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ANNUAL IMPLEMENTATION REPORT

2021

for the

INTERREG-IPA Bulgaria - Serbia CBC Programme

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PART A

IDENTIFICATION OF THE ANNUAL IMPLEMENTATION REPORT

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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)

Key information on the implementation of the cooperation programme for the year concerned, including on financial instruments, with relation to the financial and indicator data.

General implementation of the Programme

As 2020, the year 2021 was very significant, in terms of timely contacting of projects approved under 2nd Call for Proposals of the INTERREG-IPA Cross-border Cooperation Programme Bulgaria - Serbia (hereinafter referred to also as Programme) on one hand, but also full with challenges during continuation of COVID-19 pandemic situation, on the other hand. In relation of the COVID-19 pandemic situation, the Managing Authority (MA) was continued with encourages for using the alternative measures related to soft activities (mainly soft ones, which requires gathering of a large group of people or include vulnerable target groups as children) in relation with all restrictive measures imposed by national and local level. In addition, MA approved 4 requests for temporary suspension of the project implementation.

Based on Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC) decision on 4 March 2021 the MA launched a procedure for amendment of the Programme document in compliance with provision of the Article 31, paragraph 5A of the Implementation Regulation (EU) No 447/2014 to the European Commission (EC). The amendment was related with modification of financial plan for the period 2014-2020 with the corresponding co-financing and breakdown between priorities and of the financial indicators in the performance framework for final target 2023. The total amount of EUR 66 248 was transferred from PA2 to PA1 in order to financed project with ref. No CB007.2.11.064 (revised budget after negotiation EUR 625 782,38 including EUR 38 933,06 additional own contribution) approved for funding under condition with Decision №49/25.11.2020 by JMC. The total amount of EUR 30 420 was transferred from PA 2 to PA 3 in order to finance project proposal CB007.2.32.025 (revised budget after negotiation 303 494,74 EUR) approved for funding in case of availability of funds by Decision №39/27.05.2020 by JMC. Additionally in order to fully absorption of funds under the PA3 (931 462,88 EUR) the managing bodies proposed to conduct the pre-contracting procedure with two project proposals in the revised list based on general ranking - CB007.2.32.089 and CB007.2.32.175.

The total verified amount until the end of 2021 for the projects is EUR 22 208 564,27 (65,12% from the contracted budget).

By the end of the year, 22 projects under Second Call for proposals were successfully finalized and 8 new projects (two of which – one under PA 1 and one under PA 2 was terminated and signed again due to withdrawn by Lead partner) at the total amount of the EUR 2 749 389,03 under the Second Call for Proposals were contracted as follows:

- PA 1 “Sustainable tourism” - 3 projects at the total amount of the EUR 1 302 438,66
- PA 2 “Youths” – 2 project at the total amount of the EUR 216 470,93

- PA 3 “Environment” – 3 projects at the total amount of the EUR 1 230 479,44 were signed after submission of amendment of the Programme document in compliance with provision of the Art. 31, paragraph 5A of the Implementation Regulation (EU) No 447/2014 to the EC.

Thus the total number of the contracts under the 2nd Call of the Programme become 61. With signed subsidy contracts in 2021 total 109,57% of the Programme budget is contracted.

Programming post 2021-2027

In 2021, MA in coordination with NA was continued the process of programming for future CBC Programme for programming period 2021-2027 as prepared the First draft of the Interreg-IPA CBC Programme Bulgaria - Serbia 2021-2027 (sections related with programme strategy - territorial needs and potentials, objectives and priorities of the programme, indicative actions, communication measures). The prepared First draft of the Programme was approved with Decision No 4 from 24 September 2021 by Joint Working Group (JWG) via video conference meeting.

In the February 2021 was signed a service contract for elaboration of Territorial strategy for integrated measures (TSIM) with the aim to meet the needs of the INTERREG - IPA CB cooperation programme 2021 - 2027 between the Republic of Bulgaria and the Republic of Serbia to contribute to a sustainable economic development of the respective region. The Managing Authority and National Authority, supported the local stakeholders for the elaboration of a TSIM. A Task Force (TF) was established representing all relevant regional and local authorities and bodies, as well as other local stakeholders to collaborate with Consultant during the elaboration of the TSIM under and to feed in results of dialogues with relevant stakeholders, databases, expert positions etc. The first draft of the Strategy has been published for consultations on 8th of June 2021. A public campaign for collecting project ideas under the TSIM was launched on 13th of December 2021 till 14th of February 2022 on both sides of the border. Over 120 organizations from Bulgaria and Serbia participated in six webinars of the campaign as the collected project ideas were gathered in group of interventions that formed the long and short list of operations contributing to the goals of the TSIM.

At the same period in February 2021 was launched procedure for “Elaboration of environmental assessment report (EAR) for INTERREG - IPA CB cooperation programme 2021 – 2027 between the Republic of Bulgaria and Republic of Serbia and for Cross-border Strategy for Integrated Territorial Development to be financed under the INTERREG - IPA CB cooperation programme 2021 – 2027 between the Republic of Bulgaria and Republic of Serbia”. A service contract for elaboration of EAR was signed in the middle of the April 2021. During the implementation of the contract was held two round of public consultations – one on scoping report for determination of the scope and content of the environmental assessment report in the beginning of the August 2021 (EAR) and one on the first draft of the EAR in the middle of December 2021.

3. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PRIORITY AXIS

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	SUSTAINABLE TOURISM	<p>Under the 2nd Call 3 projects at the total amount of EUR 1 302 438,66 were contracted and distributed per Specific objectives as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SO 1.1 "Tourist Attractiveness" – 2 investment projects with project duration of 24 months and the total amount EUR 1 161 678,36; • SO 1.2 "Cross-border Touristic Product" – during 2021 there were not contracted any projects; • SO 1.3 "People to People Networking" – 1 project – soft measures at the total amount EUR 140 760,30 was contracted . Duration of the project 15 months. <p>3 project were temporary suspended due to unfavourable situation related to the COVID-19 pandemic situation and imposed restrictions on national and local level.</p> <p>In addition four modification requested approval by JMC and signature of addendum (one budget modification, one change in partnership and two extensions of implementation to 15 months) have been approved.</p> <p>By the end of 2021, 21 projects were successfully completed and contributed to the Programme objectives and 8 projects are under implementation.</p> <p>It is expected with projects finalized under 1st Call and contracted under 2nd Call all 10 Output indicators under PA 1 to be achieved.</p>
2	Youths	<p>Under the 2nd Call for Proposals 2 projects at the total amount of EUR 216 470,93 were contracted and distributed per Specific objectives as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SO 2.1 "Skill and entrepreneurship" – during 2021 there were not contracted any projects

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
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SO 2.2 "People to People Networking" – 2 projects – soft measures at the total amount EUR 216 470,93 were contracted and were in process of implementation. Duration of the projects is between 12 and 15 months. <p>In addition four modification requested approval by JMC and signature of addendum (three budget modifications for inclusion of own co-financing and one extensions of implementation from 12 to 15 months) have been approved.</p> <p>By the end of 2021, 12 projects were successfully completed and contributed to the Programme objectives and 4 projects are under implementation.</p> <p>It is expected with projects finalized under 1st Call and contracted under 2nd Call all 3 Output indicators under PA 2 to be achieved.</p>
3	Environment	<p>In 2021 under the 2nd Call for Proposals 3 projects at the total amount of EUR 1 230 479,44 were contracted and distributed per Specific objectives as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SO 3.1 "Joint Risk Management" – during 2021 there were not contracted any projects; • SO 3.2 "Nature protection" – 3 investment projects at the total amount EUR 1 230 479,44 were contracted and were in process of implementation. Duration of the projects is between 12 and 18 months. <p>1 project was temporary suspended due to unfavourable situation related to the COVID-19 pandemic situation and imposed restrictions on national and local level.</p> <p>In addition one modification requested have been approved at the end of December 2021 by JMC and signature of addendum (an extension of implementation from 18 to 24 months), but the addendum was signed in the beginning of 2022.</p> <p>By the end of 2021, 9 projects were successfully completed and contributed to the Programme objectives and 7 projects are under implementation.</p> <p>It is expected with projects finalized under 1st Call and contracted under 2nd Call all 10 Output indicators under PA 3 to be achieved.</p>

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
4	Technical Assistance	<p>The indicative budget for year 2020-2023 amounted to EUR 1 119 674. In December 2021 modification of the Eligibility of Technical assistance Expenditures was approved by JMC.</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 units 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 online meetings; • Organization of online technical meetings of Programme bodies; • Pre-contracting procedures under 2nd Call (online); • Online meeting of Joint Working Group (JWG) for preparation of the future Programme 2021-2027; • Signed contract for elaboration of TSIM with the aim to meet the needs of stakeholders in the cross-border region, as well as organisation of six on-line webinars under the campaign for collecting project ideas that will be implemented under the TSIM; • Organisation and conduction of public consultations on a draft TSIM under the Programme for the programming period 2021-2027; • Conduction of tender procedure for EAR for INTERREG - IPA programme 2021 – 2027 between the Republic of Bulgaria and Republic of Serbia and for TSIM to be financed under the INTERREG - IPA CB cooperation programme 2021 – 2027 between the Republic of Bulgaria and Republic of Serbia”. • Organization and conduction of public consultation on a draft of the Environmental Assessment Scoping report and EAR under the Programme; • Organisation of online event for European cooperation day 2021 “EC Day Documentary Film Festival 2021”

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

Priority axes other than technical assistance

Priority axis	1 - SUSTAINABLE TOURISM
Thematic Priority	d - Encouraging tourism and cultural and natural heritage.

Table 2: Common and programme specific output indicators - 1.d

(I)	ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Target value	2021	Observations
F	1.1.1	Total number of reconstructed / restored cultural and historical touristic objects in the eligible border area	number	15.00	15.00	
S	1.1.1	Total number of reconstructed / restored cultural and historical touristic objects in the eligible border area	number	15.00	19.00	
F	1.1.2	Total number of small scale technical infrastructure, encouraging the visits to the tourist attractions	number	18.00	20.00	
S	1.1.2	Total number of small scale technical infrastructure, encouraging the visits to the tourist attractions	number	18.00	26.00	
F	1.1.3	Total number of created/reconstructed facilities for disabled people in the supported touristic sites	number	7.00	7.00	
S	1.1.3	Total number of created/reconstructed facilities for disabled people in the supported touristic sites	number	7.00	11.00	
F	1.1.4	Total number of information access facilities created/upgraded	number	9.00	9.50	
S	1.1.4	Total number of information access facilities created/upgraded	number	9.00	15.00	
F	1.2.1	Number of sustainable tourism strategies/action plans of common tourist destinations	number	6.00	7.00	
S	1.2.1	Number of sustainable tourism strategies/action plans of common tourist destinations	number	6.00	7.00	
F	1.2.2	Total number of newly established touristic products / services	number	5.00	10.00	
S	1.2.2	Total number of newly established touristic products / services	number	5.00	12.00	
F	1.2.3	Tools developed and/or implemented for marketing and promoting tourist products in the eligible border area	number	8.00	21.00	
S	1.2.3	Tools developed and/or implemented for marketing and promoting tourist products in the eligible border area	number	8.00	24.00	
F	1.3.1	Public awareness initiatives promoting sustainable use of natural and cultural heritage and resources	number	20.00	21.00	
S	1.3.1	Public awareness initiatives promoting sustainable use of natural and cultural heritage and resources	number	20.00	28.00	
F	1.3.2	Capacity building initiatives for capitalisation of the common touristic product/services	number	20.00	29.00	
S	1.3.2	Capacity building initiatives for capitalisation of the common touristic product/services	number	20.00	30.00	
F	1.3.3	Total number of joint events aimed at promotion and cultivation of the common traditions of the borderland areas	number	15.00	22.00	
S	1.3.3	Total number of joint events aimed at promotion and cultivation of the common traditions of the borderland areas	number	15.00	31.00	

