

**QUESTION & ANSWERS**  
updated 13.08.2019

No.	Question	Answer
<b>Project staff appointment</b>		
1.	Is it possible for the members of the administrative team to work also as experts on some of the project activities? The working hours on both activities will not overlap which can be proved by respective time sheets.	An expert, engaged to perform activities related to project management as part of the project team under the project, could not be hired as external expert.
2.	Are expenditures for sick / holiday leave eligible under the project in case the employee is engaged in part-time?	<p>Expenditure for holidays and sick leave are eligible for part-time employment with fixed percentage of time worked per month and shall be declared proportionally. Holidays and sick leave costs are not eligible for part-time assignments with a flexible number of hours worked per month and assignment on an hourly basis. (See Programme Implementation Manual, item 7.9 on <a href="http://www.ipacbc-bgrs.eu/bg/implementation-stage/naruchnik-za-izpulnenie-na-proekti-v-117052019">http://www.ipacbc-bgrs.eu/bg/implementation-stage/naruchnik-za-izpulnenie-na-proekti-v-117052019</a>).</p> <p>Payment conditions for holidays and sick leave are also stipulated in item 4 of the Clarification on assignment of staff of Bulgarian partners employed under the projects, published on <a href="http://www.ipacbc-bgrs.eu/bg/implementation-stage/red-i-nachin-na-vuzlagane-na-zadulzheniya-na-chlenovete-na-ekipite-na">http://www.ipacbc-bgrs.eu/bg/implementation-stage/red-i-nachin-na-vuzlagane-na-zadulzheniya-na-chlenovete-na-ekipite-na</a>. It is explicitly clarified that in case of assignment on part-time with a flexible number of hours per month expenditure for sick / holiday leave is not eligible.</p>
3.	What supporting documents should be attached to the Request for First level control as acceptable evidences for payment of the staff remuneration in case team members are nominated with administrative order and they work on the	<p>The main documents which will be required in the process of verification are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Labour contract /Decision or Order for appointment;</li> <li>• Job description containing information on project implementation responsibilities;</li> </ul>

	<p>project within the standard 8 hours working day? How to documentary prove the team member is really working under the project since he/she is receiving a salary according the primary labour contract with the Municipality? What will be the basis for calculation of the amount which is subject of verification by the MA? Will salary costs as per the budget of the project be recognized, or will the lower payment as per the primary contract be recognized?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Administrative order for nomination of project team;</li> <li>• Time-sheets which cover 100% of actual working time and providing information on the number of hours spent per month on the project (applicable in case of part-time assignment with a flexible number of hours per month);</li> <li>• Payrolls, slips and other equivalent documents;</li> <li>• Proof of payments of salary and all social insurance etc. on behalf of the employer;</li> </ul> <p>As it is stated in item 2 of the Clarification on assignment of staff of Bulgarian partners employed under the projects (<a href="http://www.ipacbc-bgrs.eu/bg/implementation-stage/red-i-nachin-na-vuzlagane-na-zadulzheniya-na-chlenovete-na-ekipite-na">http://www.ipacbc-bgrs.eu/bg/implementation-stage/red-i-nachin-na-vuzlagane-na-zadulzheniya-na-chlenovete-na-ekipite-na</a>) the Administrative Order for appointment/nomination of project team must specify the project name/number, the functions to be performed by the relevant experts, the deadlines for implementation, the hours of employment under the project, as well as the chosen method of calculation of the remuneration under the project. The part of remuneration costs which will be requested for reimbursement under the project must be calculated on the base of real gross employment costs.</p>
<b>Public Procurement</b>		
4.	<p>In the project, we have set the need for a wide range of external experts for the different project activities - forest scientists, foresters, specialists in forest ecology and plants, dendrologists, botanists (please, see BL 4.10 of PP1). We would like to use the services of the leading Bulgarian experts in these specialties (professors, associate professors, doctors of science, experts with rich scientific and practical experience). In addition to their professional qualifications, these experts need to meet additional requirements related to the specificity of our project activities. The geographic area defined by the project should be very well known to the experts because they will carry out specific activities related</p>	<p>Contracting of employees of the partner organizations as external experts is eligible cost under BL 4 “External expertise and service costs”, for the Bulgarian partners only, in case the procurement principles and rules stipulated in Chapter 3, Title VII, Part I of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 and Chapter III of Annex I of the same regulation and the Practical Guide to Contract Procedures for EU External Actions (PRAG) are observed. This means that in the process of preparation of the Procurement plan and implementation of procurement procedures you should respect the set thresholds for each thematic group of expenditures.</p> <p>Please, have in mind also that as per the Programme rules, in case there are two or more single tender procedures for which Project partner intends to invite and award contracts to one and the same company/expert, the</p>

