

Annex 1 – Citizen's summary¹

Programming process

The process of preparation of the Cooperation Programme was coordinated by the Managing Authority (Ministry of Regional Development and EU Funds of the Republic of Croatia in the period till February 2015; Agency for Regional Development from February 2015 onwards), in cooperation with the National Authority, EU Integration Office of the Government of the Republic of Serbia, and the Task Force, working group responsible for preparation and approval the Interreg IPA Cross-border cooperation Programme Croatia – Serbia 2014. – 2020.

The process of preparation of the Cooperation Programme consisted of the following steps:

- Meetings of the Task Force for the preparation of the Programme

Task Force was nominated in July 2013 and since then ten (10) Task Force meetings and workshops were organized in the period from December 2013 to April 2015. The Task Force consisted of the representatives on national, regional and local level of the partner countries. This ensured that the regional/local level was actively involved in the programming process. All Task Force members were actively involved in the decision-making process and preparation of all Programme documents. Following the 9th Task Force meeting, the Managing Authority (hereinafter MA) submitted the approved version of the Cooperation Programme (version 1.0) to the European Commission on 14 November 2014. In the meantime, European Commission sent observations to Cooperation Programme so MA coordinated revision of the relevant sections of the Cooperation Programme. The final version of Cooperation Programme (version 2.0) was approved by the Task Force in May 2015. Interreg IPA Cross-border Cooperation Programme Croatia-Serbia 2014-2020 was submitted for approval by the MA on 2 June 2015 and approved by Commission Implementing Decision (C(2015)6026) on 24 August 2015.

During the preparation of Cooperation Programme, MA ensured that the partnership and multi-level governance principle is respected and that all relevant stakeholders are involved in the process of preparation of the Cooperation Programme. In that respect, the following consultations were organised by the MA:

- Stakeholder consultation workshops

In order to inform potential beneficiaries on the relevant documents prepared and approved by the Task Force and to include them in the selection of the thematic priorities and in definition of types of actions to be supported within each thematic priority, two rounds of stakeholder consultation workshops were organized during 2014. The first round of public stakeholders' workshops was organised on 11 April 2014 in Sombor (Serbia) for thematic

¹ Citizen's summary represents the summary of annual implementation report for the years 2014 and 2015 for the implementation of Interreg IPA cross-border Programme Croatia – Serbia 2014-2020

priorities 2 and 4, and on 14 April 2014 in Osijek (Croatia) regarding thematic priorities 1, 7 and 8. The second round of public stakeholders' workshops was organised in Novi Sad (Serbia) on 8 September 2014. The list of invitees, compiled and verified by the Task Force, consisted of 180 representative institutions per each participating country. At the stakeholder consultation workshops, approximately 120 participants were involved in the discussion and definition on the content and objectives of the Cooperation Programme.

- Online public consultations

The MA launched online public consultations on 1 August 2014, and they were opened until 1 September 2014. During that period, the relevant partners were invited to submit their written comments to the Programme documents published online: SWOT analysis, Programme intervention logic (Programme strategy) and draft Cooperation Programme. The MA informed the Programme mailing list consisting of nearly 200 contacts from the relevant institutions from the participating countries and Task Force about the launch of the public online consultations. The relevant comments received during online public consultations were taken into account during the design of the Cooperation Programme.

- Ex-ante evaluation

The Programme has been subject to an ex-ante evaluation of independent evaluators with the aim to improve Programme quality and to optimise the allocation of budget resources. Ex-ante evaluation process was launched in July 2014. The process was coordinated by the MA, in cooperation with EU Integration Office of the Government of the Republic of Serbia, as well as with ex-ante evaluation experts. Kick off meeting with the experts and the MA was held on 10 July 2014 in Zagreb (Croatia). During ex-ante evaluation process of the Cooperation Programme, ex-ante evaluators worked closely with the MA, directly involved in the elaboration of the Cooperation Programme, as well as with the Task Force (ex-ante evaluators participated at 7th Task Force meeting in Split (Croatia) in July 2014, 8th Task Force meeting in Novi Sad (Serbia) in September 2014 and at 9th Task Force meeting in Ilok (Croatia) in October 2014) which enabled them to timely appraise the content of the Cooperation Programme and to provide related recommendations for improvement to the MA. These recommendations were presented to and discussed by the Task Force and considered during the programming process. The result of the ex-ante evaluation process is the positive evaluation of the Cooperation Programme given in ex-ante evaluation Final Report from 8 May 2015. Ex-ante evaluation report is Annex 1 to Cooperation Programme.