(I)	ID	Indicator	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014
F	1.1.1	Total number of reconstructed / restored cultural and historical touristic objects in the eligible border area	11.00	10.00	2.00	0.00			
S	1.1.1	Total number of reconstructed / restored cultural and historical touristic objects in the eligible border area	17.00	16.00	11.00	11.00			
F	1.1.2	Total number of small scale technical infrastructure, encouraging the visits to the tourist attractions	17.00	13.00	8.00	1.00			
S	1.1.2	Total number of small scale technical infrastructure, encouraging the visits to the tourist attractions	24.00	23.00	19.00	19.00			
F	1.1.3	Total number of created/reconstructed facilities for disabled people in the supported touristic sites	6.00	3.00	1.00	0.00			
S	1.1.3	Total number of created/reconstructed facilities for disabled people in the supported touristic sites	9.00	9.00	7.00	7.00			
F	1.1.4	Total number of information access facilities created/upgraded	7.50	6.00	3.00	1.00			
S	1.1.4	Total number of information access facilities created/upgraded	13.00	11.00	8.00	8.00			
F	1.2.1	Number of sustainable tourism strategies/action plans of common tourist destinations	5.00	1.00	1.00	0.00			
S	1.2.1	Number of sustainable tourism strategies/action plans of common tourist destinations	7.00	5.00	1.00	1.00			
F	1.2.2	Total number of newly established touristic products / services	5.00	3.00	3.00	0.00			
S	1.2.2	Total number of newly established touristic products / services	12.00	5.00	3.00	3.00			
F	1.2.3	Tools developed and/or implemented for marketing and promoting tourist products in the eligible border area	10.00	7.00	7.00	0.00			
S	1.2.3	Tools developed and/or implemented for marketing and promoting tourist products in the eligible border area	24.00	10.00	7.00	7.00			
F	1.3.1	Public awareness initiatives promoting sustainable use of natural and cultural heritage and resources	16.00	0.00	0.00	0.00			
S	1.3.1	Public awareness initiatives promoting sustainable use of natural and cultural heritage and resources	25.00	16.00	0.00	0.00			
F	1.3.2	Capacity building initiatives for capitalisation of the common touristic product/services	14.00	0.00	0.00	0.00			
S	1.3.2	Capacity building initiatives for capitalisation of the common touristic product/services	29.00	14.00	0.00	0.00			
F	1.3.3	Total number of joint events aimed at promotion and cultivation of the common traditions of the borderland areas	12.00	0.00	0.00	0.00			
S	1.3.3	Total number of joint events aimed at promotion and cultivation of the common traditions of the borderland areas	30.00	16.00	0.00	0.00			

(1) S=Cumulative value - outputs to be delivered by selected operations [forecast provided by beneficiaries], F=Cumulative value - outputs delivered by operations [actual achievement]

Priority axis	1 - SUSTAINABLE TOURISM
Thematic Priority	d - Encouraging tourism and cultural and natural heritage.
Specific objective	1.1 - TOURIST ATTRACTIVENESS: Supporting the development of competitive tourist

Table 1: Result indicators - 1.d.1.1

ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Baseline value	Baseline year	Target value (2023) Total	2021 Total	2021 Qualitative	Observations
1.1.1	Increased visitors to the cross-border region	percentage	642,269.00	2014	1.00		0	Frequency of reporting: 2018, 2023

ID	Indicator	2020 Total	2020 Qualitative	2019 Total	2019 Qualitative	2018 Total	2018 Qualitative	2017 Total	2017 Qualitative
1.1.1	Increased visitors to the cross-border region					916,236.00			

ID	Indicator	2016 Total	2016 Qualitative	2015 Total	2015 Qualitative	2014 Total	2014 Qualitative
1.1.1	Increased visitors to the cross-border region						

Priority axis	1 - SUSTAINABLE TOURISM
Thematic Priority	d - Encouraging tourism and cultural and natural heritage.
Specific objective	1.2 - • CROSS-BORDER TOURISTIC PRODUCT: Capturing economic benefits from development of natural and cultural heritage in the border area through creating common cross-border touristic destination(s)

Table 1: Result indicators - 1.d.1.2

ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Baseline value	Baseline year	Target value (2023) Total	2021 Total	2021 Qualitative	Observations
1.2.1	Increased level of joint and integrated approaches to sustainable tourism development in the border area	scale	2.12	2014	2.50		0	Frequency of reporting: 2018, 2023

ID	Indicator	2020 Total	2020 Qualitative	2019 Total	2019 Qualitative	2018 Total	2018 Qualitative	2017 Total	2017 Qualitative
1.2.1	Increased level of joint and integrated approaches to sustainable tourism development in the border area						2.82		

ID	Indicator	2016 Total	2016 Qualitative	2015 Total	2015 Qualitative	2014 Total	2014 Qualitative
1.2.1	Increased level of joint and integrated approaches to sustainable tourism development in the border area						

Priority axis	1 - SUSTAINABLE TOURISM
Thematic Priority	d - Encouraging tourism and cultural and natural heritage.
Specific objective	1.3 - PEOPLE-TO-PEOPLE NETWORKING: Capitalising the effect of cultural, historical and natural heritage tourism on border communities through common actions

Table 1: Result indicators - 1.d.1.3

ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Baseline value	Baseline year	Target value (2023) Total	2021 Total	2021 Qualitative	Observations
1.3.1	Increased level of community involvement and awareness about sustainable use of cross-border tourist resources	scale	3.02	2014	3.50		0	Frequency of reporting: 2018, 2023

ID	Indicator	2020 Total	2020 Qualitative	2019 Total	2019 Qualitative	2018 Total	2018 Qualitative	2017 Total	2017 Qualitative
1.3.1	Increased level of community involvement and awareness about sustainable use of cross-border tourist resources						3.05		

ID	Indicator	2016 Total	2016 Qualitative	2015 Total	2015 Qualitative	2014 Total	2014 Qualitative
1.3.1	Increased level of community involvement and awareness about sustainable use of cross-border tourist resources						

Priority axis	2 - Youths
Thematic Priority	e - Investing in youth, education and skills through, inter alia, developing and implementing joint education, vocational training, training schemes and infrastructure supporting joint youth activities.

