



Interreg - IPA CBC Bulgaria - Turkey



PARTNERSHIP



ANNUAL IMPLEMENTATION REPORT 2018

INTERREG-IPA CBC Bulgaria - Turkey Programme
is co-financed by the European Union.

CCI 2014TC16I5CB005



ANNUAL IMPLEMENTATION REPORT

2018

for the

INTERREG-IPA Bulgaria - Turkey CBC Programme

CCI No. 2014TC16I5CB005

PART A

DATA REQUIRED EVERY YEAR ('LIGHT REPORTS') (ARTICLE 50(2) OF REGULATION (EU) NO 1303/2013)

1. IDENTIFICATION OF THE ANNUAL/FINAL IMPLEMENTATION REPORT

CCI	2014TC16I5CB005
Title	Interreg-IPA Cross-border Cooperation Programme Bulgaria – Turkey
Version	5.0
Reporting year	2018
Date of approval of the report by the Joint Monitoring Committee	21 June 2019

2. OVERVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COOPERATION PROGRAMME (Article 50(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 and Article 14(3)(a) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

Under the First call for proposals a total of 43 projects were financed amounting at EUR 9 992 285 (16 investment and 27 soft projects). With regard to used resources, approximately 38% of the total funding available for the two PAs was contracted under the First Call. The financial implementation of the Programme is progressing at a very good pace. 27 projects are completed until the end of 2018 and 16 investment projects are in their final stages of implementation and is expected to be finalised in the beginning of 2019 in the period January – July 2019. The total verified amount for the projects is EUR 4 794 793,63 (48% from the contracted budget) until the end of 2018. Having in mind that all investment projects are still under implementation and final payments for some soft projects finalised at the end of 2018 are still pending, the absorption rate is good.

During year 2018 the 2nd Call for proposals under the INTERREG-IPA Cross-border Cooperation Programme Bulgaria – Turkey (the Programme) was launched. The call was open on 10th of January 2018 for all specific objectives under Priority axis 1 “Environment” and Priority axis 2 “Sustainable tourism” with a total budget - EUR 15 650 351 (i.e. covering the Programme budget allocations for the years 2018, 2019 and 2020). For the first time the project proposal are submitted entirely in electronic form using the Electronic System of the Programme.

Within the specified deadline 130 project proposals were received showing a relatively greater interest in applying under PA 2 “Sustainable tourism” (86 applications received) in comparison to PA 1 “Environment” where 44 proposals were submitted.

In total 86 applications passed the administrative compliance and eligibility check and were subject to Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC) approval (decision of JMC writing procedure 13.07.2019) before proceeding to the technical and quality assessment. Following the Programme rules, all rejected at the administrative compliance and eligibility stage project proposals (44) had the possibility to submit complaints. In total 16 complaints were received, reviewed by a Complaint Panel (including MA, NA and JS representatives) and the respective decisions of the Assessment Working Group were confirmed, e.g. no changes in the list of rejected projects was introduced.

The second stage of the assessment process (technical and quality assessment) was performed in the period 4 September – 31 October 2018. The number of projects that received average technical scores above the threshold for technical admissibility (65 points out of maximum 100) is 71, showing a sufficient number of good quality projects. Since the Programme is allocating all of its remaining funding in the 2nd Call for Proposals, fulfilment of all targets for the “underachieved” OIs is essential for assessment of the Programme’s overall performance. Regarding this a separate ranking of project proposals under each Output Indicator has been made. Proposal for contracting is based on the separate ranking lists for each Output Indicator and necessary project proposals in order the indicators to be achieved.

At the JMC meeting carried out on 13 December 2018 the JMC members provisionally approved for financing 42 project proposals at the total amount of EUR 12 839 666, distributes as follow:

- PA 1 “Environment“ – 26 project proposals at the total amount of EUR 6 700 544
- PA 2 “Sustainable Tourism“ – 16 project proposals at the total amount of EUR 6 139 121.

In addition, a decision was taken, negotiation procedures to be conducted with all 71 good quality projects (proposed for financing project proposals and project proposals from the reserve list).

All applicants which had objections concerning the results were given the possibility to submit complaints.

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

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>Under the first call 16 projects at a total amount of EUR 5 437 524,55 were contracted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under SO 1.1 “Preventing and mitigating the consequences of natural and man-made disasters in the cross-border area” - 7 projects at a total amount EUR 3 430 117,56 were under implementation (6 investment project with duration between 15 and 24 months and 1 soft project with duration 15 months). <p>No significant changes were requested by the beneficiaries under this Specific objective.</p> <p>By the end of 2018, two projects (1 soft and 1 investment with duration 15 months) at a total amount EUR 677 022,65 were successfully completed and contributed to the Programme objectives.</p> <p>As indicated in Table 2, it is expected targets for all 4 OIs under SO 1.1 to be achieved by the end of implementation period of the projects from the 1st Call for the proposals successfully completed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under SO 1.2 “Improving the capacity for nature protection, sustainable use and management of common natural resources through cooperation initiatives in the cross-border area” - 9 projects at a total amount EUR 2 007

		<p>406,99 are under implementation (5 soft projects with duration between 12 and 15 months and 4 investment projects with duration between 15 and 24 months).</p> <p>No significant changes were requested by the beneficiaries under this Specific objective.</p> <p>By the end of 2018, six projects (5 soft and 1 investment with duration between 12 and 15 months) at a total amount EUR 857 281,45 were successfully completed and contributed to the Programme objectives.</p> <p>As indicated in the Table 2, the targets for 3 out of 5 OIs under SO 1.2 are achieved by the end of the implementation period of the respective projects under the 1st Call for proposals. There are no projects addressing OI 1.2.4 “Number of joint initiatives addressing preservation of marine and coastal environment, therefore such projects were encouraged to participate in the envisaged 2nd Call.</p> <p>No significant problems were detected in 2018.</p>
2.	Sustainable Tourism	<p>Under the first call 27 projects at a total amount of EUR 4 554 760,42 were contracted</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under SO 2.1 “Increasing the touristic attractiveness of the cross-border area through better utilisation of natural, cultural and historical heritage and related infrastructure” - 6 investment projects at a total amount EUR 2 704 663,36 with duration between 18 and 24 months. <p>Modifications requested approval by JMC and signature of addendum: extension of implementation period – a total of 2 requests have been approved by MA and JMC and duration was extended to 24 months.</p> <p>The OIs targets under SO 2.1 are expected to be covered after successful completion of the projects from the 1st Call.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under SO 2.2 “Increasing the cross-border tourism potential by developing common destinations” - 10 soft projects at a total amount EUR 921 048,97 with duration between 12 and 15 months. <p>No significant changes were requested by the beneficiaries under this Specific objective.</p> <p>By the end of 2018, all ten soft projects were successfully completed and contributed to the Programme objectives.</p> <p>The targets of the OIs are achieved after successful completion of the projects from the 1st Call. The achievement of OI 2.2.5 related to people involved in training and capacity building activities in the field of sustainable tourism is 90%.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under SO 2.3 “Increasing networking for development of sustainable tourism through cross-border cooperation initiatives” - 11 soft projects at a total amount EUR 929 048,09 with duration 12 - 15 months.

