



## Exemplary Project

SPECIALISATION IN HEALTH - BULGARIA  
March 2018



This document was prepared as part of the EU-funded project: *'ESIF Support in the area of health: building knowledge and capacities for monitoring and implementation, supporting innovation and effectiveness'*. Study Contract No. 2015 73 01.

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*This document was produced under the EU's third Health Programme (2014-2020) in the framework of a service contract with the Consumers, Agriculture, Health and Food Executive Agency (Chafea) acting under the mandate from the European Commission. The content of this document represents the views of the contractor and is its sole responsibility; it can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Commission and/or Chafea or any other body of the European Union. The European Commission and/or Chafea do not guarantee the accuracy of the data included in this document, nor do they accept responsibility for any use made by third parties thereof.*



Funded by the health Programme  
of the European Union

# Bulgaria - Specialisation in Health

General information	
OP information	<p><b>Title OP:</b> OP Human Resources Development (OPHRD)</p> <p><b>Priority axis:</b> Priority axis 1: “Improving the access to employment and the quality of jobs”</p> <p><b>Investment priority:</b> Investment priority 6: Enhancing equal access to lifelong learning for all age groups in formal, non-formal and informal settings, upgrading the knowledge, skills and competences of the workforce, and promoting flexible learning pathways including through career guidance and validation of acquired competences”</p> <p><b>Specific objective:</b> Specific objective 3: Increasing the number of persons employed in knowledge-based sectors, high technology and ICT, green economy, „white” sector and personal services sector, processing industry with higher value added from labour, creative and cultural sectors, who have improved their knowledge and skills with the support of HRD OP</p>
Timeline	<p><b>Start date:</b> 22/11/2016</p> <p><b>End date:</b> 31/12/2019</p>
Budget	<p><b>Total budget:</b> BGN 5,496,628 (or approximately EUR 2,810,424)</p> <p><b>Co-financing rate:</b> 100%</p> <p><b>EU Fund:</b> ESF</p>
Beneficiary/ies	<p><b>Main beneficiary:</b> Ministry of Health (Bulgaria)</p> <p><b>Other organisations:</b></p>
Category of intervention:	119 Investment in institutional capacity and in the efficiency of public administrations and public services at the national, regional and local levels with a view to reforms, better regulation and good governance
Contact details	<p><b>Name:</b> Antoaneta Dimova</p> <p><b>Organisation:</b> Ministry of Health</p> <p><b>Role in project:</b> Project Coordinator</p> <p><b>Phone number:</b> +359 2 93 01 271</p> <p><b>Email address:</b> <a href="mailto:spezialisanti@mh.government.bg">spezialisanti@mh.government.bg</a></p>
Project website	<p><a href="https://www.specializanti-mh.info/">https://www.specializanti-mh.info/</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.eufunds.bg/images/eu_funds/files/OP_Human_Resources_2014_2020/Contracts/%D0%94%D0%BE%D0%B3%D0%BE%D0%B2%D0%BE%D1%80-BG05M9OP001-1.015.pdf">http://www.eufunds.bg/images/eu_funds/files/OP_Human_Resources_2014_2020/Contracts/%D0%94%D0%BE%D0%B3%D0%BE%D0%B2%D0%BE%D1%80-BG05M9OP001-1.015.pdf</a></p>
Thematic block covered	T6: Health workforce (including i.e. training, lifelong learning, workforce planning, retention)

## Project summary

The main goal of the project is to help increase the professional capacity of doctors in training and to provide better health services. The project will allow persons who began their training for acquiring a specialty (doctors specializing in medicine and doctors specializing in dental medicine) to continue and complete their training in their specialty. This will expand the opportunities for upgrading the

knowledge and skills of health professionals in the country and will be a prerequisite for ensuring there are more specialists in the healthcare system. The project complements the measures included in the training of persons who started their training for acquiring specialty, implemented under the OP HRD 2007-2013. The main project activities are related to the provision of scholarships and payment of fees for theoretical and practical training for the remaining training time according to the individual contract of the trainee. They will support physicians specializing in medicine and doctors specializing in dental medicine who do not receive other compensation during their training.

