

ANNUAL IMPLEMENTATION REPORT

for the years **2014-2015**

of the

**INTERREG IPA Cross-border Cooperation Programme
Bulgaria – Turkey**

CCI No 2014TC16I5CB005

1. IDENTIFICATION OF THE ANNUAL IMPLEMENTATION REPORT

CCI	2014TC16I5CB005
Title	INTERREG IPA Cross-border Cooperation Programme Bulgaria – Turkey
Reporting year	2014 & 2015
Date of approval of the report by the monitoring committee	

The current Annual Implementation Report (AIR) is drawn up in accordance with the provisions of Article 42(1) of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 447/2014 in relation to Article 50(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 and Article 14(3)(a) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013 and is the first one since the Programme was adopted by the European Commission.

2. OVERVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COOPERATION PROGRAMME

The preparation of the INTERREG IPA Cross-border Cooperation Programme Bulgaria – Turkey (hereinafter referred to as “the Programme”) had started as soon as the European Commission gave its favourable opinion for continuation of the bilateral cooperation between Bulgaria and its neighbouring countries, IPA II beneficiaries - Serbia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey (letter Ares(2013)3245606-15/10/2013).

The new Programme was designed in the framework of the European strategy for a smart, inclusive and sustainable growth and in coherence with the relevant national strategic documents and principles of multi-level governance and transparency. The programming process took over the year 2014 and the formal submission date of the final draft of the Programme for consideration by the EC was 22 September 2014. Since the EC observations on the programme specificities were closed in the first half of year 2015, the Programme was approved on 22 July 2015 with EC Decision № C (2015) 5280.

Following the provisions of Article 36(2) of Regulation (EU) No 447/2014 a single Managing Authority (MA), a single Certifying Authority (CA) and a single Audit Authority (AA) were designated with Decision No 156 as of 21 March 2014 of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Bulgaria. Directorate General “Territorial Cooperation Management” at Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works of the Republic of Bulgaria is the MA under the Programme with counterpart - the Ministry for European Union Affairs of the Republic of Turkey, acting as National Authority.

In accordance with the provisions of Articles 124 and 72 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 the Description of the functions and procedures in place for the Managing Authority and the Certifying Authority were sent to the Audit Authority for review on 16 January 2015. The audit accreditation mission was carried out by the AA between September 2015 and March 2016.

Following the provisions of Article 37 of Regulation (EU) No 447/2014 and Article 23(4) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013 both partnering countries established decentralised First level control systems. The verification of expenditures made by the Programme beneficiaries on each territory will be performed by controllers designated by MA or NA.

In 2015 the MA sub-contracted development of the Management Information System (MIS) and Beneficiaries Portal to be used for implementation of the INTERREG IPA Cross-border Cooperation

Programme Bulgaria – Turkey. MIS is based on the system created for the programming period 2007-2013. The systems provide opportunities for electronic data exchange in compliance with provisions provided for in Article 122(3) or Regulation (EU) 1303/2013.

During the reporting period the consultations on the Memorandum of Implementation of the Programme were carried out between representatives of the two partnering countries. The national coordination procedures are finalized in year 2016 and respectively the Memorandum between the Republic of Bulgaria and the Republic of Turkey is concluded.

During 2015 the Managing Authority, National Authority and the Joint Secretariat prepared in close cooperation all documents needed for the smooth and timely launching of the First Call for Proposals. In order to reach high degree of transparency, the first draft of the Guidelines for applicants was published for public review on 22 April 2015. Potential applicants and other interested stakeholders were invited to express their suggestions and comments on the application package.

The first Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC) meeting was held on 27 October 2015, in Sofia on which the JMC Rules of procedure, Application package under the First Call for proposals, the Multiannual Technical Assistance Strategy, the Eligibility of Technical Assistance Expenditure, 2015 Annual Technical Assistance Plan, 2015 Technical Assistance budget, the Communication Strategy of the Programme for 2014 – 2020 and the Job descriptions of the controllers and Head of unit responsible for verification of expenditures made by partners from Bulgaria were approved.

Subsequently the first Call for proposals was launched on 16 November 2015 with a deadline for submission of project applications - 16 March 2016. The call was open for all specific objectives under Priority axis 1 and Priority axis 2 with total budget amounted on € 11 028 255 (i.e. covering the Programme budget allocations for the years 2015, 2016 and 2017).

In order to ensure broad visibility and information for the stakeholders, series of events were organized targeting potential beneficiaries from the cross-border region to promote the Call and assist interested applicants in project preparation and submission. The preliminary project preparation trainings were organized for the potential beneficiaries in Edirne and Kırklareli provinces (Turkey) during the period September – November 2015. These trainings were conducted in the form of open sessions aiming to increase capacity for project development in the context of the forthcoming call for proposals. The official opening of the information campaign for the First Call for project proposals was organised on 16 of December 2015 in Haskovo (Bulgaria) and reached wide range of target groups from the eligible area.

3. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PRIORITY AXIS (Article 50(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013:.)

The Programme addresses the thematic priorities (b) “Protecting the environment and promoting climate change adaptation and mitigation, risk prevention and management” and (d) “Encouraging tourism and cultural and natural heritage” as identified in Annex of Regulation (EU) No 231/2014.

During the programming process, the selected thematic priorities were structured into the following Programme Priority Axes (PA):

- PA 1 “Environment”
- PA 2 “Sustainable tourism”
- PA 3 “Technical Assistance”

Brief information about the Programme specific objectives is provided in Annex 1 "Citizen's summary" to this report.

3.1. Overview of the implementation

ID	Priority axis	Key information on the implementation of the priority axis with reference to key developments, significant problems and steps taken to address these problems
1	Environment	<p>The implementation of the PA 1 has started with launching the first open call for proposals. The first outputs are provisionally expected in the second half of year 2017.</p> <p>No problems faced till the moment.</p>
2.	Sustainable Tourism	<p>The implementation of the PA 2 has started with the first call for proposals launched. The first outputs are provisionally expected in the second half of year 2017.</p> <p>No problems faced till the moment.</p>
3.	Technical Assistance	<p>During the reporting period the following activities were implemented under the PA 3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Appointment of controllers for verification of expenditures; - Organization and conduction of information seminars for potential beneficiaries in the eligible cross-border area; - Organization of technical meeting concerning Guidelines for applicants under the First Call for project proposals; - Official opening of the information campaign for the First Call for project proposals; - Announcements in the mass media regarding the above events. <p>No problems faced by MA and NA until the moment.</p>

3.2. Common and programme specific indicators (Article 50(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013)

Data for common and programme-specific indicators by investment priority transmitted using the tables 1 and 2 below.

Table 1

Result indicators (by priority axis and specific objective)

						ANNUAL VALUE										
ID	Indicator	Measurement Unit	Baseline Value	Baseline Year	Target Value (2023)	2014	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	Observations (if necessary)
1.1.	Increased level of preparedness to manage emergency situations in the cross-border area	Scale	To be defined	2014	To be defined	0	0									Frequency of reporting: 2018 2023
1.2.	Increased capacity level for nature protection, sustainable use and management of common natural resources in the cross-border area	Scale	To be defined	2014	To be defined	0	0									Frequency of reporting: 2018 2023
2.1.	Increased nights spent in the cross-border area (quantitative target)	%	7 721 074	2012	Increased with minimum 1 %	0	0									Frequency of reporting: 2018 2023
2.2.	Increased level of joint and integrated approaches to sustainable tourism development in the	Scale	To be determined	2014	To be determined	0	0									Frequency of reporting: 2018 2023

	border area (qualitative target)																
2.3.	Increased level of awareness about sustainable tourism development in the cross-border area (qualitative target)	Scale	To be determined	2014	To be determined	0	0										Frequency of reporting: 2018 2023

Table 2

Common and programme specific output indicators (by priority axis, investment priority); applies also to technical assistance priority axes

	ID	Indicator (name of indicator)	Measurement unit	Target value ⁽¹⁾ (2023)	CUMULATIVE VALUE										Observations (if necessary)		
					2014	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23			
Selected operations [forecast provided by beneficiaries]	OI 1.1.1	Number of interventions related to risk prevention and management of natural and man-made hazards and disasters	Number	3	0	0											
Fully implemented operations [actual achievement]					0	0											
Selected operations [forecast provided by	OI 1.1.2	Number of joint strategies / common guidelines, trainings,	Number	6	0	0											

¹ Targets are optional for technical assistance priority axes.

	TA3.4	No of publicity events for beneficiaries	Number	N/A	0	11									
	TA3.5	Number of employees (full time) whose salaries are co-financed by technical assistance	Number	N/A	0	5*									

* Share of 33,3% of the salaries of First level Controllers are covered by the technical assistance under the programme

3.3 Milestones and targets defined in the performance framework (Article 50(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013) — submitted in annual implementation reports from 2017 onwards

Not applicable

3.4. Financial data (Article 50(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013)

Table 3

Financial information at priority axis and programme level (as set out in Table 1 of Annex II to Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 1011/2014 and table 16 of the Programme)

The financial allocation of the priority axis						Cumulative data on the financial progress					
Priority axis	Fund	Category of region	Basis for the calculation of Union support* (Total eligible cost or public eligible cost)	Total funding (EUR)	Co-financing rate (%)	Total eligible cost of operations selected for support (EUR)	Proportion of the total allocation covered with selected operations (%) [column 7/column 5 × 100]	Public eligible cost of operations selected for support (EUR)	Total eligible expenditure declared by beneficiaries to the managing authority	Proportion of the total allocation covered by eligible expenditure declared by beneficiaries (%) [column 10/column 5 × 100]	Number of operations selected

