-4/" Orizovo - Burgas "section: Lot 2 Stara Zagora - Nova Zagora, from km 210 +100 to km 241 +900 is on-going.
- Tender for Selection of the contractor for additional design and construction of the object: Trakia motorway / A-4 /" Orizovo - Burgas "section: Lot 3 Nova Zagora - Yambol, from km 241 +900 to km 277+597"- construction of Lot 3 of Trakia Motorway has been launched on 26 February 2010. On 27 April 2010 the financial offers for 11 out of 47 offers were opened. Awarding of contract is expected by end of May 2010.

- Tender for “Preparation of a Strategy for Implementation of the European Railway Traffic Management System (ERTMS)” completed, contract is expected to be signed by the end of May.
- The deadline for submission of offers under the tendering procedure for selection of contractor for “Rehabilitation of railway infrastructure along sections of the railway line Plovdiv – Burgas” contract was extended by February 10, 2010. Evaluation procedure is on-going. On 27 April the financial offers for 3 out of 8 offers were opened. Only 3 tenderers were awarded for financial assessment. Expected completion of procedures both supervision and works – end of June 2010.

OP Environment

- In the last two months the MA and IB of OPE finished the screening of the projects financed under OPE. Proposals for changes were initiated by the MA and Beneficiaries. Each project contract is on different stage in the glint of the proposed concrete measures. After signing the annex to each contract, the temporarily measure for stopping the public procurement procedure will drop out.
- In execution of the Annual Indicative Working programme (AIWP) 5 procedures had been opened under Priority 1.
- Currently 3 procedures had been opened under priority axis 2 - for Sofia Municipality Integrated Waste Treatment System, Regional Waste Management Systems in Botevgrad and Pernik.
- The procedures under Priority Axis 3 of OPE, foreseen to be opened by the end of 2009/beginning of 2010 in the respective AIWP (2009 ad 2010) have not been opened yet, due to the future changes in CoM Decree 121/31 May 2007. The MA of OPE plans to open these procedures after accepting the mentioned changes in the Decree.. Currently “Preservation and restoration of biodiversity in the Republic of Bulgaria” and procedures for Development of NATURA 2000 Network” had been opened, as well as four procedures for development and management of protected territories.

OP Regional Development

- The evaluation of the project proposals under the grant scheme BG161PO001/1.1-07/2009 “Support for the provision of appropriate and cost-effective infrastructure of higher education in urban agglomerations” completed end of April. 13 projects of state universities within the 7 large municipalities (Sofia, Plovdiv, Varna, Burgas, Ruse, Stara Zagora and Pleven) at the total amount of MEUR 38,322 have been approved.
- 15 grant contracts in the total amount of MEuro 134, 485 have been signed with the NRA under the GS BG161PO001/2.1-01/2007 "Support for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of the second and third class roads” for reconstruction and rehabilitation of 26 road sections with a total length of 311 km.
- The revised Manual for management and implementation of the OPRD was adopted by the Head of the MA and is in force since 15.04.2010.

OP Competitiveness

- The Council of Ministers adopted Decree No 82 of 26 April 2010 amending and supplementing Council of Ministers’ Decree N 236 of 2007 on the Adoption of Detailed Rules on Eligibility of Expenditures under the Operational Programme co-financed by the

ERDF. The amendments concern the possibility the expenditures of the beneficiaries for preparation of project proposals incurred prior to the date of submission of the application but after the date of publication of the selection procedure to be considered eligible for financing. It is expected the amendments to be published in the Official Journal.

