

# **IMPLEMENTATION REPORT FOR THE EUROPEAN TERRITORIAL COOPERATION GOAL**

## **PART A**

### **IDENTIFICATION OF THE ANNUAL/FINAL IMPLEMENTATION REPORT**

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## **2. OVERVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COOPERATION PROGRAMME (ARTICLE 50(2) OF REGULATION (EU) NO 1303/2013 AND ARTICLE 14(3)(A) OF REGULATION (EU) NO 1299/2013)**

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

In 2016, the Programme accelerated the progress even further by selecting projects, contracting and also implementing them. Although the projects are not finalized yet, results are already showing.

The first application for payment was submitted to the EC on the 28.12.2016 (1,165,533.13 euro ERDF), considering the designation was obtained on 5.12.2016.

99 selected projects (with available financial allocation) with a total value of 132,761,075.14 euro (out of which 10 Technical Assistance projects) were in different implementation stages: pre-contracting phase, implementation stage or finalizing their implementation period (for TA projects) and 2,716,977.39 euro were declared by the beneficiaries to the Managing Authority.

By the end of 2016, important steps in the implementation of the Programme have been made: the designation of the Programme structures, contracting and implementing the first projects, finalizing the ongoing evaluation processes and selecting the applications submitted under the calls launched in 2015.

#### **Monitoring Committee (MC) – important decisions**

During 2016, 3 MC meetings were organized and 6 written procedures were launched for taking important decisions for the Programme implementation, namely:

- Project selection -1st call– hard projects and 2nd call
- Revisions of the Description of the Management and Control System according to AA recommendations or development of the Programme
- Approval of different documents needed for the Programme implementation (e.g. AIR for 2015, ceiling list for the beneficiaries, job descriptions for JS etc.).

#### **Calls for proposals**

The second call for priority axes 4 and 5 launched on 15th of October 2015 was closed on 15th of March 2016. Following the submission deadline, 234 applications were received and evaluated, with a total value of 178,216,209 Euro.

#### **Evaluation of the applications received**

During 2016, 2 project evaluation processes have been completed:

- **1st call, hard applications for priority axes 1, 2 and 3 (the evaluation process started in 2015).** For completing the evaluation process, external expertise was contracted by the JS at the beginning of 2016.

153 applications were submitted, with a total value of 783,568,622 Euro. Following the evaluation process, 39 applications were proposed for selection (the projects receiving

more than 60 points are proposed for selection according to the Applicant's Guide).

However, the MC selection decision on selecting projects with score above 60 points was not taken and has been postponed due to discussions raised between the representatives of the two member states. After intensive discussions between MC members, MA and NA, it was agreed to select only the projects receiving over 65 points and the remaining budget to be relaunched as soon as possible. The selection decision was taken by the MC based on the Programme objectives and the goal of reaching all the Programme indicators as well as projects quality.

Thus, 16 applications were selected by the MC through the Decision no. 30/14.11.2016, with a total value of 79,167,524.73 euro, out of which ERDF 67,292,396.03 euro.

Following the MC selection decision, 57 complaints were received, out of which 50 were analyzed by the Complaint Panel (CP) and 7 were rejected without consideration on administrative grounds according to the Complaint Procedure. 1 complaint was considered as founded. The complaint accepted is related to the financial adjustment performed during the evaluation phase, thus the new budget of the project shall be approved by the MC and the financing contract shall reflect the new amount allocated.

- **2nd call for proposals, deadline for submission of applications – 15.03.2016.**

Following the evaluation process, 56 applications were selected by the MC through the Decision no. 32/08.12.2016, with a total value of 35,683,720.07 euro, out of which ERDF 30,331,162.14 euro. Out of these, 50 projects had available financial allocation, the rest of 6 being included in a reserve list.

In addition, the Monitoring Committee has decided to reevaluate 3 projects which were initially proposed for rejection by the AWG. The procedure for re-evaluation was programmed for beginning of 2017.

49 complaints were received, 33 from them were submitted for analyses to the CP, the rest of 16 complaints were rejected on administrative grounds. The complaints accepted are related to the financial adjustment performed during the evaluation phase. The new budgets of the projects shall be approved by the MC and the financing contracts shall reflect the new amount allocated.

Concluding, by the end on 2016, a total of 132,761,075.14 euro was committed to 99 projects.

- **The 3rd call for proposals**

The Programme management bodies have started the preparations for launching the 3rd call for proposals. Following the analysis regarding the reaching the Programme targets and goals (indicator targets compared with the indicators targets within the selected projects), it was decided to launch a targeted call for the indicators that were not yet secured considering the already selected projects. The 3rd call shall be launched in 2017.

- **Designation process**

The Programme structures have been designed on 5.12.2016 and the same day the EC was informed on this decision.

- **Contracting process**

26 contracts with a total value of 30,212,784.42 euro were signed and projects have started the implementation by the end of 2016:

- **Soft projects:** 23 subsidy contracts were signed in 2016. One of the selected projects, 15.2.1.086, was rejected from financing through MC Decision no. 21/04.01.2016. Therefore, the project with the highest score from the ones initially approved without financial allocation available, was selected for funding acceptance with available financial allocation, namely project 15.2.1.038. Consequently, the values of the indicators for PA 2 were adjusted accordingly.
- **Hard projects:** by the end of 2016 3 contracts were signed and 3 projects were under contracting process. Also, 25 pre-contracting visits were performed for the 16 selected projects.
- **Second call for proposals:** the pre-contracting process was started for all 50 projects and will be continued in 2017.
- **Electronic monitoring system (e-MS)**

The protocol for taking over the electronic monitoring system was signed on 28.01.2016. During 2016 the e-MS was put in place and became available for beneficiaries.

Thus, the e-MS was configured and adapted to the rules of the Programme. The internal working procedures and the programme documents were revised in order to reflect the implementation of the electronic monitoring system.

Starting with 23.09.2016, the JS started to introduce the data for the projects submitted under the first call for proposals for soft projects and to organize trainings for the beneficiaries of the projects under the implementation for using the e-MS. Also, JS has started the process of introducing the historical data in e-MS. This process will continue also in 2017.

### 3. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PRIORITY AXIS

#### 3.1 Overview of the implementation

ID	Priority axis	Key information on the implementation of the priority axis with reference to key developments, significant problems and steps taken to address these problems
PA 1	A well connected region	<p>1. Soft projects: In 2016, 2 projects were contracted, with a total value of 2,190,851.45 euro out of which ERDF 1,862,223.73 euro. These two projects are under implementation. 75,322.85 Euro have been declared by beneficiaries. Detailed information regarding the status of these projects are included in the dedicated project fiche published on the 2. programme website: <a href="http://interregrobg.eu/en/projects/our-projects.html">http://interregrobg.eu/en/projects/our-projects.html</a>.</p> <p>2. Hard projects: 5 projects with a total value of 34,978,503.53 Euro, out of which ERDF 29,731,728.00 Euro (total public contribution 34,278,933.46 Euro) were selected by the MC. At the end of 2016 the 5 selected projects were in the pre-contracting phase and pre-contractual visits were performed by the JS to these projects. The list with all selected projects and the dedicated project fiches are available on the programme website <a href="http://interregrobg.eu/en/projects/our-projects.html">http://interregrobg.eu/en/projects/our-projects.html</a>.</p> <p>3. 3rd call for proposals After selecting the projects, 59,281,580.31 euro, out of which ERDF 50,389,343.26 euro remained available for future calls. Thus, a new call targeted on the indicators is under preparation.</p> <p>No specific problems were encountered within this PA, except the issue raised by delays in selection process of the applications submitted under the second call for proposal, hard projects deadline (details in Chapter 5).</p>

