

**MAY
2017**

**ANNUAL
IMPLEMENTATION
REPORT
2016**

Interreg - IPA CBC
Bulgaria - Turkey



PARTNERSHIP

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 | <i>Interreg-IPA Cross-border Cooperation Programme Bulgaria – Turkey</i> |
| Version | 4.0 |
| Reporting year | 2016 |
| Date of approval of the report by the monitoring committee | |

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)*

During year 2016 all the activities concerning the 1st Call for proposals under the INTERREG-IPA Cross-border Cooperation Programme Bulgaria – Turkey (the Programme) which was launched in 2015 were successfully completed. The call was open for all specific objectives under Priority axis 1 “Environment” and Priority axis 2 “Sustainable tourism” with a total budget - EUR 11 028 255 (i.e. covering the Programme budget allocations for the years 2015, 2016 and 2017).

Within the specified deadline 195 project proposals were received showing a relatively greater interest in applying under PA 2 “Sustainable tourism” (108 applications received) in comparison to PA 1 “Environment” where 87 proposals were submitted.

In total 116 applications passed the administrative compliance and eligibility check and were subject to Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC) approval (at the JMC meeting held on 29 June 2016 in Edirne, Turkey) before proceeding to the technical and quality assessment. Following the Programme rules, all rejected at the administrative compliance and eligibility stage project proposals (77) had the possibility to submit complaints. In total 31 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 7 September – 20 October 2016. The number of projects that received average technical scores above the threshold for technical admissibility (65 points out of maximum 100) is 63, showing a sufficient number of good quality projects.

At the JMC meeting carried out on 8 November 2016 the JMC members provisionally approved for financing 39 project proposals at the total amount of EUR 10 750 816. All applicants which had objections concerning the results were given the possibility to submit complaints.

In the meantime negotiations and pre-contracting site visits were conducted during the period 21 November —16 December 2016. As a result 36 applications were recommended for concluding Subsidy contracts at the total amount of EUR 9 019 565.

The distribution of project partners per country is equal (40 from Bulgaria and 40 from Turkey) as the majority of the lead partners are Bulgarian - 26 out of 36 in total. The biggest number of the project partners in the projects proposed for financing are from Edirne region in Turkey and Burgas region in Bulgaria.

The distribution of project proposals by Priority axis and Specific objectives (SO) is as follows:

- PA 1 “Environment” – 15 project proposals at the total amount of EUR 5 014 651, including 6 project proposals under SO 1.1 and 9 project proposals under SO 1.2.
- PA 2 “Sustainable Tourism” – 21 project proposals at the total amount of EUR 4 004 915, including 6 project proposals under SO 2.1, 8 project proposals under SO 2.2 and 7 project proposals under SO 2.3.
- PA 3 PA “Technical Assistance”: 11.86 % of the total financial allocation of the Priority axis, amounting to EUR 351 645 distributed between 2 TA projects (operations), respectively MA and NA projects for technical assistance, including activities related to technical and JMC meetings, information and publicity events, purchase of promotional materials as well as MA, NA, JS and FLC units related costs (staff remuneration, travel and accommodation expenditures, daily allowances, office and administrative costs, etc.).

Data related to programme output indicators (OIs) in this report is based on the information provided by the applicants under the projects in their Application forms. Due to the fact that no subsidy contracts were signed and respectively no project activities were implemented by the end of 2016, the level of achievement of all Programme output indicators (OIs) for the year 2016 is zero. The figures for the years 2017, 2018 and 2019 (forecast) presented in Table 2 below are based on the analysis of the expected achievement of the respective OIs by the projects under the 1st Call which is expected to be signed in 2017 (the forecast is based on the information provided in the application forms concerning projects duration and their contribution to the Programme OIs).

On the basis of the performed analysis it could be estimated that 6 out of 9 OIs under PA 1 and 6 out of 12 OIs under PA 2 will be achieved as a result of the implementation of the selected for financing projects under the 1st Call. In addition, the data presented in the performed analysis gives assurance that all milestones for 2018 (included in the Performance framework) will be met.

Regarding the financial implementation of the programme, there are no funds transmitted to nor requested by the Lead partners of the projects due to the fact that no subsidy contracts have been signed by the end of 2016. However, during the reporting period there were expenditures covered under Priority Axis 3 – Technical Assistance for actions and services related to Programme management and implementation, such as: remuneration of the Joint Secretariat and First Level Control unit, travel costs, daily allowances, accomodations, organization of events, JMC meetings, trainings and purchase of promotional materials.

In year 2016 the already established Management Information System (MIS) has been further developed and constantly maintained ensuring that the programme data on each operation (including data on individual participants) is recorded and stored in electronic format for the purposes of project generation, monitoring, evaluation, financial management, verification and audit. The full functionality of MIS (including all modules and submodules) was upgraded and tested in the first half of the year.

The ‘Only once’ encoding principle has been respected at the level of operations and the protection of personal data and confidentiality for legal entities with respect to the information is guaranteed in line with the provisions of Directive 2002/58/EC, Directive 2009/136/EC and Directive 1995/46/EC.

The established “Beneficiaries portal” is functional and provides one-stop electronic exchange of information between beneficiaries and the Programme authorities. The portal gives the possibility for every lead partner to access the project folders on-line as well as create modify and upload relevant documentation in the Beneficiaries portal.

