

IPA Cross-border Cooperation Programme Croatia-Bosnia and Herzegovina-Montenegro 2014-2020

Programme summary – programme starting points and objectives

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The IPA Cross-border Cooperation Programme Croatia- Bosnia and Herzegovina-Montenegro will support cross-border cooperation between the participating countries in the upcoming programming period 2014-2020. The programme is currently in the preparation phase, during which key variables of the programme are being agreed between the participating countries in line with the programming process consisting of Task Force meetings and workshops and thorough consultations with the relevant stakeholders and partners where the programme area shared challenges were identified as well as measures to address them. This paper summarises the current version of the IPA Cross-border Cooperation Programme Croatia-Bosnia and Herzegovina-Montenegro 2014-2020 in order to provide a brief overview on the strategic orientation of the programme.

1. Background information about the Programme

IPA Cross-border Cooperation Programme Croatia-Bosnia and Herzegovina-Montenegro 2014-2020 covers the territory of border areas between the three participating countries. Programme area covers NUTS III or equivalent regions which includes 12 counties on the Croatian side, 110 municipalities on the side of Bosnia and Herzegovina and 10 municipalities on the Montenegrin side. This amounts to total of 87,453.95 km² of programme area with 5,587,836.00 inhabitants.

The programme area has a large number of assets but also faces numerous challenges in various fields affecting regional development, which have all been thoroughly analysed before concentrating the programme on four thematic priorities. Results expected from the programme will directly contribute to reaching goals of Europe 2020 Strategy as well as South East Europe 2020 Strategy.

2. Programme objectives, priorities and areas of intervention

The overall objective of the IPA Cooperation Programme Croatia-Bosnia and Herzegovina-Montenegro 2014-2020 is to strengthen the social, economic and territorial development of the cross-border programme area through the implementation of joint projects and activities to be supported within four thematic priorities:

1. Employment, labour market, social inclusion, health
2. Environment, risk prevention and energy production
3. Tourism and cultural and natural heritage
4. Competitiveness and SME development

The selected thematic priorities have been translated into four priority axes which will enable the programme to become the tool for implementing smart solutions that answer to the programme area needs and challenges.

Within four priority axes, seven specific objectives indicate specific changes that the IPA CBC Programme Croatia-Bosnia and Herzegovina-Montenegro 2014-2020 anticipates to achieve through implementation of specific actions and realization of related outputs.

Priority Axis 1 – “Contributing to building efficient and effective labour market and enhancing social inclusion as well as social and healthcare”

Under this priority, the programme aims to contribute to building efficient and effective labour market and to enhance social inclusion and healthcare, especially through development of capacities and skills of labour force and through improvement of services in the public health and social welfare sector.

The financial allocation to this priority amounts to 15% of total programme EU funding (about 7.5 million EUR). Projects to be funded under this priority will have to address one of the following specific objectives (SO):

SO 1.1. - To improve facilities for employment by developing capacities and skills of the programme area

This specific objective will be achieved through cross-border cooperation implementing the following indicative list of actions:

- Development and implementation of programmes for professional training and lifelong learning in order to train the workforce according to the needs of the labour market
- encouraging self-employment, promoting entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship
- increasing employment opportunities for vulnerable groups

SO 1.2. To improve services in the area of public health and social welfare sector

This specific objective will be achieved through cross-border cooperation implementing the following indicative list of actions:

- Strengthening the efficiency of public institutions from health and social care sector by increasing the availability of services
- Implementation of ICT solutions in order to improve services and networking of all relevant stakeholders

Priority Axis 2 – “To protect the environment, improve risk prevention and sustainable energy production”

Under this priority, the programme directly responds to the needs in the area of environment protection, risk prevention improvement and aims at strengthening the usage of renewable energies and improving energy efficiency.

The financial allocation to this priority amounts to 25% of total programme EU funding (about 12.5 million EUR). Projects to be funded under this priority will have to address one of the following specific objectives (SO):

SO 2.1. - To promote and improve environment and nature protection through natural resources protection and management systems for risk prevention

This specific objective will be achieved through cross-border cooperation implementing the following indicative list of actions:

- Increasing awareness of the environmental conservation needs
- Development and implementation of management plans for protected areas, protection and restoration of biodiversity
- Improving systems for water and waste management
- Improve the system for the protection of natural disasters through the development of relevant plans and initiatives and the establishment of centres for emergency situations

SO 2.2. - To promote and enhance utilization of renewable energy resources and strengthen energy efficiency

This specific objective will be achieved through cross-border cooperation implementing the following indicative list of actions:

- Promoting the use of renewable energy sources, promoting energy efficiency through the creation of relevant studies, action plans and investments in infrastructure.
- Joint incentives in order to improve legal framework in the area of renewable energy resources and energy efficiency.

Priority Axis 3 – “To encourage tourism and to preserve cultural and natural heritage”

Under this priority, the programme aims at further development and diversification of existing tourism potential and at protecting and more sustainably using of natural and cultural heritage.

The financial allocation to this priority amounts to 30% of total programme EU funding (about 15 million EUR). Projects to be funded under this priority will have to address one of the following specific objectives (SO):

SO 3.1. – “To strengthen and diversify the tourism offer”

This specific objective will be achieved through cross-border cooperation implementing the following indicative list of actions:

- Developing, promoting and branding of joint tourism niches, developing new tourism products, boosting tourism by improving tourism infrastructure,
- Developing and implementation of ICT and innovative solutions in tourism sector
- Strengthening of human resources in tourism sector

SO 3.2. – „To enable a better management and sustainable use of the cultural and natural heritage“

This specific objective will be achieved through cross-border cooperation implementing the following indicative list of actions:

- Valuating, preserving, restoring and reviving cultural, historical and natural heritage e.g. UNESCO and other historical and cultural sites and landscapes, including enabling or improving access to them
- Developing of initiatives for implementation of cross-border cultural events.
- Training programs in quality assurance systems and standardisation

Priority Axis 4 – “Enhancing competitiveness and development of business environment in the programme area”

Under this priority, the programme addresses the main challenges and needs related to the enhancing competitiveness and development of business environment in the programme area.

The financial allocation to this priority amounts to 20% of total programme EU funding (about 10 million EUR). Projects to be funded under this priority will have to address the following specific objective (SO):

SO 4.1 - To enhance institutional infrastructure and services in order to accelerate the competitiveness and development of business environment in the programme area

This specific objective will be achieved through cross-border cooperation implementing the following indicative list of actions:

- Improving the efficiency of the institutions that support the business, establishment and strengthening clusters and business networks, encouraging entrepreneurship through educational programs to enhance entrepreneurial skills
- Standardization, protection and promotion of products, encouraging the development of innovative products and services
- Strengthening cooperation between entrepreneurship, R&D centres and educational institutions in order to increase competitiveness.

IPA Cooperation Programme Croatia- Bosnia and Herzegovina-Montenegro 2014-2020 is financed from European Fund for Regional Development as regards to Croatian part of Programme allocation and from Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance Fund as regards to Bosnian and Montenegrin part of programme allocation. The total programme budget is about 50 million EUR.

Ministry of Regional Development and EU Funds is in charge for coordinating the programming process being conducted in cooperation between programme participating countries.

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