

**INSTRUMENT FOR PRE-ACCESSION ASSISTANCE
HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT COMPONENT**

OPERATION IDENTIFICATION SHEET

1. Title of the Operation:

PROMOTING YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

2. Operating Structure: Ministry of Labour and Social Security (MoLSS) – EU Coordination and IPA Management Department

3. Organisation Responsible for the Implementation of the Operation:

General Directorate of Turkish Employment Agency
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4. Compatibility and coherence with the Operational Programme

4.a Common Code for Identification (CCI) No of Operational Programme: Human Resources Development Operational Programme- CCI No. 2007TR05IPO001

4.b Commission decision (no and date) and the date of signing of the financing agreement for this OP: C(2007)6030 adopted by the EC on 7 December 2007; the date of signature of the financing agreement will be added once the latter is signed.

4.c Title of the priority axis: To attract and retain more people in employment, particularly by increasing labour force participation of women, and decrease unemployment rates, especially for young people (Priority Axis 1- Employment).

4.d Title of the measure: To increase employment of young people (Measure 1.2).

5. Description of the Operation

5.a Contribution to the achievement of the Operational Programme:

This operation will contribute to the achievement of the priority axes set out jointly in the Strategic Coherence Framework (SCF) and in the Human Resources Development Operational Programme (HRD OP). The operation will particularly focus one of the four priority axes whose objective is “Attracting and retaining more people in employment, particularly by increasing labour force participation of women; and decreasing unemployment rates, especially for young people”. More

specifically, the operation will fully contribute to the implementation of the measure 1.2 of the HRD OP which aims at “increasing employment of young people”.

To that aim, this operation is structured along a number of convergent actions in order to promote integration of the young people into the labour market. By and large, this operation aims at increasing employability of the young people and youth entrepreneurship by all relevant actions through Active Labour Market Policies (ALMP), namely vocational training/retraining, job and vocational guidance services, job search assistance, internship programmes and entrepreneurship schemes composed of training and guidance activities favouring youth entrepreneurship. This operation will increase vocational skills of the young people through vocational training/retraining in line with the needs of the labour market and economy, job search abilities of the young people through job and vocational guidance services, job experiences of them through internship facilities and on-job trainings and youth entrepreneurship through schemes including training and guidance services. The combination of all these measures will contribute to attract more people in employment by decreasing youth unemployment. Given the fact that the activities in this operation are envisaged by considering different levels of education of the young people, namely university graduates, secondary school graduates and the ones with lower educational attainment, this operation will increase employability not only of the qualified young people but also low qualified ones.

Furthermore, the operation is obviously directly related with employability of the young people in the transition period from school to work; thus the operation will also contribute to ease the school-to-work transition both for the qualified and low qualified young people. In this respect, the operation will also create synergy with the second priority axis of the HRD OP which aims at “enhancing investment in human capital by increasing the quality of education, improving the linkage between education and the labour market, and raising enrollment rates at all levels of education, especially for girls”.

The concrete contribution of this Operation to the achievement of the HRD OP is defined by the following *result* indicators, according to the HRD OP:

- Increase (from 22.3% to 30%) in the employment rate of the young people following the courses, internship and counselling activities in eligible 12 NUTS-II regions.
- Increase (from 7.5% to 15%) in the number of young entrepreneurs in eligible 12 NUTS-II regions.

5.b Overall Objective: The overall objective of the operation is to attract and retain more people in employment by promoting youth employment and decreasing unemployment rate of young people.

5.c Operation Purpose: The purpose of the operation is to deliver effective active labour market policies (ALMP) for increasing employment of young people while promoting their integration into labour market.

5.d Location(s): The operation will be implemented in 12 eligible NUTS-II regions (15 growth centres and hinterlands). However, as regarding on-job trainings and internship activities under grant scheme, exceptionally; some temporary activities can take place outside of these regions if properly justified by the applicant. Such activities cannot constitute the major part of the Action.