Table 2: Common and programme specific output indicators - 2.e

(1)	ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Target value	2021	Observations
F	2.1.1	Total number of supported youth-related small-scale infrastructure, training and information facilities	number	17.00	17.00	
S	2.1.1	Total number of supported youth-related small-scale infrastructure, training and information facilities	number	17.00	18.00	
F	2.1.2	Total number of young people involved in the supported youth entrepreneurship schemes and initiatives	number	573.00	573.00	
S	2.1.2	Total number of young people involved in the supported youth entrepreneurship schemes and initiatives	number	573.00	527.00	
F	2.2.1	Total number of youth networking initiatives supported by the Programme	number	15.00	28.00	
S	2.2.1	Total number of youth networking initiatives supported by the Programme	number	15.00	34.00	

(1)	ID	Indicator	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014
F	2.1.1	Total number of supported youth-related small-scale infrastructure, training and information facilities	17.00	17.00	12.00	1.00			
S	2.1.1	Total number of supported youth-related small-scale infrastructure, training and information facilities	18.00	16.00	16.00	16.00			
F	2.1.2	Total number of young people involved in the supported youth entrepreneurship schemes and initiatives	573.00	573.00	500.00	40.00			
S	2.1.2	Total number of young people involved in the supported youth entrepreneurship schemes and initiatives	527.00	527.00	527.00	527.00			
F	2.2.1	Total number of youth networking initiatives supported by the Programme	17.00	2.00	2.00	0.00			
S	2.2.1	Total number of youth networking initiatives supported by the Programme	33.00	18.00	2.00	2.00			

(1) S=Cumulative value - outputs to be delivered by selected operations [forecast provided by beneficiaries], F=Cumulative value - outputs delivered by operations [actual achievement]

Priority axis	2 - Youths
Thematic Priority	e - Investing in youth, education and skills through, inter alia, developing and implementing joint education, vocational training, training schemes and infrastructure supporting joint youth activities.
Specific objective	2.1 - SKILLS & ENTREPRENEURSHIP: Supporting the development of attractive environment for advancement of young people in the border region achieved through cooperation

Table 1: Result indicators - 2.e.2.1

ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Baseline value	Baseline year	Target value (2023) Total	2021 Total	2021 Qualitative	Observations
2.1.1	Level of young people's satisfaction as regards opportunities for professional and social realization in the border area	scale	2.42	2014	3.00		0	Frequency of reporting: 2018, 2023

ID	Indicator	2020 Total	2020 Qualitative	2019 Total	2019 Qualitative	2018 Total	2018 Qualitative	2017 Total	2017 Qualitative
2.1.1	Level of young people's satisfaction as regards opportunities for professional and social realization in the border area						2.84		

ID	Indicator	2016 Total	2016 Qualitative	2015 Total	2015 Qualitative	2014 Total	2014 Qualitative
2.1.1	Level of young people's satisfaction as regards opportunities for professional and social realization in the border area						

Priority axis	2 - Youths
Thematic Priority	e - Investing in youth, education and skills through, inter alia, developing and implementing joint education, vocational training, training schemes and infrastructure supporting joint youth activities.
Specific objective	2.2 - PEOPLE-TO-PEOPLE NETWORKING: Promoting cooperation initiatives for and with young people, thus enhancing mobility of young people across borders

Table 1: Result indicators - 2.e.2.2

ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Baseline value	Baseline year	Target value (2023) Total	2021 Total	2021 Qualitative	Observations
2.2.1	Increased level of youth involvement in networks across the border	scale	2.45	2014	3.00		0	Frequency of reporting: 2018, 2023

ID	Indicator	2020 Total	2020 Qualitative	2019 Total	2019 Qualitative	2018 Total	2018 Qualitative	2017 Total	2017 Qualitative
2.2.1	Increased level of youth involvement in networks across the border						2.55		

ID	Indicator	2016 Total	2016 Qualitative	2015 Total	2015 Qualitative	2014 Total	2014 Qualitative
2.2.1	Increased level of youth involvement in networks across the border						

Priority axis	3 - Environment
Thematic Priority	b - Protecting the environment and promoting climate change adaptation and mitigation, risk prevention and management through, inter alia: joint actions for environmental protection; promoting sustainable use of natural resources, resource efficiency, renewable energy sources and the shift towards a safe and sustainable low-carbon economy; promoting investment to address specific risks, ensuring disaster resilience and developing disaster management systems and emergency preparedness.

