



Bulgaria - Turkey

IPA Cross-border Programme

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**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

1. Introduction	4
1.1 Relevant background	4
1.1.1 IPA Cross-border Cooperation	5
1.1.2 Rules and regulations.....	5
1.2 The Programming process	6
2 Description of the co-operation area.....	7
2.1 Eligible area and regional structure.....	7
2.2 Geography	8
2.3 Demography.....	9
2.4 Economy	10
2.5 Labour market, education and training.....	14
2.5.1 Labour market.....	14
2.5.2 Education and training.....	16
2.6 Infrastructure	17
2.7 Environment.....	19
2.8 Culture	21
2.9 Local and regional development	21
3 SWOT-analysis of the co-operation area	23
4 previous Cross-border activities	28
4.1 Cross border activities until 2006	28
4.2 Lessons learned	29
5 General Programme Objectives and Co-operation strategy.....	30
5.1 Strategic Premises	30
5.2 Strategic objectives	31
5.3 Priorities and spheres of intervention	32
5.4 Horizontal themes and principles.....	35
5.4.1 Gender equality, equal opportunities and non-discrimination issues.....	35
5.4.2 Sustainable development	35
5.4.3 Partnership	36
5.4.4 Networking.....	36
5.4.5 Innovation	37
5.4.6 Good governance.....	37
5.5 Objectives' logics	38
6 Financing plan	39
7 Programme indicators.....	40
8 Correspondence with other EU funded and national programmes.....	43
9 Implementing and financial provisions	50
9.1 Management and implementation structures.....	51
9.1.1 Managing Authority (MA).....	51
9.1.2 National Authority.....	52
9.1.3 Certifying Authority (CA).....	53
9.1.4 Audit Authority (AA).....	54
9.1.5 Joint Technical Secretariat (including JTS antennae).....	54
9.1.6 Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC)	55
9.1.7 Group of Auditors.....	56
9.1.8 Controllers	56
9.1.9 Assessment working group	57
9.2 Generation, application selection and control of operations.....	57
9.2.1 Lead beneficiary/partner.....	57
9.2.2 Other beneficiaries/partners	58
9.2.3 Project generation/preparation:	58
9.2.4 Application:	58
9.2.5 Project assessment:.....	58
9.2.6 Project selection and approval:.....	58
9.2.7 Contracting:	59
9.2.8 First level control and payments:	59
9.2.9 Auditing.....	60
9.2.10 Project modifications:	60



9.2.11	Irregularities	60
9.3	Monitoring	62
9.4	Evaluation	62
9.4.1	Ex-ante Evaluation	62
9.4.2	Strategic Environmental Assessment	65
9.4.3	Evaluations during the programme period	76
10	Publicity and communication	78
11	Main documents and publications used.....	80



1. INTRODUCTION

This programming document sets out a platform for cross border co-operation between Republic of Bulgaria and Republic of Turkey for the period of 2007-2013.

The document was elaborated as a result of the joint efforts of the relevant national authorities and various regional partners involved and represented in the Joint Task Force (JTF), which comprises of:

- For Bulgaria – the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works (MRDPW) namely, Department of Territorial Cooperation Management under Directorate General Programming of Regional Development, the Ministry of Finance namely National Fund Directorate and Central Coordination Unit, the Ministry of Environment and Water namely the Directorate “Prevention activities” and;
- For Turkey – the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Prime Ministry Secretariat General for EU Affairs and Undersecretariat of State Planning Organisation, as well as Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency.

1.1 Relevant background

The implementation of the current cross-border co-operation CBC Programme will be jointly financed by the new “European Territorial Cooperation” objective (previously INTERREG) within the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) matched by an equivalent allocation of IPA funds. The resulting single pot of money will have to be spent according to a single set of rules and on the basis of a common benefit approach which requires the involvement of joint programming and management structures. Thus IPA will promote enhanced cooperation and progressive economic integration and coherence between EU and candidate countries.

In September 2004 the European Commission (EC) proposed two new instruments that meant a far reaching reform of the cooperation practice with accession countries and countries outside the European Union (EU) external borders. Among those instruments **IPA – the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance** (Commission Regulation (EC) No 1085/2006) – addresses both the current candidate countries (CC): Turkey¹, Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia² and the potential candidate countries (PCC): Albania, Serbia (including Kosovo), Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina. As a single integrated pre-accession instrument IPA replaces the various former instruments like PHARE, ISPA, SAPARD, the Turkey pre-accession instrument and CARDS.

Assistance for candidate countries within IPA is designed to support them in their efforts to strengthen democratic institutions and the rule of law; reform public administration; carry out economic reforms; respect human rights; promote gender equality; support the development of civil society; advance regional cooperation; and contribute to sustainable development in these countries. It should be therefore targeted at supporting a wide range of institution-building measures.

IPA consists of five key components that are designed to help Candidate Countries to implement the *acquis communautaire* and to get used to structural funds (SF) instruments. IPA components are as follow:

- Transition Assistance and Institution Building;
- **Cross-border Cooperation;**
- Regional Development;

¹ On 10 and 11 December 1999 the Helsinki European Council decided to grant candidate country status to Republic of Turkey. On 3 October 2005, accession negotiations were officially started.

² Turkey and Bulgaria recognise the Republic of Macedonia with its constitutional name.



- Human Resources Development;
- Rural Development.

The Transition Assistance and Institution Building and the Cross-border Cooperation components are accessible to all beneficiary countries (both Candidate Countries and Potential Candidate Countries) in order to assist them in the process of transition and approximation to the EU, as well as to encourage regional cooperation among them. IPA components 3, 4 and 5 are designed to help the beneficiary countries prepare for the time after accession, in particular for the implementation of the Community's cohesion and rural development policies.

1.1.1 IPA Cross-border Cooperation

Cross-border cooperation within IPA has the objective of promoting good neighbourly relations, fostering stability, security and prosperity in the mutual interest of all countries concerned, and of encouraging their harmonious, balanced and sustainable development. Learning from past experience, IPA CBC will operate on both sides of the border on the basis of one set of rules and objectives, thus providing the opportunity for fully equal and balanced programming and decision making process between Member States and Candidate Countries.

The objectives of the IPA CBC component are designed to take into consideration the specific needs of the respective external border, namely:

- Development of cross-border economic, social and environmental activities in border areas;
- Address common challenges in the field of environment, public health, prevention and fight against organized crime;
- Ensure efficient and secure borders;
- Promote legal and administrative cooperation;
- Promote local "people to people" type of actions.

The cornerstone of IPA CBC is the principle of "cross-border benefit". As laid down in Article 95 of Commission Regulation (EC) No 718/2007 of 12 June 2007 implementing Council Regulation (EC) No 1085/2006 establishing an instrument for pre-accession assistance (IPA) the operations selected for CBC programmes aimed at developing cross-border activities shall include beneficiaries for at least one of the participating Member States and one of the participating beneficiary countries. The partnering organizations shall cooperate in at least one of the following ways for each operation: **joint development, joint implementation, joint staffing and joint financing**. This concept of mutually cross-border benefiting actions reflects also on the types of projects that are to be developed within the cross-border co-operation Programme.

According to Council Regulation (EC) No 1085/2006 of 17 July 2006 IPA CBC will finance capacity and institution building activities as well as investment.