5.e Duration: 24months

5.f Target group(s) :

- Young unemployed people who are new university graduates
- Young unemployed people who are secondary school graduates
- Young unemployed people with lower educational attainment and early school leavers
- Young people who are still at school
- Young women with lower educational attainment

5.g Description of the Operation and background:

Turkey has such a young population that the median age was 28.3, according to the Address based Population Registration System 2007 Population Census Results. Even though the ‘demographic window of opportunity’ in Turkey has always been argued as a great potential for economic growth, it is crucial to note that Turkey has a limited time to take the advantage of the young population due to the decreasing population growth rates. While the potential benefits are great, so are the risks if Turkey does not make the necessary investment in its young people. By the same token, it is a great challenge to decrease youth unemployment to attain the goal of being a knowledge-based economy capable of sustainable economic growth and greater social cohesion in Turkey.

Turkey has suffered from the severe unemployment problem in general and youth unemployment in particular, especially in the wake of economic crisis in 2001. According to the Labour Force Survey (LFS) data (September 2008), the unemployment rate is 10.3% on average; 12.3% in urban and 7.1% in rural areas and non-agricultural unemployment rate is 13.3%. The severe unemployment problem has also been observed in eligible 12 NUTS-II regions. In fact, the latest data at NUTS-II level reveals that the unemployment rate was 9.7% in the eligible 12 NUTS-II regions in 2006, while it was 9.9% on average in Turkey. Unemployment rate among young people who are 15 to 24 year old age are among the most frequently cited indicators of the difficulty the young people face in integrating to the labour market. According to the household labour force survey -September 2008, the youth unemployment rate is 20.1%, non-agricultural youth unemployment rate is 25.3%. This rate is even higher than the youth unemployment rate in EU27 which was 15.3 in 2007, according to EUROSTAT Labour Force Statistics. These figures reveal that the youth unemployment rate is nearly twice as high as average unemployment rates (20,1% and 10,3% respectively in 2008/September). When it comes to gender and rural/urban breakage, it is also clear that youth unemployment is higher in urban areas than rural areas (23.1% in urban areas and 15.3% in rural areas) and it is more common among men in rural areas and women in urban areas (27,8% for women in urban areas and 18,4% for men in rural areas). Furthermore, the NEETs (Neither in education nor employment) rate is a particular concern for Turkey. According to the World Bank report released in 2008 on young people in Turkey, about 40 percent of young people are neither working nor in school. When it comes to gender breakage, it is clear that the low level of the labour force participation rate of young women is a major concern. In fact, labour force participation rate is 39.3% for the young people in total, 52.8% for men and 26.8% for women. (September 2008).

By recently passed law 5763, which is also known as ‘Employment Package’, MoLSS also provided employment subsidies for the companies recruited women and young people. In fact, the amendments stipulate, among other things, that the employers' share of social security premiums for newly hired women and young employees are to be covered by the Unemployment Insurance Fund for a five-year period, starting with 100% in the first year and ending with 20% in the fifth.

The data above explores the severe situation of young people in the labour market in general and in eligible 12 NUTS-II regions in particular. By the same token, it is remarkable to figure out the main

challenges for the young people in the labour market. According to the HRD OP and related reports, the high unemployment rate for the young people is due to a combination of different factors:

- Low employment creation capacity of the economy
- Lack of complementary employment policies
- Low educational attainment level (The drop-out rate was 47.6% in Turkey, while its average was 15.2% in EU27 in 2007. The youth educational attainment rate was 46.4% in Turkey, while its average was 77.1% in EU27 in 2007)
- Difficulties in transition from school to work (Lack of any specific structured system in place aimed at helping young people to find a job in transition process)
- Mismatch between the skills of the labour force and the demand of the labour market
- Insufficient Vocational Education and Training (VET)
- Insufficient job and vocational guidance services
- Lack of efficient active labour market policies (Trainings/re-trainings, entrepreneurship programmes, direct job creation, internships and systematic job search assistance, employment subsidies) for the young people in the labour market
- Low level of awareness among young people about the services impacting employment directly or indirectly provided by different institutions