ID	Priority axis	Key information on the implementation of the priority axis with reference to key developments, significant problems and steps taken to address these problems
PA 2	A green region	<p>1. Soft projects</p> <p>In 2016, 17 soft projects were contracted under this priority axis, with a total eligible value of 12,387,435.70 Euro, out of which ERDF 10,529,320.35 Euro (total public contribution 12,139,686.90 Euro). 13 selected projects without available financial allocation were included on a reserve list.</p> <p>The contracting process of project 15.2.1.086 was stopped due to the fact that the Lead Beneficiary did not submit the requested documents necessary for contracting. Consequently, in January 2016, the project was rejected from financing through MC Decision no. 21/04.01.2016. Thus, project 15.2.1.038 with the highest score from the reserve list, was contracted.</p> <p>16 contracted projects have started the implementation and one project (15.2.1.087) had encountered difficulties related with the financing sources of the beneficiary 3 (Silistra District Administration) and the implementation was suspended for three months (between September and December 2016). Meetings with the beneficiaries shall be organized for identifying solutions for this project.</p> <p>1,288,894.92 euro were declared by the beneficiaries to MA.</p> <p>2. Hard projects</p> <p>3 hard projects with a total value of 14,460,319.47 Eur, out of which ERDF 12,291,271.55 Euro (total public contribution 14,171,113 Euro) were selected by the MC. All 3 projects were in the pre-contracting phase and pre-contractual visits were performed by the JS.</p> <p>After selecting the hard projects, 34,463,972.60 euro, out of which ERDF 29,294,376.71 euro remained available for future calls. Thus, a new call targeted on the indicators is under preparation.</p> <p>No specific problems were encountered within this PA (details in Chapter 5).</p>

ID	Priority axis	Key information on the implementation of the priority axis with reference to key developments, significant problems and steps taken to address these problems
PA 3	A safe region	<p>1. Soft projects, deadline 30th of June 2015</p> <p>4 projects were contracted under this PA with a total value of 2.726.028,42 Euro, out of which ERDF 2,317,124.16 Euro (total public contribution 2,671,507.50 Euro). All the projects are under implementation.</p> <p>148,505,09 euro have been declared by the beneficiaries to the Managing Authority.</p> <p>Information regarding the first result of these projects are included in section 9.1.</p> <p>2. Hard projects, deadline 30th of September 2015</p> <p>8 hard projects with a total value of 14,460,319.47 Euro, out of which ERDF 12,291,271.55 o (total public contribution 14,171,113 Euro) were selected by the MC.</p> <p>At the end of 2016, 3 projects were contracted with a total value of 12,658,987.54 euro, out of which ERDF 10,760,139.42 EURO (total public contribution 12,405,807.78 euro).</p> <p>5 projects were in the pre-contracting phase and pre-contractual visits were performed by the JS for these projects.</p> <p>3. 3rd call for proposals</p> <p>After selecting the hard projects, 15,770,736.89 euro, out of which ERDF 13,405,126.36 euro remained available for future calls. Thus, a new call targeted on the indicators is under preparation.</p> <p>No specific problems were encountered within this PA, except the issue raised by delays in selection process of the applications submitted under the second call for proposal, hard projects deadline (details in Chapter 5).</p>
PA 4	A skilled and inclusive region	<p>The call for proposals (PA 4 and PA 5) was launched on the 15th of October 2015 (MC approved the Applicant's Pack and the call was launched). Deadline for the call is 15th of March 2016. The total allocation for this PA was of 17,767,279 Euro, out of which ERDF 15,102,186 Euro.</p> <p>135 applications with a total eligible value of 89,912,300 Euro, out of which ERDF 76,425,455</p>

ID	Priority axis	Key information on the implementation of the priority axis with reference to key developments, significant problems and steps taken to address these problems
		<p>Euro were submitted within the deadline.</p> <p>35 projects with a total value of 18,031,916.83 Euro, out of which ERDF 15,327,129.37 Euro were selected by the MC.</p> <p>The available financial allocations for this PA covers 34 projects, with a total eligible value of 17,327,590.36 Euro, out of which ERDF 14,728,451.87 Euro (total public contribution 16,981,038.61 Euro). One application without available financial allocation was included on a reserve list.</p> <p>At the end of 2016 the contracting process for the 34 selected projects had started.</p> <p>No funds are available for other calls for proposal for this PA.</p> <p>No specific problems were encountered within this PA.</p>
PA 5	An efficient region	<p>The call for proposals (PA 4 and PA 5) was launched on the 15th of October 2015 (MC approved the Applicant's Pack and the call was launched). Deadline for the call is 15th of March 2016. The total financial allocation was of 12,690,913 Euro out of which ERDF 10,787,276 Euro.</p> <p>99 applications with a total eligible value of 88,303,908 Eur, out of which ERDF 75,058,322 Euro were submitted within the deadline.</p> <p>21 projects with a total value of 17,651,803.20 Eur, out of which 15,004,032.74 Eur ERDF were selected by the MC.</p> <p>The available financial allocations for this PA covers 16 projects with a total eligible value of 12,306,890.14 Euro, out of which ERDF 10,460,856.63 Euro (total public contribution 12,060,752.38 Eur). The rest of 5 applications without available financial allocation were included on a reserve list.</p> <p>At the end of 2016 the contracting process for the 16 selected projects had started.</p> <p>No funds are available for other calls for proposal for this PA.</p> <p>No specific problems were encountered within this PA.</p>



ID	Priority axis	Key information on the implementation of the priority axis with reference to key developments, significant problems and steps taken to address these problems
PA 6	Technical assistance	<p>The TA funds were used for ensuring an effective and efficient programme implementation. Thus, 6,405,273 euro were contracted by the TA beneficiaries (Managing Authority, Joint Secretariat, Audit Authority and Romanian First Level Control), out of which 6,136,173 euro in 2016.</p> <p>Also, the TA funds were used for closure activities of the 2007-2013 Romania-Bulgaria Cross-border Cooperation Programme.</p> <p>Detailed information regarding the TA contracts/decisions are published on the programme website: <a href="http://interregrobg.eu/en/projects/our-projects.html">http://interregrobg.eu/en/projects/our-projects.html</a>.</p> <p>By the end of 2016, 1,204,254.53 euro have been declared by the TA beneficiaries to MA.</p> <p>The funds were used for ensuring the necessary support related to the programme implementation (project evaluation and selection, monitoring activities, project implementation, FLC verifications, staff costs, applicants and beneficiaries support, audit, communication and information activities etc.).</p> <p>In 2016 the Programme website <a href="http://www.interregrobg.eu">www.interregrobg.eu</a> went online starting with January. The website will ensure a proper information of the applicants/beneficiaries.</p> <p>Detailed information regarding the communication and information activities are presented in section 10.2.</p>

ID	Priority axis	Key information on the implementation of the priority axis with reference to key developments, significant problems and steps taken to address these problems

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

#### Priority axes other than technical assistance

Priority axis	PA 1 - A well connected region
Investment priority	7b - Enhancing regional mobility by connecting secondary and tertiary nodes to TEN-T infrastructure, including multimodal nodes

Table 2: Common and programme specific output indicators

(1)	ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Target value	2016	Observations
F	CO14	Roads: Total length of reconstructed or upgraded roads	km	120.00	0.00	
S	CO14	Roads: Total length of reconstructed or upgraded roads	km	120.00	79.94	
F	7b.1	Number of joint mechanisms (e.g. route guidance, incidents/emergencies detection and management, studies on traffic flows, feasibility studies addressing cross-border transport issues, traffic safety measures, black-spot maps, awareness raising activities)	Number of mechanisms facilitating connection	30.00	0.00	
S	7b.1	Number of joint mechanisms (e.g. route guidance, incidents/emergencies detection and management, studies on traffic flows, feasibility studies addressing cross-border transport issues, traffic safety measures, black-spot maps, awareness raising activities)	Number of mechanisms facilitating connection	30.00	8.00	

(1)	ID	Indicator	2015	2014
F	CO14	Roads: Total length of reconstructed or upgraded roads	0.00	0.00
S	CO14	Roads: Total length of reconstructed or upgraded roads	0.00	0.00
F	7b.1	Number of joint mechanisms (e.g. route guidance, incidents/emergencies detection and management, studies on traffic flows, feasibility studies addressing cross-border transport issues, traffic safety measures, black-spot maps, awareness raising activities)	0.00	0.00

(1)	ID	Indicator	2015	2014
S	7b.1	Number of joint mechanisms (e.g. route guidance, incidents/emergencies detection and management, studies on traffic flows, feasibility studies addressing cross-border transport issues, traffic safety measures, black-spot maps, awareness raising activities)	3.00	0.00

Priority axis	PA 1 - A well connected region
Investment priority	7b - Enhancing regional mobility by connecting secondary and tertiary nodes to TEN-T infrastructure, including multimodal nodes
Specific objective	SO1.1 - Improve the planning, development and coordination of cross-border transport systems for better connections to TEN-T transport networks

Table 1: Result indicators

ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Baseline value	Baseline year	Target value (2023) Total	2016 Total	2016 Qualitative	Observations
R 1.1	Cross-border population served by modernized infrastructure leading to TEN-T	Number	626,140.00	2014	1,250,000.00			

