1. Basic information

1.2 Title: 2004 Joint Small Projects Fund

1.3 Sector: 2004-2006 Cross-Border Co-operation (CBC) Programme between Turkey and Bulgaria

1.4 Location: Provinces in the Border Region between Turkey and Bulgaria

In the framework of the 2004-2006 Cross Border Co-operation (CBC) Programme between Turkey and Bulgaria, the 2004 Joint Small Projects Fund (JSPF) will finance, through a grant scheme, small projects for the following NUTS III regions: Edirne and Kırklareli.

A mirror 2004 JSPF will be financed by the 2004-2006 CBC Programme for the following NUTS III regions in Bulgaria: Bourgas, Yambol and Haskovo.

2. Objectives

2.1 Overall Objectives
The Joint Small Projects Fund (JSPF) supports the key objectives of the Turkish-Bulgarian CBC Programme, namely to help the border regions to overcome specific development problems resulting from their relative isolation in the framework of national economies; the JSPF also supports the establishment and development of co-operative networks on both sides of the border and the creation of linkages between these networks and wider European Union networks.

2.2. Purpose of the project
The purposes of the project are as following:

- Supporting the establishment or further development and deepening of contacts between different regional and local institutions on either side of the border;
- Increasing the personnel and institutional capabilities for co-operation and participation in future development programmes

2.3. Accession Partnership (AP) and NPAA priority
The JSPF plays a useful role in the process of preparation of Turkey and Bulgaria for accession, in particular through the improvement of the administrative capacity of local and regional actors to implement grant schemes. These funds are part of a process of creating “integration-minded” border regions. The project represents thus an important element in the preparation of Turkey and Bulgaria for the adoption of Structural Funds. In addition, the project supports the social and economic integration between the border
regions of candidate countries. The project is in compliance with the principles of NPAA, Chapter 21.

2.4 Contribution to National Development Plan
This project responds to the priority areas of the Regional Development medium-term strategy relating to

- Strengthening human resources and, particularly, increasing self-employment potential,
- Ensuring diversified economic activities in rural areas,
- Strengthening institutional structure by new local governance models, which will increase local participation, improve common enterprise areas and regulate collective intervention of local actors to local economic development.

It is in line with the objectives of Development Axis 4 “Increasing the economic power of Regions, reducing the interregional development disparities, and accelerating rural development”. (pNDP, page V-VI)

2.5. Cross-border Impact of the Project
The CBC Programme will contribute to the removal of existing disparities between regions on both sides of the border and thus to the gradual alignment of economic and social development. This is particularly important in view of future integration into the European Union. Full membership will require the approximation of levels of economic activity and living standards in particular in border regions in order to avoid undue problems connected to the removal of borders and the introduction of the principle of free movement.

The JSPF scheme promotes the elaboration of projects with a cross-border impact and encourages the development of linkages between local communities /organisations/ institutions on both sides of the border. In general, the “people-to-people” aspects of the individual projects and the general direction of the fund guarantee a high degree of cross-border relevance of the scheme.

3. Description

3.1 Background and justification
In the framework of the 2004-2006 CBC Programme Turkey and Bulgaria decided to allocate 500,000 € of the 2004 budget to a JSPF scheme, with a view to strengthening co-operation between the two sides of the border. The 2004 JSPF scheme will finance “soft” projects that fall under the priority areas listed at point 3.4 below, which have been identified in the Joint Programming Document for the 2004-2006 CBC Programme.

3.3 Results
Financial support through grants to small-scale “people-to-people” actions in the border regions in the fields listed at point 3.4 below should produce the following results:

- Increased intensity and degree of cross border co-operation between local authorities, NGO and other stakeholders on the two sides of the border;
- Increased level of public awareness and information on CBC, its purpose and objectives, and on the JSPF scheme;
• Increased local involvement to implement small-scale actions that may form the basis for larger cross-border co-operation projects;
• Increased absorption capacity of EC grants by local stakeholders.