Table 2: Common and programme specific output indicators - 3.b

(I)	ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Target value	2021	Observations
F	3.1.1	Total number of joint activities aimed at establishing joint early warning and disaster management systems	number	6.00	6.00	
S	3.1.1	Total number of joint activities aimed at establishing joint early warning and disaster management systems	number	6.00	6.00	
F	3.1.2	Purchased specialised equipment related to disaster management	number	15.00	15.00	
S	3.1.2	Purchased specialised equipment related to disaster management	number	15.00	20.00	
F	3.1.3	Total number of supported small-scale interventions/investments in green infrastructure for natural water retention.	number	5.00	3.00	
S	3.1.3	Total number of supported small-scale interventions/investments in green infrastructure for natural water retention.	number	5.00	6.00	
F	3.1.4	Total number of people participated in risk prevention and management training activities	number	600.00	546.00	
S	3.1.4	Total number of people participated in risk prevention and management training activities	number	600.00	696.00	
F	3.1.5	Population benefiting from flood protection measures	number	986,113.00	833,329.00	
S	3.1.5	Population benefiting from flood protection measures	number	986,113.00	707,268.00	
F	3.1.6	Population benefiting from forest fire protection measure	number	1,586,332.00	1,614,149.00	
S	3.1.6	Population benefiting from forest fire protection measure	number	1,586,332.00	1,229,500.00	
F	3.2.1	Protected areas/Natura 2000 sites in the border region with EU conform management plans	number	2.00	0.00	
S	3.2.1	Protected areas/Natura 2000 sites in the border region with EU conform management plans	number	2.00	2.00	
F	3.2.2	Total number of joint interventions, addressing the preservation and restoration of CBC ecosystems, as well as preservation and improvement of the quality of soils, air and water.	number	12.00	11.00	
S	3.2.2	Total number of joint interventions, addressing the preservation and restoration of CBC ecosystems, as well as preservation and improvement of the quality of soils, air and water.	number	12.00	20.00	
F	3.2.3	Education and awareness raising joint initiatives, in the field of preservation and protection of natural heritage, biodiversity and landscape	number	15.00	15.00	
S	3.2.3	Education and awareness raising joint initiatives, in the field of preservation and protection of natural heritage, biodiversity and landscape	number	15.00	26.00	
F	3.2.4	Capacity building initiatives, trainings, exchange of experience and know-how in the field of sustainable use of natural resources	number	15.00	16.00	
S	3.2.4	Capacity building initiatives, trainings, exchange of experience and know-how in the field of sustainable use of natural resources	number	15.00	21.00	

(I)	ID	Indicator	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014
F	3.1.1	Total number of joint activities aimed at establishing joint early warning and disaster management systems	5.00	5.00	3.00	0.00			
S	3.1.1	Total number of joint activities aimed at establishing joint early warning and disaster management systems	6.00	6.00	5.00	5.00			
F	3.1.2	Purchased specialised equipment related to disaster management	13.00	12.00	3.00	0.00			
S	3.1.2	Purchased specialised equipment related to disaster management	20.00	20.00	13.00	13.00			
F	3.1.3	Total number of supported small-scale interventions/investments in green infrastructure for natural water retention.	3.00	2.00	2.00	0.00			
S	3.1.3	Total number of supported small-scale interventions/investments in green infrastructure for natural water retention.	6.00	8.00	3.00	3.00			
F	3.1.4	Total number of people participated in risk prevention and management training activities	486.00	486.00	183.00	0.00			
S	3.1.4	Total number of people participated in risk prevention and management training activities	696.00	716.00	386.00	386.00			
F	3.1.5	Population benefiting from flood protection measures	810,145.00	810,145.00	808,658.00	0.00			
S	3.1.5	Population benefiting from flood protection measures	707,268.00	758,582.00	511,300.00	511,300.00			
F	3.1.6	Population benefiting from forest fire protection measure	1,586,332.00	1,586,332.00	280,898.00	0.00			
S	3.1.6	Population benefiting from forest fire protection measure	1,229,500.00	1,229,500.00	1,206,000.00	1,206,000.00			
F	3.2.1	Protected areas/Natura 2000 sites in the border region with EU conform management plans	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00			
S	3.2.1	Protected areas/Natura 2000 sites in the border region with EU conform management plans	2.00	2.00	0.00	0.00			
F	3.2.2	Total number of joint interventions, addressing the preservation and restoration of CBC ecosystems, as well as preservation and improvement of the quality of soils, air and water.	5.00	4.00	2.00	0.00			
S	3.2.2	Total number of joint interventions, addressing the preservation and restoration of CBC ecosystems, as well as preservation and improvement of the quality of soils, air and water.	16.00	16.00	5.00	5.00			
F	3.2.3	Education and awareness raising joint initiatives, in the field of preservation and protection of natural heritage, biodiversity and landscape	4.00	4.00	2.00	0.00			
S	3.2.3	Education and awareness raising joint initiatives, in the field of preservation and protection of natural heritage, biodiversity and landscape	21.00	21.00	4.00	4.00			
F	3.2.4	Capacity building initiatives, trainings, exchange of experience and know-how in the field of sustainable use of natural resources	7.00	4.00	4.00	0.00			
S	3.2.4	Capacity building initiatives, trainings, exchange of experience and know-how in the field of sustainable use of natural resources	18.00	18.00	4.00	4.00			

(1) S=Cumulative value - outputs to be delivered by selected operations [forecast provided by beneficiaries], F=Cumulative value - outputs delivered by operations [actual achievement]

Priority axis	3 - Environment
Thematic Priority	b - Protecting the environment and promoting climate change adaptation and mitigation, risk prevention and management through, inter alia: joint actions for environmental protection; promoting sustainable use of natural resources, resource efficiency, renewable energy sources and the shift towards a safe and sustainable low-carbon economy; promoting investment to address specific risks, ensuring disaster resilience and developing disaster management systems and emergency preparedness.
Specific objective	3.1 - JOINT RISK MANAGEMENT: Preventing and mitigating the consequences of natural and man-made cross-border disasters

Table 1: Result indicators - 3.b.3.1

ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Baseline value	Baseline year	Target value (2023) Total	2021 Total	2021 Qualitative	Observations
3.1.1	Increased level of preparedness to manage risks of transnational dimension	scale	1.90	2014	2.50		0	Frequency of reporting: 2018, 2023

ID	Indicator	2020 Total	2020 Qualitative	2019 Total	2019 Qualitative	2018 Total	2018 Qualitative	2017 Total	2017 Qualitative
3.1.1	Increased level of preparedness to manage risks of transnational dimension				2.33		2.33		

ID	Indicator	2016 Total	2016 Qualitative	2015 Total	2015 Qualitative	2014 Total	2014 Qualitative
3.1.1	Increased level of preparedness to manage risks of transnational dimension						