Given the fact that these challenges are related with education, employment and transition school-to-work policies all together, cooperation and coordination among different cornerstones of these policies is a major concern. This operation aims at tackling some of these challenges within the cooperation of all relevant public institutions, trade unions, NGOs, local authorities and even companies. The thematic focus of this operation is delivering effective active labour market policies to increase employability of the young people and youth entrepreneurship. Active labour market policies, in this operation, refers to training, re-training, job search assistance, job and vocational guidance services, employment subsidies, start-up incentives, direct job creation, entrepreneurship trainings and guidance. The age range for the young people in this operation is 15-29. It is noteworthy to remind that in the selection process among different active measures, the education level of the young people has become the main determinant. In this respect, job and vocational guidance services and entrepreneurship schemes will be the main activities for at least secondary education graduates. Secondly, secondary school graduates will be provided with vocational training/retraining activities and internships to increase the level of vocational skills and job experiences. Thirdly, vocational training and on-job trainings will be the main activities for the young people with lower level of education. By and large, this thematic and target focused approach of the operation will increase the impact of the activities on the unemployed young people.

As regards regional focus, the operation will be implemented in eligible 12 NUTS II regions (15 growth centres and hinterlands), as mentioned before. The projects should be implemented in the eligible regions, however, exceptionally; some temporary activities; such as on-job trainings can take place outside of these regions if properly justified by the applicant. Such activities cannot constitute the major part of the Action.

The activities in this operation will be realized through service and grant contracts. This operation is composed of two components, namely service and grant components.

Under the service component, there main activity group will be carried out. First of all, technical assistance team will contribute to the project in entrepreneurship field to increase entrepreneurship capacities of the young people. To that aim, there will be guidance services to increase entrepreneurship knowledge/abilities of the young people through interactive tools and entrepreneurship days in 15 growth centres. In addition to the guidance services, a model on “Youth

Entrepreneurship Support (YES)” will be developed to promote young entrepreneurship and piloted in 5 provinces. After the implementation phase, an evaluation of this model will be conducted.

Secondly, technical assistance team will contribute to the project in transition from school to work field to increase job experiences, qualifications and career prospects of the young people. To that aim, cooperation will be increased between schools/universities and companies through campaigns, career days to increase internship and on-job opportunities for the young people and to facilitate their career planning. Furthermore, matching services will be provided to provide brokerage services for internship and on-job trainings. There will be career days as well to provide vocational and career guidance services to the young people directly.

Thirdly, technical assistance team will contribute to the project in increasing policy making capacities of the local actors to promote young employment. To that aim, workshops will be conducted in 5 provinces with the participation of the young people themselves. The main aim of these workshops will be determining the needs of the young people at local level and ensure cooperation among different stakeholders in tackling youth unemployment in different thematic areas. By taking into consideration both the outcomes of the workshops and analysis of the academicians, action plans will be prepared to facilitate the functioning of the Provincial Employment and Vocational Training Boards to make policies for the young people.

The **second component** is a grant scheme for easing the integration of the young people into the labour market. The granted projects will be developed through a partnership approach in the 12 NUTS II regions with a priority given to projects developed in the 15 growth centres. The grants will be of a minimum of 100.000€ and of a maximum of 400.000€

The main aims of the Grant Scheme are:

- To create synergy among complementary activities of public institutions, local authorities, employees’ and employers’ organizations, universities, professional chambers, NGOs and companies (as associates) in promoting youth employment.
- To support public institutions, local authorities, employees’ and employers’ organizations, universities, professional chambers, NGOs and companies (as associates) in implementing activities to promote youth employment.

The priority will be given to projects:

- Ensuring cooperation with relevant stakeholders, namely, ensuring participation of at least one demand and one supply side of labour market and/or involving companies as associates.
- Being complementary among different activities of the relevant actors regarding employment and entrepreneurship of young people in line with the horizontal approach stated in 2.1.3.
- Addressing the labour market and economy needs at the local level directly and envisaging activities in the prioritised sectors in eligible regions.