3.4 Activities
The 2004 JSPF project will support:
• The financing through grants of selected small-scale “people-to-people” projects (projects located in the Border Region between Turkey and Bulgaria, or from the Turkish contribution to common Bulgarian-Turkish projects)
• Technical assistance for operating the fund. This will consist of support for operating the fund. The EC contribution may finance indirect (overhead) costs up to 7% of the 500,000 € JSPF budget for Turkey (maximum 35,000 EUR). This amount may be used for expenditure relating to the preparation, selection, appraisal and monitoring of the JSPF grant scheme.

JSPF grants will only be made available for projects whose immediate objective is non-commercial and strictly non-profit. Under no circumstances may the grant give rise to profits (i.e. it will be restricted to the amount required to balance income and expenditure for the project).

General Criteria for Eligibility
In general terms the eligible actions in the framework of the JSPF should meet the following conditions:
• have a strong and evident cross-border nature (joint projects, especially where co-financed jointly by Turkish and Bulgarian project partners, will be particularly encouraged),
• contain realistic and transparent financial provisions,
• be ready for implementation,
• be of a value within the range of maximum € 50,000 and minimum € 10,000,
• availability of co-financing. Minimum co-financing will be 10% of the cost of projects (in cash or in kind) to be borne by the organization submitting the project proposal,
• under no circumstances be in contradiction with the long-term national development plans and those of the municipality or the region (projects that are part of an overall strategy/plan for the development of the region/town/municipality will receive priority),
• if possible, contain innovative approaches (e.g.: pilot projects).

On this basis the Turkish and Bulgarian implementing authorities will jointly develop more detailed operational guidelines.

Priority areas
The Fund will support small-scale people-to-people actions in the following priority areas:

3.4.1- Economic development
Support and co-ordination of joint activities for encouraging the conclusion of cross-border co-operation agreements, strengthening the existing relation between the region’s administrations and associations such as: Chambers of Commerce, Industry, Agriculture,
business centres and regional professional associations. Support for the creation of specific databases, for exchanging information, experiences and for mutual transfers of know how, as well as for carrying out joint marketing and training activities and integrating new technologies, particularly information technologies. This measure is designed to help to promote cross-border business cooperation in order to better exploit potential synergy effects. SME are seen as one of the main driving forces behind this development process. The measure is targeted at helping micro enterprises and SMEs through their support organisations (e.g. chambers of commerce, Kosgeb etc) to become the most important drivers of economic development. The aim is to encourage in particular the creation of value added in the sector through cross-border cooperation, human resource development in the cross-border area for stimulating local employment and, in particular, for introducing equal opportunities for the adequate and effective participation of women and youths in the labour market.

3.4.2 - Tourism
Support for preparation and implementation of joint projects related to the protection, recovery and popularisation of the common cultural, architectural, artistic, historic, natural and tourism resources in the Border Region; for turning these into tourists’ attractions and cultural and historic centres into tourism destinations, without causing damage to the common heritage or to the environment; for elaborating joint strategies for developing alternative forms of tourism and reducing dependence on seasonality; for studying the possibility of creating joint cross-border holiday packages; for joint marketing and promotion of tourism; for developing initiatives and upgrading facilities to foster cross-border leisure activities; for training and building up local skills in order to bring the quality and variety of services offered on both sides of the border region closer to the standards and requirements of the modern tourism industry.

3.4.3 - Cultural Exchanges
Support for strengthening relations and for the creation of cross-border networks between universities, schools and research institutions, for exchanges of students, for joint sport and cultural activities among the youth, for joint training initiatives with a view to popularisation of new technologies and innovations, for joint scientific research and for joint studies on the history and traditions of the region.

3.4.4 - Institutional capacity building at local level
Support for intensifying the institutional interaction and co-operation in the Border Region by improving the skills of organizational structures in local and regional administrations and in other areas of the civil society. Support for transfer of know-how and for technological integration aimed at extending the availability of services (such as health services) to the most isolated areas. Support for co-operation and exchange of experiences in the field of spatial and urban planning and for regional and spatial analyses and strategies, as well as environmental studies and monitoring systems or land use concepts. Provision of appropriate training courses and of materials for distant learning, exchange of experiences on different levels and of information needed to build up institutional capacities for the preparation of projects.