		<p>By the end of 2018, ten soft projects were successfully completed and contributed to the Programme objectives.</p> <p>Project No. CB005.1.23.182 at a total amount EUR 86 204,80 was terminated due the contract obligations were breached by the lead partner.</p> <p>The targets OI are achieved after successful completion of the projects from the 1st Call for proposals. The achievement of OI 2.3.2 concerning public awareness initiatives promoting sustainable use of natural, historical and cultural heritage and resources” is 85%.</p> <p>No significant problems were detected in 2018.</p>
3.	Technical Assistance	<p>The Technical Assistance budget for year 2018 amounted to EUR 630 127.</p> <p>During the reporting period, Programme management activities were performed that ensured the necessary support related to projects implementation and administrative and operational activities concerning MA, NA, JS and FLC unit within the MA (staff remuneration, participation in various events and training seminars, maintenance of office premises, etc.).</p> <p>The Programme activities also include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization of JMC meetings • Organization of technical meetings of Programme bodies; • Information days under Second Call for proposals; • Partner search forum; • Evaluation of project proposals under the Second call (Preliminary session and verification of submitted proposals, Administrative and eligibility check and Technical assessment); • Ongoing upgrading and maintenance of Programme official website and MIS • Organization and participation in European Cooperation Day 2018 – conducted on 21 September 2018 in Burgas, Bulgaria. <p>No significant problems were detected in year 2018.</p>

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

Table 1

Result indicators (by priority axis and specific objective)

Automatic from SFC						ANNUAL VALUE										Observations (if necessary)
ID	Indicator	Measurement Unit	Baseline Value	Baseline Year	Target Value (2023)	2018 TOTAL	2018 QUALITATIVE	2017 TOTAL	2017 QUALITATIVE	2016 TOTAL	2016 QUALITATIVE	2015 TOTAL	2015 QUALITATIVE	2014 TOTAL	2014 QUALITATIVE	
1.1	Increased level of preparedness to manage emergency situations in the cross-border area	Scale	2.24	2014	2.50		2.64		0		0		0		0	Frequency of reporting: 2018, 2023
1.2	Increased capacity level for nature protection, sustainable use and management of common natural resources	Scale	2.66	2014	3.00		2.82		0		0		0		0	Frequency of reporting: 2018, 2023
2.1	Increased nights spent in the cross-border area	Percentage	7 721 074	2014	Increased with minimum 1 %	10 308 550		0		0		0		0		Frequency of reporting: 2018, 2023
2.2	Increased level of joint and integrated approaches to sustainable tourism development in the border area	Scale	2.50	2014	3.00		2.67		0		0		0		0	Frequency of reporting: 2018, 2023
2.3	Increased level of awareness about	Scale	2.77	2014	3.50		2.99		0		0		0		0	Frequency of reporting: 2018,

sustainable tourism development in the cross-border area																			2023
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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	
S=Cumulative value — outputs to be delivered by 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	0	8	11	
F=Cumulative value — outputs delivered by operations [actual achievement]					0	0	0	0	2	
S=Cumulative value — outputs to be delivered by selected operations	OI 1.1.2	Number of joint strategies / common guidelines, trainings, public awareness campaigns,	Number	6	0	0	0	17	23	

¹ Targets are optional for technical assistance priority axes.

[forecast provided by beneficiaries]		exchange of experience for risk prevention and management of natural and man-made hazards and disasters								
F=Cumulative value — outputs delivered by operations [actual achievement]					0	0	0	0	3	
S=Cumulative value — outputs to be delivered by selected operations [forecast provided by beneficiaries]	OI 1.1.3	Population benefiting from flood protection measures	Persons	290 000	0	0	0	402 749	402 749	
F=Cumulative value — outputs delivered by operations [actual achievement]					0	0	0	0	200 000	
S=Cumulative value — outputs to be delivered by selected operations [forecast provided by beneficiaries]	OI 1.1.4	Population benefiting from forest fire protection measure	Persons	480 000	0	0	0	661 392	661 392	
F=Cumulative value — outputs delivered by operations [actual achievement]					0	0	0	0	200 000	
S=Cumulative value — outputs to be delivered by selected operations [forecast provided by beneficiaries]	OI 1.2.1	Number of nature protected areas addressed by interventions	Number	5	0	0	0	11	21	
F=Cumulative value — outputs delivered by					0	0	0	0	10	

operations [actual achievement]										
S=Cumulative value — outputs to be delivered by selected operations [forecast provided by beneficiaries]	OI 1.2.2	Number of capacity building / awareness activities related to nature protection, sustainable use and management of common natural resources	Number	28	0	0	0	29	48	
F=Cumulative value — outputs delivered by operations [actual achievement]					0	0	0	0	19	
S=Cumulative value — outputs to be delivered by selected operations [forecast provided by beneficiaries]	OI 1.2.3	Number of people involved in training and capacity building activities in the field of nature protection	Number	300	0	0	0	0	604	
F=Cumulative value — outputs delivered by operations [actual achievement]					0	0	0	0	182	
S=Cumulative value — outputs to be delivered by selected operations [forecast provided by beneficiaries]	OI 1.2.4	Number of joint initiatives addressing preservation of marine and coastal environment (incl. litter reduction)	Number	5	0	0	0	0	0	
F=Cumulative value — outputs delivered by operations [actual achievement]					0	0	0	0	0	
S=Cumulative value — outputs to be delivered	OI 1.2.5	Number of joint management plans/ coordinated specific	Number	3	0	0	0	2	1	

by selected operations [forecast provided by beneficiaries]		conservation activities for protected areas									
F=Cumulative value — outputs delivered by operations [actual achievement]					0	0	0	0	1		
S=Cumulative value — outputs to be delivered by selected operations [forecast provided by beneficiaries]	OI 2.1.1	Total length of reconstructed or upgraded access roads to natural, cultural and historic tourism sites	Kilometres	5	0	0	0	1.54	1.54		
F=Cumulative value — outputs delivered by operations [actual achievement]					0	0	0	0	0		
S=Cumulative value — outputs to be delivered by selected operations [forecast provided by beneficiaries]	OI 2.1.2	Total length of newly built, reconstructed or upgraded cycling routes / walking paths	Kilometres	8	0	0	0	0.75	1.01		
F=Cumulative value — outputs delivered by operations [actual achievement]					0	0	0	0	0		
S=Cumulative value — outputs to be delivered by selected operations [forecast provided by beneficiaries]	OI 2.1.3	Number of newly built / reconstructed facilities in / leading to touristic sites	Number	10	0	0	0	7	14		
F=Cumulative value —					0	0	0	0	0		

outputs delivered by operations [actual achievement]										
S=Cumulative value — outputs to be delivered by selected operations [forecast provided by beneficiaries]	OI 2.1.4	Number of reconstructed / restored cultural and historical touristic sites	Number	15	0	0	0	2	2	
F=Cumulative value — outputs delivered by operations [actual achievement]					0	0	0	0	0	
S=Cumulative value — outputs to be delivered by selected operations [forecast provided by beneficiaries]	OI 2.2.1	Number of sustainable tourism strategies/action plans of common tourist destinations	Number	3	0	0	0	5	5	
F=Cumulative value — outputs delivered by operations [actual achievement]					0	0	0	0	5	
S=Cumulative value — outputs to be delivered by selected operations [forecast provided by beneficiaries]	OI 2.2.2	Number of marketing and promotional initiatives/events, addressing cross-border tourism products & services	Number	13	0	0	0	19	19	

F=Cumulative value — outputs delivered by operations [actual achievement]					0	0	0	0	19	
S=Cumulative value — outputs to be delivered by selected operations [forecast provided by beneficiaries]	OI 2.2.3	Number of tools developed and/or implemented for promotion of sustainable touristic potential	Number	3	0	0	0	17	17	
F=Cumulative value — outputs delivered by operations [actual achievement]					0	0	0	0	16	
S=Cumulative value — outputs to be delivered by selected operations [forecast provided by beneficiaries]	OI 2.2.4	Number of trainings and consultancy services in sustainable use of natural, historical and cultural heritage and resources	Number	3	0	0	0	7	7	
F=Cumulative value — outputs delivered by operations [actual achievement]					0	0	0	0	4	

S=Cumulative value — outputs to be delivered by selected operations [forecast provided by beneficiaries]	OI 2.2.5	Number of people involved in training and capacity building activities in the field of sustainable tourism	Number	200	0	0	0	180	180	
F=Cumulative value — outputs delivered by operations [actual achievement]					0	0	0	0	120	
S=Cumulative value — outputs to be delivered by selected operations [forecast provided by beneficiaries]	OI 2.3.1	Number of networking events	Number	15	0	0	0	21	21	
F=Cumulative value — outputs delivered by operations [actual achievement]					0	0	0	0	15	
S=Cumulative value — outputs to be delivered by selected operations [forecast provided by beneficiaries]	OI 2.3.2	Number of public awareness initiatives promoting sustainable use of natural, historical and cultural heritage and resources	Number	20	0	0	0	17	17	
F=Cumulative value — outputs delivered by operations [actual achievement]					0	0	0	0	11	