Either under the institutional building or under the grant scheme, it is advised that all the vocational training activities should be ended in certification including the approval of the Ministry of Education.

Some examples of actions which may be funded in the Grant Scheme are listed below (Please note that this list is not an exhaustive one):

- Delivering entrepreneurship trainings;
- Providing set-up business consultancy;
- Providing financial guidance services for the young entrepreneurs;

- Any innovative action to promote young entrepreneurship;
- Delivering training in professions/skills in line with the local labour market and economy needs;
- Delivering re-training in vocations where there is an identified gap in the local labour market and in sectors with high growth potential;
- Providing a second chance for the early school leavers and low qualified young people by delivering vocational trainings;
- Promoting internship opportunities and job and vocational guidance services for the young people who are still at school;
- Providing employment oriented courses for all young unemployed people;
- Promoting apprenticeship;
- Providing on-job trainings;
- Short term placements with companies i.e. internship programmes;
- Job matching services between job seekers and employers;
- Development and delivery of job and vocational guidance services (preparing CVs, individual career plans etc.);
- Designing early intervention programmes to ease the transition from school to work;
- Strengthening cooperation between universities/schools and private sector, i.e. career days, common projects;
- Providing man-to-man guidance services for the young people who want to set-up a business or benefit from the employment services;
- Promoting cooperation among public institutions, local authorities, employee's and employers' associations, NGOs and private sector to increase employability of young people.

Eligible organizations for grants will be non-profit making organizations having a legal entity as stated below:

- Municipalities
- Local and regional public organizations
- Social partners
- Chambers of Commerce
- Professional Organizations
- Schools and Universities
- Trade unions and employers' organizations
- Non-profit cooperatives
- Export associations
- NGOs

Please note that the participation of companies as associates in the grant projects will be an asset.

5.h Results with measurable indicators:

Result 1. Young people, particularly early school leavers and general secondary graduates obtain and/or improve vocational/job skills and qualifications in line with the needs of labour market and economy.

- Number of young people who participated in vocational training courses.
- Number of young people who participated in internship, employment guaranteed courses and apprenticeship programs.

Result 2. Young people have entrepreneurship skills and knowledge to start up their own business.

- Number of young people who participated in entrepreneurship courses.

Result 3. Young people are provided with qualified job and vocational guidance and counselling services.

- Number of young people having benefited from guidance and counselling.

Result 4. Cooperation and coordination is ensured both at national and local levels among public institutions, local authorities, employees and employers' associations, NGOs and private sector to increase employability of young people.

- 1 YES model
- Number of grant projects implemented in partnership approach
- Number of partnership agreements between companies and schools/universities

The main result indicators in the Operation are:

- Increase in the employment rate of the young people following the courses, internship and counselling activities in the eligible 12 NUTSII regions.
- Increase in the number of young entrepreneurs in the eligible 12 NUTSII regions.

5.i Activities:

Result 1. Young people, particularly early school leavers and general secondary graduates obtain and/or improve vocational/job skills and qualifications in line with needs of labour market and economy.

- 1.1. Delivering vocational trainings to the young people particularly to early school leavers and general secondary graduates in the prioritised sectors/occupations (Grant).
- 1.2. Delivering employment-oriented courses to all the young people (Grant).
- 1.3. Providing on the job trainings and apprenticeship opportunities for particularly the early school leavers and internship opportunities for particularly university and secondary school students (Grant and service).

1.4. Conducting meetings and campaigns with the companies to increase internship and on-job training facilities and matching services (Service).

Result 2. Young people, particularly university and secondary school graduates have entrepreneurship skills and knowledge to start up their own business.

2.1. Conducting ‘Entrepreneurship Guidelines’ by using interactive tools (dvd and web-site) (Service).

2.2. Elaborating a model on “Youth Entrepreneurship Support (YES)” to promote youth entrepreneurship by the cooperation of all relevant institutions (Service).

2.3. Implementing the model on Youth Entrepreneurship in 5 pilot provinces among 15 growth centres (Service).

2.4. Delivering vocational trainings for the young people who want to start up a business but do not have any vocational qualifications (Grant).