ID	Indicator	2015 Total	2015 Qualitative	2014 Total	2014 Qualitative
R 1.1	Cross-border population served by modernized infrastructure leading to TEN-T				

Priority axis	PA 1 - A well connected region
Investment priority	7c - Developing and improving environmentally-friendly (including low noise) and low-carbon transport systems, including inland waterways and maritime transport, ports, multimodal links and airport infrastructure, in order to promote sustainable regional and local mobility

Table 2: Common and programme specific output indicators

(1)	ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Target value	2016	Observations
F	CO16	Inland waterways: Total length of improved or created inland waterway	km	20.00	0.00	
S	CO16	Inland waterways: Total length of improved or created inland waterway	km	20.00	8.00	
F	7c.1	Number of studies, strategies and action plans to improve safety of the navigation on the Danube and the Black Sea supported	Number of strategies, action plans	5.00	0.00	
S	7c.1	Number of studies, strategies and action plans to improve safety of the navigation on the Danube and the Black Sea supported	Number of strategies, action plans	5.00	1.00	

(1)	ID	Indicator	2015	2014
F	CO16	Inland waterways: Total length of improved or created inland waterway	0.00	0.00
S	CO16	Inland waterways: Total length of improved or created inland waterway	0.00	0.00
F	7c.1	Number of studies, strategies and action plans to improve safety of the navigation on the Danube and the Black Sea supported	0.00	0.00
S	7c.1	Number of studies, strategies and action plans to improve safety of the navigation on the Danube and the Black Sea supported	0.00	0.00

Priority axis	PA 1 - A well connected region
Investment priority	7c - Developing and improving environmentally-friendly (including low noise) and low-carbon transport systems, including inland waterways and maritime transport, ports, multimodal links and airport infrastructure, in order to promote sustainable regional and local mobility
Specific objective	SO1.2 - Increase transport safety on waterways and maritime transport routes

Table 1: Result indicators

ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Baseline value	Baseline year	Target value (2023) Total	2016 Total	2016 Qualitative	Observations
R 1.2	% of the RO-BG CBC Danube length and Black Sea where safety of the navigation have been improved	percent	1.29	2014	25.00			

ID	Indicator	2015 Total	2015 Qualitative	2014 Total	2014 Qualitative
R 1.2	% of the RO-BG CBC Danube length and Black Sea where safety of the navigation have been improved				

Priority axis	PA 2 - A green region
Investment priority	6c - Conserving, protecting, promoting and developing natural and cultural heritage

Table 2: Common and programme specific output indicators

(I)	ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Target value	2016	Observations
F	CO09	Sustainable Tourism: Increase in expected number of visits to supported sites of cultural and natural heritage and attractions	Visits/year	10,000.00	0.00	
S	CO09	Sustainable Tourism: Increase in expected number of visits to supported sites of cultural and natural heritage and attractions	Visits/year	10,000.00	159,730.00	
F	6c.1	Number of integrated tourism products/services created	Number	100.00	0.00	
S	6c.1	Number of integrated tourism products/services created	Number	100.00	105.00	The project 15.2.1.086 did not finalize the contracting process, thus it was replaced with project 15.2.1.038 from the reserve list. The reported value in 2015 (39) was revised according to the contribution of the new project.
F	6c.2	Number of common strategies, policies or management plans for valorising (including raising awareness) the cultural and natural heritage through its restoration and promotion for sustainable economic uses	Number of common strategies/management plans approved	50.00	0.00	
S	6c.2	Number of common strategies, policies or management plans for valorising (including raising awareness) the cultural and natural heritage through its restoration and promotion for sustainable economic uses	Number of common strategies/management plans approved	50.00	38.00	The project 15.2.1.086 did not finalize the contracting process, thus it was replaced with project 15.2.1.038 from the reserve list. The reported value in 2015 (22) was revised according to the contribution of the new project.

(I)	ID	Indicator	2015	2014
F	CO09	Sustainable Tourism: Increase in expected number of visits to supported sites of cultural and natural heritage and attractions	0.00	0.00
S	CO09	Sustainable Tourism: Increase in expected number of visits to supported sites of cultural and natural heritage and attractions	100,630.00	0.00
F	6c.1	Number of integrated tourism products/services created	0.00	0.00
S	6c.1	Number of integrated tourism products/services created	41.00	0.00



(1)	ID	Indicator	2015	2014
		created		
F	6c.2	Number of common strategies, policies or management plans for valorising (including raising awareness) the cultural and natural heritage through its restoration and promotion for sustainable economic uses	0.00	0.00
S	6c.2	Number of common strategies, policies or management plans for valorising (including raising awareness) the cultural and natural heritage through its restoration and promotion for sustainable economic uses	19.00	0.00

Priority axis	PA 2 - A green region
Investment priority	6c - Conserving, protecting, promoting and developing natural and cultural heritage
Specific objective	SO2.1 - To improve the sustainable use of natural heritage and resources and cultural heritage

Table 1: Result indicators

ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Baseline value	Baseline year	Target value (2023) Total	2016 Total	2016 Qualitative	Observations
R 2.1	Number of tourist overnights in the CBC region	Number of Overnights	6,668,515.00	2013	7,200,000.00			

ID	Indicator	2015 Total	2015 Qualitative	2014 Total	2014 Qualitative
R 2.1	Number of tourist overnights in the CBC region				

Priority axis	PA 2 - A green region
Investment priority	6d - Protecting and restoring biodiversity and soil and promoting ecosystem services, including through Natura 2000, and green infrastructure

Table 2: Common and programme specific output indicators

(1)	ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Target value	2016	Observations
F	CO23	Nature and biodiversity: Surface area of habitats supported to attain a better conservation status	Hectares	20,000.00	0.00	
S	CO23	Nature and biodiversity: Surface area of habitats supported to attain a better conservation status	Hectares	20,000.00	27,056.00	The project 15.2.1.086 did not finalize the contracting process, thus it was replaced with project 15.2.1.038 from the reserve list. The reported value in 2015 (34,002) was revised according to the contribution of the new project.

(1)	ID	Indicator	2015	2014
F	CO23	Nature and biodiversity: Surface area of habitats supported to attain a better conservation status	0.00	0.00
S	CO23	Nature and biodiversity: Surface area of habitats supported to attain a better conservation status	27,056.00	0.00

Priority axis	PA 2 - A green region
Investment priority	6d - Protecting and restoring biodiversity and soil and promoting ecosystem services, including through Natura 2000, and green infrastructure
Specific objective	SO2.2 - To enhance the sustainable management of the ecosystems from the cross-border area

Table 1: Result indicators

ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Baseline value	Baseline year	Target value (2023) Total	2016 Total	2016 Qualitative	Observations
R 2.2	NATURA 2000 sites from the cross-border area with coordinated management tools	Number	2.00	2014	10.00			

ID	Indicator	2015 Total	2015 Qualitative	2014 Total	2014 Qualitative
R 2.2	NATURA 2000 sites from the cross-border area with coordinated management tools				

Priority axis	PA 3 - A safe region
Investment priority	5b - Promoting investment to address specific risks, ensuring disaster resilience and developing disaster management systems

Table 2: Common and programme specific output indicators

(I)	ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Target value	2016	Observations
F	CO20	Risk prevention and management: Population benefiting from flood protection measures	Persons	1,250,000.00	0.00	
S	CO20	Risk prevention and management: Population benefiting from flood protection measures	Persons	1,250,000.00	1,486,375.00	
F	CO21	Risk prevention and management: Population benefiting from forest fire protection measures	Persons	1,250,000.00	0.00	
S	CO21	Risk prevention and management: Population benefiting from forest fire protection measures	Persons	1,250,000.00	540,006.00	
F	5b.1	Population benefiting from actions of risk management	Number	2,500,000.00	0.00	
S	5b.1	Population benefiting from actions of risk management	Number	2,500,000.00	7,598,415.00	
F	5b.2	Number of joint partnerships in the field of joint early warning and emergency response	Number	50.00	0.00	
S	5b.2	Number of joint partnerships in the field of joint early warning and emergency response	Number	50.00	9.00	

(I)	ID	Indicator	2015	2014
F	CO20	Risk prevention and management: Population benefiting from flood protection measures	0.00	0.00
S	CO20	Risk prevention and management: Population benefiting from flood protection measures	0.00	0.00
F	CO21	Risk prevention and management: Population benefiting from forest fire protection measures	0.00	0.00
S	CO21	Risk prevention and management: Population benefiting from forest fire protection measures	0.00	0.00
F	5b.1	Population benefiting from actions of risk management	0.00	0.00

