

BULGARIA - SERBIA IPA CROSS-BORDER PROGRAMME 2007 - 2013





CCI Number: 2007CB16IPO006



ANNUAL IMPLEMENTATION REPORT 2011

for the Bulgaria – Serbia IPA Cross-border Programme CCI No. 2007CB16IPO006

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Bulgaria – Serbia IPA Cross-border Programme

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1. Identification

The Annual implementation report is drawn up following the requirements under Article 112 of Commission Regulation (EC) No 718/2006.

This is the third Annual Implementation Report (AIR) for the Bulgaria - Serbia IPA Cross-Border Programme, which covers the period from 1st of January 2011 to 31st of December 2011.

The Managing Authority (MA) for the Programme is the Bulgarian Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works (MRDPW) having as counterpart the Secretariat General for European Union Affairs (EUSG), the National Authority (NA).

Objective concerned:	IPA Cross-border Cooperation										
Programming period:	2007 - 2013)7 - 2013									
Programme:	Bulgaria – Serbia IPA Cross-border Programme	CCI No. 2007CB16IPO006									
Eligible area concerned:	On the Bulgarian side (6 administrative units): Vidin District (11 municipalities) Montana District (11 municipalities) Sofia District (22 municipalities) Pernik District (6 municipalities) Kyustendil District (9 municipalities) Sofia-city District (1 municipality)	On the Serbian side (6 administrative units): Bor District 4 (9 municipalities) Zaječar District (4 municipalities) Nišava District (11 municipalities) Pirot District (4 municipalities) Jablanica District (6 municipalities) Pčinja District: (7 municipalities)									
Reporting year:	2011 (financial plan 2007-2011)										

The procedure concerning Annual implementation report 2011 for the Bulgaria – Serbia IPA CBC Programme was coordinated with the National Authority during the period 25th of May - 1st June 2012.

Date of approval of Head of MA:	
Date of approval of the annual report by the Joint Monitoring Committee:	

2. Overview of the implementation of the Programme

2.1. Achievement and analysis of the progress





Memorandum of Understanding

During the reporting period the financial justification of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the partner countries was approved by the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Bulgaria (June 2011). On 8 December 2010, the Council of Ministries approved the draft version of the MoU and gave the Minister of Regional Development and Public Works, Republic of Bulgaria a mandate for negotiation and signature of the MoU. The MoU was officially signed by the two partnering countries on 18th of March 2011 and was expected to enter into force once the ratification procedure was completed.

The inter-ministerial coordination procedure for proposal to the National Assembly for ratification of the MoU was initiated by MRDPW on 10th May 2011. A remark by the Ministry of Finance, based on recent amendment of the Bulgaria – Serbia IPA Cross-border Programme, led to the need to prepare an Addendum to the MoU, concerning the proportions of national co-financing provided by the partnering countries. Therefore, a new inter-ministerial coordination procedure for approval of the Addendum to the MoU was initiated by MRDPW, and after its completion the Council of Ministers approved the draft version of the Addendum on 28th September 2011. On 18th October 2011 the Minister of RDPW received an official authorization from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to negotiate and sign the Addendum to the MoU.

Since then, the MRDPW is awaiting the completion of the coordination procedure on Serbian side, in order to proceed with official signing of the Addendum. The procedure in the Republic of Serbia was foreseen for the first half of 2012 and signature of the Addendum to the MoU envisaged for June 2012. Once the Addendum is signed, a ratification procedure shall be initiated.

Description of the management and control systems

In March 2011, Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works in its behalf of Managing Authority (MA) has submitted in Directorate General "Regional Policy" of European Commission a Description of the management and control systems for the Bulgaria – Serbia IPA Cross-Border Programme, CCI 2007CB16IPO006, in accordance with Article 115 and 116 of Commission Regulation (EC) No 718/2007, together with a report and opinion by the Audit Authority - the Audit of European Union Funds Implementing Agency of the Republic of Bulgaria, on their compliance with Article 101 to 105 of the Commission Regulation (EC) No 718/2007.

On May 2011, European Commission issued the letter with positive assessment on the Description of management and control systems on Bulgaria-Serbia IPA CBC Programme. Obtained positive assessment is a guarantee that the established management and control system by the MA are reliable enough for effective utilization and management of EU funds. With approval of the management and control systems by EC, the MA is entitled to proceed with financial allocation of the Community funding to beneficiaries under the Programme

Programme Implementation Manual (PM)

A Programme Implementation Manual (and its annexes and appendixes), describing in detail the specific rules and procedures for implementation of the Programme, has been developed by the MA, NA and Joint





Technical Secretariat (JTS) and its first version was approved by the Head of MA in August 2010. During 2011 (August) the MA issued new version of the Programme Implementation Manual describing established management and control system for the three IPA Programmes in which Bulgaria participated during this programming period. Along sides some amendments concerning specific rules, procedures, chapters or annexes have been made. The system for revisions, updates, modifications and development of the Programme Manual aims to tackle with amendments in the IPA Programmes (where applicable), legislative modifications or unexpected socio-economic development, which has a direct impact on the implementation of the Programme.

Project Implementation Manual (PIM)

First version of Project Implementation Manual (and its annexes) describing programme rules and procedures for projects implementation by beneficiaries under the Programme was approved by Head of MA in February 2011. During the reporting period the Project Implementation Manual has been developed and revised version of PIM was approved in July 2011. The new revised version of Project Implementation Manual is uploaded at Programme web-page (http://www.ipacbc-bgrs.eu/bul/news/view/102).

> First Call for Proposals

Tendering phase

The First Call for proposals for the amount of € 7 239 272 was launched on August 31, 2009 and the deadline for the receipt of applications was scheduled for November 30, 2009.

The work of the Assessment Working Group (AWG) started on 5th July 2010, but the technical and quality check and the finalization of the assessment report were performed in 2011.

In total 116 project proposals were submitted under this call (six of them were submitted after the set deadline and were not assessed). Out of the 110 proposals that were evaluated, 80 were presented by Bulgarian Lead partners and 30 – by Serbian Lead partners.

The table below indicates the applications submitted by Priority Axes and Area for Intervention and the numbers of the proposals passed the relevant checks:

Priority axis	Area of intervention	<i>,</i> .	Proposals	administrative	passed eligibility	Amount of the proposals passed checks (Euro)
Priority axis 1 Development of small-scale			25	23	23	11 159 162,10
infrastructure	concerning environmental	Investment support measures	6	4	4	2 096 707,91
		IB support measures	4	3	3	148 925,78
Enhancing capacity	2.1 Links and networking on institutional, business and educational levels		30	29	29	4 715 358,91



		IB support measures	23	22	22	3 411 158,21
	' '	IB support measures	22	20	19	1 650 521,89
Total			110	101	100	23 181 834,80

The tables below represent general information related to 1st call under the programme

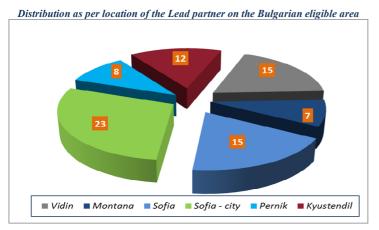
The tables below represent general information related	rto i cali dildei tile programme
Indicator	Number/amount of the proposals
Number of submitted proposals (number)	116
Before deadline (number)	110
After deadline (number)	6
Total amount of the proposals submitted within the deadline (euro)	25 564 970
Lead partner (number) – Republic of Bulgaria	80
Lead partner (number) – Republic of Serbia	30

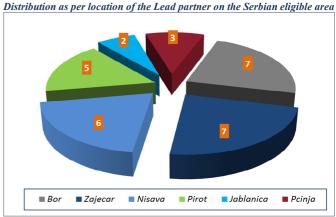
The project proposals submitted by Lead partners from Bulgaria differentiated according to district location of the lead project partners are presented in numbers as follows:

District	Vidin	Montana	Sofia	Sofia - city	Sofia - city Pernik	
Number of proposals	15	7	15	23	8	12

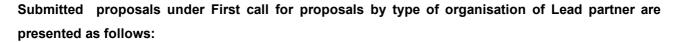
The project proposals submitted by the Lead partners from Serbia differentiated according to district location of the lead project partners are presented in numbers as follows:

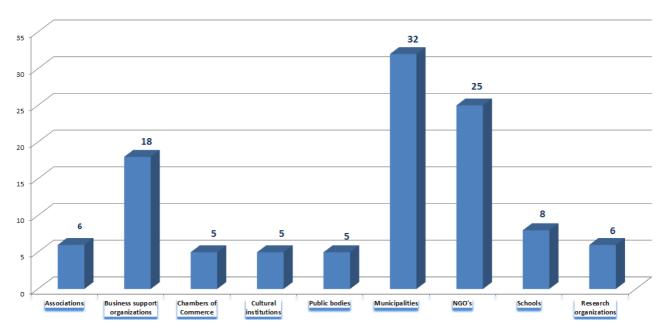
ı	District	Bor	Zajecar	Nisava	Nisava Pirot		Pirot Jablanica		Pcinja	
Number	of proposals	7	7	6	5	2	3			











Ten project proposals have been eliminated after the administrative compliance and eligibility check. The other 100 project proposals have been submitted to the technical and quality assessment.

The final results of the assessment procedure confirmed that the majority of the project proposals were very well prepared: the average final score was 75.38 points which is significantly higher than the minimum of 65 points, required for not being rejected (81 of the assessed project proposals have passed the above mentioned threshold and only 19 project proposals were rejected after the Technical/Quality Assessment). Consequently, due to the good quality of the project proposals, the Assessment Working Group recommended to MA to make a request to the Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC) to increase the available budget by 4,991,499.00 Euro, representing the amount of financial allocation for year 2009 of the Programme, thus making the amount available for the projects approved for financing under the First call €12,230,771.00.

It is very visible trend that majority of the partners are municipalities and business support organizations. It is strong indicator on the subjects who are holders of the regional development. Focus for the next steps should be establishment a link between civil society, educational institutions with "experienced" subjects.

· Pre-contracting and contracting phases

The JMC delegated to the MA, NA and JTS to carry out pre-contracting visits, including negotiations on the budget revision for the provisionally selected projects for financing under First Call for Proposals.



The pre-contracting site visits of the 15 (fifteen) projects under Priority Axis 1 proposed for financing, together with 2 (two) of the projects with the highest overall scores from the reserve list were conducted during the period 06.06.2011 – 21.06.2011. Pre-contracting Site Visit Committee members, split into two groups, visited all project partners, whose proposals include investment activities, and signed Pre-contracting Site Visit Reports with each one of them.

The Negotiation and verification meetings with all 48 (forty eight) proposals selected for funding (15 under Priority Axis 1 and 33 under Priority Axis 2) and 8 proposals with the highest overall scores from the reserve lists (2 from Priority Axis 1 and 6 from Priority Axis 2) were conducted for the period of 14.06.2011 – 06.07.2011. Negotiation Committee members, split into two groups, met with the Lead Partners and signed Negotiation and Verification Protocols with them.

The purpose of the negotiation and verification procedures was to optimize project partners' budget breakdowns, based on both the specific recommendations provided by the external assessors who performed the technical and quality assessment of the project proposals, and the good practices for sound financial management applied by the MA, NA and JTS. Moreover, all the additional documents (as specified during the administrative assessment of each project proposal, in cases where the AWG had suggested that the MA requests/verifies additional documentation prior to contract signature), and the supporting documents necessary for signature of subsidy contracts (specified in point 4.1, Chapter 9 of the Programme Manual) were requested and checked for their compliance with the formal requirements.