- Strategic environmental assessment (SEA) process

The process of Strategic Environmental Assessment was coordinated by the MA, in cooperation with Croatian Ministry of Environmental and Nature Protection, EU Integration Office of the Government of the Republic of Serbia, as well as with SEA experts. The SEA process has been launched in July 2014 and closely coordinated with the ex-ante evaluation. SEA procedure was conducted both in Croatia and in Serbia.

Based on the received comments and proposals during the SEA consultations procedure (Task Force meetings and workshops, online consultations for SEA documents in Croatia and Serbia, and public hearing workshops organised in Zagreb and Belgrade), final versions

of relevant SEA documents (SEA Study in English language, non-technical summary in Croatian and Serbian language) were prepared.

SEA procedure finished on 9 June 2015 when Croatian Ministry of Environmental and Nature Protection notified the MA that the Strategic Environmental Assessment for the Programme was conducted in line with Directive 2001/42/EZ and Croatian Law on Environmental Protection. SEA Study is Annex 5 to Cooperation Programme.

System set up and Programme implementation

Following the submission of the Cooperation Programme to the European Commission, the MA continued to coordinate and carry out the activities for the system structure set up which included: setting up the Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC), setting up the management and control system, organizing technical meetings, employment of MA and Joint Secretariat (hereinafter JS) staff, set up of the JS, set up of electronic monitoring system (eMS) and Programme communication activities.

All the above-mentioned activities are implemented in line with the Priority Axis 5 Technical Assistance, being that, in line with Article 59 of the CPR, activities within Technical Assistance include the preparation, management, monitoring, evaluation, information and communication, networking, complaint resolution, control and audit tasks of the Programme, reduction of the administrative burden on beneficiaries, including electronic data exchange system, and the reinforcement of capacity of applicants and beneficiaries as well as strengthening of the involvement of relevant partners (including the exchange of good practices among partners).

Setting up the Joint Monitoring Committee

Following the adoption of the Cooperation Programme, the MA sent notification letter to the National Authorities (hereinafter NAs) of both participating countries for the nomination of their representatives to the JMC. After the nomination of the JMC members, the MA and JS organised first JMC meeting on 24 November 2015 in Osijek (Croatia) where the JMC was formally set-up. Also, relevant documents were presented and adopted by the JMC members. Furthermore, the JMC members decided on the official Programme logotype which should be used on all communication materials by Programme bodies and beneficiaries.

Setting up the management and control system

Upon submission of the Cooperation Programme to the European Commission in November 2014, the MA continued to coordinate the process of setting up the management and control system in order to ensure efficient and effective implementation of the Programme.

Setting up of the management and control system includes, inter alia, preparation of the Description of the Management and Control System and other related documents.

The MA, in cooperation with other Programme bodies, coordinated the preparation of the following Programme documents: Manual of Procedures of the MA, Rules of Procedures of the JMC, Memorandum of Understanding, Programme Communication Strategy and Programme rules on eligibility of expenditures. As a part of the Management and Control

System, the MA also coordinated Description of national control system in Croatia and Description of national control system in Serbia, prepared by the participating countries, Manual of Procedures of the JS, prepared by the JS and Application Package for the 1st Call for Proposals (Guidelines for Applicants, Model of the Subsidy Contract, Model of the Partnership Pre-agreement, Model of the Partnership Agreement and related statements, Application Manual), prepared jointly by the JS and MA.

Relevant Programme documents were prepared by the MA in coordination with other Programme bodies (National Authorities, Joint Secretariat, Control Bodies, Certifying Authority and Audit Authority) and discussed at two technical meetings held on 17 December 2014 in Zagreb (Croatia) and on 15 July 2015 in Beograd (Serbia).

Human resources

Recruitment and selection of the MA and JS staff was organised by the Agency for Regional Development of the Republic of Croatia (ARD), in accordance with ARD internal procedures. In addition to the Head of Directorate for Managing Cooperation Programmes and Head of Service for Managing Cooperation Programmes as MA staff, five (5) more MA staff members were employed in May 2015: Programme Manager for Programme Croatia – Serbia 2014-2020, Programme Manager for Programme Croatia – Bosnia and Herzegovina – Montenegro 2014-2020, Communication Manager, IT Manager and Legal Officer, as well as two (2) JS staff members: Head of JS and Project Manager. In that respect, the JS was set up in May 2015.

Another procurement procedure for the employment of JS staff was launched in November 2015.

In total, MA and JS staff members attended 17 different trainings/workshops/seminars, in period from February 2015 to November 2015.