	<p>to training and outdoor field work of youngsters in forests. From the point of view of the project relevance and the safety of the young people, the forest areas where they can get acquainted with rare and protected species, dangerous forest pests, a variety of forest ecosystems and habitats, etc., must be identified. Our preliminary studies show that the project area is best studied in relation to forest ecology and forestry (presence of Scientific Research Base, published scientific papers on the topics, implemented scientific and applied projects, etc.) by the scientists of the Forest Research Institute – Bulgarian Academy of Sciences. They are partner organization in the project (PP3). We would like to ask you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Could we use the services of leading experts working at the Forest Research Institute – BAS?</li> <li>- How we should hire them (for example individually, by Civil Contract with each of them)?</li> <li>- How should this be reflected into the Procurement Plan?</li> </ul>	<p>procedures shall be planned as one. If the combined amount of these procedures reach the threshold of Simplified procedure, this should be reflected in the Project Procurement Plan.</p> <p>Finally, please bear in mind that an expert engaged to perform activities related to project management as part of the project team member under the project could not be hired as external expert.</p>
5.	<p>25 youngsters from Bulgaria (aged 13-18) will be included in each project activity. Each time they will be different youngsters - from different schools, different social and ethnic backgrounds, different levels of education, with different educational interests and needs, etc. In the project we have set one moderator from Bulgaria for each activity (please, see BL 4.10 of PP1). His main tasks are facilitation of communication between the youngsters and the relevant external experts involved, and providing support for the smooth running of their common workflow. In this regard, we would like the moderator for each activity to be a different person, according to the profile of the participating youth group and coming from their environment. In this way we believe he/she will be able to perform his/her functions in the best way. In this regard, we ask for your consultation:</p>	<p>As regards to the amount planned under budget sub-line 4.10 for moderators for the project activities, please have in mind that for expenditures less or equal to 2 500 Euro (without VAT), a payment may be made against invoice without prior acceptance of a tender. This concerns only expenditures which cannot be merged with other similar expenditures and should be properly reflected in the Project procurement plan; otherwise you should respect the set thresholds for each thematic group of expenditures. In this particular case, the engagement of experts must respect the applicable national legislation and all documentary evidences should be properly collected.</p> <p>If there is a need of small content change under the project, please refer to p. 8.1. of PIM and section IX of Annex 15 User manual for Beneficiary portal.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How should we hire the individual moderators (for example, with Civil Contracts with each of them)?</li> <li>- How should this be reflected into the Procurement Plan?</li> </ul>	
6.	<p>In the project, we have set the need for a wide range of external experts for the different project activities including foresters, ecologists, entomologists, phytopathologists and GIS-expert (please, see BL 4.10 of PP3). In that regard, for the execution of the project we will need the services of an expert team from the FRI. Our motives are the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The experts from the FRI have the needed qualification, experience and acknowledgement of the scientific community in our country and abroad which is prerequisite for the qualitative execution of the specific activities.</li> <li>- They have made in-depth research of the CBC project's specific area (documented in scientific publications, forest management plans, local and national projects, etc.) The most interesting and important habitats for the students as well as valuable species, plant diseases and pests, etc can be easily identified with the help and support of these experts.</li> <li>- Their detailed knowledge of the terrain specifics, will save us time for further researches, will guarantee the safety of the students and will develop and upgrade the ecological knowledge and region problems.</li> </ul> <p>In light of the foregoing, we would like to ask whether PP3 is eligible to employ expert scientists from the FRI for the implementation of the project activities.</p>	<p>Contracting of employees of the partner organizations as external experts is eligible cost under BL 4 "External expertise and service costs", for the Bulgarian partners only, in case the procurement principles and rules stipulated in Chapter 3, Title VII, Part I of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 and Chapter III of Annex I of the same regulation and the Practical Guide to Contract Procedures for EU External Actions (PRAG) are observed. This means that in the process of preparation of the Procurement plan and implementation of procurement procedures you should respect the set thresholds for each thematic group of expenditures.</p> <p>Please, have in mind also that as per the Programme rules, in case there are two or more single tender procedures for which Project partner intends to invite and award contracts to one and the same company/expert, the procedures shall be planned as one. If the combined amount of these procedures reach the threshold of Simplified procedure, this should be reflected in the Project Procurement Plan.</p>
7.	<p>The Lead partner has the obligation to perform a Local open tender for the supply of joint integrated system for early warning of floods, which is the main activity under the project.</p> <p>Given the complexity and the technical specifics of the equipment to be supplied, we find it essential to assess the</p>	<p>According to p. 4.3.3. Selection and award criteria – supplies of PRAG the award criterion to technically compliant tenders is price or, in exceptional cases mentioned in Section 4.3.3.3., the best price-quality ratio.</p> <p>Please, note that in accordance with 4.3.3.2. Supply contracts including ancillary services where a supply contract includes ancillary services (such as after sales services and/or training), the technical evaluation should take into</p>