Selection process
The JSPF Secretariat will prepare a call for proposals to be issued by the CFCU. The call for proposals must be fair and open to all eligible organisations. The call for proposals may be publicised by a variety of means (e.g. newspapers/ media/ networking newsletter)
and will be published on the 2004-2006 CBC Programme Internet site. The call for proposals should allow a reasonable deadline for the submission of proposals (2 months is recommended) and should indicate where additional information and assistance for preparing a proposal can be found.

The project applicants will, in many cases, need some assistance. Information workshops may be organised to inform and direct would-be participants, so as to ensure high transparency and encourage good quality proposals.

An appropriate panel of experts, the Team of Assessors, appointed by the Contracting Authority and approved by the Commission will assess the submitted applications in each country. The Team of Assessors will use clear and pre-defined evaluation grids, prepared by the JSPF Secretariat. Applications that do not meet the pre-specified eligibility criteria will be rejected at this stage. On the basis of the recommendations of the Team of Assessors, a joint evaluation will be performed and a final decision will be reached as to which projects will be awarded a grant.

3.5. Linked activities
In 2003, the two countries decided to implement a 2003 JSPF as a pilot project to introduce the 2004-2006 CBC Programme and a project to this effect is included in the 2003 pre-accession financial assistance programme. Since the implementation of this project is ongoing, it is too early to draw any conclusion. Moreover, in 2004 restoration of the Ekmeçizade Caravanserai in Edirne is included under 2004-2006 Cross-Border Cooperation Programme (CBC) between Turkey and Bulgaria. It will provide a venue for joint people to people events, some of which might well be financed under a JSPF grant. Finally, Edirne is also involved in the Interreg III/A CBC Programme between Turkey and Greece.

3.6 Lessons learned
There is limited experience in Turkey as regards implementing grant schemes at regional level. Experience in candidate countries has demonstrated that in general the JSPF is a highly effective and visible mechanism for mobilising worthwhile small-scale projects at the local level. Projects are often the first of their type in the locality and can often provide the applicants with new ways to express their creativity and endeavour in a cross border environment. Significantly JSPF are found to raise local interest and capacity for accessing instruments such as grant schemes. Interest has also been raised through JSPFs in post accession instruments, for which the learning experience of applicants under JSPF has been particularly valuable.

4. Institutional Framework

1. The key institutions of the Joint Small Projects Fund are the National Aid Coordinator (NAC) that is responsible for programming, monitoring, implementation and assessment of all EU-funded programmes. The National Fund (NF), in the Office of the Under Secretary of State for Treasury in Turkey, headed by the National Authorising Officer (NAO), that supervises the financial management of the 2004-2006 CBC Programme between Turkey and Bulgaria, transfers funds to the Contracting Authority to perform all necessary payments and is responsible for reporting to the European Commission. The competent National Control Authority shall carry out appropriate financial control. Turkish and Bulgarian
Contracting Authorities (CA) for the 2004-2006 CBC Programme, the Joint Co-operation Committee (JCC), the Joint Evaluation Committee (JEC), the Secretariats for the Joint Small Projects Fund, the Team of Assessors for the assessment of project applications (EC) in Turkey and in Bulgaria and the European Commission, represented by the EC Representation in Turkey and by the EC Delegation in Bulgaria.

2. The Joint Small Projects Fund will be implemented on a decentralised basis. Selection of projects to be supported by the JSPF shall be carried out by a Joint Evaluation Committee (JEC) with ex-ante approval of the EC according to PRAG. As Contracting Authority, the Central Finance and Contracts Unit (CFCU) retains overall responsibility for the implementation of the project including:
   - Call for proposals
   - approval of evaluation criteria;
   - organisation and approval of evaluation;
   - signature of contracts;
   - authorisation and payments of invoices.
Grants will be contracted in accordance with the procedures set out in the “Practical Guide to contract procedures by the general budget of the European Communities in the context of external actions” (PRAG) currently in force.
The project shall be implemented with ex-ante control of the EC. The publicity, evaluation, selection and contracting of projects to be supported by the JSPF shall be carried in accordance with PRAG.

