

Implementation of the Structural funds in Bulgaria

Monthly Brief, November 2015

Horizontal issues and legislative procedures

- Monthly update of the ExAC implementation status was carried out and a summarized Action plan for implementation of the ExAC that are not fulfilled was published at www.eufunds.bg.
- On 27.11.2015 the first PA Monitoring Committee was held with its main theme the actual status of the ex-ante conditionalities, presented by the responsible Bulgarian authorities.
- A report to the CoM was prepared on the ExAC status of implementation.
- Ensuring the functioning of Working group “Regional policy and coordination of Structural instruments”:
 - Bulgarian representatives in SAWP, COESIF and EGESIF were provided with comments and instructions on the discussed documents after coordination with the relevant domestic institutions;
 - National position for General Affair Council (18.11.2015) was prepared;
 - Coordination of the activities on implementation of the Peer-to-Peer instrument of the COM.

Information and Publicity

- On 2-3 November a meeting of the National network of communication officers of MAs took place in Belchin Bania. The main topic of discussion was the content of the book. The representatives of MAs took decision to separate the content of the book in 5 main chapters: “Inclusive Growth”, “Smart Growth”, “Sustainable Growth”, “Good Governance” and “Communication”. All participants voted in favour and started the preparation of texts and photos for the book.
- In November CCU also continued the regular update of the Single information web-portal with news, information and documents about 2007-2013 and 2014-2020 programming periods as well as with information about the activities of the DIPs for EU Cohesion Policy. The Facebook profile of Eufunds.bg has also been actively used to disseminate information about the operational programmes and the work of the DIPs.

Activities of DIPs:

- Based on the Monthly reports of DIPs, in November 2015 there were:
 - a total number of visitors in DIPs amounting to 1 137 (until now a total of 68 247)
 - a total of 1 334 requests for information received (until now a total of 65 440)
 - a total of 1 334 answers of requests of information were sent (until now a total of 65 075)
 - 717 publications in media (until now a total of 26 467)
 - 248 events with a total number of 5 262 people invited (until now a total of 5 212 events/201 894 people invited)
 - 4 009 were present at organized by DIPs events (until now a total of 161 031).

Events, trainings, campaigns:

- On 16 November 2015 the second for 2015 national information campaign was launched. “Together for Empathy” was joined initiative of the Network of 28 information centres, the Bulgarian Red Cross and the MA of OP “Human resources development”. The aim of the campaign was to popularize the opportunities under OPHRD 2014-2020 through trainings for coordinators and volunteers of the BRC to make them able to disseminate this information during the annual campaign for distribution of food to people in need. Within the period 16-25 Nov the DIPs conducted nearly 200 events for the target group with total of 4000 participants.
- Moreover based on the participation of the DIPs in the information campaigns OPs the Network continued to organize local events for promotion of the open calls for proposals and series of events dedicated to the work with the Unified Management and Information System for users in terms of compulsory e-submission of project proposals.

Certifying Authority

- In November 2015 the Certifying Authority performed checks on Reports on Certification and Statements of Eligible Expenditure submitted by Managing Authorities for four Operational Programs: OP “Regional Development”, OP “Human Resources Development”, OP “Transport” and OP “Environment”.
- In November 2015 the Certifying Authority performed on-the-spot checks at Managing Authorities before certification of expenditures for the three Operational Programs – OP “Regional Development”, OP “Human Resources Development” and OP “Environment”. The findings were sent to the Managing Authorities.
- The Certifying Authority submitted to the European Commission in November two Certificates: one for OP “Regional Development” and one for OP “Human Resources Development”;
- In November 2015, four payments from the EC for the amount of 164 696 871 EUR were received as a result of submitted Applications for payment, as follows: two tranches under OP “Environment” – one for ERDF priority axes amounting to 52 853 581 EUR and one for CF priority axes amounting to 90 114 987 EUR, one tranche under OP “Competitiveness of the Bulgarian Economy“ amounting to 19 969 544 EUR and one tranche under OP “Administrative Capacity” amounting to 1 758 759 EUR.