The statistic information of the results from the contracting process under First Call for Proposals could be summarized as follows:

Priority Axis 1 "Development of small-scale infrastructure"

Based on the decision of the Joint Monitoring Committee, the total available amount under the axis was € 7,474,360.00 and 15 projects, for a total requested amount of € 7 368 595.70, were provisionally selected for financing.

Site visits and negotiation and verification procedures were conducted with all the 15 projects, together with 2 of the projects with the highest overall scores from the reserve list.

Priority Axis 2 "Enhancing capacity for joint planning, problem solving and development"

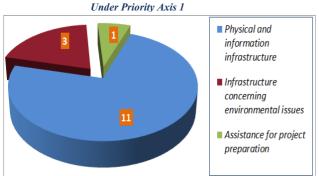
Based on the decision of the Joint Monitoring Committee, the total available amount under the second priority axis was € 4,756,411.00 and 33 projects, for a total requested amount of € 4 649 887.95, were provisionally selected for financing.

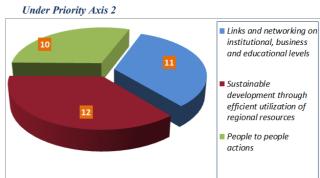
Negotiation and verification procedures were conducted with all 33 projects, together with 6 of the projects with the highest overall scores from the reserve list.



Therefore, 48 projects were recommended for immediate contracting, covering 15 projects under priority axis 1 (measure 1.1 "Physical and information infrastructure" – 11 projects; measure 1.2 "Infrastructure concerning environmental issues" – 3 projects; measure 1.3 "Assistance for project preparation" – 1 project) and 33 projects under priority axis 2 (measure 2.1 "Links and networking on institutional, business and educational levels" – 11 projects; measure 2.2 "Sustainable development through efficient utilization of regional resources" – 12 projects; measure 2.3 "People to people actions" – 10 projects).

The charts below present the initially approved number of project proposals towards the areas of interventions under the Programme.





The decision for the projects from the reserve list was pending till the submission of the required updated documents.

Meanwhile, one of the projects was rejected due to refusal of Applicant.

Finally, 6 more projects were approved for contracting.

In conclusion, 15 contracts (€ 6 968 579.20) were signed under the Priority axis 1 and 38 contracts (€ 4 810 398.17) were signed under the Priority axis 2.

The official ceremony for awarding the subsidy contracts took place on the 1st of August 2011 in Sofia ("Europe" conference hall of Dedeman Princess Hotel). Identical ceremony for awarding the subsidy contracts to Serbian Lead Partners was organized in Nis on 04.08.2011 (Tami Hotel Nis). Media coverage of both events were on high level. Representatives of the national, regional and local authorities express their support for the Program implementation.

The lists of all 53 contracts (for the total amount of € 11 778 977.37) under first and second priority axes of the programme were published on the programme web-site.

Contracted projects under First Call for Proposals



Priority Axes:	Number of Projects	Amounts
Priority Axis 1: Development of small-scale infrastructure	15	€ 6 968 579.20
Priority Axis 2: Enhancing capacity for joint planning, problem solving and development	38	€ 4 810 398.17
Total project contracted under First Call for Proposals:	53	€ 11 778 977.37

Implementation phase

Currently, 53 contracts are under implementation.

At the end of year 2011 the implementation status of the projects could be summarized as follows:

- Duration of the projects is from 10 to 24 months. First group of projects started implementation in late July 2011 and as a result, by the end of the year (2011), there were not completed projects.
 During December 2011, all projects were in the phase of 1st or 2nd period of implementation (According to the Project Implementation Manual, reporting periods are on quarterly bases).
- Three projects (namely projects Ref. № 2007CB16IPO006-2009-1-13, 2007CB16IPO006-2009-1-69 and 2007CB16IPO006-2009-1-76) are in their final execution (deadline May-June 2012) and final monitoring site visits will be organized by the JTS. Request for extension of the implementation period was sent by the beneficiary carried out project 2007CB16IPO006-2009-1-13. Thirty-three projects are in the interim period (deadline for completion of project activities July-August 2012). The remaining projects have completion period November 2012 July 2013.

Request for extensions/modifications

According the signed Subsidy contracts from the First call for project proposals under Bulgaria – Serbia IPA CBC Programme, the Project Implementation Manual and IPA Programmes Manual, during the project lifecycle the following modifications to the Subsidy contract could be made – Partnership changes, Project content changes, Budget changes, Extension of implementation period and Administrative changes.

The majority of changes under the First Call in 2011 were connected with Administrative changes, and in particular with changes of the project team. There were also changes related to modifications in the project content (mainly about revision of the action plan of the projects). Main reason for large number of requests for project modification was distance between the process of application and decision for funding. During that period, many of the proposed activities have to be modified, also large number of proposed team members were not available for the project implementation. With the extensive engagement of the JTS, MA





as well as NA, this process didn't slow down Program implementation seriously.

Only one addendum has been signed in 2011 – Addendum No.1 to project with ref. number 2007CB16IPO006-2009-1-046, concerning inclusion of VAT as eligible expenditure in the budget of the Lead Partner - Regional Directorate of Forestry – Sofia.

Risk assessment

Initial site visits were conducted in the period July-August 2011, in order to identify potential risks for each project and to discuss key issues with the project team regarding the readiness and ability of project partners to conduct the tender procedures, willingness to implement the project strategy, available resources for implementation of the project, etc.

Based on the accomplishment of risk assessment at the end of 2011 four (4) projects under the first call are identified as high risky in terms of implementation of planned activities and objectives (Project Ref. № 2007CB16IPO006-2009-1-109 with Lead partner – municipality of Samokov - Bulgaria and Project partners – municipality of Kovachevtsi-Bulgaria and municipality of Dimitrovgrad –Serbia; project Ref. № 2007CB16IPO006-2009-1-111 with Lead partner – municipality of Etropole -Bulgaria and Project partner - Municipality of Bela Palanka -Serbia); project Ref. № 2007CB16IPO006-2009-1-89 with Lead partners – Association European University of Hospitality and Tourism management -Bulgaria and 5 other partners from Bulgaria and Serbia) and also project Ref. № 2007CB16IPO006-2009-1-46 with Lead partner – Regional Directorate of Forestry - Sofia - Bulgaria and Project partner - City of Nis -Serbia).

Within 14 (fourteen) projects some delay in implementation of project activities against the planned time schedules in the Action plan was found out.

Risk assessment was periodically carried out on the basis of quarterly reporting by the beneficiaries. The results of the assessments together with determined options and actions to reduce the likelihood or consequences of risk impact on the projects' objectives were summarized in "Summary Project Risk Assessment Report and Response Plan", which was approved by the Head of MA on 7th December 2011.

The most common risk events identified in the projects implementation under First Call for Proposal, which could be bringing out are as follows:

- financial risk project partners are not capable to meet expenditures on the projects within the planed time schedule;
- procurement risk lack of sufficient capacity to procure the respective procedures, beneficiaries
 faced problems in carrying out procurement procedures under PRAG rules;
- operational risk delays in the implementation, due to non-proper planning and starting of the
 project activities, poor communication between project partners, changes in the project teams,
 delay in sub-contracting procedures, problems with documentations and language of the
 programme;
- external risk local elections in Bulgaria, which cause some additional delays.



In order to mitigate the ascertained risks and untimely completion of the planned project activities, JTS and MA had taken several measures to observe the project progress and to support the beneficiaries. In relation to the Risk Response plan, concerning all risky projects the JTS took the following measures:

- The JTS strictly observed during the period under review the quality of the Project Progress Reports
 (PPR), and for the projects with financial risks the quality of the financial part of the Project
 Progress Reports;
- The JTS examined the progress of the projects and the respective timetable through strict monitoring of Project Progress Reports, implementation of the procurement plan, project timetable, and related correspondence.
- The JTS scrutinized the subcontracting management by the Project Partners mainly through consultations, site visits and observation of a procurement procedures;

For more detail information concerning the measures taken by the MA and JTS to mitigate the ascertained risks of untimely completion of the planned project activities and support to the beneficiaries with a delay in the implementation of project actions, see 2.3 - Measures taken by the JTS and MA.

> Second Call for Proposals

The Second Call for proposal was launched on November 22nd, 2011 at the following websites:

- www.ipacbc-bgrs.eu the Programme website;
- www.mrrb.government.bg the website of the Bulgarian Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works;
- www.eufunds.bg the website of the EU funded programmes in Bulgaria;
- www.evropa.gov.rs the website of the EU funded programmes in Serbia.

The deadline for submission of project proposals was scheduled for February 20th 2012, 4:00 p.m. local time.

In order to respond to the potential applicants questions, during the period of projects' preparation the 'Questions and answers' section on the Programme website was regularly updated.

The Second call for proposals was also announced in the following national newspapers:

- "Novinar" in Bulgaria;
- "Politika" in Serbia.

The radio-coverage of the Second Call for proposals was provided as follows:

"BG Radio" (Bulgarian radio station, airing program on the national level), immediately following the announcement of the Second Call for proposals, once a day for five consecutive days a 30 second advertisement promoting the Second Call for proposals has been aired on the national frequency of the "BG Radio" station.



- "CITY Radio" (Serbian radio station, airing program on the national level), immediately following the announcement of the Second Call for proposals, once a day for three consecutive days a 40 second advertisement promoting the Second Call for proposals has been aired on the national frequency of the "CITY Radio" station.

The Information campaign concerning the Second Call for project proposals of the Bulgaria-Serbia IPA Cross-border Programme has been launched on the 5th of December 2011 at the "Dedeman Princess" Hotel ("Europe" hall) in Sofia. The information events took place as follows:

- 5th of December 2011 Sofia (Bulgaria, "Europe" hall Hotel "Dedeman Princess",
- 6th of December 2011 Montana (Bulgaria), Youth House ("Obshtinski Mladejki dom"),
- 7th of December 2011 Nis (Serbia), "Svrlizanka" hall,
- 8th of December 2011 Bor (Serbia), Hotel "Albo" hall.

All Information days have contributed to increasing the awareness of interested parties within both primary and secondary target groups. During the information days the representatives of the Managing Authority, National Authority, and the Joint Technical Secretariat have presented to the participants the basic goals of the Programme as well as the specific rules and procedures for applying under the Second Call. Special attention has been given to questions concerning the eligibility of applicants, activities and expenditures.

The information days have attracted significant public attention. More than 480 people participated in the seminars including the representatives from the local and regional administration, educational and cultural institutions and NGOs. The regional media (newspaper, radio, and television) were also presented. All the questions and answers recorded during the Information days have been published on the Programme website.

Within the 2nd call for proposals of the Bulgaria – Serbia IPA CBC Programme (2007-2013) there are 262 project proposals, from which 257 applications were submitted within the deadline – 20th February 2012.

> Audit

Within the 2011 the Executive Agency "Audit of European Union Funds" of the Republic of Bulgaria, which is an Audit Authority (AA) for the Bulgaria-Serbia IPA Cross border programme 2007-2013 has conducted a "Systematic audit for assurance on effective functioning of management and control systems" under the programme and submitted its Final report on 21st of December 2011. Following 4 level scale for formulating the final assessment for the programme the Audit Authority's opinion refers to level 2 "Work, but some improvements are needed". The preliminary audit report was submitted to the Managing Authority of the programme on 7th of December 2011 and encompasses eight findings of which two were determined with "medium level" and six with "low level" of significance. The preliminary audit report specific objectives were focused on key requirement 1 "Clear determination and division of functions between and in the framework of the MA" and key requirement 2 "Adequate procedures for selection of operations". The preliminary audit report covers 5 recommendations for corrective activities and the MA adopted roadmap and launched



measures to overcome the shortcomings identified by the AA. The general issues underlined by the AA have mainly an administrative character and related to timeframes, procedures for carrying out quality control over first level control performance, etc. All the AA findings are closed in the final audit report circulated on 21st of December 2011.

