



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Regional Workshop on EU Funding for Agribusiness

April 28, Hotel Moskva, Belgrade, Serbia

AGENDA

08:30 – 09:00 *Introductory Networking, coffee served*

09:00 – 10:30 **TOPIC 1 - IPARD / SAPARD, FP 6 and FP 7 (cordis.europa.eu/)** **Practical Lessons Learned for the Business**

- Emil Darev, Deputy Executive Director, State Fund “Agriculture”
(<http://www.dfz.bg/news.php>), Bulgaria

- Jozko Fornazaric, Head of General Affairs Service, Agency for Agricultural Markets and Rural Development (AAMRD, www.aktrp.gov.si), Slovenia

10:30 – 11:00 *Networking Break*

11:00 – 12:30 **TOPIC 1 – Questions & Answers / Open Discussion**

12:30 – 13:30 *Light lunch with business networking*

13:30 – 15:00 **TOPICS 2 – Company / NGO examples from EU programs: pre-Accession; Structural Funds; Horizontal programs; Country level Operational Programs, Cross border opportunities for partnerships etc.**

- Nikolay Yarmov, Executive Director, Center for Entrepreneurship and Executive Development Bulgaria (<http://www.en.ceed-bulgaria.org/web/default.aspx>)

- Cristina Manescu, Executive Director, Center for Entrepreneurship and Executive Development Romania

(<http://www.en.ceedromania.org/web/Pages/News/default.aspx>)

(Emil Darev presenting from his private sector experience of over 10 years)

15:00 – 15:30 *Networking Break*

15:30 – 17:00 **TOPIC 3 - Role and Lessons Learned of USAID Agribusiness Project in Assisting with EU Funding for public or private sector**

- Bill Mays, Independent Consultant with over 15 years of experience with USAID Funded Projects

(Emil Darev and Nikolay Yarmov from their extensive former USAID experience)

17:00 – 18:00 Questions & Answers, Open Discussion and Conclusions (Moderated by: TBD)

[FOR ROOM RESERVATIONS PLEASE CONTACT the RCI Team at rci@bcserdon.com]

Introducing the Experts

1. **Bill Mays** – Senior Finance Advisor. Mr. Mays is a highly accomplished financial specialist having spent the majority of the past 12 years working with agricultural businesses in every country of South-Eastern Europe. Bill has delivered hundreds of training workshops to SMEs and banking professionals on topics including business planning, budgeting, International Accounting Standards, bank credit analysis, ethics, and Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA[®]) exam preparatory courses. A unique aspect of his experience rests with his proven ability and experience working on both sides of the financing table. Bill has successfully worked with agribusiness SMEs on preparing their business plans and also with bank credit officers and departments on understanding and evaluating solid businesses from their written plans and interviews. Mr. Mays has managed USAID and EU funded programs while also writing

Regional Competitiveness Initiative

Organized by the USAID RCI Project in collaboration with the CEED Network





business plans for more than 100 Southeastern Europe and Central Asian companies and public institutions, which successfully secured more than 100,000,000 Euros from commercial lenders and financial institutions.

2. **Cristina Manescu** – Cristina Manescu is the Executive Director of CEED Romania, which implemented the grant under the USAID/USDA Rural Leaders Development Programme and participates in the ongoing EU-funded project „Women in Business”, targeting rural women entrepreneurs. Cristina Manescu has a wide experience in various areas of SME development, both in Romania and abroad. Cristina worked for over 15 years as a national and international consultant for UNDP, UNIDO, UNOPS in 10 countries from Central and Eastern Europe, Caspian Sea area and Central Asia, and in various projects funded by USAID, UNDP and EU in Romania. As the Task Manager of the Delegation of the European Commission in Bucharest, Cristina coordinated the whole portfolio of projects for SMEs in Romania. Cristina Manescu holds an University degree from the Cybernetics Faculty of the Academy of Economic Studies in Bucharest, a Master of Business Administration from Conservatoire National des Arts et Métiers - CNAM Paris, and a Master degree from The National Institute for Economic Development, Bucharest.
3. **Emil Darev** – Background in economics and finance. I have a banking experience mainly in SME lending both in Bulgaria and Afghanistan. Extensive experience in business plan preparation for raising of debt and equity financing. Extensive experience with development work and projects mainly in agribusiness and SME development in Bulgaria and Afghanistan. Extensive experience with donor programs and sources of financing - EU, USAID, EBRD, USTDA, etc. Preparation of projects for applying for subsidies from donor programs including SAPARD program in Bulgaria. During the last two years I am the Deputy executive director of State Fund "Agriculture" responsible for the Rural Development Program (budget 3.2 billion Euros) and the Operating program for the Development of the Fishery Sector (100 mln. Euros budget) in Bulgaria. State Fund "Agriculture" is the only accredited Paying Agency in Bulgaria which administrates the EU funds for the implementation of the Common Agricultural Policy of the EU.
4. **Jozko Fornazarič** – “As far as EU funds are concerned, I started my career in this field in 2001 in Slovenian SAPARD Agency, within the accreditation proces, as the irregularity officer. In March 2004 I joined the European Commission (DG Agriculture and RD) firstly as a *stagiaire*, later as an *expert national détachée* in the Financial Audit Unit (Agri J.5). In this Unit I was in charge of Croatian SAPARD accreditation process as well as of annual clearance of accounts for pre- and post-accession measures of CAP. Back to Slovenian Paying Agency in July 2006 I took over the EU Affairs Department, a unit in charge of all communication with external auditors and EU Institutions and for horizontal issues within the Agency (risk management, implementation of newly adopted regulations, irregularities management etc.). As from October 2008 onwards, I manage the General Affairs Service which embraces HR, PR, EU Affairs, legal, budget and other horizontal issues of the Slovenian Paying Agency.”
5. **Nikolay Yarmov** – has been occupying the position of Executive Director of CEED Bulgaria since its inception. Mr. Yarmov has more than 12 years of extensive experience in finance; private sector and SME development; micro-lending; equity investment; and an array of loan guarantee facilities. During his employment with the USAID Mission to Bulgaria as Senior Advisor – Enterprise Development, he has a proven record of successful \$50 million program design and implementation. As a result and in recognition of his professionalism and achievements, Mr. Yarmov has received numerous honors and awards, to include the Meritorious Award for Designing the Regional Commodity Exchange Concept, and the On-The-Spot Award for exceptional support to the SME round table discussions. Mr. Yarmov continues his support for the growth and development of SMEs in Bulgaria through consultancy work, participation in international round table discussions, training courses provided by CEED and other numerous ventures to assist young entrepreneurs in their early stages of development.