(1)	ID	Indicator	2015	2014
S	5b.1	Population benefiting from actions of risk management	4,944,000.00	0.00
F	5b.2	Number of joint partnerships in the field of joint early warning and emergency response	0.00	0.00
S	5b.2	Number of joint partnerships in the field of joint early warning and emergency response	1.00	0.00

Priority axis	PA 3 - A safe region
Investment priority	5b - Promoting investment to address specific risks, ensuring disaster resilience and developing disaster management systems
Specific objective	SO3.1 - To improve joint risk management in the cross-border area

Table 1: Result indicators

ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Baseline value	Baseline year	Target value (2023) Total	2016 Total	2016 Qualitative	Observations
R 3.1	The quality of the joint risk management in the CBC area	the satisfaction degree of the stakeholders in the area	2	2014	3			

ID	Indicator	2015 Total	2015 Qualitative	2014 Total	2014 Qualitative
R 3.1	The quality of the joint risk management in the CBC area				

Priority axis	PA 4 - A skilled and inclusive region
Investment priority	8e - Integrating cross-border labour markets, including cross-border mobility, joint local employment initiatives, information and advisory services and joint training (ETC-CB)

Table 2: Common and programme specific output indicators

(1)	ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Target value	2016	Observations
F	CO44	Labour Market and Training: Number of participants in joint local employment initiatives and joint training	Persons	10,000.00	0.00	
S	CO44	Labour Market and Training: Number of participants in joint local employment initiatives and joint training	Persons	10,000.00	55,600.00	
F	CO46	Labour Market and Training: Number of participants in joint education and training schemes to support youth employment, educational opportunities and higher and vocational education across borders	Persons	2,000.00	0.00	
S	CO46	Labour Market and Training: Number of participants in joint education and training schemes to support youth employment, educational opportunities and higher and vocational education across borders	Persons	2,000.00	9,701.00	
F	8e.1	No. of initiatives (trainings, education schemes, websites, agreements, networks, job-fairs etc.) that activate workforce mobility in the cross border area	Number	50.00	0.00	
S	8e.1	No. of initiatives (trainings, education schemes, websites, agreements, networks, job-fairs etc.) that activate workforce mobility in the cross border area	Number	50.00	465.00	

(1)	ID	Indicator	2015	2014
F	CO44	Labour Market and Training: Number of participants in joint local employment initiatives and joint training	0.00	0.00
S	CO44	Labour Market and Training: Number of participants in joint local employment	0.00	0.00



(1)	ID	Indicator	2015	2014
		initiatives and joint training		
F	CO46	Labour Market and Training: Number of participants in joint education and training schemes to support youth employment, educational opportunities and higher and vocational education across borders	0.00	0.00
S	CO46	Labour Market and Training: Number of participants in joint education and training schemes to support youth employment, educational opportunities and higher and vocational education across borders	0.00	0.00
F	8e.1	No. of initiatives (trainings, education schemes, websites, agreements, networks, job-fairs etc.) that activate workforce mobility in the cross border area	0.00	0.00
S	8e.1	No. of initiatives (trainings, education schemes, websites, agreements, networks, job-fairs etc.) that activate workforce mobility in the cross border area	0.00	0.00

Priority axis	PA 4 - A skilled and inclusive region
Investment priority	8e - Integrating cross-border labour markets, including cross-border mobility, joint local employment initiatives, information and advisory services and joint training (ETC-CB)
Specific objective	SO4.1 - To encourage the integration of the cross-border area in terms of employment and labour mobility

Table 1: Result indicators

ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Baseline value	Baseline year	Target value (2023) Total	2016 Total	2016 Qualitative	Observations
R 4.1	Population that have access to joint employment initiatives	Number	200,000.00	2014	500,000.00			

ID	Indicator	2015 Total	2015 Qualitative	2014 Total	2014 Qualitative
R 4.1	Population that have access to joint employment initiatives				

Priority axis	PA 5 - An efficient region
Investment priority	11b - Promoting legal and administrative cooperation and cooperation between citizens and institutions (ETC-CB)

Table 2: Common and programme specific output indicators

(1)	ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Target value	2016	Observations
F	11b.1	Number of supported cross border mechanisms (agreements, networks, regulations, studies, policies, strategies, information exchange tools) to enhance cooperation capacity	Number	100.00	0.00	
S	11b.1	Number of supported cross border mechanisms (agreements, networks, regulations, studies, policies, strategies, information exchange tools) to enhance cooperation capacity	Number	100.00	133.00	

(1)	ID	Indicator	2015	2014
F	11b.1	Number of supported cross border mechanisms (agreements, networks, regulations, studies, policies, strategies, information exchange tools) to enhance cooperation capacity	0.00	0.00
S	11b.1	Number of supported cross border mechanisms (agreements, networks, regulations, studies, policies, strategies, information exchange tools) to enhance cooperation capacity	0.00	0.00

Priority axis	PA 5 - An efficient region
Investment priority	11b - Promoting legal and administrative cooperation and cooperation between citizens and institutions (ETC-CB)
Specific objective	SO5.1 - To increase cooperation capacity and the efficiency of public institutions in a CBC context

Table 1: Result indicators

ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Baseline value	Baseline year	Target value (2023) Total	2016 Total	2016 Qualitative	Observations
R 5.1	Level of co-ordination of the public institutions in the eligible area	Intensity of cooperation between cross-border stakeholders	3	2014	4			

ID	Indicator	2015 Total	2015 Qualitative	2014 Total	2014 Qualitative
R 5.1	Level of co-ordination of the public institutions in the eligible area				

## Priority axes for technical assistance

Priority axis	PA 6 - Technical assistance
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Table 2: Common and programme specific output indicators

(1)	ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Target value	2016	Observations
F	TA6.1	No of performed evaluations of the programme	Number		0.00	
S	TA6.1	No of performed evaluations of the programme	Number		0.00	
F	TA6.2	Functional Pro ETC	Number		1.00	
S	TA6.2	Functional Pro ETC	Number		0.00	
F	TA6.3	No of Monitoring Committee meetings	Number		6.00	
S	TA6.3	No of Monitoring Committee meetings	Number		0.00	
F	TA6.4	No of events for beneficiaries	Number		30.00	
S	TA6.4	No of events for beneficiaries	Number		0.00	
F	TA6.5	Number of employees (full time) whose salaries are co-financed by technical assistance	number		52.00	Technical error for the value included in 2015 (65). The correct value is 39.
S	TA6.5	Number of employees (full time) whose salaries are co-financed by technical assistance	number		0.00	

(1)	ID	Indicator	2015	2014
F	TA6.1	No of performed evaluations of the programme	0.00	0.00
S	TA6.1	No of performed evaluations of the programme	0.00	0.00
F	TA6.2	Functional Pro ETC	0.00	0.00
S	TA6.2	Functional Pro ETC	0.00	0.00
F	TA6.3	No of Monitoring Committee meetings	3.00	0.00
S	TA6.3	No of Monitoring Committee meetings	0.00	0.00
F	TA6.4	No of events for beneficiaries	16.00	0.00
S	TA6.4	No of events for beneficiaries	0.00	0.00

(1)	ID	Indicator	2015	2014
F	TA6.5	Number of employees (full time) whose salaries are co-financed by technical assistance	39.00	0.00
S	TA6.5	Number of employees (full time) whose salaries are co-financed by technical assistance	0.00	0.00

### 3.3 Table 3: Information on the milestones and targets defined in the performance framework

Priority axis	Ind type	ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Milestone for 2018 total	2016 Final target (2023) total	2016	Observations
PA 1	F	1F1	(Certified) Expenditure	EUR	8000000	96,450,936.00	58,964.81	
PA 1	I	1K1	Number of KM of roads to be upgraded or reconstructed for which tenders have been launched	Number of KM	60	0.00	0.00	
PA 1	O	CO14	Roads: Total length of reconstructed or upgraded roads	km	Km of reconstructed or upgraded roads	120.00	0.00	
PA 2	F	2F1	(Certified) Expenditure	EUR	5100000	63,454,564.00	847,489.62	
PA 2	O	CO09	Sustainable Tourism: Increase in expected number of visits to supported sites of cultural and natural heritage and attractions	Visits/year	1000	10,000.00	0.00	
PA 2	O	6c.1	Number of integrated tourism products/services created	Number	10	100.00	0.00	
PA 3	F	3F1	(Certified) Expenditure	EUR	4500000	48,225,468.00	103,216.81	
PA 3	O	5b.2	Number of joint partnerships in the field of joint early warning and emergency response	Number	10	50.00	0.00	
PA 4	F	4F1	(Certified) Expenditure	EUR	1000000	17,767,279.00	0.00	
PA 4	O	8e.1	No. of initiatives (trainings, education schemes, websites, agreements, networks, job-fairs etc.) that activate workforce mobility in the cross border area	Number	10	50.00	0.00	
PA 5	F	5F1	(Certified) Expenditure	EUR	1000000	12,690,913.00	0.00	
PA 5	O	11b.1	Number of supported cross border mechanisms (agreements, networks,	Number	10	100.00	0.00	

