

Bulgaria – program on Renewable Energy, Energy Efficiency and Energy Security – funded by EEA grants

Background:

The EEA and Norway Grants 2014-2021 represent funding from Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway to reduce economic and social disparities and strengthen cooperation with 15 EU countries in Central and Southern Europe and the Baltics. For the period 2014-2021, a total contribution of €2.8 billion has been agreed. In the Memorandums of Understanding (MoU) with the individual countries, the actual allocation is determined. In the MoU it is also determined which Norwegian authorities will be the donor program partner (adviser) for the countries' respective programs.

In Bulgaria NVE is donor program partner for a program covering renewable energy, energy efficiency and energy security. Being a donor program partner means to provide advisory services in all phases of project developments and implementation. In addition, NVE is also the project partner in a related, so-called pre-defined project under the program, for carrying out a study for the potential for hydropower in water supply systems.

Strengthening relations between Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway and the beneficiary countries is the other of the two main objectives of the EEA and Norway Grants. On program level: public institutions and government agencies from the beneficiary states and Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway cooperate in the design of the program (concept note) and share knowledge and experience during the implementation stage. On project level under the program: private businesses, research groups, municipalities, and NGOs from the donor and the beneficiary countries are encouraged to enter into cooperation to implement joint projects. NVE as a donor program partner will assist in facilitating such project cooperation.

Activities:

The work in the first part was mostly related to preparatory activities in connection with developing a concept note for the program. The program agreement was signed in June 2018. Next step is a matchmaking (before summer 2019), and then the open calls for project applicants will be gradually launched after summer 2019.

The program is divided into 4 areas:

- a) Developing small hydro power plants in water supply systems.
- b) New geothermal energy installations.
- c) Improved energy efficiency in buildings, industry and municipalities.
- d) Competence building in the program relevant areas.

Overall data for the energy program in Bulgaria

NVE Mandate: NVE is Donor Program Partner (DPP) to the Program Operator (PO) in Bulgaria, the Ministry of Energy. NVE is also Project Partner to the Project Promotor on the predefined project under the program.

Program budget from the EEA Grants of euro 28,000,000 (this is 85 percent of the total budget, which is euro 32,941,176 – the rest comes from the national co-financing).

NVE's expenditures as DPP are covered by a separate contract with FMO (Financial Mechanism Office).

Program period: Projects can be awarded until 2021, and must be completed by 2024.

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