Although electronic data exchange has been put in place, a parallel paper flow of documents concerning official correspondence between beneficiaries and programme bodies remains due to the restrictions and requirements of the respective national legislation and rules.

In addition, during year 2016 an amendment of the INTERREG-IPA CBC Programme Bulgaria - Turkey was performed concerning the establishment of baseline and target values of qualitative programme result indicators that does not influence the already approved Programme priorities and objectives. The amendment was initiated by the MA in order to fulfil the requirements set in Article 8 of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013 where it is stated that for the programme-specific result indicators, baselines shall be established using the latest available data and targets shall be set for 2023.

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 | <i>Environment</i> | <p>Due to the fact that no subsidy contracts under PA 1 were signed and no implementation of activities started by the end of the year 2016, the presented information concerns only the expected outcomes from the selected for financing projects under the first call.</p> <p>In total 87 applications under PA 1 were received within the 1st Call for proposals, out of which 15 projects were proposed for financing at a total amount of EUR 5 014 651, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SO 1.1 - 6 project proposals - all of them being investment type with a duration 15 - 24 months. As indicated in Table 2, 3 out of 4 OIs targets under SO 1.1 are expected to be achieved through the |

| | | |
|----|-----------------------------|---|
| | | <p>successful implementation of the selected projects;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SO 1.2 - 9 project proposals, including 5 “soft” and 4 investment projects with a duration 12 - 24 months. The data in Table 2 shows that 3 out of 5 OIs targets under SO 1.2 are expected to be achieved through the successful implementation of the selected projects; <p>The first outputs under both SOs are provisionally expected in 2018.</p> <p>No significant problems were detected in 2016.</p> |
| 2. | <i>Sustainable Tourism</i> | <p>Since no subsidy contracts under PA 2 are signed yet and no implementation of activities has started by the end of the year 2016, there are no implemented operations to be reported for 2016.</p> <p>In total 108 applications were received under PA 2 during the 1st Call for proposals, out of which 21 projects are proposed for contracting at a total amount of EUR 4 004 914.82 as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SO 2.1 – 6 investment projects were proposed for financing with a duration 15 - 24 months. As indicated in table 2, the OI targets at Programme level will be partially achieved through the implementation of the selected projects. The first outputs under SO 2.1 are provisionally expected in the second half of 2019. - SO 2.2 – 8 soft projects were proposed for financing with a duration 12 - 15 months. All target OIs will be achieved within the successful implementation of the selected projects with the exception of OI 2.2.5 (the expected achievement is 60%). The first outputs under SO 2.2 are provisionally expected in 2018. - SO 2.3 – 7 soft projects were proposed for financing with a duration 12 - 15 months. The final OI targets will be fully achieved with the exception of OI 2.3.2 (the expected achievement is 40%). The first outputs on SO 2.3 are provisionally expected in 2018. <p>The underachieved target values for the respective OIs will be addressed during the initiation and implementation of the 2nd Call for proposals (to be launched in 2017) ensuring that all final targets will be fully met.</p> <p>No significant problems were detected in 2016.</p> |
| 3. | <i>Technical Assistance</i> | <p>During the reporting period programme related activities were performed for ensuring the necessary support for the 1st Call for proposals, including: assessment of project proposals, providing support to the beneficiaries (info-days, training, seminars etc.), organisation of technical meetings of Programme bodies, organisation of JMC meetings etc.</p> <p>The Programme management activities in 2016 included organizing and conducting of technical and JMC meetings as well as administrative and operational activities concerning MA, NA, JS and FLC unit (staff remuneration, participation in various events and training seminars, maintenance of office premises etc.).</p> <p>The Programme information and communication activities in 2016 covered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organising events/info days and partner search forum for promoting the 1st Call for proposal; - Organising European Cooperation Day 2016 – on 21 September 2016 in Burgas; - Supply of promotional materials for popularization of the Programme; - Ongoing upgrading and maintenance of Programme official website and MIS; <p>No significant problems were faced by MA and NA in 2016.</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 indicators¹ (by priority axis and specific objective)

| ID | Indicator | Measurement Unit | Baseline Value | Baseline Year | Target Value (2023) | ANNUAL VALUE | | | | | | | | | | Observations (if necessary) |
|------|---|------------------|----------------|---------------|-------------------------------|--------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|---|
| | | | | | | 2014 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | |
| 1.1. | Increased level of preparedness to manage emergency situations in the cross-border area | Scale | 2.24 | 2014 | 2.50 | 0 | 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 | 2.66 | 2014 | 3.00 | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | Frequency of reporting: 2018 2023 |
| 2.1. | Increased nights spent in the cross-border area (quantitative target) | Percentage | 7 721 074 | 2012 | Increased with minimum 1 % | 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 (qualitative target) | Scale | 2.50 | 2014 | 3.00 | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | Frequency of reporting: 2018 2023 |
| 2.3. | Increased level of awareness about sustainable tourism development in the cross-border area (qualitative target) | Scale | 2.77 | 2014 | 3.50 | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | Frequency of reporting: 2018 2023 |

¹ The baseline and target values of qualitative result indicators (RIs 1.1, 1.2, 2.2 and 2.3) are set in accordance with the Baseline and Target Values Study elaborated by MA on the base of a survey carried out in year 2015 and included in the cooperation programme – version 4.0 of February 2016.

