

APPLICANT'S GUIDE



BULGARIA - THE FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA IPA CROSS-BORDER PROGRAMME

Call for Proposals No: 2007CB16IPO007-2011-2

Deadline for submission: [September 14, 2011](#)

Table of Contents

Table of Contents	2
Legal basis.....	3
Explanation of text-box.....	3
1 General Information.....	3
1.1 Overview of Bulgaria – the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia IPA Cross Border Programme	4
1.1.1 Eligible Cross-border Area	4
1.1.2 Programme Strategy	5
1.1.3 Programme objectives	6
1.1.4 Programme Priority Axes.....	7
1.2 Programme Implementation Structures	7
1.3 Programme Financial Allocation.....	8
1.3.1 Financial allocation for the second call for proposals	8
1.4 State Aid	8
1.5 Revenue Generating Projects.....	9
2 Rules of the call for proposals	9
2.1 General Information	9
2.2 Eligibility Criteria.....	11
2.2.1 Eligibility of applicants (Lead Partner and Partners)	11
2.2.2 Eligibility of Activities.....	14
2.2.3 Eligibility of expenditures	22
List of eligible expenditures	23
BUDGET LINE 1: Administrating costs – maximum 25 % of total project costs.....	23
BUDGET LINE 2: Travel and accommodation.....	24
BUDGET LINE 3: Meetings, conferences, events	24
BUDGET LINE 4: Information and publicity.....	25
BUDGET LINE 5: External expertise and financial audit.....	25
BUDGET LINE 6: Investments	25
BUDGET LINE 7: Others – maximum 15 % of total project costs.....	26
2.3 How to apply for funding.....	29
2.3.1 How to get the Applicant's Pack.....	29
2.3.2 How to fill in the Application Form and its Annexes.....	29
3 Annexes.....	35
3.1 Annexes (A)	35
3.2 Annexes (B)	36
3.3 Annexes (C)	37
4 Where and how to send the application	37
5 Deadline for receipt of applications.....	39
6 Evaluation and Selection of Applications.....	39
Glossary of terms	50
Glossary of Acronyms.....	51

Legal basis

In the elaboration of this guide the following legal provisions have been observed:

- Council Regulation (EC) No 1085/2006 of 17 July 2006 establishing an Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA)
- Regulation of European Parliament and Council (EU) No. 540/2010 of 16 June 2010, amending Council Regulation (EC) No 1085/2006 of 17 July 2006 establishing an Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance;
- Commission Regulation (EC) No 718/2007 of 12 June 2007 [OJ L 170 from 29.06.2007] implementing Council Regulation (EC) No 1085/2006 establishing an instrument for pre-accession assistance (IPA), (hereinafter IPA IR)
- Commission Regulation (EC) No 80/2010 of 28 January 2010 amending Regulation (EC) No 718/2007 implementing Council Regulation (EC) No 1085/2006 establishing an instrument for pre-accession assistance (IPA)
- Bulgaria –the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia IPA Cross Border Programme, approved by the European Commission on 14.12.2007 with programme reference number C (2007)6298, approved amendment on 26.06.2010 with reference number C(2010) 3880
- Other relevant national and European legislation.

Please note that all these legal provisions must also be observed by the applicants during both project elaboration and implementation phases.

Explanation of text-box

Across all the following pages you will find a highlighted text boxes – marked **"Important:**

📌 IMPORTANT - highlights the most important elements to be taken into account when preparing a project.

1 General Information

This application guide aims to provide practical information for project applicants to the Bulgaria – the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia IPA Cross Border Programme.

It is the most practical level of documentation needed for the successful submission of a project under this programme. This guide provides information on how to fill in the application, budget and related forms, the application procedure, the project selection criteria, the decision procedure and other practical advices.

📌 IMPORTANT

Please note that this is not a PHARE/CARDS programme. Therefore please read carefully this Guide in order to avoid confusion!

1.1 Overview of Bulgaria – the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia IPA Cross Border Programme

This programme is financed by the European Union through the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA) and co-financed by Bulgaria and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia through contributions from state budgets and if applicable - from project beneficiaries.

The programming document drafted jointly by the two countries through a large partnership with national, regional and local stakeholders was approved by the European Commission on 14 December 2007 (Decision No. 6298) and was amended and approved by the European Commission on 21 June 2010 (Decision No. 3880). It sets out the general framework of intervention of IPA in the Programme cross-border area.

The programme continues the evolution of the EU's cross-border initiatives, reflected in Neighbourhood Programme PHARE CBC /CARDS from 2004 to 2006.

More detailed information on types of projects, eligible activities and beneficiaries, the budget breakdown per priority axes and key areas of intervention are given below.

The programming document is available on the web site of the Programme www.ipa-cbc-007.eu and on www.mrrb.government.bg and www.mls.gov.mk

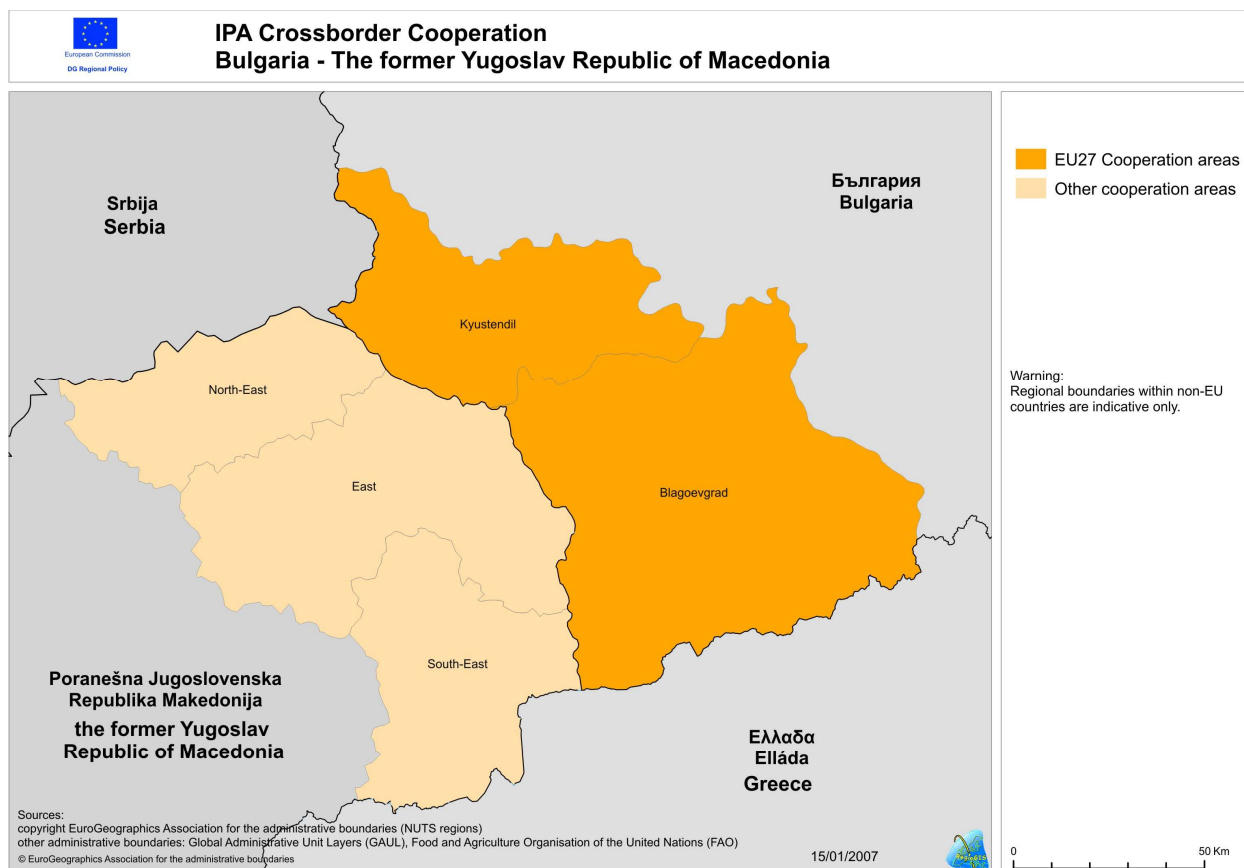
1.1.1 Eligible Cross-border Area

The border area of Bulgaria comprises the districts of **Blagoevgrad and Kyustendil** (NUTS III), covering 9 501 sq. km (8.6% of the total country territory) and with population of 486 291 people (6.3% of the total country population). It consists of 23 municipalities (NUTS IV) and 462 settlements:

- District of **Blagoevgrad**: **14 municipalities** – Bansko, Belica, Blagoevgrad, Gotce Delchev, Garmen, Kresna, Petrich, Razlog, Sandanski, Satovcha, Simitli, Strumiani, Hadjidimovo, Yakoruda;
- District of **Kyustendil**: **9 municipalities** – Bobovdol, Boboshevo, Dupnitsa, Kocherinovo, Kyustendil, Nevestino, Rila, Sapareva Banya, Trekliano.

The border area of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia comprises the **North-East, the East and the South-East** NUTS III statistical regions covering 9 235 sq. km (35,9 % of the total country territory) and with population of 579 314 people (28.6 % of the total country population). It consists of 27 municipalities (NUTS IV), including 641 settlements:

- **North-East region**: **6 municipalities** - Kratovo, Kriva Palanka, Rankovce, Kumanovo, Lipkovo and Staro Nagoricane;
- **South-East region**: **10 municipalities** - Valandovo, Gevgelija, Bogdanci, Dojran, Radovis, Konce, Strumica, Bosilovo, Vasilevo and Novo Selo;
- **East region**: **11 municipalities** - Berovo, Pehcevo, Vinica, Kocani, Cesinovo - Oblesevo, Zrnovci, Probistip, Stip, Karbinci, Delcevo and Makedonska Kamenica.



1.1.2 Programme Strategy

IPA replaces the five previously existing pre-accession instruments, PHARE, ISPA, SAPARD, Turkey instrument, and CARDS, thus uniting under a single legal basis all pre accession assistance. IPA has also been designed to better adapt to the different objectives and progresses of each beneficiary concerned, thus providing a targeted and effective support according to their needs and evolution.

Border regions are often facing disadvantages due to their peripheral geographical locations and relative isolation from national economies. At the same time the development of the internal market within the Union (and the free movement of people, goods, services and capital) also brought out the need for the balanced development and integration of the European territory.

The aim of this Programme is to promote stronger integration of the territory thus providing a balanced and sustainable development throughout the entire cross-border region. The main purpose of the interventions to be funded by the programme in the CBC area is to support activities for economic development, by investing in the necessary small-scale infrastructures, human potential and supporting favourable business environment and social inclusion. The main resources used to develop the strategy were the following:

- EU guidelines and Regulations on IPA; Community Strategic guidelines on cohesion;
- The socio-economic analysis and the SWOT analysis of the eligible border region;
- Correspondence with EU Programmes, National / regional programmes and strategies on both sides of the border;
- Experiences from the previous Phare and CARDS programmes for the 1999-2006 period;
- The conclusions of the discussions of programming bodies, responsible authorities, experts and key persons at the regional / local level.

The Programme strategy is developed by giving a stress on fostering the strengths and use of the potential opportunities of the region through the defined priorities and spheres of

intervention taking into account the great variety of cross-border needs and possibilities for cooperation. In addition the programme aims to reduce threats from natural disasters and pollution which are common for the region.

1.1.3 Programme objectives

The strategy, therefore, sets out to address the specific needs of the border area both in the short and longer term, and supports the following **overall strategic goal**:

Sustainable development in the border region in support of the wider European Cooperation and Integration Efforts.

The overall aim of the programme, with the core elements of the strategy derived from the SWOT analysis, together led to the formulation of the following **specific objectives of the IPA CBC Programme**, which should be taken into account when preparing a project:

- ***Specific objective No. 1: To foster the sustainable economic growth in the cross border region.***
- ***Specific objective No. 2: To promote social cohesion in cross border region.***
- ***Specific objective No. 3: To further develop the attractiveness and quality of life in the cross border region.***

The project proposals addressing **Objective 1** shall demonstrate diversification of the current economic activities, support for the region to evolve into an economically strong region with high standard of living; development of new value chains; stimulus for research and development cooperation; clustering and business-support services; support to new technologies and innovations.

The project proposals addressing **Objective 2** shall invest in human resources development; people to people actions; labour market initiatives; cultural exchanges; support for raising the adaptability of the labour force to the market demands; cross-border networks at all levels and sectors of activity, incl. support for preparation of mutually benefiting project proposals.

The project proposals addressing **Objective 3** shall make effective use of the existing natural and cultural resources in the region and reveal the economic benefits that they can bring to local residents; eco and cultural tourism initiatives shall be supported when they prove their sustainable development effect on the region.