S=Cumulative value — outputs to be delivered by selected operations [forecast provided by beneficiaries]	OI 2.3.3	Number of public awareness initiatives promoting alternative forms of tourism	Number	5	0	0	0	9	9	
F=Cumulative value — outputs delivered by operations [actual achievement]					0	0	0	0	8	
S=Cumulative value — outputs to be delivered by selected operations [forecast provided by beneficiaries]	TA3.1	No of performed evaluations of the programme	Number	2	0	0	0	0	1	Not cumulative
F=Cumulative value — outputs delivered by operations [actual achievement]					0	0	0	0	0	Not cumulative
S=Cumulative value — outputs to be delivered by selected operations [forecast provided by beneficiaries]	TA3.2	Updated MIS system*	Number	1	0	0	1	1	1	Not cumulative
F=Cumulative value — outputs delivered by operations [actual achievement]					0	0	1	1	1	Not cumulative
S=Cumulative value —	TA3.3	No of Monitoring Committee	Number	14	0	1	2	0	2	Not cumulative

outputs to be delivered by selected operations [forecast provided by beneficiaries]		meetings								
F=Cumulative value — outputs delivered by operations [actual achievement]					0	1	2	0	2	Not cumulative
S=Cumulative value — outputs to be delivered by selected operations [forecast provided by beneficiaries]	TA3.4	No of publicity events for beneficiaries	Number	4	0	11	4	9	8	Not cumulative
F=Cumulative value — outputs delivered by operations [actual achievement]					0	11	4	9	8	Not cumulative
S=Cumulative value — outputs to be delivered by selected operations [forecast provided by beneficiaries]	TA3.5	Number of employees (full time) whose salaries are co-financed by technical assistance*	Number	8	0	5	5	23	14	Not cumulative. 6 BG FL controllers, 5 JS experts in Haskovo, 3 JS experts in Edirne branch office.
F=Cumulative value — outputs delivered by operations [actual achievement]					0	5	5	23	20	Not cumulative. 6 BG FL controllers, 5 JS experts in Haskovo, 3 JS experts in Edirne branch office and 5 MA experts.

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

Table 3

Information on the milestones and targets defined in the performance framework

Priority axis	Ind type	Id	Indicator	Measurement unit	Milestone for 2018 total	Final target (2023) total	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	Observations
1	F	1	Eligible certified expenditure of the priority axis 1 "Environment"	EUR	821 171	11 338 407,00	1 261 152,19	0	0	0	0	Total certified amount 1 508 469,59 EUR (IPA + national funding)
1	I	1.1.1	Number of contracted projects related to risk prevention and management of natural and man-made hazards and disasters	number	3	3	6	6	0	0	0	Signed contracts
1	O	1.1.1	Number of interventions related to risk prevention and management of natural and man-made hazards and disasters	number	0	3	2	0	0	0	0	Based on the project contracted and their duration
1	O	1.2.1	Number of nature protected areas addressed by interventions	number	3	5	10	0	0	0	0	Based on the project contracted and their duration
2	F	2	Eligible certified expenditure of the priority axis 2 "Sustainable tourism"	EUR	821 171	11 338 407,00	1 208 165,59	41 998,34	0	0	0	Total certified amount 1 424 497,39 EUR (IPA + national funding)
2	I	2.1.3	Number of contracted projects addressing OI 2.1.3 "Number of newly built / reconstructed facilities in / leading to touristic sites"	number	4	7	4	4	0	0	0	Signed contracts
2	O	2.1.3	Number of newly built / reconstructed facilities in / leading to touristic sites	number	0	10	0	0	0	0	0	Based on the project contracted and their duration
2	O	2.2.1	Number of sustainable tourism strategies/action plans of common tourist destinations	number	2	3	5	0	0	0	0	Based on the project contracted and their duration

*Member States submit cumulative values for output indicators. Values for financial indicators are cumulative. Values for the key implementation steps are cumulative if the key implementation steps are expressed by a number or percentage. If the achievement is defined in a qualitative way, the table should indicate whether they are completed or not.

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

Table 4

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 17 of the Programme)

Priority Axis	Calculation basis	Total funding	Co-financing rate	Total eligible cost of operations selected for support	Proportion of the total allocation covered with selected operations	Public eligible cost of operations selected for support	Total eligible expenditure declared by beneficiaries to the managing authority	Proportion of the total allocation covered by eligible expenditure declared by beneficiaries	Number of operations selected	Total eligible expenditure incurred by beneficiaries and paid by 31/12/2018 and certified to the Commission
1	Total	13,339,303.00	85.00%	5,437,524.55	40.76%	5,437,524.55	2,817,798.29	21.12%	16	1,261,152.19
2	Total	13,339,303.00	85.00%	4,554,760.42	34.15%	4,554,760.42	2,527,166.31	18.95%	27	1,208,165.59
3	Total	2,964,290.00	85.00%	1,669,662.00	56.33%	1,669,662.00	506,664.24	17.09%	8	
Grand total		29,642,896.00	85.00%	11,661,946.97	39.34%	11,661,946.97	5,851,628.84	19.74%	51	2,469,317.78

*The number of operations selected includes technical assistance projects for 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2018

Table 5

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	Intervention field	Form of finance	Territorial dimension	Territorial delivery mechanism	Thematic priority dimension	Economic dimension	Location dimension	Total eligible cost of operations selected for support	Public eligible cost of operations selected for support	Total eligible expenditure declared by beneficiaries to the managing authority	Number of operations selected
1	085	01	01	07	b	24	BG341	509,944.53	509,944.53	402,418.90	2
1	085	01	01	07	b	24	TR212	357,732.85	357,732.85	342,367.89	1
1	085	01	03	07	b	24	BG343	78,367.03	78,367.03	74,287.44	1
1	085	01	03	07	b	24	BG422	448,371.56	448,371.56	23,859.91	2
1	085	01	03	07	b	24	TR213	500,302.25	500,302.25	231,729.34	2
1	087	01	01	07	b	24	BG341	95,539.24	95,539.24	26,062.15	1
1	087	01	01	07	b	24	BG422	581,955.11	581,955.11	106,470.08	1
1	087	01	01	07	b	24	TR212	589,017.24	589,017.24	72,087.01	1
1	087	01	01	07	b	24	TR213	568,473.20	568,473.20	426,117.23	1
1	087	01	02	07	b	24	BG422	581,483.41	581,483.41	555,083.11	1
1	087	01	02	07	b	24	TR213	468,915.20	468,915.20	99,430.34	1
1	087	01	03	07	b	24	BG341	112,688.77	112,688.77	105,300.85	1
1	087	01	03	07	b	24	BG422	544,734.16	544,734.16	352,584.04	1
2	075	01	01	07	d	24	BG422	73,232.22	73,232.22	26,095.15	1
2	075	01	02	07	d	24	BG341	78,693.27	78,693.27	58,262.84	1
2	075	01	02	07	d	24	TR212	57,740.97	57,740.97	50,499.12	1
2	092	01	01	07	d	24	BG341	106,064.85	106,064.85	95,608.62	1
2	092	01	01	07	d	24	BG343	483,431.68	483,431.68	205,641.88	1
2	092	01	01	07	d	24	BG422	86,204.80	86,204.80	0.00	1
2	092	01	01	07	d	24	TR213	438,054.90	438,054.90	196,758.41	1
2	092	01	02	07	d	24	BG341	496,495.09	496,495.09	191,120.67	1
2	092	01	03	07	d	24	BG422	430,655.78	430,655.78	179,726.97	2
2	094	01	01	07	d	24	BG341	918,597.36	918,597.36	607,050.15	6
2	094	01	01	07	d	24	BG422	93,460.80	93,460.80	91,795.24	1
2	094	01	01	07	d	24	TR212	96,177.77	96,177.77	88,308.72	1
2	094	01	02	07	d	24	TR213	100,909.24	100,909.24	95,649.59	1
2	094	01	03	07	d	24	BG341	114,113.96	114,113.96	112,759.19	1
2	094	01	03	07	d	24	BG422	88,006.06	88,006.06	86,367.45	1
2	095	01	01	07	d	24	BG422	81,267.15	81,267.15	74,407.67	1
2	095	01	01	07	d	24	TR212	553,680.33	553,680.33	308,586.39	2
2	095	01	02	07	d	24	BG422	91,713.85	91,713.85	27,654.40	1
2	095	01	03	07	d	24	BG422	166,260.34	166,260.34	30,873.85	2
3	121	01					BG	904,177.00	904,177.00	310,314.49	4
3	121	01					TR	765,485.00	765,485.00	196,349.75	4

*The number of operations selected includes the technical assistance project for 2018

Table 6

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

	The amount of ERDF 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 ERDF at programme level *100)</i>	Eligible expenditure of ERDF 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 ERDF at programme level *100)</i>
1	2	3	4	5
All or part of an operation outside the Union part of the programme area ⁽³⁾	22 470,80	0,08 %	18 281,26	0,07 %

4. SYNTHESIS OF THE EVALUATIONS (Article 50(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013)

NAME	FUND	FROM MONTH	FROM YEAR	TO MONTH	TO YEAR	TYPE OF EVALUATION	THEMATIC PRIORITY	TOPIC	FINDINGS
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² ERDF support is fixed in the Commission decision on the respective cooperation programme.