OP / FUND	Certified expenditures up to 30.11.2015	Interim payments received from EC as per 30.11.2015
ERDF	3 327 395 880 €	2 345 135 587 €
1.OP Competitiveness of the Bulgarian Economy	1 421 837 970 €	824 891 602 €
2. OP Regional Development	1 123 233 741 €	914 081 008 €
3. OP Technical Assistance	45 597 825 €	36 831 164 €
4. OP Transport	392 289 709 €	276 560 673 €
5. OP Environment	344 436 635 €	292 771 139 €
CF	1 958 332 792 €	1 511 093 647 €
1. OP Environment	853 283 552 €	679 942 371 €
2. OP Transport	1 105 049 240 €	831 151 276 €
ESF	1 272 807 464 €	1 007 996 198 €

1. OP Human Resources Development	1 130 845 139 €	887 338 660 €
2. OP Administrative Capacity	141 962 325 €	120 657 538 €
Total 2007-2013 SCF	6 558 536 136 €	4 864 225 432 €
Total IPA Cross-border Programmes	63 652 016 €	45 365 822 €

Operational programmes 2007 -2013:

OP “Environment”

- On November 06, 2015 was opened the new Regional System of Waste Management in Pleven. The landfill will serve 186,000 people from the municipalities of Pleven, Dolni Dubnik, Iskar and Pordim and will open 56 jobs. Besides cell waste with a capacity of 785,500 tons, landfill includes separation and composting plant, as well as a center for transfer of waste. The project is worth MEUR 14.
- On November 16, 2015 in Aksakovo was put into operation the new regional system for waste management. It will serve nearly 365,000 people from Aksakovo, Beloslav and Varna. There are landfill, separation and composting plants. The value of the investment is MEUR 14.2.
- Since November 16, 2015 the National System for Environmental Monitoring now has the most modern equipment for measuring the purity of air, soil, water and noise levels. 34 stationary laboratories of the system are upgraded with new equipment, which guarantee the accuracy of the data from all the samples and tests. Moreover, another 6 new mobile laboratories were delivered - in Sofia, Plovdiv, Stara Zagora, Varna, Rousse and Pleven. Modern equipment was purchased under a project implemented by the Executive Environment Agency (EEA).

OP “Transport”

- In the beginning of November 2015 has completed the full installation of the system for automated collection and analysis of data on road traffic. The automated system will replace the manual system used till now. The system is part of the project “Integrated system for analysis and assessment of traffic on motorways and first class roads in Bulgaria, which are part of the TEN-T network”.
- On November 27, 2015 representatives from the National Railway Infrastructure Company held a presentation in Sofia. On the event was presented the project “Design of the construction of the railway line Vidin - Sofia: update of the project and preparation of Vidin-Medkovets railway”. The project envisages the construction of railroad that will be used by domestic and international passenger and cargo traffic. The project is implemented in two lots:
 - Lot 1: Update and optimization of the preliminary design for the railway sections Medkovets-Ruska Byala and Ruska Byala-Stolnik;
 - Lot 2: Update of the preliminary design and design of a detailed master plan and technical project for Vidin-Medkovets railway.

OP “Development of the competitiveness of the Bulgarian economy”

- Gas Interconnector Project Bulgaria-Serbia. By Ordinance No ПД-16-1000/17.11.2015 of the MA of OPC, the deadline of the project duration of the first phase was extended until 31st December, 2015.

Programming period 2014-2020:

OP Regions in Growth

- On November 06, 2015 a Working meeting took place at the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works among the involved institutions to discuss the prioritization of vocational schools, which will be supported under Priority Axes 3 Regional Educational Infrastructure of the Operational Programme “Regions in Growth” 2014-2020;
- On November 11, 2015 a report on the national survey about value of time was published. The updated data on the value of time was presented. It will be used in preparing Cost-Benefit Analysis for infrastructural projects in transport sector in Bulgaria for the period 2014-2020. The results from the implementation of the contract have horizontal character and will be applied in the preparation of CBA for infrastructural projects.

OP Environment

- On November 13, 2015 took place the 4th Meeting of the Monitoring Committee of the OP "Environment". The agenda addressed issues related to the changes under OPE in co-financing from the Cohesion Fund. It was adopted also the Indicative Annual Work Programme for 2016 OPE 2014-2020.

OP Transport and Transport Infrastructure

- Upon acceptance of the work of the commission appointed for the conduct of the restricted tender procedure “Design and build of Struma Motorway, Lot 3.1”, “AM Struma 3.1” JV has been appointed as a contractor for this tender.
- Upon acceptance of the work of the commission appointed for the conduct of the open tender procedure “Supervision of the design and build of Struma Motorway, Lot 3.1”, “SN AM Struma Lot 3.1” JV has been appointed as a contractor for this tender. The amount of the contract is EUR 866 767 excluding VAT and the time for completion is 60 months.
- The 4th meeting of the Monitoring Committee of OPTTI 2014-2020 took place on November 25-26, 2015. Within the two-day meeting were discussed the priority projects till 2020 and the status of projects financed by the OPT 2007-2013, which are still not implemented.
- On November 30, 2015 an open tender procedure was launched with subject: “Design and build of Struma motorway Lot 3.1 Zheleznitsa tunnel” with National Company Strategic Infrastructure Projects as an Employer. The estimated value is EUR 127 822 970 excluding VAT and the time for completion is 1400 days.

