SOUTH EAST EUROPE TRANSNATIONAL
CO-OPERATION PROGRAMME

3rd Call for Proposals

Terms of reference

Managing Demographic Change in SEE –

Migration and Human Capital as key for sustainable
economic growth

March 2011

1. Background

Long-lasting labour force decline is expected all throughout Europe's regions as a result of demographic change and migration. These trends can hamper reaching main strategic goals set by the European Union such as territorial cohesion and the achievement sustainable economic growth. In its recent policy papers the European Union is therefore stressing the importance of tackling the demographic challenges in key areas like employment, human capital, productivity and migration[1].

Rapidly shrinking work forces, constant brain drain of many regions and the direct neighborhood of both emigration- and immigration countries as well as EU member and non-member states are just some factors which affect and complicate demographic patterns in Southeast Europe (SEE). Together with further aspects like gender, age and the given territorial heterogeneity of the programme area, they are creating a complex challenge to economic development and cohesion, clearly calling for wider transnational action.

The SEE regions where the sharp decline in working-age population is coupled with a relatively low educational attainment will be particularly hard hit, negatively influencing their productivity and economic competitiveness[2]. Hence, ensuring the local availability of human capital through the efficient delivery of services related to education and training, improving the labour force participation of unused female potential and disadvantaged minority groups as well as extending working lives will be crucial for avoiding a further aggravation of regional inequalities in SEE[3].

In terms of migration patterns affecting demographic change, some SEE countries are facing significant emigration, however recently most countries have become both, receiving and destination countries of migrants[4]. Regions in Bulgaria and Romania have experienced the most significant out-migration related to EU enlargement. As a result the country's population and work force declines at a fast speed. Austria and Italy are immigration countries, yet both countries experience high emigration at the same time[5]. In the near future, most SEE countries are likely to stay net-emigration countries with a further decline in the working-age population. Many regions within SEE are further witnessing rural to urban migration of particularly skilled females in economically active age groups, leading to cities like Bratislava, Budapest and

[1] - European Commission (2010): Investing in Europe's Future. 5th report on economic, social and territorial cohesion. http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docoffic/official/reports/cohesion5/index_en.cfm
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[2] - Rostock Center for the Study of Demographic Change (2008): Mapping Regional Demographic Change and Regional Demographic Location Risk in Europe. http://www.demographic-risk-map.eu/downloads/final-report.pdf
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[3] European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (2006): Age and Employment in the New Member States. http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/pubdocs/2006/26/en/1/ef0626en.pdf
[4] Kupiszewski, M. ,Mijak, J. and Nowok, B. (2006) IMPACT OF FUTURE DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGES IN EUROPE. Central European Forum for Migration Research. http://www.cefmr.pan.pl/docs/cefmr_wp_2006-06.pdf
[5] Vienna Institute of Demography (2010): European Demographic Data Sheet. http://www.oeaw.ac.at/vid/datasheet/download_2010.shtml

Bucharest experiencing sub-urbanisation[6]. This additionally affects low fertility rates and a relative 'masculinisation' of rural areas.

Finally, a further persistent problem is data availability, consistency and transparency across SEE countries and regions. This leads to uncertainties linked to demographic and migratory scenarios, and a lack of transnationally comparable models and forecasts. Especially public administrations at regional level lack the analytical and policy capacity to develop adequate policies and strategies tailored to the specific circumstances of concerned territories.

These unprecedented challenges can only met by place-based solutions addressing the combined effects of demographic changes and migratory flows on human capital and labour markets in a holistic way. In a framework of multi-level governance across different countries, regions and actors, such as offered by the SEE transnational cooperation programme, strategic projects to be funded by this 3rd Call for Proposal shall effectively address the capacity of key stakeholders to explore and apply such solutions. In contrast to other programmes, focusing more on individuals (e.g. ESF) or information exchange, the SEE programme allows addressing the topic in a territorial sense and with a broad mix of activities. Hence, priority will be given to integrative approaches, clearly reflecting the cross-sectoral character of the topic. At the same time any strategic project should take into account already existing initiatives as well as other funding instruments available in SEE in order to avoid overlaps and to maximize synergies.

2. Objectives

2.1 Overall objective

The overall objective is to design new ways of addressing migration-related demographic changes and its effects on human capital and labour markets, with the ultimate goal of achieving sustainable economic competitiveness of SEE countries, regions and cities. To do so, the project aims at improving and harmonizing the statistical evidence base across the programme area, promoting transnational policy dialogue and strengthening public administrations' ability to develop and implement innovative policies and strategies.

2.2 Specific objectives

-   To improve the evidence base with regard to migration-related demographic changes by facilitating the common understanding and SEE-wide usability of existing data, information and statistical tools.

-   To promote transnational policy dialogue and mutual policy learning among SEE key-stakeholders of the policy-areas concerned.

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[6] http://www.eprc.strath.ac.uk/eprc/documents/PDF_files/EPRP_72_DealingwithDemographicChange-RegionalPolicyResponses.pdf

- To develop effective demographic / migratory forecast models and derive regional policy scenarios with regard to labour market, human capital and related public services.

- To increase the policy coherence by updating regional strategies and mainstreaming integrative approaches into sectoral policies.

