



Ministerul Sănătății



Programme „European public health challenges” financed under the EEA Financial Mechanism 2014-2021

-03.09.2019-

On 13 October 2016, the Memorandum of Understanding between the Governments of Romania and the EEA countries (Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein) on the implementation of the Financial Mechanism of the European Economic Area 2014-2021 was signed. The objectives of the EEA Financial Mechanism 2014-2021 are to support economic and social cohesion in Europe through economic growth, sustainable development, reducing economic and social disparities in the European Economic Area, and strengthening cooperative relations between the donor states and beneficiary countries.

Within this financial mechanism, the Ministry of Health carries out, as a Program Operator, the Programme "European Public Health Challenges". The allocated budget is 47,058,824 euro (85% - grant and 15% - co-financing). Norwegian programme partners are the Norwegian Institute of Public Health (NIPH) and the Norwegian Directorate of Health (HDIR).

The Ministry of Health as Program Operator is responsible for the preparation and implementation of the "European Public Health Challenges " programme, i.e. the drafting of the program proposal, the management of the funds through the selection, evaluation, contracting and monitoring of the predefined projects, but also projects selected by calls for projects. The Ministry of European Funds fulfills the role of National Coordinator of the EEA Financial Mechanism called "National Focal Point" responsible for achieving the objectives set by the Donors.

Between January 2017 and July 2018, the programme proposal was prepared by the Ministry of Health in cooperation with the Ministry of European Funds, the Norwegian Financial Mechanism Office (OMF) and the Norwegian partners, the Norwegian Institute of Public Health and the Norwegian Directorate of Health.

On 16.07.2018, the Program Agreement (Financing Agreement) entered into force, being signed by the Ministry of European Funds (on behalf of Romania) and by the Chairman of the EEA Financial Mechanism Committee (from Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein). With the signing of this document, **the programme entered the implementation phase.**

The overall objective of the programme is: improved prevention and reduced inequalities in health’.

The specific objectives of the program are:

- policies and services for the prevention of diseases improved;
- access to health care services for vulnerable groups improved.

The main estimated results of the programme are:

- 2 studies on health status of Romanian population based on EU methodology (EHES), one for adults and one for children developed;
- 84 fully equipped and functional community integrated centres;
- 45 newly created school cabinets fully functional;
- 200 family doctors cabinets using PREVENT application achieved;
- 1 good practices model for community healthcare developed;
- 7,000 preventive cancer screening tests performed to women from vulnerable groups of 7 counties;
- 1500 women treated with mobile unit or in ambulatory care achieved;
- 30000 women informed on cervical cancer prevention by door to door campaign accomplished;
- 1 health professional registry developed and functional;
- early detection of heart failure due to ischemic heart disease increased with 40%;
- 1 Medical Registry to track left ventricular remodelling as a result of acute myocardial infarction developed and functional;
- 2000 patients with heart failure receiving support and proper treatment done;
- 35 community care centres established and functional;
- 48000 vulnerable persons that have received health preventive services (primary and community care assistance) accomplished;
- Tuberculosis mortality rate (per 100,000 population) decrease to 4% done;
- 15300 persons tested for tuberculosis done;
- 600 M/XDR tuberculosis patients receiving adequate social and psychological treatment and support done;
- Increasing the cured cases in paediatric oncology from 60% to 70% done;
- 450 children per year receiving diagnostic and treatment in paediatric oncology done;
- 1 health policy adapted to the needs in mental health area done;
- 3000 children at risk to have a mental health disease and children with mental health diseases receiving community health services for complex evaluation, early intervention, diagnostic and treatment done;
- 8 standards for mental health community services developed and implemented
- 1500 parents better informed with regards to main risks of developing mental health disorders and positive parenting as one of the main protective factor against it done;
- National strategy and action plan for hospital acquire infection and antibiotics consumption developed and piloted;
- Guidelines for antimicrobial infection management developed;
- 170 of health professionals trained in preventing, surveillance and control of hospital acquire infection and antibiotics consumption management done;
- 4000 vulnerable persons that have received health care services done;
- 10 bilateral initiatives in Romania or EEA countries for strengthening bilateral cooperation, exchange of good practices, know-how in health area accomplished;
- Investment in equipment, refurbishment of buildings;
- Information, education and awareness campaigns form health professionals and other professionals, legislative proposal for improving legislation in force;