- On 21 April 2010 the Council of Ministers adopted on its meeting the amended Framework and Funding Agreements concerning JEREMIE. The purpose of both Agreements is to provide a legal basis for the transfer of funds (EUR 200 million) from the Operational Programme managed by the Managing Authority to European Investment Fund (EIF) and defining the conditions under which EIF shall contribute such funds in the registered capital of the Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) acting in its own name but for the ultimate benefit and on the account of the Republic of Bulgaria. The Government of the Republic of Bulgaria will implement the JEREMIE Initiative through a Holding Fund structure. JEREMIE is therefore to be implemented through the award of a contract directly to the EIF, providing for a direct financial contribution of the JEREMIE Contributions to EIF under the condition that the Republic of Bulgaria shall remain the ultimate economic beneficiary of, and shall be entitled to, any end result of the JEREMIE Initiative. With effect as of 31 December 2015, EIF shall transfer to the Government of the Republic of Bulgaria the EIF Participation Interest acquired as a result of the contribution of the JEREMIE Contribution to the share capital of the SPV, in compliance with the applicable European Union and Bulgarian laws and regulations by the time of exit.
- On 14 April the MA published an Invitation to the NGOs for their participation in selecting of NGOs' representatives in the Monitoring Committee of the OP. Only NGOs dealing in the following fields may apply:
 - Prevention of water, soil and air solution;
 - Preservation of Bio diversity and energy efficiency promotion;
 - Use of renewable energy sources;
 - Equal opportunities;
 - Competition (SME);
 - Other fields of competency related to the OP impact.

Each NGO may nominate only one representative. The applications are to be submitted within one month from the date of publication (**until 15 May**). The selection will be done on the basis of the documents provided. Selected representatives will be divided in permanent working groups to the MC.

- As of 30 April 2010 the total number of the contracts under the Operational Programme is 755 with a total amount of EUR 406.1 million (including JEREMIE); the amount of payments is about **EUR 16 million**. According to the Indicative Working Programme (2010) 16 calls should be open (including JEREMIE) with a total budget of **approximately EUR 665 million**.
- Currently, there are three on-going calls under the OP:
 - *“Development of innovative start-up companies by support for commercialization of innovative products, processes and services”*, launched on 29th of March 2010; the call is without deadline for applications and with a budget of **EUR 10 million**. According to the Indicative timetable set in point 4 of the Application Guidelines, an information campaign is envisaged for the period 1-30 May; the evaluation process will be carried out in the period May - December 2010 as the projects will be evaluated on the basis of the date of their submission (for example project

- proposals received in the period 29 March - 11 May will be evaluated by an Evaluation committee starting its work on 12 May).
- “*Support for establishment of technology parks*”, launched on 20 June 2009 with a total budget of **EUR 1, 5 million**. There are no applications received under this call so far.
 - “*Support for establishment and development of start-up innovative enterprises*”, launched on 20th of June 2009 too, with a budget of about **BGN 27 million**. Until the end of April 85 project proposals. were received
- Other two planned for first quarter of 2010 calls, according to IAWP (2010): “Technology modernization of small and medium sized enterprises” and procedure “Technology modernization of large enterprises” with a total budget of **EUR 80 million** should be launched in the beginning of May 2010.
 - Implementation of the OP Competitiveness: **As of 30 April** 32,83% (382 million euro) of the total resources available to the OP have been contracted, with 1,38% of the OP’ budget paid to the beneficiaries. As of January 2010 the total amount of payments was about EUR 4, 7 million; as of 28 February it was about EUR 11, 8 million; as of 31 March - EUR 12, 2 million and as of 30 April – EUR 16.1 million. Those figures show that the amount of payments in April compared to those until January is 3.5 times higher, as the OPC made a growth in payments for the last month (since 31 March 2010), totalling to above 3.8 million euro (as of 31 March 1, 05%; as of 30 April 1, 38%).
 - Regarding the public procurement procedure under Axis 5 of the OP Competitiveness: “Optimization of the management of the OP Competitiveness” launched by MEET in March, **12 applications** were received until the deadline for applications (**26 April**) . **On 28 April** an Evaluation Committee, appointed with an Order of the Deputy Minister of Economy, Energy and Tourism, started its work. The Evaluation Committee should evaluate the applications submitted by the deadline within 20 working days. A representative of the CCU is also included as a member of the Evaluation Committee. The expected main results of the procedure are as follows:
 - Profound analysis of the OP implementation;
 - Comparative analysis of the OP with other similar MS’ OPs;
 - Improved working process, management, monitoring and control procedures;
 - Improved Guidelines for applicants;
 - Effective and efficient mechanism for evaluation of the project proposals;
 - Risk management system;
 - ToR for Information System, etc.

