



# Citizen's summary 2016

**Interreg - IPA CBC**   
Bulgaria - Serbia





## ABOUT THE SUMMARY

The current document aims to describe in a concise and illustrative way the main achievements of the Interreg-IPA Cross-border Cooperation Programme Bulgaria-Serbia in 2016. The complete Annual implementation report for 2016 is now available at the Programme website: [www.ipacbc-bgrs.eu](http://www.ipacbc-bgrs.eu)

### The Summary is focused on the following topics

- Brief Programme description
- 1st Call for proposals results
- Main events in 2016/European Cooperation Day
- Programme website and social media pages
- Public awareness activities

## THE PROGRAMME

### Programme goal

To stimulate the balanced and sustainable development of the Bulgaria-Serbia border region integrated in the European space - achieved through smart economic growth, environmental change adaptation and learning culture enhancement.

### Programme Budget

The total Programme budget is **34 102 256 euro**.

The Programme is co-funded by the European Union, from the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance II (IPA II) fund.

### Priority Axes and specific objectives:



#### Priority Axis 1: Sustainable Tourism

- 1.1. Tourist Attractiveness
- 1.2. Cross-Border Touristic Product
- 1.3. People-To-People Networking



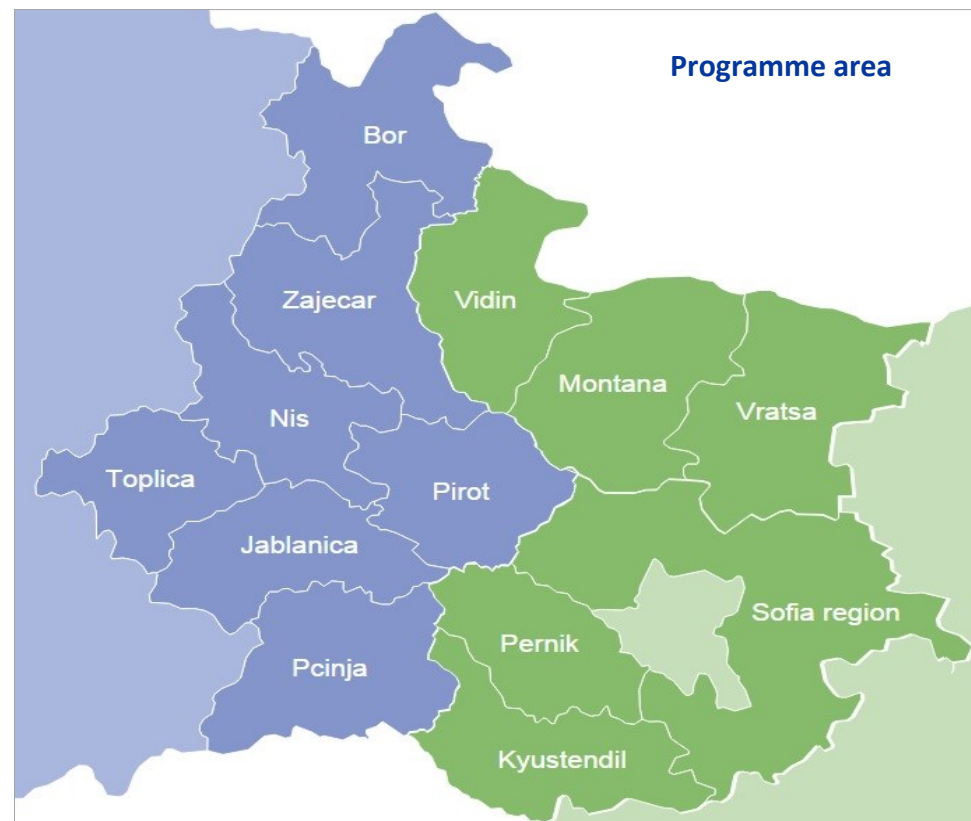
#### Priority Axis 2: Youth

- 2.1. Skills & Entrepreneurship
- 2.2. People-To-People Networking



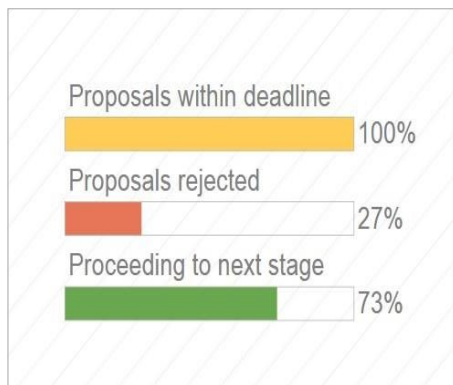
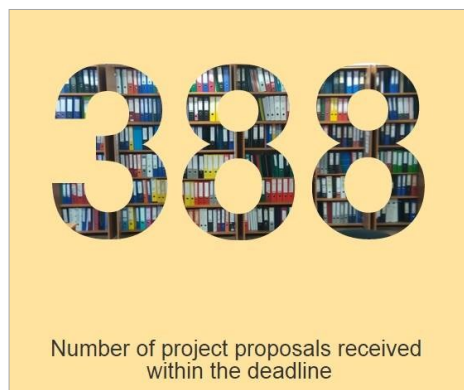
#### Priority Axis 3: Environment

- 3.1. Joint Risk Management;
- 3.2. Nature Protection.

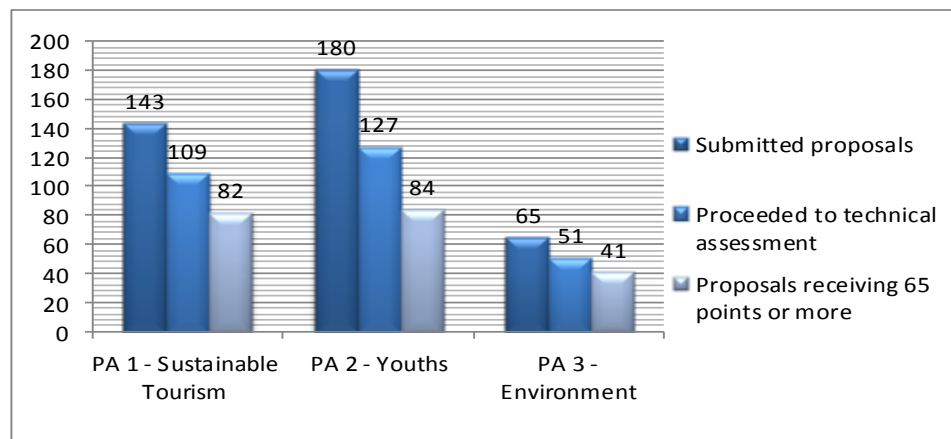




## LAUNCH OF THE 1st CALL FOR PROPOSALS



Priority Axis	Number of funded projects	Total amount
PA 1 – Sustainable Tourism	12	5 834 011,90 €