⚡ IMPORTANT

For further details on programme strategy please refer to the programming document.

1.1.4 Programme Priority Axes

In order to achieve the objectives set out in the programming document, the partnering countries have jointly agreed upon the main directions on which the interventions under this programme should focus. These main directions are called Priority Axes and are as follows:

- **Priority Axis 1: Economic Development and Social Cohesion;**
- **Priority Axis 2: Improvement the Quality of Life;**
- **Priority Axis 3: Technical Assistance.**

📌 IMPORTANT

Only the first two Priority Axes finance projects submitted by applicants while the third one is dedicated to ensuring the proper functioning of the programme management and implementation bodies.

The priority axes are broken down to key areas of intervention as follows:

Priority Axis 1: Economic Development and Social Cohesion

1.1 Economic Development

1.2 Social Cohesion

1.3 Project Preparation

Priority axis 2: Improvement the quality of life

2.1 Utilization of eco resources

2.2 Utilization of cultural resources

📌 IMPORTANT

For further details on programme priority axes and key areas of intervention please refer to the programming document.

1.2 Programme Implementation Structures

According to the IPA Regulations, the two partnering countries have established the following main management and implementation bodies.

Managing Authority (MA) - the Bulgarian Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works – both countries have agreed that the responsibility of a Single Managing Authority (MA) will be given to the Directorate General "Territorial Cooperation Management" at the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works of the Republic of Bulgaria. The Managing Authority is responsible for managing and implementing the cross-border programme in accordance with the principle of sound financial management.

National Authority (NA) - The Ministry of Local Self-Government of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia cooperates in joint programming, management and implementation of the programme.

Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC) is formed of representatives at national, regional and local level from both countries, supervises the programme and is responsible for its strategic adaptation. The JMC approves the Applicant's Package, including the project evaluation and selection criteria.

Joint Technical Secretariat (JTS) (main office) is based in Kyustendil (Bulgaria). It assists the programme management bodies in carrying out their respective duties and is the main

contact point between the programme and the potential beneficiaries/project partners.

Joint Technical Secretariat (JTS branch/antennae) is based in Strumitca (the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) as part of the JTS, having as main role to serve as local contact point for potential beneficiaries/project partners.

⚡ IMPORTANT

The JTS – main office and antennae – are the main structures responsible for providing information and support to potential beneficiaries.

1.3 Programme Financial Allocation

The total budget of the programme for the 2007-2011 programming period is **14277857 Euro**, of which **12136178 Euro** is represented by EU contribution. The remaining **2141679 Euro** are national contributions from state budgets.

Please note that the programme financial allocation is not broken down by state or eligible regions.

1.3.1 Financial allocation for the second call for proposals

The total amount allocated for this call for proposals for the two priority axes is broken down as follows:

<i>Euro</i>			
Priority Axis	Community Funding	National funding*	Total funding
	(a)	(b)	(a)+(b)
Priority Axis 1	2 217 418	391 310	2 608 728
Priority Axis 2	2 771 773	489 137	3 260 910
Total	4 989 191	880 447	5 869 638

⚡ IMPORTANT

*** State budget co-financing of both participating countries.
Voluntary own contribution of partners is allowed.**

1.4 State Aid

Commercial and profit-making activities are not eligible under this Call for Proposal.

In case any activities will generate profit these will be deducted from the grant and the project will be subject of the state aid.

To this end, the following provisions shall be fulfilled by each project:

- When the beneficiaries of the project sub-contract the activities in order to achieve the goals of the operation, the contracting must be done by a transparent tendering procedure, following the PRAG.
- The project must not create an economic advantage to an economic operator.
- All studies or other project results shall be made available for free to all interested individual or legal persons, in a non-discriminatory way.

Making the studies available only for certain individual or legal persons is strictly forbidden! Also, the project results should not create an economic advantage.

1.5 Revenue Generating Projects

No revenue generating projects shall be financed under the present call for proposals.

2 Rules of the call for proposals

2.1 General Information

Cooperation criteria

*The projects must have **direct CBC impact**, which shall be understood in terms of respecting at least one of the following conditions as described below: joint development, joint staffing, joint implementation and joint financing.*

Joint development – means that the project must be designed in close cooperation of the partners from both sides of the border. This means that project proposals must clearly integrate the ideas, priorities and activities of stakeholders. The Lead Partner is the coordinator of this process but should include other partners from the beginning of the development process;

Joint implementation – means that activities must be carried out and coordinated among partners on both sides of the border. It is not enough that activities run in parallel. There must be clear content-based links between what is happening on both sides of the border and regular contact between the two sides. The Lead Partner is responsible for ensuring that activities are properly coordinated, that schedules are kept and that the right quality levels are achieved;

Joint staffing – means that the project should not duplicate functions. Therefore, regardless of where the body is located, there should be a joint project management. The staff will be responsible for project activities on both sides of the border;

Joint financing – means that there will be only one contract per project and there must therefore be one joint project budget. The budget should be divided between partners according to the activities carried out. There is only one project bank account for the EU and national contribution (held by the Lead Partner). The Lead Partner is responsible for administration and distribution of funds and for reporting on their use.

📌 IMPORTANT

Projects covering more than one of the above conditions will be evaluated more favourably.

📌 IMPORTANT

Number of project proposals per institution/organization:

Under the current call for proposals an institution/organization may submit only **one project proposal as a Lead Partner**. In case an institution/organization has submitted more than one project proposal as a Lead Partner, all submitted proposals will be eliminated on administrative stage.

*An institution/organization may, however, be involved in other projects but only as a **Project Partner**.*

📌 IMPORTANT

One project proposal must cover only one Key Area of Intervention. This is obligatory condition. Combination of activities from different Key Areas of Intervention is forbidden and will lead to direct elimination.

Applicable law**⚡ IMPORTANT**

When the beneficiaries of the project **sub-contract the activities** in order to achieve the goals of the operation, the sub-contracting must be done by a transparent tendering procedure, following the provision **of EU Regulation 718/2007, article 121, translated into Practical Guide to Contract Procedures for EC external actions (available at http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/implementation/practical_guide/index_en.htm)**.

The projects must be in line with the national and European legislation on equal opportunities and environmental protection. The project must also respect the European legislation provisions on information and publicity.

⚡ IMPORTANT

The project must include activities for **information and publicity**, according to the **European Commission Regulations and observing the Visual Identity Manual (available at http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/visibility/index_en.htm)**.

The financing under the current Programme shall be made available to potential beneficiaries through a competitive process. The Managing Authority together with the National Authority and the Joint Technical Secretariat are launching the present call for proposals. The deadline for submission of applications is given in section 5.

The present call for proposal has the goal of establishing solid partnerships in the eligible area by financing "soft" projects (as studies, strategies, seminars, know-how exchanges etc.) and "investment projects" (as works activities, supply etc.).

For each project, a **Lead Partner (LP)** among the project partners **must** be appointed. The Lead Partner shall be a natural or legal person **in the eligible border region of the Programme** and shall assume the following responsibilities:

- lays down the arrangements for its relations with the final beneficiaries participating in the operation in an agreement comprising, inter alia, provisions guaranteeing the sound financial management of the funds allocated to the operation, including the arrangements for recovering amounts unduly paid;
- is responsible for ensuring the implementation of the entire operation;
- is responsible for transferring the relevant budget amount to the partners participating in the operation according to the partnership agreement and certified costs;
- ensures that the expenditure presented by the partners participating in the operation has been paid for the purpose of implementing the operation and corresponds to the activities agreed between the partners participating in the operation;
- verifies that the expenditure presented by the final beneficiaries participating in the operation which are natural or legal person in the participating countries has been validated by the controllers referred to in Article 108 of Commission Regulation (EC) No.718/2007 of 12 June 2007;
- collects the information from the project partners, cross-checks the verified activities with the progress of the project and submits the reports to the JTS;
- signs the agreement for implementation of the operation with MA;
- informs MA about necessity of project modifications;

The tasks of the Lead Partner are provided in the **subsidy contract (Annex C)** and in the **partnership agreement template (Annex A5)** as well.

⚡ IMPORTANT

Every project must include at least one partner from each side of the border region. Projects which do not comply with this requirement will not be eligible.

All partners are directly responsible for the project implementation and cannot act as an intermediary.

All organizations participating, under this Call for Proposals, are called partners. The partners shall select one, from among themselves, to be the Lead Partner.

The submission of projects is open to all potential beneficiaries that meet the eligibility criteria set below.

2.2 Eligibility Criteria

In order to be eligible for funding under the programme, a project should meet three types of criteria:

- eligibility of applicants (see section 2.2.1)
- eligibility of activities (see section 2.2.2)
- eligibility of expenditures (see section 2.2.3)

2.2.1 Eligibility of applicants (Lead Partner and Partners)

(1) All partners involved should fulfil the following criteria:

- be non-profit making bodies/organizations, legally established according to the national legislation of the state on whose territory they are located;
- be non-governmental organizations (associations or foundations), public sector operators, local/regional/national authorities;
- be established within the **eligible cross border region between Bulgaria and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia** and
- belong to the one of the following categories in general:
 - be local/regional/national authorities or subsidiary structure(s) of local/regional/national authorities. In case a local/regional/national structure **is not and can not act as a legal entity**, its legally established central organization, if such exists, shall be the project partner
 - be national and regional agencies (responsible at central, regional and municipal level)
 - be nature park administrations
 - be local/regional forestry directorates
 - be health care institutions
 - be cultural institutions
 - be community centres
 - be regional employment agencies
 - be non-governmental (NGO) or non-profit (NPO) organizations¹ such as business support organizations, local enterprise agencies, development agencies, Chambers of

¹ Profit is defined as:

-The making of gain in business activity for the benefit of owners of the business;
 - in the case of a grant for an action, profit is a surplus of receipts over the costs incurred by the beneficiary when the request is made for final payment;
 - Lump-sums and flat-rate financing should be established in such a way as to exclude a priori a profit.

Commerce (CoCs), Information and Communication Technology (ICT) development agencies, educational, training and Research and Development (R&D) institutions, employers and producer associations, trade unions; other state and public agencies and associations

- be educational institutions such as universities, schools, colleges and libraries
- be Euro regions
- or any association of two or more of the above

and

- be directly responsible for the preparation and management of the action with their partners, not acting as an intermediary and
- not be affected by potential conflict of interest with the Joint Structures of the Programme (Managing Authority, National Authority, Certifying Authority, Audit Authority, Joint Monitoring Committee and Joint technical Secretariat). Should such situation arise during performance of the contract the beneficiary must immediately inform the Managing Authority;

⚡ IMPORTANT

The specific categories of eligible institutions/organisations are provided for each Key area of intervention.

⚡ IMPORTANT

Lead partner must be registered within eligible border region between Bulgaria and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia at least 12 months before the deadline for submission of project proposals under current Call for Proposals.

In case when local/regional/national authorities/bodies situated in the eligible area is not and can not be a legal person/entity, its legally established central organization shall apply as Lead partner.

The maximum number of partners in a project will be ten (10), including the Lead Partner!

⚡ IMPORTANT

All partners in a project must sign a draft partnership agreement with the Lead Partner that stipulates their rights and duties. Partnership agreement should be signed and annexed to the application form.

A partnership agreement template is annexed to the present Guide (Annex A5). The partners may decide to stipulate additional or more restrictive provisions from those mentioned in the partnership agreement template.

All partners must have clear roles in project development and implementation. If there are no changes in the approved application the draft agreement to be considered as final.

(2) Potential applicants are not eligible to participate in calls for proposals if:

- (a) they are bankrupt or being wound up, are having their affairs administered by the courts, have entered into an arrangement with creditors, have suspended business activities, are the subject of proceedings concerning those matters, or are in any analogous situation, arising from a similar procedure provided for in the national legislation or EU regulations;
- (b) they have been convicted of an offence concerning professional conduct by a judgment which has the force of *res judicata* (i.e., against which no appeal is possible);
- (c) they are guilty of serious professional misconduct proven by any means;

- (d) they have not fulfilled obligations relating to the payment of debts to the consolidated state budget;
- (e) they have been the subject of a judgment which has the force of *res judicata* for fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organization or any other illegal activity detrimental to the Communities or national financial interests;
- (f) they have been declared to be in serious breach of contract for failure to comply with their contractual obligations in connection with a procurement procedure or other grant award procedure financed by the Community or national budget.

Applicants are also excluded from participation in calls for proposals or the award of financial support if, at the time of the call for proposals, they:

- (g) are subject to a conflict of interests; the conflict of interests represents any circumstances that may affect the evaluation or implementation process, in an objective and impartial manner. Such circumstances may result from economic interests, political or national preferences or family connections.
- (h) are guilty of misrepresentation in supplying the information required by the Managing Authority/ Joint Technical Secretariat as a condition of participation in the call for proposals or fail to supply this information;
- (i) have attempted to obtain confidential information or influence the evaluation bodies during the evaluation process of current or previous calls for proposals;

In the cases referred to in points (a), (c), (d), (f), (h) and (i) above, the exclusion applies for a period of two years from the time when the infringement is established. In the cases referred to in points (b) and (e), the exclusion applies for a period of four years from the date of notification of the judgment.

