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Application form “AEBR-Cross Border Award” 2010
Deadline: 20.09.2010

Please, fill in the grey gaps and return this form by e-mail!

“Territorial Cooperation in a Post-Crisis Scenario. Contribution of Cross-Border Cooperation.”

1. General information

1.1 Applicant border / cross-border region:

The border area between Greece and Bulgaria in the Region of East Macedonia – Thrace. The project is carried out by the Euroregion Nestos – Mesta.

1.2 Title of the cross-border cooperation measure* [project(s), programme(s)/strategy(ies), concept(s)/project idea(s)]:

Target: Work

1.3 Period:

2008 - 2010

1.4 Project initiator:

Drama Chamber of Commerce and Industry

Contact:

Alkis PAPADEMETRIOU (Mr)

1.5 Partners:

Euroregion Nestos – Mesta, Greek side

Euroregion Mesta – Nestos, Bulgarian side

Contact:

Tania SIKOTIDOU, Ms

Ognyan LAZAROV, Mr

1.6. Financing of the cross-border cooperation measure (e.g. INTERREG):

Remark: It has to be visible how financing of the concept(s)/project idea(s) can be realised.

The project was financed by 4 major funding sources: ROP East Macedonia Thrace, Local Employment Initiatives programme; Drama Chamber of Commerce and Industry; Euroregion Nestos Mesta; Private Companies through Corporate Social Responsibility

1.7 Links to other projects, measures and/or programmes (only if applicable):

The consulting actions are designed so as to be **complementary** to other programmes and Community Initiatives implemented by the Chamber of Drama. These actions relate to support for SMEs for their development and to the creation of new jobs. Thus, there could be collaboration with the EQUAL Initiative implemented by the Chamber, with the ARGE28 network of which the Chamber is the only member from Greece, and with other programmes for the support of SMEs and the creation of jobs

2. Contents

2.1 Objectives of the cross-border cooperation measure:

“Target: Work” is a mentoring scheme that fosters entrepreneurial spirit among people interested in becoming entrepreneurs and enhance employability in the times of economic crisis in an attempt to take advantage of territorial cooperation between the region of Drama in Greece and that of Gotze Delchev in Bulgaria.

The main objective of the measure is:

- Fight the economic crisis that plagues the border area of Drama region in Greece and Gotze Delchev in Bulgaria.
- to take advantage of territorial cooperation between the two border regions in this corner of South-eastern Europe in order to fight problems of employment that stem from the cost crisis situation that prevails in the wider area marked by considerable percentage of unemployment rate.
- to offer consulting services contributing to the strengthening, informing and encouragement of the unemployed, of those just entering the marketplace,
- as well as actions for sensitising and raising awareness within the social fabric so as to achieve the social and employment inclusion of those people threatened with employment exclusion
- stimulate Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) of the enterprises in the neighbouring regions between Drama and Gotze Delchev

2.2 Organisational structure and activities to implement the objectives (e.g. joint secretariat, contract etc.):

The project had a territorial cooperation character between Greece and Bulgaria because it was implemented on both sides of the border. The Drama Chamber of Commerce and Industry was the main project manager but in order to incite the territorial cooperation the project partners were the Euroregion Nestos – Mesta (Greek side) and the Euroregion Mesta – Nestos (Bulgarian side)

The Drama Chamber was the managing authority and the paying authority of the project and the CBC structures had the responsibility of its implementation.

The project is funded by the ESF and national fund through the Regional Operational Programme of East Macedonia – Thrace, called “Local Development Initiatives”. Drama Chamber provided funds for the extension of the project while in the total funding the companies have had a fair share calculated as part of their CSR input.

The strong cooperation among companies and the Drama Chamber along with the CBC structures contributes to the success of the initiative. Other success factors are the Chamber and CBC structure appeals to the CSR instincts of the participating companies and the extensive good publicity.

The project is promoted through general publicity, specialized letters, printed brochures, direct contact and direct mailing to Chamber and Euroregion members.

2.3 How far has the cooperation measure been implemented, respectively up to which point of time can it realistically be implemented?

The consulting service involved actions and services – across the border area- for providing information, orientation and support to individuals or social groups in order to increase employability, access to the marketplace, the development of entrepreneurship, etc. The supporting services aimed at reducing the post- crisis problems that plague the border regions of Greece and Bulgaria.

Given the particular sensitivity of border area CBC structures to the issue of entrepreneurship creation in the wider area, the project “Target: Work” is an innovative methodology which foresees “consulting” not as a passive event that simply offers participants “advice” and information, but as an active event in which the participants have an active outlook and take part themselves in these events, thus acquiring useful and usable tools which shall help them with their business ambitions.

