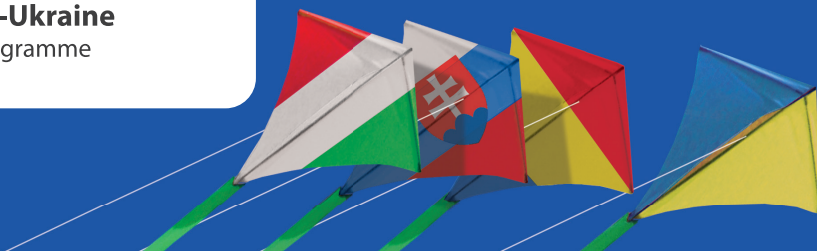




Hungary-Slovakia-Romania-Ukraine
ENPI Cross-border Cooperation Programme

**Partnership
without borders**



Newsletter #5

December 2013

The fifth Newsletter of the Hungary-Slovakia-Romania-Ukraine ENPI CBC Programme 2007-2013 issued in the fifth year of the Programme's lifecycle brings you the latest news and information about results of the Third Call for Proposals, management of the Large Scale Projects and other projects from the First and the Second Calls and representation of the Programme at the series of event organised under the umbrella of the European Cooperation Day.

Third Call for Proposals - State of play

The third Call for Proposals was launched on 30 September 2011. The Joint Technical Secretariat (JTS) received 271 applications by the deadline for submission of applications on 31 January 2012. The overall amount requested by all applications was 83 907 486,13 EUR and that is 10,5 times more than the initial available allocation for open call procedure. After the closure of the opening session, administrative and eligibility check the JTS organized the first meeting of Project Selection Committee (PSC) which has the responsibility to carry out and supervise the entire evaluation and selection process and to provide the Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC) with the recommendations on proposals to be granted from the Programme resources. After the second meeting of the PSC the selection procedure ended up with the result that 36 projects were recommended for award for the total amount of 10 962 748,55 EUR and 19 projects were recommended for reserve list at the amount of 7 315 441,43 EUR. At the end of the whole evaluation process, the JMC meeting was convened for definitive approval of the selected proposals to 6 December 2012, in Tokaj, Hungary and taking into consideration that the over-commitment is not allowed in the ENPI CBC Programmes the maximum amounts awarded to the projects had been decreased to 8 657 311,45 EUR for 30 applications and 6 projects were shifted to reserve list which amounted to 9 620 879,53 EUR. The decision was endorsed by the European Commission during February 2013 and in May the JTS started to work on the contracting procedure of the selected 30 projects. For the time being 25 Grant Contracts have been prepared and signed by both parties and started the implementation of the actions. For the weekly updated contracts list please visit our website following the link

<http://www.huskroua-cbc.net/en/awarded-projects>

Projects being awarded from the Reserve list

In order to increase the level of absorption of ENPI allocation of the Programme the JMA/JTS took all necessary steps and launched a written procedure requesting the Joint Monitoring Committee members to approve the reallocation of 17,64% from the Technical Assistance budget of the Programme and grant it to the applications included in the reserve list within the 3rd Call for Proposal. The Joint Monitoring Committee adopted the proposal on grant provision for further projects on 28 November 2013 and the contracting procedure of project proposals recommended for award from the reserve list started immediately. As the result of the decision, 12 projects are being awarded along with 2 other projects, decided earlier to be financed from Programme resources and were included into the reserve list. The overall grant amount for the projects from reserve list is 3064527,28 EUR. The JTS has started the contracting procedure on 28 November 2013 considering the fact that in line with Article 43 of the Implementing Rules (951/2007) the deadline for proceeding the process of contracts signing should be not later than 31 December 2013.