> Evaluation under the programme

Multi-annual Evaluation Plan for Bulgaria – Serbia IPA Cross-Border Programme 2007-2013 was elaborated and approved by JMC on 13th May 2011. The Evaluation Plan defines and explains the overall coordination arrangements for the on-going evaluation process under the programme. Following the evaluation plan, the Programme is subject to three evaluations aiming to improve the quality, effectiveness and consistency of the assistance and the strategy and implementation of the Programme, taking due attention to sustainable development issues and horizontal objectives.

The first evaluation was carried out in August 2011 by MA experts. The main purpose of the internal analysis was examination of the output and result indicators, which are going to be achieved in result of project implementation under First Call for Proposals in order to be examined the need of specifically targeted call for proposals, assess the extent of achievement of the programme's indicators.

It was assumed that:

- Most of the indicators will be achieved after the successful implementation of the proposed for financing projects under First Call for Proposals
- The rate of the achievement of the most of the output indicators significant exceeds the Programme targets 2016 as a result of:
 - Lower targets of the programme's output and results indicators set up in the Programme's documents and
 - Increased number of indicators in the specific project's Application forms due to misunderstanding by the applicants about essence of the indicators.
- Under Priority Axis 2 Enhancing capacity for joint planning, problem solving and development, all of
 the result indicators will be achieved, although the outputs indicators will meet the target only for
 area of intervention 2.1 Links and networking on the institutional, business and educational levels.
- The indicators under the Priority Axis 1 Development of small-scale infrastructure for social and
 economic networking will not be achieved. Furthermore, the value of percentage of achievement of
 some of the indicators (output and result) is very small.

As a result of the analysis, a Methodology for output and result indicators under the Bulgaria – Serbia IPA Cross-Border Programme (CCI Number 2007CB16IPO006) were uploaded to the Programme web-page (http://www.ipacbc-bgrs.eu/bul/page/documents/others) and recommendation for using the methodology



during the preparation of the Application Form was incorporated in the Guidelines for applicants under the 2^{nd} Call.

During 2011, an internal evaluation related to achievement of objectives set out in the Communication plan has been carried out by MA experts. The result of the evaluation directs to improvement of the communication plan in the following main points:

- Refining the communication objectives and activities in order to be respected the logic intervention objective-activity-result (indicators).
- Improvement of the indicators (definition and quantities) in order to become accurately SMART.
- Including the result and impact indicators in order to assess the general awareness of the public about the programme.
- The reliable source data for monitoring the indicators to be ensured.

As a result of the evaluation, an Indicative Plan for implementation of the recommendations given by the evaluation has been elaborated and strictly observed by the Communication officer in the JTS. The revised Communication plan is uploaded on the programme web-page (http://www.ipacbc-bgrs.eu/bul/page/documents/others).

In 2012 an external on-going evaluation will be carried out under the Programme. The evaluation will examine the implementation of the Programme, of a broader nature, against the traditional criteria of effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, impact and sustainability. It will look towards the following programming period with a view to identifying priorities for funding on the basis of the experiences of implementation of the Programme.

• Information on the physical progress of the Programme:

The table below presents the result indicators which are used to monitor the progress at programme level. The table contents baselines and indicators achieved during 2011 in compliance with Methodology of Programme output and result indicators assessment elaborated under the Programme. It is aiming more precisely defining of the indicators and their measurement. The achievements on programme level will be reported as soon as the projects under First Call for Proposals complete theirs implementation.

The indicators which will be used to monitor the progress at Programme level are shown in the table below:

Programme Result Indicators		2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Total	
	Achievement	0	0	0	0	0							
Improved small-scale infrastructure	Target 2016		2.5%										
imastructure	Baseline*						31						
Increase of public transport coverage (% of population)	Achievement	0	0	0	0	0							
	Target 2016		2% (3.55 km)										
coverage (70 or population)	Baseline		3,480 km.										
	Achievement	0	0	0	0	0							
Decreased pollution in the region	Target 2016		2%										
	Baseline*						3						
Increased attractiveness of the	Achievement	0	0	0	0	0							
region based on preservation of	Target 2016	2%											



natural resources	Baseline*						8					
	Achievement	0	0	0	0	1						
Projects actually applied	Target 2016		3%									
	Baseline*						10					
	Achievement	0	0	0	0	0						
Number of joint information services established	Target 2016						3					
	Baseline*						32					
Improved environment for development of relationships across the border	Achievement	0	0	0	0	0						
	Target 2016	3%										
	Baseline*						43					
Increased cross-border	Achievement	0	0	0	0	0						
movement of people and	Target 2016						1.5%					
exchange of goods and services in the region	Baseline*						34					
Increased public awareness	Achievement	0	0	0	0	0						
regarding sustainable use of	Target 2016						2%					
regional resources	Baseline*						42					
	Achievement	0	0	0	0	0						
Number of new partnerships created	Target 2016						7	•				
Greated	Baseline*						49	•				

^{*} The indicators above presented had been calculated on the base of the elaborated Methodology of Programme output and result indicators assessment.

Financial information (All financial data should be expressed in euro)

The total value of the IPA CBC Programme Bulgaria - Serbia for the period 2007 - 2013 is € 36 905 807 out of which € 31 369 936 are EC funding and € 5 535 871 national co-financing from state budgets by both partnering countries.

The division of financial support between priorities 2007-2013 is shown in the table below:

Breakdown of priority axes by source of funding:

Priority	Community Funding	National funding**	Total funding	Co-financing rate (%)
. Hally	(a)	(b)	c=a+b	a/c*100:b/c*100
Priority Axis 1 Development of small-scale infrastructure	17 253 465.00	3 044 729.00	20 298 194.00	85% :15%
Priority Axis 2 Enhancing capacity for joint planning problem solving and development	10 979 478.00	1 937 555.00	12 917 033.00	85% :15%
Priority Axis 3 Technical Assistance	3 136 993.00	553 587.00	3 690 580.00	85% :15%
Total EUR	31 369 936.00	5 535 871.00	36 905 807.00	85% :15%

^{*}The table above represents data for the period 2007-2013 according to the approved by the JMC on 3rd October 2011 amendment related to new financial allocations covering the period 2012 and 2013 of the Bulgaria-Serbia IPA Cross border programme which follows the adoption by the EC of the Multi-annual Indicative Financial Framework 2011-2013. There is acknowledgement as of 14th October 2011 for receipt via SFC2007 system of the Financial tables covering the period 2012-2013 of the programme. Revision of data is pending due to decommitment rule proceedings.

^{**} State budget co-financing for Bulgaria and obligatory beneficiaries' own co-financing for Serbia.



According to the Commission Regulation (EC) 718/2007 the pre-financing payment by the EC could only be made after MA's receipt of the positive opinion on its Description of the management and control systems. In order to ensure smooth implementation of the programme (organization of technical meetings, JMC meetings, information campaign, publicity etc.), the MA ensured financial allocation from the Bulgarian national budget in order to cover such expenditure.

N+3 Rule (pursuant to Article 166 of the Council Regulation №1605 of 25th of June 2002 on the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities)

The significant delay in completing the compliance process of the Programme and afterwards late contracting of the projects under the 1st Call for proposals resulted in financial de-commitment of funds in the end of year 2011 (due to failure to achieve N+3 target). Although the measures taken by the MA for speeding up the verification process (possibility for additional verifications of expenditures, trainings for beneficiaries, individual consultations etc.) the level of absorption of the fund by the project partners during the first quarterly period was unsatisfactory and below the expected target.

Below it is shown the accomplishment status of N+3 rule by 31st of December 2011:

Pi	rogramme	Payment	targets*	EC advance payments	EC reimbursements	Total advance + reimbursements	Amounts to be includ	ed in application for to avoid N+3Risk	payment in order
2008	2009	2010	2011	2007-2009	2007-2011***		2012	2013	2014
0.00	0.00	0.00	1 061 448.00	5 775 642.00	0.00	5 775 642.00	4 714 194.00	4 808 474.00	4 904 646.00

^{**} Cumulated amounts 2007-2011

Automatic decommitment rule N+3 for 2011 year - MA is notified by EC for the amount of resources representing the reducing of the obligation of EC for the amount of 980 940.65 euro. MA has to provide actual financial plan until 22 May 2012.

Considering the low amount declared to the Commission for 2011, the de-commitment situation for the following years, and in particular for 2012, represents a serious challenge considering that the level of expenditure to be certified is extremely high in relation to the rhythm of absorption and reporting of the projects that hitherto has been experienced. The MA and JTS have therefore taken a proactive approach and beside of being active by providing consultations, additional guidance and day-to-day support to the project partners.

Beside measures taken till now, the MA is continuing its efforts in order to increase the quality level of the submitted documents by the project partners as well to ensure proper implementation of the projects.

• Information about the breakdown of use of the Funds (EUR)





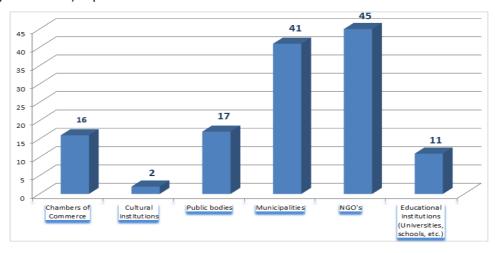
The table below represents actual financial data for year 2011.

	Expenditure paid out by the beneficiaries included in payment claims sent to the managing authority	Corresponding Community and Public contribution (IPA + National public)	Private expenditure	Expenditure paid by the body responsible for making payments to the beneficiaries	Total payments received from the Commission (excluding adv. payment)
PRIORITY AXIS 1	0	0	0	0	0
PRIORITY AXIS 2	0	0	0	0	0
PRIORITY AXIS 3	95 842.30	95 842.30	0	0	0
GRAND TOTAL	95 842.30	95 842.30	0	0	0

Assistance by target groups

Wide range of target groups submitted proposals within the 1st call. The most of apllicants demonstrated their interest in the Priority Axis 2 "Enhancing capacity for joint planing, problem solving and development", which represents 70 project proposals in comparison with 30 proposals within Priority Axis 1 "Development of small-scale infrastructure".

The number of entities implementing projects following 1st Call award procedure, classified by target groups (state of play as of 2011) is presented below:



• Assistance repaid or re-used

Not applicable.

Qualitative analysis

From a programme management point of view, during 2011 the efforts were concentrated on ensuring a sufficient speed in the implementation of the programme in order to avoid de-commitment and to forward the dissemination activities.



The significant delay in starting of Bulgaria – Serbia IPA Cross-Border Programme affect into absorption of the fund and the current financial status shows slow progress of the programme. The absorption of funds from the projects side increased, but additional efforts are still required concerning the FLC in partnering country and quality of the request for payment submitted by beneficiaries. The close cooperation with the NA and consultations to the beneficiaries will continue in order to support the very demanding tasks in meeting formalities in relation to the Programme's requirements.

During 2011, major steps were taken in order the accumulated delay to be overcome and the decommitment to be avoided. The MA completed the contracting process under the First Call for Proposals and the overall assessment process was carried out according to the indicative time frame. The pre-contract site visits and negotiation procedures were carried out smoothly, bringing out some minor shortcomings in the guidelines for applicants and technical evaluation (overcome in the Second Call).

In general, the First Calls for Proposals can be considered successful from the point of view that a sufficient number of proposals have been received, indicating a vivid interest to the Cross-border programme. The response on the First Call reveals a positive trend in submission of qualitative applications under all measures within the Programme. In fact, as it was described in chapter 2.1 the good quality of the applications predetermines additional allocations of fund available to First Call.