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

<p>Implementation evaluation of Interreg - IPA CBC Programmes 2014-2020, managed by the Republic of Bulgaria</p>	<p>IPA(e)</p>	<p>8</p>	<p>2018</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>2019</p>	<p>Process</p>	<p>d, b</p>	<p>The overall objective of the evaluation of the implementation of the 3 (three) Interreg - IPA CBC Programmes 2014-2020, managed by the Republic of Bulgaria in terms of assessment of the current programme progress and providing recommendations for further improvement of the overall management and implementation of each of the programmes, which could contribute towards successful achievement of their objectives, results and outputs.</p>	<p>The objectives of the programme are properly reflected by the way projects are generated. The eligible activities under each PA as described in the Programme were incorporated in the eligible activities under the First and Second calls. The beneficiaries assessed positively the support they received during the implementation phase of the Programme. The Programme has well elaborated indicator system which allows provision of information for the achievement of the Programme specific objectives. The changed mechanism for selection of project proposals under the Second call has significant positive impact on the projected achievement of the OI of the Programme. All OIs below target will be achieved if the projects proposed for contracting in the Second call are implemented as planned. Overall results of the Second Call for Proposals show that not all allocated funds will be fully absorbed. The core challenges and needs of the cross border region remain still relevant. The observance of the horizontal principles is fully integrated in the management system of the Programme (application and implementation stages) and in the activities of the selected projects. The</p>
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									communication activities reflect the necessities of the target groups. The dissemination of project and programme results employs diverse methods that ensures that the coverage is significant.
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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 significant problems that could have affected the Programme performance were identified during the reporting period.*
- (b) OPTIONAL FOR LIGHT REPORTS, otherwise it will be included in point 9.1 (Article 50(4) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013)

Information is included in p.9.1

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

A citizen's summary of the contents of the annual and the final implementation reports shall be made public and uploaded as a separate file in the form of annex to the annual and the final implementation report

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

PART B

REPORTING SUBMITTED IN YEARS 2017, 2019 AND FINAL IMPLEMENTATION REPORT (Article 50(4) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 and Article 14(4) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

9. ASSESSMENT OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COOPERATION PROGRAMME (Article 50(4) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 and Article 14(4) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

9.1 Information in Part A and achieving the objectives of the programme (Article 50(4) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013)

FOR EACH PRIORITY AXIS — Assessment of the information provided above and progress towards achieving the objectives of the programme, including the contribution of the ERDF to changes in the value of result indicators, when evidence is available from evaluations

The Programme's progress toward achievement of the targets of the output and result indicators is quite good, based on data as of end-2018. The majority of the OIs under PA1 have good achievement progress and all of them except two are expected to be overachieved with the completion of the projects from the First Call for proposal. The two indicators which are lagging behind will be achieved with projects proposed for financing under the Second call for proposals.

The OIs in the PA 2 also have satisfactory rates of achievement. Six of the OIs overachieved their values with the projects from the First call for proposals and two of them have reached achievement rates of over 60%. Only 4 of the OIs (namely the ones in SO 2.1. Increasing the touristic attractiveness of the cross-border area through better utilisation of natural, cultural and historical heritage and related infrastructure) have low achieved values. However, their target values are expected to be achieved with the projects proposed for financing under the Second call for proposals.

There are 2 RIs in PA 1, one is fully achieved and the other is 94% achieved as of end of 2018. One RI under PA2 is significantly overachieved while the targets of the remaining two are achieved over 85%.

The Managing Authority has launched an online survey for monitoring of the result indicators to measure the achievement of the programme specific objectives, targeted at programme stakeholders. The questionnaires were also published in Bulgarian and Turkish languages.

For **Priority Axis 1 - Environment**, the recapitulation for the achievement of the three Result Indicators under the priority axis are as follows:

RI 1.1. Increased level of preparedness to manage emergency situations in the cross-border area - the target value of 2.50 is overachieved by the end of 2018.

RI 1.2. Increased capacity level for nature protection, sustainable use and management of common natural resources – the achievement of the indicator by the end of 2018 is 2.82. The indicator has a good progress compared to the baseline of 2.24 and the target of 3.00 for year 2023.

For **Priority Axis 2 – Sustainable Tourism**, the recapitulation for the achievement of the Result Indicators under the priority axis are as follows:

RI 2.1. Increased nights spent in the cross-border area – the target value for 2023 is overachieved by the end of 2018.

RI 2.2. Increased level of joint and integrated approaches to sustainable tourism development in the border area – the achievement of the indicator by the end of 2018 is 2.67. The indicator has a good progress compared to the baseline of 2.50 and the target of 3.00 for year 2023.

RI 2.3. Increased level of awareness about sustainable tourism development in the cross-border area – the achievement of the indicator by the end of 2018 is 2.99. The indicator has a good progress compared to the baseline of 2.77 and the target of 3.00 for year 2023.

9.2. Specific actions taken to promote equality between men and women and to promote non-discrimination, in particular accessibility for persons with disabilities, and the arrangements implemented to ensure the integration of the gender perspective in the cooperation programme and operations (Article 50(4) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 and Article 14(4), subparagraph 2, (d) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

An assessment of the implementation of specific actions to take into account the principles set out in Article 7 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 on promotion of equality between men and women and non-discrimination, including, where relevant, depending on the content and objectives of the cooperation programme, an overview of specific actions taken to promote equality between men and women and to promote non-discrimination, including accessibility for persons with disabilities, and the arrangements implemented to ensure the integration of the gender perspective in the cooperation programme and operations

In the Programme document, there is a detailed description of each principle and a list of specific of proposed measures for addressing these principles. It is stated that the Programme authorities will ensure the observation of all these principles by applicants in the development and implementation of their projects. The Programme provides direct contribution to all the three horizontal principles.

The Programme applicants have the obligation to explain how their project complies and contributes to the promotion of the three horizontal principles during the development and the implementation phases of the project. This is included as a requirement in the GfA of both call for proposals with explanations what is expected by the beneficiaries. In the 2nd call for proposal the explanations are extended and improved to facilitate the understating of the horizontal principles by the applicants. The observance of the principles is directly included in the evaluation grid of the technical and quality evaluation stage of the project proposals. If the project proposal is not coherent with any of the observed horizontal principles, no points were assigned to the proposal. Maximum points are envisaged to be given to projects that clearly demonstrate coherence with all 3 horizontal principles. During the implementation stage, at project level, the reporting of horizontal principles is obligatory in the Final Project Progress Report submitted by beneficiaries. In it, the Lead project partner provides information on how project activities and outputs contribute to the horizontal principles, in accordance with the provisions set in the Project Implementation Manual

The observance of the horizontal principles is part of the monitoring and controlling activities of the JS and controllers and they validate the data provided by the beneficiaries on horizontal themes.

At programme level, the application of the horizontal principles is monitored, assessed, and reported in the Annual Implementation Reports. In the AIR 2016, there are two sections dedicated to the application of horizontal principles

During the on-site visits with beneficiaries and the focus groups carried in Edirne, the evaluation team received the feedback that the beneficiaries fully understand the Programme horizontal principles and their observance is strictly followed during the projects implementation.

Due to the thematic scope of the Programme's strategy, the principle of equal opportunities and non-discrimination, and the principle of equality between men and women, set out in Article 7 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013, are not considered to be a primary focus of the Programme. However, specific actions were taken to promote these principles at both programme and project level. Equal opportunities and non-discrimination and equality between men and women principles are very relevant to the cross-border region struggling with lagging behind economic development, negative demographic trends and brain drain occurrences.