The programme contains 8 predefined projects, 1 call for proposal and 2 small grant schemes:

A. Predefined projects

Project 1: Strengthening the National Network of Primary Health Care Providers to improve the Health Status of the Population, children and adults (including vulnerable population) - **budget 8,763,016 euro, duration 36 months, beneficiaries:** National Institute of Public Health in partnership with National Institute for Maternal and Child Health - Allessandrescu – Ruscescu, World Health Organization, Norwegian Institute of Public Health and Norwegian Directorate of Health.

Description: The project will support increased access to health in 7 counties through health promotion and integrated preventive services, such as community centers. The project will deliver a model of good practice for community health care, bringing health services (especially preventive and health promotion) close to the people in vulnerable communities. It will develop models of integrated community centers that later will be replicated and implemented in SGS No 1 in other counties than the 7 counties initially covered by the project.

Activities:

- A European Health Examination Survey (EHES) and a health needs assessment at local level will be carried out;
- A model of integrated services at community level as well as guidelines for family doctors and community nurses will be developed;
- The "PREVENT" IT solution will be expanded with e.g. modules for reproductive health, oral health, hygiene, injuries and a communication tool;
- New instruments for community care providers will be developed, such as care protocols and standardized recording forms contributing to the development of county health profile, and health promotion materials will be developed and disseminated;
- Training will be carried out for health professionals and community teams, including training of trainers (ToTs);
- New school health cabinets will be created, refurbished and staffed.

Status: The Project was approved and now is in evaluation stage on Programme Operator side.

Project 2: Strengthening at National Level the Capacity of the Romanian Health Sector to Implement Organized Screening for Cancers Amenable To Cost-Effective Early Detection Interventions (CEDICROM 2), **budget 1.999.889 euro, duration 24 months, beneficiaries:** Oncology Institute "Prof. Dr. Ion Chiricuta", Cluj-Napoca in partnership with University Hospital Oslo/ Cancer Registry of Norway (Oslo UNIVERSITETSSYKEHUS HF / Kreftregisteret).

Description: The project will support integrated preventive and curative medical services in primary medical services for marginalized, vulnerable groups provided at the level of communities.

Activities:

- Roll-out of preventive and curative medical services in 7 determined counties for marginalized, vulnerable groups.
- Follow-up and ensure treatment of all cervical lesions found both in CEDICROM 1 and CEDICROM 2 projects (mobile unit treatment).
- Door to door information campaign

- Access to preventive medical services for cervical cancer prevention at community level;
- HPV vaccination and HPV and “Babes-Papanicolaou” screening tests integrated in family doctors’ medical services packages assisted by mobile units;

Status: The project was contracted in 28th of June 2019 and now is under implementation

Project 3: Development of the single healthcare professional’s registry, **budget: 500.000 euro, duration 36 months, beneficiaries:** Ministry of Health- Centre for Human Resources in Public Health in partnership with National Institute of Public Health.

Description: The project will support the improvement of human resources management in the health sector in Romania by introducing a unique, centralized and standardized data registry on health professionals.

Activities:

Activity 1 Development of the concept model of the single health professionals registry:

- Activity 1.1 Organizing a workshop for collecting the information and data about current situation in the field;
- Activity 1.2 Develop a questionnaire addressed to medical staff for data collection;
- Activity 1.3 Organizing a work visit in Norway;
- Activity 1.4 Defining the conceptual model including the organizational work procedures;
- Activity 1.5 Harmonization of national legislation concerning the single health professional’s registry.

Activity 2 Developing the single health professional registry

- Activity 2.1 Organization of the procurement procedure of IT system;
- Activity 2.2 Development of IT platform that host the registry;
- Activity 3.Project publicity and communication

Activity 3.1 Organizing project conferences;

- Activity 3.2 Develop and distribute promotional materials;
- Activity 3.3 Website development and maintenance.

Status: The project is under revision based on the comments of the Norwegian partners.