⚡ IMPORTANT

The Lead Partner on behalf of all partners should sign a “Declaration of eligibility” (Annex A6 to the application form), declaring that all project partners including Lead partner do not fall into any of the above categories (a) to (i).

(3) All partners must prove their financial and administrative capacity to manage the project, by:

- ensuring temporary availability of funds from own/third sources until they are reimbursed by the programme;
- covering all non-eligible expenditure and additional expenditures, either declared in the application form or identified as such by the programme authorities during the evaluation and implementation of projects.
- be experienced and able to demonstrate their capacity to manage their share of activities of the project for which the grant is requested (see AF, part 1);

⚡ IMPORTANT

All partners are not obligatory to provide financial contributions for the eligible expenditures of the project from their own resources. If they provide financial contributions for the eligible expenditures of the project voluntarily, they should also have the capacity to ensure their own contributions. In this regard, their own contributions represent the share of the total eligible expenditure that will be financed by the Lead Partner and its partners.

In this framework, the Lead Partner and its partners must:

- a) follow the value of their own contributions (if applicable) and the list of eligible expenditures when completing the budget of the project (AF – part 3 to the present Guide).

- b) have stable and sufficient sources of finance to ensure the continuity of the operation of their organizations throughout the project and, if necessary, to play a part in financing it.

⚡ IMPORTANT

The applicants should:

- ensure temporary availability of funds from their own/third party sources until they are reimbursed by the programme;
- undertake the expenses for all non-eligible expenditures.

All project partners shall annex if applicable a Decision of Local Council/ Board of Directors or any similar body governing them regarding the project development and the coverage of expenditures related to it.

The Managing Authority may require additional documentary evidence and argumentations regarding financial capacity.

⚡ IMPORTANT

Political parties/organisations and trade companies are not eligible.

2.2.2 Eligibility of Activities

Definition: An action (or project) is composed of a set of activities.

The project must be in line with the indicative operations from the key area of intervention under each priority axis as stipulated in the Bulgaria – the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia IPA Cross-Border Programme and listed below.

⚡ IMPORTANT

Under this call for proposals, **two type of project** shall be financed

- **non-investment ("soft") projects** aiming at developing studies, workshops, seminars and exchanges of experience and
- **"Investment" projects** should obligatory include construction activities, "soft" measures and supply (if necessary)

In addition **feasibility studies or other types of technical documentation** shall be financed under this call for proposals.

"Two-phase" (two-component) projects will not be allowed (project design component/phase and works/construction component/phase).

Duration: The planned duration of the action may not be lower than 6 months nor exceed 18/24 months

Projects duration and budget limits:

Priority axis	Area of intervention	Type of measure	Project Grant Amount (€)	Project Duration (months)
Priority Axis 1 Economic Development	1.1 Economic Development	Soft	10 000-100 000	6-18
		Investment + Soft	100 000-500 000	6-24

and Social Cohesion	1.2 Social Cohesion	Soft	10 000-100 000	6-18
		Investment + Soft	100 000-500 000	6-24
	1.3 Project preparation	Soft	10 000-50 000	6-18
Priority Axis 2 Improvement the Quality of Life	2.1 Utilization of Eco Resources	Soft	10 000-100 000	6-18
		Investment + Soft	100 000-500 000	6-24
	2.2 Utilization of Cultural Resources	Soft	10 000-100 000	6-18
		Investment + Soft	100 000-500 000	6-24

In Investment project including soft measures for Priority Axis 1 and 2, the investment component should not exceed 18 months.

⚡ IMPORTANT

The EU will finance 85% of the eligible expenditures and the state budgets of the two participating countries shall provide 15% co-financing.

⚡ IMPORTANT

Allocation of the budget between "Soft" and "Investment" projects will be respectively 20:80 % from the total amount of the current Call.

Location: In order to be eligible for financing all project activities must take place within the eligible cross-border area of Bulgaria and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (see section 1.1.1).

⚡ IMPORTANT

Non-investment ("soft") projects – mainly soft activities are eligible for financing. In case expenditures for supply are envisaged, such expenditures **must not exceed 20 % of total eligible project costs.**

In addition either **PCs, laptops or other relevant equipment** can be procured under supplies, while the procurement of laptops should be properly **justified for the purpose of the specific activity** and will be eligible only if such **have not already been procured under other EU - funded projects.**

"Investment" projects including "soft" measures - mainly **investment support activities are eligible for financing.** Expenditures for investment support activities should form **at least 70% of total eligible project costs and must obligatory contain works component.**(supply is allowed only in connection to works activities)

The types of activities financed under each Priority axis, Key areas of Intervention and Indicative operations are described below:

Priority Axis 1 – Economic Development and Social Cohesion - Improved competitiveness and economic growth of the whole region in order to increase the employment and social integration of the cross-border area:

The axis is split in three key areas of intervention, referring to economic development, social cohesion and project preparation respectively.

Key Area of Intervention 1 – Economic Development

Indicative operations

(1) "Soft" measures

Under this indicative operation, the following activities are eligible:

- Development of training, best practices transfer, scientific exchange and educational facilities for knowledge based economy;
- Initiatives for development of a common labour market and more close collaboration between labour
- *Joint actions for business-support of cross-border business activities:* establishment of centres to support cross-border business initiatives, development of joint marketing and promotion services, use of IT for promoting cross-border cooperation between companies, establishing of data bases for regional stakeholders, joint initiatives for attracting direct investment in the cross-border region and strengthening the transfer of expertise, etc.
- *Advising on preparation and certification* of private companies, NGO and public institutions ensuring systems for quality of management, products, ecological requirements;
- *Counselling and advice in business start up*, business planning and strategy development, technology transfer, patents and trade marks, legal affairs, finance and marketing;
- *Promotion of cross-border networking:* business meetings, seminars, conferences, business excellence awards, etc.
- *Cross-border initiatives for the promotion of entrepreneurial collaborations:* training programmes, development of support schemes and establishment of economic networks;
- *Cross-border awareness raising activities on acquits compliance for SMEs:* seminars, training courses, information campaigns, joint development of guides and other publications, assessments and other types of co-operation in the field.
- *Creation of co-operation structures* for providing joint cross border services to business and especially SME's
- *Support for the setting up of the joint ventures*, co-operatives or consortia for joint manufacturing or provision of tourist services - preparation of business and marketing plans, market studies, market and PR campaigns, direct export sales and marketing, etc.;
- *Information services* for entrepreneurs active in the border region: creation of databases, joint business directories, Internet platforms, various Internet-based informational resources, etc.

- Preparation of *joint research studies* for market opportunities;

(2) "Investment" measures

Under this indicative operation, the following activities are eligible:

Small-scale construction works, e.g. reconstruction/ rehabilitation of information and business centres and incubation facilities.

- Establishment of centres for exchange of information on cross-border economic cooperation;
- Vitalization of adjacent facilities to the locations (e.g. bus stops, parking places, pavements, lightning, and green areas);
- Renovation and establishment of communication networks;
- Works supervision services (related to the construction works);
- *Purchase of IT equipment* necessary for establishment of business networks, databases and virtual business support centres;

Potential applicants

to fulfill the eligibility criteria laid down within 2.2. Eligibility Criteria and

- can be one of the following type of organizations: **municipalities, chambers of trade and commerce, economic associations, industry or agriculture, professional and branch associations, economic development agencies, business centres, business associations, business incubators, trade unions, professional education and qualification organizations, vocational schools, training centres, universities, schools, colleges, NGOs, regional structures of central / local administration, institutions of labour market administration, associations of the above.**

Key Area of Intervention 2 – Social Cohesion

Indicative operations

(1) "Soft" measures

Under this indicative operation, the following activities are eligible:

- Creation of a *joint information systems* giving the possibility of institutional contacts for cross-border activities;
- Research and feedback for establishment of common social and public services including health care cooperation;
- Activities encouraging *human resource management* and equal opportunities of the vulnerable groups to the labour market;
- *Establishment of joint HR development systems*, strategies development and sharing of best practice in the field of HR management
- *Creation of cooperation* between the education, the qualification institutions and the labour market;
- *Implementation of cross-border training initiatives* and vocational education schemes to train or re-train workers in the tourism and manufacturing sectors;
- *Creation of information networks for e-services* (e-health, e-learning, e-government etc.)

(2) "Investment" measures

- Development of social infrastructure including educational, health care, child care etc. infrastructure;
- Supply of specialized equipment;
- Reconstruction works.

Potential applicants***to fulfill the eligibility criteria laid down within 2.2. Eligibility Criteria and***

- can be one of the following type of organizations: **municipalities, non profit health care institutions, chambers of trade and commerce, economic associations, industry or agriculture, professional and branch associations, economic development agencies, business centres, business associations, business incubators, trade union associations, professional education and qualification organization, vocational schools, training centres, universities, schools, colleges, NGOs, regional structures of central administration / local administration, institutions of labour market administration, associations of the above.**

Key Area of Intervention 3 – Project Preparation***Indicative operations******(1) "Soft" measures***

Under this indicative operation, the following activities are eligible:

- Pre-feasibility and feasibility studies
- Economic and technical feasibility studies
- Cost-benefit analyses
- Financial and cash-flow plans
- Marketing studies
- Background studies and rules for the preparation of aid schemes and financial support tools
- Environmental Impact Assessments
- Technical Studies
- Detailed project designs
- Architectural and engineering designs
- Preparation of tendering (public procurement) documents and bills of quantities

The objective of this sphere of intervention is to prepare mature project to apply under other EU and national financial sources.

Potential applicants***to fulfill the eligibility criteria laid down within 2.2. Eligibility Criteria and***

- can be one of the following type of organizations: **local or regional authorities; regional structures of central administration; research institutes, schools, training centres; chambers of commerce; institutions of labour market administration; professional education and qualification organizations; universities; NGOs; associations of the above organization.**

Priority Axis 2 – Improvement the Quality of Life – protection and sustainable utilization of natural resources and cultural landscape

⚡ IMPORTANT

Under the Second Call for proposals up to 20 % of total amount of priority axis 2 will be allocated for projects under the Key area of intervention: Utilization of Cultural Recourses

The types of activities financed under each Priority axis, Key areas of Intervention and Indicative operations are described below:

Key Area of Intervention 1 – Utilization of Eco Resources***Indicative operations******(1) "Soft" measures***

- Establishment of network and cooperation between the existing environmental institutions (i.e. environment protection agencies, administrations of the protected areas) for the maintenance of the sustainability of ecosystems and protection of the shared natural environment, a cross-border integrated approach and networking;
- Development of the joint/correlated management plans for the nature protected areas;
- Development of joint plans and joint solutions for biodiversity safeguarding;
- Development and implementation of the joint plans, educational and training programmes for pollution prevention;
- Development of joint early warning systems for prevention of natural disasters;
- Joint development and promotion of tools and techniques for establishment of common cross border tourism based on the opportunities for sustainable use of natural resource;
- Joint studies on climate change impacts on the area and joint action plans for reducing these impacts;
- Joint studies related to the increase of the energy efficiency and of the use of renewable energies;
- Joint research studies, inventories, data collection, information and know how exchange on cross-border area's natural resources protection;
- Reduction of negative effects of economic activities on the environment and encouraging of friendly environmental economic activities;
- Joint public awareness campaigns for environmental protection and nature-friendly behaviour: joint conferences, workshops, exhibitions, bi/multi-lingual promotional literature;
- Joint cross-border information campaigns focused on protecting the area's fragile environment, including cross-border and international workshops on environmental risk prevention and fight against climate change challenges;
- Activities for mitigation of environmental pollution in mining sites (for example exchange of experience, cross-border studies, elaboration of sustainable management plans, etc.)