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 ⁽²⁾ (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 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 10 | | | | |
| Fully implemented operations [actual achievement] | | | | | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | |
| Selected operations [forecast provided by beneficiaries] | OI 1.1.2 | Number of joint strategies / common guidelines, trainings, public awareness campaigns, exchange of experience for risk prevention and management of natural and man-made hazards and disasters | Number | 6 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 13 | | | | | |
| Fully implemented operations [actual achievement] | | | | | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | |
| Selected operations [forecast provided by beneficiaries] | OI 1.1.3 | Population benefiting from flood protection measures | Persons | 290 000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 200 000 | 202 749 | | | | | |
| Fully implemented operations [actual achievement] | | | | | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | |
| Selected operations [forecast provided by beneficiaries] | OI 1.1.4 | Population benefiting from forest fire protection measure | Persons | 480 000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 200 000 | 861 392 | | | | | |
| Fully implemented operations [actual achievement] | | | | | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | |

² Targets are optional for technical assistance priority axes.

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|----------|---|------------|-----|---|---|---|---|-----|------|--|--|--|--|--|
| Selected operations [forecast provided by beneficiaries] | OI 1.2.1 | Number of nature protected areas addressed by interventions | Number | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 11 | | | | | |
| Fully implemented operations [actual achievement] | | | | | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | |
| 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 | 0 | 19 | 30 | | | | | |
| Fully implemented operations [actual achievement] | | | | | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | |
| 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 | 182 | 422 | | | | | |
| Fully implemented operations [actual achievement] | | | | | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | |
| 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 | 0 | | | | | |
| Fully implemented operations [actual achievement] | | | | | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | |
| Selected operations [forecast provided by beneficiaries] | OI 1.2.5 | Number of joint management plans/ coordinated specific conservation activities for protected areas | Number | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | | | | | |
| Fully implemented operations [actual achievement] | | | | | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | |
| 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 | Kilometers | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1.54 | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|----------|---|------------|----|---|---|---|---|----|-------|--|--|--|--|--|
| Fully implemented operations [actual achievement] | | | | | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | |
| Selected operations [forecast provided by beneficiaries] | OI 2.1.2 | Total length of newly built, reconstructed or upgraded cycling routes / walking paths | Kilometers | 8 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0,744 | | | | | |
| Fully implemented operations [actual achievement] | | | | | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | |
| 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 | 0 | 0 | 7 | | | | | |
| Fully implemented operations [actual achievement] | | | | | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | |
| Selected operations [forecast provided by beneficiaries] | OI 2.1.4 | Number of reconstructed / restored cultural and historical touristic sites | Number | 15 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | | | | | |
| Fully implemented operations [actual achievement] | | | | | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | |
| 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 | 0 | 2 | 4 | | | | | |
| Fully implemented operations [actual achievement] | | | | | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | |
| 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 | 0 | 20 | | | | | | |
| Fully implemented operations | | | | | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|----------|--|--------|-----|---|---|---|---|-----|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| [actual achievement] | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 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 | 0 | 11 | | | | | | | |
| Fully implemented operations | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| [actual achievement] | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 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 | 0 | 4 | | | | | | | |
| Fully implemented operations | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| [actual achievement] | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 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 | 0 | 120 | | | | | | | |
| Fully implemented operations | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| [actual achievement] | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Selected operations [forecast provided by beneficiaries] | OI 2.3.1 | Number of networking events | Number | 15 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 15 | | | | | | | |
| Fully implemented operations | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| [actual achievement] | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 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 | 0 | 8 | | | | | | | |
| Fully implemented operations | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| [actual achievement] | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Selected operations | OI 2.3.3 | Number of public awareness | Number | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5 | | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|-------|--|--------|-----|---|----|----|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|---|
| (forecast provided by beneficiaries] | | initiatives promoting alternative forms of tourism | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Fully implemented operations [actual achievement] | | | | | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | |
| | TA3.1 | No of performed evaluations of the programme | Number | N/A | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | |
| | TA3.2 | Updated MIS system | Number | N/A | 0 | 0 | 1 | | | | | | | | |
| | TA3.3 | No of Monitoring Committee meetings | Number | N/A | 0 | 1 | 3 | | | | | | | | |
| | TA3.4 | No of publicity events for beneficiaries | Number | N/A | 0 | 11 | 15 | | | | | | | | |
| | TA3.5 | Number of employees (full time) whose salaries are co-financed by technical assistance | Number | N/A | 0 | 5* | 5* | | | | | | | | 5 BG FL controllers, 6 JS experts in Haskovo and 4 JS experts in Edirne branch office. The remuneration for JS staff in 2016 is covered by 2007-2013 BG-TR Programme |

*Share of 33,3% of the salaries of the Bulgarian First level Controllers are covered by the Technical assistance PA.