Priority axis	Ind type	ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	Milestone for 2018 total	2016 Final target (2023) total	2016	Observations
			regulations, studies, policies, strategies, information exchange tools) to enhance cooperation capacity					

Priority axis	Ind type	ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	2015	2014
PA 1	F	1F1	(Certified) Expenditure	EUR	0.00	0.00
PA 1	I	1K1	Number of KM of roads to be upgraded or reconstructed for which tenders have been launched	Number of KM	0.00	0.00
PA 1	O	CO14	Roads: Total length of reconstructed or upgraded roads	km	0.00	0.00
PA 2	F	2F1	(Certified) Expenditure	EUR	0.00	0.00
PA 2	O	CO09	Sustainable Tourism: Increase in expected number of visits to supported sites of cultural and natural heritage and attractions	Visits/year	0.00	0.00
PA 2	O	6c.1	Number of integrated tourism products/services created	Number	0.00	0.00
PA 3	F	3F1	(Certified) Expenditure	EUR	0.00	0.00
PA 3	O	5b.2	Number of joint partnerships in the field of joint early warning and emergency response	Number	0.00	0.00
PA 4	F	4F1	(Certified) Expenditure	EUR	0.00	0.00
PA 4	O	8e.1	No. of initiatives (trainings, education schemes, websites, agreements, networks, job-fairs etc.) that activate workforce mobility in the cross border area	Number	0.00	0.00
PA 5	F	5F1	(Certified) Expenditure	EUR	0.00	0.00
PA 5	O	11b.1	Number of supported cross border mechanisms (agreements, networks,	Number	0.00	0.00



Priority axis	Ind type	ID	Indicator	Measurement unit	2015	2014
			regulations, studies, policies, strategies, information exchange tools) to enhance cooperation capacity			

### 3.4. Financial data

**Table 4: Financial information at priority axis and programme level**

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Priority axis	Fund	Calculation basis	Total funding	Co-financing rate	Total eligible cost of operations selected for support	Proportion of the total allocation covered with selected operations	Public eligible cost of operations selected for support	Total eligible expenditure declared by beneficiaries to the managing authority	Proportion of the total allocation covered by eligible expenditure declared by beneficiaries	Number of operations selected
PA 1	ERDF	Total	96,450,936.00	85.00	37,169,354.98	38.54%	36,425,967.88	75,322.85	0.08%	7
PA 2	ERDF	Total	63,454,564.00	85.00	27,097,236.48	42.70%	26,555,291.73	1,288,894.92	2.03%	20
PA 3	ERDF	Total	48,225,468.00	85.00	32,454,730.15	67.30%	31,805,635.54	148,505.09	0.31%	12
PA 4	ERDF	Total	17,767,279.00	85.00	17,327,590.39	97.53%	16,981,038.61	0.00	0.00%	34
PA 5	ERDF	Total	12,690,913.00	85.00	12,306,890.14	96.97%	12,060,752.38	0.00	0.00%	16
PA 6	ERDF	Total	19,914,966.00	65.00	6,405,273.00	32.16%	6,405,273.00	1,204,254.53	6.05%	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>ERDF</b>		<b>258,504,126.00</b>	<b>83.46</b>	<b>132,761,075.14</b>	<b>51.36%</b>	<b>130,233,959.14</b>	<b>2,716,977.39</b>	<b>1.05%</b>	<b>99</b>
<b>Grand total</b>			<b>258,504,126.00</b>	<b>83.46</b>	<b>132,761,075.14</b>	<b>51.36%</b>	<b>130,233,959.14</b>	<b>2,716,977.39</b>	<b>1.05%</b>	<b>99</b>

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

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

1. Operation (2)	2. The amount of ERDF support(1) envisaged to be used for all or part of an operation implemented outside the Union part of the programme area based on selected operations	3. Share of the total financial allocation to all or part of an operation located outside the Union part of the programme area (%) (column 2/total amount allocated to the support from the ERDF at programme level *100)	4. Eligible expenditure of ERDF support incurred in all or part of an operation implemented outside the Union part of the programme area declared by the beneficiary to the managing authority	5. Share of the total financial allocation to all or part of an operation located outside the Union part of the programme area (%) (column 4/total amount allocated to the support from the ERDF at programme level *100)
16	1,687,263.53	0.78%	2,946.00	0.00%

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

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

#### 4. SYNTHESIS OF THE EVALUATIONS

The Evaluation Plan of Interreg V-A Romania-Bulgaria Programme, approved by the Monitoring Committee in October 2015 and sent to the European Commission via SFC, states that “having regard to the size and scope of the programme, as well as to the need of sufficient physical progress to serve as basis for evaluation, no evaluations are planned before 2018” and that “therefore there will be no progress on the implementation of the evaluation plan to be reported in the annual implementation report to be submitted in 2017 regarding the implementation of the evaluation plan and the follow-up given to the findings of evaluations.”

Consequently, according to the plan, no evaluations were carried out during 2016 regarding the implementation of this programme.

However, in order to prepare the future evaluation work, the staff of MA’s Evaluation Unit participated both in the works of the Performance Assessment Functional Working Group established in Romania as part of the coordination mechanism for managing ESI Funds (meetings on Terms of Reference, assessment criteria, statistical data and indicators) and in the evaluation-related events organised by the Interact Programme (impact evaluation – methods and Terms of Reference).

## 5. ISSUES AFFECTING THE PERFORMANCE OF THE PROGRAMME AND MEASURES TAKEN

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

The main issues with impact on the performance of the Programme are:

1. Delays of the evaluation and selection process of the applications submitted under the first call for proposal (priority axis 1, 2 and 3), hard projects (launched in 2015, deadline 30th of September 2015).

For the evaluation process of the hard applications, technical external expertise was needed. The procurement procedure had some delays, thus the evaluation process was extended over the procedural terms of 60 working days. After the evaluation process, the selection stage was organized.

During the selection process, a disagreement between Monitoring Committee members appeared and no decision was taken on the issue for three months. The MA proposal was to select all projects with a score above 60 points and to overcontract at Programme level. The MC did not adopt this decision, the Bulgarian delegation disagreeing with the proposal, while the Romanian delegation supported it. The overcontracting was necessary since in this scenario most of the available funds would have been used but not all Programme indicators would have been met.

Thus, during the MC meeting organized on 4th of August 2016, the MC members composing the Bulgarian delegation required the cancellation of the call. After intensive negotiations between Romanian and Bulgarian delegations, the MC decision was to postpone the selection of the projects for later on.

Following the MC meeting, a conciliation meeting between the representatives of the two member states was organized in Brussels. The meeting was mediated by the EC representative, but no agreement was reached.

Further, a high level meeting was organized in Bucharest. Meeting was attended by the two Ministers of regional development in Romania and Bulgaria and representatives of the, Managing Authority, National Authority and EC. The solution identified by the two parties was to select for financing only projects receiving over 65 points and the remaining budget to be relaunched as soon as possible in order to reach the remaining indicators. Consequently, the Programme structures presented this proposal to the MC members that decided to select these projects.

The arguments for this decision were and not to cancel the call:

1. the Programme to have immediate financial allocation available to launch a targeted call on the indicators that were not secured by the selected projects
2. a better quality of the selected projects was ensured;
3. the premises for reaching programme indicators included in the performance framework are created.
4. The premises for avoiding decommitment are ensured.

The selection of projects based on this proposed solution (selection of projects with score higher than 65 points) was finalized on 14th of November 2016.

## 2. Delays in implementing the Electronic Monitoring System

As mentioned in the AIR 2015, another issue with impact on the Programme performance is related to the electronic monitoring system. Since the development of an Electronic Management System for Interreg V-A Romania – Bulgaria – “PRO-ETC” has failed (contractor did not provide the system in due time) the MA decided to use the IT system developed by Interact – eMS.