(2) "Investment" measures

- Improvement and construction of small-scale infrastructure addressing natural sites;
- Prevention, restoration and conservation of important areas, species and habitats (remediation of impacted areas, including destroyed by fires, replanting, wetland restoration, revitalization of populations of endemic species, enrichment planting, etc.);
- Development of sustainable nature-friendly organic farming, fishery, agriculture and fruit-culture, including cultivation and production of herbs, nuts, medical plants, aromatic species, vegetables, honey products, animal products, mushroom-growing, wild berries, tree-nursery, etc;
- Preparation or reconstruction of farms for adoption (or conversion to) of technologies for organic aquaculture, farming and stock breeding;
- Small scale investment measures aimed at improving or rehabilitating water wells/springs/ponds and surrounding areas, soil eroded and wet areas;

- Small scale investment measures aimed at removing the technical barriers through improvement of infrastructure for agriculture/organic waste disposal, herbicides disposal, anaerobic digestion and biogas production, pasture management, agricultural waste water treatment, etc.;
- Investment in specialized equipment and technologies related to the nature protection and necessary for implementation of the activity under this component;
- Creation and equipment of animal-watching places; bird watchers' and photo-hunters' platforms, wild birds'/animals' feeding places made of aesthetically/environmentally appropriate materials; 'Green' and 'theme' eco-paths (ornithological, botanical); educational/scientific itineraries;
- Construction of cycling trails in suitable locations (due to the environmental problems created by off road biking activities, areas and routes liable to erosion should not be developed for this purpose);
- Re/Construction/refurbishment of buildings of 'nature based' interpretation / education / visitor centres (these are centres which perform activities aiming at attracting the tourists closer to nature), combined/or not with vocational training of guides, animators, mountain guides, rescue teams etc;
- Activities for permanent protection on the negative effect of flood phenomena – cleaning of rivers beds, relief works, renewal/rehabilitation of water control and water redirection structures such as: protective walls, embankments, dikes, piers, rehabilitation and construction of drainage facilities and infrastructures, etc;
- Activities in the sphere of operational protection on the negative effect of flood phenomena - creating small scale hydro-technical structures and other activities for improvement of the cross border flood management;
- Reinforcement of river cross-sections for the purposes of water monitoring.

Potential applicants

to fulfill the eligibility criteria laid down within 2.2. Eligibility Criteria and

- can be one of the following type of organizations: **municipalities, regional structures of central / local administration, administration of Nature parks, universities, colleges, schools, professional education and qualification organization, research institutes, training centres, community centers, NGOs, associations of the above.**

Key Area of Intervention 2 – Utilization of Cultural Resources

Indicative operations

(1) "Soft" measures

- Cross-border collaboration between cultural institutions and organisations;
- Creation of new common cross-border cultural products and services;
- Activities for development of cultural tourism as a factor for increase of employment;
- Establishment of information networks for promotion of common cultural heritage in the region;
- Exchange of best practices and know-how in the sphere of revival and preservation of the cultural heritage, promotion of cultural sites and their transformation into tourist sites;
- Elaboration of models for the management of cultural sites;
- Activities reducing and avoiding negative effects of economy on the authenticity of the cultural heritage;

- Cultural cooperation through development of joint traditional and new festivals, exhibitions, cultural events, etc.
- Encouragement/revitalization of traditional craftsmanship, traditional customs and cultural heritage, and rural tourism development;
- Development of new cross border integrated rural tourism products covering the whole tourism cycle – destinations, services and skills development, interpretation programmes, marketing and promotion, etc., which could promote employment in the border area;
- Activities related to marketing and advertising of the rural sights, such as publishing of brochures and leaflets, promotion of rural products in the particular area; organization of exhibitions or seminars, creation of data-bases, web pages and multimedia products, identification of the existing needs and trends of the market and development of proper marketing strategies for the products, etc.
- Initiation of partnerships among local stakeholders in the border area and implementation of joint actions aimed at awareness raising, marketing and promotion, capacity building, organization of round tables and workshops for discussing topics related to sustainable rural tourism development and to valorization of local assets and cultural heritage.

(2) "Investment" measures

- Re/Construction or rehabilitation of small-scale infrastructure related to cultural sites;
- Re/Construction or rehabilitation of a modern tourism infrastructure - camping grounds and associated facilities located adjacent to areas of high natural value; systems of walking and eco paths, hiking, riding trails; creation of zones and facilities for rock climbing, water sports; creation and equipment of rest places, fire safe picnic places and related supervision (as per the requirements of applicable National legislation),
- Creation of better infrastructure for tourist visits, including for disabled (improvement of access and utilities) to natural phenomenon and cultural sightseeing, etc: e.g. stairs, lighting, water supply and sewerage, electricity, heating and ventilation; installation of signs, slopes, toilets, small waste collection facilities, etc.
- Creation of marks - boards, pointers, map schemes etc; trail marking, interpretation/directional boards, according to the established nomenclature, maps and written guides;
- Works to improve road access to sights and objects for cultural and rural tourism - car-parks, re/ construction of roads, recreation zones, etc and related supervision (as per the requirements of applicable National legislation);
- Procurement of equipment and materials - for interpretation, education, visitor or other centres; creation of information systems in tourism information centres, equipment for cultural events, monitoring systems for monitoring of dampness and temperature, security systems, etc.

Potential applicants

to fulfill the eligibility criteria laid down within 2.2. Eligibility Criteria and

- can be one of the following type of organizations: **municipalities, regional structures of central / local administration, universities, colleges, schools, theatres, museums, libraries, professional and education organization, training centres, institutions for heritage protection, community and cultural centers, NGOs, associations of the above.**

⚡ IMPORTANT

All investment activities should be implemented on a **municipal or state-owned property**.

The property should be:

- free of any encumbrances;
- not the object of an pending litigation;
- not the object of a claim according to the relevant national legislation.

All envisaged **investment activities** have to be supported with **approved/certified detailed works design and issued Construction Permit** (where applicable according to the relevant legislation²).

In case of investment activities for protection of cultural and historical heritage, the detailed works design for conservation/restoration/construction should be approved by the relevant national institutions for cultural heritage, prior submission of the project proposal.

"Two-phase" (two-component) projects will not be eligible (project design component/phase and works/construction component/phase).

All the **investment proposals** should have **positive environmental impact assessment (EIA)**, if for such kind of activities an EIA is required by the national legislation. Make sure that **all investments (e.g. infrastructure works)** be carried out in compliance with the **relevant Community environmental legislation**.

The procedures for Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) as set down in the EIA-directive³ fully apply to all investment projects under IPA. If the EIA-directive has not yet been fully transposed, the procedures should be similar to the ones established in the above-mentioned directive. If a project is likely to affect sites of nature conservation importance, **an appropriate nature conservation assessment shall be made, equivalent to that provided for in Article 6 of the Habitats Directive⁴.**

2.2.3 Eligibility of expenditures

Only "eligible costs" can be taken into account for financial support. These costs are detailed below. The budget is therefore both a cost estimate and a maximum ceiling for "eligible costs". Note that the eligible costs must be based on real costs. The eligibility of expenditure applies to EU and national contribution.

It is therefore in the applicant's interest to provide a **realistic and cost-effective budget**.

Requirements for eligible costs

To be eligible for financial support under the call for proposals, costs must:

- be necessary for carrying out the activity and must comply with the principles of sound

² Law of Spatial Planning (Official Gazette of Republic of Bulgaria № 1/2001); Constriction Low (Official Gazette of Republic of Macedonia № 130/2009)

³ Council Directive 85/337/EEC of 27 June 1985 on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment (OJ L 175, 5.7.1985, p. 40. Directive as last amended by Directive 2003/35/EC, OJ L 156, 25.6.2003, p. 17.

⁴ Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (OJ L206, 22.7.1992). Directive as last amended by Regulation (EC) No 1882/2003 (OJ L284, 31.10.2003, p. 1)

financial management, in particular value for money and cost-effectiveness;

- have been stipulated in the project budget;
- have actually been incurred by the beneficiaries or their partners during the implementing period for the activities defined in the application form;
- be recorded in the partners' accounts and tax documents, be identifiable and verifiable, and be backed up by supporting documents;
- be verified by controllers and certified as eligible;
- be in line with the provisions of the subsidy contract, national and European legislation;
- have not been subject to financing from any other public funds;
- be effectuated until the end of project. The starting date for the eligibility of expenditure for project preparation is the date of the official approval of the Financing Agreement between the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the European Commission (October 13, 2008) but not earlier than one year before the date of the current call for proposals. The starting date for the eligibility of other expenditure is the date of signing of the contract between MA and Lead Partner;
- expenditures must be made according to the:
 - Commission Regulation (EC) No 718/2007 of 12 June 2007 [OJ L 170 from 29.06.2007] implementing Council Regulation (EC) No 1085/2006 establishing an instrument for pre-accession assistance (IPA);
 - Commission Regulation (EC) No 80/2010 of 28 January 2010 amending Regulation (EC) No 718/2007 implementing Council Regulation (EC) No 1085/2006 establishing an instrument for pre-accession assistance (IPA)
 - Practical Guide to Contract procedures for External actions (PRAG);
 - Specific rules approved by the Joint Monitoring Committee.

To be eligible for financial support under the present call for proposals, costs have not been subject to financing from any other public funds.

⚡ IMPORTANT

In-kind contribution is not eligible expenditure!

List of eligible expenditures

BUDGET LINES:

BUDGET LINE 1: Administrative costs – maximum 25 % of total project costs

BUDGET LINE 2: Travel, daily allowance and accommodation

BUDGET LINE 3: Meetings, conferences, events

BUDGET LINE 4: Information and publicity

BUDGET LINE 5: External expertise

BUDGET LINE 6: Investments – min 70 % of total project costs

BUDGET LINE 7: Others – maximum 15 % of total project costs

⚡ IMPORTANT

The total sum of the maximum rates of the budget lines listed below exceeds 100 %. In a project with real expenditures the amount should be 100 %.

BUDGET LINE 1: Administrating costs – maximum 25 % of total project costs

Staff involved in project implementation remuneration. Including all expenditures related to the offices as:

Sub-line	Eligible expenditures
Project staff	Administrative/technical staff is for example the Project Leader, Coordinator, accountant, secretary, technical assistant, procurement expert and other experts. All staff members must be essential for the implementation of the operation. Payments for technical and administrative staff including social security charges and other related costs. Remuneration for external for the organisation experts is not allowed in this budget line (see budget line 5).
Rent of office	Expenses covering rent of office.
Overheads	Expenses covering electricity, heating, water etc.
Consumables	Expenses covering paper, pens, diskettes, folders, toners etc.

BUDGET LINE 2: Travel and accommodation

This budget line will cover the expenses for the participants from both countries (project staff and/or direct beneficiaries) in events taking place in the two partnering countries, as follows:

- events related to the project (technical meetings, meetings of joint working groups, meetings of the project team etc., workshops, trainings & seminars)
- business trips related to the project activities;

Sub-line	Eligible expenditures
Travel costs	<p>Travel costs will usually cover expenses for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • train tickets; • bus tickets; • car travels (expenditure for petrol/kilometre, green card, motor way taxes etc.); • medical insurances • visa expenditures • insurances <p>⚡ IMPORTANT Total number of kilometres should be determined in the project proposal in compliance with the project scope.</p>
Daily allowances	<p>Daily allowances – only for project staff members</p> <p>In the eligible border region - € 20;</p> <p>In third countries and outside the eligible border region - € 35.</p>
Accommodation	<p>Accommodation costs</p> <p>In the eligible border region - € 50;</p> <p>In third countries and outside the eligible border region - up to € 130.</p>

BUDGET LINE 3: Meetings, conferences, events

Costs for organisation of meetings, seminars, press conferences, awareness campaigns, trainings, evaluation committees etc. include:

Sub-line	Eligible expenditures
Rent of hall	Expenses for rent of hall (in public or private buildings) – for meetings, trainings or evaluation procedures;
Rent of audio/video equipment	<p>Expenses for rent of equipment, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • translation equipment; • audio equipment; • video equipment; • other related to the purpose of the event equipment.

Coffee breaks, refreshments etc.	Expenses for coffee breaks, refreshments, catering, business diners and lunches for all participants in the events; ⚡ IMPORTANT Expenditures for alcoholic beverages and cigarettes are not eligible. The costs are only eligible if stated clearly and easily visible on the invitation/agenda.
Preparation of materials	Expenses for preparation of materials supporting the events (invitations, agenda, presentations etc.);
Consumables	Expenses for consumables as paper, files, folders, cases, diskettes, compact disks, etc.

BUDGET LINE 4: Information and publicity

Sub-line	Eligible expenditures
Purchase of advertising materials	Expenses for purchase of advertising materials as CDs, USBs, hats, bags, note books, folders etc.
Elaboration, design, translation, etc.	Expenses for elaboration, design, translation, publishing or printing of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> information materials (concerning the project documents, implementation provisions etc.) brochures (informing about the project's implementation and results); manuals and guidelines (concerning the project); visibility materials (including elaboration and printing logo of the project, etc.)
Publications in mass-media	Expenses for preparation of materials and assuring promotions in radio, TV and press.