It shall be pointed out that the contribution of the supported projects to gender equality and equal opportunities principles is not possible to measure since projects do not collect disaggregated data. Overall, the interviews conducted with beneficiaries, confirmed that women are actively involved in all project activities and participation is on equal terms.

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9.3. Sustainable development (Article 50(4) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 and Article 14(4), subparagraph 2, (e) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

An assessment of the implementation of actions to take into account the principles set out in Article 8 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 on sustainable development, including, where relevant, depending on the content and objectives of the cooperation programme, an overview of the actions taken to promote sustainable development in accordance with that Article

The three dimensions of the sustainable development (ecological, economic and social) are taken in consideration within the Programme elaboration and implementation as the two priority axes focus fully on this principle. Environmental authorities and partners from both countries have been involved in every stage of the Programme elaboration and implementation to be ensured that environment protection is strictly imbedded in all Programme activities. Their active role is guaranteed by their participation in the Programme JMC, the body which makes all strategic decisions concerning the overall management and implementation of the Programme. Representatives of the Ministry of Environment and Water of Republic of Bulgaria, Trakya Development Agency from Republic of Turkey and NGOs in the environmental sphere are included in the composition of the JMC, some of them as members with voting rights, and others as members in advisory capacity. These institutions have as their main priority to ensure compliance of the Programme activities with sustainable development and environmental protection principles. As members of the JMC, they

are actively involved in the preparation, assessment and implementation of projects, and Programme communication activities. They monitor the sustainable development principle through the review and approval the GfA, then they approve the list of projects proposed for financing and the reserve list and during the projects implementation they follow the achieved results related to sustainable development by the programme beneficiaries.

Both Programme priority axes have strong contribution to the sustainable development horizontal principle.

The review of the projects from the First call for proposal shows that the project activities supported the sustainable development principles are in three main directions:

- investment activities representing supply of equipment and/or support of small scale interventions which represent actual supportive measures for the sustainable development of the cross border regions.
- joint activities for environment protection as strategies, plans, guidelines which support the common efforts and activities for ensuring the sustainable development of the cross border regions;
- capacity building activities and awareness raising campaigns which support raising the knowledge and experience for the sustainable development among the cross border regions population and changing behaviour for protecting natural areas and habitats.

Usually the funded projects include combination of three or two of the activities described above. This is clearly presented in all projects in Priority Axis 1 Environment , project 115 covers all of the activities listed above, projects 005, 006, 007, 084, 087, 149 and 153 have activities which include investment in sustainable development and capacity and awareness raising activities. Projects 162 and 165 have investment activities and joint activities for environmental protection. The soft projects 024, 047, 125 have activities supporting capacity building activities and joint activities for nature protection. The projects funded under priority axis 2 Sustainable Tourism, specific objective 2.1. „Increasing the touristic attractiveness of the cross-border area through better utilisation of natural, cultural and historical heritage and related infrastructure“ 167, 139, 099 and 112 have direct effect over the sustainable development as they include investment activities focused on construction and renovation of touristic sites. The other projects funded under specific objectives 2.2 „Increasing the cross-border tourism potential by developing common destinations“ and 2.3 „ Increasing networking for development of sustainable tourism through cross-border cooperation initiatives“ include activities related to the sustainable tourism development and awareness raising promoting sustainable use touristic, historical and cultural resources.

9.4. Reporting on support used for climate change objectives (Article 50(4) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013)

The projects supported under specific objectives 1.2. Improving the capacity for nature protection, sustainable use and management of common natural resources through cooperation initiatives in the cross-border area also supporting the EU 2020 Climate change and energy target as they are building capacities and are raising the awareness for the importance of environment protection and the common efforts that have to be done to prevent and avoid the climate change negative consequences. It is

expected also the approved for financing projects from the second call for proposals which include activities addressing preservation of marine and coastal environment also to contribute to the climate change objective.

In addition, annually, in compliance with the requirements of Directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment, and the respective Bulgarian national legislation, the MA prepared Annual monitoring report (SEA compatibility report) on the environmental effects of the Programme. The SEA compatibility report is coordinated and approved by the Ministry of Environment and Water of the Republic of Bulgaria (MOEW). The main conclusion of the report is that all specific measures and requirements to prevent, reduce and eliminate as much as possible the negative consequences following the Programmes implementation are duly fulfilled during the application phase, as well as during the projects' assessment process .

9.5 Role of partners in the implementation of the cooperation programme (Article 50(4) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 and Article 14(4), subparagraph 1, (c) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

Assessment of the implementation of actions to take into account the role of partners referred to in Article 5 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013, including involvement of the partners in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the cooperation programme

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As regards fulfilment of the requirements of Article 50(4) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013, the role of partners is demonstrated through their participation in the Programme Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC), composed of representatives from Bulgaria and Turkey, nominated by local, regional and national authorities / organisations, including non-governmental organisations, economic and social partners, municipalities, districts administrations, academic and scientific institutions, environmental, educational and business organisations.

Partners are actively involved at every stage of programme implementation. With the participation in JMC meetings, they get acquainted with the latest development of the Programme. In addition, their role and remarks (if any) are from great importance during consultations on the texts from Guidelines for participants (GfA). Active participation is also demonstrated in the assessment and selection of project proposals to be financed under the Second call for proposals.

10. INFORMATION AND ASSESSMENT (Article 14(4), subparagraph 1 (a) and (b), of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

10.1 Progress in implementation of the evaluation plan and the follow-up given to the findings of evaluations

According to the requirements of Art. 21(1) of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 477/2014, "IPA II assistance shall be subject of evaluations, in accordance with Article 30(4) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) and Art. 56 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013, It is

included in the Evaluation Plan of the Programme which envisages two evaluations to be conducted during the programming period – Implementation and Impact evaluations.

According to the Programme Evaluation Plan (approved by the JMC on 29 June 2016), the first Programme evaluation (implementation evaluation) was envisaged to be launched in the second half of 2018. It was planned to assess performance and identify ways for improvement of activities under the Programme, to elaborate findings about the current progress and recommend solutions for improvements which could contribute towards the successful implementation of the Programmes, the decision-making process and potentially to provide feedback and important aspects for consideration for the next programming period.

Service contract with external consultant was concluded for the period 23.08.2018 – 23.03.2019 amounting on EUR 135 060,00 (VAT included), which to cover operational aspects and analysis of the achievement of the objectives of the three INTERREG – IPA CBC Programmes 2014-2020, managed by the Republic of Bulgaria and the cut-off date of the evaluation was 31 December 2018. The overall objective of the evaluation was: assessment of the current programme progress and provision of recommendations for further improvement of the overall management and implementation of the Programme, which could contribute towards successful achievement of its objectives, results and outputs. In addition, the evaluator is expected to potentially provide feedback and important aspects for consideration for the next programming period.

The main purposes of the external independent implementation evaluation have been defined in the Terms of Reference (ToR) as follows:

- Evaluation of effectiveness and efficiency of the programme management system of Interreg – IPA CBC Bulgaria – Turkey Programme 2014-2020, managed by the Republic of Bulgaria;
- Evaluation of effectiveness and efficiency of the implementation of the Interreg – IPA CBC Bulgaria – Turkey Programme 2014-2020, managed by the Republic of Bulgaria;
- Evaluation of the relevance, consistency and complementarity of the objectives of Interreg – IPA CBC Bulgaria – Turkey Programme 2014-2020, managed by the Republic of Bulgaria;
- Evaluation of the effectiveness and efficiency of the communication strategy under Interreg – IPA CBC Bulgaria – Turkey Programme 2014-2020, managed by the Republic of Bulgaria;
- Identification of potential for improvements and recommendations for the Interreg – IPA CBC Bulgaria – Turkey Programme 2014-2020, including key issues and findings, which could potentially contribute for the new programming period post 2020.

The Final Evaluation Report was submitted according to the set deadline in March 2019 and contained all the information needed as per the Terms of Reference.