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

| Priority Axis | Indicator type (Key implementation step, financial, output, or where appropriate result indicator) | ID | Indicator or key implementation step | Measurement unit, where appropriate | Milestone for 2018 | Final target (2023) | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | Observation (if necessary) |
|---------------|--|-----------|---|-------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|----------------------------|
| PA 1 | OI | OI 1.1.1 | Number of interventions related to risk prevention and management of natural and man-made hazards and disasters | number | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | |
| | KIS | KIS 1.1.1 | Number of contracted projects related to risk prevention and management of natural and man-made hazards and disasters | Number | 3 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | |
| | OI | OI 1.2.1 | Number of nature protected areas addressed by interventions | Number | 3 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | |
| | FI | FI 1 | Eligible certified expenditure of the priority axis 1 "Environment" | EUR | 821 171 | 11 338 407 | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | |
| PA 2 | OI | OI 2.1.3 | Number of newly built / reconstructed facilities in leading to touristic sites | Number | 0 | 10 | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|-----|--------------|--|--------|---------|------------|---|---|---|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| | KIS | KIS 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 | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | |
| | OI | OI 2.2.1 | Number of sustainable tourism strategies/action plans of common tourist destinations | Number | 2 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | |
| | FI | FI 2 | Eligible certified expenditure of the priority axis 2 “Sustainable tourism” | EUR | 821 171 | 11 338 407 | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | |

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 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 | Less developed | Public | 13 339 303 | 84,99 % | 0.00 | 0 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0 | 0 |

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----------------------|-----|----------------|--------|------------|---------|------------|---------|------------|------|---|---|
| Priority axis 2 | IPA | Less developed | Public | 13 339 303 | 84,99 % | 0.00 | 0 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0 | 0 |
| Priority axis 3 - TA | IPA | Not applicable | Public | 2 964 290 | 84,99 % | 351 645 | 11,86 % | 351 645 | 0.00 | 0 | 2 |
| <i>Total</i> | IPA | Less developed | | 29 642 896 | 84,99 % | 351 645,00 | 11,86 % | 351 645,00 | 0.00 | 0 | 2 |

Regarding the financial implementation of the Programme, there are no funds transmitted to nor requested by the Lead partners of the projects due to the fact that no subsidy contracts have been signed by the end of 2016. However, during the reporting period there were expenditures covered under Priority Axis 3 – Technical Assistance for actions and services related to Programme management and implementation, such as: remuneration of the Joint Secretariat and First Level Control unit (Bulgaria), travel costs, daily allowances, accomodations, organization of events, JMC meetings, trainings and purchase of promotional materials.

The Annual Technical Assistance Plan for 2016 was approved by the JMC on 8 January 2016 together with a detailed budget breakdown and rules on Eligibility of Technical Assistance Expenditures. The indicative budget of Priority axis “Technical assistance“ for year 2016 amounted to EUR 351 645,00 or about 11.86% of the total Programme budget allocation to this priority axis.

The number of operations selected under Priority axis „Technical assistance“ (2 in total) in column 12 indicates the number of TA projects (operations) which include eligible activities to be performed by the managing and national authorities.

Table 5

Breakdown of the cumulative financial data by category of intervention³

(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 | | Categorisation dimensions | | | | | | | | Financial data | | | |
|---------------|--------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|--------------------------|-------------------------|---|--|---|--|-------------------------------|
| | Fund | Category of region | 1 Intervention field | 2 Form of finance | 3 Territorial dimension | 4 Territorial delivery mechanism | 5 Thematic priority dimension IPA | 6 ESF secondary theme | 7 Economic dimension | 8 Location dimension | 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 MA | Number of operations selected |
| PA 1 | IPA | Less developed | 085 & 087 | 01 | 01/02/03 | N/A | b) | N/A | N/A | BG341 BG343 BG422 TR212 TR213 | | | | |
| PA1 | IPA | Less developed | 085 | 01 | 01/02/03 | N/A | b) | N/A | N/A | | | | | |
| PA1 | IPA | Less developed | 085 | 01 | 01 | N/A | b) | N/A | N/A | | | | | |
| PA1 | IPA | Less developed | 085 | 01 | 02 | N/A | b) | N/A | N/A | | | | | |
| PA1 | IPA | Less developed | 085 | 01 | 03 | N/A | b) | N/A | N/A | | | | | |
| PA1 | IPA | Less developed | 087 | 01 | 01/02/03 | N/A | b) | N/A | N/A | | | | | |
| PA1 | IPA | Less developed | 087 | 01 | 01 | N/A | b) | N/A | N/A | | | | | |
| PA1 | IPA | Less developed | 087 | 01 | 02 | N/A | b) | N/A | N/A | | | | | |

³ Data concerning selected operations under PA 1 and PA 2 is going to be presented in the next Annual implementation report (for the year 2017)