- To strengthen the capacity of regional administrations to undertake evidence-based strategic planning and programming as well as to implement related policies and strategies.

3. Activities

The project activities must build on a careful assessment of the previous achievements in the field, including SEE projects approved under the 1st and 2nd call for proposals and other actions implemented through different regional development programmes. Capitalization of previous results is of outmost importance in order not to duplicate activities and to bring added value to the project.

The activities listed under 3.1 "Compulsory activities" must be included into all proposed strategic projects for consideration.

The activities listed under 3.2 "Additional indicative activities" are optional (and intends to offer a non exhaustive list of possible complementary activities). Additional activities can be added to the minimum set of compulsory activities, however their presence does not automatically ensure higher scores in the quality check of the assessment. Additional activities to the minimum set of compulsory ones are assessed according to the contribution they bring in to the achievements of the objectives of the project, their concreteness, feasibility and adequacy, also in relation to the budget, the partnership and the timeframe foreseen

3.1 Compulsory Activities

- Mapping the data and information (as well as related statistical tools) available in SEE on migratory flows and demographic changes in relation to labour market needs, human capital and local social and economic services.

- Elaborating a concrete action plan for knowledge transfer and capacity building where such data, information and/or tools are not available.

- Developing and implementing transnational policy learning and dialogue mechanisms as well as setting up a common platform for launching transnational policy initiatives.

- Joint development of a flexible methodological framework for forecast models and policy scenarios to be applied at regional level.

- Making available policy tools for streamlining sectoral policies and the regional programming of existing funding instruments in a strategic way.

- Enhancing the capacity of regional administrations to use policy scenarios, results of forecasts as well as statistical outcomes for strategic policy planning and for programming resources and services accordingly.

3.2 Additional indicative activities

- Identification and sharing of information on methodologies/models in use in SEE for data analysis and forecast.
- Develop adjusted Migration Profiles including data on demography, human capital, labour market as well as information about related policies and institutional frameworks.
- Identification and coordination of existing networks in the policy-areas concerned and/or initiating new network structures.
- Realising networking activities for strengthening of multilevel cooperation within and across participating countries.
- Promoting policy learning on how to better use existing research data for evidence-based policy making.
- Elaborating a methodology to compare regional scenarios and identify common / complementary needs among regions.
- Joint development of a methodology or other guidance materials to assist administrations to integrate forecasts and scenarios into their spatial, economic and sectoral plans and programmes.
- Design and implementation of training-programmes and -measures.
- Pilot measures in the fields concerned, such as to test, compare and refine forecast models in selected territories with different demographic scenarios and outcomes.

4. Outputs

- SEE-wide Inventory of data, information, statistical tools and data analysis systems in use in the fields of demographic change, migration and human capital.
- Needs analysis and action plans for those territories and administrative levels, where the mentioned data or tools are not available.
- Map of forecast models in use to anticipate the impacts of migration-related demographic change.
- New, updated or adjusted forecast models.
- Transnational coordination-mechanism/network for continuous dialogue and policy learning.
- Improved frameworks for multilevel governance of complex policy challenges.

- Comparative methodology for the identification of common needs and challenges deriving from the forecast scenarios.
- Evidence-based tools for policy planning and programming of resources and services.
- Improved policies and (pilot-) strategies
- Training programmes, course-concepts and curricula
- Trained administrative staff with improved skills and competences

5. Beneficiaries

5.1 Eligible Partnership

Maximum 3 (three) financing partners per country and per project concept can be involved (due to the high number of countries involved in the Programme, developing too large partnerships might hamper a smooth management, leading to strong deficiencies of the implementation).

At least 8 (eight) Partner States shall be included (in terms of location of Partners – both financing and ASP).

In addition, partnerships must meet the following criteria, specific to this theme:
- At least six of the project partners (financing partners) shall be regional or local authorities representing territories facing significant effects from demographic and migratory flows.

5.2 Further Recommendations

Though the project topic requires a strong involvement of regional public administrations, the ideal partnership should consist of a variety of stakeholders with different perspectives, capacities, and roles to play. Each proposed partnership must contain a lead partner, who will manage and coordinate the activities. The lead partner must have some demonstrated capacity (previous projects, etc.) to lead and manage large, international projects of this character. Ideally, the lead partner should have contacts and experience working in multiple countries of the region.

The core-partnership should consist of the following types of actors:
- Regional and local authorities of territories most affected by demographic and migratory flows.
- Relevant national ministries with a direct competence on demographic change or migration and its respective policy effects.
- Statistics offices/bureaus, population registries, employment agencies.
- Regional (SEE) networks active in relevant fields.

Further partners, such as chambers of commerce, labour unions, international organisations, universities or research institutes as well as relevant NGOs, might be added in order to ensure the technical and institutional capacity needed for achieving the specific goals of a project.

The ideal partnership will consist of approx. 15 financing partners. The inclusion of further actors as Associated Strategic Partners or Observers can be considered an asset if their value added is clearly demonstrated. There must be a good, demonstrated balance between partners who have experience and expertise to share and partners who are primarily looking to gain capacity. The integration of already existing thematic (demography, migration, human capital, labour market) networks with clear SEE-relevance is considered a further asset.