

# Joint Operational Programme “Black Sea 2007-2013” Newsletter January 2010

Common borders. Common solutions.

## Highlights of the second newsletter:

1. Good bye 2009!
2. Welcome 2010!
3. INTERACT's contribution
4. RCBI's contribution

### GOOD BYE 2009!

2009 was very important on the agenda of the Joint Operational Programme „Black Sea 2007-2013“. The Joint Managing Authority (the Ministry of Regional Development and Tourism from Romania) would like to thank the potential beneficiaries for their interest in the Programme and our collaborators (European Commission, Regional Capacity Building Initiative (RCBI), INTERACT ENPI Project, National Authorities and National Info Points from the countries participating to the Programme) for their kind assistance.

The successful kick off **Conference of the Programme** organized in Bucharest on 5<sup>th</sup> of May was followed by the launching of the 1<sup>st</sup> call for proposals on the 30 of June with deadline for submitting the proposals on the 12 October. The indicative amount of ENPI funds allocated under this first call was 3.311.369 EURO, and Turkey participated with IPA funds amount to 1.339.401 EURO. The co-financing of the EU is 90 % of the total eligible costs at project level. The cross-border cooperation projects, financed within this call, cover the areas of sustainable economic development, tourism, nature and environment protection and cultural cooperation, areas that correspond to the three priorities of the Programme.



23 July 2009, Partnership Forum in Varna



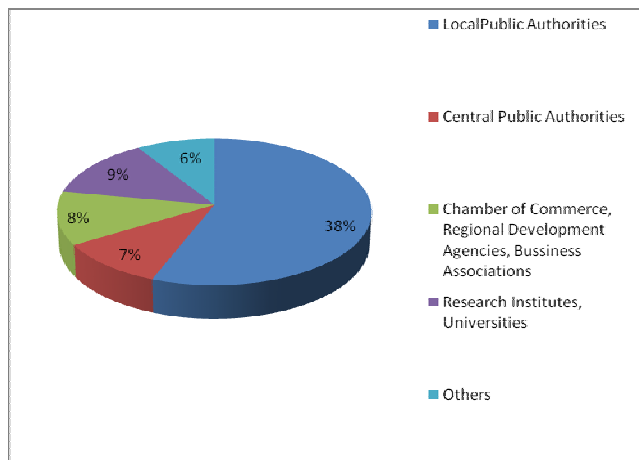
30 July 2009, Project Preparation Workshop, Istanbul

In the framework of the first call for proposals of the JOP “Black Sea 2007-2013”, the Joint Managing Authority together with the Regional Capacity Building Initiative, the National Info Points and the National Authorities from the countries participating in the Programme organized 41 events. In order to respond better to the needs of the potential beneficiaries, the events had different formats: Partner Search Forums (3), Info Days (9), Project Preparation Workshops (19), and Follow -up Information Workshops (10).

More than 1800 participants attended these events. According to the chart below, they represented local, regional and central authorities, NGO's, chambers of commerce, regional development agencies, business associations, universities, research institutes.

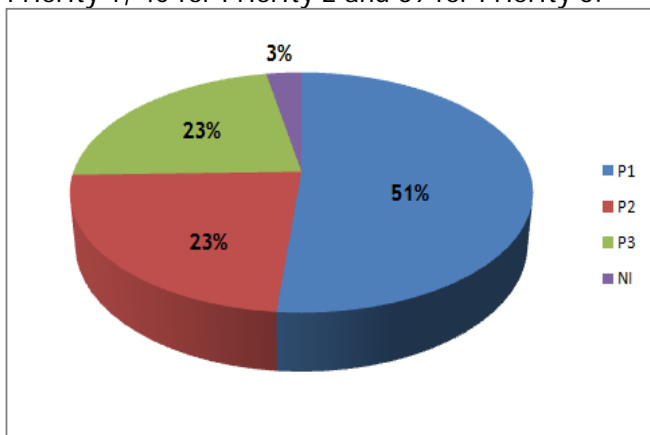
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The number of events, as well as the overall number of the participants demonstrates the high interest for the Programme, also proven by the 173 applications submitted under the first call.

Among the 173 projects, 89 were submitted for Priority 1, 40 for Priority 2 and 39 for Priority 3.