10.2 The results of the information and publicity measures of the Funds carried out under the communication strategy

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The communication activities were focused in two main directions: awareness-raising and absorption capacity. Therefore, the purpose of communication activities can be defined as follows: to highlight the role of the EU and to ensure that assistance from the IPA Funds is transparent by proactively disseminating information and providing platforms that stimulate exchanges of experience in order to raise the awareness with the general public and to create the premises for high absorption of EU funds in the eligible area of the Programme by ensuring that all relevant information reaches the beneficiaries.

The information and communication materials are coordinated between the relevant Programme institutions, especially MA, NA and JS. The communication themes have been established following each target group: potential beneficiaries, direct beneficiaries, other stakeholders, European Union's institutions and bodies, national/regional/local media from both countries, general public, internal public.

During 2018 the **official website** of the Programme www.ipacbc-bgtr.eu was one of the main publicity tools to promote the Programme and to disseminate the relevant information in a user-friendly interface, which allows the necessary information to be found more easily. Content was added throughout 2018 to allow a greater visibility of cooperation actions and an efficient capitalization of the projects' productions and their use by the greatest number stakeholders. During the 2018 the Programme website was visited 50 042 times by 28 309 visitors, 101.14% more than 2017; New potential 35 project partners were registered in the Partner Search Database/Partners' search facility for the Second Call for project proposals and 60 public tenders were uploaded on the web site. Announcements, news and important information were also published on the web-sites of MA and NA (www.mrrb.government.bg, www.ab.gov.tr);

MIS System, including its section "Beneficiary portal" has been fully operational and maintained during 2018. The system ensures electronic exchange of information with applicants and beneficiaries.

Social Media – The Programme has accounts on Facebook (www.facebook.com/BulgariaTurkey/), Twitter (https://twitter.com/BgTr_IPACBC), YouTube (www.youtube.com/channel/UCX8un48A5Vn1ICz2xtbDkww) and LinkedIn (www.linkedin.com/in/interreg-ipa-cbc-bg-tr/). The channels were maintained and updated on a regular basis and are used to disseminate news stories to a wider audience. The top posts on Facebook in 2018 are related with the launch of the Second call for project proposals (746 people reached) and with European Cooperation day 2018 held in Burgas and Edirne. Facebook page reached 435 subscribers, Twitter 112 followers and LinkedIn 159 connections. Over 100 video materials from the projects implemented under the First Call were published on YouTube channel.

Promotional materials have been elaborated: 300 plastic pens, 350 writing notepads and 600 USBs. Additionally USBs, laptop bags, conference and shopping bags, promotional t-shirts, umbrellas, mugs and some small promotional materials as pens, notepads, agenda organizers, binders, sets of color markers, PVC stickers, etc. were partially disseminated during the events in 2018.

Mass Media Campaign was organized for the purposes of informing general public and potential beneficiaries of the Second call for project proposals events – Info days, Partner Search Forum, as well as for attracting general public and media attention for the EC Day 2018. The campaign was carried out in January, February, March and September included: press releases, announcements in local radios, Social media promotion.

11 Press releases were distributed to the local and the national media to inform about the possibility for submission of projects proposals under the Second call for proposals and to promote Programme and ECDay.

TV/Radio Campaign - one 30 seconds radio spot for the Second call for proposals.

Four Info Days for Applicants/Potential Beneficiaries within the Second Call for Proposals in the period 08.02-13.02.2018 were hosted by the Programme in Haskovo, Yambol, and Burgas, Republic of Bulgaria and Kirklareli, Republic of Turkey. The events were attended by 357 participants. The biggest event in terms of participation, resources spent and impact was the **Partner Search forum** organized in Edirne, Republic of Turkey on 22.02.2018 and had 280 participants.

EC Day 2018

EC Day celebration was held for a 7th consecutive year. Two parallel art festivals “Painting our future together” were organized in Burgas, Republic of Bulgaria and Edirne, Republic of Turkey on 21.09.2018 with 77 participants and guests, including children, partners and representatives of local and regional authorities as well as citizens from the cross-border region.

Joint Monitoring Committee meetings organized in 2018:

- On 09.01.2018, in Edirne, republic of Turkey - approved the Application package including Guidelines for Applicants and criteria for selection of operations for the Second Call for proposals and the Assessment rules for the Second Call for Proposals.

- On 13.12.2018 in Pomorie, Republic of Bulgaria - 42 project proposals were recommended for financing under the Second Call pro project proposals by the Joint Monitoring Committee. 29 project proposals within Priority Axis 2 “Sustainable Tourism” have been assessed with more than 65 points and were included in the Reserve list
- One **Technical Meeting** took place during 2018 in Pomorie, Bulgaria, concerning the smooth programme implementation.
- In the **European Year of Cultural Heritage** two of the cultural heritage projects implemented under the First Call are presented in INTERREG e-book "Connecting Cultures, Connected Citizens", prepared by European Commission and Interact Programme: Project “Development and promotion of gourmet and wine tourism in the cross-border region of Bulgaria and Turkey (TransGourmeTour)”, Project code CB005.1.22.046 and Project "Common cultural and historical heritage beyond the borders“, (TOGETHER), Project code CB005.1.21.139.

The communication strategy was set on general principles: Flexibility, Synergy with other Programmes and all important elements, and the horizontal themes, sustainable development, equal opportunities and non-discrimination and equality between men and women. Since these principles had a defining role in the development of the strategy and in establishing information and publicity measures , it is justified to consider the communication strategy as properly established and relevant, as well as effective and efficient in fulfilment of the Programme’s communication objectives.

The purpose of information and publicity measures in awareness-raising and absorption capacity and in disseminating key Programme messages has been achieved.

11. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION WHICH MAY BE ADDED DEPENDING ON THE CONTENT AND OBJECTIVES OF THE COOPERATION PROGRAMME (Article 14(4), subparagraph 2 (a), (b), (c) and (f), of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)

11.1 Progress in implementation of the integrated approach to territorial development, including sustainable urban development, and community-led local development under the cooperation programme

Not applicable

11.2 Progress in implementation of actions to reinforce the capacity of authorities and beneficiaries to administer and to use the EU funds

In relation to reinforce the capacity of Managing Authority, National Authority and beneficiaries to administer and to use the EU funds several capacity building trainings were conducted. Four Info Days for Applicants/Potential Beneficiaries within the Second Call for Proposals were held in Haskovo, Yambol, and Burgas, Republic of Bulgaria and Kırklareli, Republic of Turkey. Representatives of local authorities and potential beneficiaries were trained in preparation of project proposals. Special focus was given to on-line submission of project proposals/documents via Management Information System (MIS), section “Beneficiary portal”. The biggest event in terms of

participation, resources spent and impact was the Partner Search forum organized in Edirne. Training for the selected external assessors for the Second call of proposals was organized in Sofia.

11.3 Contribution to macro-regional and sea basin strategies (where appropriate)

Blue Growth Strategy is a long term strategy adopted by the European Commission in 2012 with main focus to support sustainable growth in the marine and maritime sectors as a whole. The objective of the Blue Growth strategy is to promote smart, sustainable and inclusive growth and employment opportunities in Europe's maritime economy

The strategy consists of three components:

1. Develop sectors that have a high potential for sustainable jobs and growth, such as:

- aquaculture (Fisheries website)
- coastal tourism
- marine biotechnology
- ocean energy
- seabed mining

2. Essential components to provide knowledge, legal certainty and security in the blue economy

- marine knowledge to improve access to information about the sea;
- maritime spatial planning to ensure an efficient and sustainable management of activities at sea;
- integrated maritime surveillance to give authorities a better picture of what is happening at sea.

3. Sea basin strategies to ensure tailor-made measures and to foster cooperation between countries

- Adriatic and Ionian Seas
- Arctic Ocean
- Atlantic Ocean

- Baltic Sea
- Black Sea
- Mediterranean Sea
- North Sea

Both PA of the Programme has strong contribution to actions supported by the strategy. The Programme areas covers parts of the Black sea area and supports partnership activities for preservation of marine and coastal environment (incl. litter reduction). PA 2 “Sustainable tourism” supports the development of coastal and maritime tourism. It is expected that some of the projects proposed for financing under the Second call for proposals will have direct contribution to the Strategy as the have activities addressing preservation of marine and coastal environment.