1.1.2 Rules and regulations

The CBC Programme for Cross-border Cooperation between Republic of Bulgaria and Republic of Turkey has been elaborated in accordance with the following documents:

- Council Regulation (EC) No 1085/2006 of 17 July 2006 establishing an Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA);
- Commission Regulation (EC) No 718/2007 of 12 June 2007 implementing Council Regulation (EC) No 1085/2006 establishing an instrument for pre-accession assistance (IPA).



1.2 The Programming process

In July 2006 for the purposes of programming of CBC Programme BG-TR a Joint Bulgarian-Turkish Task Force (JTF) has been established represented by relevant Bulgarian and Turkish authorities. The work of JTF including the drafting process of CBC Programme was supported by the external Technical Assistance expertise.

Preparation of the programme takes into account the views and advices of local and regional authorities. It also ensures transparency of the process and open access to the relevant information. To this end public consultations have been organised with the potential beneficiaries to discuss the socio-economic analysis, SWOT analysis, vision, objectives and priorities of the CBC programme.

Preparation of the CBC Programme has also taken into account the comments of ex-ante evaluation and the strategic environmental assessment that have been incorporated in the document.

The programming process Milestones

Date & Place	Milestone
14.07.2006, Ankara	Kick-off meeting of Joint Task Force (JTF). Identification of key issues and bodies responsible for preparation of the CBCP, clarification of programme area, discussion on the CBCP content.
06.12.2006, Sofia	Kick-off meeting of MRDPW Managing Authority and Technical Assistance team, involved in preparation of CBC Programme.
10.12.2006, Sofia	Technical Meeting of JTF. Discussion on the CBC Programme development time table. Implementation structures and process.
29 – 31.01. 2007, Haskovo, Jambol, Burgas	Regional Consultations on the SWOT analysis with the participation of stakeholders at regional and local level in Bulgaria.
01 – 02.02. 2007 Kırklareli and Edirne	Regional Consultations on the SWOT analysis with the participation of stakeholders at regional and local level in Turkey.
20-22.02.2007 Haskovo, Jambol, Burgas	Regional Consultations on the Priorities and spheres of intervention with the participation of stakeholders at regional and local level in Bulgaria.
20-21.02.2007 Edirne and Kırklareli	Regional Consultations on the Priorities and spheres of intervention with the participation of stakeholders at regional and local level in Turkey.
27.02.2007 and 01.03.2007, Sofia	Technical Meeting of JTF. Implementation structures and process. Discussion on draft CBCP.
March – April 2007 Sofia - Ankara	On-line consultations of the responsible Bulgarian and Turkish institutions on the Draft CBCP.
Mid of June	Final approval of the programme by JTF

2 DESCRIPTION OF THE CO-OPERATION AREA

2.1 Eligible area and regional structure

The core co-operation area includes the eligible districts Burgas, Yambol and Haskovo on the Bulgarian side and the eligible provinces Edirne and Kırklareli on the Turkish side.

The eligible co-operation area is determined in accordance with the IPA rules set out in Regulation 1085/2006 where only NUTS III regions (or respective equivalents) are eligible for cross-border co-operation programmes. In Bulgaria the corresponding NUTS III administrative-territorial units are the districts established by the Law on the Administrative Territorial System in Republic of Bulgaria³. In Turkey the corresponding equivalent of NUTS III administrative-territorial units are the provinces established by Decision of Council of Ministers No 2002/4720.⁴

Bulgaria – Turkey cross- border co-operation area is illustrated on the map below:

Map 1: Bulgaria – Turkey Co-operation area



Bulgaria – Turkey cross-border co-operation area covers a territory of 29032.9 km² with total population of 1 561 984 people. The common Bulgarian – Turkish border stretches along 288 km with 3 currently operating border crossing points. The eligible area in Bulgaria represents 14.99 % of total territory of the country respectively the eligible area in Turkey represents 1.58 % of total country territory.

³ Republic of Bulgaria; State Gazette No 63/14.07.1995, last amendment SG No 46/03.06.2005

⁴ Republic of Turkey, Official gazette No 24884, 22 September 2002

Table1: List of the eligible NUTS III units in the co-operation area

NUTS III level equivalent	Area in square km	% of the country's territory
District Burgas	7 748.1	6.98 %
District Yambol	3 355.5	3.02 %
District Haskovo	5 533.3	4.98 %
Bulgaria CBC	16 636.9	14.99 %
Province Edirne	6 097	0.80 %
Province Kırklareli	6 299	0.78 %
Turkey CBC	12 396	1.58 %
TOTAL CBC	29 032.9	BG territory – 57,3 % TR territory – 42,7 %

Source of Information: Bulgaria: National Cadastre Institute Ltd; 2005

Turkey: Turkish Statistical Institute, 2005, Regional Statistics; <http://www.turkstat.gov.tr>

2.2 Geography

The eligible Bulgaria - Turkey cross-border co-operation area is situated in South-Eastern Europe, at the south-eastern part of the Balkan Peninsula.

The *geographical structure* of the co-operation area alternates from altitude 710m to 1000 m and includes plains, low altitude valleys, plateaus and hilly areas, with some mountain features. In the North-West the co-operation area borders to the Eastern Rhodopi Mountains and low branches of the Sakar Mountain in Bulgaria. On the South-west the co-operation area borders to the Aegean Sea (Saros Gulf) in Turkey. In the North-East the co-operation area borders to the Balkan Range in Bulgaria. In the South-East the co-operation area borders to Strandja/Yildiz Mountain and Black Sea littoral presented both in Bulgaria and in Turkey.

Map 2: Geographical structure of co-operation area



The **water reserves** of co-operation area comprise both surface and ground waters. Maritsa/Meric River is the biggest river on the Balkan Peninsula. Tundja/Tunca River is another important one in the region. The region of Strandja/Yildiz Mountain is the richest on water resources in the entire Thracian – Strandja/Yildiz area. Five rivers take their sources from the Strandja/Yildiz Mountain. The largest of them are Ropotamo, Dyavolska and Veleka/Değirmendere. Also the surface waters are presented by several big lakes situated on the Bulgarian side. The ground water resources consist of mineral springs and thermal waters.

Joint influence of the Black Sea and Aegean Sea; Strandja, Sakar, Balkan Range and Eastern Rhodopes Mountains as well as Maritza and Tundja/Tunca Rivers set the patterns of **the climate** over the cooperation area. The climate varies from transitional-continental to continental-Mediterranean. The **mountains** are generally forested with deciduous trees and some evergreen.

Different types of **mineral resources** are presented in the co-operation area. There are non-metal deposits (limestone, marble, gabbro, granite, asbestos and argil), metal deposits (polymetallic ore - mainly lead, zinc, and silver) and brown coal deposits on the Bulgarian side. On the Turkish side there are deposits of coal, chrome, iron, copper, bauxite, marble and sulphur. There are considerable sources of sea-salt in the Black Sea coastal areas of the co-operation area.

2.3 Demography

The total population of co-operation area is 1 561 984 people. The population structure among the participating units differs.

The population of the Bulgarian part of the co-operation area is 830 917 people, accounting for 10.76 % of the country's total population. Bigger cities are Burgas (189529), Yambol (79665) and Haskovo (78929). The population on the Turkish side is 731 067 people, accounting for 1.07 % of the total population in Republic of Turkey. Bigger cities are Edirne (119298) and Kırklareli (53221).