The mentoring activity has established a reliable, friendly and effective inter-territorial (GR-BG) job mechanism and a multi-level support network for the employment or people threatened with unemployment or exclusion. The scheme offers consulting and psychosocial support, the development of social skills, specialised and individualised professional orientation and support for entrepreneurship, particularly for sectors of the economic activity that suffer the most from the post- crisis scenario.

Besides assisting the unemployed to enter the labour market, their employability is enhanced and new jobs created.

In the Drama Chamber and in the Euroregion Nestos – Mesta on both sides of the border we have, somewhat ambitiously, called this proactive method “**Target: Work**”. For the preparation of this activity we spoke with employment consultants, but primarily gathered information, assistance and support from similar programmes run by European networks in which the Chamber is an active participant. In this way, we can capitalise upon the accumulated experience and knowledge acquired through similar programmes.

In order to implement this action in the best way possible, we wished to select executives from specific enterprises in the border areas of GR-BG who voluntarily offered, as part of their **Corporate Social Responsibility** initiatives, useful information, advice and specific proposals for the development of entrepreneurship.

The positive results anticipated from this consulting action include:

- The creation of a reliable, friendly and effective local mechanism and multi-level support network for the unemployed or people threatened with employment or exclusion.
- Alleviation from the pains of economic crisis that is prominent in the wider area.
- Strengthen the social fabric
- Incite the local companies (very small in their size) to perform CSR.
- Consulting and psychosocial support,
- The development of social skills,
- The specialised and individualised professional orientation and
- The support for entrepreneurship, particularly for women, will result in assisting the unemployed to enter the labour market, increase their employability and create new jobs.

All this is the border area between Drama region in Greece and Gotze Delchev in Bulgaria: Regions that suffer from the economic crisis.

The DIRECT BENEFICIARIES are the region's unemployed who are the immediate recipients of the consulting services.. The consulting actions are designed so as to be **complementary** to other programmes and Community Initiatives implemented by the Chamber of Drama. These actions relate to support for SMEs for their development and to the creation of new jobs. Thus, there could be collaboration with the EQUAL Initiative implemented by the Chamber, with the ARGE28 network of which the Chamber is the only member from Greece, and with other programmes for the support of SMEs and the creation of jobs.

It is to the participating authorities intention that this pilot approach to the issue of "consulting" be sustainable and be continued once the programme is completed. Thus, the network of "counselling" executives from the enterprises participating in the programme will continue to operate once it is completed, and it will also be complemented by other enterprises who wish to offer consultation voluntarily and to contribute and participate in such an action.

It is also among the participating authorities' intentions to explore the possibility of extending this pilot action to other programmes funded by the European Union which come under the direct responsibility of the European Commission or the European Parliament.

The project "Target: Work" targets different population segments: young, women, minorities, etc, who wish to receive specialized mentoring for setting up a new business or receive support in managing and operating their existent business. The population segment that is supported through the project is the one that suffered the most due to the post-crisis scenario.

3. Contribution of the measure (added value) to the development of the border/cross-border region:

(Please tick where applicable and explain shortly)

- 3.1 Economy (e.g. globalisation, necessary structural change, development of new markets, technological development)

The project is an innovative measure to promote employment and assist in creating and securing job positions in the CBC area in South-eastern Europe.

- 3.2 Demographic change (e.g. birth rate, ageing, migration, effects on the labour market)

Stabilization and creation of new jobs has an effect on border area labor markets and it is a major impediment to imigration and migration from border areas: a trend that is imminent in the border region of Euroregion Nestos – Mesat.

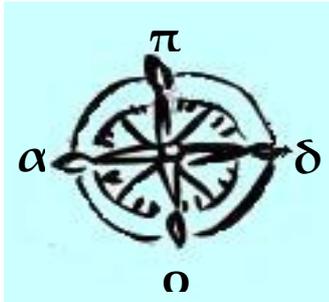
- 3.3 Climate change (e.g. draught, storms, flooding, global warming)

- 3.4 Transport and accessibility / mobility (e.g. Trans-European Networks, cross-border traffic links, motor highways on the seas)

“Target: Work”

A project that supports “Local Employment Initiatives” in the area of Drama in Greece and Gotze Delchev in Bulgaria in order to contribute to CBC by fostering territorial cooperation in a Post-Crisis scenario.

