

Implementation of the Structural funds in Bulgaria

Monthly Brief, October 2015

Horizontal issues and legislative procedures

- During the month, the Council of Ministers adopted the second revision of the Partnership Agreement of Bulgaria. The changes in the document are necessary in order to reflect the amended Multiannual Financial Framework (EC 28) and the changes introduced in the Bulgarian programmes in the process of their approval by the EC. The revised Partnership Agreement was submitted to the EC via SFC 2014.
- In the period 28-30 October 2015 was held a seminar "Functions and responsibilities of the Monitoring Committees for the programs and the partnership agreement for programming period 2014-2020", organized by the CCU. The event was aimed at representatives in the monitoring committees of local authorities, socio-economic partners and the non-governmental sector. The focus of the seminar was related to basic requirements for the work of the monitoring committees and the role of the partners in the process. The aim was to strengthen the participation of the partners in the work of the monitoring committees as to guarantee the application of the partnership principle.
- On October 7, the draft of a Law on the ESIF management was adopted by the Parliament at first reading, according the parliamentary procedure for adoption of laws. During the month started preparing a detailed consideration of the draft of a law for the second reading, after then, it will be finally adopted.
- 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.
- 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.
- A working meeting with the EIB was held on the cooperation framework 2014-2020 and the MoU signing event.

Information and Publicity

- On 21-22 October total of 10 representatives of the National network of communication officers of MAs attended the sixth edition of EuroPCom in Brussels. Within the event the representatives of the CCU were awarded in the competition for information campaign. The campaign "Let's create together Bulgaria 2020" was nominated for the third award for public communication among 29 proposals of 17 countries.
- On 27 October a meeting of the National network of communication officers of MAs took place in Sofia. The main topic of discussion was the forthcoming preparation a book for all programmes as common event. On the meeting had discussed content of the book and the participation of all programs in the preparation of texts and images. 12 December 2015 was set as the date for the printing of the book. Then it will be circulated to the general public.
- In October the Central Coordination Unit (CCU) continued the media campaign in national TV and radio stations. During the reported period more than 100 spots were broadcasted in 4 national TV channels and 2 radio stations.
- 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 October 2015 there were:
 - a total number of visitors in DIPs amounting to 1 304 (until now a total of 67 110)
 - a total of 1 378 requests for information received (until now a total of 64 106)
 - a total of 1 402 answers of requests of information were sent (until now a total of 63 741)
 - 462 publications in media (until now a total of 25 734)
 - 114 events with a total number of 3 315 people invited (until now a total of 4 964 events/196 632 people invited)
 - 2 308 were present at organized by DIPs events (until now a total of 157 024).

Events, trainings, campaigns:

- On 8-9 October 2015 in Ruse was held the 7-th coordination meeting of the Network of 28 district information points. Total of 49 representatives of 28 DIPs attended the meeting. The main points of discussion were forthcoming initiatives of the network until the end of 2015.
- 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 October 2015 the Certifying Authority performed checks on Reports on Certification and Statements of Eligible Expenditure submitted by all Managing Authorities for seven Operational Programs: OP “Regional Development”, OP “Competitiveness of the Bulgarian Economy”, OP “Administrative Capacity”, OP “Human Resources Development”, OP “Environment”, OP “Transport” and OP “Technical Assistance” as well as for the three IPA Cross-Border Programs.
- In October 2015 the Certifying Authority performed on-the-spot checks at all Managing Authorities for the seven Operational Programs under SFC as well as in the MA of the IPA Cross-Border Programs. The findings were sent to the Managing Authorities for all programmes.
- The Certifying Authority submitted to the European Commission in October twelve Certificates, as follows: two for OP “Regional Development”, two for OP “Administrative Capacity”, two for OP “Environment” – one for CF priority axe and one for ERDF priority axes, one for OP “Competitiveness of the Bulgarian Economy”, one for OP “Human Resources Development” and one for OP “Technical Assistance”, as well as three Certificates for IPA Cross-Border Programs;
- In October 2015, one payment from the EC for the amount of **7 401 866 EUR** was received as a result of submitted Application for payment under OP “Administrative Capacity”.
- Three advance payments for IPA Cross-Border Programs 2014-2020, amounting to 5 122 234 EUR were received from the EC in October 2015.