In January 2016 the process initiated in 2015 for implementing the e-MS system was finalized by signing the license agreement between MA and Interact Programme – City of Vienna. Also, the MA intensified the process to adapt eMS to the Programme features and the Joint Secretariat has started to feed in the system the information corresponding to the historical data related to the two calls for proposals that were unfolded outside the system. Thus, by the end of 2016, the hand-over process to the beneficiaries was finalized for the soft projects. The hand over procedure for the hard projects and for the PA 4 and 5 projects will be finalized in 2017.

The 3rd call for proposal shall use the eMS (including project submission).

Also, all the Programme documents (Description of the Management and Control System, internal working procedures, etc.) were revised in order to include the modifications generated by the implementation of the eMS system.

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

See point 9.1



## **6. CITIZEN'S SUMMARY (ARTICLE 50(9) OF REGULATION (EU) NO 1303/2013)**

A citizen's summary of the contents of the annual and the final implementation reports shall be made public and uploaded as a separate file in the form of annex to the annual and the final implementation report

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

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

**8. PROGRESS IN PREPARATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF MAJOR PROJECTS AND JOINT ACTION PLANS (ARTICLE 101(H) AND ARTICLE 111(3) OF REGULATION (EU) NO 1303/2013 AND ARTICLE 14(3)(B) OF REGULATION (EU) NO 1299/2013)**

**8.1. Major projects**

Table 7: Major projects

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

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

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





## 8.2. Joint action plans

Progress in the implementation of different stages of joint action plans

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**Table 8: Joint action plans (JAP)**

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

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**9. ASSESSMENT OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COOPERATION PROGRAMME (ARTICLE 50(4) OF REGULATION (EU) NO 1303/2013 AND ARTICLE 14(4) OF REGULATION (EU) NO 1299/2013)**

**9.1 Information in Part A and achieving the objectives of the programme (Article 50(4) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013)**

Priority axis	PA 1 - A well connected region
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According to the plan, no evaluations regarding the implementation of the programme were carried out during 2016.

However, analyzing the progress of the programme implementation toward the proposed target, it can be concluded that important steps that have been made for achieving the programme objectives and reaching the indicators target.

Following the results of two calls for proposals and selection of 89 projects with financial allocation available, almost 60% of the total financial allocation of the Programme was committed and clear premises for reaching both financial and indicators intermediary and final targets were created.

With the exception of 9 output indicators (according to the Programme structure estimation) for which the selected operations do not cover the proposed targets, all the programme indicators should be reached if the already selected projects will be contracted and implemented by the beneficiaries.

**Priority Axis 1**

Almost 39% (37,169,354.98 euro) of the total financial allocation of this PA has been committed to the 9 selected projects. The remaining amount shall be launched in 2017 – 3rd call for proposals.

Based on the information provided by the beneficiaries within the selected operations, the progress of the indicators is as follows:

- Total length of reconstructed or upgraded road – is covered in a proportion of 66%.
- No. of joint mechanisms – is covered in a proportion of 26.6%
- Total length of improved or created inland waterway – is covered in a proportion of 40%
- Number of studies, strategies and action plans to improve safety of the navigation on the Danube and the Black Sea supported – is covered in a proportion of 20%.

For the uncovered values of the indicators a third call for proposals will be designed and launched in 2017.

Almost 43% (27,097,236.48 euro) of the total financial allocation of this PA has been committed to the 20 selected projects. The remaining amount shall be launched in 2017 – 3rd call for proposals.

The target values included in the Table 2 are based on the information provided by the beneficiaries within the applications. Thus, according to the information, the progress of the indicators is as follows:

- No. of integrated tourism products/services created – is already covered by the selected projects (more than 100%)
- Increase in the number of visits to supports sites of cultural and natural heritage and attractions – is already covered by the selected projects (more than 100%)
- No. of common strategies, policies, or management plans for valorizing (including raising awareness) the cultural and natural heritage through its restauration and promotion for sustainable economic uses – is covered in a proportion of 76%
- Surface area of habits supports to attain a better conservation status - is already covered by the selected projects (more than 100%)
- Population benefiting from flood protection measures - is already covered by the selected projects (more than 100%)
- Population benefiting from forest fire protection measures - is covered in a proportion of 43.2%
- Population benefiting from actions of risk management - is already covered by the selected projects (more than 100%)
- Number of joint partnerships in the field of joint early warning and emergency response - is covered in a proportion of 18%.

The soft projects that stated their implementation in 2016 have generated the first results. According to the information provided within the progress reports, the following indicators have registered the first results:

1. Number of integrated tourism products/services created – 3 products
2. Number of common strategies, policies or management plans for valorizing (including raising awareness) the cultural and natural heritage through its restoration and promotion for sustainable economic uses – 3 strategies.
3. Number of tourist overnights in the CBC region have registered a progress of 389 visitors within the region.

During the evaluation process it was noticed that, in some situations, the projects contribution to the indicators may be overestimated by the beneficiaries. Thus, when designing the third call for proposals scheduled for 2017, this aspect was taken into consideration, the call is planned to be targeted towards the indicators which are not met, based on an analysis performed by JS of current status of reaching targets (based on information from selected projects).

Priority axis	PA 3 - A safe region
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Almost 63% (32,454,730.15 euro) of the total financial allocation of this PA has been committed to the 12 selected projects. The remaining amount shall be launched in 2017 – 3rd call for proposals.

The target values included in the Table 2 are based on the information provided by the beneficiaries within the applications. Thus, according to the information, the progress of the indicators is as follows:

- Number of participants in joint local employment initiative and joint training - is already covered by the selected projects (more than 100%)
- Number of participants in joint education and training schemes to support youth employment, educational opportunities and higher and vocational education across borders – is covered in a proportion of almost 100%.
- No. of initiative (training, education schemes, websites, agreements, networks, job-fairs etc.) that activate workforce mobility in the cross border area - is already covered by the selected projects (more than 100%)
- No. of initiative (agreements, networks, regulations, studies, policies, strategies, information exchange tools etc.) to enhance cooperation capacity - is already covered by the selected projects (more than 100%)

During the evaluation process it was noticed that, in some situations, the projects contribution to the indicators may be overestimated by the beneficiaries. Thus, when designing the third call for proposals scheduled for 2017, this aspect was taken into consideration.

Priority axis	PA 4 - A skilled and inclusive region
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The 34 selected projects are covering the entire financial allocation of this priority axis (100%).

According to the information provided by beneficiaries, the indicators targets shall reached.

- No. of initiatives (trainings, education schemes, websites, agreements, networks, job-fairs etc.) that activate workforce mobility in the cross border area (more than 100%)
- No of participants in joint local employment initiatives and joint training (more than 100%)
- No of participants in joint educational and training schemes to support youth employment, educational opportunities and higher and vocational education across borders (more than 100%)
- Population that have access to joint employment initiatives (more than 100%)

The contracting process for the selected operations have started and will be completed

during 2017. No project started its implementation in 2016.

Priority axis

PA 5 - An efficient region

The 16 selected projects are covering the entire financial allocation of this priority axis (100%).

According to the information provided by beneficiaries, the indicators targets shall be reached.

- Number of supported cross border mechanisms (agreements, networks, regulations, studies, policies, strategies, information exchange tools) to enhance cooperation capacity (more than 100%)
- Level of co-ordination of the public institutions in the eligible area will increase from a degree of 3 to a degree of 4 (on a scale from 1 to 5).

The contracting process for the selected operations have started and will be completed during 2017. No project started its implementation in 2016.

Priority axis

PA 6 - Technical assistance

By the end of 2016, 32% of the TA budget have been contracted by the TA beneficiaries (namely Managing Authority, Joint Secretariat and Romanian First Level Control), and 6% of the TA budget have been spent and declared by the beneficiaries.

Contribution to output indicators:

**Functional electronic system e-MS** - By the end of 2016 - the eMS was adapted to the Programme specific. All the historical data related to the applications submitted under the First call for proposals, soft projects, launched within the Interreg V-A Ro – Bg Programme and those related to the TA were uploaded in eMs.

**No of Monitoring Committees meetings – 6 meetings were organized by the Programme structures.**

**No of events for beneficiaries** – 30 events have been organized by the Programme structures (namely thematic meetings, info days dedicated to the first and the second calls for proposals, workshops etc.).

