



Interreg - IPA CBC
Bulgaria - Serbia



CITIZEN'S SUMMARY

ANNUAL IMPLEMENTATION REPORT 2020



ARTICLE 50 (9) OF REGULATION (EU) NO 1303/2013



The Programme

In the framework of the annual reporting to the European Commission (EC), the current report gives an overview about the implementation of the programme in the year 2019.

The eligible area of the Programme covers NUTS III regions or equivalents, situated on the border between both partnering countries, including: Bulgarian districts of Vidin, Montana, Vratsa, Sofiyska oblast, Pernik and Kyustendil, and Serbian districts of Bor, Zajecar, Nisava, Toplica, Pirot, Jablanica and Pcinja.

PRIORITY AXES OF THE PROGRAMME

- **Sustainable Tourism** - Encouraging tourism and cultural and natural heritage;
- **Youth** - Investing in youth, education and skills;
- **Environment** - Protecting the environment and promoting climate change adaptation and mitigation, risk prevention and management.

FINANCIAL ALLOCATION

The total Programme budget is EUR 34 102 256.

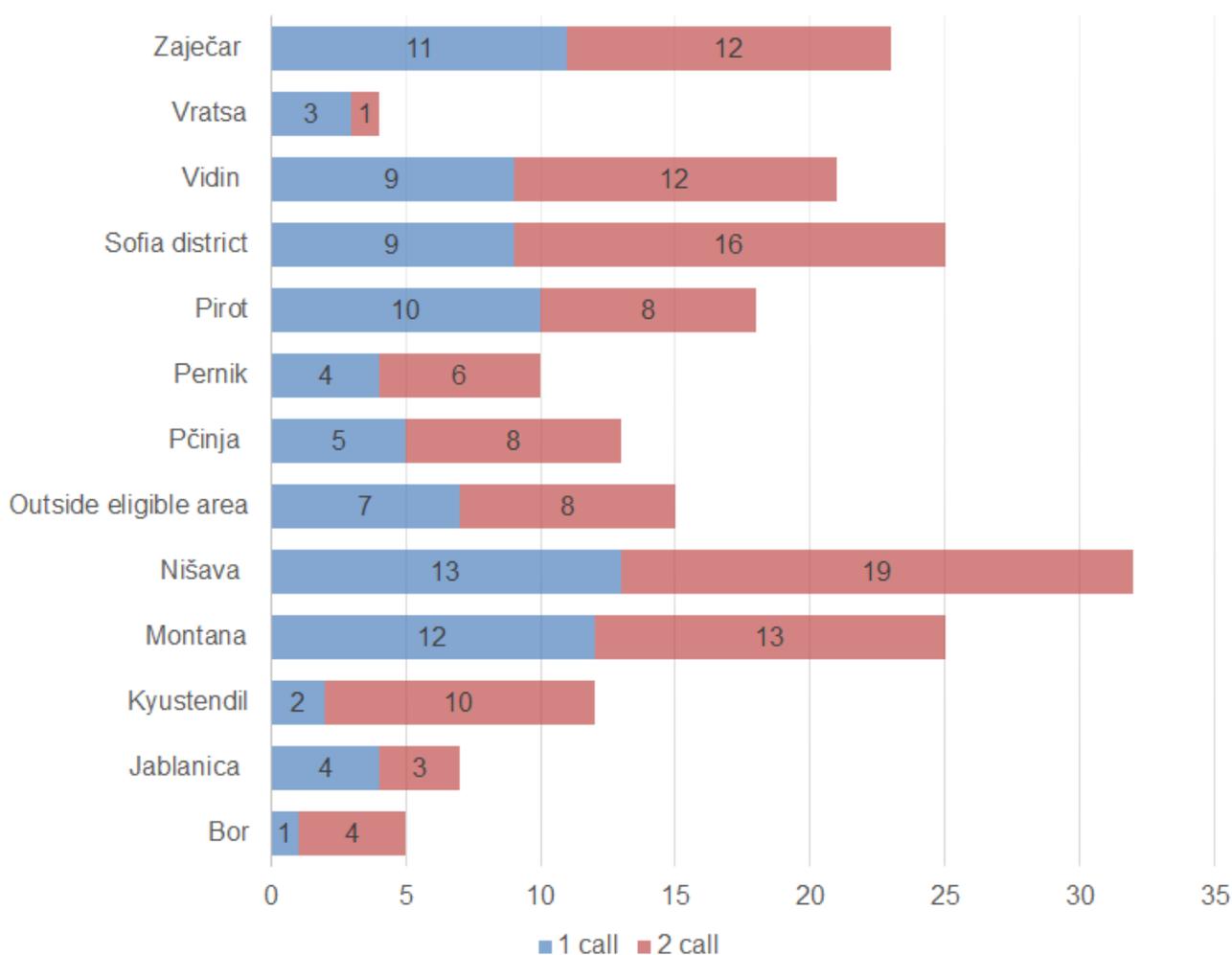
The Programme is co-financed by the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA

II) at a rate of 85% and requires a share of 15% national co-financing.

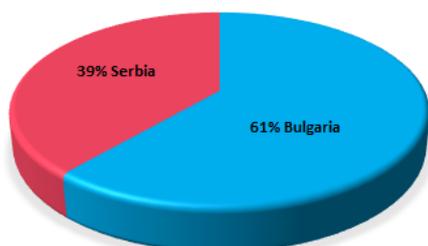
Performance and Progress in 2020

- 54 project partners from Bulgaria and 61 from Serbia;
- 58 lead partners from Bulgaria and 37 from Serbia;
- Mostly municipalities, cultural institutes, government administrations and NGOs;
- Sustainable trend in the distribution of partnership along the border;
- Low share of partnerships between public and civil sector.

DISTRIBUTION OF PROJECT PARTNERS PER REGION:



LEAD PARTNERS



PROJECT PARTNERS



Financial progress in 2020

Priority Axis	Number of funded proposals	Contracted amount (euro)	Payments (euro)
PA 1 – Sustainable tourism	41	12,395,005.03	6,356,742.82
PA 2 – Youth	27	7,011,800.65	4,255,736.22
PA 3 – Environment	25	12,369,903.30	6,823,124.22
Total	93	31,776,708.98	17,435,603.26

Out of 55 projects from the Second Call, 19 projects (10 under PA1, 7 under PA2 and 2 under PA3) have been completed in 2020, while the remaining 36 proceed with implementation.