Priority axis	3 - Environment
Thematic Priority	b - Protecting the environment and promoting climate change adaptation and mitigation, risk prevention and management through, inter alia: joint actions for environmental protection; promoting sustainable use of natural resources, resource efficiency, renewable energy sources and the shift towards a safe and sustainable low-carbon economy; promoting investment to address specific risks, ensuring disaster resilience and developing disaster management systems and emergency preparedness.
Specific objective	3.2 - NATURE PROTECTION: Promoting and enhancing the utilization of common natural resources, as well as stimulating nature protection in the programme area, through joint initiatives across the border

Table 1: Result indicators - 3.b.3.2

ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Baseline value	Baseline year	Target value (2023) Total	2021 Total	2021 Qualitative	Observations
3.2.1	Increased capacity for nature protection and sustainable use of common natural resources in the border region	scale	2.13	2014	2.50		0	Frequency of reporting: 2018, 2023

ID	Indicator	2020 Total	2020 Qualitative	2019 Total	2019 Qualitative	2018 Total	2018 Qualitative	2017 Total	2017 Qualitative
3.2.1	Increased capacity for nature protection and sustainable use of common natural resources in the border region						2.34		

ID	Indicator	2016 Total	2016 Qualitative	2015 Total	2015 Qualitative	2014 Total	2014 Qualitative
3.2.1	Increased capacity for nature protection and sustainable use of common natural resources in the border region						

Priority axes for technical assistance

Priority axis	4 - Technical Assistance
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Table 2: Common and programme specific output indicators - 4.Technical Assistance

(1)	ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Target value	2021	Observations
F	4.1.1	Number of performed evaluations of the programme	number	2.00	0	Not cumulative.
S	4.1.1	Number of performed evaluations of the programme	number	2.00	0	Not cumulative.
F	4.1.2	Updated MIS system	number	1.00	0	Not cumulative.
S	4.1.2	Updated MIS system	number	1.00	0	Not cumulative.
F	4.1.3	Number of Monitoring Committee meetings	number	14.00	1	Not cumulative.
S	4.1.3	Number of Monitoring Committee meetings	number	14.00	1	Not cumulative.
F	4.1.4	Number of publicity events for beneficiaries	number	4.00	7	Not cumulative.
S	4.1.4	Number of publicity events for beneficiaries	number	4.00	7	Not cumulative.
F	4.1.5	Number of employees (full time) whose salaries are co-financed by technical assistance	number	8.00	37	Not cumulative.
S	4.1.5	Number of employees (full time) whose salaries are co-financed by technical assistance	number	8.00	37	11 BG FL controllers, 14 MA experts, 5 JS experts in Sofia (1 ongoing competition for JS expert in Sofia), 4 JS experts in Nis, and 3 SR FL controllers.

(1)	ID	Indicator	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014
F	4.1.1	Number of performed evaluations of the programme	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
S	4.1.1	Number of performed evaluations of the programme	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
F	4.1.2	Updated MIS system	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
S	4.1.2	Updated MIS system	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
F	4.1.3	Number of Monitoring Committee meetings	1.00	1.00	2.00	1.00	2.00	1.00	1.00
S	4.1.3	Number of Monitoring Committee meetings	1.00	1.00	2.00	1.00	2.00	1.00	1.00
F	4.1.4	Number of publicity events for beneficiaries	2.00	4.00	13.00	3.00	8.00	12.00	12.00
S	4.1.4	Number of publicity events for beneficiaries	2.00	4.00	13.00	3.00	8.00	12.00	12.00
F	4.1.5	Number of employees (full time) whose salaries are co-financed by technical assistance	32.00	29.00	27.00	28.00	12.00	5.00	5.00
S	4.1.5	Number of employees (full time) whose salaries are co-financed by technical assistance	32.00	30.00	22.00	28.00	12.00	5.00	5.00

(1) S=Cumulative value - outputs to be delivered by selected operations [forecast provided by beneficiaries], F=Cumulative value - outputs delivered by operations [actual achievement]

3.3 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	2021	Observations
1	F	1	Eligible certified expenditure of the priority axis 1 "Sustainable Tourism "	EUR	734 770*	11,935,790.00	7,238,928.37	
1	I	1.1.2	Number of projects contracted related to small scale technical infrastructure, encouraging the visits to the tourist attractions	number	8	12.00	15.00	
1	O	1.1.2	Total number of small scale technical infrastructure, encouraging the visits to the tourist attractions	number	4	18.00	20.00	
1	O	1.2.3	Tools developed and/or implemented for marketing and promoting tourist products in the eligible border area	number	4	8.00	21.00	
2	F	2	Eligible certified expenditure of the priority axis 2 "Youths "	EUR	524 836*	6,495,821.00	4,707,391.99	
2	I	2.1.1	Number of projects contracted related to youth-related small-scale infrastructure, training and information facilities	number	9	9.00	9.00	
2	O	2.1.1	Total number of supported youth-related small-scale infrastructure, training and information facilities	number	2	17.00	17.00	
3	F	3	Eligible certified expenditure of the priority axis 3 "Environment "	EUR	629 803*	12,260,420.00	7,402,064.70	
3	I	3.1.1	Number of projects contracted addressing joint early warning and disaster management systems	number	5	6.00	6.00	
3	O	3.1.1	Total number of joint activities aimed at establishing joint early warning and disaster management systems	number	2	6.00	6.00	