**Operation of the JSPF**

1. The Contracting Authority in Turkey is the Central Financing and Contracts Unit (CFCU). The Contracting Authority in Bulgaria is the CBC Implementing Agency at the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works (MRDPW).

2. The CBC Joint Co-operation Committee (JCC), composed of representatives of Turkey, Bulgaria and the EC, has agreed to allocate to the 2004 Joint Small Project Fund 500,000 € out of the 2004 CBC budget for each of the two countries. The JCC is also responsible for the Joint Programming Document (JPD) that provides the framework within which the JSPF is to be implemented. The JCC will receive reports on the implementation of the JSPF and will decide the future implementation framework on annual basis, as part of the allocation of funds for that year.
The Joint Evaluation Committee (JEC), the Secretariats for the Joint Small Projects Fund, and the Team of Assessors for the assessment of project applications are defined in the Special Guidelines for Management for Joint Small Project Fund.

**Eligible beneficiaries**

Eligible beneficiaries in principle include all non-profit decentralised, local organisations, such as:

- Municipalities within the defined border region
- District level organisations
- Inter-communal co-operation organisations
- Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture
- Professional associations
- NGOs
- Universities
Profit making organisations and national organisations without a distinctive role in the border region will not be eligible.

5. Budget (in MEUR):

The EU budget for the 2004 JSPF is € 0.5 million, as detailed below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EU Support</th>
<th>(€ Million)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Support</td>
<td>Investment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint Small Project Fund</td>
<td>0.465</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical assistance(**)</td>
<td>0.035</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>0.500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(*) co-financing is needed and will be a criterion for eligibility of projects. Minimum co-financing of 10% of the projects’ costs will be provided by the beneficiaries, not by the Turkish National Fund

(**) Maximum 7% of Total PHARE allocation (0.5 M€) may be used to cover Technical Assistance for consultancy and training inputs, but not for remuneration

Note: expenditure on equipment should be included under Investment

6. Implementation Arrangements
6.1 Implementing Agency
The Implementing Agency will be the Central Finance and Contracting Unit (CFCU) which will retain overall responsibility for the implementation of the programme, including: preparation of guidelines for applicants and other relevant documents, launch of call for proposal, evaluation criteria, evaluation of applications, signature of contracts, authorisation of invoices. Payment of invoices will be made by the CFCU.

The Beneficiary will be the Under Secretariat of State Planning Organization.

6.2 Twinning
No twinning activities are included as part of the grant schemes and the individual investment projects.

6.3 Non-standard aspects
There are no “non-standards aspects”. The EC PRAG contract procedures will strictly be followed.

6.4 Contracts
Grant Contracts will be signed according to the EC PRAG contract procedures.
7. Implementation schedule

Co-ordination with the Bulgarian authorities will be ensured so that the respective calls for proposals are launched in the same time with identical deadlines.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First call for proposals</td>
<td>03/2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establishment of the JEC, Team of Assessors</td>
<td>05/2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contracting (latest deadline)</td>
<td>07/2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completion of projects (estimate)</td>
<td>07/2006</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8. Equal opportunity

In the whole process of preparation and implementation of the projects no discrimination between men and women will be made. Participation in grants financed under the Joint Small Projects Fund facility is open equally to men and women. Every effort will be made to encourage the participation of women.

9. Environment

Environmental aspects will be assessed individually for each of the proposed projects.

10. Rates of return

N/A

11. Investment criteria

N/A

12. Conditionality and sequencing

The accreditation of the CFCU for running grant schemes, ability of eligible stakeholders to comply with the administrative and procedural requirements and availability of support to applicants as well as the capacity of applicants to co-finance projects are conditions for the success of this project.