The Partnership Agreement between Bulgaria and the EU sets the frames of the assistance to be received from the EU structural and investment funds in the period 2014-2020. The Partnership agreement sets four priorities for the implementation of the EU Cohesion Policy: Education, employment, social inclusion and healthcare for inclusive growth, Scientific research, innovation and investment for smart growth, Connectivity and green economy for sustainable growth, and Good governance and access to quality administrative services. Also it exclusively states that the preferred priority areas for cooperation in the Programme between Bulgaria and the Turkey are in the field of environmental protection, promotion and development of natural and cultural heritage. Consequently, the Programme fully addresses these priority areas and provides support in preventing and mitigating the consequences of natural and man-made disasters in the cross-border area, improving the capacity for nature protection, sustainable use and management of common natural resources through cooperation initiatives and increasing the touristic attractiveness and potential of the cross-border area.

Disaster Risk Reduction Strategy 2014 – 2020 for Bulgaria. The strategy aims to outline a coherent framework for identification the strategic priorities for action to reduce the risk of disasters and to support the priorities measures implementation at national, district, municipal and field level. The strategy will also help identify and prioritize specific areas for cross - border and regional cooperation and will ensure solving problems in a coordinated way. The strategy has 4 main priorities:

1. Develop a sustainable national policy and secure a robust legal and institutional framework to reduce the risk of disasters.
2. Identifying, assessing and monitoring the risks of disasters. Expand and maintain effective national forecasting systems, monitoring, early warning and disaster reporting.
3. Building a Disaster Response Culture at All Levels management and society through the use of experience, learning, scientific research and innovation
4. Reducing significant risk factors and increasing risk preparedness for effective response to disasters at all levels of management

PA 1 Environment is relevant to the last three priorities of the strategy. Its two specific objectives are focused on preventing and mitigating the consequences of natural and man-made disasters in the cross-border area and Improving the capacity for nature protection, sustainable use and management of common natural resources through cooperation initiatives in the cross-border area. The most valuable contribution is actually the established partnership and common activities between the borders which is main objective of the Strategy.

The three NUTS III regions in Bulgaria that are covered by the Programme have regional strategic documents: Regional Development Strategy of Burgas district 2014 – 2020, Regional Development Strategy of Yambol district 2014 – 2020 and Regional Development Strategy of Haskovo district 2014 – 2020. In all of them the sustainable tourism development and the adaptation to the climate changes and protection of environment are defined as leading priorities. The CBC Programme supports exactly the same activities and thus contributes for the achievement of the objectives set in the three Strategies. In addition, fact, the three strategies for regional development have explicitly included a goal for international and European territorial cooperation.

The Indicative Strategy Paper for Turkey (the Strategy Paper) sets out the priorities for EU financial assistance for the period 2014-20 to support Turkey on its path to accession. It uses the political priorities set out in the enlargement policy framework to identify key areas where financial assistance is most needed and most useful in helping Turkey meet the accession criteria. The Strategy paper sets the two main pillar for the pre-accession assistance in the period 2014 – 2020: “Democracy and rule of law” and “Competitiveness and growth”. These two main pillar are further developed in seven priority sectors which will be supported by IPA II and are presented below:

1. Democracy and Governance
2. Rule of Law and Fundamental rights
3. Environment, climate action and energy
4. Transport
5. Competitiveness and innovation, agriculture and rural development
6. Education, Employment and Social Policies
7. Territorial and Regional Cooperation

The cross-border Programme contributes directly to the territorial and regional cooperation priority . In the ISP is stated that the „Interreg IPA CBC programme between Bulgaria and Turkey has turned into a popular funding instrument..... ”. This means that the Programme succeed to provide real contribution for the positive development of the cross border region and it has achieved one of his main objectives to create relations and partnership between the people from both sides of the border.

The Programme also provides strong contribution to the Environment, and climate action and energy sector. Turkey is located in one of the areas most vulnerable to climate change impacts, with risks to agricultural production, water supply, natural resources, ecosystems, public health, and consequent damage to livelihoods. Therefore the projects funded under PA 1 Environment address these challenges through the supported activities in preventing and mitigating the consequences of natural and man-made disasters and improving the capacity for sustainable use and management of common natural resources.

Trakya Region Development Plan 2014 - 2023 presents a vision of "Thrace developing with its high added value production whilst preserving its natural and cultural values; where collaboration and innovation prevails, and where the standard of life and wellbeing is at its highest." To realize this vision, twenty-one priorities and ninety-four policies under these priorities are suggested in terms of "People and Society," "Lifestyle and Environment" and "Production and Economy". PA 1 Environment contributes to the implementation of Initiative 10 related to protection of floods and earthquakes and PA 2 Sustainable Tourism supports Initiative 18 focused on development the tourism in Trakya region.

11.4 Progress in the implementation of actions in the field of social innovation

Not applicable.

12. FINANCIAL INFORMATION AT PRIORITY AXIS AND PROGRAMME LEVEL (Articles 21(2) and 22(7) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013)

For the purpose of assessing progress towards the achievement of milestones and targets set for financial indicators in the years 2018 and 2023, table 4 of Part A of this Annex shall have two additional columns (13 and 14):

The financial allocation of the priority axis						Cumulative data on the financial progress						Data for the purpose of the performance review and performance framework	
Priority axis	Fund	Category of region	Basis for the calculation of Union support* (Total eligible cost or public	Total funding (EUR)	Co-financing rate (%)	Total eligible cost of operations selected for support	Proportion of the total allocation covered with selected operations	Public eligible cost of operations selected for support	Total eligible expenditure declared by beneficiaries to the managing authority	Proportion of the total allocation covered by eligible expenditure declared by	Number of operations selected	Total eligible expenditure incurred and paid by beneficiaries and certified to the	Total eligible expenditure incurred and paid by beneficiaries by 31/12/2023 and certified to

			eligible cost)			(EUR)	(%) [column 7/column 5 × 100]	(EUR)		beneficiaries (%) [column 10/column 5 × 100]		Commission by 31/12/2018 Article 21(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013	the Commission Article 22(7) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.	13. ⁴	14. ⁵
Priority axis 1	IPA	Less developed	Total	13 339 303	84,99%	5 437 524,55	40,76%	5 437 524,55	2 585 746,40	19,38 %	16	1 508 469,59	<i>Applicable only for the Final IR</i>
Priority axis 2	IPA	Less developed	Total	13 339 303	84,99%	4 554 760,42	34,15%	4 554 760,42	2 491 454,61	18,68 %	27	1 424 497,39	<i>Applicable only for the Final IR</i>
Priority axis 3 - TA	IPA	N/A	Total	2 964 290	84,99%	1 669 662,00	56,33 %	1 669 662,00	506 664,24	17,09 %	4*	215 868,35	<i>Applicable only for the Final IR</i>
<i>Total</i>				29 642 896	84,99%	11 661 946,97	39,34 %	11 661 946,97	5 583 865,25	18,84 %	47	3 148 835,33	<i>Applicable only for the Final IR</i>

⁴ For the purpose of assessing progress towards the achievement of milestones and targets set for financial indicators in the years 2018, column 13 shall be added only for report submitted in 2019

⁵ For the purpose of assessing progress towards the achievement of milestones and targets set for financial indicators in the years 2023, column 14 shall be added only in the final implementation report.

PART C

REPORTING SUBMITTED IN YEAR 2019 AND FINAL IMPLEMENTATION REPORT (Article 50(5) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013)

13. SMART, SUSTAINABLE AND INCLUSIVE GROWTH

Information and assessment of the programme contribution to achieving the Union strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.

The Programme is designed to enhance and expand the cross-border cooperation between Bulgaria and the Turkey. Although it has relatively limited and people-focused nature it relates to several main EU strategic documents (Europe 2020) and macro-regional strategies (Blue Growth Strategy), and national and regional strategies. The coherence of the Programme with main strategic documents and the contribution of its priority axes to their respective goals could be found summarised in Annex 6.

The Europe 2020 strategy is the overarching strategy of the European Union for the 2010-2020 period. The strategy has broad, interrelated and mutually reinforcing goals, which form a reference framework for activities at EU and at national and regional levels. Europe 2020 defines three main priorities: Smart growth – developing an economy based on knowledge and innovation; Sustainable growth – promoting a more resource efficient, greener and more competitive economy; and Inclusive growth – fostering a high-employment economy delivering economic, social and territorial cohesion. The Programme has a high level of coherence with EU 2020. PA1 Environment contributes strongly to the goal of climate change and energy while PA2 Sustainable Tourism relates mainly to the goals of employment and poverty and social exclusion.