**9.2. Specific actions taken to promote equality between men and women and to promote non-discrimination, in particular accessibility for persons with disabilities, and the arrangements implemented to ensure the integration of the gender perspective in the cooperation programme and operations (Article 50(4) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 and Article 14(4), subparagraph 2, (d) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)**

An assessment of the implementation of specific actions to take into account the principles set out in Article 7 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 on promotion of equality between men and women and non-discrimination, including, where relevant, depending on the content and objectives of the cooperation programme, an overview of specific actions taken to promote equality between men and women and to promote non-discrimination, including accessibility for persons with disabilities, and the arrangements implemented to ensure the integration of the gender perspective in the cooperation programme and operations

The programme management structures and the beneficiaries ensured the promotion of equal opportunities and non-discrimination, equality between men and women when performing their activities (setting up the programme monitoring committee, hiring the staff/team projects, organizing the events, developing the procurement procedures etc.).

The Programme structures have created the framework for ensuring the compliance with this principle by including the programme documents references to promote non-discrimination and promote non-discrimination. Thus, within the documents of the calls for proposals, the programme management structures included specific requirements regarding the equality between men and women and to promotion of non-discrimination that must be observed by applicants when developing their applications. During the evaluation process, the assessors had analyzed and properly scored the applications contribution to this principle, namely the specific measures proposed for promotion of equal opportunities and non-discrimination, including accessibility for persons with disabilities (1 extra point was granted for applications that included at least one specific measure).

Special attention regarding these issues is also given during monitoring process of the project implementation. Thus, the project's reports regarding the progress of the activities must include (according to both templates foreseen within the Project Implementation Manual and e-MS system) specific reporting information regarding the equality between men and women and promotion of non-discrimination. For beneficiaries support, PIM provides clear examples of measures on how the equal opportunities and non-discrimination equality between men and women can be ensured during the project implementation.

Final reports that will be submitted by the beneficiaries after the end of the project implementation period will have to include consolidated information regarding these issues.

### **9.3.Sustainable development (Article 50(4) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 and Article 14(4), subparagraph 2, (e) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)**

An assessment of the implementation of actions to take into account the principles set out in Article 8 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 on sustainable development, including, where relevant, depending on the content and objectives of the cooperation programme, an overview of the actions taken to promote sustainable development in accordance with that Article

The core element of the programme strategy is to bring together the cross-border communities as the first step towards sustainable cooperation and to promote their common actions to overcome the physical and socio-cultural barriers, and to better exploit the opportunities offered by the development of the cross-border area for a mid-long-term sustainable growth.

Efforts to cope with the impacts of climate change and attempts to promote sustainable development share common goals and determinants, therefore these subjects were viewed as high importance factors for the implementation of the Programme and important measures were taken in order to ensure that these aspects are treated with maximum importance by each and every project. In this regard, express requirements were included within the applicant's guide for all calls for proposals and also properly assessed during the assessment and selection process.

Thus, the applications that propose specific measures to contribute to the promotion of sustainable development are receiving 1 extra point and for green solution, 2 points can be awarded.

Also, for the infrastructure projects, the environmental agreement, environmental impact report and study are mandatory in the application phase, according to the national legislation. For the projects where a study containing data on the estimated impact on the environment of the investment project is required by the national legislation, this will be presented during the pre-contractual phase.

The projects selected under PA 3 – Green region are tackling aspects related to natural disasters as flood and fire. The impact will become evident in the next years as the projects will be implemented (the list of selected/contracted projects is here <http://interregrobg.eu/en/projects/our-projects.html>.)

Also, special instruments were created for the purpose of monitoring these aspects, starting with the reports of the project's progress, on the spot monitoring visits, special reports to be submitted by the beneficiaries together with the final report (mentioned within the project implementation manual - PIM). Thus, PIM promotes clear examples for the beneficiaries of measures for sustainable development as: green public procurement/buy green, online meetings, car sharing, and using means of transport friendly with the environment.

In the same time the representatives of the national environmental authorities are members in the Monitoring Committee being involved in the process of setting the rules of the calls for proposals and in the selection process of the projects.

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

Calculated amount of support to be used for climate change objectives based on the cumulative financial data by category of intervention in Table 7

<b>Priority axis</b>	<b>Amount of support to be used for climate change objectives (EUR)</b>	<b>Proportion of total allocation to the operational programme (%)</b>
PA 1	3,243,876.91	3.96%
PA 2	483,143.34	0.90%
PA 3	17,900,044.19	43.67%
<b>Total</b>	<b>21,627,064.44</b>	<b>10.02%</b>

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### **9.5 Role of partners in the implementation of the cooperation programme (Article 50(4) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 and Article 14(4), subparagraph 1, (c) of Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013)**

Assessment of the implementation of actions to take into account the role of partners referred to in Article 5 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013, including involvement of the partners in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the cooperation programme

The Monitoring Committee is composed of 42 members (21 from Romania and 21 from Bulgaria) and 20 observers (8 from Romania and 12 from Bulgaria). They are representing the national/regional/local public authorities, non-governmental organizations, academic institutions, etc. from the region. When setting the composition of the MC, the programme structures ensured the participation of all relevant the partners according the EU provisions.

Through Decision no. 1/25.03.2015, during the first meeting, the MC members have approved the Rules of Procedure of the Monitoring Committee which have established the responsibilities of the participants, based on the functions and attributions which are fulfilled by the MC. The rules of procedure are accompanied by a code of conduct in order to prevent conflict of interest, to ensure confidentiality and application of the rules for protection of data.

Since the MC had been established and until the end of 2016, the MC members had have involved in the process of drafting the programme documents, namely the applicant 'guides for the two calls for proposals launched in 2015, the implementation documents for the beneficiaries (Visual Implementation Manual). Also, the documents were in public consultation, thus every entered entity had the opportunity to submit its opinion. The suggestions were taken into consideration when finalizing the documents.

The composition of the MC is posted on the Programme website and updated, in case any modifications occur.



**10. OBLIGATORY INFORMATION AND ASSESSMENT ACCORDING TO ARTICLE 14(4), SUBPARAGRAPH 1 (A) AND (B), OF REGULATION (EU) No 1299/2013**

**10.1 Progress in implementation of the evaluation plan and the follow-up given to the findings of evaluations**

No evaluation was performed for Interreg V-A Romania-Bulgaria.

## 10.2 The results of the information and publicity measures of the Funds carried out under the communication strategy

The Programme Communication Strategy was approved by the MC through Decision no. 2/25.03.2015 and in accordance with it, the Annual Communication Plan was elaborated and approved through MC Decision no. 26/04.08.2016.

The specific objectives of the Communication Strategy consisted of:

**To support the successful implementation** of the programme by ensuring an effective communication system (measures, channels, targeted messages to all identified targets);

**To increase public awareness** concerning the programme aims, priorities, financial support provided, estimated economic and social impact on regional development;

**To increase the knowledge** of the potential beneficiaries on the financing opportunities offered by the programme, eligibility criteria and selection mechanism for the applications submitted.

**To ensure transparency** in the use of the Funds and thus increase the level of trust of the general public in the institutions managing the INTERREG V-A Romania-Bulgaria Programme;

**To increase the visibility** of the INTERREG V-A Romania-Bulgaria Programme and of the MA, NA and JS, at national and regional level;

**The target groups of the Communication Strategy** are potential and direct beneficiaries, governmental/ non-governmental actors, European Union's institutions and bodies, national/ regional/local media from both countries, general public (citizens), staff of the management bodies of the Programme, other communication support groups and networks.

### **Activities undertaken in order to implement the information and publicity measures:**

A new **website** [www.interregrobg.eu](http://www.interregrobg.eu) is dedicated to the Programme Interreg V-A Ro – BG, being functional since 18.01.2016. The website has a flexible, user-friendly structure, is accessible to people with disabilities and constantly updated with general information regarding the programme, the opportunities for financing, contact details of the Programmes' managing structures, lists with selected/contracted projects drafted in accordance with the provisions of the art. 115 (2) and Annex XII from the EU Regulation 1303/2013, details on the composition of the Monitoring Committee, lists of Q&A news for the events organised within the Programme, modifications occurred within the national legislation of the two countries, fiches of the projects in implementation and information regarding tender procedures, practical guide for avoiding fraud, Project Implementation Manual and other manuals, procedures and instructions useful for beneficiaries etc. As well, on line contests and campaigns to promote the projects were organized on the website and the Facebook page of the Programme.