The greater part of the subsidy contracts under First Call for Proposals was signed between 28th of July and 2nd of August 2011. In the implementation phase, due to the long period between the deadline for submission of project proposals and the signature of the subsidy contracts, administrative changes were required by beneficiaries in the project management teams. Additionally, the requirement each member of the project team to be contracted under labour contract, become an obstacle for the timely starting of the project activities. In general, the delay in the appointment of the project management staff accumulated delay in initial phase of implementation of some projects. The first implementation trimester for most of the projects finished with the formation of the project team and the expenses made for the project were mainly for the salaries of the staff. During the second trimester of the relevant projects the beneficiaries started to overcome the delay of the activities. A number of procurement procedures were launched during the second and third trimester and planned project activities were under implementation.

In order to facilitate the beneficiaries, MA and JTS introduced an innovative and beneficial for the project partners practice of publishing on the website of the Programme filled in examples of the PRAG tender dossiers (works, supplies and services) for most frequently used procedures. In addition, training and consultation tools, and section "Frequently Asked Questions" (FAQ) on the programme's webpage were applied.

The horizontal themes are also taken into consideration through the standard format of the application form developed in the context of the Programme. As result, the applicants and beneficiaries are requested to justify how their projects observe the Programme provisions on horizontal themes. During the



implementation of the projects, these rules are observed, since such a provision is inserted in the progress project reports.

2.2. Information about compliance with Community law

The Programme has been prepared in accordance with Community Strategic Guidelines 2007 – 2013 priorities – especially in the area of improving of the attractiveness of the cross-border region and further developing of the human resources.

The Programme is compliant with the main EU strategic documents, notably with the Lisbon and Gothenburg strategies, targeting sustainable development, equal opportunities and cross-border partnership.

The overall strategic goal and the priority axes of the Programme are fully compliant with main Bulgarian and Serbian national strategies and programmes, which are indicated in the Programme document. In order to ensure sound financial management of the Programme, the MA initiated a procedure and Decree No 221 of Council of Ministries for eligibility of expenditures has been adopted on 11th of September 2009.

There are no problems encountered relating to the compliance with Community law in the implementation of the Programme.

2.2.1 Changes in Bulgarian legislation affecting the Programme implementation

Changes in rules regarding eligibility of the expenditures:

With Council of Ministers' Decree No 330 of 5th of December, 2011(Published in State Gazette No 98 of 13th of December, 2011) amending Council of Ministers' Decree No 62 of 2007 regarding the adoption of National rules on eligibility of expenditure under the operational programmes co-financed by the Structural and Cohesion funds of the European Union, in relation to the 2007-2013 financial framework (Published in State Gazette, No 27 of 2007) a "Methodology for the determination, payment and reimbursement of expenditure for the remuneration of employees in the administration of central and territorial authorities of the executive power, the administration of local self-government authorities and the administration of the judiciary for the management and implementation of projects and participation in the evaluation of project proposals under operational programmes co-financed from the Structural Funds and the Cohesion Fund of the European Union" was adopted. The Council of Ministers' Decree No 330 entered into force on the day of its promulgation in the State Gazette – 13th of December, 2011.

The subject matter of the approved methodology is the remuneration, which could be paid to the employees of State administration (central and local) and the administrations of municipalities in relation with the performance of activities for managing or implementing projects under operational programmes financed by the Structural and Cohesion Funds of EU and will be applied for all Bulgarian partners in projects for which subsidy contracts are signed after its entering into force.



2. 3 Significant problems encountered and measures taken to overcome them

Within the Programme implementation, the following major problems were encountered:

- The accumulated delays in the implementation of the Subsidy contracts and the low level of financial absorption by the project partners were crucial for the low level of programme financial commitment in 2011. The delays are partly related to problems inside the project partnership due to the high number of partnership in some cases. Another negative effect on the proper project implementation is failure of the verification process to comply with the given deadlines and a lack of experience in some of the project partners. Frequent changes of project team members and/or recruitment of experts with insufficient experience in cross-border projects additionally impede the successful project implementation as a whole.
- Loss of funds according to the rule N+3 for 2011. The European Commission informed the MA about the amount of € 980 940,65, that will be decommited. The MA should submit to the EC an updated financial plan until 22nd May 2012;
- Loss of applying the rule N+3 IPA funds, that should be spent in 2012, in relation to the N+3 rule are worth € 4 714 194,00. At present the MA has signed contracts under Priority Axes 1 and 2 for the amount of € 10 012 130,67 financed under IPA. In order to comply with the N+3 rule, 47% of the value of the above mentioned contracts should be spend and subsequently certified by Certifying Authority till the end of the year. In addition, the MA will sign contracts under the Second Call for Proposals and it is possible around 10% of the amount of these contracts to be verified till the end of 2012.
- Some difficulties occurred in relation to the level of knowledge about PRAG rules and specific templates in English language which are applicable for the programme as well as some delays related to the cost verifications within the FLC process.

In reference with above shortcomings the MA and JTS took a number of practical measures to support the beneficiaries as follows:

- Active correspondence and organization of technical meetings with representatives from the National authority, on which possible options/ways for improving of the First Level Control system, as well as possibilities for assistance to the beneficiaries in project implementation are discussed;
- Conducting of trainings for the beneficiaries regarding the requirements and the specificities during the project implementation;
- Organizing "Open Days" at JTS premises, where technical questions, as well possible solutions to deal with different situations and problems are discussed with the project partners from both sides in details;
- Standard forms of the most frequently used documents during the project implementation have been uploaded on the web-site of the programme (Project Progress Reports, Request for First Level Control, Request for Payment, Time sheets, etc.). Models of Tender Dossiers for each type of



contract (Service, Works, Supply) have been elaborated and they were also published on the programme web-site. The MA follows the new/updated versions of PRAG and gives timely instructions and advises to the beneficiaries in accordance with changes occurred;

- The programme website section "Questions and Answers" has been regularly updated, in order to
 make familiar a wider range of beneficiaries with the opinion of the Managing Authority about
 technical and financial issues (the procedure and method of assigning duties, forming and payment
 of fees,reporting and acceptance of the works performed by the experts of Bulgarian project
 partners, procedure for approval of an exception to the rule of origin, etc.);
- Daily Consultations for the members of the project teams on topics, related to the project implementation (tender procedures, preparation of specific annexes and project documents, requests for change in the subsidy contracts, etc.)
- Participation of the JTS's representatives as observers during the Tender Opening Sessions of sub-tender procedures conducted by the beneficiaries;
- Carried out on-the-spot visits, in order to assess the actual progress of the project implementation and to advice the project teams when different cases and problems occur;

In general, even though the programme has faced delays with the submission of request for payments from LPs in the course of 2011, it could be mentioned that the quality of the sub-tender procedures, progress reports, and request for payments have been improved.

2.4 Changes in the context of the programme implementation (if relevant)

The Bulgaria-Serbia IPA Cross border programme was amended following approval given by the JMC on 3rd October 2011. The amendment is in compliance with the Multi-annual Indicative Financial Framework 2011-2013 adopted by the EC and relates to new financial allocations covering the period 2012 and 2013 of the Bulgaria-Serbia IPA Cross border programme. The acknowledgement for receipt via SFC2007 system of the financial tables for year 2012 and 2013 of the programme was received on 14th October 2011.

2.5 Complementarity with other instruments

The complementarity of the Bulgaria – Serbia IPA Cross-border Programme with other instruments has been carefully analysed already in the programming phase and it is discussed in detail in Chapter 7 of the Operational Programme Document.

Complementarily with other financial instruments will be ensured through mechanisms foreseen in the programming document. Programme coordination with other financial instruments will be done by the national coordination structures in both participating countries. The representatives of national coordination structures participate in JMC sessions. Representatives from ministries managing sectorial programmes also participate as observers in JMC sessions ensuring coordination and avoiding overlapping. Another useful tool for this purpose is the Management Information System of the Programme.





2.6 Monitoring arrangements

Monitoring of the Programme ensures the quality of its implementation. The development and implementation of the monitoring system of the Programme is responsibility of the Managing Authority. The Managing Authority and the Joint Monitoring Committee are responsible for monitoring the Programme implementation in accordance with the principle of sound financial management and the indicators for output and results specified in the Programme. The Joint Monitoring Committee observes the monitoring of the Programme implementation and ensures the achievement of the Programme objectives through a rational use of the allocated resources.

The representatives of national coordination structures participate in the JMC sessions. Representatives from ministries managing sectorial programmes also participate as observers in JMC sessions ensuring coordination and avoiding overlapping. Another useful tool for this purpose is the Management Information System of the Programme.

"Monitoring, Evaluation and Programming" Department is responsible for performance of monitoring at programme level, while monitoring at project level is implement by JTS and its branch office.

> Joint Monitoring Committee

During the reported period the following JMC meetings were carried out:

- The first one took place on May 13th, 2011 in Sofia, Bulgaria and was co-chaired by Ms. Lilyana Pavlova, Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works of the Republic of Bulgaria and Head of the Managing Authority of the Bulgaria-Serbia IPA Cross-border Programme and Ms. Sanda Simic Assistant Director of the National Authority (the Serbian Office for European Integration). Ms. Nathalie Verschelde, from the Directorate General "Regional Policy" represented the European Commission. The Joint Monitoring Committee members have discussed the results of the First call projects evaluation and approved the final list of projects (including a reserve list) for financing from the Programme funds totalling 12 230 771 euro. The JMC also approved the TA budget for 2011, the JTS Annual Work Plan for 2011, the revised Rules of procedures for the JMC meetings and the Multi-annual Evaluation Plan.
- The next JMC meeting took place on **November 10th**, **2011 in Belgrade**, **Serbia** and was cochaired by Mr. Ognjen Miric Deputy Director and coordinator for EU funds, Serbian European Integration Office and Head of the National Authority and Mr. Kiril Geratliev Director General of the "Territorial Cooperation Management" Directorate General within Ministry for Regional Development and Public Works of the Republic of Bulgaria and Head of Managing Authority. European Commission was represented by Ms. Nathalie Verschelde, from Directorate General "Regional Policy". The JMC discussed and approved the Application package of the Second Call for proposals. The total amount allocated to the second Call for proposals was € 8 741 808.

During 2011, the **JMC written procedures** were carried out as follows:





- On January 19, 2011 a written procedure was launched (and the Decisions were signed on March 8, 2011) regarding the following topics:
 - second revision of the Bulgaria Serbia IPA Cross-border programme;
 - amendment of Rules of Procedures of JMC;
 - amendment of the Communication plan.
- On March 29, 2011 a written procedure was initiated regarding the Technical assistance budget allocation for 2011, changes in the Rules for eligibility of technical assistance expenditures for 2011, approval of the Annual plan for use of the technical assistance funds in 2011 and the Multi-annual evaluation plan of the Programme. After receiving large number of comments and additional proposals, the Head of MA proposed (letter No 99-00-2-546/03.05.2011) to transfer the discussion between MA and NA to the Technical meeting in May 2011 and JMC to make the final decision at the meeting on May 13, 2011.
- On June 6, 2011 a written procedure was launched (and the Decisions were signed on June 8, 2011) for approval of the following documents:
 - Annual report for implementation of Bulgaria Serbia IPA Cross-border Programme (including Annex to the report),
 - Financial report for the disbursed resources under Priority Axis 3 'Technical assistance' for 2010.
 - Evaluation report on the achievements of objectives set out in the Communication plan for the period of 2007-2010.
- On June 21, 2011, a written procedure was launched for approval of the Negotiation report for the First Call for proposals 2007CB16IPO006-2009-1, summarizing the results of the precontracting site visits and the negotiations with the Lead partners approved for financing by the JMC.