OP / FUND	Certified expenditures up to 31.10.2015	Interim payments received from EC as per 31.10.2015
ERDF	3 336 013 260 €	2 272 312 462 €
1.OP Competitiveness of the Bulgarian Economy	1 421 837 970 €	804 922 058 €
2. OP Regional Development	1 131 851 121 €	914 081 008 €
3. OP Technical Assistance	45 597 825 €	36 831 165 €
4. OP Transport	392 289 709 €	276 560 673 €
5. OP Environment	344 436 635 €	239 917 558 €
CF	1 958 332 792 €	1 420 978 660 €
1. OP Environment	853 283 552 €	589 827 384 €
2. OP Transport	1 105 049 240 €	831 151 276 €
ESF	1 253 687 227 €	1 006 237 438 €
1. OP Human Resources Development	1 111 724 902 €	887 338 659 €
2. OP Administrative Capacity	141 962 325 €	118 898 779 €
Total 2007-2013 SCF	6 548 033 279 €	4 699 528 560 €
Total IPA Cross-border Programmes	63 652 016 €	45 365 822 €

Operational programmes 2007 -2013:

OP “Environment”

- New Information and Education Visitor Centre of the National Park Pirin Directorate was opened on 10.12.2015 in Bansko, built under the project "Sustainable management of the National Park Pirin". The site is worth about MEUR 325.
- On 10.20.2015 held an official opening ceremony for the Panagyurishte Region Landfill, constructed in partnership between Municipalities of Panagyurishte and Strelcha, and the Regional Waste Management Association. The Landfill will serve about 30 thousand residents. The total project cost is over MEUR 9.
- On 28.10.2015 was opened renewed and rehabilitated water supply network in Bankya. The total project value is about MEUR 35.
- On 29.10.2015 was opened the reconstructed WWTP in Ravda. The facility collects, treats the wastewater from Nessebar, Sunny Beach, Sveti Vlas, Kosharitsa and Ravda, and settlements.

OP “Transport”

- On October 19, 2015 were installed the first 3 systems for automated monitoring of the road weather conditions within 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”. The stations are located near Montana, near Kresna, and one at the entrance of Burgas. The overall value of the contract is EUR 2 000 000 without VAT.

- On October 22, 2015 began the construction of section 2 of the Western Arc of Sofia Ring Road. The implementation of the section includes construction of a direct route and reconstruction of Sofia Ring Road. Its total length is 5,3 km. The value of the construction contract is EUR 52 151 703, incl. VAT. The construction supervision contract is for EUR 367 639, incl. VAT.
- The Construction of Dupnitsa – Blagoevgrad Section of Struma Motorway was completed and opened for traffic on October 22, 2015. Lot 2 is the longest and the most complex section of Struma motorway up to now. It includes 42 big structures - 7 viaducts, 15 bridges, 6 overpasses and 14 underpasses.
- On October 29, 2015 Lot 1 Orizovo – Dimitrovgrad of Maritsa motorway was opened for traffic. With the building of the 31,4 km section the overall construction of the motorway was completed – from its connection with Trakia motorway to the border control checkpoint Kapitan Andreevo at the Bulgarian-Turkish border.

OP “Development of the competitiveness of the Bulgarian economy”

