
The 10 concepts for local economic development have been selected, which will receive funding for implementation under the GALOP project

On 30 October 2020 the evaluation of the 41 concepts for local economic development presented was completed. Based on these concepts the municipalities will apply for support under Project No. BGLD-1.002-0001 “Growth through activation of the local potential - GALOP”, implemented by the National Association of the Municipalities in the Republic of Bulgaria (NAMRB). The 10 finalists were selected by the Interdepartmental Commission, which included experts from the Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities, the Programme Operator of “Local Development, Poverty Reduction and Improved Inclusion of Vulnerable Groups” Programme under the European Economic Area (EEA) Financial Mechanism 2014 - 2021, and the National Coordination Unit with the Council of Ministers, in addition to the Association representatives. They will have the opportunity to receive financial support for the implementation of their concepts of local economic development.

The project, which the NAMRB is working on together with the Norwegian Association of Local Authorities, aims to draw the attention of municipalities to a realistic assessment of local conditions and help achieve their potential for socio-economic development.

The opportunities provided by the project provoked a great interest during the competition, and the presented concepts demonstrated the in-depth approach of the municipalities to the specific problems of the local community and the ability to look for various opportunities to overcome them. The NAMRB takes the opportunity to thank all the candidates for the activity and quality of the developed concepts!

All submitted concepts were examined in detail and evaluated according to complex criteria, which included both the scope of the proposed ideas and their contribution to overcoming the socio-economic problems of the region, employment opportunities and prospects for sustainable results. The following concepts were admitted for the next stage of the project “Growth through activating local potential - GALOP”:

Community	Emphasis on the concepts presented
Brezovo	Integrated investments in production, processing, marketing and technical support for local agricultural products, incl. organic and eco products. The closed cycle will be carried out jointly by the local authorities, farmers, processing business and scientific units in the field.
Belitsa	Establishment of an enterprise for handicrafts and souvenirs, small accompanying tourist, etc. infrastructure related to the local economy (tourism, wood industry, agriculture and weaving). It will be carried out jointly by the local authorities, cultural institutions, Rila Nature Park management, local business in the field of tourism and wood processing.
Elena	Encouraging the production of specific products from the local stock-breeding, combined with the promotion and diversification of the accompanying services in the field of tourism and cultural development. Integrated actions of the municipality, vocational schools, cultural institutions and farmers’ associations are envisaged.
Ivanovo	Development of a specific local product through investments, production and processing facility, as well as conducting an aggressive marketing campaign, incl. trademark registration. Intensive cooperation is planned between the municipality, manufacturers, processors and traders unions.
Momchilgrad	Creation of an own tourist product based on the unique local landmarks, incl. such of national and global importance. This will be accompanied by the promotion of local breeders and linking production with tourist consumption. The municipality, guest houses, livestock breeders and “Momchilgrad-Krumovgrad” Local Action Group ” will work together.

Bansko	Establishing a year-round destination through integrated investments in cultural-festival and sports-rehabilitation tourism. It is planned to establish a Museum of the Mountain and a workshop for local crafts, as well as build a municipal sports and rehabilitation center. Partners will be the municipality, local museums, community centers and cultural institutions, and sports clubs.
Lyaskovets	Activation of the local potential through interactive investments in the unique museums of vine-growing and expatriate gardening. Construction of tasting halls and workshops, establishment of a tourist center at the local pilgrimage sites, creation of local tourist packages and a brand. The partnership is between the municipality, “Lyaskovets-Strazhitsa” Local Action Group, cultural institutions, owners of museum expositions and hotel-keepers.
Levski	Achieving economic growth through investments in industrial production in the existing area, intensification of agricultural production, processing and trade, diversification of local tourism product in NATURA 2000 network areas. Partners will be the local authority, producers, business and Local Action Groups.
Valchi dol	Diversification and expansion of the tourist product in the municipality through the construction of a number of sites for sports, recreation and tourism, construction of a hippotherapy center and training of children with special educational needs. Partners include the municipality, a hunting and fishing company, social NGOs and business.
Dimitrovgrad	Development of balneology and rehabilitation in addition to sports-recreational and cultural tourism in the town of Merichleri by utilizing the mineral water and supporting local craft traditions, incl. by building a municipal complex and concomitant events in the field of culture, local production of agricultural and craft products. Partners are the local authorities, producers and cultural institutions.