The demographic potential of co-operation area is different for both sides. On the Bulgarian side, due to a serious contribution of Burgas District, the demographic potential in terms of natural growth rate is better when compared to the national values (-5.4‰). On the other hand due to a negative natural growth and out-migration there are serious disparities between three districts and especially in terms of depopulation of the rural areas. Moreover this is a serious demographic challenge for Bulgarian side which needs support to overcome. On the Turkish side there is a relative demographic stability, although the value of natural growth rate is much below the Turkish national (12.9‰). This side of the co-operation area also faces demographic challenges with out-migration especially of young and educated people and depopulation of the rural areas because of better job opportunities in urban areas.

The population of the Bulgarian side of the co-operation area is **ageing** over the last years following the national trend. The ageing index of population on Bulgarian side is higher than the country's average (98.3). As a result, human potential for the economic development especially in rural areas of Bulgarian side is decreasing. On the Turkish side, as a result of relative demographic stability, population is much younger with over a quarter falling within the [0-14] age range.

**Table 2: Population of the co-operation area**

NUTS III level equivalent	Inhabitants ⁵	Population density ⁶	Ageing index ⁷	Natural growth rate in ‰ ⁸
District Burgas	418 750	54,05	103.61	- 2,8
District Yambol	146 094	43,54	140.19	- 6,3
District Haskovo	266 073	48,09	140.27	- 6,6
Bulgaria CBC	830 917	49,94	128.02	- 5,2
Province Edirne	402 606	66,03	43.75	-0,5
Province Kırklareli	328 461	52,14	44.64	5,9
Turkey CBC	731 067	53,80	44.20	2,7
TOTAL CBC	1 561 984			

Source of information: Bulgarian National Statistical Institute, 2005

Turkish Statistical Institute, 2005, Regional Statistics; <http://www.turkstat.gov.tr>

The *average population density* of Bulgarian side of the co-operation area is lower than national (69.9 inhabitants per km²) and varies significantly at the municipal level. These differences are affected on one hand of mountain, border and rural areas with low population density, and on the other – of developed urban centres where the population density is high. The population density of the Turkish side of cooperation area is lower than the national (86 inhabitants per km²). In Kırklareli Province the north and north-eastern areas of the territory are one of the least populated in Turkey.

2.4 Economy⁹

There are differences in the economic structure of the two sides of co-operation area. It has to be mentioned that conclusions for the Turkish side has to be considered conditional (see footnote).

On Bulgarian side in terms of employment in the basic economic sectors, rather complex economy in the advanced district capitals Burgas, Haskovo and Yambol co-exist with agricultural economy and mono-structural industry in peripheral areas. On Turkish side according to the same parameter, economy is clearly dominated by agriculture, following by the service sector and the industry. Kırklareli is networking with Istanbul which contributes considerably to development of the province's economy.

On Bulgarian side in terms of employment of the population by type of sector, Haskovo has the highest share of population employed in industry, above average share of employment in agriculture is characteristic for Yambol, while the most of the population in Burgas is employed in services and construction due to the well developed tourism sector. On the other hand, on Turkish side nearly 50% of employment is in agriculture; Edirne has higher shares of population employed in services and construction, whereas employment in industry is dominant for Kırklareli.

⁵ Inhabitants: Bulgarian data as of 31.12.2005, Turkish data as of year 2000 when the last census of population was held

⁶ Population density: Inhabitants per square km. Bulgarian data as of 31.12.2004, Turkish data as of year 2000

⁷ Ageing index: The ratio of people aged 60 and over to children younger than 15.

Bulgarian data as of 31.12.2004, Turkish data as of 2000

⁸ Natural growth rate: Bulgarian data as of 2004, Turkish data as of year 2000

⁹ For the Bulgarian side the statistical data in this section are based on two most recent publications of the Bulgarian National Statistical Institute -, Yearbook 2005 and the "Regions, districts and municipalities in Bulgaria, 2004"; Statistical data of National Employment agency; District development strategies 2005 – 2015 of districts Burgas, Yambol and Haskovo; Eurostat Yearbook 2006–07. For Turkish side the statistical data are based on the publications of Turkish Statistical Institute, on-line data <http://www.turkstat.gov.tr>. Regarding the employment in the basic economy sectors the most recent regional data is available at NUTS II level only (TR 21 NUTS II level includes Edirne, Kırklareli and Tekirdag); Eurostat Yearbook 2006–07.

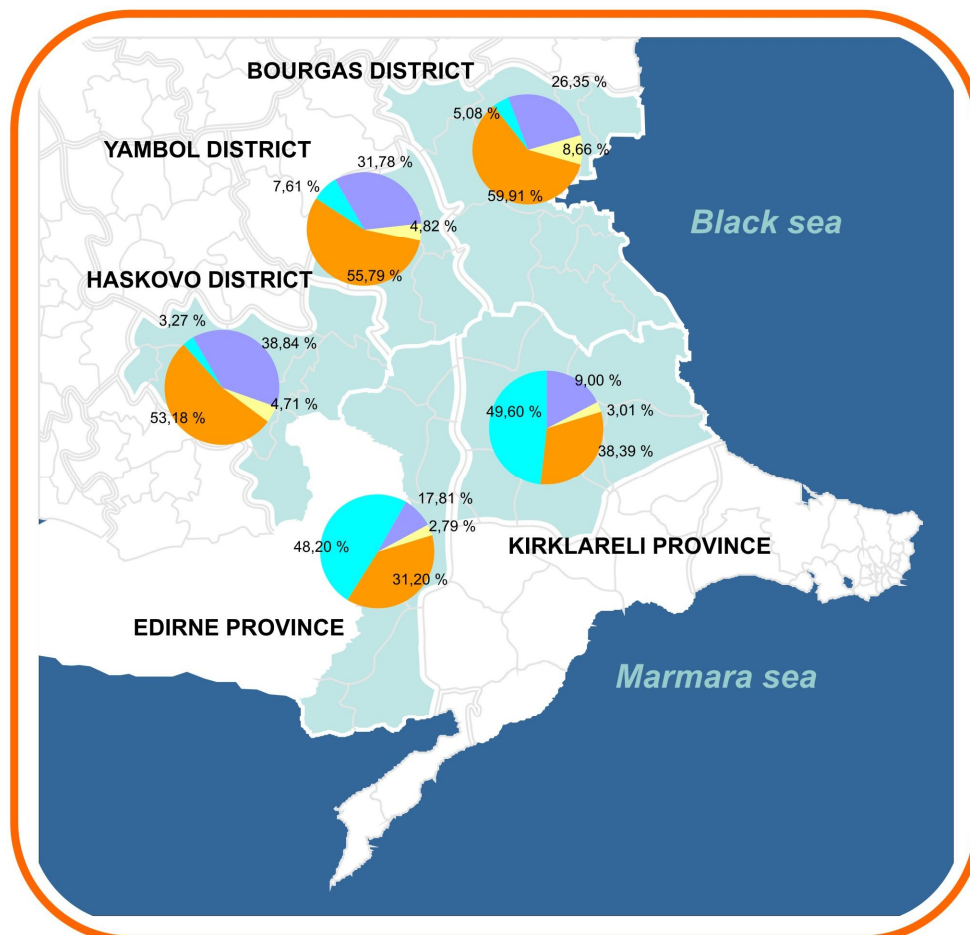


Table 3: Basic economic sectors and employment

NUTS III level equivalent	Numbers of employees	ratio of employment in Industry %	ratio of employment in Construction %	ratio of employment in Services %	ratio of employment in Agriculture %
District Burgas	115 858	26,35	8,66	59,91	5,08
District Yambol	30 386	31,78	4,82	55,79	7,61
District Haskovo	61 336	38,84	4,71	53,18	3,27
Bulgaria	207 580				
Province Edirne	196 389	9,00	3,01	38,39	49,60
Province Kırklareli	166 262	17,81	2,79	31,20	48,20
Turkey	362 561				
TOTAL	570 144				