Some of the activities under the public procurement procedure, especially Activity 1 “Analysis of OPC implementation and management process” for the period from the beginning of the implementation of the Operational Programme (October 2007) to the period of signing the contract with the subcontractor under the procedure will be considered as an evaluation of the OPC. Additionally to this, the MA envisages launching a procedure for interim evaluation of the OP in the second half of 2010.
 - On 30th of April 2010 a regular monthly meeting between the MA and IB of the OP was held. The main points of the Agenda were the monitoring of the implementation of the corrective measures discussed on previous monthly monitoring meetings, the progress of the implementation activities under the priority axes of the OP, discussion of identified

problems occurred in the process of implementation of the activities under the priority axes of the OP.

- On 14th and 15th of April 2010 representatives from OLAF – European Anti Fraud Office carried out two days on the spot check concerning “Lalov” case. The first meetings took place at MEET on 14 of April 2010 and the second on 15th of April 2010 at the office of respective company in the case. The meetings were concluded with a written report including main conclusions and results from the on the spot check, signed by all participants.
- Regarding the procedure for appointment of a Director of the “European Funds for Competitiveness” Directorate at Ministry of Economy, Energy and Tourism (MA of OP Competitiveness) the deadline for submission of applications **was 14 April 2010**. It is expected the appointment of a Director to be done in the beginning of May 2010.
- Regarding the finalization of the written procedure concerning the proposal of the MA for approval of modification of the Indicative Annual Working Programme for 2010, for modification of general selection criteria for operations under procedure „Provision of consulting services for enterprises experiencing financial and economic impediments” and for approval of joint proposals of MA and IB concerning the implementation of the contracts for grant financial assistance under the OP, contracted in 2008-2009, the Secretariat of the MC sent **on 28 April 2010**:
 - Minutes of taking decision by written procedure (the deadline for written opinions was **9 April 2010**);
 - Summary information on the received comments and positions on the MA proposal;
 - Final version of the Indicative Annual Working Programme for 2010;
 - General selection criteria for operations under procedure „Provision of consulting services for enterprises experiencing financial and economic impediments”.
- With respect to the new proposals on the procedure „Provision of consulting services for enterprises experiencing financial and economic impediments”, made by the EC, the MA of the OP suggests to adopt the second proposed approach, under which the selection of consulting company is to be conducted by the applicants, taking into consideration the conditions regarding the consulting organizations, stipulated in the operations selection criteria. This proposal will be reflected in the General selection criteria and the changes will be additionally presented to the MC for decision by written procedure.
- **On 21 April** the MA sent to the EC a letter concerning the complaints procedure, in particular complaint of Mr. Penchev, complaint of Mr. Mitev as well as profound examination of all complaints and claims submitted by beneficiaries of the OP.

OP Technical Assistance

- There is some delay in the indicative program for the first quarter of 2010. The main reason for that is the lack of readiness for submission of proposals developed by the beneficiaries because of the structural changes which were made. To overcome the delay MA held informal consultations and cooperation in the preparation of project proposals.
- Within the objective of accelerating implementation of existing projects, in April MA ensured the modifications of projects to successful implementation and execution of objectives and actions on them.

- MA acted on the recommendations of the presented report on an audit by EA AEUF to assess the costs of salaries and bonuses paid for performance of activities of OPTA civil servants, under an employment contract and / or other persons, and in conjunction with the findings of the inspection visits at MA by CA.
- The amendment of Decree 229/2009 of 27.4.2010 adopting the Rules of the Council of Ministers and its Administration Directorate OP Technical Assistance as the OPTA MA became part of the Administration Council of Ministers and Head of the MA, respectively - Minister on management of EU funds (by Decree 70/2010 of coordination in the management of EU funds). These changes require modifications in the management and control of operational program, all processes and procedures comply with the new institutional structure of the program.

