



Partners selection for project implementation under INTERREG EUROPE Programme

Ministry of Labour and Social Justice from Romania, by the General Directorate for Budget Planning and Financial Management - Unit for Project Implementation and Administration of Grants Financed from European Funds, announces **the partners' selection for project implementation for the Interreg Europe Programme, financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF).**

The lead partner of the project is the Ministry of Labour and Social Justice (*MLSJ*), from Romania. The Ministry acts in relevant way for the proposal and creation of new policies in this country. *MLSJ* carry out national policies, correlated with those at European and international level, in the labour field, family, social protection and the elderly, fulfilling the role of state authority, strategy and planning, regulation, and also coordination.

The role of lead partner in the success of the project is the position of initiator of the project proposal and it likewise demonstrate a deep administrative experience in social policies and knowledge of what needs to be improve.

Interreg Europe is at the third call for projects and it is known that supports interregional cooperation projects. These are projects that involve partnership policy for organisations from at least three different European countries who are cooperating for about five years to learn each from other and to address a regional policy issue of a joint concern. Thereby, our project should include partners from different countries for working together on a shared regional policy issue to improve the effectiveness of the policies of the regions involved in the project.

Thematic interest of the project

Objective 2.1: Improving SMEs' competitiveness policies

Context of the project proposal

We mention just a few aspects that drives us to create a project:

- Difficulty of SMEs to access funding;
- Excessive bureaucracy and administrative obstacles;



- lack of courage of women to make their skills known;
- High percentage of unemployment;
- Crisis of the productive and territorial models.

General situation at SMEs' level and general situation at the territorial level leads to obstacles that prevent SMEs to be adaptable and innovative impose the need to introduce new economic models.

Issue addressed. Objectives

In many European Countries the SMEs are facing several difficulties in being competitive, and when talking about women entrepreneurs these difficulties are even more profound. Women's intellectual potential and their contribution to Europe's competitiveness are not being maximized. The regions involved in this project are facing common challenges related to high unemployment rates, crisis of the productive and territorial models, and deprived or abandoned industrial spaces.

Having regard of the general situation of SMEs' which leads to obstacles that prevent them to be adaptable and innovative there is a need to introduce new economic models based on elements such as environmental sustainability, social inclusion, creativity, culture as well as knowledge.

The project's main **objective** is to increase the number of newly-established SMEs and also to support the existing SMEs based on the concept of *creative economy* in deprived areas such as abandoned industrialized areas.

The specific objectives:

- Empower long-term unemployed women by promoting female partnership;
- Identify new entrepreneurial opportunities by enhancing the value of their existing skills;
- Enforce the potential of local and regional creative economy that will exploit the regional specificity;
- Promote local development through capacity building and exceeding inherent limits;
- Stimulate women's entrepreneurial skills as the basis to create new businesses or to reinforce existing initiatives.

The SMEs will become more adaptable and innovative, allowing territories to be more competitive (thanks to growing employment rates) and therefore they will be able to offer better living standards (owing to the fact of wage stability).

In order to do so, the project partners' staff and the stakeholders will evaluate the importance and difficulty of capacity building as a key factor for the success and survival rate of SMEs managed by women. They will cooperate closely by exchanging ideas, efforts and knowledge based on a



multidirectional cycle consisting of capacity building, creative entrepreneurship culture and innovation as the main factors to address business creation and growth.

Main policy instruments addressed

In the first instance, our project meets Europe's 2020 Strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth which sets objectives that aim to draw at least 20 million people out of poverty and social exclusion and to increase the employment rate of employment to 75% for the population aged 20-64 years. The partnership will support and promote entrepreneurship with emphasis on sectors with creative potential, development of entrepreneurship education and boosting social entrepreneurship through programmes of tutoring/mentoring, counselling, role models etc. Distinctly we are referring to those programmes addressed to vulnerable social categories/disadvantaged females, especially female entrepreneurs, unemployed females or those that came out of the social protection system etc.

The project emphasizes policies that support female entrepreneurs in order to reduce imbalances and distortions in respect with economic and social development, employment policies and social inclusion. Policies that promote female entrepreneurship and also research and development policies, by encourage the access to information about European instruments and programs dedicated to SMEs.

In this second instance, to achieve the objective of the programme, are envisaged in our project the European and the partners' national policies, mainly those regional strategies which affect SMEs competitiveness such as the ERDF National Operational Programmes.

Possible the **project title** will be:

Creativity and growth by boosting knowledge – enhancing local economies through knowledge and encourage of female entrepreneurs for creatives SMEs.

Main criteria for selecting implementing partner:

- partner's competence /experience in topic tackled
- relevance of policy instrument addressed by partner
- partner's capacity to influence policy instrument



- level of region development from which partner originates, to achieve a good balance of partnership
- geographical coverage
- Public authorities or
- Public law bodies (bodies governed by public law)

Other criteria:

- partner's capacity to actively participate in project
- making use of wide geographical coverage of programme
- We are interested also in partners from northern Europe, including the EEA. Thereby, especially we are looking for public institutions including from countries in northern Europe.

Detailed Terms of References are available at the following contacts:

Irina CRĂCIUN and Maria ABABEI to the email addresses: irina.craciun@mmuncii.gov.ro ;
maria.ababei@mmuncii.gov.ro and irinacala.s@gmail.com .

Timelines

We appreciate if we will can have already outlined the project partnership at 30th of May 2017 at 12.00 CET, for better structuring of project.

Therefore we invite you with your contribution proposal, to join the Know-Growth project partnership.