Project 4: Creating a register to track left ventricular remodeling result of acute myocardial infarction in order to prevent cardiac failure, **budget 2.500.000 euro, duration 24 months, beneficiaries:** Heart Institute "Niculae Stancioiu" Cluj-Napoca in partnership with Heart Institute Timisoara, Emergency County Hospital Oradea Haukeland University Hospital, Norway and University Hospital of North Norway;

Description: The project, implemented as a pilot project in 8 counties in the western part of Romania, will support the establishment of a cardiac insufficiency registry based on the Norwegian registry in cardiovascular diseases and develop a risk model that will identify and influence the population at risk with an objective to reduce the burden of cardiovascular diseases. The project will also increase the survival rate of patients who have suffered an acute myocardial infarction by acquisition of medical equipment, by training professional medical staff and by identifying and promoting a proactive therapeutic approach towards patients at risk of heart failure.

Activities:

- Early stage and accurate treatment, utilizing the equipment that will be acquired through the project;
- Training of medical professionals;
- Creating a registry tracking patients from the first day after revascularization;
- Carry out awareness and prevention campaigns;

Status: The project was contracted in 28th of August 2019 and now is under implementation

Project 5: Strengthening the TB control in Romania through implementation of the WHO END TB Strategy 2016-2020, budget: 10.000.000 euro, duration 36 months, beneficiaries: "Marius Nasta" Pneumology Institute, LHL Tuberculosis (Norwegian partner) and Romanian Angel Appeal;

Description: The project shall support the Romanian TB control and surveillance system and network, with an aim to decrease the hospitalization period, involving the family doctors in TB diagnostic and monitoring through the implementation of PAL strategy, and improving diagnostic and treatment results through universal access to rapid diagnostic and complete and correct regimes.

Activities:

- Ensuring universal access to early diagnosis of TB;
- Ensuring the management of TB in children through the implementation of the new guidelines for case management of TB in children;
- Roll-out the ambulatory care patient centered approach in line with WHO recommendations;
- Increasing the political commitment through advocacy and lobby activities (including the necessary changes in legislation);
- Increasing the engagement of communities, civil society organizations, and all public and private care providers through IEC and advocacy activities;
- Increasing the TB infection control through implementation of the IC measures at the level of the TB units;
- Increasing TB awareness in Romania among patients, vulnerable groups and general population;

Status: The project is under revision based on the comments of Financial Mechanism Office (FMO).

Project 6: Increase performance regarding diagnosis and treatment of cancers in children by improving technical equipment, purchase of modern devices, medical personnel training and development of guidelines, **budget: 3.698.245,75 euro, durata 24 months, beneficiaries:** Institute of Oncology "Prof.Dr.I.Chiricuta" Cluj-Napoca, in partnership with Norwegian Directorate of Health, Oncology Institute Bucharest, Regional Oncology Institute Iasi, Children Hospital Louis Turcanu Timisoara;

Description: The project supports the improvement of the diagnosis and treatment of children with cancer through the purchase of equipment, training programs for health professionals on the use of equipment and the improvement of their diagnostic and therapeutic abilities and the development and implementation of guidelines on diagnosis and treatment in pediatric oncology according to European standards.

Activities:

Activity 1. Developing a unitary approach at national level towards treating cancer in children using radiotherapy during project implementation.

- Contracting the authors of the guidelines:

- Documentation and study visits in Norway for creating the guidelines:
- Elaboration of the guidelines
- Guidelines approval, printing and distribution

Activity 2. Improving access to modern paediatric oncology treatments at national level using high performance equipment bought and installed during project implementation

- Purchasing the medical equipment
- Installing and using the medical equipment

Activity 3. Capacity building of medical staff from Romania for treating children with cancer

- Contracting the trainers of medical staff
- Creating the training curricula
- Organizing the trainings for the medical staff

Activity 4. Project visibility

Activity 0. Project management

Status: The project was contracted in 24th of July 2019 and now is under implementation

Project 7: Support for the Development of Community Mental services for children and adolescents, **budget 2.500.000 euro, duration 36 months, beneficiaries:** National Centre of Mental Health and Anti-drug Action in partnership with Norwegian University of Science and Technology-The Regional academic community for autism, ADHD, Tourette’s syndrome and narcolepsy (RFM);

Description: The project shall support raising awareness and improving capacities of community members, parents, professionals in primary care, education and social protection field to better support children at risk and/or with mental health disorders, develop appropriate community mental health services for children with mental health disorders, and improve access to health care services for children with mental health disorders.