Priority axis	Ind type	ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
1	F	1	Eligible certified expenditure of the priority axis 1 "Sustainable Tourism "	EUR	5,938,490.38	4,796,955.24	2,012,900.30	105,202.86	0.00
1	I	1.1.2	Number of projects contracted related to small scale technical infrastructure, encouraging the visits to the tourist attractions	number	14.00	13.00	11.00	11.00	8.00
1	O	1.1.2	Total number of small scale technical infrastructure, encouraging the visits to the tourist attractions	number	17.00	13.00	8.00	1.00	0.00
1	O	1.2.3	Tools developed and/or implemented for marketing and promoting tourist products in the eligible border area	number	10.00	7.00	7.00	0.00	0.00
2	F	2	Eligible certified expenditure of the priority axis 2 "Youths "	EUR	4,142,305.82	3,574,687.72	1,980,434.54	205,579.49	0.00
2	I	2.1.1	Number of projects contracted related to youth-related small-scale infrastructure, training and information facilities	number	9.00	8.00	8.00	8.00	8.00
2	O	2.1.1	Total number of supported youth-related small-scale infrastructure, training and information facilities	number	17.00	17.00	12.00	1.00	0.00
3	F	3	Eligible certified expenditure of the priority axis 3 "Environment "	EUR	6,370,553.16	4,595,651.48	1,828,420.99	111,520.38	0.00
3	I	3.1.1	Number of projects contracted addressing joint early warning and disaster management systems	number	6.00	6.00	5.00	5.00	5.00
3	O	3.1.1	Total number of joint activities aimed at establishing joint early warning and disaster management systems	number	5.00	5.00	3.00	0.00	0.00

Priority axis	Ind type	ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	2015	2014
1	F	1	Eligible certified expenditure of the priority axis 1 "Sustainable Tourism "	EUR		
1	I	1.1.2	Number of projects contracted related to small scale technical infrastructure, encouraging the visits to the tourist attractions	number		
1	O	1.1.2	Total number of small scale technical infrastructure, encouraging the visits to the tourist attractions	number		
1	O	1.2.3	Tools developed and/or implemented for marketing and promoting tourist products in the eligible border area	number		
2	F	2	Eligible certified expenditure of the priority axis 2 "Youths "	EUR		
2	I	2.1.1	Number of projects contracted related to youth-related small-scale infrastructure, training and information facilities	number		
2	O	2.1.1	Total number of supported youth-related small-scale infrastructure, training and information facilities	number		
3	F	3	Eligible certified expenditure of the priority axis 3 "Environment "	EUR		
3	I	3.1.1	Number of projects contracted addressing joint early warning and disaster management systems	number		
3	O	3.1.1	Total number of joint activities aimed at establishing joint early warning and disaster management systems	number		

3.4. Financial data

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 (Model for transmission of financial data) and table 17 of model for cooperation programmes under IPA.

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
1	Public	12,002,038.00	85.00	13,495,527.61	112.44%	13,058,087.48	7,688,095.02	64.06%	43
2	Public	6,399,153.00	85.00	7,111,931.48	111.14%	6,907,837.88	4,989,338.15	77.97%	28
3	Public	12,290,840.00	85.00	13,600,382.73	110.65%	13,447,923.86	7,752,096.96	63.07%	28
4	Public	3,410,225.00	85.00	3,158,563.37	92.62%	3,158,563.37	1,779,034.14	52.17%	12
Total		34,102,256.00	85.00	37,366,405.19	109.57%	36,572,412.59	22,208,564.27	65.12%	111

Where applicable, the use of any contribution from third countries participating in the cooperation programme should be provided (for example IPA and ENI, Norway, Switzerland)

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Table 6: Cumulative cost of all or part of an operation implemented outside the Union part of the programme area

1. Operation (2)	2. The amount of IPA support(1) envisaged to be used for all or part of an operation implemented outside the Union part of the programme area based on selected operations	3. Share of the total financial allocation to all or part of an operation located outside the Union part of the programme area (%) (column 2/total amount allocated to the support from the IPA at programme level * 100)	4. 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	5. Share of the total financial allocation to all or part of an operation located outside the Union part of the programme area (%) (column 4/total amount allocated to the support from the IPA at programme level *100)
	1 601 674,99	5,53%	1 045 409,33	3,61%

(1) IPA support is the Commission decision on the respective cooperation programme.

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

4. SYNTHESIS OF THE EVALUATIONS

According to the Programme Evaluation Plan (approved on 21.04.2016 by the JMC) the Implementation/mid-term evaluation of the Programme had been launched in June 2018. Tender procedure for Implementation evaluation under Interreg - IPA CBC Programmes, managed by the Republic of Bulgaria, had been completed and service contract with external consultant was signed on 23th of August 2018 with 7 months duration.

The contract ended in March 2019 and the Implementation evaluation report of the Programme 2014-2020 has been prepared in accordance with the provisions of Art. 56 (3) of the Regulation (EU) № 1303/2013.

The Report had been submitted and approved with JMC Decision on 18 June 2019. The Action plan for implementation of the recommendations for the programming period 2014-2020 and recommendations for the programming period post 2020 was presented and approved on JMC meeting held on 08 November 2019.

The results about mid-term evaluation of the Programme was reported in the Annual Implementation report for 2019. The recommendations from the evaluation were accepted and taken into account in the process of preparation of the Interreg-VI-A IPA Bulgaria - Serbia Programme for the new programming period.

Name	Fund	From month	From year	To month	To year	Type of evaluation	Thematic priority	Topic	Findings
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5. ISSUES AFFECTING THE PERFORMANCE OF THE PROGRAMME AND MEASURES TAKEN

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

In relation to the COVID-19 pandemic situation, on 20th of March 2020 emergency measures were introduced at national and local level. Taking into consideration these measures, MA published guidelines for project implementation in emergency circumstances. Version 2.0 of the guidelines for Applicants (GfA) was published on 23rd of April 2020 in order to improve the control and legality of the actions to be taken in case of temporary suspension of projects, which supplemented the instructions for the beneficiaries of the Programme. Such measures included analysis of the project activities, suspension of projects, reporting, documentary and on-the-spot checks. In order to minimize the negative impact on the work plan implementation, the JS conducted regular monitoring of the projects and ensured the beneficiaries to carry out the remaining project activities/events by alternative means, including digital ones.

At the end of 2020 due to Covid-19 pandemic situation and the local measures of the health authorities a revised version of Instructions and the amended FLC guidelines was approved. Preserving the health of all involved and help in the fight against the pandemic, the MA is temporarily introducing an alternative option for verification - Virtual (online) verification in order to replace on-the-spot visits and verification for “soft” projects.