BUDGET LINE 5: External expertise

Sub-line	Eligible expenditures
Feasibility, design works etc.	Expenses for feasibility, technical studies, design works etc.
Interpreters, lecturers, trainers.	Expenses for interpreters, lecturers, trainers (should not be persons involved in the programme/project management);
Authorizations, certificates, etc.	Expenses for obtaining authorizations, certificates, agreements, permits etc. related to elaboration of documents, supplies and works. Bank charges for transnational financial transactions ; Bank charges for opening and administering the separate bank account(s) required by the programme;
Consultancy	Expenses for external consultancy (for studies, legal advice etc.);

BUDGET LINE 6: Investments – min 70 % (Investment projects), maximum 20 % (Soft Projects) of total project costs

Sub-line	Eligible expenditures
Purchase of land	Expenses for purchase of land – only in exceptional cases when it is absolutely necessary for the project implementation. Has to be well justified providing all documents for evaluation of the value of the land.

	<p>Value of the land should be certified by an independent qualified appraiser or duly authorized official body.</p> <p>⚡ IMPORTANT Maximum 5 % of total project costs.</p>
Small scale investments	<p>Expenses for land preparation – any works aimed at making the land suitable for the purpose of the project (removal of unnecessary materials and vegetation, drainage etc.);</p> <p>Main investment (construction, reconstruction, rehabilitation, widening and modernization of the building(s)/site(s) and the related installations).</p> <p>Connection to utilities: power connection, water supply and sewage connection, gas connection etc.</p> <p>Site organization: places for workers and equipment, waste removal, fences etc.</p> <p>Expenses for land rehabilitation after completion of works and/or environment protection activities;</p> <p>Expenditure for supervision (if necessary) – in compliance with the relevant national legislation</p>
Supply*	<p>Expenditure for purchase and rental of IT equipment and furniture;</p> <p>Expenditure necessary to bring the equipment to working condition;</p> <p>Expenditure for software;</p> <p>Purchase of vehicles is eligible provided that they are mandatory for achieving the project objective (i.e. specialized vehicles for interventions in case of disasters).</p> <p>IMPORTANT In case of investment projects only supply connected to works activities will be allowed</p>

*** For equipment that will not be used by the project partners or the project target group after the project completion and if the economic lifetime of the equipment is longer than the project duration, only the depreciation costs are eligible.** In this case, the eligible expenditure will be its depreciation costs during operation duration. The depreciation rate has to be in line with national or internal partners' rules.

Depreciation is charged proportionally in each relevant periodical report. The full value of depreciated costs on equipment in relation to the total project duration cannot be charged as total amount in one particular period.

Only the proportionate sum of the depreciations costs according to the use of equipment for the project is eligible. The amount (percentage used and time duration) has to be auditable.

The depreciation costs of equipment can never exceed the purchase price of the equipment.

BUDGET LINE 7: Others – maximum 15 % of total project costs

Sub-line	Eligible expenditures
Project preparation	<p>Expenses for project preparation (meetings between partners, consultancy, studies, translation of documents, taxes and other charges) carried out before the subsidy contract is signed. Expenditures are eligible from the date of the Financing Agreement between the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the European Commission (13 October 2008) but not earlier than one year before the date of call for proposals.</p>

	<p>⚡ IMPORTANT Maximum 5 % of total project costs. NB: Payment of a subsidy towards the cost of Project Preparation will only be made to those applicants whose projects are approved for financing. Otherwise, this cost is not recoverable.</p>
Other specific for the project	<p>Specific activities foreseen in the project that cannot be put down under any of the above budget lines. Those costs are eligible only if they are detailed in the explanatory documents, according to the complexity of the project.</p> <p>⚡ IMPORTANT Maximum 5 % of total project costs.</p>
Contingency	<p>⚡ IMPORTANT Maximum 5 % of total project costs.</p>

According to Article 89 of IPA Implementing Regulation 718/2007, by way of derogation of article 34 the following expenditure shall be eligible:

- (a) value added taxes, if the following conditions are fulfilled:
 - (i) they are not recoverable by any means from other sources according to national legislation (for Bulgaria – Bulgarian VAT Act, letter № 91-00-502/27.08.2007 of the Ministry of Finance; for former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia - Rulebook on the Implementation of the Value Added Tax);
 - (ii) it is established that they are borne by the final beneficiary; and
 - (iii) they are clearly identified in the project proposal.
- (b) charges for transnational financial transactions;
- (c) where the implementation of an operation requires a separate account or accounts to be opened, the bank charges for opening and administering the accounts;
- (d) legal consultancy fees, notaries fees, costs of technical or financial experts, and accountancy, if they are directly linked to the co-financed operation and are necessary for its preparation or implementation;
- (e) the cost of guarantees provided by a bank or other financial institutions, to the extent that the guarantees are required by national or Community legislation;
- (f) overheads, provided they are based on real costs attributable to the implementation of the operation concerned.

The following types of expenditures are ineligible:

According to Article 34 of the IPA Implementing Regulation 718/2007 unless otherwise provided for under the specific provisions laid down under each IPA component, the following expenditure shall not be eligible:

- (a) taxes, including value added taxes;
- (b) customs and import duties, or any other charges;
- (c) purchase, rent or leasing of land and existing buildings;
- (d) fines, financial penalties and expenses of litigation;
- (e) operating costs;
- (f) second hand equipment;
- (g) bank charges, costs of guarantees and similar charges;
- (h) conversion costs, charges and exchange losses associated with any of the component specific euro accounts, as well as other purely financial expenses;
- (i) contributions in kind.

In addition to the above the expenditures concerning the actions listed below shall not be eligible:

- Actions concerned only or mainly with individual sponsorships for participation in workshops, seminars, conferences, congresses;
- Actions concerned only or mainly with individual scholarships for studies or training courses;

- Actions with provisions for financing the usual management activities of the local organizations;
- Actions that started before Applicants have signed a contract for awarding grants except project preparation activities;
- Actions linked to political parties;
- Charitable donations;
- Activities covered by other public funds.

2.3 How to apply for funding

2.3.1 *How to get the Applicant's Pack*

The Applicant's Pack contains the Application Form and Annexes. These are the official forms that should be submitted when applying for financial support under the programme. The Applicant's Guide, which is also included in the pack, provides potential beneficiaries with detailed guidelines on the application for funding process.

The Applicant's Pack is available on the following websites:

Programme website: www.ipa-cbc-007.eu;

Managing Authority's website: www.mrrb.government.bg;

National Authority's website: www.mls.gov.mk;

Joint Technical Secretariat's website: www.ipa-cbc-007.eu

Bulgarian Ministry of Finance's website: www.eufunds.bg

Applicants may submit questions of substance in writing up to 21 calendar days before the deadline for submission of proposals. The JTS will reply no later than 11 calendar days before the deadline for the submission of proposals.

Questions may be sent by e-mail or by fax to the address listed below, indicating clearly the reference of the Call for Proposals:

Fax: +359 78 55 11 85

E-mail: jtsipakyustendil@gmail.com

Questions that may be relevant to other applicants, together with their answers, will be published on the internet site: www.ipa-cbc-007.eu.

2.3.2 *How to fill in the Application Form and its Annexes*

Please find below the guidelines for filling in the Application Form and Annexes.

⚡ IMPORTANT

Make sure you **fill in the Application Form and Annexes** (see below) **by computer**, correctly and completely and add all related documents.

Applications and Annexes must be submitted using the **forms included in the Applicant's Pack**.

The application and Annexes must be **filled in English**.

The supporting documents issued by national/local authorities or other bodies shall be attached.

All pages should have, in the lower right corner, **the page number** (which will continue from the **Application Form until the last page of the last annex**).

Modifying the standard Application form or Annexes will result in the rejection of your application.

The Application Form (Part I, II and III) should be identical **in paper and electronic version** (version No of the bottom of the pages should be identical).

Application Form (AF)**Application Form Cover:**

The project title and the name of the Lead Partner organization should be stated in English.

Project registration

Registration number and date: Will be put on the envelope by the JTS/Antennae. The registration date and time is the day and time when the fully completed, dated, stamped and signed application form, together with the annexes, arrive at the JTS/Antennae. The application form and annexes should be physical (paper version) and digital (CD or DVD) and should arrive at the JTS/Antennae before or on the deadline announced in the call for proposals. **Any application received after the deadline will be automatically rejected even if the postmark indicates a date preceding the deadline or if the delay is due to the courier service.**

Project number: This will be filled in by the Chairperson of the Assessment Working Group at the opening session.

CHECK LIST

The check list will be filled automatically when all parts and sections of the application form have been properly completed.

AF - PART 1**⚡ IMPORTANT**

Please fill the information below for every project partner starting with No 1 for Lead partner / beneficiary.

1. Identity**1.1. Detailed information**

Write the official and full name of the organisation.

Write the legal status, official address, legal representative, telephone, fax and e-mail.

If the partner is a regional/local branch with legal personality, it should be mentioned within section: Organisation.

The names of all the partner organizations should be stated both in their native language and in English. The "legal status" filed should be filled in with the type of organization (from public sector - Public body or Public equivalent body and from Non governmental sector).

Public sector

- Public body - legal entity established and governed by public law assigned with specific competences and tasks performed in public interest (e.g. national, regional, local authorities).
- Public equivalent body - legal entity that has to fulfil the following criteria:
 - established under public or private law mainly for the specific purpose of meeting needs in the general interest;
 - having legal personality (including non profit organisation with public financing);
 - financed, for the most part, by the State, regional or local authorities, or other bodies governed by public law; or subject to management supervision by those bodies; or having an administrative, managerial or supervisory board, more than half of whose members are appointed by the State, regional or local authorities, or by other bodies governed by public law

Non governmental sector

- non-profit organisation - legal entity whose primary objective is to support private interest or public concern for non-commercial purposes, without concern for financial profit (e.g. foundations, civic associations with private financing only).

For the all partners including the Lead Partner organization, the name and position of the legal representative are requested.

The Lead Partner and the partners must present data regarding the object of activity and the tax registration number.

The *Lead Partner* is, as lead beneficiary, responsible for the implementation of the entire project. The Lead Partner will be the addressee of the entire correspondence during the application evaluation process and will also be responsible for reporting to the JTS after approval of the project. More information about the role and tasks of the Lead Partner are stipulated in the subsidy contract template annexed to this Guide.

1.2. Partner profile

Write the past experience (**over past 3 years**) in territorial co-operation actions.

Write the specific role of each partner in the implementation and management of the current project. If the Lead Partner participates as a partner in other project proposals under the present Call for Proposals, these project proposals should be clearly stated by the Lead Partner.

1.3. Partner experience

State already financed and implemented projects (*maximum 10 (ten) per project partner*).

Here the beneficiaries must state if they have ever received financing from European funds.

Here the Project partners must provide detailed information about successfully implemented projects (**maximum 3 (three)** projects per project partner selected by previous table).

2. Financial data**2.1. Detailed information**

Write national registration code, VAT registration, IBAN, BIC, bank details

2.2. Financial status, capacity and equipment

The project partners must state information concerning annual turnover, number of full time staff, number of part time staff, number of offices and equipment.

Application Form - PART 2**1. Project identity****1.1. Project title**

Write the official and *full name* of the project and acronym.

Write Priority and Key area of intervention of the project. Priority axis No. and Key area of intervention No. should be taken from the table shown at section 2 - **item 2.2.2. Programme priority axes** of this document.

Project duration

Write the project duration **in months**.

1.2. Cross border character of the project

In order to prove the cross-border character of the project you must explain which of the following criteria are fulfilled (**minimum one**): *Joint Development, Joint Implementation, Joint Staffing, Joint Financing* (please refer to section 2 – General requirements).

1.3. Cross border impact of the project

The project partners must provide information regarding the cross-border impact of the project. As it could be seen in the Evaluation Grids (Chapter 6 – Evaluation and Selection of Applications), the cross-border impact of the project is assessed under Technical and Quality Evaluation N-12. **If the average score is less than 5 points for this criterion, the project proposal will be rejected.**

2. Financial information

2.1. Sources of financing (EUR)

The information concerning total value of the project, total value of the EU funds, total value of the national co-financing and if applicable - own contribution will be filled automatically after filling the Budget tables of the **Application form – Part III - Table 2.**

2.2. Breakdown of eligible expenditure per year (EUR)

The eligible expenditures planned will be filled automatically after filling the Budget tables of the **Application Form – Part III – table 3.**

3. Project description

3.1. Consistency with programme strategy

All projects in Bulgaria – the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia IPA Cross Border Programme must comply with the *strategy set out in the Programme*. This can be demonstrated by explaining the foreseen contribution of a project to the aims of the programme. Project partners should explain briefly and clearly how their project will contribute to the aims of the programme.

In this area the partners must explain how the project complies with the programme strategy and state the priority axis, key area of intervention and indicative operation aimed by the project.

In case the project envisages activities which might contribute or influence another priority axis or key area of intervention or indicative operation, explanations are to be given in this section.

3.2. Project objectives

The projects should set its own clear objectives (general and specific), in line with the programme objectives. It must be explained how the project objectives comply with the objectives of the programme and of the priority axes.