Operational Program “Innovations and Competitiveness” (OPIC)

- On 2nd November, 2015 package of documents under procedure: “Support for innovation in enterprises” were published for public discussion on the internet address of the Operational Program: www.opcompetitiveness.bg. This is the first procedure of OPIC under Priority Axis 1” Technological development and Innovation’. The Methodology and criteria for

selection of operations were approved on 26th November by the members of the Monitoring Committee. The procedure is envisaged to be launched in December, 2015.

The objective of the procedure is provision of investment support of increasing innovation activity of enterprises in the thematic areas identified in Innovation Strategy for Smart Specialization. The total amount of the financial grant aid under the call for proposals is BGN 97 791 500.

- On 9th November, 2015 was the third deadline for submission of project proposals for applicants with codes of major economic activity within the high-technology and medium high-technology industrial sectors under the procedure: BG16RFOP002-2.001 „Improving the Production Capacity of SMEs”, Priority Axis 2 “Entrepreneurship and Capacity for Growth of SMEs”, Investment Priority 2.2 “Capacity of SMEs to Grow”.
The first 202 contracts for funding under OPIC and within the first deadline for submission for project proposals for the respective procedure are expected to be contracted not later than December, 2015. The projects amount to BGN 116, 5 million.
- On 26th November, 2015 in the Council of Ministers was held the 1st official Meeting of the Monitoring Committee for the Operational Program “Innovations and Competitiveness” 2014-2020 (OPIC) and Operational Program “Initiative for Small and Medium Enterprises” 2014-2020. (OP ISME). The meeting was chaired by Mr. Filip Kirev, Head of the Political Cabinet of the Minister of Economy and Vice - Chairman of the Monitoring Committee. The meeting was attended by representatives of DG "Regional and urban policy" of the European Commission. The members and the guests of the committee were welcomed by Mrs. Vittoria Alliata di Villafranca, European Commission, Director, Directorate in DG "Regional and urban policy".

OP Human Resources Development

- Third Monitoring Committee (MC) meeting took place on 11 November 2015. The criteria for selection of the following operations were approved:
 - “Socio-economic integration of vulnerable groups”;
 - “Training of adults passed literacy courses”;
 - “Provision of services at home through vouchers”;
 - “Improvement of the emergency treatment”;
 - “Specialization in Healthcare”;
 - “Specialized trainings for the MLSP employees”.

The total budget of the 6 operations is BGN 109,5 mln.

The MC of OPHRD 2014-2020 also approved changes in the selection criteria of 4 operations:

- 2014BG05M9OP001-3.2015.001 “Developing and implementing a system for monitoring, evaluation and control of the National Strategy of the Republic of Bulgaria for Roma Integration 2012-2020” – the execution period of the procedure was extended until the end of 2016;
- BG05M9OP001-3.004 “Optimization and innovations in General Labour Inspectorate Executive Agency” – the budget of the procedure increased to BGN 7,1 mln.;
- BG05M9OP001-1.003 “New workplace 2015” – the budget of the procedure increased to BGN 100 mln.;

- BG05M9OP001-1.006 “Trainings and Employment” – the budget of the procedure increased to BGN 92 mln.

OP Science and Education for Smart Growth

- OPSESG MA launched a procedure for direct awarding BG05M20P001-2.003 “Developing students’ abilities and increasing their motivation for learning through activities, which develop specific knowledge, skills and competences (Your hour) – Phase 1”. The objective is to raise the achievements in schools by complementing, developing and building competencies, knowledge and skills acquired through the compulsory school education. The budget is BGN 140 mln., the deadline for submission of application is 27.01.2016. Only e-application is foreseen.
- OPSESG MA launched a procedure for direct awarding BG05M20P001-2.005 “Maintenance and improvement of the developed rating system for the universities – Phase 1”. The objective is successful implementation of policy in the field of higher education and achieving the objectives set out in the Strategy for Development of Higher Education in the Republic of Bulgaria for the period 2014-2020. The budget is 3 mln. leva, the deadline for submission of application is 27.01.2016. Only e-application is foreseen.