Furthermore, in accordance with the imposed restrictions for business travelling and health risks to the employees of the managing bodies, MA initiated revision in the GfA under Second Call for Proposals, point 6.5 Pre-contracting procedures of the GfA providing for virtual (online) checks for the investment projects. The revision of the GfA was approved by JMC Decision 52/04.03.2021 and was given mandate to the MA for conducting of the pre-contracting procedure with two project proposals in the revised list based on general ranking.

In 2021 similar measures were undertaken in order to mitigate the obstacles resulting from the measures against COVID-19 pandemic.

(b) OPTIONAL FOR LIGHT REPORTS, otherwise it will be included in point 9.1. An assessment of whether progress made towards targets is sufficient to ensure their fulfilment, indicating any remedial actions taken or planned, where appropriate.

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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

You can upload/find the Citizen's summary under General > Documents

7. REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS (ARTICLE 46 OF REGULATION (EU) No 1303/2013)

8. 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

Table 7: Major projects

Project	CCI	Status of MP	Total investments	Total eligible costs	Planned notification/submission date	Date of tacit agreement/ approval by Commission	Planned start of implementation	Planned completion date	Priority axis / Thematic priorities	Current state of realisation — financial progress (% of expenditure certified to Commission compared to total eligible cost)	Current state of realisation — physical progress / Main implementation stage of the project	Main outputs	Date of signature of first works contract (1)	Observations
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(1) In the case of operations implemented under PPP structures the signing of the PPP contract between the public body and the private sector body (Article 102(3) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013).

Significant problems encountered in implementing major projects and measures taken to overcome them

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Any change planned in the list of major projects in the cooperation programme

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8.2. Joint action plans

Progress in the implementation of different stages of joint action plans

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Table 8: Joint action plans (JAP)

Title of the JAP	CCI	Stage of implementation of JAP	Total eligible costs	Total public support	OP contribution to JAP	Priority axis	Type of JAP	[Planned] submission to the Commission	[Planned] start of implementation	[Planned] completion	Main outputs and results	Total eligible expenditure certified to the Commission	Observations
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Significant problems encountered and measures taken to overcome them

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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)

Priority axis	1 - SUSTAINABLE TOURISM
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Priority axis	2 - Youths
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Priority axis	3 - Environment
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Priority axis	4 - Technical Assistance
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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

n/a

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

n/a

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

n/a

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

n/a

10. OBLIGATORY INFORMATION AND ASSESSMENT ACCORDING TO 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

n/a

Status	Name	Fund	Year of finalizing evaluation	Type of evaluation	Thematic priority	Topic	Findings (in case of execution)	Follow up (in case of execution)
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10.2 The results of the information and publicity measures of the Funds carried out under the communication strategy

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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 the implementation of the integrated approach to territorial development, including integrated territorial investments, sustainable urban development, and community led local development under the cooperation programme

n/a

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

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

As stipulated by the Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013, recital 19, article 8(3)(d) on the "Content, adoption and amendment of cooperation programmes" and article 14(4) 2nd subparagraph (c) "Implementation reports", this programme contributes to MRS(s) and/or SBS:

The INTERREG-IPA Bulgaria-Serbia CBC Programme contributes to the achievement of the European Strategy for the Danube Region (Danube strategy). The main needs identified in the Danube strategy are structured within the following areas: mobility, energy, environment, risk prevention and mitigation, socio-economic development, and security.

At the stage of assessment and selection of projects under the Second Call of the Programme, coherence with Danube strategy is ensured by a separate selection criterion in Section II of the Technical and Quality Assessment grid. The highest possible score under the criterion (4) point is obtained when a project envisages activities which are coherent with the strategy.

At the implementation stage, the CBC Programme is closely coordinated with the Danube strategy, as its priority axes contribute to different pillars and priority areas. More specifically, activities supported under PA 1 Sustainable Tourism are fully coherent with Pillar A: Connecting the Danube Region, Priority area 3: To promote culture and tourism, people to people contacts. PA 1 also partially contributes to Pillar C: Building Prosperity in the Danube Region, Priority area 8: To support the competitiveness of enterprises.

Activities supported under PA 2 Youths contribute to the achievement of the aims of Pillar C: Building Prosperity in the Danube Region, and Priority area 9: To invest in people and skills. For instance, eligible activities under SO 2.1 include support to youth entrepreneurship schemes and initiatives. PA 2 also partially addresses two priority areas under Pillar C of EUSDR: To develop the knowledge society through research, education and information technologies; and to support the competitiveness of enterprises, including cluster development.

Activities supported under PA 3 Environment are fully coherent with Pillar B: Protecting the Environment in the Danube Region. For instance, eligible activities under SO 3.2 include cooperation and networking initiatives tackling water pollution, including Danube pollution. Some of the projects funded under the First Call of the Programme contribute to Priority area 5 of the EUSDR: To manage environmental risks.

The Disaster Risk Reduction Strategy 2014 – 2020 for Bulgaria 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.

PA 3 Environment is relevant to the last three priorities of the strategy.

The six NUTS III regions in Bulgaria that are covered by the Programme (Vidin, Montana, Vratsa, Sofia, Pernik and Kyustendil) have Regional Development Strategies for 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.

- EU Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR)
- EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region (EUSAIR)

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

n/a

13. SMART, SUSTAINABLE AND INCLUSIVE GROWTH

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

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**14. ISSUES AFFECTING THE PERFORMANCE OF THE PROGRAMME AND MEASURES TAKEN
— PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK (ARTICLE 50(2) OF REGULATION (EU) No 1303/2013)**

Where the assessment of progress made with regard to the milestones and targets set out in the performance framework demonstrates that certain milestones and targets have not been achieved, Member States should outline the underlying reasons for failure to achieve these milestones in the report of 2019 (for milestones) and in the final implementation report (for targets).

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DOCUMENTS

Document title	Document type	Document date	Local reference	Commission reference	Files	Sent date	Sent By
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LATEST VALIDATION RESULTS

Severity	Code	Message
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