Set up of the electronic monitoring system (eMS)

In line with Section 2.5.4 of Cooperation Programme, the MA is responsible for setting up, running and maintaining a computerised system to record and store data on each operation necessary for the monitoring, evaluation, financial management, verification and audit (including data on individual participants in operations where applicable, in compliance with electronic data exchange requirements provided for in Article 122(3) of the CPR and in related implementing acts) and contributing to the reduction of administrative burden for beneficiaries.

According to the above mentioned requirements, and in line with the Regulations 1303/2013 and 480/2014, the Programme set up information system – electronic monitoring system (eMS), developed and provided by the programme INTERACT. The License Agreement, clearly stating rights, liabilities and obligations of the MA and of INTERACT, was signed on 1 October 2015. Following the signing of the Agreement, the procurement procedure for hosting services was launched and the hosting contract was signed on 8 December 2015. Furthermore, the MA started to work on the preparation and adjustment of eMS module for the launch of the 1st Call for Proposals as well as for other relevant eMS modules: assessment of project proposals, contracting, reporting, monitoring, payments, audits, etc. The work on adjusting and monitoring eMS is on-going responsibility of the MA.

Communication activities

In line with Article 42(4) of IPA II Regulation, the MA is responsible for coordination of the tasks linked to the requirements on information, publicity and transparency as well as for the information and communication activities regarding Cooperation Programme as set out in Articles 115 and 116 of CPR.

Within the Programme information and communication measures and tools, the MA launched the procurement procedure for services of development, hosting and maintenance of the Programme website, as well as for services of Programme logotype design in September 2015. The selection process was finished by the end of October 2015 and the contract with the service provider was signed on 10 November 2015.

The official website of the Programme was launched in December 2015 (<http://www.interreg-croatia-serbia2014-2020.eu/>).

Official Programme logotype, i.e. visual identity of the Programme, was selected at the first JMC meeting in November 2015.

Furthermore, the MA launched procurement procedure for Programme promotional materials in October 2015 as a part of coordinating communication activities for the launch of the 1st Call for Proposals.

Priority Axis 5 Technical Assistance

Technical assistance activities are implemented by the MA and other authorities involved in the management of the Programme.

Activities implemented within Priority Axis Technical Assistance within 2014 and 2015 are listed below:

- a Joint Secretariat supporting the Managing Authority and assisting the Joint Monitoring Committee in the implementation and day-to-day management of the Programme set up and managed;
- 1st Calls for Proposals, including the development of guidance documents setting out the conditions for the support of operations prepared for implementation;
- procedures for the quality assessment, monitoring and control of operations implemented under the cooperation programme, (making use of experts where relevant) and contributing to the reduction of administrative burden for beneficiaries set up and implemented;
- Programme Communication Strategy, including the setting up and implementation of information and communication measures and tools in line with Article 115 of the CPR drafted and started to be implemented;
- computerised system to record and store data on each operation necessary for the monitoring, evaluation, financial management, verification and audit (including data on individual participants in operations where applicable, in compliance with electronic data exchange requirements provided for in Article 122(3) of the CPR and in related implementing acts) and contributing to the reduction of administrative burden for beneficiaries set up whereas running and maintenance started;
- trainings and capacity building to the Programme management structure in order to contribute to the successful implementation of the Programme ensured;

- information documents for applicants and beneficiaries to guide them in the preparation of applications and the implementation, evaluation, control and communication of approved operations drafted;
- the Joint Secretariat set up and coordinated in implementing tasks related to the implementation of the Programme at national level.

Programme specific output indicators achieved in 2014 and 2015 are stated in the following table.

Indicator	Measurement unit	Current value (31/12/2015)	Target value (2023) (optional)
Joint secretariat established	Number	1	1
Joint Monitoring Committee meetings held	Number	1	9
Programme communication strategy developed and implemented	Number	1	1
Independent programme evaluations implemented (ex-ante and during programme implementation)	Number	1	2
Programme e-Monitoring System developed, implemented and used	Number	1	1
Training and building capacity for Programme management structure ensured	Number	17	
Number of employees (Full Time Equivalents) whose salaries are co-financed by technical assistance	Number	5.33	12

Cumulative financial data broken down by category of intervention is stated in the following table.

Categories of Intervention			
Priority axis	Code	Total amount (EUR)	Spent amount (EUR)
PA5	121 Preparation, implementation, monitoring and inspection	2,057,590.00	109,063.25
PA5	122 Evaluation and studies	514,398.00	0.00
PA5	123 Information and communication	857,330.00	4,353.98

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