

## INTRODUCTORY NOTE FOR CONSULTATION

Thessaloniki, February 26, 2014

Dear Partners,

The Managing Authority of European Territorial Cooperation Programmes and the Bulgarian National Authority applying the partnership and multilevel governance principles in the development of the CBC Operational Programmes, announce a public consultation process for the development of the new Operational Programme Greece - Bulgaria 2014-2020 and invite the following groups of stakeholders to actively participate:

- (a) Competent urban and other public authorities;
- (b) Economic and social partners; and
- (c) Bodies representing civil society, including environmental partners, non-governmental organisations, and bodies responsible for promoting social inclusion, gender equality and non-discrimination.

Your input to the development of the new Operational Programme Greece - Bulgaria 2014-2020 is considered valuable in order to respond effectively to challenges and opportunities in the cross-border area and establish productive cross-border cooperation in the new programming period.

The present letter marks the beginning of Phase A of the consultation process. This phase will be followed by policy development workshops (Phase B) and then a second questionnaire will accompany the publicizing of the first Operational Programme draft (Phase C), which will allow you to comment on specific programme provisions. The results of the whole consultation process will be incorporated in the final Operational Programme to be submitted to the European Commission.

In the current consultation phase (Phase A) we invite you to submit your views – in conjunction with your specific thematic field of expertise – with regards to:

1. Your past experience with the Greece-Bulgaria 2007-2013 Programme and the aspects of this programme that could be improved upon in the new programming period 2014-2020.
2. The current challenges, needs and development priorities in the eligible cross-border area.
3. The suitability of available policy tools for responding to those challenges.

By answering the attached questionnaire you will directly contribute to the design of the new Operational Programme Greece-Bulgaria 2014-2020.

You can also contribute to the visibility of this consultation process by posting this letter on your website and/or by forwarding it to stakeholders (in any of the above 3 categories) that can provide constructive input to the design of the new programme.

The present letter and the questionnaire are posted on the following websites:

[www.interreg.gr](http://www.interreg.gr) , [www.greece-bulgaria.eu](http://www.greece-bulgaria.eu) , [www.eufunds.bg](http://www.eufunds.bg)

Thank you in advance for your contribution,

Mr. George Emmanuel

Head of the Managing Authority of ETC Programmes

For further clarifications please send your questions to **GR\_BG\_2014-20@mou.gr**

Where and how you can submit your input:

Completed questionnaires in word (.doc) format can be sent by e-mail to **GR\_BG\_2014-20@mou.gr** until Friday, March 7, 2014. We regrettably inform you that we cannot process any questionnaires received after that date.