	<p>technical quality of the offers, not only the lowest price. The tender documentation is in the process of being elaborated, so we would like to know if it is admissible to include a methodology for evaluation of the offers on the basis of the best quality/price ratio, where technical indicators will be assessed as well.</p>	<p>account the quality of such services on a yes/no basis. All noncompliant tenders having been eliminated, the contract is awarded to the tenderer offering the lowest price for both equipment and ancillary services together. According to p. 4.3.3.3. the evaluation may be carried out according to the best price-quality ratio criterion only for supply contracts which include particularly significant ancillary services, and only after prior approval.</p>
8.	<p>In connection with the implementation of a project, in our role of LP we are about to announce a public procurement procedure for the supply of equipment worth EUR 150,000 related to the implementation of the envisaged activities. One of the requirements of the program and a condition for carrying out the selection procedures for contractors, in accordance with the Practical Guide to Contract External Action Procedures (PRAG) and the Beneficiary's Guide, is to declare the procedure in the Official Journal or equivalent.</p> <p>Upon a letter sent by the LP to the Editor-in-Chief of the State Gazette, we received a reply (we enclose the request and the received answer) that the State Gazette does not publish public procurement notices pursuant to Article 7, paragraph 1 of the State Gazette Act, where a law or regulation requiring the relevant material to be promulgated in the State Gazette is required.</p> <p>In this regard, please provide us with guidance as to where we can publish the necessary procurement documentation, since the State Gazette does not have a regulatory equivalent.</p>	<p>According to PIM, section Procurement publications, p.31, for Local open tender procedures for supply / works the Contracting Authority should publish: Complete tender dossier, Contract notice (annexes C2 or D2 of the PRAG), Summary Contract notice (annexes C3 or D3 of the PRAG) and Contract award notice (annexes C9b or D9b of the PRAG) in all appropriate media, in particular on the Programme's web site and the grant Beneficiary's website (in its role of Contracting authority). Additionally, Summary Contract notice should be published in official journal of the partner country or any equivalent media in which the action is being carried out.</p> <p>The compliance with the requirement for publication in ' official journal of the partner country or any other equivalent media ' is present when the contract notice is published at national level in accordance with national legislation and the basic standards of publicity and advertising of contracts are met.</p> <p>Publicity means are appropriate where the contract notice is published in a way as to ensure that any interested economic operator has access to relevant procurement information before awarding it so that he may be able to submit a tender or express his interest in participating in the award of the contract.</p>
<b>Financial management and reporting</b>		
9.	-	-
<b>Modifications</b>		
10.	<p>Our staff costs will be at Real rate. In table BL1-Real staff cost, the unit rate for the Accountant is 1.16 euro/per hour, but this is under the minimal salary in Bulgaria. According Bulgarian law we cannot hire our accountant on this unit rate.</p>	<p>It is the sole responsibility of each project partner to fully respect the requirement of the applicable national labour legislation as regards to employing of the project management teams' experts. In case LP requests a project modification, the procedure to follow is detail described in p. 8.1 of</p>

	Is it possible to reduce the Units and increase the Unit rate while the Total is kept unchanged?	PIM and section IX of Annex 15 User manual for Beneficiary portal.
<b>Beneficiary portal</b>		
11.	-	-
<b>Project implementation</b>		
12.	-	-