



Republic of Bulgaria

MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND SOCIAL POLICY

**Human Resources Development
Operational Programme**

Priority Axis 7:

TRANSNATIONAL AND INTERREGIONAL COOPERATION

GUIDELINES FOR GRANT APPLICANTS

under open procedure of selection of projects covering certain quality requirements within a specified deadline for application

30 September 2011, 16:00

Name of the Grant Scheme: WITHOUT BORDERS – COMPONENT 1

Budget line: BG051PO001-7.0.01

Code by priority theme:	80
Code by form of financing:	01
Code by territorial dimension:	00
Code by type of economic activities :	17, 18, 19, 20, 22
Code by locations:	EU

Sofia, 2011

Name	Integrated service for entrepreneurs in Bulgaria
Place of performance of the activities	Country: Region: Municipality: Town / Village: Bulgaria (six centers- one in each planning region), Spain (Region Valencia)
Duration	12 months
Project Goals	<p>Overall Objective (s): The overall objective of the project is to implement the Spanish experience in supporting small and medium entrepreneurs in Bulgaria, while stimulating the development of new services for small businesses, improving integration and coordination of labor market through more effective professional and social involvement of stakeholders and creating conditions and opportunities for job employment for the representatives of the disadvantaged social groups.</p> <p>Specific objective (s): The specific objectives of the project are: to mobilize teams from six regions in Bulgaria that will create integrated services for local entrepreneurs and to become cores for stimulation of the economic initiative in places; to provide opportunities for small and medium entrepreneurs to receive information, training and consulting assistance for their business development and to build a network of support and mutual assistance among them; to improve employment conditions and opportunities for persons that are potential victims of employment discrimination.</p>
Main activities	The main activities of the project include: 1) identifying teams for implementing the project in 6 centers in the country (one in each planning region) and an information seminar in Bulgaria to introduce the teams to the experience of the Spanish partner in program EQUAL (in particular introduce them to the integrated service for entrepreneurs), 2) visit of a 10-member Bulgarian delegation (one representative per team + 3 experts of the applicant organization + interpreter) in Spain for direct observation of how this system works in practice, 3) six-day conferences in place to introduce entrepreneurs to the opportunities of the project, 4) three-day consulting of the experts of the applicant organization in Bulgaria by their Spanish colleagues, 5) translation, adaptation and publication of a handbook for entrepreneurs, 6) three trainings of the collective group of entrepreneurs and local administrators; 7) concurrent consultation for entrepreneurs; 8) development of an interactive

	<p>website for the project for internal and external communication of the members of the target groups; 9) visit of a group of 8 successfully participated in the project Bulgarian entrepreneurs in Spain and exchange of practices with their Spanish colleagues (+interpreter + expert); 10) final round table in Bulgaria for result reporting and lessons learned from the project.</p>
Description of the target group	<p>The target group consists of the following subgroups: 1) representatives of the political leadership of municipalities (mayors and deputy mayors, councilors and committees), municipal personnel (administrative personnel in municipal administrations), representatives of local development agencies, business centers and business incubators, 2) experts and business, management and organizational development coaches, 3) entrepreneurs from small and medium businesses, 4) persons with disabilities seeking employment interested in development as entrepreneurs or finding temporary or permanent job in firms of local entrepreneurs.</p>
Number of persons in the target group involved in the project	<p>Subgroup 1) - 36+ people, subgroup 2) - 12+ people, subgroup 3) - 24+ people, subgroup 4) - 24+ people</p>
Information and publicity	<p>The project includes initial and final press conference as well as press conferences regarding the departure or the arrival of the two Bulgarian groups in Spain, making a banner for the information and training events of the project, information boards in each of the six centers and also advertising and office supplies. Representatives of the Embassy of Spain in Bulgaria are going to participate in all public appearances and press conferences.</p>
Total cost of the project	<p>199 085.20 levs</p>
Amount of the requested grant	<p>199 085.20 levs</p>
% of the requested grant out of the total cost of the project	<p>100 %</p>
Amount of the funds spent by the applicant	<p>127 705.36 levs</p>
Amount of the funds spent by the partner / s (where applicable)	<p>71 379.84 levs</p>