| Priority axis | Characteristics of expenditure | | Categorisation dimensions | | | | | | | | Financial data | | | |
|---------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|--------------------------|-------------------------|--|--|---|--|-------------------------------|
| | Fund | Category of region | 1 Intervention field | 2 Form of finance | 3 Territorial dimension | 4 Territorial delivery mechanism | 5 Thematic priority dimension IPA | 6 ESF secondary theme | 7 Economic dimension | 8 Location dimension | 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 MA | Number of operations selected |
| PA1 | IPA | Less developed | 087 | 01 | 03 | N/A | b) | N/A | N/A | | | | | |
| PA 2 | IPA | Less developed | 075/079/090 092/094/095 | 01 | 01/02/03 | N/A | d) | N/A | N/A | BG341 BG343 BG422 TR212 TR213 | | | | |
| PA 2 | IPA | Less developed | 075 | 01 | 01/02/03 | N/A | d) | N/A | N/A | | | | | |
| PA 2 | IPA | Less developed | 075 | 01 | 01 | N/A | d) | N/A | N/A | | | | | |
| PA 2 | IPA | Less developed | 075 | 01 | 02 | N/A | d) | N/A | N/A | | | | | |
| PA 2 | IPA | Less developed | 075 | 01 | 03 | N/A | d) | N/A | N/A | | | | | |
| PA 2 | IPA | Less developed | 079 | 01 | 01/02/03 | N/A | d) | N/A | N/A | | | | | |
| PA 2 | IPA | Less developed | 079 | 01 | 01 | N/A | d) | N/A | N/A | | | | | |
| PA 2 | IPA | Less developed | 079 | 01 | 02 | N/A | d) | N/A | N/A | | | | | |
| PA 2 | IPA | Less developed | 079 | 01 | 03 | N/A | d) | N/A | N/A | | | | | |
| PA 2 | IPA | Less developed | 090 | 01 | 01/02/03 | N/A | d) | N/A | N/A | | | | | |

| Priority axis | Characteristics of expenditure | | Categorisation dimensions | | | | | | | | Financial data | | | |
|---------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|--------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|--|---|--|-------------------------------|
| | Fund | Category of region | 1 Intervention field | 2 Form of finance | 3 Territorial dimension | 4 Territorial delivery mechanism | 5 Thematic priority dimension IPA | 6 ESF secondary theme | 7 Economic dimension | 8 Location dimension | 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 MA | Number of operations selected |
| PA 2 | IPA | Less developed | 090 | 01 | 01 | N/A | d) | N/A | N/A | | | | | |
| PA 2 | IPA | Less developed | 090 | 01 | 02 | N/A | d) | N/A | N/A | | | | | |
| PA 2 | IPA | Less developed | 090 | 01 | 03 | N/A | d) | N/A | N/A | | | | | |
| PA 2 | IPA | Less developed | 092 | 01 | 01/02/03 | N/A | d) | N/A | N/A | | | | | |
| PA 2 | IPA | Less developed | 092 | 01 | 01 | N/A | d) | N/A | N/A | | | | | |
| PA 2 | IPA | Less developed | 092 | 01 | 02 | N/A | d) | N/A | N/A | | | | | |
| PA 2 | IPA | Less developed | 092 | 01 | 03 | N/A | d) | N/A | N/A | | | | | |
| PA 2 | IPA | Less developed | 094 | 01 | 01/02/03 | N/A | d) | N/A | N/A | | | | | |
| PA 2 | IPA | Less developed | 094 | 01 | 01 | N/A | d) | N/A | N/A | | | | | |
| PA 2 | IPA | Less developed | 094 | 01 | 02 | N/A | d) | N/A | N/A | | | | | |
| PA 2 | IPA | Less developed | 094 | 01 | 03 | N/A | d) | N/A | N/A | | | | | |
| PA 2 | IPA | Less developed | 095 | 01 | 01/02/03 | N/A | d) | N/A | N/A | | | | | |

| Priority axis | Characteristics of expenditure | | Categorisation dimensions | | | | | | | | Financial data | | | |
|----------------------|--------------------------------|----------------|---------------------------|----------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|--------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|--|---|--|-------------------------------|
| | | | 1 Intervention field | 2 Form of finance | 3 Territorial dimension | 4 Territorial delivery mechanism | 5 Thematic priority dimension IPA | 6 ESF secondary theme | 7 Economic dimension | 8 Location dimension | 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 MA | Number of operations selected |
| PA 2 | IPA | Less developed | 095 | 01 | 01 | N/A | d) | N/A | N/A | | | | | |
| PA 2 | IPA | Less developed | 095 | 01 | 02 | N/A | d) | N/A | N/A | | | | | |
| PA 2 | IPA | Less developed | 095 | 01 | 03 | N/A | d) | N/A | N/A | | | | | |
| Technical Assistance | IPA | N/A | 121 | 01 | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | 285295 | 285295 | - | 2 |
| | | | 122 | 01 | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0 |
| | | | 123 | 01 | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | 66350 | 66350 | - | 2 |

Table 6

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

| | The amount of IPA support ⁽⁴⁾ 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 |
| All or part of an operation outside the Union part of the programme area ⁽⁵⁾ | 0.00 | 0 | 0.00 | 0 |

⁴ ERDF support is fixed in the Commission decision on the respective cooperation programme.

⁵ In accordance with and subject to ceilings set out Article 20 of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013.

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

According to the Programme Evaluation Plan (approved by the JMC on 29 June 2016) the first Programme evaluation (mid-term evaluation) is envisaged to be launched in the second half of 2018. It will analyse the effectiveness and efficiency of the programme management system as well as the level of achievement of the set Programme objectives.

5. ISSUES AFFECTING THE PERFORMANCE OF THE PROGRAMME AND MEASURES TAKEN

(article 50(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013)

No significant problems that could have affected the Programme performance were identified during the reporting period.

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

A citizen's summary of the state of play in the Programme implementation is presented as an annex to the current annual implementation report and is made available 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

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)*

As prerequisites for the sound financial management and proper implementation of the Programme, are the setting up a Description of the management and control system and conclusion of Memorandum of Implementation between both partnering countries.