PA 2 – Youth	13	4 754 487,39 €
PA 3 - Environment	10	5 362 360, 52 €
<b>Total</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>15 950 859,81 €</b>



### Basic facts about the 1st Call for project proposals:

- **Duration of the Call** - 5 months- launched on 17 August 2015 with deadline on 18 January 2016;
- **Available budget** - the initial total amount allocated to the 1st Call for proposals was **EUR 12 687 304**. Due to the high number and the overall good quality of the submitted project proposals, the Joint Monitoring Committee decided to increase the initial budget of the Call (including the 2018 allocation) to the total amount of **EUR 18 570 429**;
- **Scope** - the Call was open to project proposals under **all 7 specific objectives** under the 3 priority axes;
- **Promotional activities** –the Call was promoted in the national newspapers in both countries, as well as on numerous websites, through social media, and at 11 public events known as “Info days” and the very popular “Partner Search Forum”;
- **Submitted project proposals** - 388 application forms were received within the deadline;
- **The Administrative Compliance and Eligibility Check** of all submitted project proposals was performed during the period 25 January – 1 April 2016. In total 287 project proposals were found compliant, while 101 were rejected;
- **The Technical and Quality Check** was performed during the period 22 April – 27 June 2016. **207** project proposals received at least 65 points on the quality assessment;
- In total 37 project proposals were approved for funding, out of which: **35 subsidy contracts** were concluded in 2016 and **2 more contracts** are expected to be signed in 2017. The list of all projects approved for financing is uploaded on the Programme’s website.