Source of information: Bulgarian National Statistical Institute, Year book 2005
 Turkish Statistical Institute, Regional Statistics; <http://www.turkstat.gov.tr>

It is important to note that in terms of employment of the population by type of sectors the above characteristics has changed in the past several years. For the period 2004 – 2006 a clear tendency of decreasing the share of agriculture and increasing the shares of industry and notably services is obvious for NUTS II level equivalents TR 21 (Edirne, Kırklareli, and Tekirdag)¹⁰. Accordingly, it could be considered conditionally that in terms of employment of the population by type of economic sector, Turkish side of the co-operation area is generally affected by this tendency.



¹⁰ Source: Turkish Statistical Institute, Household Labour Force Surveys, www.turkstat.gov.tr



On Bulgarian side, in terms of the gross value added (GVA)¹¹ by economic sector in Burgas District industry has the highest share (35.78%) whereas in Haskovo District services have the highest share (67.83%). Not surprisingly in Yambol agriculture has the highest share (32.83%) which is also above average of the country (11.42%) and shows the importance of the agriculture for this district. In general the growth of the service sector is notable for Bulgarian side while in the industry, the past decade of economic restructuring brought a decrease in terms of volume and intensity.

On the Turkish side, in terms of gross domestic product (GDP)¹² by sectors in Edirne Province, services have the share of 47.42% followed by agriculture with a share of 35.80%, and by the industry with a share of 16.78%. It has to be mentioned that in terms of GDP by sectors the share of agriculture is far over the national share for Turkey (13.43%). In Kırklareli Province in terms of GDP by sector the share of industry is 57.22%, followed by services with a share of 32.25% and agriculture with a share of 10.53%. It has to be mentioned that the share of industry in terms of GDP by economic sectors is far over the national average for Turkey (28.40%).

In terms of GDP per capita at current prices, there are similarities between the two countries at the national level, but when comparing the districts and provinces nationally there are disparities. Respectively the GDP per capita at current prices for Bulgaria national level is EURO 2249 (2003) and for Turkey national level is EURO 2277 (2001). In terms of industry sector Kırklareli Province and Burgas District are the two most developed territorial units within the co-operation area and thus their GDP per capita is higher. The Turkish NUTS II region TR21 that includes Edirne, Kırklareli and Tekirdag Provinces ranks 5th in GDP per capita among all 26 NUTS II level equivalents in the country.

Table 4: GDP per capita (current prices)

NUTS III level equivalent	EURO
District Burgas	2 631
District Yambol	1 482
District Haskovo	1 336
Bulgaria CBC area	1 816
Province Edirne	2 264
Province Kırklareli	3 383
Turkey CBC area	2 824

Source of information: National Statistical Institute of Bulgaria, Yearbook 2005, Turkish Statistical Institute, Regional Statistics, www.turkstat.gov.tr,

The industrial location pattern is different on the two sides of the co-operation area. In Turkey there is a greater concentration of industrial activities in or next to the main urban settlements, while Bulgarian industrial locations are more widely distributed. On the Turkish side, there are Industrial sites with complete basic infrastructure but are not yet occupied. On Bulgarian side of the co-operation area the industry sector consists of sub-sectors such as: chemical industry, machinery building for food processing, electrical engineering; metal and wood – work industries; ready wear and textile industries; food and drink production; glass and ceramic industries etc. On the Turkish side the predominant industry sub-sectors include: food processing, textile and ready wear, leather, metal and wood – work industries.

Most of the enterprises in the co-operation area are represented by small and medium size enterprises (SMEs), and little share of big enterprises. Accordingly the existing big industrial enterprises are playing a key role as economic drivers providing a lot of value-added, employment and businesses for many of the local SMEs. For the co-operation area private

¹¹ Data for Bulgaria are for 2003, source: National Statistical Institute, Statistical Yearbook 2005

¹² There are no GVA data available for Turkey. The last available data for GDP at provincial level is for year 2001, see at <http://www.turkstat.gov.tr>



initiative has been quite dynamic in the SME sector in the recent years. The main reason for this is promotion of free competition and employment opportunities. Nowadays most of the newly opened workplaces are SMEs. On the Bulgarian side the share of SMEs is over 98%. On Turkish side nearly 96% of all the enterprises have less than 50 people employed. In general, SMEs in the programme area have a steady position within the domestic market, but some very minor number of SMEs export abroad.

Despite of the good position of the SMEs in terms of quantity there is still much to be done in terms of quality. The main characteristics of the SMEs sector are as follow:

- High flexibility in business operations;
- Rather direct and individual customer orientation;
- A low rate of internationalization;
- Low rate of research activities and contacts with universities and research institutes;
- Limited geographical area of actions;
- Low export rates;
- Low level of integration in production chains and networks;
- Lower qualification level of employees.

In terms of quality improvement of SMEs sector, some good examples could be referred such as established in Haskovo District "Association of the producers of machinery for food producing industry"¹³ as well as good relationship between Crafts organizations in Edirne and Yambol¹⁴. These examples refer to the potential for development and implementation of various initiatives for SMEs support in terms of increase of market access, information basis and, clustering. Appropriate initiatives could lead to further economic development of the co-operation area.

The services sector accounts for the biggest relative share and an upward trend in the structure of the economy in the co-operation area. Of high importance for the services growth is tourism. In the past several years tourism has made contribution to economic growth and employment creation of the co-operation area. In 2004 on Bulgarian side the tourism sector employs 5.5% of the active workforce, which is above the national average (3.7%). According to the Bulgarian National Statistical Institute the total number of visits with tourism purpose and recreation in Bulgaria for 2004 were 4 010 326. The nights spent on the Bulgarian side of cooperation area were 4 625 714 (33% of those at the national level) of which by foreigners – 4 001 986 (39% of those at the national level). On Bulgarian side, most of the towns and villages along the Black Sea coast benefit from tourism impact, by attracting both domestic and foreign visitors. However, the seasonal character and unused other resources are serious weaknesses of tourism at the Bulgarian side of co-operation area.

In Turkey, there is a serious positive trend of tourism development for the period 2001 – 2005. In 2005 total visits with tourism purpose in Turkey were 10 430 788 of which foreigners 9 904 716¹⁵. On Turkish side of the co-operation area tourism is developing by attracting visitors with its tourism facilities, historical past, numerous monuments and tradition. In general the resources for tourism remain still unexploited.

The favourable natural and environmental characteristics of the co-operation area provide opportunities for sustainable development of different forms of tourism. Furthermore, the abundance of cultural and historical landmarks and natural resources is an advantage for the diversification of the currently available tourist products and services for the purposes of cross-border co-operation and promotion the programme area as unique tourist destination.

