

## **PROGRAMMING PERIOD 2007-2013**

### ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLEMENTATION PROCEDURE OF TRANSNATIONAL COOPERATION (TNC) UNDER LEADER AXIS

#### SECTION A: **COUNTRY SPECIFIC DETAILS**

##### 1. Name of the programme:

Rural Development Programme 2007 – 2013, Republic of Bulgaria

##### 2. Number of Local Action Groups (LAGs):

40 LAGs are expected to obtain approval and funding for the implementation of their Local Development Strategies (LDS). The evaluation of LDSs submitted in the context of a first call will complete in July 2011. A second call for submission of LDSs is foreseen, which is expected to close by the end of 2011.

##### 3. Axes covered by LAGs:

Leader actions may address axes 1, 2 and 3 of the RDP.

##### 4. Axes and measures covered by TNC projects:

LAGs operating on the basis of an approved LDS may address TNC via any measure of the RDP.

##### 5. Total RDP budget for all the four axes (including EU+ public+ private expenditure):

EUR 3,973,362,177

##### 6. Total budget for Leader axis:

EUR 102,100,080

Of which:

a. EU Funding: EUR 61,590,645

b. Public funding: EUR 15,397,661

c. Private funding: EUR 25,111,774

## SECTION B: PROGRAMMING AND IMPLEMENTATION OF TRANSNATIONAL COOPERATION PROJECTS

1. FINANCIAL ASPECTS	
Budget for TNC projects  (Total public funding: EU + public)	<p>The total budget (including private funding) allocated to measure 421 amounts to EUR 6,415,692. Cooperation is supported by public funds with EUR 5,132,554, which represents 6.67% of the overall axis 4 public funding and 0.16% of the public funding of the RDP's budget.</p> <p>The extent to which funds will be specifically allocated to TNC will be clarified following the completion of the LAG selection / LDS approval process. At present, the maximum allowable expenditure for a LAG amounts to EUR 200,000 EUR per cooperation project.</p>
Responsibility for the management of the Budget (MAs or LAGs)	LAGs will manage their TNC budget under the supervision of the Managing Authority (MA) and the Paying Agency (PA).
Special budget for the preparatory technical support of TNC projects	<p>Up to EUR 1,026,511 of preparatory technical support funds are available, which may be spent to establish cooperation partnerships and to elaborate common projects. This includes the following activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organisation of meetings between the potential partners;</li> <li>• Feasibility studies, market research, other surveys;</li> <li>• Technical planning: planning meetings, development of common action plans, etc.</li> </ul> <p>The MA foresees to approve preparatory actions twice a year (until the end of 2013):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maximum allowable expenditure for preparatory technical support for TNC projects: EUR 25,000 per project;</li> <li>• Maximum allowable expenditure for preparatory technical support for inter-territorial cooperation projects: 10,000 EUR per project.</li> </ul>
2. PROGRAMMING ASPECTS	
Local Development Strategies and TNC	The extent to which LAGs have included TNC in their LDSs will be assessed at the end of 2011, following the completion of the LAG selection / LDS approval procedure. Once a LDS has been approved, a LAG may submit to the MA TNC project applications, which are consistent with the objectives of its LDS.
Way of selecting cooperation projects	The MA is in charge to review and approve the TNC project applications prepared by the LAGs. Until the end of 2013, the MA foresees to organise two rounds of calls for TNC project proposals every year.
Main topics of TNC proposed for the 2007-2013 programming period	Information about the most frequently proposed TNC topics will be provided at the end of 2011, following the completion of the LAG selection / LDS approval procedure.
Cooperation with third countries	There are no restrictions concerning the countries LAGs are allowed to cooperate with.
Maximum/minimum number of TNC projects per LAG	No restriction has been established concerning the number of TNC projects a LAG may engage in.