Implementation of ongoing projects

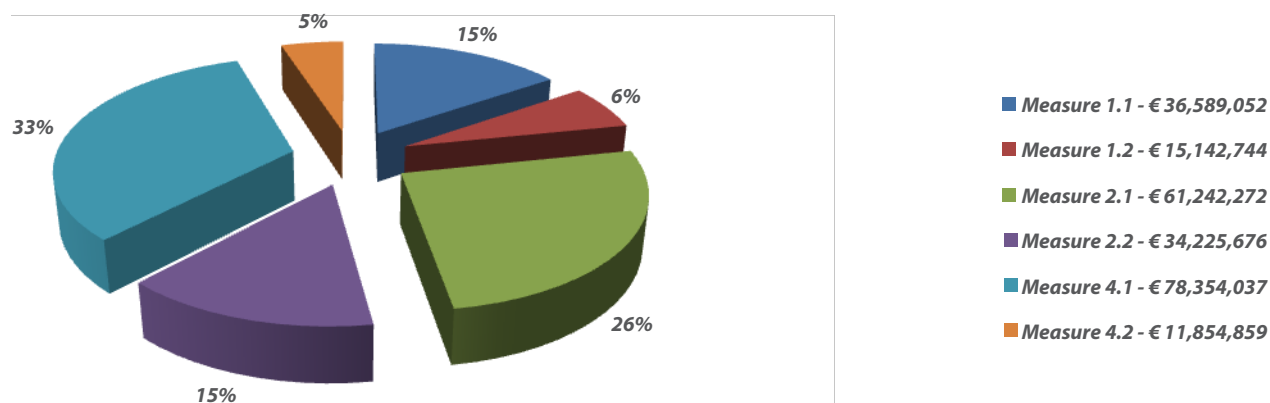
Projects awarded through open call

During the period of 2007-2013 the number of the contracted projects reached 139. During the first call for proposal 47 contracts were signed with the total amount of 15 699 350,68 EUR while within the second call for proposal just one less, 46 projects started implementation of activities using grant amount of 16 103 183,11 EUR. The third and the last call for proposal within the within the Hungary-Slovakia-Romania-Ukraine ENPI CBC 2007-2013 Programme 42 grant contracts were prepared and signed by representatives of Beneficiaries and the Joint Managing Authority, receiving 10 972 953,38 EUR of ENPI grant in total. JTS is still working on contracting of 12 projects, which were granted from the reserve list. By 2013 nearly 30 projects finished their activities and JTS closed the projects. Besides contracting and closing procedures, JTS deals with activities related to project modification request processes, checking and correction of Interim Reports/Final Reports, providing continuous help-desk to Beneficiaries (correspondence as well as phone and personal consultations) and also visits of projects in order to monitor the progress.

Based on the applications received within the open calls for proposal, it seems that measure 4.1 Institutional cooperation within Support people to people cooperation generated the highest interest, the requested ENPI contribution for the submitted projects was 7,6 times higher than the available resources. Measure 2.1 Environmental protection, sustainable use and management of natural resources aiming to enhance environmental quality was also extremely popular, the demand was in 8,9 times higher than the allocated amount.

Measure	Available amount
1.1 Harmonised development of tourism	€ 6,863,828
1.2 Create better conditions for SMEs and business development	€ 3,431,914
2.1 Environmental protection, sustainable use and management of natural resources	€ 6,863,828
2.2 Emergency Preparedness	€ 10,295,742
4.1 Institutional cooperation	€ 10,295,742
4.2 Small scale "People to people" cooperation	€ 3,431,914
Total	€ 41,182,970