In that respect the Managing Authority has set up an adequate and fully operational institutional system, which in 2016 received an unqualified opinion by the Audit Authority for compliance with the designation criteria related to internal control arrangements, risk management, management and control activities and monitoring as set out in Annex XIII to Regulation (EC) No 1303/2013.

During the reporting period the consultations on the content of the Memorandum of Implementation were successfully finalised and resulted in its co-signing and entering into force, namely: the Memorandum was co-signed on 19 February 2016 – on behalf of the government of the Republic of Bulgaria and on 28 March 2016 - on behalf of the government of the Republic of Turkey. The respective ratification procedures have been successfully carried out by both partnering countries and respectively the document entered into force as of 17 October 2016.

Financing Agreement regarding Bulgaria- Turkey IPA Cross-border Programme 2014-2020 period was co-signed on 10 June 2016 - on behalf of the European Commission and on 11 October 2016- on behalf of the government of the Republic of Turkey. The Financing Agreement entered into force on 27 October 2016 after signature and ratification process.

Taking the necessary steps towards achievement of the Programme's objectives, the Managing Authority launched the 1st Call for Proposals on 16 November 2015. The Call was open for both Priority Axes at the total amount of 11 028 255 EUR, representing the Programme's financial allocation for years 2015, 2016 and 2017.

In addition to the information events carried out in 2015 (one info-day in Bulgaria and 8 training seminars in Turkey) in 2016 two info-day events took place in Bulgaria (on 7 January in Yambol and on 12 January in Burgas), as well as one partner search forum in Edirne, Turkey (21 January 2016). The above events together with the "Questions & Answers" section on the Programme's web site, have led to generating a substantial interest among potential beneficiaries to explore the possibilities for funding under the Programme, and as a result 195 project proposals were received within the deadline - 16 March 2016. A relatively greater interest in applying was observed with 108 applications received under PA 2 "Sustainable tourism" while under PA 1 "Environment" 87 proposals were submitted. Out of 195 submitted proposals, 116 passed the administrative compliance and eligibility check and were subject to technical and quality assessment and 63 projects received average technical scores above 65 points (out of maximum 100), which was the threshold for technical admissibility.

At the meeting held on 8th November 2016 the JMC members provisionally approved 39 projects for financing at the total amount of EUR 10 750 816. The proposed activities in the selected projects cover all specific objectives and show a balanced territorial distribution of project partners across the whole Programme area thus involving a wide variety of local stakeholders that ensures the achievement of the overall Programme objective for strengthening the Bulgaria-Turkey cross-border cooperation capacity in the field of nature protection and sustainable tourism.

By the end of 2016 the pre-contracting procedures with the selected projects including check for double financing, check for compliance with State Aid rules (for Bulgarian projects partners only), on-the-spot site visits of the investment projects and budget negotiations were finalised and as a result, a total of 36 applications were recommended for signing subsidy contracts at the total amount of EUR 9 019 565.

The distribution of projects approved for funding by lead partners is as follows: 26 projects with leading partners from Bulgaria and 10 - with leading partners from the Republic of Turkey. The total amount foreseen to be contracted under PA 1 "Environment" is EUR 5 014 650,54 (15 project proposals) and under PA 2 "Sustainable Tourism" is EUR 4 004 914,82 (21 project proposals).

Data related to programme output indicators (OIs) in this report is based on the information provided by the beneficiaries in the Application forms of the proposed for financing under the 1st call projects.

Due to the fact that no subsidy contracts were signed and respectively no project activities were implemented by the end of 2016, the level of achievement of all Programme output indicators (OIs) for the year 2016 is 0. The forecast for the years 2017 and 2018 is a result of an analysis of the expected OIs achievement under the projects that are to be financed under the first call. The analysis takes into consideration the projects duration and the expected contribution to the Programme OIs.

On the basis of the performed analysis a forecast can be made that 6 out of 9 OIs under PA 1 targets and 6 out of 12 OIs under PA 2 targets will be achieved as a result of the implementation of the selected under the first call projects.

In addition the data presented in the performed analysis gives assurance that all milestones for 2018 (included in the Performance framework) will be met through the implementation of the projects.

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)*

The principles set out in Article 7 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 on promotion of equality between men and women and non-discrimination were included in the Guidelines for Applicants of the 1st call for proposals, as the project applicants were invited to explain how their project would comply with and possibly even strengthen the links between project activities and this specific horizontal principle. A separate question dedicated to promotion of equality between men and women and non-discrimination was included in the Technical and quality assessment grid. During the quality assessment, maximum points in this section were given to projects that clearly demonstrated coherence with all 3 horizontal

principles (sustainable development, equal opportunities and non-discrimination, equality between men and women).

In addition, during the implementation stage, every Lead project partner shall present in the Final Project Progress Report information on how the project activities and outputs contribute to the horizontal principles in accordance with the provisions set in the Project Implementation Manual.

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*)

The principles set out in Article 8 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 on sustainable development were taken into consideration during the programming process and during the preparation of Guidelines for Applicants under the 1st Call for proposals. At the application stage, sustainable development was included in project selection criteria as quality criterion to be assessed in project proposals. The project applicants were invited to explain how their project would comply with and possibly even strengthen the links between project activities and sustainable development as a specific horizontal principle. A separate question dedicated to promotion of sustainable development was included in the technical and quality assessment grid. During the quality assessment, maximum points in this section were given to projects that clearly demonstrated coherence with this specific horizontal principle.