2.5. Delivering entrepreneurship trainings to the young people (Grant and Service).

2.6. Providing entrepreneurship and financial guidance to the young people who participated in the trainings and easing their access to the financial support by guidance services (Grant and Service)

2.7. Providing man-to-man guidance services for the young people who want to set-up a business (Grant and Service).

Result 3. Young people are provided with qualified job and vocational guidance and counselling services.

3.1. Developing and delivering job and vocational guidance and counselling services for the young unemployed people and students. (Grant and service).

3.2. Preparing ‘Individual Career Plans’ for the young people who benefited from job and vocational guidance services (Grant).

3.3. Providing job search assistance to the young people i.e. preparing CVs, informing about job search means etc. (Grant and service).

3.4. Organising career days and/or common projects in universities and secondary schools to strengthen the cooperation between universities/schools and private sector/employers associations (Grant and service).

Result 4. Cooperation and coordination is ensured both at national and local levels among public institutions, local authorities, employees and employers’ associations, NGOs and private sector to increase employability of young people.

4.1. Organizing workshops to ensure cooperation among different institutions and organizations at local level to increase employability of the young people (Grant and service).

4.2. Drafting and implementing grant projects with a partnership approach (Grant).

4.3. Preparing Action Plans for the Young People in the wake of the workshops (Service).

6. Implementation arrangements

6.a Institutional framework:

The overall management of the operation will be ensured by:

- Operation Coordination Unit (OCU)
- Senior Representative of the Operation Beneficiary (SROB) from İŞKUR
- Operation Steering Committee (OSC)
- Local Operation Coordinator (LOC)

İŞKUR will establish an Operation Coordination Unit (OCU), which will be adequately staffed and will provide the use of all necessary premises and logistical support (office space, furniture, access to telephone, fax etc.) This unit will be composed of a Central Operation Coordinator (COC) and up to 6 experts from the relevant departments in İŞKUR. In fulfilling its tasks, the OCU will be supported by international and local consultants and will benefit from several training sessions delivered within the programme. Existence of a professional and stable structure for OCU staff is a crucial factor for the timely and proper implementation of the Operation. OCU will function in close cooperation with the Technical Assistance Team, at least at a weekly meeting.

The Operation will be implemented under the supervision of İŞKUR Deputy General Director, acting as Senior Representative of Operation Beneficiary (SROB), assisted by two Deputy Senior Officers selected among the Heads of the relevant İŞKUR Departments. The SROB will act as the formal representative of İŞKUR and will assume overall responsibility for the successful implementation of the project cooperating with the consultant and ensuring that the consultant performs the tasks in accordance with the pre-defined deadlines and to the standard of quality required. He/she will formally approve the reports of the Consultant, the technical documents, payments requests/invoices prior to financial check and payment by CFCU (“read and approved”), requests of the Consultant regarding recruitment of non-key and short term experts. He will provide the coordination with other departments within his/her Ministry for the development and proper implementation of project.

The necessary arrangements and preparations for providing office environment and supplies (furniture, telephone, access to internet etc.) in General Directorate will be met by the Consultant.

Within the context of this organization, a Steering Committee will be established to guide İŞKUR in problems faced with during the operation implementation phase, to control operation, to advise on implementation strategy, to accelerate cooperation between İŞKUR and policy makers, to ensure consistency between activities and objectives and to strengthen links between operation components. The senior representatives of Ministry of Labour and Social Security, Ministry of National Education, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs, Ministry of Industry and Trade, Secretariat General for EU Affairs, State Planning Organisation, Turkish Statistical Institute, Board of Higher Education, Small and Medium Sized Business Development Organization, Turkish Trade Unions Confederation (TÜRK-İŞ), Hak-İş Trade Unions Confederation (HAK-İŞ), Confederation of Progressive Trade Unions of Turkey (DİSK), Turkish Confederation of Employers’ Association (TİSK), The Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey (TOBB), The Confederation of Turkish Artisans and Craftsman (TESK), the General Directorate of Youth and Sport and Delegation of the European Commission to Turkey will take place in the Steering Committee. Representatives of other relevant institutions, local authorities, experts, and NGOs may be invited to meetings of the Committee whenever needed.