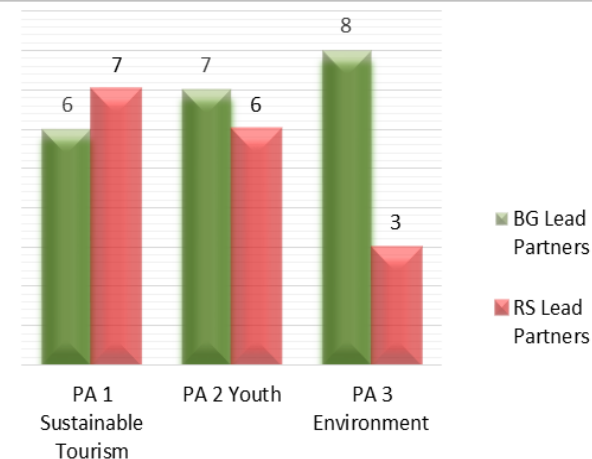
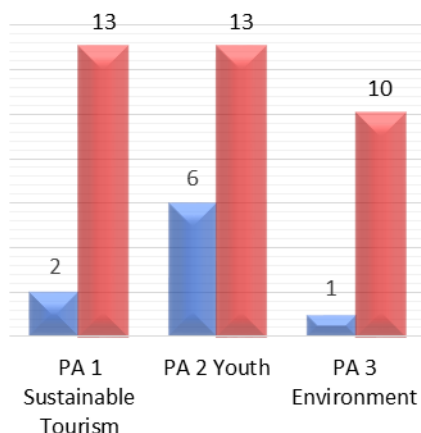