Activities:

- development and implementation of a national awareness raising campaign tackling stigma around mental health, the main barrier in accessing support services;
- development of positive parenting skills and empowerment of parents to identify early signs of emotional risk in their children and to make timely referrals to specialized services;
- capacity building for professionals in primary care, education and social protection sectors for timely identification and referral of children at risk of developing a mental health disorder/ with mental health disorders
- elaboration of a national study on the incidence of mental health disorders among children and adolescents, especially pervasive developmental disorders;
- elaboration of 8 standards for mental health community services developed and implemented;
- capacity building for professionals in mental health field in order to treat children with mental health disorders – pervasive disorders, ADHD, anxiety disorders, depression, attachment disorders;
- mental health service delivery for children diagnosed with a mental health disorder in 6 selected pilot community mental health centers.

Status: the project is under development giving the fact that a new Norwegian partner was included in the project.

Project 8: Strengthening the capacity to address antimicrobial resistance (AMR) and healthcare associated infections (HAI) in Romania, **budget 1.761.494 euro, duration 24 months, beneficiaries:** National Institute of Infectious Diseases “Professor Dr.Matei Bals”;

Description: The project shall support monitoring of Anti-Microbial Resistance (AMR) and Hospital Acquired Infections (HAI) and stewardship on antibiotics prescription through developing National Strategy and National Action Plan, elaboration standards and protocols, AMR testing, HAI surveillance and antibiotic stewardship in public hospitals, as well as professional guidelines, training and capacity-building for health professionals.

Activities:

- Development of National Strategy and National Action Plan to combat AMR and HAI;
- Developing the operational tools (guidelines and procedures) to ensure an effective and sustainable implementation of NAP: guideline regarding to microbiological diagnosis and antibiotic resistance testing, guideline regarding epidemiological surveillance and guideline regarding antibiotic stewardship;
- Training of personnel involved in surveillance of healthcare associated infections and monitoring the use of antibiotics and antibiotic-resistance, using e-learning platforms for specific subjects;
- An information and education campaign and awareness-raising for antibiotic use in primary health care and by the general public.

Status: The project was approved in 3rd of September 2019. The evaluation and contracting procedures will be initiated soon.

B. CALL FOR PROJECTS AND SMALL GRANT SCHEMES

Call for projects in value of 9,000,000 euro dedicated to local authorities, Public Health Directorates, hospitals and other authorities for measures to improve health services especially for vulnerable groups, namely infrastructure investments, training and information and awareness campaigns. Partnerships with NGOs, professional associations, public authorities are encouraged.

Status: Call preparation activities has begun in August 2019. It is estimated that the call for projects will be launched in 2020.

Small Grant Scheme 1 in value of 3,500,000 euro to be addressed to local authorities in rural areas to create community centers, including equipment investments and awareness campaigns. The Good Practice Model for Community Assistance and for the Development of Integrated Community Centers developed under Project no. 1 will be preconditions for launching the call for projects. Partnerships with public authorities, NGOs, professional associations are encouraged.

Status: The call preparation activities will begin in early 2020. It is estimated that the call will be launched in October 2020 after the conditionality provided in the project no. 1.

Small Grant Scheme 2 in value of 1,000,000 euro dedicated to NGOs to provide outreach services for vulnerable groups and deprived areas to strengthen prevention and reduce the impact of diseases affecting the population, especially communicable diseases.

Status: Call preparation activities has begun in 2019. It is estimated that the call for projects will be launched in 2020.

C. BILATERAL RELATION

This component addresses the improvement of bilateral relations between entities in the beneficiary country and the donor countries involved in the programme. The budget allocated to meet the target is € 200,000 to run study visits for project promoters to get good practice, know-how on improving prevention and reducing inequalities in health.

Status: The bilateral plan containing several proposals will be discussed with Norwegian partners and further improved.

Contact person:

Patricia Cucu
Information, publicity and bilateral actions expert
Tel.021/307.25.11
e-mail: patricia.cucu@ms.ro