Agriculture has been traditionally developed in the co-operation area. On Bulgarian side, the shares of the agricultural land and forests are respectively 58.57% and 33.19% of the total territory. Also the share of the arable land to total agricultural land is 78.04% and the indicator

¹³ Haskovo District Development Strategy 2005 - 2015

¹⁴ Mentioned during the public consultations in the programme area on the First draft socio-economic analyses, January – February 2007.

¹⁵ Source: Turkish Statistical Institute, <http://www.turkstat.gov.tr>. Turkish Regional statistical data for tourism is not available.



'arable land per person' is one of the highest in the country (1.92 ha/person) compared to the national average (0.63 ha/person). The main crops growing are cereals, orchards, oleaginous (sun seeds), fruits and vegetables, grapes, and other. Stock breeding in the region covers all types of animals and involves also use of mountain pastures. Agriculture is faced with a number of restrictions: dispersed ownership, reduced irrigated areas, obsolete facilities, shortage of investments and new technologies, deficiencies in the integration with the food industry, etc. It has to be mentioned that developed by UNDP and currently implemented Agriculture and Rural development Programme for Strandja-Sakar (ARDPSS) 2005- 2007 is supporting 41% of the municipalities from Bulgarian side of the co-operation area. Through ARDPSS these rural and underdeveloped municipalities are overcoming their overall economic and social difficulties and are improving their capacity for successful EU funds absorption for the period 2007-2013.

On Turkish side, the shares of the agricultural land and forests are respectively 49.35% and 26.79 % of the total Turkish side territory¹⁶. Also the share of the arable land to total agricultural land is 82.46%. The main crops growing are rice, cereals, oleaginous, fruits and vegetables, grapes and etc. Stock breeding in the region covers only ovine animal breeding. On Turkish side the agriculture is also faced with restrictions such as insufficient irrigation system, dispersed land ownership, use of old technologies.

Although generally increasing, the economy growth rates still remain insufficient for overcoming the considerable lagging behind of the Bulgaria- Turkey cross- border co-operation area as compared to the EU average values. Accordingly, appropriate interventions are needed so that the overall economic potential of the co-operation area to be improved.

2.5 Labour market, education and training

2.5.1 Labour market¹⁷

In terms of labour market characteristics there are similarities but also disparities in both sides of the cooperation area. It has to be mentioned that for Turkish side most of the conclusions below are based on statistical data of NUTS II level equivalents which also includes Tekirdag Province. However, it could be considered conditionally that Turkish side of the programme area is generally under the influence of the following tendencies.

For the period 2001 - 2005 the average **employment rates** of Bulgaria (52.2%) and Turkey (46.5 %) are under the EU 25 average (63 %).

In Bulgaria, for the period 2001 – 2005 the labour market was following an upward trend so to achieve its maximum in 2005. On Bulgarian side of the programme area, the labour market development is coherent with the national tendencies but in 2005 it was more favourable compared to the country. In 2005 the activity rate¹⁸ is 48.8% in Burgas District, 51.4% in Jambol District and 48.3% in Haskovo District, following an upward trend. The total number of employed persons in Bulgarian side of the cooperation area accounts for 10.6% of those employed nationally with employment rate¹⁹ in Burgas District at 45.8 %, in Jambol District at 46.7% and in Haskovo District at 43.9%. Despite the small disparities between the three

¹⁶ Source: Environment Status Report Kırklareli, 2005; Environment Status Report Edirne, 2005

¹⁷ For Bulgaria the statistical data in this section are from Bulgarian National Statistical Institute, Year Books 2001-2005; Statistical data of National Employment agency; District development strategies 2005 – 2015 of districts Burgas, Yambol and Haskovo; Eurostat Yearbook 2006 – 07. For the Turkish side the statistical data are from Turkish Statistical Institute (Household Labour Force Surveys), <http://www.turkstat.gov.tr> and Ministry of labour and social security, General Directorate of Turkish Employment Organization, Statistical yearbook 2005 available at <http://www.iskur.gov.tr>; Eurostat Yearbook 2006–07. Turkish Statistical Institute updates regional labour market statistical data only at NUTS II level; respectively TR 21 NUTS II Level includes Edirne, Kırklareli and Tekirdag Provinces.

¹⁸ Bulgarian National Statistical Years book 2005, Activity rate: ratio between labour force and population of 15 years old and over. The labour force includes employed and unemployed persons, 15 years old and over

¹⁹ Bulgarian National Statistical Years book 2005, Employment rate: ratio between employed population and population of 15 years of age and over



districts, the average employment rate is higher than the national rate (44.7%). The majority of the employment is in the private sector. The increasing employment rate for Bulgarian side of cooperation area is a result of the relatively increasing economy for the mentioned period.

In 2005 in NUTS II Level TR 21 (Edirne, Tekirdag, Kirkclareli) the labour force participation rate²⁰ is 57.6%, following an increasing trend which is opposite to the national one (48.3%). Despite of the overall positive tendency, this parameter remains low due to the extremely low labour force participation rate of women. In 2005 in NUTS II Level TR 21 (Edirne, Tekirdag, Kirkclareli) the labour force participation rate of women is 34.5% following decreasing trend that is also coherent with the national tendency.

For the period 2000 - 2005 the employment rate trend of Turkey could be divided in two sub-trends. For the period 2000 - 2003 the trend was decreasing due to the economic crisis of 2001 and it started to move upwards for 2004 – 2005 period²¹. For 2005 in NUTS II Level TR 21 the total number for employed persons is also increasing and accounts for 2.6% of those employed nationally with the employment rate of 53.1% (43.4% national). Also this rate is ranking third highest in the country. The positive trend of the employment rate of the Turkish side of the cooperation area is a result of the stable economic environment and especially of the expansion of economic growth of Istanbul metropolitan area, to which Kirkclareli province is linked.

In 2005 the *unemployment rates* of Bulgaria (10.1%) and Turkey (10.3%) are over the EU 25 (8.8 %) ²².

For the period 2000 – 2005 the unemployment rate for Bulgaria is decreasing as a result of macroeconomic stability which reflects to less redundant employees in different economy sectors, and more job opportunities. In 2005 for Bulgarian side of programme area the unemployment rate is lower than the national average (10.1%). Nevertheless the average women unemployment rate is higher than the national (5.3%) and EU 25 levels. The average shares of registered²³ long-term and youth unemployed people is slowly decreasing but still remains high compared to the national and EU 25 levels. Despite of the active labour market policies implementation, low qualification represents the overwhelming share of the unemployed people and in particular among the long-term unemployed and youths. Another handicap for Bulgarian side of the cooperation area is the “brain drain”, especially in the sense that well educated and mainly young people often find jobs in other parts of the country or abroad.

For the period 2000 – 2005 the unemployment rate for Turkey could also be divided in two sub-trends. For the period 2000-2003 the rate is increasing, while for 2004 – 2005 remains stable at 10.3%²⁴. In 2005 for NUTS II Level TR 21 (Edirne, Tekirdag, Kirkclareli) the unemployment rate is lower than the national average. The main reason for this positive trend is the stable economic environment on the Turkish side of the co-operation area as well as the active measures of the Turkish State in terms of fight against unregistered work. Nevertheless the women unemployment rate remains high when compared to the national value. For the Turkish side of cooperation area, the average share of registered youth unemployed people is lower than the national one (48.4%)²⁵. The highest share of unemployment is among those of lower educational level. Accordingly, a special focus to the vulnerable groups at the labour market is needed so that social cohesion improvements for the cooperation area can be achieved.