- **Sofia Tech Park:**
 - On 8th October 2015 the site of the future Science and Technology Park was visited by Mr. Carlos Moedas - European Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation. The event was attended by Mr. Boyko Borissov, Prime Minister of the Republic of Bulgaria, Mr. Tomislav Donchev, Deputy Prime Minister for EU Funds and Economic Policies and Mr. Todor Tanev, Minister of Education and Science.
 - On 28th October 2015 in Grand Hotel Sofia was held a conference on the topic of "Strategies for Supporting the R&D Sector in Bulgaria and Republic of Korea". The purpose of the event was to compare the experience of Bulgaria and Republic of Korea in the field of strategies and instruments for supporting the R&D sector and to determine good practices which can be taken from Korea and applied to the R&D sector in Bulgaria. During the official opening of the conference a signing ceremony took place for a Memorandum of Understanding between Sofia Tech Park JSC and Innopolis Foundation. The conference was opened by Mr. Maeng-ho Shin - Ambassador of Republic of Korea to Bulgaria, Mr. Cha Dong Kim - President and CEO of Innopolis Foundation, Ms. Elitsa Panayotova - Executive Director of Sofia Tech Park JSC.
 - On 29 th October 2015 in Grand Hotel Sofia was held a scientific forum on the topic of "Technology Commercialization and Technology Transfer - How it is Done in Bulgaria and Republic of Korea". The main purpose of the event was to compare the experience of Bulgaria and Republic of Korea in the field of technology transfer and commercialization of research and technologies. The key topics were “Supporting innovation: the first science and technology park in Bulgaria”, “The experience of Republic of Korea in the field of technology commercialization”, “The R&D model of Innopolis and successful technology commercialisation examples”, “Technology Appraisal System and Technology Finance”, “Creation of spin-off enterprises”, “Technology transfer in Bulgaria”. Among the speakers of the forum were Dr. Junseok Seo, Innopolis Foundation, Prof. Kyung Jin Hyung, KIBO (Korea Technology Finance Corporation), Ms. Elitsa Panayotova, Executive Director, Sofia Tech Park JSC; Ms. Zlatina Karova, Director, Science Department, Ministry of Education and Science.

Programming period 2014-2020:

OP Regions in Growth

- On September 28 and October 02, 2015 a training course on state aid took place addressing the experts from the Intermediate Bodies for evaluation and selection of projects to be funded under Priority Axis 1 of the Operational Programme “Regions in Growth” 2014-2020, procedure BG16RFOP001-1.001-039 ”Implementation of Integrated Urban Development Plans 2014-2020”;
- On October 06, 2015 the first joint meeting of the Monitoring Committee of the OP “Regional Development” 2007-2013 and the Monitoring Committee of the OP “Regions in Growth” 2014-2020 took place at the premises of the Council of Ministers;
- On October 09, 2015 the Managing Authority of the OP “regions in Growth” 2014-2020 has published draft guidelines for application on a procedure BG16RFOP001-3.001 „Culture and Sport in School” for public discussion;
- In the period 8-10 September 2015 the Managing Authority of the OP “Regions in Growth” 2014-2020 conducted a training on electronic application through the Information System for management and monitoring of the EU funds in Bulgaria (ISUN 2020). The training addressed demonstration of the operation of the Module for electronic services of the information system for the employees from the municipalities-beneficiaries under Priority Axis 1 “Sustainable and Integrated Urban Development”;
- On October 28, 2015 the Managing Authority of the OP “Regions in Growth” 2014-2020 has published a package of documents for the procedure BG16RFOP001-8.003 „Budget line for 28 municipalities of small towns from 4-th level of the National Spatial Development Concept”.

OP Environment

- Through the information system for management and monitoring, `EUMIS 2020`, a project proposal was submitted under a direct award procedure the OPE 2014-2020", Water" sector. The budget under the procedure is MEUR 31,4. The aim is to improve the investment planning and management of WSS sector through the development of Regional Feasibility Studies. This will identify priority investments in water and sanitation infrastructure at regional level in consolidated areas. Ongoing reform of the WSS sector will be supported through updating the public water supply assets.
- The 3rd Meeting of the Monitoring Committee of the OPE 2014-2020 held on 8 October 2015. Announcement of 7 procedures OP worth MEUR 184 is forthcoming. During the Meeting was presented a draft amendment of the OPE 2014-2020, as well as a draft amendment of the Indicative Annual Work Programme for 2015. Members of the Committee discussed the methodologies and criteria for evaluation proposals under the following procedures: "Preparing RFS for WSS for Sofia Municipality", "Development and implementation of methods for the analysis of water, sediment and biota and equipping of laboratories EEA" "development of managerial approach to the Natura 2000 network and management NPRD, "" Determination and complement the network of marine protected areas, analyses and studies of species, natural habitats, subject to reporting under the Habitats Directive and the Birds Directive.

- On 30.10 the MA announced a new procedure under OPE 2014-2020 in field of biodiversity, aimed at more effective management of protected areas of the Natura 2000 network. Direct beneficiary is the National Office for Nature Protection Directorate in MOEW. The project proposal has to be submitted up to November 30, 2015.