Requested ENPI contribution per measure

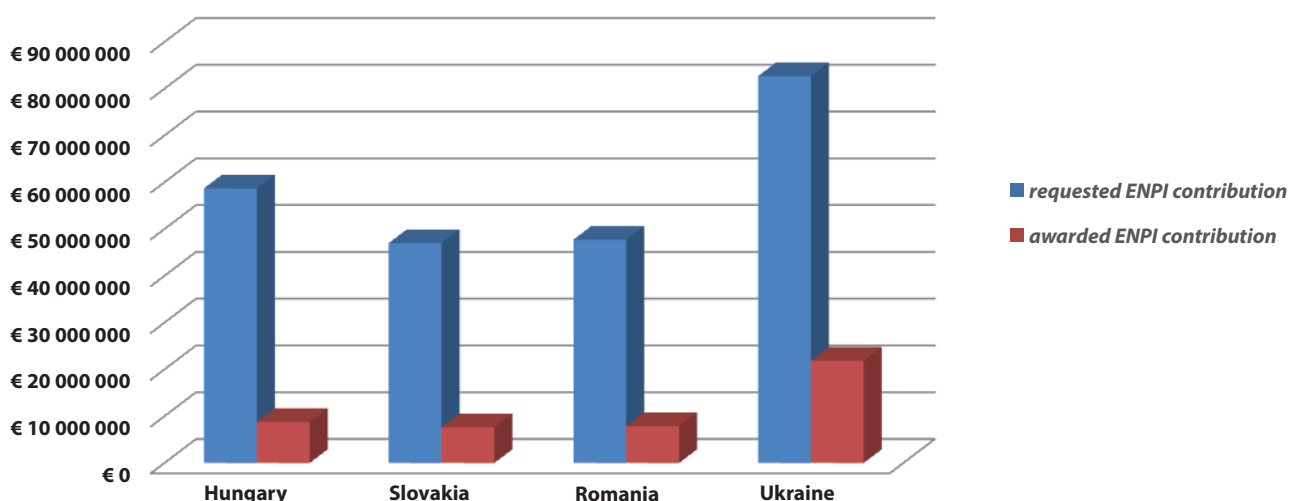


The figures also show that the highest demand for the ENPI fund arose in Ukraine, 35% of the total requested amount was required by Ukrainian partners, it is in 1.4 times more than the 2nd highest demand expressed by Hungarian partners. (Excluding funds requested by partners registered outside of the Programme territory and Priority 3.).

The awarded ENPI contribution was allocated similarly to the requests: Ukraine received 47,38% of the total awarded funds, but there is no significant differences regarding the other 3 countries, all of them were awarded around 8 million EUR respectively.

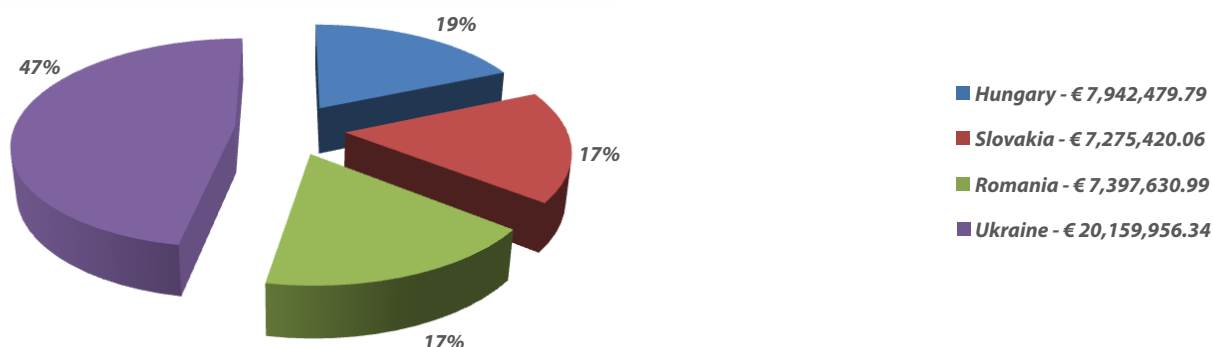
	Hungary	Slovakia	Romania	Ukraine
Requested ENPI contribution	€ 58,700,975	€ 46,995,700	€ 47,717,852	€ 82,677,032
Awarded ENPI contribution	€ 8,747,292	€ 7,625,055	€ 7,907,786	€ 21,868,366

Requested vs Awarded ENPI contribution



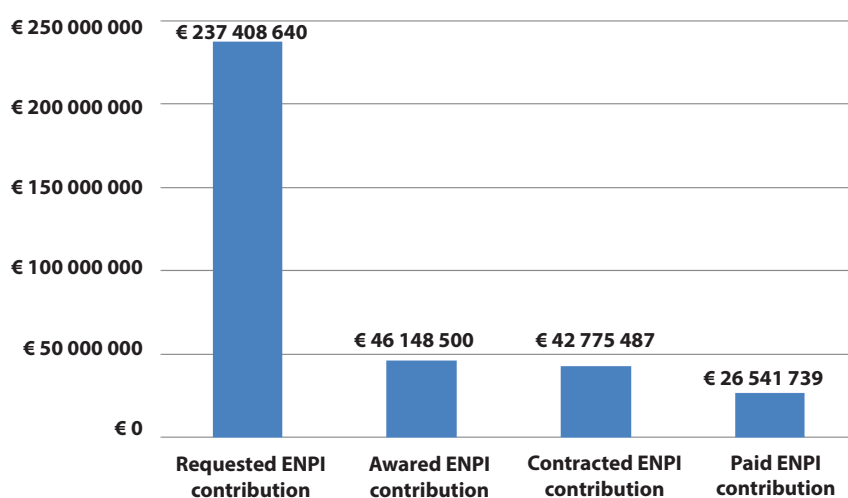
After reviewing the submitted budgets, the selected projects were contracted for slightly less amounts than they were awarded to, for exact figures please see the below chart. (Figures exclude Priority 3. numbers.)