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.
Priority axis 1	IPA	NUTS III or equivalent	Public	13 339 303	84,999996 %	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0	0
Priority axis 2	IPA	NUTS III or equivalent	Public	13 339 303	84,999996 %	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0	0
Priority axis 3 - TA	IPA	NUTS III or equivalent	Public	2 964 290	84,999983 %	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0	0
<i>Total</i>	IPA	NUTS III or equivalent		29 642 896		<i>0.00</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0.00</i>	<i>0.00</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>

Table 4

Breakdown of the cumulative financial data by category of intervention for the transmission made by 31 January (as set out in Table 2 of Annex II to Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 1011/2014 and tables 6-9 of the Programme)

Priority axis	Characteristics of expenditure		Financial data							
	Fund	Category of region	1 Intervention field	2 Form of finance	3 Territorial dimension	4 Territorial delivery mechanism	Total eligible cost of operations selected for support (EUR)	Public eligible cost of operations selected for support (EUR)	The total eligible expenditure declared by beneficiaries to the managing authority	Number of operations selected
Environment	IPA	NUTS III or equivalent	085 Protection and enhancement of biodiversity, nature				0,00	0,00	0,00	0

			protection and green infrastructure							
			087 Adaptation to climate change measures and prevention and management of climate related risks e.g. erosion, fires, flooding, storms and drought, including awareness raising, civil protection and disaster management systems and infrastructures				0,00	0,00	0,00	0
				01 Non-repayable grant			0,00	0,00	0,00	0
					05 - Cooperation across national or regional programme areas in national context		0,00	0,00	0,00	0
Sustainable tourism	IPA	NUTS III or equivalent	075 Development and promotion of tourism services in or for SMEs				0,00	0,00	0,00	0
			079 Access to public sector information (including open data e-Tourism)				0,00	0,00	0,00	0

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			090 Cycle tracks and footpaths				0,00	0,00	0,00	0
			092 Protection, development and promotion of public tourism assets				0,00	0,00	0,00	0
			094 Protection, development and promotion of public cultural and heritage assets				0,00	0,00	0,00	0
			095 Development and promotion of public cultural and heritage services				0,00	0,00	0,00	0
				01 Non-repayable grant			0,00	0,00	0,00	0
					05 Cooperation across national or regional programme areas in national context		0,00	0,00	0,00	0
								0,00	0,00	0
Technical Assistance	IPA	NUTS III or equivalent	121 - Preparation, implementation, monitoring and inspection				0,00	0,00	0,00	0

			122 - Evaluation and studies				0,00	0,00	0,00	0
			123 - Information and communication				0,00	0,00	0,00	0
				01 - Non-repayable grant			0,00	0,00	0,00	0
					05 - Cooperation across national or regional programme areas in national context		0,00	0,00	0,00	0

Table 5

Cumulative cost of all or part of an operation implemented outside the Union part of the programme area

	The amount of IPA support ² envisaged to be used for all or part of an operation implemented outside the Union part of the programme area based on selected operations (EUR)	Share of the total financial allocation to all or part of an operation located outside the Union part of the programme area (%) <i>(column 2/total amount allocated to the support from the IPA at programme level *100)</i>	Eligible expenditure of IPA support incurred in all or part of an operation implemented outside the Union part of the programme area declared by the beneficiary to the managing authority (EUR)	Share of the total financial allocation to all or part of an operation located outside the Union part of the programme area (%) <i>(column 4/total amount allocated to the support from the IPA at programme level *100)</i>
1	2	3	4	5

² ERDF support is fixed in the Commission decision on the respective cooperation programme.

All or part of an operation outside the Union part of the programme area ⁽³⁾	0.00	0	0.00	0
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4. SYNTHESIS OF THE EVALUATIONS (Article 50(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013)

Not applicable for current report.

5. ISSUES AFFECTING THE PERFORMANCE OF THE PROGRAMME AND MEASURES TAKEN (article 50(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013)

(a) Issues which affect the performance of the programme and the measures taken

No issues affecting the Programme performance during the reporting period.

6. CITIZEN'S SUMMARY (Article 50(9) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013)

A citizen's summary of the contents of the current annual implementation report as well as general information about the Programme is presented in the form of annex and is made public on the programme website.

7. REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS (Article 46 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013)

Not applicable

8. WHERE APPROPRIATE, PROGRESS IN PREPARATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF MAJOR PROJECTS AND JOINT ACTION PLANS (Article 101(h) and Article 111(3) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 and Article 14(3)(b) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

8.1. Major projects

Not applicable

8.2. Joint action plans Progress in the implementation of different stages of joint action plans

Not applicable

³ In accordance with and subject to ceilings set out Article 20 of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013.