3. COMMON PROVISIONS FOR TNC PROJECT APPROVAL	
Information about procedures of approval and implementation of TNC projects	<p>The implementation mechanism for Measure 421 / Cooperation has been provided for in the RDP 2007-2013, which can be consulted via <a href="http://prsr.government.bg/index.php/en/">http://prsr.government.bg/index.php/en/</a></p> <p>Related legislative acts and relevant procedures are currently under elaboration.</p>
Eligibility criteria for cooperation projects	<p>Eligibility criteria applying to Measure 421 / Cooperation are publicly available via the above indicated source in the RDP 2007-2013. Accordingly, cooperation projects should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be implemented by LAGs selected by the Managing Authority;</li> <li>• target the development of the territory covered by the LAG's LDS;</li> <li>• be consistent with and contribute to the objectives and priorities of the LDS and RDP; involve the project partners in the preparation and implementation of the project, which have adequate capacity to implement the project.</li> </ul>
Selection criteria for cooperation projects	<p>In accordance with the RDP document the following criteria apply for the selection of joint projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Quality of the project:</b> project relevance and maturity; innovativeness of proposed approach; value added of the partnership; quality of the action plan; tangible benefits for the rural area; sustainability and cost effectiveness;</li> <li>• <b>Quality of the partnership:</b> level of involvement and responsibilities of partners; management capacity and professional qualifications to implement the project;</li> </ul> <p>Number of participating LAGs: priority will be assigned to projects involving more than 2 Bulgarian LAGs and/or more than one MS other than Bulgaria.</p>
Eligible activities of measure 421 Cooperation	<p>The following types of operations are eligible for support:</p> <p>A. Preparatory technical support, which may include the following activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organisation of meetings between the potential partners;</li> <li>• Feasibility studies, market research, other surveys;</li> <li>• Technical planning: planning meetings, development of common action plans, etc.</li> </ul> <p>B. Implementation of joint actions, which produce tangible benefits for the participating rural areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of new products or services, such as tourism products based on common heritage; development of a range of traditional craft products inspired by common traditions;</li> <li>• Establishment of facilities for joint production of goods or services;</li> <li>• Joint marketing of local products (e.g. local labels, common tourist packages, development of new market outlets for local products);</li> <li>• Preservation of shared natural or cultural heritage;</li> <li>• Capacity building: sharing of experience, good practices and lessons learnt on local development through e.g. common publications, events, twinning arrangements (exchange of programme managers and staff), and joint or coordinated development work;</li> <li>• Other operations with clear benefits for the rural area, supporting the achievement of objectives of the LAGs strategies.</li> </ul> <p>Joint actions may comprise the following types of activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investments in tangible and intangible assets;</li> <li>• Elaboration and implementation of marketing strategies;</li> <li>• Training and capacity development, necessary for the implementation of joint projects;</li> <li>• Establishment and running of common structures;</li> <li>• Other activities that are directly related to the objectives of the joint action;</li> <li>• In addition: project co-ordination / management / monitoring and reporting to the partners and the MA.</li> </ul>

## SECTION B: PROGRAMMING AND IMPLEMENTATION OF TRANSNATIONAL COOPERATION PROJECTS

<p>Typical examples of eligible costs for TNC projects</p>	<p>A. Eligible costs related to preparatory technical support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meetings with potential partners, e.g.: travel &amp; accommodation costs and fees for experts, full board and lodging costs, interpreter's fees, communication;</li> <li>• Costs related to the organisation of planning sessions and events;</li> <li>• Project pre-development costs, e.g.: project feasibility study, consultancy on specific issues, fees for experts working on action plans, translation costs, additional staff costs.</li> </ul> <p>B. Eligible costs related to the implementation of joint actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Joint product/service development costs, including tangible and intangible investments costs;</li> <li>• Studies and marketing research directly related to the joint action;</li> <li>• Expenditure related to implementation of promotional or marketing campaigns;</li> <li>• Costs related to the organisation of trainings, workshops, common events, meetings etc.;</li> <li>• Publication costs;</li> <li>• Costs related to establishing and running common structures;</li> <li>• Project activity co-ordination costs: additional staff costs, travel expenditure, full board and lodging costs, communication costs, fees for experts, translation costs.</li> </ul>
<p>Specific documents concerning the cooperation partners required from LAGs</p>	<p>The RDP establishes no specific rules that impose documentation requirements on TNC project partners when submitting applications to approval authorities. However this may be subject to a change, as related legislative acts and relevant procedures are currently under elaboration.</p>
<p>The approval process of TNC applications</p>	<p>It is foreseen that the MA will launch two rounds of calls for TNC project proposals every year (until the end of 2013).</p>

### List of abbreviations:

EU:	European Union
LAG:	Local Action Group
LDS:	Local Development Strategy
MA:	Managing Authority
MS:	Member State
PA:	Paying Authority
TNC:	Transnational Cooperation
RDP:	Rural Development Programme