In order to promote the Programme and the launching of calls for proposals, the following publications were posted on the website of the Programme and sent to the potential applicants/ beneficiaries: flyers in electronic format (in Romanian and Bulgarian language) for promotion of the two calls for proposals, launched within the

Programme and a brochure for presentation of the opportunities for financing, offered by the Programme as well as the Applicant's Packs for the two calls for proposals.

**The Visual Identity Manual**, useful instrument for Beneficiaries regarding the implementation of the information and publicity measures, included within the financing contracts within the Interreg V-A Romania – Bulgaria Programme, was initially approved through MC Decision no. 10/02.06.2015. During 2016, following the proposals of beneficiaries, the revised version of VIM was approved by MC Decision no. 27/04.08.2016, in order to be simplified and more flexible.

**The Target group** was informed periodically about the Programme implementation status via e-mail.

**The Electronic Newsletters**, elaborated within the Programme were published on the website of the Programme and sent to the potential beneficiaries/beneficiaries, representatives of the mass media, Programmes' network of information multipliers, etc.

**The network of information multipliers**, which functions as a group of information multipliers in regard of the actions undertaken under the Programme, was additionally developed by the inclusion of other organizations created within the eligible area.

**The Launching Conference of the Interreg V-A Romania – Bulgaria Programme** was held on 26th of March 2015 in Belogradchik (Vidin District) and was attended by 136 persons.

**Written and online media** campaign was carried out through posting the news regarding the organisation of events on the Programmes' website, Facebook profile, via e-mail, by sending the relevant information towards the media representatives and through publishing of over 94 journalistic materials.

**The Annual Conference** in regard of the progress registered in the implementation of the Interreg V-A Romania-Bulgaria Programme and the results of the Romania – Bulgaria Cross Border Cooperation Programme 2007-2013 was held on 21st of November 2016 in Calarasi and was attended by 67 persons.

**Monitoring of the press articles** in the central and local media as well as those with on line coverage is done constantly, for both Romania and Bulgaria.

**The Europe Day and The European Cooperation Day** were celebrated by undertaking actions under different mottos like for instance „We are Europeans” with the purpose of raising awareness, especially among young people, of the importance of the cross border /European cooperation for all citizens of the EU and promoting the perception of the EU as a borderless space, offering more possibilities, equal opportunities and freedom of movement.

**The Promotion of the calls for proposals** was carried out by organizing „Info Days” in the eligible counties in Romania and districts in Bulgaria. These events, during which presentations were made and appropriate conditions for discussions with the participants were created, were dedicated to potential beneficiaries. In total, 20 events were organized (15 events in 2015 and 5 events in 2016), attended by 1035 participants.

**On site visit** for promoting a project implemented within the Programme took place on 17th of November 2016 in Craiova and was attended by 30 participants, representatives

of the mass media and other local stakeholders.

**Meetings with potential applicants** were held both at the headquarters of the Joint Secretariat and at their locations in order to present the information referring to the calls for proposals launched under the Programme. As well, thematic meetings for presenting the rules for project implementation within the Interreg V-A Romania – Bulgaria, dedicated to the beneficiaries, were organized and attended by 134 participants.

**Information and promotion materials for the Interreg V-A Romania – Bulgaria Programme** were elaborated and inscribed with the Programme and the EU logos and distributed to potential beneficiaries.

**Training session related to different aspects of communication within the** Interreg V-A Romania – Bulgaria was held on 28th of December 2016 in Ruse, Bulgaria.

**11. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION WHICH MAY BE ADDED DEPENDING ON THE CONTENT AND OBJECTIVES OF THE COOPERATION PROGRAMME (ARTICLE 14(4), SUBPARAGRAPH 2 (A), (B), (C) AND (F), OF REGULATION (EU) NO 1299/2013)**

**11.1 Progress in implementation of the integrated approach to territorial development, including sustainable urban development, and community-led local development under the cooperation programme**

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

The programme structures are implementing measures fore reinforce their own capacity and beneficiaries.

For the Programme structures (MA, JS, NA and FLC): dedicated seminars, trainings and technical meetings were organized /attended for/by the staff, mostly related to the new legal provisions of the 2014+ programming period, as: conflict of interest, antifraud measures and irregularities, simplified costs, new public procurement legislation, implementation of eMS, communication and information etc.

Also, the representative of the Managing Authority have been involved in different working groups set up by Interact, namely:

- Working Group on Staff exchange – the results of the activity of this group are included in this document *Interreg staff exchange - Recommendations and considerations*. <http://www.interact-eu.net/library#857-publication-interreg-staff-exchange-recommendations-and-considerations>
- Task Force for Cooperation and Coordination models – the activity is on going
- Working Group for e-MS - the activity is on going.

For applicants/beneficiaries:

The programme structures have organized info days for each call launched for presenting the rules of the call and how to apply for funding.

Also, dedicated events/thematic workshops for beneficiaries on the following feald were organized: rules for projects implementation (provisions of the financing contracts, project monitoring, first level control, information and communication measures, how to use and introduce data in the eMS, etc.) as well as best practice examples. Moreover, to clarify certain aspects regarding the implementation of the projects meetings were organized at beneficiaries' request.

The Proamme have issued guidelines for beneficiaries regarding the implementation of the projects (Project Implementation Manual) and of the communication activities (Visual Identity Manual). These documents provide clear information and support for beneficiaries, ensuring a smooth implementation of the Programme.

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

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

- EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR)
- EU Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR)
- EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region (EUSAIR)
- EU Strategy for the Alpine Region (EUSALP)
- Atlantic Sea Basin Strategy (ATLSBS)

## EUSDR

**The pillar(s) and priority area(s) that the programme is relevant to:**

	<b>Pillar</b>	<b>Priority area</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	1 - Connecting the Danube region	1.1 - Mobility - waterways
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	1 - Connecting the Danube region	1.2 - Mobility - rail, road & air
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	1 - Connecting the Danube region	1.3 - Energy
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	1 - Connecting the Danube region	1.4 - Culture and tourism
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	2 - Protecting the environment in the Danube region	2.1 - Water quality
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	2 - Protecting the environment in the Danube region	2.2 - Environmental risks
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	2 - Protecting the environment in the Danube region	2.3 - Biodiversity, landscapes, air and soil quality
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	3 - Building prosperity in the Danube region	3.1 - Knowledge society
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	3 - Building prosperity in the Danube region	3.2 - Competitiveness
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	3 - Building prosperity in the Danube region	3.3 - People & skills
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	4 - Strengthening the Danube region	4.1 - Institutional capacity & cooperation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	4 - Strengthening the Danube region	4.2 - Security



**Actions or mechanisms used to better link the programme with the EUSDR**

**A. Are macro-regional coordinators (mainly National Coordinators, Priority Area Coordinators or Steering Group members) participating in the Monitoring Committee of the programme?**

Yes  No

**Name and function**

Ministry of Foreign Affairs as National Coordinator of EUSDR

**B. In selection criteria, have extra points been attributed to specific measures supporting the EUSDR?**

Yes  No

**a) Are targeted calls for proposals planned in relation to EUSDR**

Yes  No

**b) How many macro-regional projects/actions are already supported by the programme? (Number)**

86

**c) Were extra points/bonus given to a project/action with high macro-regional significance or impact? If yes, please elaborate (1 specific sentence)**

Out of 86 selected projects with financial allocation, 21 have received extrapoints (2 points) for contribution on EUSDR.

**d) Other actions (e.g. planned strategic projects). Please elaborate (1 specific sentence)**

n.a

**C. Has the programme invested EU funds in the EUSDR?**

Yes  No

**Approximate or exact amount in Euro invested in the EUSDR:**

ERDF	107,402,431.81
CF	
ESF	
EAFRD	
EMFF	
ENI	
IPA	
any other funds	
name of "any other funds"	-

**D. Obtained results in relation to the EUSDR (n.a. for 2016)**

The 3rd call for proposals that will be launched in 2017 will take into consideration the EUSDR objectives.

**E. Does the programme contribute to the targets as validated by the national coordinators and priority area coordinators in 2016 (uploaded on the EUSDR website)? (Please specify the target(s))**

Projects are still under implementation, no results have been reported in relation with the EUSDR objectives/targets. in 2016.

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

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### 13. SMART, SUSTAINABLE AND INCLUSIVE GROWTH

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

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

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

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## Documents

Document title	Document type	Document date	Local reference	Commission reference	Files	Sent date	Sent By
Summary AIR 2016	Citizens' summary	23-Jun-2017		Ares(2017)32367 40	Summary AIR 2016	28-Jun-2017	nheriuli