3.3. Background and demand for the overall project

Project partners should provide a clear description of the problem which the project is going to tackle and the contribution which the project will make to help solve it. Project partners should provide information about needs, strengths, weaknesses and constraints of the target groups and the target region.

It is recommended to describe what is new about the project in relation to what has been previously achieved – including other supported by EU activities and other projects and programmes in the area – and in relation to what will be achieved in this area in the future. It should be described why the chosen partnership is necessary for the project. Furthermore, the level of achievements of the project should be justified in terms of having a long-lasting impact from its final results.

3.4. Description of the target groups, beneficiaries and estimated number

The Project partners should provide clear description of the target groups, beneficiaries and estimated number.

"Target groups" are the groups/entities who will be positively affected by the project

"Direct beneficiaries" are those directly involved in the project implementation

"Final beneficiaries" are those who will benefit from the project in a long term

3.5. Project activities

Project partners should fill in the activities planned to achieve the objectives as set out in 3.2. Please state the location of each activity and the responsible partner for each activity.

3.6. Duration and action plan

For each activity must be clearly stated **the starting date, the completion date and duration**.

4. Monitoring indicators

4.1. Expected outputs and results

The Project partners should provide quantification of those programme's indicators that are relevant to the project outputs and results, following the instruction given in the "Methodology of output and result indicators". The document is available on the Programme's web-page.

Please note that the **Quant** field in the specific sections has to be filled according to the programme units:

- In the output section, the quantities are in **Number** for all output indicators;
- In the results sections, the quantities are in **Percentage (%)** for all result indicators **and in Number only** for result indicator **Joint information services established** in Key Area of Intervention 1.1. Economic development and result indicator **New Social Economic enterprises created** in Key Area of Intervention 1.2. Social cohesion /

In the "justification" field of the result section, the applicants must describe the sources of verification of the results to be achieved.

4.2. Multiplier effect

Describe the possibilities for replication and extension of the action outcomes.

4.3. Sustainability

The applicants should explain how the sustainability of the outputs and results of the project will be ensured after completion of the action. This part should include aspects of ownerships; necessary follow-up actions and resources for maintenance of the outputs delivered under the project; built-in strategies; etc.

The Lead Partner and project partners should ensure the sustainability of the project results not less than five years after completion of the implementation period in terms for investment support projects and not less than 2 years after completion of the implementation period in terms for soft measures projects.

Please note, that in accordance with the Article 57(1) of Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006, the project retains the contribution from the Funds only if that project does not undergo a substantial modification:

- affecting its nature or its implementation conditions or giving to a firm or a public body an undue advantage; and
- resulting either from a change in the nature of ownership of an item of infrastructure or the cessation of a productive activity.

5. Project coherence with

5.1. Other programmes/strategies

The Project partners should identify those regional/national/European programmes or strategies in the field to which the application refers and demonstrate the coherence of the project to the respective documents/actions if applicable.

5.2. Other projects

The Project partners must identify projects to which the present application has complementary/ upgrading /multiplier impact.

5.3 Horizontal themes

Explain how your project will contribute towards the promotion of the three *horizontal themes* (equal opportunities, environmental impacts and Innovative elements/methods).

If a negative impact is envisaged, for any reason, then it should be clearly explained as to how such effects will be minimized or otherwise offset.

6. Management of the project

6.1. General coordination and management including administrative and financial aspects

The role and responsibilities of the Lead Partner and project partners should be clearly described.

In general Lead Partner is responsible for the overall coordination, management and administration of the project and project partners are responsible for definite activities.

The Lead Partner and the project partners should draft and sign a Partnership Agreement, which clearly defines the roles and responsibilities of each partner. A template for the Partnership Agreement is included in the application package, indicating the minimum standards of the Partnership Agreement. The concrete agreement for the project can be extended and more detailed.

⚡ IMPORTANT

A partner can never be a sub-contractor and vice versa!

Please note that a "partner" involved in the project implementation as "lead partner" or "project partner" is excluded from any forms of sub-contracting to other partners within the project.

6.2. Team proposed for project implementation

The Project partners should provide information regarding the project management staff giving different positions and main responsibilities.

Additionally CVs of experts for the different positions have to be attached.

Partners should go for a balanced team in terms of experience, competences and capacity.

7. Information and publicity

According to the EC Regulations and the Programme, the beneficiaries must promote their projects and the added value of the Community funds.

Within a project the Lead Partner or each of the partners in the project must perform communication and promotion activities (media campaigns, events, promotional and informational materials, electronic channels etc). All project partners shall indicate concrete measures to be taken in this respect and also in order to disseminate the project results. All costs for proposed measures need to be included in the financial plan for the project and accounted for in the Budget Form. It should also mention who will benefit from the project and it might also specify other target groups such as authorities on different levels, enterprises, NGOs, other projects concerning the same issues as the proposed project, the general public and the mass media. These activities must be eventually evaluated to establish the impact they had on the target groups (the means and methods of evaluation should be mentioned in the table). The beneficiaries will accept to be included on a list containing the following information: the names of the beneficiaries, the titles of the projects and the amounts of public funding allocated to the respective projects.

Application Form - Part 3**Table 1 – TOTAL BUDGET PER PROJECT PARTNERS**

Table 1 –Names of project partners starting with PP1 (Lead partner), country code and total financial contribution will be automatically filled after you finish the AF part III.

Table 2 – DETAILED BREAKDOWN OF BUDGET LINES PER PARTNER (PP1, PP2, PP3 etc.)

All project partners fill a separate Table 2 (PP1 to PP10) – answering to their number in Table 1 (PP1, PP2, PP3 etc.) giving a breakdown of the expenditures that each of them will be responsible for during the project implementation. The figures in the column "Unit rate" should be without VAT. **The amount of eligible VAT (in total) is not calculated automatically and should be filled by every partner in row "Eligible VAT" in the end of Table 2.** Table 2 (total)– DETAILED BREAKDOWN OF BUDGET LINES PER YEARS will be automatically filled and will provide a detailed summary of the project costs per Budget lines and Sub-lines.

⚡ IMPORTANT

It is very important for proper evaluation, implementation and reporting of the project every project partners to fill Table 2 carefully, precisely and logically to the project activities. The use of the right units (hour, day, month, kilometres, etc.) and number of units in the budgeting process avoid future problems in reporting and more important, in reimbursement of expenditure. For example: unit "per month" means 8 hours, 22 working days; "part time" is not a unit; two days seminar does not always mean three accommodations and four daily allowances.

Table 3 – SUMMARY BREAKDOWN OF BUDGET LINES PER YEARS

Table 3 will be filled automatically providing a summary of the project costs only per BLs and years.

Table 4 - SUMMARY BREAKDOWN OF BUDGET LINES PER PROJECT PARTNERS

This table will be filled automatically providing information for the distribution (balanced/unbalanced) of the project budget between project partners. Information about amount of eligible VAT is generating automatically.

Table 5 – PROJECT SOURCES/PARTNERS' CONTRIBUTION

In Table 5 the sources of national co-financing should be inserted – **15 % state co-financing** is provided and if applicable (not obligatory) **own contribution** and/or other sources.

⚡ IMPORTANT

EU co-financing should **not exceed 85%** of the total project costs.

PARTNERSHIP AND COFINANCING STATEMENT is automatically filled. Additionally every project partner should fill name and position of the legal representative and date. After printing the statement has to be signed and stamped. On paper version this document should be provided in a number corresponding to the project partners.

The Managing Authority reserves the right to propose to the JMC reduction of the project costs.

3 Annexes**3.1 Annexes (A)**

The following Annexes should be filled according to the template and submitted together with the Application form:

A1. Inventory of the Application form and its annexes.

A2. Authorization document (letter of attorney, administrative order etc.) from the legal representative of the partner (in case the application form and annexed declarations are not signed by the legal representative of the Lead Partner/partner) – **original**.

A3. Project summary**⚡ IMPORTANT**

Project summary should be filled in **English, Macedonian and Bulgarian**. In case of inconsistency between the three versions, the English version shall prevail.

A4. CVs of the project management team

Have in mind that one person cannot participate in the management team of more than two projects and cannot occupy more than one post in the project team.

A5. Partnership Agreement**A6. Declaration of Eligibility****A7. Sworn Statement****A8. Declaration of Commitment****A9. Declaration that included in Application Form VAT is not recoverable (if any).****3.2 Annexes (B)**

The following Annexes should be provided and submitted together with the Application form:

B1. Documentary and other evidence (in original or certified copy) on the most recent legal status of all partners (issued not later than 6 months prior the date of application **(notary certified)**)

B2. Decision of Applicant's governing body (Local Council/Board of Directors or any similar body) regarding project development and implementation *(original or certified by the partner that it is a true copy)*

B3. Supporting documents concerning INVESTMENT SUPPORT ACTIVITIES ONLY

B3.1. In case Works activities are foreseen: documents certifying the right of property/concession on the land and/or building should be provided:

- Ownership act or certificate for ownership of the tangible assets, which will be subject of works activities **(notary certified copy);**
- Decision of Applicant's governing body and where applicant is not owner Agreement with the owner, clearly stating that the assets are given for free right of use for the purpose of the project at least for **5 years after end of the project. (notary certified copy);**

B3.2. Notary certified Declaration from the land and/or building owner that the land and/or building is:

- free of any encumbrances;
- not the object of an pending litigation;
- not the object of a claim according to the relevant national legislation.

B3.3. In case of Supply of equipment: Technical specification of the tangible assets should be provided;

B3.4. In case of investment activities requiring passing through private territories: the consent of the owners must be obtained and presented in a due legal form and copy of the ownership act **(notary certified copy);**

B3.5. In case of investment activities within territories with special status: relevant documentation required by the respective national legislation (***original or notary certified copy***);

B3.6 In case of investment activities concerning renovation of cultural monuments: relevant documentation required by the respective national legislation (***original or notary certified copy***);

B3.7. Copy of letter issued by the relevant body clearly stating that Environmental Impact Assessment is not necessary (***notary certified copy***)

or

Copy of positive Environmental Impact Assessment (positive opinion from the relevant body), required by the national legislation (***notary certified copy***);

B3.8. Approved Detailed works design (if applicable according to the relevant legislation).

B3.9. Latest photos of the site. At the back of the photograph the following information has to be provided - **name of applicant, place, the exact location of the object on the photo, date.**

Any other documents concerning the project may be provided as Annexes.

⚡ IMPORTANT

In case any of the above documents are not in English, a translation into English of the relevant parts of these documents, proving the partners' eligibility, must be attached.

3.3 Annexes (C)

The following Annex is provided for information:

C. Subsidy contract - The contract annexed is only indicative

⚡ IMPORTANT

All copies should be certified "**True copy**" by the legal representative of the respective partner or of the Lead partner.

For information the following Annexes should be provided and submitted on the pre-contracting stage after request:

- Copy of the partners' accounts - Annual Balance Sheet and Profit and Loss Accounts for 2009 and 2010 (*certified by the partner that is a true copy*);
- Copies of the partners' Certificate for registration or national registration code and VAT registration (if applicable) (*certified by the partner that is a true copy*).
- Copies of the partners' certificate issued by the relevant body for lack of obligations (taxes and social security duties) issued not later than 6 months prior the date of request or plan for rescheduling of the debts if existing (***notary certified***).
- Declaration from all partners that they are familiar with the definition for irregularity and fraud according to a template.

4 Where and how to send the application

Each application form should be bound (together with its annexes) in the way that pages could not be taken away from a whole set. The cover page of the Application Form should be visible,

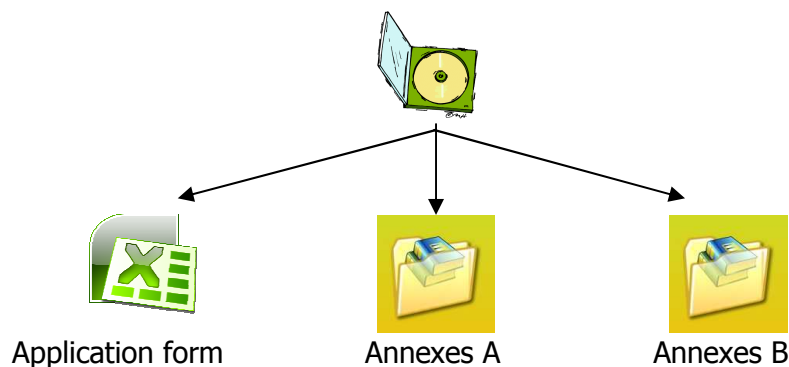
where <Project Title>, <Name of the Lead Partner>, <Signature and Stamp of Lead Partner> should be written by the applicant.

A full electronic version of the Application Form and its annexes must be also enclosed on a CD or DVD.