Technical meetings between representatives of Managing Authority and National Authority

During the reported period four joint **technical meetings** were organized between MA, NA and JTS representatives:

 February 2nd – 4th, 2011 (Sofia): Technical Meeting on the finalization of Memorandum of Understanding, the Programme Manual and the Description of the Management and Control Systems.

The representatives of MA, NA and JTS have discussed the following issues:

✓ Memorandum of Understanding – coordination, signature, logistics



- ✓ Technical assessment of the 1st Call for Proposals selection procedure for external assessors
- ✓ First Level of Control structure and description of NA system
- ✓ Programme Manual discussion of the chapters
- ✓ Description of the Management and Control Systems
- ✓ Other current and forthcoming tasks related to the implementation of the Bulgaria-Serbia IPA Cross-border Programme.
- May 12th, 2011 (Sofia): Technical Meeting preparing the JMC session.

The participants form EC, MA, NA and JTS have reviewed in detail the Status of implementation of Action Plans for MA and NA, as well as the whole package of documents to be discussed at the forthcomin0g JMC meeting (the rules for eligibility of expenditures, the TA budget for 2011, the Final ranking of project proposals, the proposal for re-allocation of funds, Eligibility of Expenditures and the schedule for negotiations with Applicants, pre-contracting site visits and signature of the contracts.

• October 17th, 2011 (Nis): Technical meeting preparing the forthcoming JMC session.

The representatives of MA/NA and JTS worked together on the finalization of the Application package (incl. Guide for Applicants, Application form, etc.) for the Second Call for proposals under the Bulgaria-Serbia IPA Cross-border Programme to be launched after the next JMC meeting. Other issues discussed: agenda and logistics of the JMC meeting.

- November 9th, 2011, (Belgrade): Preparation of the JMC session
- **November 25th, 2011 (Sofia):** Technical meeting on the update of the Eligibility of TA expenditure and the finalization of the 2012 TA budget.

In addition to the Up-dated version of the Eligibility of the TA expenditures and the 2012 TA budget, the participants from MA, NA and JTS discussed the Annual Work Plan for 2012 and some organizational issues related to the info-campaign, the partner search forum and the trainings for applicants.

Project level

The overall monitoring at the Projects level is carried out by the Joint Technical Secretariat (JTS) for Bulgaria—Serbia IPA Cross border Programme with main office located in Sofia, Bulgaria and a branch office placed in Nish, Serbia. The JTS implements the main monitoring tools – on the spot checks and checks of PPRs, verifying the proper implementation of the projects in conformity with the provisions of the Subsidy Contracts, objectives of the Application forms and Programme rules.

Following the adopted procedure, **the initial visits** to projects under First Call for Proposals have been carried out between the period 25th August - 18th September and 45 Lead partners have been visited. The



initial visits for the other 8 contracts, signed after October 2011 were scheduled for January 2012 (project No. 24, 30, 39, 54, 58, 96,101,105).

The initial visits conducted by JTS and MA experts aim to assess the level of awareness of the project teams about terms and conditions of the Subsidy Contract and the Programme implementation rules, and to identify the initial risks for the project implementation. The general conclusions from these visits could be summarized that a lot of projects envisaged changes in the project teams and a delay in the implementation is foreseen due to this administrative changes. It was perceive that insufficient capacity by the project partners in sub-tendering procedures under PRAG rules and the project partners' capability for meet the current expenditures under the projects implementation will be obstacles for smooth implementation of the projects.

Ad hoc visits were not carried out during 2011.

> First Level Control system

During the 2011 year First Level Control system is duly implemented for the purposes of verification of expenditures for amounts spend by the project partners implementing projects signed under the 1st call for project proposals.

The first level control (FLC) system is developed in accordance with Art. 16 of Regulation (EC) 1080/2006 in order to make possible in the framework of the IPA CBC Bulgaria-Serbia Programme (2007-2013) to verify: (1) the delivery of the products and services co-financed; (2) the soundness of the expenditure declared for operations or parts of operations implemented on the respective cross-border territory; (3) the compliance of respective expenditures and related operations with Community rules and applicable national rules.

The Bulgarian side set up a decentralized FLC system and Serbian side adopted centralized FLC system.

In Bulgaria the first level control is carried out by controllers selected by the DG "Territorial Cooperation Management" within the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works in accordance with respective national rules from a list of external independent controllers (established on state level), authorized by the Ministry in its capacity of a managing authority for IPA CBC Bulgaria-Serbia (2007-2013).

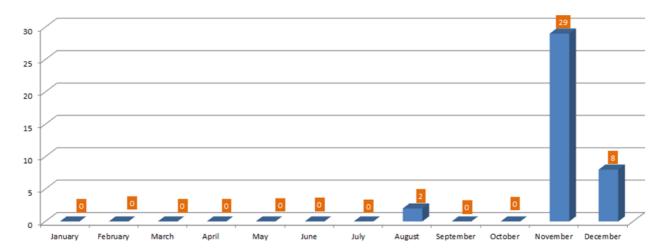
In Serbia, first level controllers are full-time employees of the CFCU, Ministry of Finance of Republic of Serbia. The designation of controlling duties between the FLC controllers for specific project partners is carried out by the Head of FLC unit.

Within the year 2011 the number of submitted requests for first level of control under the programme is 43.

The chart below represents the flow of confirmed invitations (on monthly basis) by First Level Controllers who carried out FLC for project partners on the Bulgarian side.



Bulgaria-Serbia IPA Cross-border Programme 2007-2013



The Bulgarian First Level Control for 2011 under the programme encompasses 24 on-the-spot visits on the premises of respective project partners in Bulgaria which represents 22 projects and total verifyed expenditures amounted to 143 108,96 euro.

The Serbian First Level Control for 2011 under the programme encompasses 17 checks on the expenditures of respective project partners in the Serbian area which represents 16 projects and total verifyed expenditures amounted to 57 574,83 euro.

National Authority

With a Serbian Governmental Decision No. 337-8105/2010-05 from 4th November 2010, the responsible body, acting as National Authority (Sector for EU funds and Development Assistance, Ministry of Finance, Republic of Serbia) was incorporated within the Serbian European Integration Office (SEIO). This transfer has been made with only technical amendment of the structure and all of the responsibilities of the NA remain unchanged, including the employees, managing the Programme. All of the relevant documents have been updated with the new name of the institution, acting as National Authority - the Department for Cross-border and Transnational Cooperation Programmes, SEIO.

Joint Technical Secretariat

During the reporting period (2011) the JTS was fully operational and staffed – Head of JTS, Communication Officer, two Project Managers in the main office in Sofia, and two Project Managers in the branch office in Nis. One of the Project Management Experts in the Nis Branch office quit for personal raisons, but was immediately replaced (after a public selection procedure) by a new qualified expert.

Therefore, in 2011 JTS had the necessary staff to complete its duties according to the IPA Programme Manual.

In 2011, the JTS of the Bulgaria-Serbia IPA Programme administrated 53 joint projects totaling 11 778 977.37 euro.





During 2011 the JTS staff attended mainly thematic seminars organized by INTERACT for the different types of experts working for IPA CBC programmes in order to give them opportunities to get more information about the best European practices in their specialized line of work:

- IPA CBC Public Procurement Workshop, organized by INTERACT on February 24th, 2011 (Brussels, Belgium);
- IPA Vienna's Regional Network Fourth Annual Meeting, organized by INTERACT on October 5th 6th, 2011 (Belgrade, Serbia);
- CBC Communication network annual meeting, organized by INTERACT on November 24th -25th, 2011 (Dublin, Ireland)

The JTS staff from the office in Nis has attended training on irregularities and their prevention, organized on March 9th, 2011 in Belgrade (Serbia) by the National Authority.

In addition, the Head of JTS Bulgaria-Serbia (with the financial support of the Organisation Naionale de la Francophonie and Wallonie-Bruxelles International) has organized a training seminar 'Management and implementation of the European programmes on territorial cooperation: the case of the INTERREG IV France-Wallonie-Bruxelles programme'. The leading experts from MA and JTS of the France-Wallonie-Bruxelles cross-border Programme have shared their experience and lessons learned. Although the seminar was organized mainly for the JTSs of the IPA programmes, it was attended and highly appreciated not only by the JTSs staff, but also by other experts of the MA.

Management Information system

In order to facilitate the overall implementation of the Programme, at both programme and project level, the Management Information System is created as practical tool for performing the task of the relevant authorities (Managing Authority, National Authority, Certifying Authority, JTS). The information system is operational and under updating its functionality (the system is accessible via Internet at https://mis-006.mrrb.government.bg. The entry is under control and requires user permission). The system's scope covers all joint programme and project level tasks as follows:

- Programme and call for proposals management: the adequately recorded programme data creates the basis for all sorts of further monitoring activities. Thus programme data like priority structure, budget, indicators etc. are recorded in order to facilitate programme-level monitoring and aggregations.
- Project module: functionality of the project section ensures tracking the whole life-cycle of projects including TA projects as the system facilitates the management and monitoring of a great number of project related tasks (contract and modification data, implementation data management of progress reports and request for FLC, etc.).



- Financial management: the financial section is also a crucial part of the system's functionality. It ensures the sound management of Community funds.
- Reporting: in addition to the project applications and contracts data, a section for programme reporting and evaluation will be established during the current functionality's updating of the system.

2.7 National performance reserve (where applicable and only for the annual implementation report submitted for 2010)

Not applicable.

- 3. Implementation by priority
- 3.1 Priority Axis 1 "Development of small-scale infrastructure"

3.1.1. Achievement of targets and analysis of the progress

Information on the physical and financial progress of the priority

The overall objective of this Priority axis 1 "Development of small-scale infrastructure" is development of steadfast partnership cooperation within the range of improvement of the cross border infrastructure condition oriented towards spatial integration, better quality of the environment and accessibility, more favorable business environment for new business activities and attractiveness for inhabitants and investors.

Following the financial plan for the period 2007-2013 the funds available for the Priority axis 1 amounted to 20 298 194 euro (incl. 17 253 465 euro Community funding and 3 044 729 euro National funding).

Under First Call for Proposals 15 projects are financed under Priority Axis 1 "Development of small-scale infrastructure" shared between the measures as follows:

- Measure 1.1 "Physical and information infrastructure" 11 projects;
- Measure 1.2 "Infrastructure concerning environmental issues" 3 projects;
- Measure 1.3 "Assistance for project preparation" 1 project.

The majority of contracted projects cover measure 1.1. which in percentage represents 73,3% of all the contracted projects under priority axis 1.