The Steering Committee will meet four times in a year. Organization of the meeting will be conducted by Technical Assistance Team (TAT) in coordination with İŞKUR.

6.b Proposed monitoring structure and methodology:

Monitoring teams will be established at central and regional level in order to monitor the Operation in accordance with the Grant Implementation Manual. The monitoring activities of the grant projects will be conducted under another operation of the Ministry of Labour and Social Security called “Technical Assistance for Potential Operation and Grant Beneficiaries, Information and Publicity” under HRD OP Technical Assistance measure.

Furthermore, monthly management meetings will be convened in order to monitor the operation activities, discuss and assess the progress of the operation and solve the problems arising during implementation. These meetings will be chaired by the Beneficiary (SROB). PCU, TAT, responsible task and contract managers from the CFCU, Ministry of Labour and Social Security as the Operating Structure, Secretariat General for EU Affairs, State Planning Organization and Delegation of the European Commission to Turkey will be participants to this monthly management meeting.

All the responsibility in terms of Operation including the Grant Scheme belongs to the Operating Structure. Accordingly, the OS cooperates with the main beneficiary (İŞKUR) in monitoring the implementation of the contract, ensures that the beneficiary/grants beneficiaries submit the progress reports on the implementation of projects to the OS and to the CFCU simultaneously. These reporting requirements will be met in line with the PRAG.

6.c Required procedures and contracts for the implementation of the operation and their sequencing:

The CFCU will be Implementing Agency and responsible for all procedural aspects of the tendering process, contracting matters and financial management, including payment of operation activities.

Contracts	Call for Tendering	Signing contract	Contract Completion
Service Contract	QR 3 /2009	QR 1 /2010	QR 1 /2012
Grant Contract	QR 2 /2009	QR 4 /2009	QR 4 /2010

7. Risks and assumptions:

Assumptions underlying the operation intervention are:

- Effective coordination and cooperation among all relevant stakeholders is ensured.
- Full commitment is ensured particularly in employment guaranteed courses.
- Financial support for the young entrepreneurs is provided by relevant institutions, such as, KOSGEB and tough conditions to benefit from the facilities.
- The target groups are willing to take part in the project activities.
- Awareness on the importance of promoting youth employment is at a desired level.
- The self-confidence of the target groups is at a desired level.
- Certification is ensured at the end of trainings.

Risks presumed in the Operation are:

- Lack of adequate commitment to the operation by all relevant stakeholders.
- Lack of coordination and cooperation among relevant institutions and organizations.
- Insufficient participation in the trainings and other activities of the Operation.
- Insufficient financial support provided by relevant institutions, such as KOSGEB to the young entrepreneurs.

8. Expected impact of the operation on the target group and multiplier/spill over effects:

The main expected impact of the operation on target group, namely young people will be increasing their employability and entrepreneurship by all relevant actions to decrease youth unemployment.

Multiplier/spill over effects of the operation is the following:

- Decreased risk of social exclusion of the young unemployed people and thus increased social cohesion.
- Increased ownership of the policies and active labour market policies for young people at the local level.
- Improved and confidence-based relationship between public institutions and civil society for easing integration of the young people in labour market.
- Increased contribution of the social partners, NGOs and companies in promoting employment policies for young people.

9. Sustainability:

The sustainability of the Operation will be ensured through revision, maintenance and dissemination of the activities in the Operation and innovative actions introduced in the grant scheme to the other provinces, updating relevant analyses and maintenance of the partnership approach. The main financial resource in ensuring sustainability of the Operation is the budget allocated to İŞKUR by the recently passed law 5763 published on the Official Gazette dated 26/05/2008. This operation will introduce innovative actions and policy options to particularly İŞKUR provincial directorates, Provincial Employment and Vocational Training Boards to implement the tasks and use the budget effectively allocated by the law numbered 5763.