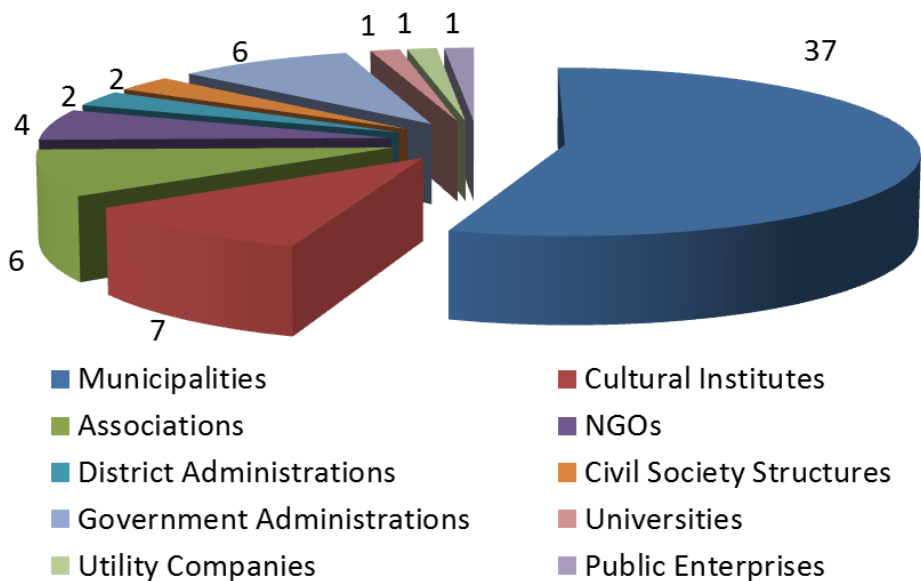
## FIRST CALL FOR PROPOSALS - RESULTS

### Basic facts about the 1st Call for project proposals

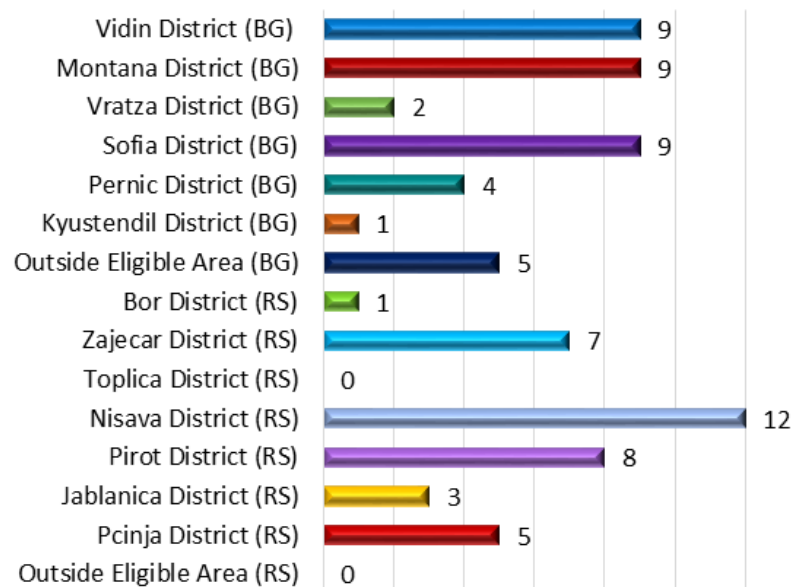
- The majority of the projects are investment proposals.
- The Lead partners (LPs) of the contracted projects are distributed as follows: 21 LPs from Bulgaria and 16 LPs from Serbia.
- The most presented partnership organizations are the municipalities, followed by cultural institutes, government administrations and associations.
- 31 Project Partners from Bulgaria and 33 from Serbia are participating in the implementation of the projects.



### Partnership organisations



### Distribution of Project by Region





## EVENTS ORGANISED IN 2016

The **2nd Joint Monitoring Committee meeting** was held on 21 April 2016, in Nis, Serbia. The main decisions made by the JMC include:

- Approval of the Annual implementation reports of the Bulgaria-Serbia IPA Cross-border Programme 2007-2013 and Interreg-IPA CBC Programme Bulgaria-Serbia 2014-2020,
- Approval of the results from the administrative compliance and eligibility check of project proposals under the 1st Call.

The **Third Joint Monitoring Committee meeting** took place on 15 July 2016 in Bozhurishte, Bulgaria. The main objective of the meeting was to approve the list of projects proposed for funding under the 1st Call. After a discussion on the results from the assessment and taking into consideration the high interest of the stakeholders to apply under the Programme as well as the overall good technical

quality of the received proposals, the JMC approved reallocation of additional financial resources, increasing the amount of the available funds for



the First Call to EUR 18 570 429 . As a result 37 joint cross-border cooperation projects were approved for financing.

The **official ceremony** for awarding of the first 33 subsidy contracts under the



First Call for proposals was held on 24 November 2016, at the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works in Sofia, Bulgaria.

**Three training seminars** for management team members of the funded projects were held in Bulgaria, in the period 25-30 November 2016. The workshops took place in the cities of Sofia, Montana and Vidin, and were attended by 89 participants. The most important topics covered during the events were related to: technical and financial implementation of the projects; public procurement; verification of expenditures; information and visibility; e-governance; irregularities and anti-fraud measures. Three trainings with similar agenda were held in Serbia, in the cities of Aleksinac and Nis. The trainings were attended by 158 participants.





## EUROPEAN COOPERATION DAY



For a 5th consecutive year, the European Cooperation Day was celebrated. A culinary tourism festival “Eat, travel, love cross-border cooperation” was organized on 17 September 2016, in Dupnitsa, Bulgaria. The event attracted over 230 participants including official guests, representatives of local and regional authorities and media.

An important focus of the event in Dupnitsa was given to the “Photo competition 2016” awarding ceremony. The competition was held during the period 28 July—28 August. Winners under each of the three categories: “Food and Culinary Traditions”, “Music and Dance”, and “Biodiversity”, received their awards from the official Programme representatives.