> Tables with indicators under Priority Axis 1 - Development of small-scale infrastructure

The indicators that will be used to measure the progress of axes are shown in the tables below:

Measure 1.1 Physical and information infrastructure

Programme Output Indicators		2007	2008	2009	2010	2011*	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Total
Number of small-scale	Achievement	0	0	0	0	2						
projects addressing physical infrastructure improvement	Target 2016						5					
initiaditatata inprovenent	Baseline						6					



Number of small-scale	Achievement	0	0	0	0	2				
projects addressing information infrastructure	Target 2016						3			
improvement	Baseline						0			
Number of small-scale	Achievement	0	0	0	0	7				
projects addressing social infrastructure improvement	Target 2016						3			
	Baseline						3			
Number of small-scale	Achievement	0	0	0	0	0				
projects addressing business and innovation facilities	Target 2016						7			
	Baseline						9			
Number of existing facilities	Achievement	0	0	0	0	2				
upgraded	Target 2016						7			
	Baseline						6			
Number of institutions/bodies	Achievement	0	0	0	0	6				
reached by programme activities	Target 2016						45			
douvido	Baseline						24			
Training places created	Achievement	0	0	0	0	0				
	Target 2016						3			
	Baseline						0			

Measure 1.2 Infrastructure concerning environmental issue

Programme Output Indicators		2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Total
Number of joint friendly	Achievement	0	0	0	0	1						
environmental projects	Target 2016						5					
	Baseline*						2					
Number of small-scale	Achievement	0	0	0	0	2						
infrastructural projects	Target 2016						3					
concerning environmental protection	Baseline						0					
Number of projects for	Achievement	0	0	0	0	1						
pollution prevention and flood reduction	Target 2016						3					
Toddottori	Baseline						3					
	Achievement	0	0	0	0	0						
Partnerships for cases of natural disasters established	Target 2016						2					
	Baseline						0					
Number of joint eco-itineraries	Achievement	0	0	0	0	0						
created/developed	Target 2016						5					
	Baseline						3					
Number of institutions/bodies	Achievement	0	0	0	0	3						
reached by programme activities	Target 2016						10					
	Baseline						8					



Measure.1.3. Assistance for project preparation

Programme Output Indicators		2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Total
Feasibility studies	Achievement	0	0	0	0	0						
	Target 2016						10					
	Baseline*						4					
	Achievement	0	0	0	0	0						
Preliminary and detailed design works	Target 2016						7					
design works	Baseline						8					
Project environmental	Achievement	0	0	0	0	0						
assessments	Target 2016						2					
	Baseline						1					

^{*} above tables represent data on the grounds of contracted projects level and successfully finalized activities

Qualitative analysis

The above tables represent summarized data of the output indicators under priority axis 1 for the year 2011, achieved by the implementation of the projects. Taking into account late contracting for the 1st call of the programme, during the 2011 projects implementation were mainly in its initial and middle stage which leads to lack of opportunity to report data for a number of output indicators described in above tables.

For the three areas of intervention (measure 1.1 – "Physical and information infrastructure"; measure 1.2 – "Infrastructure concerning environmental issue"; and measure 1.3 – "Assistance for project preparation") within the priority axis 1 there are 16 indicators defined for reporting purposes but at this stage (as of December 2011) for 7 of the indicators still there is no numbers for reporting. There is potential these circumstances to be overcome in the period after 2011 through speeding up launch of calls for project proposals, optimizing contracting and implementation processes.

As a good practice for the 2011 it could be reported that for indicator described as "Number of small-scale projects addressing social infrastructure improvement" (within area of intervention 1 "Physical and information infrastructure") there are currently 7 projects contracted in comparison with envisaged target in 2016 for 3 projects.

3.1.2. Significant problems encountered and measures taken to overcome them

No significant problems could be encountered in implementing the priority axis 1 of the programme.

3.2 Priority axis 2 "Enhancing capacity for joint planning, problem solving and development"

3.2.1. Achievement of targets and analysis of the progress

Information on the physical and financial progress of the priority





The overall objective of Priority axis 2 "Enhancing capacity for joint planning, problem solving and development" is to improve the capacity of the region to deal with regional issues as: identification of problems and tracks for solutions, partnerships establishment, strengthening of institutional and business structures to respond to market requirements, establishment of models for cooperation based on best practices and common needs.

Following the financial plan for the period 2007-2013 the funds available for the priority axis 2 amounted to 12 917 033 euro (incl. 10 979 478 euro Community funding and 1 937 555 euro National funding).

Under First Call for Proposals 38 projects are financed under Priority Axis 2 "Enhancing capacity for joint planning, problem solving and development" shared between the measures as follows:

- Measures 2.1 "Links and networking on institutional, business and educational levels" 13 projects;
- Measure 2.2 "Sustainable development through efficient utilization of regional resources" 13 projects;
- Measure 2.3 "People to people actions" 12 projects.

> Tables with indicators under Priority Axis 2 - Enhancing capacity for joint planning problem solving and development

The indicators that will be used to measure the progress of axes are shown in the tables below: Measure 2.1. Links and networking on institutional, business and educational levels

Programme Output Indicators		2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Total
Number of linkages between	Achievement	0	0	0	0	70						
different institutions created	Target 2016						7					
	Baseline*						22					
Number of joint databases	Achievement	0	0	0	0	7						
created	Target 2016						3					
	Baseline						32					
Number of management	Achievement	0	0	0	0	15						
plans/strategies/researches developed	Target 2016						3					
истонорой	Baseline						63					
Number of education/business	Achievement	0	0	0	0	101						
partnerships	Target 2016						5					
	Baseline						90					
Number of common marketing	Achievement	0	0	0	0	3						
initiatives	Target 2016						2					
	Baseline						7					
Number of institutions	Achievement	0	0	0	0	47						
participating in knowledge	Target 2016						5					
economy activities	Baseline						81					



SMEs involved/addressed in	Achievement	0	0	0	0	169					
CBC projects	Target 2016						7				
	Baseline						380				
	Achievement	0	0	0	0	821					
Number of people involved in projects' activities	Target 2016						400				
projects activities	Baseline						4858				
	Achievement	0	0	0	0	12					
Management and job-related training courses	Target 2016						15				
training courses	Baseline						14				
	Achievement	0	0	0	0	230					
Number of people trained	Target 2016	6 250									
	Baseline						1203				

Measure .2.2. Sustainable development through efficient utilization of regional resources

Programme Output Indicators		2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Total
Number of common cross-	Achievement	0	0	0	0	1						
border tourist products and services	Target 2016						7					
	Baseline*						18					
	Achievement	0	0	0	0	15						
Tourist destinations created/ developed	Target 2016						2					
шотогорош	Baseline		ı			ı	0	1				
	Achievement	0	0	0	0	0						
Number of projects concerning common cultural	Target 2016						10					
heritage	Baseline						6					
	Achievement	0	0	0	0	0						
Number of cultural events carried out	Target 2016						15					
	Baseline						20					
	Achievement	0	0	0	0	0						
Number of projects concerning common products and services	Target 2016						10					
products and services	Baseline						7					
	Achievement	0	0	0	0	3						
New jobs created	Target 2016						50					
	Baseline						2					
	Achievement	0	0	0	0	2						
Number of projects concerning exchange and	Target 2016						7					
transfer of know-how	Baseline						8					
	Achievement	0	0	0	0	11						
Number of cross-border business events, seminars,	Target 2016						15					
workshops carried out	Baseline						83					



	Achievement	0	0	0	0	20				
Awareness campaigns carried out	Target 2016						30			
	Baseline						46			

Measure 2.3. People to people actions

Programme Output Indicators		2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Total
Number of people to people	Achievement	0	0	0	0	148						
collaboration projects	Target 2016						50					
	Baseline*						32					
Number of institutions/bodies	Achievement	0	0	0	0	59						
involved	Target 2016						100					
	Baseline						93					
	Achievement	0	0	0	0	777						
Number of people involved	Target 2016						300					
	Baseline						1624					

^{*} above tables represent data on the grounds of contracted projects level and successfully finalized activities.

Qualitative analysis

The above tables represent summarized data of the output indicators under priority axis 2 for the year 2011, achieved by the implementation of the projects.

For the three areas of intervention (measure 2.1 – "Links and networking on institutional, business and educational levels"; measure 2.2 – "Sustainable development through efficient utilization of regional resources"; and measure 2.3 – "People to people actions") within the priority axis 2, there are 22 indicators defined for reporting purposes and at this stage (as of December 2011) for 3 of the indicators still there are no numbers for reporting. There is potential the reported data for output indicators significantly to be improved in the period after 2011 through speeding up launch of calls for project proposals, optimizing contracting and implementation processes.

As a good practice for the 2011 it could be emphasized that for 10 of indicator described under priority axis 2, the reported data are over the envisaged targets for 2016.

3.2.2. Significant problems encountered and measures taken to overcome them

No significant problems could be encountered in implementing the priority axis 2 of the programme.

4. Major projects (if applicable)

Not applicable – no major projects were financed / implemented under the Programme during the reported period.

5. Technical Assistance (priority axis 3)

The aim of the Technical Assistance (TA) is to provide effective and efficient administration and implementation of the Programme. The Technical Assistance is using only for activities directly related to



the Programme management. Technical Assistance is investing in the overall management and promotion of the Programme, awareness raising, pro-active project generation, etc.

For the period 2007-2013 approximately 3.13 million Euro Community Funding is available for this priority axis, matched by 0.5 million Euro national contributions.

In order to implement the activities under Priority axis 3 – Technical assistance, an annual technical assistance plan is prepared by the MA, together with the other structures involved in the Programme implementation. The Annual Technical Assistance Plan is designed to provide detailed information about the Programme related activities envisaged to be carried out by Managing Authority, National Authority and Joint Technical Secretariat under Priority axis 3 - Technical assistance of Bulgaria – Serbia IPA Cross-Border Programme and is subject of approval by the JMC.

Total budget forecast for 2011 is amounted to 714 270, 00 Euro, from which 469 000, 00 Euro allocated for MA and 245 270.00 Euro for NA. The detailed indicative breakdown of budget for 2011 has been approved by JMC.

The main activities carried out within 2011 are as follows:

- Finalizing the assessment process for the project proposals under First Call for Proposals. Two meetings of the Assessment Working Group (AWG) have been held in the first trimester of the year, where the final meeting of the AWG has been held on 18th April 2011 in Sofia and JMC approved the result of assessment on 13th May 2011.
- Financing projects under First Call for Proposals. The official ceremony for awarding the subsidy contracts took place on the 1st of August 2011 in Sofia ("Europe" conference hall of Dedeman Princess Hotel). Identical ceremony for awarding the subsidy contracts to Serbian Lead Partners was organized in Nis on 4th August 2011.
- Trainings and workshops for successful implementation of the projects in Bulgaria and Serbia.
 JTS organized two days workshop for all partners involved in implementation of the awarded projects.
- Announcing the Second Call for Project Proposals. The Call for proposal was launched on November 22nd, 2011.
- Trainings and workshops for potential partners in Bulgaria and Serbia.
- Partner search Forum in Pernik. Partner Search Forum under the Second Call for project proposals of the Bulgaria-Serbia IPA Cross-border Programme was held on the 14th of December 2011 at the Pernik Palace of culture. The event has been organized by the Joint Technical Secretariat of the Programme in cooperation with the Managing Authority and the National Authority.



Evaluation of the Communication plan. The internal evaluation exercise "Evaluation related to achievement of objectives set out in the Communication plan" has been carried out by Working Group for evaluation, established with administrative order by the Head of Managing Authority. In result an evaluation report with recommendations has been elaborated.

Additionally, activities related to assessment, pre-contracting procedures and JMC meetings, monitoring, procurement procedures and information and publicity events have been carried out.

Trainings for Assessors and First level controllers

As a continuation of the training process from 2010, during the Reporting period, in 2011, the following trainings were performed by the MA, NA and JTS on the following dates and places:

- Training for Bulgarian First level of controllers was held in Sofia, MRDPW' premises on 4th April 2011. During the training the following main topic were presented: Guidance for First Level Control for CBC Programme Romania Bulgaria 2007-2013, discussions on the findings in the report of the Executive Agency 'Audit (key findings and proposals from the audit report (DG 'TCM'; Frequent issues during the implementation of FLC), Guidance for First Level Control for ETC Programme Greece Bulgaria 2007 2013, Mechanism to penalize and to exclude of the First level controllers' database of the controllers failed to fulfil their obligation during the implementation of FLC. The training session was attended by 45 controllers:
- Training for Bulgarian First level of controllers was held in Sofia, the Dedeman Princess Hotel on 12th September 2011. The lectures from MRDPW presented to the participants: general information about the IPA cross-border programmes and the process for verification of the expenditures, information about the independent controlling procedures executed by First Level of Control (with cases and examples), as well as examples of Check procedures for selection of contractor under PRAG and the application of horizontal financial corrections. The mechanism for sanction and removal from the controllers' database, when they have lapse in the performance of their imputed duties;
- Training for Bulgarian First level of controllers was held in Sofia, MRDPW' premises on 7th October 2011. During the training the following main presentations were made: general info about the CBC programs financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the process of verifying the expenditure, independent control procedures applied in the implementation of the First Level of Control (with cases and examples), Verification procedures for selecting subcontractors under Public Procurement Law (PPL), RSPP and CoM Decree 55/2007;

Quality check by Certifying Authority

Within the 2011 the "National Fund" Directorate at the Ministry of Finance of Republic of Bulgaria, acting as Certifying Authority (CA) for the Bulgaria-Serbia IPA Cross border programme 2007-2013 has conducted a





regular on the spot check before certification. The examination was conducted between 21st of November 2011 and 23rd of November 2011 on the premises of MA and in compliance with the adopted procedures for performing on-spot checks by the CA. The subject of these checks was the verified expenditures under Priority axis 3 – Technical assistance for the period 2007 - October 2011.