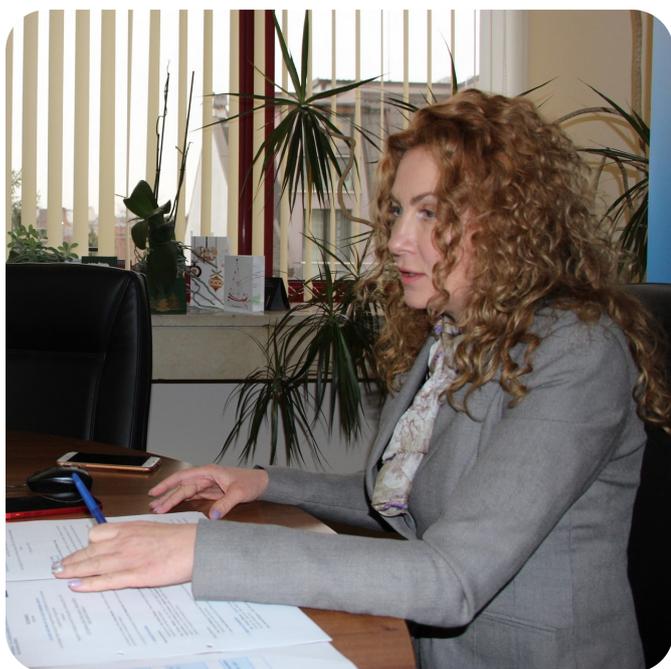


Projects under the Second Call



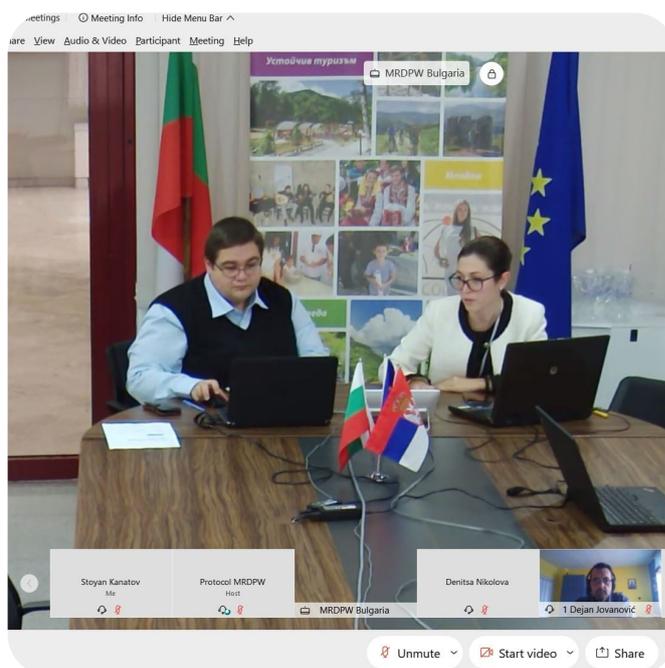
JMC Meeting

On 18 December 2020, the Eight Joint Monitoring Committee meeting under the Interreg-IPA Cross-border Cooperation Bulgaria-Serbia Programme 2014-2020 was held online. During the online session of the JMC the current progress of implementation of the Programme was presented and a decision for amendment of the Technical assistance's budget for the period 2020 – 2023 was taken in order to be



forthcoming Programme:

- **Priority Axis 1 “Competitive border region”** – aimed at enhancing sustainable growth, ensuring jobs and increasing the competitiveness of SME-s with a share of 15% of the total Programme’ budget;
- **Priority Axis 2 “Integrated development of the border region”** – with a focus on fostering the integrated social-economic and environmental development, cultural heritage and security in urban and other than urban areas with a share of 55% of the total Programme’ budget;
- **Priority Axis 3 “A more resilient border region”** – aimed at adaptation on climate changes, risk prevention and disaster resilience with a share of 20% of the total Programme’ budget.



guaranteed the successful completion of the current Programme and a smooth transition to the new Programme. The representatives of the JMC have been also informed on the progress in the programming for 2021-2027.

On the same day the Third meeting of the Joint Working Group for the forthcoming Programme period 2021-2027 was held. The main focus was the discussion of the logic of interventions, which outlines the following three priority axes for the

Trainings for beneficiaries

On 03.07.2020 the Joint Secretariat of the Interreg-IPA CBC Bulgaria-Serbia Programme conducted an online training for 38 representatives of the Bulgarian project partners of the 13 new projects, financed from the beginning of 2020, and another 20 projects expected to be awarded subsidy. On 15.07.2020 the Joint Secretariat branch office in Nis, Serbia conducted the second online training for 54 representatives of 13 new projects contracted from the beginning of 2020 and another 20 projects, which were expected to be awarded subsidy.

The received feedback showed that 90% of the Bulgarian participants shared that the training was practical, conducted in an understandable way and they were satisfied with the received information. More than 93% of the Serbian respondents were satisfied or rather satisfied from the training. For more than 80% of them the training was conducted in a completely understandable way, was of sufficient duration and quite practical. All participants shared that the topics discussed:

- **Project Implementation and Reporting;**
- **Communication and Visibility;**
- **Public procurement;**
- **Verification of funds and reporting to FLC;**
- **Anti-fraud measures**

were concrete and clear to the project implementation stage and valued high the opportunity for online presence. A real demonstration of the functionalities of the Beneficiary portal has been also performed. Lecturers in the training were representatives of the Joint secretariat, the First level control unit and the Managing Authority of the Programme. After the end of each panel the participants were allowed to ask questions concerning project implementation and received their answers from the lecturers. Q&A were published on the Programme's website. At beneficiaries' convenience, the JS prepared a series of online training modules for project implementation, which were uploaded and are available for free on the Interreg-IPA CBC Bulgaria-Serbia website here: <http://www.ipacbc-bgrs.eu/bg>.