The projects under SO 1.1 . Preventing and mitigating the consequences of natural and man-made disasters in the cross-border area have contribution to the Europe 2020 target for Climate change and energy. Their main activities are focused on mitigation the negative effects over of the natural and man-made disasters in the cross-border area. Projects 084 and 165 are the best examples for this contribution.

The projects supported under specific objectives 1.2. Improving the capacity for nature protection, sustainable use and management of common natural resources through cooperation initiatives in the cross-border area also supporting the EU 2020 Climate change and energy target as they are building capacities and are raising the awareness for the importance of environment protection and the common efforts that have to be done to prevent and avoid the climate change negative consequences. It is expected also the approved for financing projects from the second call for proposals which include activities addressing preservation of marine and coastal environment also to contribute to the climate change objective.

The energy efficiency target is supported by the projects in SO 2.1 Increasing the touristic attractiveness of the cross-border area through better utilisation of natural, cultural and historical heritage and related infrastructure where all constructed or renovated buildings and sites follow the energy efficiency principles.

All the projects funded under PA 2 Sustainable development supports indirectly the creation of employment and reduction of poverty in the cross border regions. The projects are focused on increasing the touristic attractiveness and touristic potential of Bulgaria – Turkey cross border regions

which is expected to attract visitors, develop new businesses and boost economic development of the regions. Two of the projects selected as best practices are good example for this contribution. In project 107 unemployed people from the labour offices get the chance to be trained as touristic guides which improve their chances for finding a job. The implemented activities in project 103 lead to development of the sea tourism potential in region of Camlica and Ivaylovgrad and opening of restaurant, shops and guest house.

The Territorial Agenda of the European Union 2020 (TA2020) is a strategic document for territorial development aimed towards an inclusive, smart, and sustainable Europe of diverse regions. The agenda, which was agreed upon in May 2011, outlines several main territorial challenges for the European Union:

- Increased exposure to globalisation;
- Challenges of EU integration and the growing interdependences of regions;
- Demographic and social challenges, segregation of vulnerable groups;
- Climate change and environmental risks;
- Energy related challenges;
- Loss of biodiversity, vulnerable natural, landscape and cultural heritage.

Most of these challenges are relevant to the CBC Programme area and are comprehensively addressed in the Programme document. The challenges related to climate change, environmental risks, and loss of biodiversity are addressed by PA 1 Environment. The projects from SO 1.1 Preventing and mitigating the consequences of natural and man-made disasters in the cross-border area have direct contribution to addressing these challenges. All of them include activities for mitigation the climate change negative effects through supply of necessary equipment, construction and/or reconstruction of protective equipment and mobilizing joint efforts of the cross border population for reducing the environmental risks. Projects funded under SO 1.2 Improving the capacity for nature protection, sustainable use and management of common natural resources through cooperation initiatives in the cross-border area address the challenges related to loss of biodiversity and vulnerable natural heritage. They have initiatives related to protection of the nature, waters and natural habitats, waste separation, cleaning of protected areas, development of systems for monitoring environmental changes. But their key contribution is building the knowledge of the local population and promotion and popularisation of the importance of environmental protection measures and preservation of natural heritage.

The projects under PA 2 Sustainable Tourism address most strongly the challenges related to loss of cultural heritage. The projects under this priority axis have direct contribution for the protection of the cultural and historical heritage in the cross border regions as they encompass activities for renovation of cultural and historical sites, for revealing forgotten traditions and places, for promoting exchange of cultural and artistic techniques, for popularising traditions and cultural events.

All Programme activities face the demographic and social challenges as these are common issues for all cross border areas. The funded Programme activities strive to decrease the regional disparities, to strengthen the economic development, to create employment and to provide support to all vulnerable groups. These challenges are also covered by the horizontal principles of the Programme.

14. ISSUES AFFECTING THE PERFORMANCE OF THE PROGRAMME AND MEASURES TAKEN - PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK (Article 50(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013)

The Programme's progress toward achievement of the targets of the output and result indicators is quite good, based on data as of end-2018. Proper level of achievement of all milestones set out in the performance framework has been ensured as a result from the execution of the projects financed under the First Call for Proposals (contracts were signed in the end of March 2017).

The thorough assessment of the Programme progress made up to 2018 as regard to the planned milestones could be summarized as follows:

PA 1 “Environment”

The majority of the OIs and key implementation steps under PA1 have good achievement progress. At the end of 2018 OI 1.1.1 “Number of interventions related to risk prevention and management of natural and man-made hazards and disasters” has achieved its target for 2023 year at 67% and OI “1.2.1 Number of nature protected areas addressed by interventions” has overachievement of 200% of the set target due to the high number of contracted projects contributing to respective OIs. Based on the previous experience, the MA considered it appropriate to finance more projects in order to ensure final achievement of OIs, because at the contracting stage (in first quarter of 2017) it was not certain that all financed projects will be successfully implemented and all planned outputs will be delivered. In addition, the selection under the First Call for proposals was solely based on the quality of the submitted proposals, and they were ranked and contracted on general grounds.

The values of the financial indicator under PA 1 is also overachieved, as the amount of IPA fund certified is almost double of the target for 2018, since the projects were timely implemented and reported compared with previous programming period where the beneficiaries did not have sufficient experience in project implementation. It is expected that in the next years, the achievement of the financial indicators will follow the targets with normal deviation as result of the project implementation.

The two indicators which are lagging behind will be achieved with projects proposed for financing under the Second call for proposals.

PA 2 “Sustainable Tourism”

The OIs in the PA 2 also have satisfactory rates of achievement. Six of the OIs have overachieved their values with the projects from the First call for proposals and two of them reached achievement rate of over 60%.

The results of the analysis show that there is also high rate of overachievement of the OI 2.2.1 “Number of sustainable tourism strategies/action plans of common tourist destinations”, with milestone for 2018 of 2, and achieved value of 5 sustainable tourism strategies/action plans of common tourist destinations. Thus, the calculated rise of the level of achievement of this OI is 250% due to timely implementation of the projects contributing to respective OI.

Concerning OI 2.1.3 “Number of newly built / reconstructed facilities in / leading to touristic sites”, the achievement until the end of 2018 is “0”, since projects implemented which activities are linked to this indicator are on-going. Due to the nature of the indicator (investment one, related mainly to roads), the

target 2018 was also set at “0”, due to the fact that the implementation of the contracted projects is 24 months and its achievement will be reported in 2019.

The respective KIS 2.1.3 “Number of contracted projects addressing OI 2.1.3 “Number of newly built / reconstructed facilities in / leading to touristic sites” has achievement of 4 for 2018 while the target for 2018 is 4 (100% achievement), which means that with the successful implementation of these 4 projects and from the projects to be contracted under the Second call for proposals, the final target for 2023 of the indicator will be achieved also. Hence, the FI “Eligible certified expenditure of the priority axis 2 “Sustainable Tourism” is achieved at high rate - EUR 1 208 165, 59 were certified, compared to the planned EUR 821 171 for 2018 due to the high contract amount for these 4 projects (almost to the grant limits of the specific objective).

Only 4 of the OIs (namely the ones in SO 2.1. Increasing the touristic attractiveness of the cross-border area through better utilisation of natural, cultural and historical heritage and related infrastructure) have low achieved values. It is expected their target values to be achieved with the projects proposed for financing under the Second call for proposals.

Common efforts of the MA/NA

In order to achieve the set targets of lagging OIs, MA decided to apply new approach for selection of applicants under the Second call for proposals. The approach suggests creating separate rankings of project proposals under each OI. Therefore, as per the newly established Guidelines for applicants, preference is to be given to quality project proposals that contribute to OIs, which have not yet been achieved, and contracting as many projects from each separate ranking list as necessary for reaching the set OI target. Projects fulfilling only OIs that have already been achieved through the already implemented projects from the First Call shall only be contracted in case of available funding. Since the contracting of the projects under the Second Call shall be done in 2019, no new targets could be set out in 2018.

Nevertheless, one of the main challenges on Programme level is to ensure fulfilment, in the following years, of the targets for the underachieved OIs.