²⁰ Turkish Statistical Yearbook, Labour force participation rate: ratio between labour force to the population 15 years of age and over

²¹ Eurostat Yearbook 2006-07

²² Eurostat Yearbook 2006-07

²³ Sources: For Bulgaria: Bulgarian National Employment agency statistics, www.az.government.bg. For Turkey: Ministry of Labour and Social security, General Directorate of Turkish Employment Organization, Statistical yearbook 2005, <http://www.iskur.gov.tr>

²⁴ Eurostat Yearbook 2006-07

²⁵ Source: Ministry of Labour and Social security, General Directorate of Turkish Employment Organization, Statistical yearbook 2005, <http://www.iskur.gov.tr>

**Table 5: Unemployment 2005**

NUTS III level equivalent	Unemployment rate	Women unemployment rate	% of youths in unemployment	% of long term unemployed ²⁶
Burgas District	6.2	4.4	20.7	35.4
Yambol District	9.2	7.5	27.0	63.5
Haskovo District	9.3	6.9	23.3	55.1
Bulgaria CBC	8.2	6.3	23.4	51.3
Edirne Province	7.8 ²⁷	11.7 ²⁸	47.1	39.2 ²⁹
Kirklareli Province	7.8	11.7	43.5	39.2
Turkey CBC	7.8	11.7	45.3	39.2

Sources of information: For Bulgaria: National Statistical Institute of Bulgaria, Yearbook 2005; National Employment Agency statistics, www.az.government.bg;

For Turkey: Turkish statistical Institute, Household Labour Force Survey for 2006, www.turkstat.gov.tr; Ministry of Labour and Social security, General Directorate of Turkish Employment Organization, Statistical yearbook 2005 available at <http://www.iskur.gov.tr>

Despite of some positive development trends of the labour market in the cooperation area they still remain low as compared to EU 25 countries. Respectively, further human resources development in the cooperation area is needed in the context of meeting the goals of the Renewed Lisbon Strategy.

2.5.2 Education and training

The general education system is well developed in the cooperation area. The process is bound with the existing network of educational institutions at all levels (primary, secondary and higher).

There are 367 educational institutions in the Bulgarian side of the cooperation area, of which 306 are general schools; 59 are special and vocational schools and 2 universities. There are 423 educational institutions in Turkish side of the border area of which 1 University, 59 vocational and technical secondary school, 46 general secondary schools, and 317 primary schools. As a result an optimal structure for ensuring the general education exists. Especially on the Turkish side the basic school enrolment level is higher than the national one.

The vocational training system is well developed in the programme area. It consists of different training providers presented by vocational training centres, chambers, NGOs etc. Both Bulgaria and Turkey has developed relevant legislative environment as well as provisions for further development.

Although the vocational training system is well developed, training demand amongst some population groups of the cooperation area is still low³⁰. In general labour force of the eligible area as a whole lacks modern professional competencies and is specialised in a narrow professional field, which predetermines its low mobility. The labour force lacks certain modern

²⁶ Source: For Bulgaria: Bulgarian National Employment agency statistics, www.az.government.bg. For Turkey: Household Labour Force Survey for 2006, www.turkstat.gov.tr. As provincial level data is not available, the given figure represent Turkish national long term unemployment rate,

²⁷ Source: Turkish Statistical Institute, Household Labour Force Survey for 2006, Press release No 33, March 6th 2007, www.turkstat.gov.tr. The presented data is average for NUTS II Level TR 21 (Edirne, Tekirdag, Kirklareli)

²⁸ The presented data is average for NUTS II Level TR 21 (Edirne, Tekirdag, Kirklareli)

²⁹ The presented data is average for NUTS II Level TR 21 (Edirne, Tekirdag, Kirklareli)

³⁰ Sources: For Bulgaria: Bulgarian National Employment Agency analyses, www.az.government.bg. For Turkey: Ministry of Labour and Social security, General Directorate of Turkish Employment Organization, Statistical yearbook 2005, <http://www.iskur.gov.tr>

basic skills, mainly inter-disciplinary and inter-professional skills and knowledge, as well as essential qualifications. There is a shortage of skilled labour in the field of new technologies in manufacturing and services, tourism and leisure activities. Entrepreneurial skills are also underdeveloped.

The educational level and professional skills of the unemployed population are serious matters of concern. Accordingly high numbers of long-term and young unemployed people could be referred. Respectively the skills of these vulnerable groups are outdated and they could not match the labour market demands and expectations.

Moreover underdeveloped relationships within the chain education/training – business are some of the weaknesses of the co-operation area. With regards, further development of new and diversification of existed education and training opportunities in the context of common social-economic development could be a ground for co-operation in the core area.

2.6 Infrastructure

The cooperation area is served by all means of transport infrastructure. In terms of Pan-European Transport network it is directly served by Corridors № 4, № 8 and № 10 and indirectly - by Corridor № 9.

Map 3: Transport infrastructure





Corridor 4: Dresden/Nuremberg to Istanbul - crosses the cooperation area in of Haskovo district and Edirne and Kırklareli provinces;

Corridor 8: Durres-Tirana to Burgas - crosses the programme area between Yambol and Burgas districts;

Corridor 9: Helsinki to Alexandropolis - crosses the programme area in the district of Haskovo and passing by the province of Edirne;

Corridor 10: Salzburg/Ljubljana to Tessaaloniki - crosses the programme area in the district of Haskovo.

Other international roads that impact the cooperation area are as follow:

Road E 87: Starts from Odessa in Ukraine, passes through Romania and Bulgaria, enters Turkey and stretches up to Antalya. In the Border Region it goes through Burgas, Tzarevo, Malko Turnovo, Dereköy, Kırklareli and Babaeski.

Road E 80: Relays Turkey with the rest of Europe and is directly linked with the road infrastructure of Edirne and Kırklareli provinces.

Road D 100: Connects Istanbul to Edirne and Bulgaria

Also the Region is directly served by two Bulgarian National Transport Corridors - "Black Sea" (border crossing Durankulak–Varna–Burgas–Malko Turnovo) leading towards the province of Kırklareli, and the second corridor (Silistra–Shoumen–Yambol–Elhovo–Lesovo–border crossing) leading towards the province of Edirne.

In terms of other means of *transport*, the cooperation area is also served by - existing railway transport infrastructure as well as one operational international airport and one operational international sea port (Town of Burgas). Istanbul International airport is the nearest to Turkish side of the cooperation area. There are 3 operating border-crossing points - Kapitan Andreevo – Kapikule (between Haskovo and Edirne province), Malko Turnovo – Dereköy (between Burgas district and Kırklareli province, Lesovo - Hamzabeyli (between Yambol district and Edirne province).

In terms of transport infrastructure the overall accessibility of the programme area is generally acceptable but the road infrastructure does not meet European criteria concerning travelling safety and comfort. Accordingly future improvements for common benefit of the cooperation area are needed.