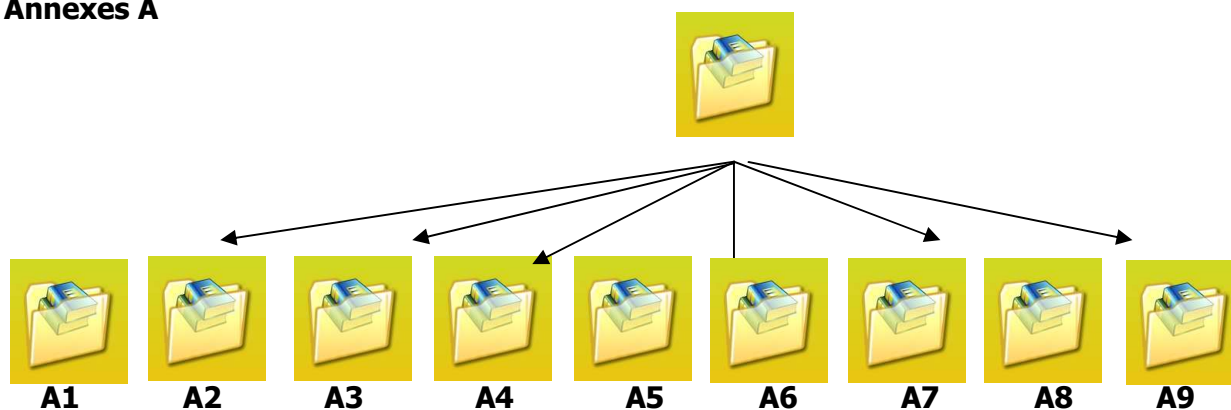
Electronic version of Application form should be recorded in Excel.

⚡ IMPORTANT

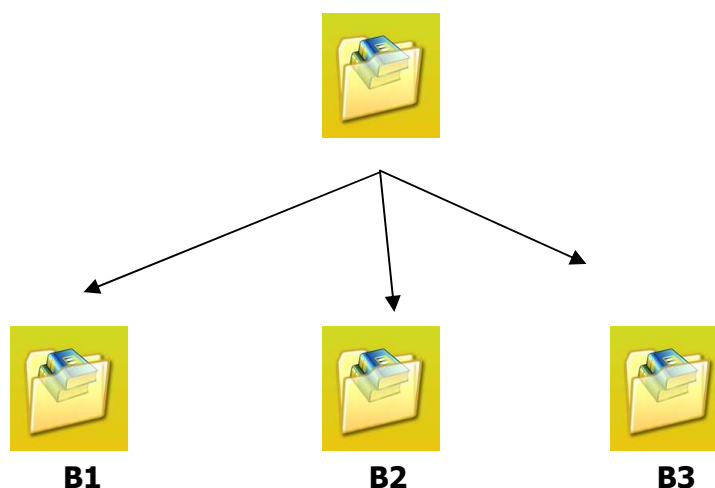
All supporting documents should be scanned and recorded with file names, corresponding to respective documents per partner and archived in following electronic folders:



Annexes A



Annexes B



Subfolders B.3



For technical and architectural plans where their scan is impossible, electronic version should be provided.

⚡ IMPORTANT

The electronic format must contain exactly the same proposal as the paper version enclosed.

Applications must be received in a sealed envelope by registered mail, private courier service or by hand-delivery (a signed and dated certificate of receipt will be given to the deliverer) at the address below:

Postal address, Address for hand delivery or by courier service

JTS Kyustendil

Republic of Bulgaria
Kyustendil 2500,
7 Marin Drinov str.

Branch JTS (Antenna)

2400 Municipality of Strumica
NN Blogoi Mucheto str.
(town park)
2 floor

The outer envelope must bear the:

- **Call for Proposal number: 2007CB16IPO007 - 2011 – 2 and**
- **the full name and address of the applicant**

Applications **sent by any other means (e.g. by fax or by e-mail)** or delivered to other addresses **will be rejected**.

Applications (application form and annexes) shall be submitted in **one original and 1 copy**, bound in A4 format and **electronic format (CD or DVD)**.

5 Deadline for receipt of applications

⚡ IMPORTANT

The deadline for the receipt of applications is **September 14, 2011, 4 pm.**

Any application registered **after the deadline** will automatically **be rejected**, even if the postmark indicates a date preceding the deadline or if the delay is due to the courier service.

6 Evaluation and Selection of Applications

The project evaluation and selection criteria prepared by the Managing Authority together with the National Authority and the Joint Technical Secretariat are approved by the Joint Monitoring Committee(JMC).

The assessment process will be organised and secretarially supported by JTS. The results of all assessment steps will be summarised in the form of a report and presented to the JMC for a decision.

The JMC will decide on the approval of projects and the amount of programme's financial contribution to each operation. Following that, each Lead Partner will be informed with an official letter, signed by the MA on behalf of JMC, about approval/rejection of their project. For the approved projects this letter will also provide information on the next steps.

Contracts with the Lead Partners of the approved projects will be prepared on the standard template. Implementation of the projects may start only after the contracts are signed by both - the MA and the Lead Partner.

Applications will be examined and evaluated by the JTS with the assistance of external assessors. All project proposals submitted by applicants will be assessed according to the following steps and criteria:

(1) STEP 1: OPENING SESSION AND ADMINISTRATIVE CHECK

The following will be assessed:

- **The deadline has been respected.** If the deadline has not been respected the proposal will automatically be rejected.
- The project proposal **satisfies all the criteria** mentioned in the **Table for administrative compliant check**. If any of the requested information is missing or is incorrect, the proposal may be rejected on that sole basis and the proposal will not be evaluated further.

🔥 **IMPORTANT Additional clarification** concerning administrative compliance of the project proposals **could be requested**. Please having in mind that additional information/clarification must not be requested when improvement of proposal is possible.

ADMINISTRATIVE COMPLIANCE CHECK

ADMINISTRATIVE PART (to be filled by JTS)

Project No	
Lead Partner	
Partner/s	
Project title	

No	CRITERIA FOR ADMINISTRATIVE COMPLIANCE	YES	NO
1.	The Project proposal has been delivered within the deadline .		
2.	The identification details are clearly stated on the outside of the sealed package.		
3.	All parts of the Application Form and supporting documents are submitted in one original and one printed copy.		
4.	An electronic version of the Application Form and its annexes has been provided.		
5.	Cover page of the Application form is signed and stamped.		
6.	Inventory of the Application form and its annexes (Annex A1) is submitted and all pages of the Application Form and annexes are numbered according to the Inventory.		
7.	Authorization document from the legal representatives of partners (in case the application form and annexed declarations are not signed by the legal representatives of the Lead Partner/partners) (Annex A2) – <i>original is/are presented</i> .		
8.	Project summary is submitted in 3 (three) languages English, Bulgarian and Macedonian (Annex A3).		
9.	The Application Form is duly completed in compliance with the template.		
10.	All sections of the Application Form are typed in English .		
11.	CVs of the project team are presented in English (Annex A4).		
12.	Partnership agreement signed and stamped by all partners is presented (Annex A5).		
13.	Declaration of eligibility signed by Lead partner is presented (Annex A6).		
14.	Sworn statement signed by Lead partner and all partners is presented (Annex A7).		
15.	Partnership and co-financing statement signed and stamped by every partner.		
16.	Declaration of Commitment signed and stamped by every partner (Annex A8).		
17.	Declaration that VAT included in the application form is not recoverable (Annex A9)		

No	SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS	YES	NO
18.	Documentary and other evidence (in original or certified copy) on the most recent legal status of all partners is provided (issued not later than 6 months prior the date of application <i>(notary certified)</i>).		
19.	Decision of Applicant's governing body (Local Council/Board of Directors or any similar body) regarding project development and implementation <i>(original or certified by the partner that is a true copy)</i>		
No	SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS CONCERNING INVESTMENT ACTIVITIES	YES	NO
20.	In case Works activities are foreseen following documents certifying the right of property/concession on the land and/or building are provided:		
20.1.	Ownership act or certificate for public ownership of the tangible assets, which will be subject of works activities <i>(notary certified copy)</i> .		
20.2.	Decision of Applicant's governing body and where applicant is not owner Agreement with the owner clearly stating that the assets are given for free right of use for the purpose of the project at least for 5 years after end of the project <i>(notary certified copy)</i> .		
20.3.	Notary certified Declaration from the land and/or building owner that the land and/or building is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o free of any encumbrances; o not the object of an pending litigation; o not the object of a claim according to the relevant national legislation. 		
21.	In case of Supply of equipment Technical specification of the tangible assets is provided		
22.	In case of investment activities requiring passing through private territories : the consent of the owners is obtained and presented in a due legal form and a copy of the ownership act is attached <i>(notary certified copy)</i> .		
23.	In case of investment activities within territories with special status relevant documentation required by the respective national legislation is/are presented		
24.	In case of investment activities concern cultural monuments relevant documentation required by the respective national legislation is/are presented <i>(notary certified copy)</i> .		
25.	Copy of letter issued by the relevant body clearly stated that Environmental Impact Assessment is not necessary (notary certified copy) or Copy of positive Environmental Impact Assessment (positive opinion from the relevant body), required by the national legislation (notary certified copy)		
26.	Approved/certified Detailed works design and issued Construction Permit (if applicable according to the relevant legislation).		
27.	Latest photos of the site with filled name of applicant, place,		

the exact location of the object on the photo, date.			
COMMENTS		YES	NO
Project proposal satisfies all criteria for administrative compliance			
Assessor's name:	Assessor's signature:	Date of evaluation:	

⚡ IMPORTANT

Only proposals that satisfy all the criteria mentioned in the administrative compliance checklist will be evaluated on eligibility stage.

(2) STEP 2: ELIGIBILITY CHECK

The eligibility check is a part of evaluation of the project proposal, based on the criteria for eligibility as follows:

ELIGIBILITY COMPLIANCE CHECK

ADMINISTRATIVE PART (to be filled by JTS)	
Project No	
Lead Partner	
Partner/s	
Project title	

No	ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	YES	NO
1.	The applicant submitted only one project proposal as a Lead Partner.		
2.	At least one partner from each side of the cross border region is involved.		
3.	Lead partner is registered at least 12 months before the deadline for submission of project proposals under current Call for Proposals. (Annex B 1)		
4.	All partners are eligible organizations (public bodies/ public equivalents/ non-profit organizations registered in the eligible area). (Annexes B 1)		
5.	The project is in line with given Priority axes and key Areas of intervention stipulated in the Applicant's Guide. (AF Part 2, section 1.1)		
6.	The project activities are located in the eligible area. (AF Part 2, section 3.5)		
7.	The implementation period is in the limits of project duration indicated in the Applicant's Guide. (AF Part 2, sections 1.1 and 3.6)		
8.	The value of the financial support requested is in line with the limits indicated in the Applicant's Guide. (AF Part 2, section 2.2 and Part 3, table 2)		
9.	The co-financing rates for EU and national funds are within the limits indicated in the Applicant's Guide. (AF Part 2, section 2.1 and Part 3, table 5)		
10.	At least one of the following conditions is covered : Joint development, Joint implementation, Joint staffing, Joint financing.		

(AF Part 2, section 1.1)			
COMMENTS		YES	NO
Project proposal satisfies all criteria for eligibility compliance			
Assessor's name:	Assessor's signature:	Date of evaluation:	

⚡ IMPORTANT

Only proposals that satisfy all the criteria mentioned in the eligibility compliance checklist will be evaluated on technical and quality evaluation stage.

(3) STEP 3: TECHNICAL AND QUALITY EVALUATION STAGE

An evaluation of the quality of the proposals, including the proposed budget, and of the capacity of the applicant and his partners, will be carried out in accordance with the evaluation criteria set out in the Evaluation Grid included below.