## Development and Implementation

<p>Initiator/trigger</p>	<p>This project supplements the support measures for doctors and dentists who started their specialisation, which were implemented under the OP "Human Resources Development" (OPHRD) 2007-2013 through Project BG051PO001-6.2.18-0001 "New Opportunities for doctors in Bulgaria". The current project was developed in the continuation of this earlier project in order to overcome the lack of sufficient support for the specialization in health and provide financial incentives for young doctors wishing to specialise in Bulgaria.</p> <p>Usually, post-graduate doctors have difficulties in financing their specialisation. In the 2007-2013 period many medical students in specialisation were not compensated/paid for their specialisation and the previous project aimed to support them by covering their tuition fees. In 2015, the legislation governing the training of medical professionals was amended and under the new conditions students in specialisation receive compensation and are usually under employment contracts. The objective of the current project 'Specialisation in health' is to support the students who are still specialising under the old conditions. Therefore, the financial support for the specialisation period of doctors and dentists will help the completion of their training and will prevent the interruption of their specialisation due to impossibility to pay the tuition fees.</p> <p>Through these projects the Ministry of Health declares its willingness to provide institutional support for raising the professional skills and qualifications of medical doctors and dentists. Investing in the education of medical staff is directly related to the provision of specialists in the health sector.</p>
<p>Project objective</p>	<p>The overall objective of the project is to help increase the professional capacity of doctors in training by expanding their opportunities for knowledge and skill development in order to ensure there are more specialists in the healthcare systems and that better health services are provided.</p> <p>The specific objectives of the project are to improve the access of 520 doctors in training (doctors specializing in medicine and doctors specializing in dental medicine) to acquiring their specialty in the health systems and expanding their opportunities for upgrading their knowledge and skills.</p>
<p>Target group(s)</p>	<p>Health professionals in training - doctors specializing in medicine and doctors specializing in dental medicine</p>
<p>Project health-related indicators</p>	<p>The success rate indicators for the project are the improved professional skills and qualification of the employed professionals, as well as the number of participants who have acquired qualification at the end of the project.</p>

## Results

<p>Expected/attained results, outcomes and potential impacts</p>	<p>The expected result of the project is for 520 doctors in training to receive financial support from the ESF for their training in order to acquire their specialty within the financing period of the project. However, the number of students training under the old conditions is decreasing, hence the expected number of trained doctors is lower than the achieved results in the previous programming period.</p> <p>The project hopes to achieve the largest number of participants who complete their specialisation. This will overcome some of the problems associated with the reduced number of health professionals in Bulgaria.</p>
<p>Success factors &amp; Challenges</p>	<p>The key success factor is that more doctors and dentists get financial support from OPHRD 2014-2020 for their specialization. The success of the project will be based on the percentage of the participants who have received a qualification within the project funding. Through the</p>

	<p>implementation of the project some measures to support the specialisation of young doctors in Bulgaria were introduced. These activities are aimed at reducing the problems with the workforce in the healthcare sector and providing more physicians for the health system.</p> <p>The challenges for the implementation of the two projects for support of the specialisation in health were overcome with amendments to the legislation e.g. to allow financing from EU sources for doctors training under <i>Ordinance № 34/2006 regarding specialisation in the healthcare system</i>.</p>
Potential for replication	It is possible.
<b>Wider context</b>	
Relevance of the project to the objective of the relevant thematic block	Increasing the opportunities for acquisition of specialization, providing continuing education in the healthcare and overcoming the plight of the workforce in this sector.
Relevance of the project objective to the specific objective of the OP	Through reducing the problems with the workforce in the healthcare sector, which are mainly related to the lack of enough staff and physicians for different specialities. For some priority specialities with significant deficit of staff the Ministry of Health covers financially the theoretical and practical training of doctors in order to close the staff gap and ensure there are sufficient physicians to cover the needs. The current projects provides the same support for the remaining specialities.
Relevance of the project towards reducing health inequalities	<i>Not applicable</i>
Relevance of the project towards the reform of health systems	<i>Not applicable</i>
Relevance of the project objective to the national context and policy goals	<i>Not applicable</i>
Relevance of the project objective to health policy goals at EU level	The project is in line with the objectives to increase investment in human resources by providing training opportunities to acquire the necessary qualifications and key competencies.