In addition, during the implementation stage, every Lead project partner shall present in the Final Project Progress Report information on how the project activities and outputs contribute to the sustainable development.

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

In accordance with *Annex 1 “Nomenclature for the categories of intervention of the Funds under the Investment for growth and jobs goal and of the Youth Employment Initiative”* of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 215/2014, the project proposals approved for financing under Priority axis 1, falling within the scope of intervention field dimension with codes 085 and 087, will support climate change objectives, as follows:

- Projects under code 085 “Protection and enhancement of biodiversity, nature protection and green infrastructure” with 40%
- Projects under code 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” with 100%.

The project proposals approved for financing under Priority 2, falling within the scope of intervention field dimension with code 090 “Cycle tracks and footpaths”, will contribute on 100% to climate change objectives as a whole.

Following 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 Managing

Authority prepared Annual monitoring report (SEA compatibility report) on the compatibility of the environmental effects of the "INTERREG-IPA CBC Bulgaria - Turkey" for the year 2016. The SEA compatibility report was coordinated and approved on 18th April 2017 by responsible environmental body – Ministry of Environment and Water of Republic of Bulgaria and was published on the website of the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works and on the official page of the INTERREG-IPA Cross-border Cooperation Programme Bulgaria – Turkey.

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)*

The most important role of partners is demonstrated in their participation in the Programme Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC) which makes the strategic decisions concerning the overall implementation of the Programme. The JMC is a permanently acting bilateral partnership structure, without legal personality, composed of representatives of Bulgaria and Turkey (national delegations), appointed by respecting the principles of partnership and representation. The national delegations are formed of members with voting rights and members in an advisory capacity, 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.

According to the JMC Rules of procedures any decision is taken by consensus between the national delegations of the partnering countries by respecting the opinion and suggestions of every JMC member during the constructive discussions.

Some of the most important decisions taken by the JMC in 2016 were as follows:

- approval of the results from the administrative compliance and eligibility check of the 1st Call project proposals as well as approval of Complaint procedure report concerning that stage;
- approval of the results from the technical and quality assessment stage as well as approval of Complaint procedure report concerning that stage;
- approval of the Programme document modification concerning establishment of baseline and target values of the qualitative Programme result indicators;
- approval of the Annual implementation report for 2014-2015 including report on implementation of e-Cohesion regulatory requirements and the Evaluation plan of the Programme;
- approval of all documents concerning Priority Axis 3 “Technical assistance” (Multi-annual indicative budget forecast, Annual technical assistance plan, Annual technical assistance budget, Eligibility of technical assistance expenditures).

Ensuring the transparency at each stage of the Programme development and implementation is crucial for the proper addressing the needs and challenges of the cross-border regions. Representatives of partners with relevant background to the Programme priorities and objectives, including non-government organisations, local, regional and national authorities as well as educational, cultural and tourism institutions took part in the coordination and development of Programme related documents such as the

Guidelines for applicants for the 1st Call for proposals. The partners were also involved in Programme publicity activities, e.g. information days, partnership forum and joint events etc.

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 approved Programme Evaluation Plan, the first evaluation is envisaged to be launched in the last quarter of 2018. It will cover mid-term analysis of the effectiveness and efficiency of the programme management system, the level of achievement of the set Programme's targets, including the relevance, consistency and complementarity of the Programme objectives as well as the effectiveness and efficiency of the Communication strategy.

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

The Programme authorities used various communication methods, aiming at increased public awareness and more effective communication. During 2016 various communication activities and tools were used to reach the wide audience:

- **The Programme website** is the main platform for information and publicity for both - internal and external information about the Programme. The website from the previous programming period was re-designed in 2015 and it is available on the following address: <http://www.ipacbc-bqtr.eu/>. The website sessions for 2016 were 27 320 and total page views were 87 933. In 2016 the targeted values of website activities were overachieved.

In order to ensure transparency of the decision making process, all JMC decisions were made public on the website of the programme, as well as the list of projects approved for financing (in accordance with the provisions of Article 115 (2) and Annex XII of EU Regulation no 1303/2013). The list is available on the Programme website and regularly updated. In addition, the list of all JMC members was published on the Programme website in accordance with Article 48 (2) CPR which ensure avoiding conflicts of interest. In November 2016 a "Handbook of Best Practices" and recommendations for a better steering future projects preparation was published on the website. The study was elaborated within the performed Impact Evaluation of the IPA Cross-border Programmes 2007-2013.

- **Social Media pages** are used by the Programme as an innovative approach to reaching the general public, as follows:

- In 2016 the official Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/BulgariaTurkey/>) had become more widely used tool and the messages were directed to various audiences. The top post in 2016 is from the Third Joint Monitoring Committee's meeting related to the approval of the projects proposed for financing under the First Call (721 people reached).
- In 2016 the Twitter page ([//twitter.com/BgTr_IPACBC](https://twitter.com/BgTr_IPACBC)) was used for important Programme related messages and provided links to the official website and other media sources addressing the Programme events or specific projects. In 2016 the Programme Twitter page received: 43 posts, 53 Likes and 23 followers.

