

SUMMARY

Draft INTERREG IPA Cross Border Cooperation Programme between Republic of Bulgaria and Republic of Turkey 2021 - 2027

Main characteristics of the programme area:

The programme area covers 3 districts on the Bulgarian side – Burgas, Yambol and Haskovo and 2 provinces on the Turkish side – Edirne and Kırklareli. The border between Bulgaria and Turkey is nearly 288 km long including three operating border crossings. The total population of the programme area is 11.76% of the total population of both countries. The settlement structure of the area is characterized by the presence of 5 medium-large cities: Burgas, Yambol and Haskovo, on the Bulgarian side of the cross-border area and Edirne and Kırklareli on the Turkish side. The border region is assessed as having a rich cultural and natural heritage and a high degree of environmental sensitivity to climate change.

The main joint challenge of the cross-border cooperation area for the period 2021-2027 is to take a more technological course of development, taking advantage of the economic results leading to growth, as well as reducing inequalities in income and disparities in access to services from a common interest. In general, a number of opposing economic trends are observed on both sides of the border, thus creating favourable conditions for the exchange and sharing of knowledge and good practices, which will ultimately contribute to building cooperative cross-border economic relations. The region falls into the groups of regions at risk of poverty and social exclusion, income inequality, ageing population, insufficient development of regional value chains and entrepreneurship, the need to undertake technological transformation and create a competitive business environment.

The identified joint investment needs reflect outlined territorial disparities, challenges and assets as well as objectives of the Territorial Agenda 2030 which seeks to reinforce solidarity in promotion convergence and reducing inequalities between better-off places and those with less prosperous prospects or that are lagging.

Total programme budget: EUR 34 415 251

Eligible types of action and beneficiaries by priorities:

Priority	Specific objective	Budget (EUR) ¹
Priority 1: Environmentally-friendly cross-border region	1.1 Promoting energy efficiency and reducing greenhouse gas emissions	7 608 662
	1.2 Promoting the transition to a circular and resource efficient economy	
Priority 2: Integrated development of the cross-border region	2.1 Fostering the integrated and inclusive social, economic and environmental local development, culture, natural heritage, sustainable tourism and security in areas other than urban areas	24 816 287
Priority 3: More secure cross-border region	3.1 Improving migration management A strategic project connected with strengthening the capacity of the law enforcement institutions from both sides of the border to tackle irregular migration in a cooperative and a solidarity-based manner Project partners will be Regional Directorates of Ministry of Interior in Haskovo, Burgas and Yambol from Bulgarian side and Governorships of Edirne and Kırklareli from Turkish side.	1 990 302
Total budget		34 415 251

Priority 1 - Environmentally-friendly cross-border region

Specific objective 1.1 Promoting energy efficiency and reducing greenhouse gas emissions

Actions to be supported:

- Investments for reducing GHG emissions and energy consumption in the entire industry life cycle, also by replacing old equipment with new, more energy-efficient;
- Investments for energy efficiency of enterprise-owned building stock, where the production processes take place;
- Investments for implementation of digital solutions for collecting and analyzing data on GHG emissions and energy consumption on an enterprise level with the aim to assist data-driven decision-making;

¹ According to Article 27 of the Interreg Regulation 10% of the financial allocation of each priority of the programme is allocated to Technical assistance.

- Investments for implementation of energy real-time information and management systems and energy end-use applications;
- Conduction of energy efficiency audits, but only as an action (integral part) of projects implementing technological solutions for reducing energy consumption in industrial processes and energy efficiency measures of enterprise-owned building stock;
- Joint development of new and providing access to existing technological solutions for energy efficiency and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions;
- Improving exchange of know-how, best practice and information between the relevant local businesses from both sides of the border in the area of energy efficiency and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions;
- Joint trainings and providing consultancy services to enterprises on energy efficiency;

Beneficiaries:

- Existing and new MSMEs including those organized as cooperatives and social enterprises

Specific objective 1.2 Promoting the transition to a circular and resource efficient economy

Actions to be supported:

- Development of last-longer and suitable for reuse, repair, and recycling products, incl. purchase of relevant technological equipment. Recyclable designs should be comprehensive by keeping the recycling infrastructure in mind. Regulators should match recycling quotas (e.g., EU recycling rate of 75% of packaging waste by 2030) to regional capacities and plan the expansion of the recycling streams in coordination with those quotas.
- Development of new business models based on renting and sharing goods and services (the so-called product-as-service models);
- Development of circular business models to favour the establishment of regional close-loop value chain by employing B2B, B2C and C2C models of cooperation;
- Development of circular biobased business models, solutions and product;
- Supporting measures for knowledge sharing, design methodology, innovation labs/hubs, clustering as approaches to promote circular products and circular production processes;
- Development of regional certification practices that reward regional products based on their different sustainability performance, environmental impact and circularity potential.