OP Human Resources Development

- The progress under the procedures which are targeted to implementation of certain anti-crisis measures on the labour market – prequalification of unemployed people; increase of qualification and key competences of employed persons remains to be stable. Under “I can” so far were received more than 46 000 applications while 27 000 vouchers for more than 17 000 000 BGN were already within the final beneficiaries. The MA initiated written procedure for increasing the allocation for the operation and the EA temporarily suspended the approval of applications.
- Under the “Development” scheme, “New choice – development and realization” project, trainings were conducted for acquiring or increasing of the professional qualification of unemployed who are registered in the Employment Offices. During the past month under the project were submitted 100 applications from employers for opening of job positions – 89 from the state administration and 11 from the private sector. The total number of the received applications from employers is 919.
- On 28.04.2010 the Ministry of Education, Youth and Science completed the procedure for applying for scholarships and awards for the summer semester of the school year 2009/2010 under the project “Students scholarships for equal access to education and increasing the motivation for better results”. 16 821 students from 49 Universities will receive scholarships for the summer semester at the total amount of 7 569 450 BGN. 17 370 students will receive single awards at the total budget of 3 474 000 BGN.
- On 30.04.2010 expired the deadline for submission of project proposal BG051PO001-5.3.03 “National information and promotion campaigns for encouraging the healthful living through physical activity” which main objective is to increase the motivation of the active population and employees with specific health risks for healthy conduct through increasing of the physical activities. The direct beneficiary – The Ministry of Physical Education and Sports submitted project proposal and its evaluation is forthcoming.
- On 15.04.2010 the Agency for Social Assistance launched a procedure for direct awarding BG051PO001-5.2.08 “Not to leave a single child”, component 1 “Planning of deinstitutionalization measures” which objective is to undertake concrete measures for real deinstitutionalization of children from the specialized institutions. The direct beneficiary - the Agency for Child Protection should submit the respective project proposal by 15.06.2010. The budget of the procedure is 5 000 000 BGN.

OP Administrative Capacity

- The evaluation of the received project proposal under the procedure „Competent and effective state administration” for direct awarding with beneficiary – the Institute of

Public Administration was completed and the coordination procedure with the CCU for avoidance of double financing was successfully conducted. The signing of a contract is forthcoming.

- On 23.04.2010, the Managing Authority launched new procedure for direct awarding with beneficiary – Council of Ministers’ Administration. The procedure is under Sub-priority 1.1. “Effective structure of the state administration” and is targeted on identification of the problematic areas in the structure of the administration and on this basis to undertake the necessary measures for the optimization of its work. The budget is 3 000 000 BGN and the deadline for submission of the project proposal is 01.07.2010. On 28.04.2010 the Managing Authority held information day on this procedure.
- The MA organized and held information days in Plovdiv and Gabrovo, respectively on 26 and 29.04.2010 for the call for proposals for the state administration under “Modern human resources management in the state administration” procedure launched on 31.03.2010, On 19.04.2010 an information day was conducted in the Ministry of Finance for the central administration, on three procedures for calls for proposal launched in March – “Effective coordination and partnership in policy-making and implementation of policies”; “Modern human resources management in the state administration. Beneficiary – state administration” and “Improvement of the service delivery to the citizens and the business sector, including through e-governance development”.
- The competition procedure for appointment of new Director of the Managing Authority completed and the deadline for appealing of the results of the competition expired. The new Director will be officially appointed in short terms.

Implementation of ex-ISPA/CF 1164

- Monthly progress meetings in Environment and Transport sectors were held respectively on 22 April 2010 and 20 April 2010.
- In order to secure the proper implementation of projects at risk some ad-hock site visits were carried out (in the towns of Kardjali, Smoljan and Montana). These visits were led by Mr. Donchev, Minister on Management of EU Funds. Separate meetings with the Contractors were held, in which very strict conditions were laid down.
- On-the spot check of Plovdiv-Svilengrad Railway project was held on 28-29 April 2010. The on-the-spot check was performed jointly with the MA within MTITC, National Fund and CCU.
- Danube Bridge Sub-Monitoring Committee meeting agreed for 21-21 April was cancelled due to the restriction on the air traffic.
- Minutes of the meeting of the Joint Bulgarian-Romania Working Group for Danube Bridge project held on 23 March 2010 as regards choosing of the possible solution for setting up of a joint Bulgarian and Romanian entity for management and operation of the second Danube Bridge is expected to be finalized in the beginning of May.

Data on OPs financial progress is attached.