## PROGRAMME WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA PAGES

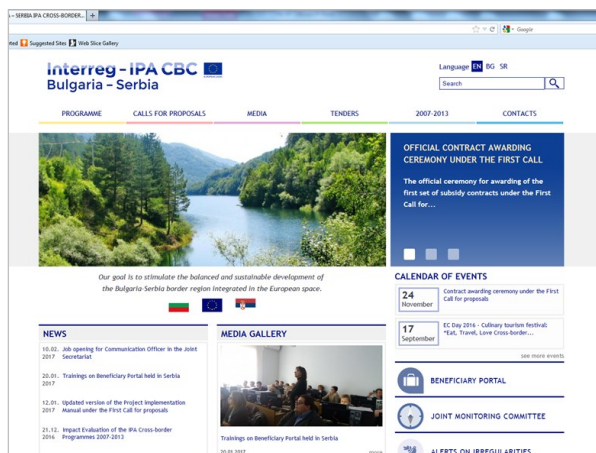
www.ipacbc-bgrs.eu

In 2016 a significant number of website visits was registered - almost **40 000 visits in total**, which shows high level of interest (close to the number of visits registered in 2015).

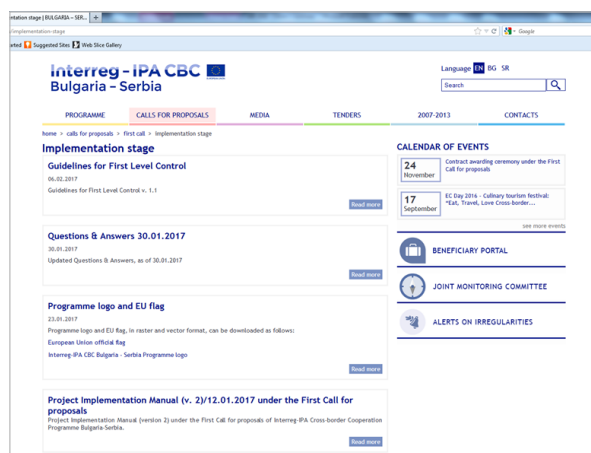
In order to reach wider audience and ensure transparency of the Programme, both social media pages: Facebook and Twitter (already created in January 2015) have been continuously maintained and updated. The use of social media for promotion of the Programme has proven to be a very efficient and cost-effective. The Programme Facebook page reached 2700 Likes in 2016.

MIS, including its section "Beneficiary portal" has been fully operational and maintained during 2016. The system allows tracing of all activities at project and programme level leading to an improved communication between the beneficiaries and all programme bodies and structures.

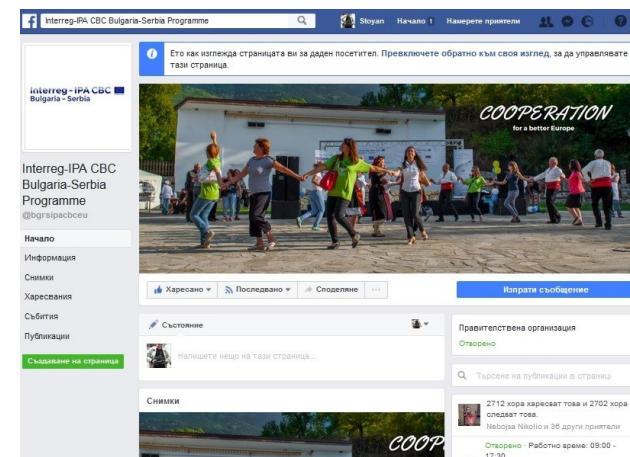
The home page of the Programme website



The section "Call for proposals" at the website



Programme page on Facebook:





## PROGRAMME MEDIA CAMPAIGN AND MEDIA COVERAGE

Two media campaigns were launched in 2016: campaign of trainings for programme beneficiaries under the First Call and campaign for European Cooperation Day 2016.

Press releases were distributed to national, regional and local media before and after the programme events and initiatives.

Over 100 different publications in electronic media (web portals, local, regional and national e-newspapers) and radio stations were published for popularization of the projects start under the First call, programme trainings and events.

During the European Cooperation Day 2016, one audio advertisement spot was broadcasted on regional radio stations aiming to inform the large audience in cross-border region on the celebration campaign.







**Interreg - IPA CBC**   
Bulgaria - Serbia

[www.ipacbc-bgrs.eu](http://www.ipacbc-bgrs.eu)