Beneficiaries:

- Existing and new MSMEs including those organized as cooperatives and social enterprises

Priority 2: Integrated development of the cross-border region**Actions to be supported:**

- Joint and cooperative actions for promoting entrepreneurship, digitalization (incl. ICT based management and production solutions, such as Customer Relationship Management (CRM), Customer Data Platform (CDP), Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP)), technological modernization; participation in regional value chains and internationalisation, applying new business and technology innovation models, upgrading production and outreach strategies, wider adoption and implementation of circularity principles, solutions and models; marketing and research. It will be clearly communicated to potential applicants that under this priority MSMEs will not receive direct support for implementing circular economy models in order to demarcate this support from the one under priority 1. Legal entities other than MSMEs can apply or participate as partners in integrated projects of circular economy significance.
- Upskilling and building new knowledge and skills of local employees and NEETs; development of new or improving existent settings for remote work; adoption of new human resource management practices to deal with younger generations;
- Developing of new integrated regional tourist products where applicable with zero environmental footprint with the aim to overcome the seasonality in the sector, to increase the number of visitors and nights spent, to improve the access and quality of the tourism infrastructure by also strengthening the links between natural and cultural sites, including through enhancing the cycling network; upgrading marketing and branding practices;
- Promoting joint actions for the development of ecosystem practices and services in the management of natural assets with tourism potential;
- Support for actions aimed at wide implementation of consumer-oriented approaches in the provision of services of general interest, as well as by incorporating digital and green solutions for servicing in a cross-border environment;

- Implementation of joint actions to reduce pollution and ecological footprint, and provide clean air, water and food, to mitigate and adapt to climate change and to prevent and mitigate the consequences of natural and man-made disasters.

Beneficiaries:

- Population in the cross-border region (Population of the Burgas, Haskovo and Yambol districts and Edirne and Kırklareli provinces)
- Local/ regional bodies and authorities, regional structures of central public authorities;
- Civil society;
- NGOs;
- R&D, academic and training institutions;
- Social institutions;
- MSMEs.

Priority 3: More secure cross-border region

Actions to be supported:

- Conducting trainings, exchange of experience and good practices, study visits in order to improve institutional cooperation and capacity;
- Measures for the enhancement of the security in urban and suburban areas of the cross-border region;
- Delivery of specialised equipment/devices to improve the technical capabilities and enhance the physical capacity of the law enforcement officers/departments in the cross-border region.

The investments will take the form of a project of strategic importance related to strengthening the capacity of law enforcement institutions on both sides of the border to tackle illegal migration.

The project activities envisaged within this project are relevant to the Specific Objective: Improving migration management as they are aimed at enhancing the abilities of law enforcement officers on both sides and increasing the cross-border effect at the same time, which will all contribute to the specific objective. Planned trainings will enhance knowledge about regulations on international and European level and also increase language skills that will play an important

role in diminishing barriers due to language. Supply of specialized equipment will provide law enforcement officers with the equipment necessary for more effective counteraction to irregular migration. The project will help to build a system in case a future crises and change the way of reaction from ad hoc responses to durable solutions, and all this can be done if key institutional actors are involved in the process, encompassing the two main areas where irregular migration has been detected – at the border and inland.

The main target groups:

- Population in the cross-border region (Population of the Burgas, Haskovo and Yambol districts and Edirne and Kırklareli provinces);
- Visitors in the cross-border region;
- Migrants and asylum seekers;
- Public authorities and service providers;
- Enterprises;
- Potential investors and local economic operators;
- Law enforcement authorities in the border region;

Beneficiaries:

- Regional Directorates of the Ministry of Interior in Haskovo, Burgas and Yambol;
- Law Enforcement department in the Edirne and Kırklareli province;
- Other law enforcement authorities.