Contracted ENPI contribution



In general we can state that the Programme has achieved its goal. Every year it involved more and more organizations which wanted to strengthen their cross-border cooperation in order to improve the social and economic conditions. Two years before the Programme implementation end there was paid 62% of the contracted funds to beneficiaries and partners, including advance payments and further instalments to those projects which carried out all necessary requirements for getting the second instalments or balance payments (27 projects from the 1st and the 2nd Calls for Proposals have already achieved their goals).

Paid ENPI contribution



(Figures exclude Priority 3. numbers.)

Projects through direct award procedure - Large scale projects

Slovak - Ukrainian project 'Modernisation and reconstruction of Border Crossing Points at the Slovak – Ukrainian border'

During the course of the year 2013, the JTS proceeded with the internal procedures related to signing of the Grant Contract which took place on 12 March 2013 by the Slovak Beneficiary. The project started its implementation 1 April 2013 when both Slovak and Ukrainian partners have elaborated all documents necessary to proceed required for procurement procedure. Concerning the infrastructural components, the works at the Vysne Nemecke – Uzghorod border crossing-border check point will start at the end of February – beginning of March 2014.

Romanian - Ukrainian project 'Efficient and secure border between Romania and Ukraine'

After the award letter was issued by the JMA (3 September 2012) the LSP Partners started to work on the requirements and conditions set in the mentioned document. After the completion of the conditions and providing the JMA/JTS with required clarification, Partners signed the Partnership Agreement which was signed by the Ukrainian Partners in December 2012. JTS continued the internal procedures on preparing the Grant Contract which was signed on 14 March 2013 by the

Romanian Beneficiary and the implementation phase started on 1 April 2013. During the course of the year institutional changes have been accomplished by the Ukrainian Partners. These changes started during the summer of 2013 and a new Partnership Agreement was prepared. Starting from 1 August 2013 the National Agency for Fiscal Administration- NAFA had been reorganised by a merger and took over the National Customs Authority's (Beneficiary) responsibilities. Finally NAFA decided to transfer the responsibility on project implementation to the General Regional Directorate of Public Finance in Cluj-Napoca. A new project team and Action Plan were created which would speed up the project implementation.

Hungarian - Ukrainian project 'Efficient and secure border between Hungary and Ukraine'

The entire and updated Application package (with the new Ukrainian Partner – Chop Customs Office of the Ministry of the Taxes and Revenues of Ukraine – introduced) was submitted by the Hungarian Beneficiary to the JTS on 14 December 2012. After a numerous round of clarifications, the consortium members signed the Partnership Agreement in November 2013 and on 6 December 2013 the Grant Contract was signed at a personal meeting in the Hungarian National Police Headquarters' Office, which was visited by the representative of the Beneficiary and the Joint Technical Secretariat. The project implementation period has started on 7 December 2013.

European Cooperation Day - 2013

This autumn has been very fruitful and colourful for the Hungary-Slovakia-Romania-Ukraine Programme starting with the intense work on preparation of the new Programme for 2014–2020 and finishing with the celebration of the Europe Cooperation Day 2013 by visiting all counties of the program area (Hungary, Slovakia, Romania and Ukraine) by bus/bike. The Hungary-Slovakia-Romania-Ukraine ENPI Cross-border Cooperation Programme joined this year again to more than 80 other European Territorial Cooperation programmes all over Europe in order to celebrate the European Cooperation Day 2013, a campaign aiming to communicate the achievements of European cooperation across the borders to the general public initiated for the second time by the European Commission. In the frame of the campaign more than 40 cross-border cooperation projects on economic and social development, environmental protection and emergency preparedness, as well as institutional and people-to-people cooperation funded by the EU within the Hungary-Slovakia-Romania-Ukraine ENPI Cross-border Cooperation Programme took part in more than 20 joint events.