OP Good Governance

- OPGG MA launched a grant procedure BG05SFOP001-3.002 “Increasing the competence of the magistrates and court officials through effective training at the National Institute of Justice”. The objective is to provide quality vocational training, information, research, international and other activities which are targeted at increasing the efficiency of justice. The budget is BGN 10 mln., the deadline for submission of applications is 31.12.2016. Only e-application is foreseen.
- OPGG MA launched a grant procedure BG05SFOP001-3.001 “Strategic projects under the updated Strategy for continuing the reform of the judiciary and Strategy for introduction of e-governance and e-Justice in justice sector for the period 2014-2020”. The objective is to support the efforts for modernization and reform of the judicial system. The budget is BGN 35 mln., the deadline for submission of applications is 31.12.2016. Only e-application is foreseen.
- Second Monitoring Committee (MC) meeting took place on 20 November 2015. The MA presented the progress in the implementation of the Indicative Annual Work Programme (IAWP) for 2015, as well as the funding opportunities under the proposed IAWP for 2016.
- On 18 November 2015 an Annual Information Event was conducted for presenting the progress and achieved results under the three programmes, managed by the “Good Governance” Directorate at the Council of Ministers: OP “Good Governance”, OP “Technical Assistance” and OP “Administrative Capacity”. It was reported that certified expenditures under OPTA and OPAC were respectively 79 % and 81,6 % of the budget. 6 procedures amounting to BGN 79,7 mln. will be launched in 2016 under OPGG.

OP under the Fund for European Aid to the most deprived 2014-2020

- CoM’s decision No 902 for designation of the Managing and the Certifying Authority was adopted on 16.11.2015 and sent to the EC via “SFC 2014”.
- One of the participants in the tender procedure for supply of 21 types of food products appealed the decision for selection of supplier for 12 of the abovementioned positions before

the Commission for protection of competition (CPC). The CPC has recognized the claim of the company. The Ministry of Labour and Social Policy will appeal the decision of the CPC before the Supreme Administrative Court because the proposal of this particular company doesn't meet the requirements of the programme.

For the remaining 9 products suppliers have already been selected and the contracts concluded.

Data on OPs financial progress is attached.

OP Implementation as of 30.11.2015

EURO

OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME	Programme budget *			Contracted		Payments		Received payments from EC	
	Total	EU Funding	National co-funding	Total as of 30.11.2015	% implementation	Total as of 30.11.2015	% implementation	Received payments from the EC (EU part) as of 30.11.2015	% implementation
OP Transport	2 003 481 166 €	1 624 479 623 €	379 001 543 €	2 000 069 056 €	99,83%	1 633 773 901 €	81,55%	1 272 750 164 €	78,35%
OP Environment	1 717 164 786 €	1 395 379 676 €	321 785 110 €	2 096 716 237 €	122,10%	1 751 876 709 €	102,02%	1 120 102 298 €	80,27%
OP Regional Development	1 601 274 759 €	1 361 083 545 €	240 191 214 €	1 688 883 372 €	105,47%	1 468 272 385 €	91,69%	1 036 578 527 €	76,16%
OP Competitiveness	1 162 215 551 €	987 883 218 €	174 332 333 €	1 171 732 824 €	100,82%	1 093 509 064 €	94,09%	913 801 092 €	92,50%
OP Technical Assistance	54 658 454 €	46 459 686 €	8 198 768 €	58 288 563 €	106,64%	52 225 859 €	95,55%	41 177 850 €	88,63%
OP Human Resource Development	1 213 869 575 €	1 031 789 139 €	182 080 436 €	1 271 600 495 €	104,76%	1 151 867 627 €	94,89%	980 199 682 €	95,00%
OP Administrative Capacity	174 057 556 €	147 948 923 €	26 108 633 €	189 422 000 €	108,83%	163 200 428 €	93,76%	134 487 903 €	90,90%
TOTAL SCF	7 926 721 847 €	6 595 023 810 €	1 331 698 037 €	8 476 712 547 €	106,94%	7 314 725 975 €	92,28%	5 499 097 516 €	83,38%
Rural Development	3 166 565 492 €	2 551 518 762 €	615 046 730 €	3 139 182 004 €	99,14%	2 649 230 309 €	83,66%	2 154 256 945 €	84,43%
OP Fisheries	83 710 892 €	62 783 169 €	20 927 723 €	95 232 321 €	113,76%	69 719 572 €	83,29%	49 409 196 €	78,70%
TOTAL AGRICULTURAL FUNDS	3 250 276 384 €	2 614 301 931 €	635 974 453 €	3 234 414 325 €	99,51%	2 718 949 880 €	83,65%	2 203 666 141 €	84,29%
TOTAL	11 176 998 231 €	9 209 325 741 €	1 967 672 490 €	11 711 126 872 €	104,78%	10 033 675 855 €	89,77%	7 702 763 657 €	83,64%

* The budgets of OPE, OPTA, OPAC, RDP and OPF are decreased with the amounts of decommitments for 2013 and 2014