Based on the results from on-the spot check performed by CA, the certified expenditures under priority axis 3 "Technical assistance" amounted to 94 714,51 euro, which includes 80 507,35 euro by the European Community funds.

6. Information and publicity

The objective of this sphere of intervention ensures:

- Preparation, translation and dissemination of the Programme related information and publicity materials including but not limited to the programme website, official Programme documents, procedure manuals, bulletins, brochures, posters, etc.; as well as expenses for consumables as paper, files, folders, cases, diskettes, compact disks, etc.
- Organisation of public events as conferences, seminars, workshops, round table discussions, trainings for beneficiaries, networking and awareness-raising events, partner search forums etc. including rent of halls and equipment (audio-, video-, translation- equipment), expenses for interpreters, lecturers, trainers (should not be persons involved in the programme); expenses for coffee breaks, refreshments, business diners and lunches for all participants in the events;
- Purchase of advertising materials as CDs, USBs, hats, bags, note books, folders etc. as well as expenses for publications in radio, TV and press.

During 2011 all of the activities envisaged in the Communication Plan have been organized and performed accordingly: info days and trainings have been successfully organized, various types of promotional materials have been disseminated to the target audience, the Programme Web site has been established and maintained. The mass media campaign contributed to the successful promotion of the Programme in general and of the specific calls (First and the Second Call) in particular. The Programme' visual identity and graphics standards have been maintained and widely disseminated to all the Programme's stakeholders.

Evaluation and revision of the Communication Plan were carried out in 2011.

In order to contribute to the effective implementation of the communication activities during the Programme implementation phase, some recommendations have been expressed. Recommendations are formulated in two main dimensions as follows:

- Recommendations related to the visibility and transparency,
- Recommendations concerning administrative issues, coordination and ensuring coherence





In general, it was assumed that the Programme communication activities have been developed and implemented in compliance with EC principles and standards and in coherence with regional objectives and sustainability policies.

After the assessment the following conclusions have been formulated:

- In implementing the Communication plan main achievements are assured transparency, easy access via Programme web site to information about the programme, real cross-border communication and partnerships, promotion of border area development, opportunities for funding of project proposals, trainings and other programme' events held, different promotional materials disseminated, etc.
- It will be appropriate in order to enhance the quality of measurement of results of information and publicity activities, the Communication plan to be adjusted mainly in the part related to indicators for which there is not reliable source data or clear methodology for precise estimation.
- It is expected after contracting phase, following the first call for project proposals the endresults and good practices to be communicated and make this information available on the Programme' web site.

Programme website

The Programme official website was effectively released on 21st of August 2009: www.ipacbc-bgrs.eu.

The website includes comprehensive information on the Programme and its Priority axes, accompanied by all documents concerning Programme implementation. The website has been regularly updated with relevant information on the Programme (events, news, documentation etc.). The website also includes a tool for partners search with project partner database, thereby facilitating the integration among actors and promoting joint activities and ideas.

During 2011 the website was one of the main publicity tools used to promote the Programme and disseminate the relevant information.

The "News" section is particularly useful to both general public and the potential beneficiaries since it is continuously updated with information on all the relevant events, trainings, info-days, and news in general.

In order to ensure broad publicity, information on the Programme has been also disseminated through regional and national websites as well as on the websites at the European level:

www.mrrb.government.bg - Bulgarian Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works

www.eufunds.bg - EU Structural Funds website

www.seio.gov.rs - Serbian European Integration Office (National Authority).



According to the statistical data the Programme's web site has generated 8.034 visits (6.386 of which are unique visits) in 2009, 7.105 visits (6.404 of which are unique) in 2010 and 30.270 visits (22.540 of which are unique) during 2011.

Bulgaria-Serbia IPA Cross-border Programme website statistics

Sta	usucs		
Year	Visitors	Unique	Impressions
2011	30 270	24 616	130 170
2010	7 105	6 404	28 628
2009	8 034	6 386	50 186

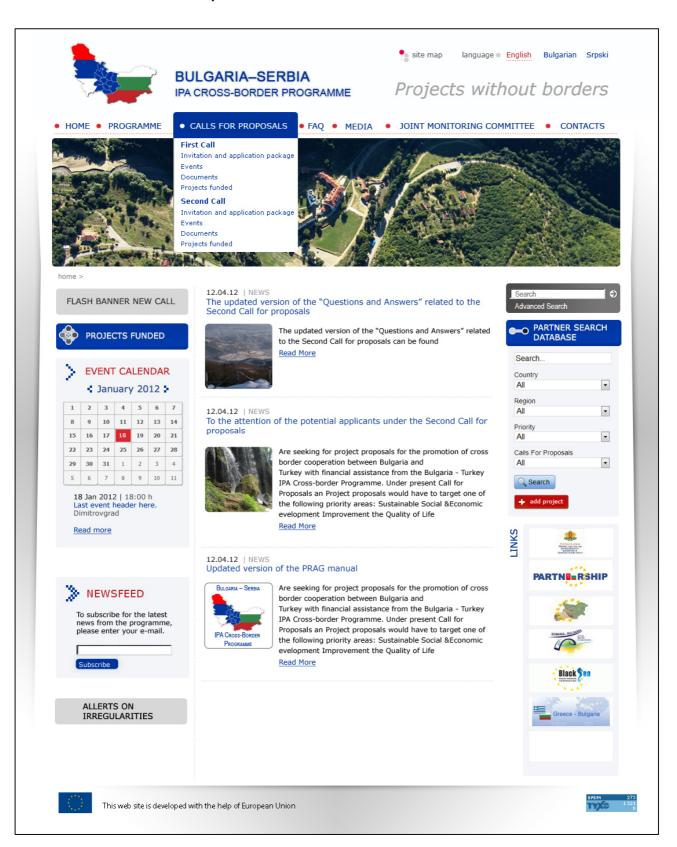
In fact, during each of the final two months in 2011 greater number of visits was recorded than during the entire year 2010. The significant increase in the number of visits to the Programme website indicates that the promotion of the Programme has been very effective during 2011 and that the Programme attracts an important public attention.

Although the Programme website proved to be valuable communication and promotion tool, there is a room for improvement in terms of functionality and design. Therefore on June 10th 2011 a public procurement procedure "Maintenance for MISs and websites for IPA cross-border programmes managed by Republic of Bulgaria" was launched. As a result of this procedure the contract for improvement of the Programme website and the MIS system was signed. The new user-friendly version of the sitemap structure was presented which will allow the users to find the necessary information more easily. Also, new applications are going to be added to the website as well such as: the "events calendar", "slideshow banner" displaying images from the cross-border region, and a "Joint Monitoring Committee" section.



New Programme website draft design

Publications and promotional materials







Tender dossier for elaboration and delivery of the following promotional materials had been prepared:

- √ 3000 leaflets containing the basic Programme information 1500 in Bulgarian and 1500 in Serbian language,
- √ 1000 brochures containing basic (but more elaborate than the leaflet) Programme information 500 in Bulgarian and 500 in Serbian language,
- ✓ 3000 business cards for the JTS team and the MA/NA representatives,
- √ 300 business cards holders with laser engraved EU and Programme logo,
- √ 1000 laminated cardboard folders with elastic cord,
- ✓ 2000 standard cardboard folders with folded pockets,
- √ 1000 standard plastic folders,
- √ 1000 PVC stickers (with Programme and EU logo),
- √200 binders.
- √ 2 one-sided "quick" banners,
- √ 2 table "skirt" banners.
- √ 4 metal name plates for fixating on walls,
- √ 500 notebooks with spiral binding,
- √ 300 agenda organizers with eco-leather binding,
- √ 300 table calendars with high quality photo illustrations from the cross-border region,
- √ 500 pocket calendars,
- √ 10 large maps of the cross-border region,
- √ 2000 plastic pens with Programme logo,
- √ 200 metal pens with Programme logo,
- √ 10 sets of small table flags (Bulgarian, Serbian and EU flags) on a stand,
- √ 200 USBs (4 GB) with Programme name and EU flag,
- √ 20 USBs (16 GB) with Programme name and EU flag,
- √ 300 conference bags,
- √ 50 business document bags,
- √ 300 post-it note cubes,
- √ 200 T-shirts (various sizes),
- √ 200 ceramic coffee mugs.

The above material were produced and supplied by a selected company through a public tender procedure that was launched on June 16th 2011.

The materials have been used for the promotion of the Programme in the eligible regions. They have been distributed on various occasions (Info days, JMC meetings, technical meetings, training seminars etc.) to the programme implementation stakeholders, potential applicants, beneficiaries and the general public.





All the materials correspond to the guidelines set in the Communication Plan as well as to the "Communication and Visibility Manual for European Union External Actions", published by the European Commission (available here: http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/visibility/index en.htm.

Publicity in local and national media

Internet

In addition to the promotion through the Programme website and the websites of the official institutions related to the Programme, both the Programme and the projects funded received a good online media attention. **Over 30 websites** (other than the Programme website) have featured useful information about the Second Call for proposals and the related events.

Radio

Serious efforts were made in order to provide radio-coverage of the Second Call for proposals:

- **"BG Radio"** (Bulgarian radio station, airing program on the national level), immediately following the announcement of the Second Call for proposals, once a day for five consecutive days a 30 second advertisement promoting the Second Call for proposals has been aired on the national frequency of the "BG Radio" station.
- "CITY Radio" (Serbian radio station, airing program on the national level), immediately following the announcement of the Second Call for proposals, once a day for three consecutive days a 40 second advertisement promoting the Second Call for proposals has been aired on the national frequency of the "CITY Radio" station.
- Radio "Hristo Botev" (Bulgarian radio station, airing program on the national level) conducted a 20 minute interview with the head of JTS, after the Partner Search Forum in Pernik. The head of JTS summarized the results achieved under the First Call and promoted the Second Call for proposals of the Programme.

Television

"Media centar Nis" - Close cooperation with "Media centar Nis" (http://www.mcnis.org.rs) has been established, a media agency from Nis which serves as the information portal for the media in South-Eastern Serbia but also closely cooperates with the major media houses on the national level. "Media Centre Nis" assisted the JTS in inviting the chief media stakeholder from the region to the training events in Nis on the 4th of August 2011 as well as the Information days event on the 7th of December 2011. Press conferences had been organized and attended by the representatives of MA, NA and JTS. Information days in particular attracted serious media attention, including the representatives from "Radio Television Belle Amie", "NTV", "TV Zona", a very respective business journal on the national level "Privredni Pregled" and "RTV 5".



- "Radio Television Bor" – "RTV Bor" is a local television from Bor, Serbia (http://www.rtvbor.rs/). The journalists interviewed the JTS experts from the local office in Nis, concerning the Second Call for proposals and the Programme in general.