EUROPEAN COOPERATION DAY 2020

On 21.09.2020, the Interreg-IPA CBC Bulgaria-Serbia Programme celebrated the European Cooperation Day and 30 years anniversary from the beginning of the crossborder cooperation programmes. Within a joint online event under the heading “Together we can do more” under three of the CBC programmes – with Republic of Serbia, Republic of North Macedonia and Republic of Turkey, were presented the achieved results and successfully implemented projects. Official greetings for the event were made by Mrs. Lena Pench, Director in the European Commission's DG Regional and Urban Policy Department, HE Mr. Dimiter Tzantchev, Permanent Representative of Republic of Bulgaria to the European Union, Ms. Denitsa Nikolova, Deputy Minister of Regional Development and Public Works, Mr. Mihajilo Dašić, Assistant Minister of European Integration, Republic of Serbia and Mr. Faruk Kaymakcı, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Turkey. The event were life-streamed at 16.00 (Bulgarian time), on the Facebook pages of the three programmes: <https://www.facebook.com/ipacbcgrs>, <https://www.facebook.com/interregipacbcgmnk> and <https://www.facebook.com/BulgariaTurkey> and is still available for free.

EUROPEAN REGIONS WEEK 2020

An interesting discussion for cross-border cooperation (CBC) in the health sector, within the 18-th Week of Regions and cities, was held online on 15 October 2020. Representatives of the CBC programmes between Bulgaria-Serbia, Poland-Belarus-Ukraine, Belgium-France and the Central European Service for Cross-Border Initiatives discussed the specific healthcare needs of the regions, successfully implemented health projects and the main obstacles in the implementation process. Representatives of the European Commission referred the future healthcare CBC giving an emphasis on the Directive on the application of patients’ rights in cross-border healthcare and the 2021-2027 programming. A video recording of the workshop could be found [here](#).



**18th EUROPEAN WEEK of
REGIONS and CITIES**

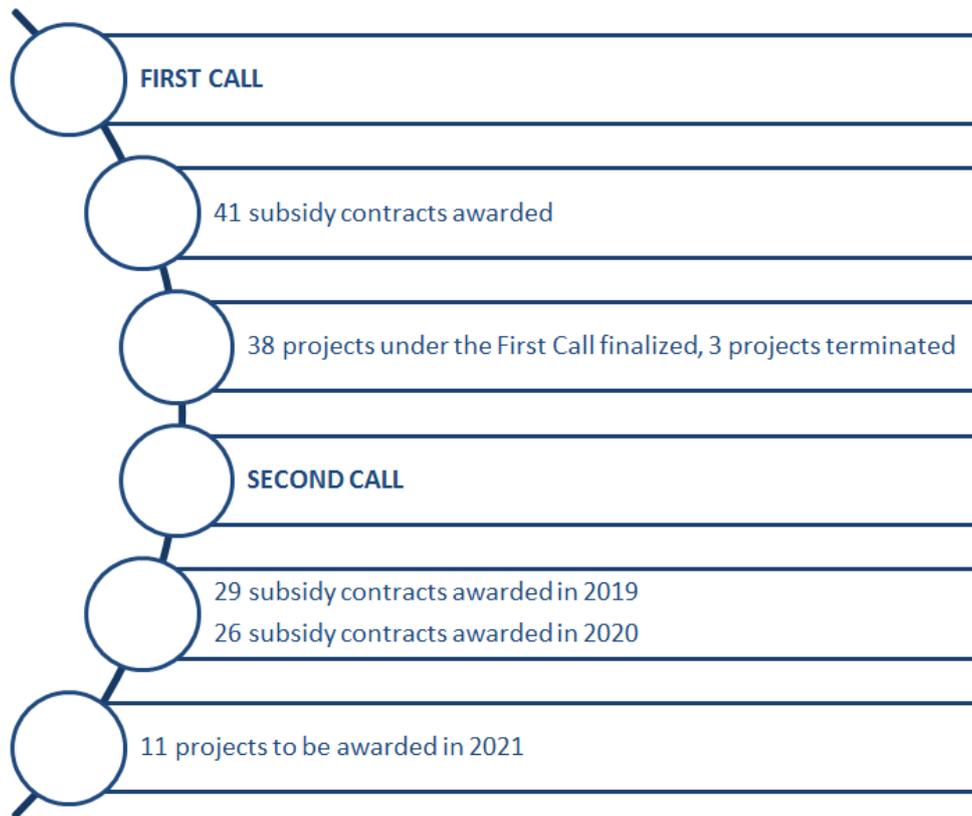
05>09 OCTOBER 2020

12>16 OCTOBER 2020

19>22 OCTOBER 2020



Milestones 2020



Contacts

MANAGING AUTHORITY (MA)

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and Public Works
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