Through a range of activities and events, participants looked at promotion the results and achievements of the program. Therefore in the newsletter we invite you to remember some thrilling moments of the events.

The Programme team started its journey on September 17 visiting Drienica village (Presov region, Slovakia) where the participants attended the reconstructed multifunctional tourism centre and then the team moved to Lysá ski resort. That day there also was held a briefing for journalists in Prešov Self-Governing Region which concerned the programme and the JTS team continued its way from Prešov to Ľubovec. The tour under the umbrella of ECD was continued in Kosice Self Governing Region where after the meeting with the Head of "Department of the Implementation of European Projects" and the Branch Office expert, the JTS team was able to get acquainted with the result of the St. Elisabeth Cathedral reconstruction in Košice and development centres.



After the bus/biking tour in Slovakia, the representatives of JTS travelled to Uzhhorod (Transcarpathian region, Ukraine). On September 18 the first event was held at the Tisza River Basin Water Resources Directorate in Ughhorod where the projects financed by the Programme on emergency preparedness with the participation of the Romanian and Hungarian partners were presented. There also was held a meeting with the Governor of Transcarpathian Region and the Mayor of Ughhorod. After that Hungary-Slovakia-Romania-Ukraine Programme and Poland-Belarus-Ukraine ENPI CBC Programme representatives participated in the round table under the title of "Conditions and perspectives for joint cross-border cooperation projects implementation by local organizations" which was organized by Uzhhorod City Council and attended by representatives of local authorities, civil society, Beneficiaries and Partners. The teams of both Programmes continued its way from Uzhhorod to Baranyntsi village and then to Mukachevo. In Mukachevo Castle, there were made presentations of cross-border cooperation projects on the reconstruction of the Mukachevo castle and the development of children's rehabilitation. The last meeting in Ukraine of Hungary-Slovakia-Romania-Ukraine JTS team took place in Solotvyno Village Council, where the Beneficiaries and Partners had an opportunity to introduce the projects on strengthening tourism infrastructure and cross-border people-to-people cooperation.



On September 19, the team travelled to Romania in order to visit County Library in Baia Mare where a grant contract of a project awarded within the 3rd call for proposal was presented and signed. The County Museum in Satu Mare in North-Western Romania was the next and the last stop in the country, where children celebrated European Cooperation Days with music and dance performance.

On September 20, the team visited a project event dedicated to achieved results within HU-UA cross border cooperation - the establishment of a joint TV studio in Nyíregyháza (Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg County, Hungary) organised by Kölcsey Television. The next local event visited by the JTS members was organized by E-misszió Nature Protection and Environmental Association, which was aimed at raising awareness of citizens regarding the importance of composting and its role in protection of environment. After this, the participants of the bus/ biking tour visited Arany János Highschool and Primary School", where an ECO- Playing house was established as the result of project financed within the Hungary-Slovakia-Romania-Ukraine Programme second call for proposals. The final event under the umbrella of the ECD for the JTS team was an open air event promoting environmental protection on Kossuth Square in Nyíregyháza with the participation of the E-misszió Environmental Association and a photo exhibition in Tiszadob village (Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg County) promoting environmental protection among youth.



We would like to take the opportunity here again to say thank you to all organizations who contributed with their work to the initiative of the European Cooperation Days 2013! JTS hopes to meet again next year everybody who participated in one of the European Cooperation Day events!

Feedbacks from Beneficiaries on experience gained during project implementation

Regarding the fact that the end of the Programme implementation is approaching, the Joint Technical Secretariat should be informed about the experience gained by the Beneficiaries/Partners who were involved in project implementation. Interesting questions are collected below around three main topics which give the opportunity to revise the CBC projects implementation better and to look at their effects through the eyes of involved people from different regions. The answers give inspiration to JTS in day-to-day office work and may be encouraging for potential Applicants/Partners who are planning to submit their applications in the next programming period.