TECHNICAL AND QUALITY EVALUATION

TECHNICAL AND QUALITY EVALUATION PART (to be filled by MA)	
Project No	
Lead Partner	
Partner/s	
Project title	

MANAGEMENT CAPACITY			
No	SELECTION CRITERIA	Max. score	Reference
1.	The partners are experienced in project management in similar or other EU financed projects	5	Part I p.1.3.
	<i>All partners implemented 3 or more projects</i>		
	<i>All partners implemented at least 1 project</i>		
	<i>Some partners implemented projects</i>		
	<i>None of the partners has experience</i>		
2.	The project team proposed has the capacity to manage the project	5	Part II p.6.1., p.6.2. & CVs of the proposed project team
	<i>The whole project team has experience in project management</i>		
	<i>Some of the project team have experience</i>		
	<i>None of the project team has experience</i>		
3.	Participation of partners in project management team	5	Part II p.6.1. & p.6.2.
	<i>Balanced participation of all partners</i>		
	<i>Unbalanced participation but all partners</i>		
	<i>In case of several partners - no participation of some of them</i>		
	<i>In case of 2 partners – one does not participate</i>		
4.	Staff, technical capacity and financial stability of the	5	Part I

	project partners		p.2.2.
	<i>All partners have permanent staff, good technical capacity and financial stability</i>	5 points	
	<i>Some partners have permanent staff, good technical capacity and financial stability</i>	2-4 points	
	<i>Newly established organizations/ no stability of all partners</i>	1 point	
	SUBTOTAL	20	
CONSISTENCY WITH THE PROGRAMME AND OTHER DOCUMENTS AND STRATEGIES			
No	SELECTION CRITERIA	Max. score	Reference
5.	The project is relevant to the overall and respective specific objectives of the programme	5	Part II p.3.1.
	<i>Relevant to the overall and specific objectives of the programme</i>		
	<i>Partial relevance to the overall and specific objectives of the programme</i>		
	<i>No relevance to the overall and specific objectives of the programme</i>		
6.	The project is relevant to the objectives of one of the priority axes and one of the spheres of intervention and respective indicators	5	Part II p.3.2.
	<i>Clear relevance</i>		
	<i>Partial relevance</i>		
	<i>No relevance</i>		
7.	Clearly defined and strategically chosen target groups	5	Part II p.3.4.
	<i>Clearly defined and quantified target groups</i>		
	<i>Vague description of target groups</i>		
	<i>Not defined target groups</i>		
8.	The project fulfils one or several of the cooperation criteria: joint development, joint implementation, joint staffing, joint financing	5	Part II p.1.2. Passing
	<i>Covering all 4 of the above criteria</i>		
	<i>Covering 3 of the above criteria</i>		
	<i>Covering 2 of the above criteria</i>		
	<i>Covering 1 of the above criteria</i>		
9.	Coherence of the project with other programmes and/or strategies	5	Part II p.5.1. p.5.2.
	<i>Clearly demonstrated coherence</i>		
	<i>Unclear or vague coherence</i>		
	<i>No coherence demonstrated</i>		
10.	The project contains elements of value added providing coherence with the following horizontal themes: equal opportunities, environmental impacts, innovative elements	5	Part II p.5.3. Passing
	<i>Coherence with 3 of the above horizontal themes</i>		
	<i>Coherence with 2 of the above horizontal themes</i>		

	<i>Coherence with 1 of the above horizontal themes</i>	<i>2 points</i>		
	<i>No value added</i>	<i>1 point</i>		
	SUBTOTAL		30	
METHODOLOGY				
No	SELECTION CRITERIA	Max. score	Reference	
11.	The project activities proposed are appropriate and consistent with the objectives and expected results	5	Part II p.3.3 & p.3.5.	
	<i>Consistency between objective, activities & results</i>	<i>5 points</i>		
	<i>Not very well justified activities</i>	<i>2-4 points</i>		
	<i>Low level of consistency</i>	<i>1 point</i>		
12.	Cross-border impact of the project	10	Part II p.1.3. Passing	
	<i>Strong cross-border impact</i>	<i>10 points</i>		
	<i>Weak, unclear/doubtful cross-border impact</i>	<i>5 points</i>		
	<i>No cross-border impact</i>	<i>1 point</i>		
13.	Action plan and partners' responsibilities	5	Part II p.3.6.	
	<i>Clear and feasible action plan and partners' responsibilities</i>	<i>5 points</i>		
	<i>Some activities not well justified/some responsibilities unclear</i>	<i>2-4 points</i>		
	<i>Unclear action plan and partners' responsibilities</i>	<i>1 point</i>		
14.	Level of involvement and participation of project partners in activities	5	Part II p.3.5.	
	<i>Balanced participation of all partners</i>	<i>5 points</i>		
	<i>Unbalanced distribution of activities between project partners</i>	<i>3-4 points</i>		
	<i>In case of several partners - not all of them involved in project activities</i>	<i>2 point</i>		
	<i>In case of 2 partners – one is not involved in project activities</i>	<i>1 point</i>		
15.	Output and result indicators	5	Part II p.4.1. & p.4.2.	
	<i>Quantified & relevant to the activities indicators are provided</i>	<i>5 points</i>		
	<i>Some indicators are provided</i>	<i>2-4 points</i>		
	<i>No or irrelevant indicators are provided</i>	<i>1 point</i>		
16.	Potential multiplier effects of the project and sustainability of expected results after EU funding ends	5	Part II p.4.3. & p.4.4.	
	<i>Possibilities for replication & well sustainability</i>	<i>5 points</i>		
	<i>Doubtful multiplier effect and sustainability</i>	<i>2-4 points</i>		
	<i>No possible multiplier effect or sustainability</i>	<i>1 point</i>		
	SUBTOTAL		35	
BUDGET				
No	SELECTION CRITERIA	Max. score	Reference	

		e	
17.	Estimated expenditures are necessary for the implementation of the project <i>All estimated costs are eligible and necessary for the implementation of the project</i> 5 points <i>Some costs are not relevant to the activities proposed</i> 2-4 points <i>Most estimated costs are not strictly necessary for the implementation of the project</i> 1 point	5	Part III Passing
18.	The costs are estimated based on real market prices <i>All costs are estimated based on market prices</i> 5 points <i>Some costs are not based on market prices</i> 2-4 points <i>Most costs are not based on market prices</i> 1 point	5	Part III Table 2
19.	Budget breakdown between partners <i>Balanced budget breakdown between partners</i> 5 points <i>One or several partners have budget 2-3 times less than any other of the partners</i> 2-4 points <i>One or several partners have budget 5 times less than any other of the partners</i> 1 point	5	Part III Table 4
	SUBTOTAL	15	
	TOTAL	100	
COMMENTS			
Recommendation			
Assessor's name:		Assessor's signature:	Date of evaluation:

🔥 IMPORTANT

- Only projects with score of 65 and above will be proposed for financing
- If a criterion is not applicable for a definite type of project an average score is given

Note on Section 1. Management capacity

If the total average score **is less than 10 points** for section 1, the project proposal **will not be proposed for financing**.

Note on Section 2. Consistency with the programme and other documents and strategies

If the total average score **is less than 20 points** for section 2, the project proposal **will not be proposed for financing**.

🔥 IMPORTANT

Taking into account the good Administrative Practices, the Assessment Working Group **can exclude an applicant at any stage** of the Call for proposals evaluation process whenever it is obvious that the latter does not meet the eligibility criteria

Provisional selection

Following the evaluation, a table listing the proposals ranked according to their score and within the available financial envelope will be established as well as a reserve list following the same criteria.

Contact Details

Managing Authority

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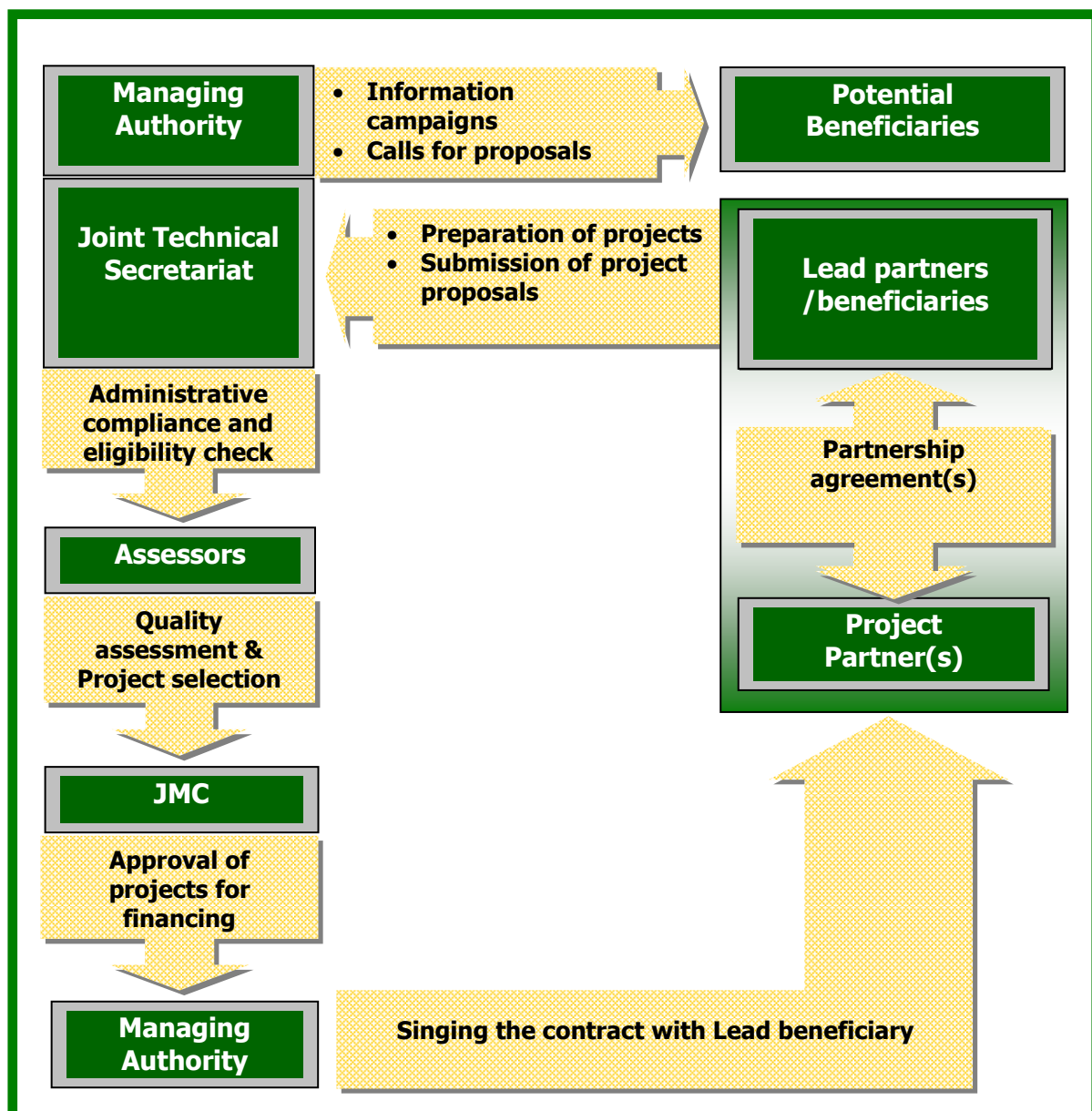
Joint Technical Secretariat

Bulgaria, 2500 Kyustendil,
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National Authority

Ministry of Local Self-government
Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, 1000, Skopje
Mito Hadzi Vasilev Jasmin Str. NN
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Project evaluation and selection procedure



Glossary of terms

Applicant	Any legal entity meeting the eligible criteria which submits an application to be financed by the programme
Beneficiary	Any applicant whose application has been approved for financing
Eligible expenditure	Expenditures made by a Beneficiary, related to the operations financed through the programme, which could be financed from the structural instruments, as well as from the state budget and/or own Beneficiary contribution
Eligible area/region	The border area of Bulgaria comprises the districts of Blagoevgrad and Kyustendil. The border area of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia comprises the North-East, the East and the South-East NUTS III statistical regions
Lead Partner	An applicant designated by the partners involved in a project responsible for coordinating the process of development, submission and implementation of that specific project
Managing Authority	The structure responsible for managing the operational programme. is DG "Territorial Cooperation Management", within Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works in Bulgaria.
National Authority	The counterpart of the Managing Authority in the partner state - Ministry of Local Self-Government
Priority Axis	A strategic priority within the operational programme, including a group of interconnected key areas of intervention and operations with measurable specific objectives
Partner	Any applicant involved in a project
Project	The operation for which funding is being sought under the Programme, expressed in the application form and its annexes.

Glossary of Acronyms

AA	Audit Authority
AF	Application Form
BG	Republic of Bulgaria
CA	Certifying Authority
CARDS	Community assistance for Reconstruction, Development and Stabilisation
CBC	Cross-Border Cooperation
CBA	Cost Benefit Analysis
EC	European Commission
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
EU	European Union
DG	Directorate General
GD	Government Decision
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IPA	Instrument for pre accession
IT	Information Technology
JMC	Joint Monitoring Committee
JTS	Joint Technical Secretariat
LP	Lead Partner
MA	Managing Authority
MF	Ministry of Finance (Republic of Bulgaria)
MIS	Management Information System
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MS	Member State
NA	National Authority
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
NUTS	Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics
OP	Operational Programme
OPRD	Operational Programme Regional Development
PC	Personal Computer
Phare CBC	Phare (P oland H ungary A id for R econstruction of the E conomy) Programme for Cross-Border Cooperation

PRAG	Practical Guide to Contract Procedures for EC external actions
RDA	Regional Development Agency
R&D	Research and Development
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SMEs	Small and Medium sized Enterprises
SOP	Sectoral Operational Programme
SWOT	Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities, Threats
TA	Technical Assistance
VAT	Value Added Tax