- The **YouTube account** (www.youtube.com/channel/UCX8un48A5Vn1ICz2xtbDkww) was created in October 2016 to promote European cooperation day 2016 video.
- **Publication/ Info tool / Poster** The JS and MA participated in designing own poster for European Cooperation Day 2016 to advertise the event and distributed its copies to public and cultural institutions in the city of Burgas one week before the celebration.
- **Info-days** Two info Days were organised and conducted in 2016 – one in Yambol and one in Burgas, respectively on 7 January 2016 and on 12 January 2016.
- **Partnersearch Forum** took place on 21 January 2016 in Edirne, Turkey. More than 280 participants from Bulgaria and Turkey took part in the event. The event marked the end of the Info Days' promotional campaign under the First Call for project proposals. The campaign attracted significant public and media attention, especially the forum in Edirne - reaching more than 500 participants in total.
- **European Cooperation Day 2016** - for the fifth consecutive year the Programme celebrated the European Cooperation Day. The Programme bodies jointly organized a cross-border celebration initiative under the motto "Together by air, land and water" on 21 September 2016 in Burgas.
- **Media event concerning Impact evaluation** - on 9 December 2016 a media event was organized in Sofia, on which the findings from the impact evaluation of the IPA CBC programmes 2007-2013, including the "Handbook of Best Practices" were presented and widely discussed with the key programmes' stakeholders.
- **Multimedia tools** / More than 200 professional photos were taken during the European Cooperation Day 2016. Two professional video clips were also shot capturing the best of the balloon flights during the event. The photos and video clips were uploaded on the Facebook page and Youtube channel.
- **Massmedia activities** / In 2016 **press releases** in Bulgarian, Turkish and English were prepared and distributed among national, regional and local media - before and after each of the Programme events. In total 12 press releases were prepared and distributed.
- **Press review** / As a result of constant communication with the media, prepared and distributed press releases, organized press conferences and publicity events, over 40 different publications in the electronic media (web portals, local, regional and national newspapers, TV and radio stations) concerning the Programme were launched.
- **TV and radio spots in Bulgarian and Turkish languages** / One audio advertisement spot was prepared during the European Cooperation Day 2016 campaign. The version of the radio commercial was aired on 2 regional radio stations in Bulgaria.
- In 2016 a tender procedure for supply of **promotional materials** and wide range of gadgets for popularization of the Programme was conducted. In addition, cross-border maps and roll-up banners were designed and produced.

All communication activities in 2016 aimed at promoting the Programme, its priorities and financing opportunities, through creating communication tools to assist the potential beneficiaries in project generation and implementation, as well as popularizing the Programme results. In addition, all communication activities observed the EC requirements as set in the Communication and Visibility Manual for European Union External Actions. The implemented various information and publicity measures resulted in a high number of project proposals received under the 1st Call – 195 in total.

11. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION *(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 *(where appropriate)*

Specific actions to reinforce the capacity to administer and use the EU funds were envisaged for both Programme authorities and beneficiaries. During 2016 the capacity building initiatives were implemented:

- **Addressing Programme bodies:** MA, NA and JS staff members participated in various seminars and workshops organised by INTERACT programme or other training organisations (for example: by the Bulgarian Institute of Public Administration), as follows: Project Development Seminar for Interreg Programmes in Stockholm, Sweden; Project Monitoring and Reporting Workshop for Interreg programmes in Sofia, Bulgaria; Interact's project Management Camp 2016 in Gothenburg, Sweden (dedicated to topics related to project management in the context of Interreg programmes); Interreg Finance Management Camp in Seville, Spain; Successful management of Interreg-IPA CBC in Tirana, Albania (an event targeted to new staff working in Interreg-IPA CBC Programmes); Internal training concerning MIS and Beneficiary portal.

An external assessment of the administrative capacity and workload in the Managing Authority, First Level of Control Unit and Joint Secretariats under INTERREG-IPA CBC Programmes 2014-2020 managed by Republic of Bulgaria (including Bulgaria – Turkey programme) and identifying training needs was performed in 2016. The specific recommendations given by the external consultant are going to be taken into consideration in regard to future capacity building activities of the programme bodies.

- **Addressing potential project beneficiaries:** In order to promote the call and to support the potential applicants in project generation, in 2016 two info-day events took place in Bulgaria (on 7 January in Yambol and on 12 January in Burgas), as well as one partner search forum in Edirne, Turkey (21 January 2016).

Additionally to the above initiatives, in 2016 written guidelines and manuals for potential beneficiaries were developed and made available on the Programme website aiming to enhance capacity in both project applying and implementation.

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

Not applicable.

11.4 Progress in the implementation of actions in the field of social innovation *(where appropriate)*

Not applicable.

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

| 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 | Less developed | Public | 13 339 303 | 84,99 % | 0,00 | 0,00 | 0,00 | 0,00 | 0,00 % | - |
| Priority axis 2 | IPA | Less developed | Public | 13 339 303 | 84,99 % | 0,00 | 0,00 | 0,00 | 0,00 | 0,00 % | - |
| Priority axis 3 TA | IPA | N/A | Public | 2 964 290 | 84,99 % | 351 645 | 11,86 % | 351 645 | 0,00 | 0,00 % | 2 |
| Total | IPA | | Public | 29 642 296 | 84,99 % | 351 645 | 11,86 % | 351 645 | 0,00 | 0,00 % | 2 |