Logo of the project



Main Objectives of the project :

“Target: Work” is a mentoring scheme that fosters entrepreneurial spirit among people interested in becoming entrepreneurs and enhance employability in the times of economic crisis in an attempt to take advantage of territorial cooperation between the region of Drama in Greece and that of Gotze Delchev in Bulgaria.

The main objective of the measure is:

- to take advantage of territorial cooperation between the two border regions in this corner of South-eastern Europe in order to fight problems of employment that stem from the cost crisis situation that prevails in the wider area marked by considerable percentage of unemployment rate.
- to offer consulting services contributing to the strengthening, informing and encouragement of the unemployed, of those just entering the marketplace,
- as well as actions for sensitising and raising awareness within the social fabric so as to achieve the social and employment inclusion of those people threatened with employment exclusion
- stimulate Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) of the enterprises in the neighbouring regions between Drama and Gotze Delchev

Management and Implementing authorities:

The project had a territorial cooperation character between Greece and Bulgaria because it was implemented on both sides of the border. The Drama Chamber of Commerce and Industry was the main project manager but in order to incite the territorial cooperation the project partners were the Euroregion Nestos – Mesta (Greek side) and the Euroregion Mesta – Nestos (Bulgarian side)

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The strong cooperation among companies and the Drama Chamber along with the CBC structures contributes to the success of the initiative. Other success factors are the Chamber and CBC structure appeals to the CSR instincts of the participating companies and the extensive good publicity.

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Project Activities:

The consulting service involved actions and services – across the border area- for providing information, orientation and support to individuals or social groups in order to increase employability, access to the marketplace, the development of entrepreneurship, etc. The supporting services aimed at reducing the post- crisis problems that plague the border regions of Greece and Bulgaria.

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Results:

The positive results anticipated from the implementation of this consulting action include:

- The creation of a reliable, friendly and effective local mechanism and multi-level support network for the unemployed or people threatened with employment or exclusion.
- Alleviation from the pains of economic crisis that is prominent in the wider area.
- Strengthen the social fabric
- Incite the local companies (very small in their size) to perfume CSR.
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- The support for entrepreneurship, particularly for women, will result in assisting the unemployed to enter the labour market, increase their employability and create new jobs.

All this is the border area between Drama region in Greece and Gotze Delchev in Bulgaria: Regions that suffer from the economic crisis.

The Beneficiaries:

The beneficiaries are the border regions' unemployed who are the immediate recipients of the consulting services. The consulting actions are designed so as to be **complementary** to other programmes and Community Initiatives implemented by the Chamber of Drama. These actions relate to support for SMEs for their development and to the creation of new jobs. Thus, there could be collaboration with the EQUAL Initiative implemented by the Chamber, with the ARGE28 network of which the Chamber is the only member from Greece, and with other programmes for the support of SMEs and the creation of jobs.

Future of the Project:

It is to the participating authorities intention that this pilot approach to the issue of "consulting" be sustainable and be continued once the programme is completed. Thus, the network of "counselling" executives from the enterprises participating in the programme will continue to operate once it is completed, and it will also be complemented by other enterprises who wish to offer consultation voluntarily and to contribute and participate in such an action.

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Partners:

Drama Chamber of Commerce and Industry
Euroregion Nestos – Mesta (Greek side)
Euroregion Mesta – Nestos (Bulgarian side)

Programme and Budget:

Initial budget funded by ROP East Macedonia – Thrace, Local Initiative Programme; Measure 5.5; Contract Number 92937
17.608,00€

The project is enhanced by funding contributions from the participating organizations and the CSR input by the companies.

Target: Work

GR

Drama is situated in the north eastern part of Greece, and shares part of its borders with Bulgaria.

Its unemployment rate is well above the national average, close to 15%, and therefore, enterprise creation is a valuable mechanism for enhancing the region's economy and contributing to economic growth.

"Target: Work" is a mentoring scheme that fosters entrepreneurial spirit among people interested in becoming entrepreneurs, and enhances employability.

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The project is financed by the ESF and national funds through the Regional Operational Programme of East Macedonia (Thrace), called "Local Development Initiatives". Drama Chamber contributes to the extension of the project.

It targets different population segments: young, women, minorities, etc, who wish to receive specialized mentoring for setting up a business.

The strong cooperation between companies and the Chamber contributes to the success of the initiative. Other success factors are that the Chamber appeals to the CSR instincts of the participating companies and the extensive and good publicity.

The project is promoted through general publicity, specialized letters, printed brochures, direct contacts, and direct mailings to Chamber members.

→ Drama Chamber of
Commerce and Industry

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