IV. Description of the project proposal

4. Relevance (maximum 3 pages)

4.1. Objectives of the project proposal

The project proposal aims to implement the Spanish experience in supporting small and medium entrepreneurs in Bulgaria, while stimulating the development of new services for small businesses, improving integration and coordination of labor market through more effective professional and social involvement of stakeholders and creating conditions and opportunities for job employment for the representatives of the disadvantaged social groups.

The specific objectives of the project are: to mobilize teams from six regions in Bulgaria that will create integrated services for local entrepreneurs and to become cores for stimulation of the economic initiative in places; to provide opportunities for small and medium entrepreneurs to receive information, training and consulting assistance for their business development and to build a network of support and mutual assistance among them; to improve employment conditions and opportunities for persons that are potential victims of employment discrimination.

The underlying idea of the project is to show in practice that it is possible to create a working partnership between local authorities and entrepreneurs which will improve the quality of life in local communities through investment in local human capital that will benefit both those who create employment and those who seek employment and social inclusion, and those who have the official responsibility for that to happen.

4.2. Relevance of the project proposal to the specific needs and issues in specific location of the project?

The main priority in the National Strategy for encouragement of Small and Medium Enterprises 2007-2013 is entrepreneurship education and encouragement of entrepreneurship skills. This project precisely aims in this priority. By transfer of leading Spanish experience in this field there will be created an incentive for Bulgarian entrepreneurs, representatives of local governmental and civil structures serving local business as well as for unemployed persons who rely on small and medium businesses to provide them with employment which is consistent with the mentioned priority.

4.3. Relevance of the proposal with the requirement for innovative approach / elements

In the process of acquiring the experience of the Spanish partner, the applicant organization finds that the experience is particularly instructive and valuable and is "crying" to be handed over to Bulgaria after a certain adaptation. According to the profile of the applicant organization and its national representation, the team of the project took some innovative solutions, the first of which is not to limit the transfer of knowledge and skills in one place but to make it in six locations - one in each planning region of the country –so that to multiply the effect of the initiative. The second decision was to extend the target for the people who are plan to start their own business (as in the "original" Spanish project) and to be included and existing entrepreneurs from small and middle business so that they can also benefit from the know-how of the project, and through them - the people that they can provide employment.

In third place, NAMCB decided not to make everything like the Spanish partner has done, since the amount of funds in this schedule is incomparable with what had the Spanish partner, but to focus on the popularization of its attempt towards structures that could be "infected" by the good example and implement it in the Bulgarian conditions according to the available local resources and opportunities. In other words, the main innovation that NAMCB aims is the social dimension in the broader context of the initiative, which aims to achieve the changes in attitudes, values, strategies, policies and processes related to the development of entrepreneurship - with focus in its relationship with local structures and the establishment of equal employment opportunities for the local workforce.

The project relies on stimulating the responsible institutions in probating new organizational solutions, methods and ways of work that will strengthen the links between them, consider their current work and as a result to achieve significant results in local communities as the Spanish partner. Besides the general idea and organizational intervention, the innovativeness of the project goes through its separate elements such as consulting experts in Bulgaria, visits to Spain of specifically formed groups from Bulgaria, training of Bulgarian entrepreneurs and project entrepreneurs of a joint team composed of one Spanish and two Bulgarian trainers etc.

The implementation of interactive Web-based operating platform for communication, know-how and best practices as well as consultation for all users both participants in the project or not. This platform will include a library with all the materials of the project, a link to the website of our Spanish partner and a network between organizations from Bulgaria and other countries participating in the EQUAL program. The interactive platform successfully replaces traditional and existing offices, which significantly reduces the costs and allows a constant access of a wide range of users across the country.