- ❖ P1: Economic and social development
- ❖ P2: Common challenges environment and waste and wastewater management
- ❖ P3: People-to-people cooperation
- ❖ Not identified: 5 proposals

On the 10<sup>th</sup> of November, the JMA started, under the supervision of the Chairperson and Secretary of the Selection Committee the administrative check of the applications. The administrative check represents the first step in the evaluation and selection process of the applications.

In December 2009, the European Commission decided to supplement the budget of the Programme with an additional 1 million Euro. We hope that the high number of projects submitted will determine further increase in the funds allocated by the European Union for the Black Sea Programme.

2009 was also the year in which the working procedures of the Joint Managing Authority were elaborated and the implementation system of the programme was consolidated.

## WELCOME 2010!

We wish our collaborators, beneficiaries and potential beneficiaries a Happy New Year and hope that 2010 will bring everyone more opportunities.

The evaluation and selection process of the projects submitted under the first call will continue at the beginning of 2010 with step 2, the eligibility check. Once the administrative and eligibility check are finalised, the external assessors will carry out the technical and financial assessments of the applications submitted under the first call. Based on the assessments performed, the Selection Committee will propose for approval of the JMC a list with the project proposals and the Joint Monitoring Committee will take the final decision on projects to be awarded. The signature of the grant contracts is estimated to start in May 2010. The list of contracts awarded will be published on the Programme's website.

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## RCBI, SUPPORTING THE SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BLACK SEA PROGRAMME

After the conclusion of the contracts, the beneficiaries of the projects together with their partners will be invited by Joint Managing Authority to attend a training seminar in which topics such as project management, public procurement rules, communication and visibilities rules shall be discussed.

At the **Annual Programme Conference**, estimated to take place in June 2010, the Joint Managing Authority is planning to present the first Implementation Report and the launching date for the second call for proposals, after the application package has been approved by the Joint Monitoring Committee. In order to support the potential beneficiaries to prepare their projects proposals a new series of events will be organised in all the countries participating in the programme. An indicative list of these events will be published on the website of the Programme, after the approval of the Annual Communication Plan by the JMC.

Also, the JMA will continue the online support for potential applicants and partners and in this respect will launch, in March 2010, an improved **partner search tool** on the website of the Programme.

In 2010 the **Joint Technical Secretariat** for the Black Sea Programme will be set up. The Secretariat will have the headquarters in Bucharest. An international open competition will be launched for the recruitment of the JTS staff. Also, Joint Managing Authority will launch a call for expression of interest for the set up of a pool of independent assessors in charge of supporting the evaluation of proposals submitted under the Programme. The Pool of Assessors will be regularly updated.

Supporting the Partner Countries to participate in the implementation of the Black Sea ENPI CBC programme is the EU funded Regional Capacity Building Initiative (RCBI). As well as organizing events in conjunction with the JMA and National Authorities, RCBI gives support to potential applicants and partners through a Partners database on its website and making all info and training material available for download.



30 May 2009, Gyumri, Armenia

The **Partners database** is an interactive tool, which allows organisations from Partner Countries to advertise that they are available and organisations from Member States and Turkey, as well as other Partner Countries, to search for potential partners. Organisations can include details of the programmes it participates in and its fields of interest making it easier for those searching particular kinds of partners. To register or search for partners go to [www.rcbi.info/pages/18\\_1.html](http://www.rcbi.info/pages/18_1.html) . For those looking for partners in EU Member States, links are given to project idea and other partner databases.

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All materials delivered at the Black Sea seminars can be downloaded at the following address: [www.rcbi.info/pages/46\\_1.html](http://www.rcbi.info/pages/46_1.html). Materials from each event can be downloaded as a single PDF file and include information on the programme, tips for finding partners, details of the application and selection process and suggested steps to follow in preparing and submitting a proposal.

RCBI has also just published two reports designed to contribute to the successful management and implementation of the ENPI CBC programmes. One is an evaluation of Partner Country involvement in the ENPI CBC Programmes and the other gives a snapshot of the ‘State of Play’ of the ENPI CBC Programmes. Key findings and recommendations include that Partner Countries have been actively involved in the development of the programmes and also in the first calls for proposals but there is still room for improvement. There is a reliance on the National Authorities who although they have given very good support did always have sufficient capacity and resources available to provide the support needed. The support delivered has been very useful and needs to be continued and followed up with internet information and tools.

