Increase the competitiveness of the local economy and improve the business environment

**Total call budget:** 2 708 904 EUR  
**Maximum amount of grant:** 400 000 EUR  
**Date for announcement of the call:** October-December 2023  
**Funding rate:** 100 % of the eligible costs under de minimis rule

**Objectives of the procedure:**  
Fostering the integrated and inclusive social, economic and environmental local development, culture, natural heritage, sustainable tourism and security, in areas other than urban areas

**Eligible applicants:** Micro, small and medium enterprises (at least one partner from each side of the border region)

**Geographic coverage:** Bulgarian regions – Blagoevgrad and Kyustendil and North Macedonia regions – North-East, East and South-East

**Eligible costs:**  
- Staff costs  
- Office and administrative costs  
- Travel and accommodation costs  
- External expertise and services costs  
- Equipment and works
Eligible activities:

➢ Joint actions aimed at improving the knowledge capacity of the SMEs to operate in a greener, more digital and more competitive environment (acquiring new knowledge and skills, incl. access to external finances)
➢ Joint solutions aimed at increasing the productive capacity of the SMEs to become greener, more digital and more competitive (technological modernization)
➢ Actions aimed at building effective product development process (it encompasses all steps needed to take a product from concept to market availability) and reaching new markets (marketing, entrepreneurship, internationalization)

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