For the question **'How did cross-border cooperation activities have changed everyday operation of your organization?'** Beneficiaries reacted as follows:

In general, Beneficiaries considered professional development on personal and organizational levels as the major positive impact of joint work during project implementation. The gained experience was useful and innovative for the majority of project representatives. People managed to extend their business networks getting along with specialists/experts from other organisations. While implementing the projects people shared best practices, worked on new tasks, expressed progressive ideas and discovered new opportunities for further cooperation. Now those who were involved in cross-border activities have become unique specialists with invaluable experience and developed skills in the sphere of cross-border cooperation. Project participants are glad to have an opportunity to improve the situation in their regions applying modern technologies, new approaches and achieving progress in professional sphere. In general, a day to day work has become more interesting for those involved in the implementation of the projects and also it is very inspiring for the personal and professional development of the project team as well. At the same time it is important to be aware of EU legislation and related procedures. In more general sense CBC projects motivated people to get to know better their cross border partners, their traditions, mentality and legislation. This experience plays a great role not only in the life of organizations but in the life of public and civil society as well.

It is worth to be mentioned that the development and implementation of the projects is a very interesting process which expands horizons. The projects can bring changes, for example, to the operational structure of the public or community organization, and management approaches. The Beneficiaries/Partners shared their experience with many different institutions, as an example the University project involved 25 universities all over Ukraine. This statement may reflect the goal of the Programme and prove the multiplying effect.

Public attitude towards the cross-border cooperation in the Programme areas also has a key importance. The question **'What is the public attitude like in your area on CBC?'** encouraged respondents to describe what the characteristics of their own region are in this regard.

Some of the Beneficiaries answered that cross-border cooperation has been historically rooted in their area, and they are sure

that people are eager to participate in cross-border cooperation activities. The cross border projects give an opportunity for the regions to be closer to each other and to understand better the problems in their countries and namely in their regions.

To the question **‘Do the future plans of your organization include a submission of application for the first call for proposals of HU-SK-RO-UA ENI CBC 2014-2020?’** – the respondents answered „yes” with no exception. Having the experience of cross-border project implementation, the organizations may have a clear vision and understanding of the importance and necessity of such kind of projects which aimed at a more intense and deeper social and economic cooperation between cross-border regions involving all possible stakeholders. During the current programme people experienced positive effects of CBC projects implementation, and this inspired them to start to think about how to use forthcoming opportunities within the Hungary-Slovakia-Romania-Ukraine ENI CBC Programme 2014-2020.

Joint preparation of the new Programme in the frame of ENI CBC 2014-2020

Cross-border cooperation (CBC) at the external borders of the EU is a key priority in the European Neighbourhood Policy. CBC under the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI) will be built on its predecessor, the ENPI. Support to CBC at the EU's external border will continue to draw on funds from both the external and internal headings of the EC budget, for the pursuit of CBC activities serving both sides of the EU's external border. Some aspects will be adjusted, for example a move to full application of shared management arrangements and the possibility of including major social, economic or cultural centres. The new ENI regulation has been approved by the College of Commissioners on 7 December 2011 and is now under discussion at the European Parliament. The regulatory framework for the new generation of ENI CBC programmes 2014 - 2020 is currently under preparation. More detailed provisions for the CBC programmes are to be set out in Implementing Rules which will be adopted by the Commission indicatively at the end of 2014.

The preparation of the next programming period of 2014-2020 under the ENI with the participation of Hungary, Slovakia, Romania and Ukraine has already been started. The representatives of the four countries participating in the on-going Hungary – Slovakia – Romania – Ukraine ENPI CBC Programme already took part in two meetings. The first meeting was on 7 December 2012 which aimed at presenting the actual status of the CBC Implementing Rules and Strategy in the framework of the ENI 2014-2020, discussing the ENI CBC Strategic framework, overview the timeline of the planning process and to appoint the members of the Joint Task Force. The 2nd meeting convened to the 23 May 2013 in order to clarify the position of all countries involved in present Programme regarding the eligibility of the programme area in the new ENI CBC 2014-2020 Programme and starting the preparation of the next programming period. The representatives of the participating countries presented their overviews and intentions how they foresee the programming process and how they plan to participate in the next programming period and later the representative of the European Commission shared the available information about the legislation framework. The countries agreed to continue the Program with the four countries and in terms of geographical coverage the countries also wish to continue and keep the eligible regions. During the course of the year the draft the Terms of References for the ex-ante evaluation, Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and elaboration of for the joint operational programme for the period 2014-2020 was prepared and approved by the countries. The public procurement procedure for selecting the experts who will assist the countries in the preparation process has been published on 26 November 2013. For further information please visit the website of the Programme.

<http://www.huskroua-cbc.net/en/opened-call-for-proposals>