ANNEXES TO PROJECT FICHE

1. Logical framework matrix in standard format (compulsory)
2. Detailed implementation chart (compulsory)
3. Contracting and disbursement schedule by quarter for full duration of programme (including disbursement period) (compulsory)
**PHARE LOGFRAME**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Joint Small Project Fund</th>
<th>Programme name and number</th>
<th>Turkey-Bulgaria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2004-2006 CBC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Contracting period expires:</td>
<td>30.11.2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Disbursement period expires:</td>
<td>30.11.2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total budget:</td>
<td>MEUR 0,500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overall objectives</th>
<th>Objectively verifiable indicators</th>
<th>Sources of Verification</th>
<th>Assumptions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Help the border regions to overcome specific development problems resulting from their relative isolation in the framework of national economies;</td>
<td>Monitoring by JSPF Secretariats and Implementing Agency</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The establishment and development of co-operative networks on both sides of the border and the creation of linkages between these networks and wider European Union networks.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose of the Project</th>
<th>Objectively verifiable indicators</th>
<th>Sources of Verification</th>
<th>Assumptions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Supporting the establishment or further development and deepening of contacts between different regional and local institutions on either side of the border;</td>
<td>Number of cross border projects with clear regional development impact increased;</td>
<td>Monitoring and assessment reports;</td>
<td>Good response from local community for the identification and development of projects;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increasing the personnel and institutional capabilities for co-operation and participation in future development programmes</td>
<td>Increased number of new contacts established and number of new partnerships achieved</td>
<td>Reports by JSPF Secretariats and the Implementing Agency.</td>
<td>Capacity of local stakeholders for finding partners across the border and completing good application forms;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Two sides of the mirror project to be contracted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Availability of qualified personnel at central, regional and local administration’s level;</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Efficient programme management by all responsible institutions;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ongoing co-ordination and co-operation between the two countries.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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1 Total budget will be the sum of EC Support and minimum co-financing of 10% of the projects’ costs be provided by the beneficiaries.
### Results
- Increased intensity and degree of cross-border co-operation between local authorities, NGO and other stakeholders on the two sides of the border;
- Increased level of public awareness and information on CBC, its purpose and objectives;
- Increased local involvement to implement small-scale actions that may be conducive to larger cross-border co-operation projects;
- Increased absorption capacity of EC grants by local stakeholders.

### Objectively verifiable indicators
- Increased number of project applications received by the Secretariats;
- Number of new contacts established and number of new partnerships achieved;
- Increased number and variety of applicants to the JSPF;
- At least 3-4 pilot projects which form a basis for larger projects;
- At least 10% more of projects qualifying for financing in respect to JSPF 2003.

### Sources of Verification
- Monitoring and assessment reports;
- Reports of the Implementing Agency;
- Programme evaluation reports;
- Regional and local press and news reports.

### Assumptions
- Efficient marketing and promotion of the JSPF scheme in the border region;
- Competent assistance and advice to local stakeholders;
- Adequate support for applicants through counselling and mentoring functions at local level;
- Encouragement by local authorities of cross border contacts for the establishment of partnerships;
- Well functioning co-operation and co-ordination between IA, Secretariats, Joint Committees, and with the EC Representation and other relevant central, regional and local authorities;
- Well functioning co-operation among the central, regional and local administrations of the two countries.

### Activities

#### Means

Grant contracts signed for selected and approved projects.

#### Costs

- EC Funds – 500 000 EUR;
- Local Funds – minimum co-financing of 10% of the projects’ costs.

#### Assumptions
- JSPF documentation and Operational Guidelines prepared and approved;
- Sustained interest of local institutions in the JSPF scheme;
- Sufficient local/regional project development capacity and capacity to prepare professional grant applications;
- Availability of local organisations willing to apply for JSPF grants.
## Implementation Time Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01 People-to-people JSPF grants</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>T/C/I/D</td>
<td>I/D</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>I/D</td>
<td>I/D</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02 Technical Assistance</td>
<td>C/I</td>
<td>I/D</td>
<td>C/I</td>
<td>C/I/D</td>
<td>I/D</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

T: Tendering  
C: Contracting  
I: Implementation  
D: Disbursement
## Commitment Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Allocation (EUR Mil.)</th>
<th>Commitments (EUR Mil.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>People–to-people JSPF grants</td>
<td>0,465</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02</td>
<td>Technical Assistance</td>
<td>0,035</td>
<td>0,010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>0,500</strong></td>
<td><strong>0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Disbursement Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Allocation (EUR Mil.)</th>
<th>Disbursements (EUR Mil.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>0,010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>0,500</strong></td>
<td><strong>0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>