All towns and most of the villages in the programme area are connected with the national and the international automatic *communication network*. There are possibilities for improvements of the existing networks, introducing digital techniques and building of optic transmission systems. Currently International long-distance connections between Bulgaria and Turkey are available via transit optical cable system that connects Haskovo with Edirne. The infrastructure for telecommunication applications is at satisfactory level in the main towns but still to be improved in the rest of the programme area.

The *public water supply infrastructure* serves 99.6% of the population of the Bulgarian side and 92% of the population of the Turkish side of the programme area. It terms of quality of this service there are still some problems with water loss during transport on Bulgarian side of the cooperation area.

On Bulgarian side, only 52.6% of the population of Burgas District is served by *wastewater treatment plants (WWTP)*. Under ISPA Programme WWTP for municipalities of Haskovo and Dimitrovgrad are still under construction. On Turkish side, only some of the industrial enterprises in Edirne Province have WWTP³¹. Some other WWTP for enterprises are under construction. Therefore ranges of improvements for building a reliable wastewater treatment cycle in the programme area are still needed.

The *energy infrastructure* in the region is well developed to meet the existing local needs. Natural gas is increasingly becoming a good alternative for cheaper and environmentally-

³¹ Source: Kırklareli Province Environmental Report 2005



friendly energy source for both households and industry. The construction of the gas distribution networks in the major centres of the region is already in progress.

2.7 Environment

Air: Ambient air conditions in the CBC region are comparatively good. The main reasons for air pollution are emissions of fuel used in industry and for households heating and exhaust gases of vehicles. Along with excellent quality of the air in the mountain area “hot spots” are registered (for example, in Bulgarian town of Dimitrovgrad, three major polluters of the air and water are placed – nitrogen plant “Neochim”, thermo-electric power station “Maritsa-3”, and cement plant “Vulkan”). According to the national legislation of both countries most of the industrial enterprises are required to be equipped with the necessary air purification facilities. In general for the past several years, the index of general air contamination is decreasing for both sides of the co-operation area¹⁰.

Water: According to the collected data, ecological situation of surface waters is also comparatively good. A major cause for pollution of waters in the region is the lack of sewerage systems for the majority of small and middle sized municipalities. Ground waters are polluted in some areas mainly with nitrates, phosphates, etc. On the Turkish side main receiving bodies of the wastewaters are lakes and rivers³². In Kırklareli province some problems with presence of nitrates, iron, manganese, phosphates and others, above norms have occurred³³. In Edirne Province the number of wastewater treatment plants is increasing³⁴. Water pollution in the cross border rivers Maritca/Meriç and Tundja/Tunca is also high. As the co-operation area is crossed by rivers, joint *water and flood risk management* offers an excellent opportunity for co-operation. Another opportunity could be improvements for building a reliable treatment cycle of the wastewaters.

Soils: The status of soils in the CBC area is adequate. A serious soil destruction phenomenon – the erosion has occurred in the past several years. About 655 000 hectares in Kırklareli are under risk. Also the river Rezovska/Revze determines soil erosion phenomena that could become critical. Soil erosion occurs in the coastal and partly in forested areas. Restricted usage of pesticides, “green” agriculture and farming, control over the air and water pollutions, etc. measures led to a tendency of improving of ecological situation during the last years. Diminishing of soil erosion in the region could be an area for cooperation.

Solid waste treatment cycle in the area does not meet acceptable standards. In most of the settlements on Bulgarian side are organized solid waste disposal places, but the solid waste is not collected separately. In some small rural municipalities and mainly in villages uncontrolled solid waste disposal is a serious problem. On the Turkish side in some of the settlements no organized solid waste disposal places or solid waste treatment plants exist. Several of the available solid waste disposals in bigger settlements have already exhausted their capacity. This is a reason for serious problems especially in summer months³⁵. Accordingly, improvements for building a reliable solid waste treatment cycle in the programme area are needed.

Biological Diversity: The high abundance of flora and fauna species and variety of habitats and ecosystems can be easily adversely affected by chaotic economic activities. Because of anthropogenic pressure, some of endemic species became extinct during recent decades. Biodiversity of the region also includes a gene fond used for economic and other purposes. Established protected areas and further plans for delineation of new ones are the key to conservation and preservation of the richness of the region.

³² Source: Turkish Statistical Institute, 2004 Municipal wastewater statistics, www.turkstat.gov.tr

³³ Source: Kırklareli Province Environmental Report 2005

³⁴ Source: Edirne Province Environmental Report 2005

³⁵ Source: Edirne Province Environmental Report 2005; Kırklareli Province Environmental Report 2005



Natural Reserves

A strong focus to preservation of the environment is an important part of the development strategies of both countries.

Bulgaria has traditions in nature conservation and management. Obeying national and international legislation, and stakeholder interest, management plans for Bulgaria's protected areas seek to ensure biodiversity conservation in addition to cultural and spiritual values. In the CBC region on Bulgarian side the *Strandja Nature Park* is located. It is the largest protected area in Bulgaria (115,837.8 hectares). The Park is characterized by rich biodiversity and availability of variety of habitats and ecosystems. Flora and fauna include considerable amounts of endemic species. Strandja Nature Park includes the oldest protected area in Bulgaria - Silkosia reserve (established 1931). Four other reserves - Lopushna/Uzunbudzhak, Vitonovo, Sredoka and Tisovitsa belong to the park. Since 1977 Lopushna/Uzunbudzhak is declared as biosphere reserve and is a part of the UNESCO Worldwide network of biosphere reserves with a global significance "Man and biosphere"³⁶. Strandja Nature Park also includes other 12 protected areas and a number of archaeological and natural monuments. In addition, it belongs to the European network of protected areas - NATURA 2000. An important step in terms of promotion of sustainable development and environmental protection in the Strandja/Yildiz Mountain has been made by development of two projects under Phare Programme (FMA 2005 and 2006). Those activities are expected to strengthen the cross border cooperation by protection and coordinated management of the unique environment, natural and cultural resources and thus contributing to the region's sustainable economic growth. Strandja/Yildiz area offers excellent opportunities for co-operation between the two countries for protecting the quality of the environment and engaging in joint works regarding natural resources.

Turkey also has traditions of nature conservation and a history in defining of protected areas. The nature conservation activities have been systematically promoted following the norms of national and international legislation. Turkey gets some important steps on reforming and changing the approaches to management of the protected areas such as gap analysis, implementation programs taking into account economic, social, cultural and regional requirements. In terms of sustainability of biodiversity technical studies are being carried out including the Project "Capacity Building in the Field of Environment for Turkey, Component 3: Nature, Twinning Assistance in the Implementation Birds & Habitats & the CITES Convention (TR0203-03.3/1)" financed under 2002 EU Pre-Accession Financial Assistance and in the scope of this project technical studies for drafting a Nature Protection Law are undertaken. Technical studies on the assessment of some bird species have been carried out under the Project "Capacity Building in the Field of Environment for Turkey, Component 3: Nature (TR0203-03.3)" financed under 2002 EU Pre-Accession Financial Assistance.³⁷ One of the most important protected areas in Turkey is *Gala Lake National Park*. It is situated on the Turkish side of cooperation area in Edirne Province. The established management plan³⁸ for Gala Lake National Park is as an example, for the implementation of a methodology for wetlands management. Two other protected areas are situated on the Turkish side in Kırklareli Province – Kasatura Korfezi Nature Reserve and Saka Lake Nature Reserve³⁹. The forest of Kasatura Korfezi Nature Reserve contains the only black pine grove in the Turkish Thrace/Trakya Region, and is a unique forest ecosystem with many animal and plant species.