Indicators for communication and publicity measures

	Activity	Indicator	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Total	
	Website functionality	Number of web-site visits	0	0	8 034	7 105	30 270							
		Target 2016	2000 per year											
ite		Baseline					0							
Programme website		Increase in the number of web site visits (on a yearly basis)			n/a	-12%	+326%							
ē		Target 2016		1		ı	2% per	vear				1	1	
nu		Baseline					0							
<u>ra</u>	Partners' search facility	Number of new potential PPs in the	•	_	00	_	400							
og.	·	database	0	0	92	2	193							
₽.		Target 2016	20 per call											
		Baseline	0											
	Leaflets	1) Number of leaflets produced	0	0	1 000	0	3000							
		Target 2016	500 per call											
		Baseline					0							
		2)Number of leaflets distributed			100		95							
		Target 2016	80% of leaflets produced											
v		Baseline	0											
Promotional materials	Brochures	1)Number of brochures produced	0	0	750	0	1000							
		Target 2016	500 per year											
Ĕ		Baseline		1		Т	0	Т				1	1	
la l		2)Number of brochures distributed			100		95	<u> </u>						
<u>.</u>		Target 2016	80% of brochures produced											
5		Baseline		ı		ı	0	ı	1	1		ı	ı	
ē	Other promotional materials	1)Number of materials prepared for	0	0	3 002	0	5890 (not							
₫.	(gadgets)	promotion of the programme	U	U	3 002	U	including 4200 folders/binders)							
		Target 2016	200 per call											
		Baseline					200 pc	i can						
		2)Number of materials distributed					70% on average							
		Target 2016		ı	1	l	80% of the mate	rials prod	uced	1	1	ı	ı	
		Baseline					0							
	Info-days	Number of organizations/bodies	0	_	200	0	100							
_		attending	0	0	300	0	120							
ior		Target 2016					40 per	event						
nat ina		Baseline					0							
Information seminars	Thematic seminars/ workshops	Number of organizations/bodies attending	0	0	650	80	97							
= "		Target 2016	20 per event											
		Baseline					0							



		Number of newspapers publishing issue(s) concerning the programme	0	0	4	0	4						
	Print media campaign	Target 2016		I.	1	1	4 per	vear	1	1	l	1	1
	The mode campaign	Baseline	· por you										
	Press conferences	Number of press conferences held				n/a*	2						
	1 1000 domerchood	Target 2016		I	1	11/4	2 for the duration o	f the Prog	ramme	1			
		Baseline					0		Idillillo				
	Press releases	Number of press releases published				n/a*	6						
		Target 2016	-				1 per	call					
		Baseline	-				0						
	Press Advertisements	Number of press advertisements		0	_	_	0						
		published	0	0	5	0	2						
		Target 2016	2 per call										
		Baseline	0										
gu	Internet media advertisement	Number of				n/a*	2						
campaign		advertisements/eBanners	i			II/a	2						
Ē		Target 2016					2						
		Baseline	0										
dia	eNewsletter	Number of eNewsletters				n/a*	1						
ne		Target 2016	2										
S		Baseline		0									
Mass media	Participation in regional initiatives	Number of events				n/a*	1						
2	and forums					11/4							
		Target 2016					1						
		Baseline		1			0	1			1		
	TV and Radio campaign	Number of TV advertisements					0						
		aired	1 for the duration of the Droggomme										
		Target 2016 Baseline	1 for the duration of the Programme										
		Number of radio advertisements		I	1	1	0		1			1	
		aired					2						
		1 per country for each Call											
		i per country for each Call											
		Baseline											
							0						
	Increasing the competence of the	Percentage of submitted projects											
ing	potential beneficiaries	that pass the minimum threshold of					74						
ain		65 points											
Active training		Target 2016					50%						
ive	0, , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , ,	Baseline		1	1	1	0	I	ı	1	I	ı	
4ct	Strengthening the capacity of the	Number of participants					48 (figure represents all attended						
•	MA/NA/JTS through attending		•				trainings/seminars)						



trainings/seminars	Target 2016	min 50% of the total staff										
	Baseline	0										
Increasing the availability and quality of the information disseminated to the public	Increase in the number of project proposals submitted for the last Call for Proposals in comparison to the number of projects submitted for the preceding Call for Proposals		n/a*	132								
	Target 2016		•	•	2%	•			•			
	Baseline	0										
	Percentage of submitted projects whose final assessment score that pass the minimum threshold of 65 points		n/a*	74								
	Target 2016	min 50% out of the total number of projects submitted for the relevant Call										
	Baseline	0										
Beneficiaries' trainings	Number of participants			630								
	Target 2016	min 20										
	Baseline	0										
	2) Number of trainings			5								
	Target 2016	min 1										
	Baseline				0							
Controllers performing FLC	Number of participants			75								
trainings	Target 2016	min 30										
	Baseline				0							
	2) Number of trainings			3								
	Target 2016				min 1							
	Baseline	0							ı	1		
External assessors trainings	Number of participants			14								
	Target 2016	min 10										
	Baseline	1	1	1	0		1	1	T			
	2) Number of trainings			11								
	Target 2016	min 1										
	Baseline	0										

^{*}the indicator was established in 2011 and data for the previous periods was not recorded.





Attachment:

ANNEX 1 to the Annual Report 2011

A number of press-releases published on the website in 2011 are listed below





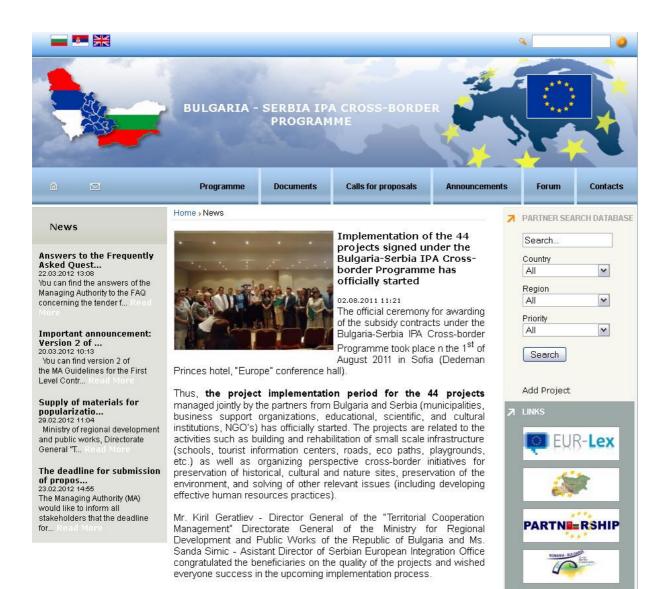












Training of beneficiaries took place immediately following the awarding



In September 2011, the following e-bulletin was published in order to present current information about the implementation of the territorial cooperation programmes in Republic of Bulgaria to a wider number of stakeholders.



Бюлетин за програмите за териториално сътрудничество

Главна дирекция "Управление и териториалното сътрудничестви към Министерство на регионалното развитие и благоуетвойството

> Година I, Брой 1 1 септември 2011 г.

Защо започваме работа по този бюлетин?

След успешното приключение на процедурите по оценка на съответствието на секторните оперативни от България, благодарение на служителите в Главна дирещия "Управление на териториалното сътрудничество", на Съвместните технически с Съртифицирация и Одитирация от Одитирация от образи и одени за съответствие по програмияте за съответствие и одени за съответствие по програмите за съответствие по програмите за съответствие по програмите за транограмино, траночационално осътрудничество, съфинансирани от Европейския инструмента за предприсъединителна помощ и Европейския инструмента за добро съседство и партньорство.

Програмите за териториал но сътрудничество отразя ват в най-голяма степен луха и принципите на Обе динена Европа, но поради ниските си бюджети и факта, че се изпълняват и управляват съвместно с други страни, се считат за високорискови.

Околрискови. Допълнителна пречка пред потенциалните бенефициенти е задължителното за програмите използване на английски евик. Проблем представлява както подготовката на качествено проектно предложение, така и отчитането на техническото и финансово изпълнение на дейностите по сикочените договори. Взароже догимо, набровно

Въпреки всичко изброено програмите предоставят въяможност за реално сътрудничество с местните власти, неправителствените организации и образователните институции от сърните отраните въролейския съюз. Те са специфичен инструмент за транофер на значия, умения и добри практики при подготовката, управлението и изпълнението на проекти.

Основната цел на настоящия бюлетин ще бъде дь представя актуална информация за напредъка на програмите, за отговорните институции и звена при изпълнението, а оъщо така и за основните проблеми и възможните решения на проектно ниво.

В следващите броеве ще представим успешни проекти по програмите за териториално сътрудничество, за което ще разчитаме на всички водещи партньори.

треденицами: перволачално периодичността на біолетина да бъде на всем два месечда, но при интерес от страни — водещи партньори и партньори в проектите, контрольори, и др., както и в периоди, импънени с повече събития и важни срокове, ще бъде подговян всем месец.

Разчитаме на вашия интерес, мнения, препоръки и предложения за темите и съдържанието на бюлетина

В този брой:

Стартираха боговорите по програмите за трансгранично сътрубничество

Пребстои обучение на новонаетите контрольори по програмите за трансгранично сътрубничество, финансирани от Инструмента за пребприсъедини-

Очаквайте обявяването на бве нови покани за набиране на проектни пребложения по ОП за ТГС България— Турция и България— Сър-

Пребстои сключване на боговори за пребоставляне на национално съфинансиране по СОП за ТГС Черно-

44 съвместни проекта по Програмата за ТГС България — Сърбия са вече на етап изпълнания

Коорбинати за контакт на Главна бирекция Управление на териториалното сътрубничество² и Съвместните технически

Очаквайте в спедващия

Какво означава принципът 4

Ратифициран е Меморандум за разбирателство за изпълнение на Оперативната програма за териториално сътрудничество Гърция — България 2007-2013

На 27 юли 2011 г. бе ратифициран Меморандумът за разбирателство между Република България и Република България относно изпълнението на Оперативната програма за европейска териториално сътрудничество Гърция — България.

Законът за ратификация е публикуван в Държавен вестник, бр.61 от 9 август 2011 г.

Съгласно изискванията на меморандума Министерството на регионалното развитие и благоустройството ще трансферира средствата от националното съфинансиране за българските партньори на Сертифицирация орган - Министерството на регионалното развитие, конкурентоспособността и корабоплаването на Гърция, което от своя страна ще ги преведе

в сметките на водещите партньори по проектите.

Размерът на националното съфинансиране по първата покана е 3 618 855,05 евро. Към 1 септември 2011 г. са силочени 65 договора по първата покана на обща стойност над 64 или. евро. Резултатите по этората покана се очакват в края на месец септември, а подписването на договори през октомри 2011 г.

Събития през месец септември 2011 г.

- 12 септември 2011 г. обучение на контрольори
- 15 септември 2011 г. изтича крайният срок за кандидатстване по ОП за ТГС България— Македония
- Септември 2011 г. обявяване на втората покана за набиране на предложения по ОП за ТГС България— Турция
- Септември 2011 г. обявяване на втората покана за набиране на предложения по ОП за ТГС България—Сърбия
- 30 септември 2011 г. краен срок за кандидатстване по СОП в Черноморския басейн



Promotional materials 2011















Bulgaria-Serbia IPA Cross-border Programme events in 2011

Partner Search Forum (under the Second Call for Proposals) – Pernik, December 14, 2011







Information days for Second Call for proposals (December 5-8, 2011)









Joint Monitoring Committee meeting (November 10th, 2011 - Belgrade)







Awarding ceremony and training of beneficiaries under the First Call for proposals in Nis (August $4^{\rm th}$, 2011)









Some publications in electronic media concerning the Bulgaria-Serbia IPA Cross-border Programme in 2011