OP Transport and Transport Infrastructure

- On October 08, 2015 National Company Strategic Infrastructure Projects and „INJCONSULTPROEKT“ Ltd. signed a contract based on a tender procedure with subject: „Road safety audit of the preliminary design of Struma Motorway Lot 3.1 Zheleznitsa Tunnel“. The value of the contract is EUR 4 550, excl. VAT and the time for completion is 56 days.
- On October 23, 2015 was held the Third meeting of the OPTTI Monitoring committee.
- On October 30, 2015 National Company Strategic Infrastructure Projects launched an open tender procedure with subject: “Supervision of design and build of Hemus Motorway, Stage 1 under separate positions: position I – section from A2 (Yablanitsa) to III-307 and position II – section from III-307 to II-35”. The estimated value of the services under the two separate positions is around EUR 7 800 000, excl. VAT and the time for completion of each separate position is 55 months. The financing of project is envisaged within the parameters of Operational Programme on Transport and Transport Infrastructure 2014-2020.

Operational Program “Innovations and Competitiveness” (OPIC)

- On 12th October, 2015 the Managing Authority of Operational Program “Innovations and Competitiveness” 2014-2020 published a list of project proposals suggested for rejection at the stage of “Administrative Compliance and Eligibility Evaluation” within the first deadline for submission of project proposals, 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”.
- On 30th October, 2015 an additional list of project proposals suggested for rejection at the stage of “Administrative Compliance and Eligibility Evaluation” was published under the same procedure within the first deadline for submission of project proposals.

OP Human Resources Development

- OPHRD Managing Authority launched a procedure for direct awarding BG05M9OP001-3.005 “New standards for social services”. The objective is to improve accessibility, efficiency and process of deinstitutionalization of social services for children, the elderly and adults with disabilities, and to improve the quality of social services through analysis and development of current quality standards and funding according to the needs of the consumers. The direct beneficiary is MLSP Directorate “Social inclusion”. The budget is 2 mln. leva, the deadline for submission of application is 21.10.2015. Only e-application is foreseen.
- In connection with the great interest in procedure BG05M9OP001-1.003 “New workplace 2015”, the MA will submit a proposal for increasing the budget of the procedure at the Monitoring Committee meeting, which will be held on 11.11.2015. Within the first deadline

– 14.09.2015, 1695 proposals amounting to 286 mln. leva were received. The assessment for administrative compliance and eligibility is ongoing.

- OPHRD is the first programme with designated Managing and Certifying Authorities. CoM's decision No 823 for designation of authorities was adopted on 21.10.2015 and it was sent to the EC via "SFC 2014".

OP Science and Education for Smart Growth

- Third Monitoring Committee meeting took place on 22-23 October 2015. Criteria for selection of nine operations amounting to 424,5 mln. leva were reviewed and approved. The new operations are within the first three priority axes of the program. The objective is to provide support in the areas of research, education and lifelong learning and to create educational environment for active social inclusion. The Indicative annual work programme and the Communication Plan of OP for 2016 were approved.
- OPSESG MA launched a procedure for direct awarding BG05M20P001-2.003 "Student scholarships – Phase I". The objective is to promote training in areas of higher education, identified as priority for the national economy. Special attention will be focused on expanding opportunities for the inclusion of students with disabilities in the cycle of higher education. The budget is 26 mln. leva, the deadline for submission of application is 29.01.2016. Only e-application is foreseen.
- OPSESG MA launched a procedure for direct awarding BG05M20P001-2.002 "Student practices – Phase I". The objective is to improve the quality of higher education by providing practical training for students in real working environment. The budget is 37 mln. leva, the deadline for submission of application is 29.01.2016. Only e-application is foreseen.
- OPSESG MA launched a procedure for direct awarding BG05M20P001-3.003 "Ensuring conditions and resources for building and developing a supportive environment in kindergartens and schools for the implementation of inclusive training – Phase I". The objective is to ensure higher quality and better access to education by creating a supportive environment for early prevention of learning difficulties, including training of children and students with special educational needs and a supportive environment for inclusive education and social inclusion of students with deviant behavior. The budget is 17,5 mln. leva, the deadline for submission of application is 28.01.2016. Only e-application is foreseen.
- OPSESG MA launched a procedure for direct awarding BG05M20P001-2.001 "Career guidance system in school education". The objective is to create an integrated system for realization and employment by qualification of secondary school graduates in accordance with the requirements of the labor market. The budget is 7,5 mln. leva, the deadline for submission of application is 28.01.2016. Only e-application is foreseen.