Entrepreneurship Guidelines, which will be at the disposal of all relevant institutions, will be updated and extended to other provinces. The model tested during the operation on 'Youth Entrepreneurship Support' will continue in the pilot provinces by making the necessary adjustments for better results and they will be disseminated to the other provinces. ALMP approaches which became successful during the operation will continue to be held by relevant actors. The protocols made for the implementation of these activities will be sustained for the following years.

Partnership approach among different stakeholders developed within the Grant Scheme at the local level for the promotion of young employment will continue at local level. İŞKUR, particularly the Provincial Employment and Vocational Training Boards will be the main trigger in maintaining of the partnership approach at local level. Furthermore, the partnership approach developed under the grant scheme will be continued not only at local level, but also extended to the other regions outside the 12 NUTS-II regions.

10. Horizontal Issues:

The operation will take into consideration of the horizontal issues referred in HRD OP. As regards *equal opportunities*, the principle of ensuring equal access to services for men and women will be established as one of the main criteria in the selection of beneficiaries of the operation which is one of the added values of this operation. In fact, young women are one of the main target groups of this operation. Not only all the young people irrespective of gender will enjoy equal opportunities for taking part in activities presumed in the Operation, but also the participation of women will be encouraged and obstacles removed particularly in the grant projects and workshops. When it comes to recruiting personnel for this operation, there will be no discrimination based on sex, race, or religion and objective selection criteria will be used in this process.

As regards *sustainable development and environmental protection*, even though they do not fall directly with in the scope of the Operation, the Operation will make references these issues whenever appropriate. The operation will take care of environmental safety in all activities.

As regards *participation of civil society*, partnership approach is the basic approach both in envisaging and implementing the main activities in the Operation. Given that youth unemployment is a multi-dimensional problem not only related with labour markets but also education and training, active cooperation will be stimulated during the operation to come up with tailor-made policies.

As regards *geographical, sectoral and thematic concentration*, Operation will be implemented in eligible 12 NUTS II regions (15 growth centers and hinterlands), as mentioned before. The thematic focus of this operation will be ensured by delivering active labour market policies to increase employability of the young people and youth entrepreneurship. The sectoral concentration will also be achieved by conducting vocational training/retraining and entrepreneurship activities in line with the labour market and economic needs at local level.

The participation of *disadvantaged persons* will be encouraged and obstacles will be removed in all activities envisaged under this Operation.

As regards *good governance*, that issue will be a permanent concern of the Operation at all stages and levels. All administrative procedures concerned with the award of contracts will strictly follow the EC standardized rules and procedures, namely those prescribed under the relevant PRAG. Lastly, but not least transparency of procedures and results will be sought at all times.

11. Links with other IPA component measures:

This operation is linked with IPA component III on “Regional Competitiveness OP (RC OP)” and particularly with the measure M.2.1 of the RC OP which aims at improving the entrepreneurial skills. The young people who will benefit from entrepreneurial trainings and guidance services delivered in the Operation will also be supported by the RC OP to start-up their business and to establish their business plans. Furthermore, improving the employability of the young unemployed people will assist on the improvement of business environment by providing a more skilled labour force. In addition to these issues, attention will be paid to the sectoral analyses and priorities of the RC OP in order to ensure that trainings and guidance delivered in this operation will be consistent with the local/regional economic needs.

Measure 1.3 of the RC OP (Improvement of R&D, Innovation and Technology and ICT Environment and Infrastructure) will also help to create more qualified jobs and will meet the needs of the university graduates.

Another linkage with IPA component III will also be established in the regions where the RC OP will improve the tourism sector under the measure 1.4. In these regions, the Operation will pay a particular attention that young people will participate to vocational training in the tourism sector in the granted projects. Furthermore, the other prioritized sectors in RC OP will be also given priority under the grant scheme.

By and large, this Operation will follow the sectoral analysis and priorities of the RC OP in order to ensure that trainings and guidance delivered in this operation will be consistent with the local/regional economic needs.

Total Budget of the Operation: 27.000.000 €