**Regional Capacity Building Initiative**  
Supporting partner country participation in ENPI CBC Programmes 2007 - 2013

The ‘State of Play’ findings include the process of developing the programmes has been positive and the success of the calls held to date indicates a high level of interest among populations. People are already looking to how to improve and build on the success for the next programming period after 2013. There is only a short time available for implementing the programmes and special attention should be paid to making use of all the funds. Attention should also be paid to the clarification of

procedures and templates in PraG as these are believed not to be sufficient for ENPI CBC.

RCBI’s assistance was scheduled to end in 2009 but will now continue through to June 2012. The focus will be to continue to work with the JMA and the National Authorities to increase capacity among potential applicants and partners within Partner Countries to prepare and implement projects. Planned support includes information, project preparation events and partner forums for the coming calls for proposals, training for project management (for lead partners) and follow up monitoring of Partner Country involvement in ENPI CBC Programmes. For more information on RCBI, please visit the RCBI website or email [info@rcbi.info](mailto:info@rcbi.info).

### INTERACT ENPI PROJECT-ONE YEAR OF SUPPORT TO PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

Following the launching conference held in Marseille in November 2008 and a first year of growing support to programme implementation, the INTERACT ENPI project has celebrated its first anniversary by holding its second annual conference in Rome on 10-11 December.

Over 100 delegates representing implementing bodies and participating countries of 12 ENPI CBC programmes have gathered in order to discuss their present and future implementation challenges. Following an overview of the differences between the past experience of Neighbourhood Programmes and the ENPI CBC instrument, the current state of programme implementation, focused on the launching and processing of the first call for project proposals, was subject to discussion. The outcome of the first call, with over 1.300 project proposals submitted in the four programmes having already closed it, shows the high interest that the ENPI CBC instrument has managed to create in the different programme areas. A first introduction to future challenges such as the regional dimension of the Eastern Partnership and the mid-term review of ENPI CBC



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programmes closed the plenary sessions held during the first day of the conference. These plenary sessions were later complemented with in-depth debates during three different workshops, which covered issues of relevance to all programmes such as the evaluation and selection process, monitoring and evaluation at programme and project level and the requirements linked to the implementation of Large Scale Projects and the fulfillment of public procurement rules. The debates which were raised throughout the conference showed the high degree of evolution of ENPI CBC programmes during the year 2009.



In addition to the annual conference, the implementation of the INTERACT ENPI project during the second half of 2009 has been characterized by an always increasing provision of services targeted both at supporting single programmes and at promoting networking among them all. Out of the networking activities at the basis of the INTERACT ENPI approach and methodology, the launching of two new **Laboratory Groups** (one on Large Scale Projects and public procurement and a second one on Monitoring and Evaluation) should be emphasized. Likewise, it is worth highlighting that the second meeting of the **audit and finance network of ENPI CBC Programmes** took place in late October; the analysis three types of audits foreseen in the ENPI CBC Implementing Rules as well as the handling of recoveries were the core contents of this meeting. All these networking activities have counted with the active participation of the ENPI CBC Black Sea programme.

Taking into account the current stage of programmes implementation, a large effort of the activities carried out by the INTERACT ENPI project during the last months has concentrated in providing support to programmes in understanding the rules governing the evaluation and selection process in the framework of their first call for project proposals. In this respect,

training activities have been designed in order to provide single Joint Managing Authorities with a comprehensive overview of the process as well as of the foreseen outcomes of the different stages. A specific training for the Joint Managing Authority and internal assessors of the Black Sea Programme took place on 2 November 2009, during which a thorough analysis of the administrative and eligibility checklists was undertaken by all participants.

Most important, the INTERACT ENPI project has developed the “**Guide for assessing project applications under ENPI CBC Programmes**” with the main purpose of supporting the persons responsible for the preparation, management and execution of the evaluation and selection process by proposing in one document a systemic, coherent and consistent way to undertake the evaluation and selection of project proposals submitted for funding to the ENPI CBC programmes. The Guide can be downloaded from the INTERACT ENPI web page: [http://www.interacteu.net/enpi\\_news/guide\\_for\\_assessing\\_project\\_proposals\\_under\\_enpi\\_cbc\\_programmes/189/3704](http://www.interacteu.net/enpi_news/guide_for_assessing_project_proposals_under_enpi_cbc_programmes/189/3704) The INTERACT ENPI project looks forward to an even closer cooperation with the Black Sea Programme during the year 2010.

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