OP Good Governance

- OPGG MA launched a procedure for direct awarding BG05SFOP001-4.001 "Ensuring the functioning of the national network of 27 regional information centers". The objective is to ensure the effective functioning of the 27 regional information centers in the period 2015-2018. The budget is 10 mln. leva, the deadline for submission of applications is 21.12.2015. Only e-application is foreseen.

- On 02.10.2015 expired the deadline for submission of applications under the procedure for direct awarding BG05SFOP001-1.001 “Structuring data and analytical activities in the implementation of strategic documents for the development of public administration, development of e-governance and introducing e-governance in the justice sector”. Executive Agency “Electronic Communication Networks and Information Systems”, Council of Ministers Administration, National Statistical Institute and Ministry of Justice applied for funding amounting to 9 mln. leva. Applications are under assessment.

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

- Tendering procedure for selection of supplier of food products is ongoing.
- Distribution of individual food packages is expected to start in mid-November 2015.

Data on OPs financial progress is attached.

OP Implementation as of 31.10.2015

EURO

OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME	Programme budget *			Contracted		Payments		Received payments from EC	
	Total	EU Funding	National co-funding	Total as of 31.10.2015	% implementation	Total as of 31.10.2015	% implementation	Received payments from the EC (EU part) as of 31.10.2015	% implementation
OP Transport	2 003 481 166 €	1 624 479 623 €	379 001 543 €	2 027 738 010 €	101,21%	1 606 149 114 €	80,17%	1 272 750 164 €	78,35%
OP Environment	1 717 164 786 €	1 395 379 676 €	321 785 110 €	2 107 206 623 €	122,71%	1 708 167 445 €	99,48%	977 133 730 €	70,03%
OP Regional Development	1 601 274 759 €	1 361 083 545 €	240 191 214 €	1 673 529 287 €	104,51%	1 427 411 525 €	89,14%	1 036 578 527 €	76,16%
OP Competitiveness	1 162 215 551 €	987 883 218 €	174 332 333 €	1 183 045 399 €	101,79%	1 083 155 652 €	93,20%	893 831 549 €	90,48%
OP Technical Assistance	54 658 454 €	46 459 686 €	8 198 768 €	58 347 801 €	106,75%	52 181 744 €	95,47%	41 177 850 €	88,63%
OP Human Resource Development	1 213 869 575 €	1 031 789 139 €	182 080 436 €	1 272 393 698 €	104,82%	1 140 843 356 €	93,98%	980 199 682 €	95,00%
OP Administrative Capacity	174 057 556 €	147 948 923 €	26 108 633 €	191 714 094 €	110,14%	160 929 862 €	92,46%	132 729 144 €	89,71%
TOTAL SCF	7 926 721 847 €	6 595 023 810 €	1 331 698 037 €	8 513 974 911 €	107,41%	7 178 838 699 €	90,57%	5 334 400 646 €	80,89%
Rural Development	3 166 565 492 €	2 551 518 762 €	615 046 730 €	3 136 804 695 €	99,06%	2 530 237 624 €	79,90%	2 154 256 945 €	84,43%
OP Fisheries	83 710 891 €	62 783 168 €	20 927 723 €	95 840 678 €	114,49%	63 715 179 €	76,11%	47 274 559 €	75,30%
TOTAL AGRICULTURAL FUNDS	3 250 276 383 €	2 614 301 930 €	635 974 453 €	3 232 645 372 €	99,46%	2 593 952 804 €	79,81%	2 201 531 504 €	84,21%
TOTAL	11 176 998 229 €	9 209 325 740 €	1 967 672 490 €	11 746 620 283 €	105,10%	9 772 791 502 €	87,44%	7 535 932 150 €	81,83%

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