There are many opportunities for jointly preservation of biodiversity lying along the border. Initiatives for the development of common projects for Maritsa/Meriç/Evros between Turkey, Bulgaria and Greece and for Strandja/Yıldız Mountains between Turkey and Bulgaria are good examples⁴⁰. In general sustainable use of natural resources so to reduce the environmental

³⁶ UNESCO's The Man and the Biosphere Programme (MAB) is established in 1970 and proposes an interdisciplinary research agenda and capacity building aiming to improve the relationship of people with their environment globally: <http://www.unesco.org/mab>

³⁷ Source: Written questions from the European Commission and related answers of Turkey on CHAPTER 27: ENVIRONMENT, <http://www.abgs.gov.tr/indexen.html>

³⁸ The plan was developed with the support of UNESCO's The Man and the Biosphere Programme (MAB)

³⁹ Ref: Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Turkey, <http://goturkey.kultur.gov.tr/>

⁴⁰ Ref: http://www.unesco.org/mab/icc/countryRep/E_Turkey.pdf



impact will be a decisive factor in helping the cooperation area achieve sustainable development and to improve the quality of life. Preservation of protected areas offers a solid ground for cooperation. This important field of cooperation between two countries is fully in compliance with EU Strategy on the Sustainable Use of Natural Resources.⁴¹

2.8 Culture

The rich, unique and diverse culture is one of the biggest strengths of the programme cooperation area. Culture could easily be utilized as a tool that forms the basis for prosperous cross border cooperation. The cultural heritage presents an important potential for cross border development from the social, economic and environmental aspect. It can also provide employment possibilities in various fields, such as audio-visual products, traditional handicrafts and trade, though special focus should be placed to development of market oriented products and services to ensure sustainability of such initiatives.

A potential for development and implementation of joint cross-border programmes in the field of scientific research, archaeological excavation, preservation and exploitation of ancient settlements for the benefit of local communities and external visitors in the cooperation area exists. There already are some exchanges across the border, partly led by public institutions, partly by other associations. These contacts can however be intensified thus creating a basis for more active cross-border cooperation. The cultural heritage is an important asset of co-operation area. Accordingly this could be a ground for the development of joint tourism routes, joint studies, promotion and advertising, joint actions for protection and intercultural exchange, etc.

Potential for cooperation is also in the field of arts and creative industries (including services related to cultural heritage, theatre and dance, music, production of CDs, publishing, visual arts, cultural tourism, education in the field of arts, design, etc.). Use of modern technologies provides potential for creation of innovative products and services.

The institutional base for cooperation in the field of culture is very strong in the programme area. Traditional cultural organizations such as libraries, museums, community and cultural centres, etc., have a long-lasting presence and are well recognised by local communities.

On Bulgarian side of cooperation area, there are 8 theatres, 18 museums and 5 libraries. In Bulgaria, Chitalishta (community centres) are a unique phenomenon dated from the times of Bulgarian Renaissance in XIX century. Nowadays, 313 community centres on Bulgarian side of the cooperation area are focal points of cultural and community-based initiatives. There is a potential for development of joint projects between community centres in Bulgaria and NGOs in Turkey in the area of creative industries, exchange of experience, good practices, etc. On Turkish side of the programme area there are 1 theatre, 3 museums and 23 libraries.

Accordingly culture presents an important potential that can contribute to good neighbourhood relations development. On the other hand, culture should also be understood as a potential generator of new products and employment possibilities in connection to other sectors.

2.9 Local and regional development

In Bulgaria, the process of regional development policy-making is governed by the Regional Development Law of February 2004⁴². Regional policy-making involves the efforts of a broad range of actors, who can be loosely split into three main groups, separated on the basis of their position with respect to state power and of the level of their involvement. The structure of

⁴¹ Ref: <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/natres/>

⁴² The Law is promulgated in State Gazette No.14/ 20.02.2004, last amended 2006



the actors follows the administrative division of the country. The main units of local self government in Bulgaria are the 264 municipalities that are included in 28 districts and 6 planning regions of the country.

The actors who represent state power in the process are two main types. The first type encompasses the actors with greatest importance in the process. They can be found in both the legislative and executive branches of power, at the central, regional, and local levels. More concretely, the national legislature's standing committee on Local Self-Government, Regional Policy and Urban Development is the main rule-maker. At the local level, the rule-making bodies are the municipal councils at the 264 Bulgarian municipalities. In the executive branch, the main actors are the Minister of Regional Development and Public Works, the District Governors, the Regional Development Councils and municipal Mayors. Regional Development Councils formulates policies at the planning region level.

Second type actors, that are relevant for regional policy-making in Bulgaria, are various ministers and state agencies. Their focus is not specifically on regional development and policy-making, but their area of activity is closely related to the processes in the regions by affecting the structure of economic activity, the local infrastructure, the standards of living conditions, and the availability of funding for different programmes and projects.

The third broad group of actors in the process of regional policy-making includes the ones who represent the civil society and other entities. Besides the citizens in general, who face the usual collective action challenges, there are the non-government organizations as representatives of specific interests of the citizens and followers of specific agendas in the process of regional policy-making, for example Regional Development Agencies, environmental groups, NGOs and other. Another group of representatives of the civil society are the business organizations, which can be local branches of national or international business organizations (the Bulgarian Industrial Association, the Bulgarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, etc) as well as networks of local business support centres and business incubators etc. Finally, the group of non-state actors includes neighbouring cross border regions, whose existence expands the opportunities for regional development.

In Turkey⁴³, at the local level the Governance system has three administrative levels; province, county and town. Provinces and counties have a two-tier governance system. Governors appointed by central government⁴⁴ as the first tier. The second tier is comprised of the chairmen of municipalities and municipal councils voted in at local elections for a five-year period. Local councils and chairmen are responsible for physical planning, infrastructure and, to some extent, economic and social development in collaboration with the agents of central departments operating under the provincial governor. As far as local public services are concerned, ministries⁴⁵ having branches or representatives at the provincial level (and, in some cases, at the regional level) are functioning independently on the basis of their own schedule and budget.

With the adoption and enactment of the Law on Establishment of Development Agencies (DAs)⁴⁶ special regional development entities at NUTS II level equivalents are currently in process of establishment. This is a follow up of a process that has started in 2002 when the Turkish territory has been classified into 12 NUTS I, 26 NUTS II and 81 NUTS III level equivalents for the purposes of more efficient implementation and analysis of regional development policies and ensuring harmonization with the EU⁴⁷.

⁴³ The below text is based on the written questions from the European Commission in the screening process of and related answers given of Republic of Turkey, <http://www.abgs.gov.tr/indexen.html>

⁴⁴ Provincial governors require the approval of the Cabinet and afterwards the President while county governors are appointed by the Ministry of the Interior.

⁴⁵ The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Transportation, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism and the Ministry of Public Works and Settlement.

⁴⁶ Republic of Turkey, Law No. 5449 (Official Gazette: 8 February 2006, no 26074),

⁴⁷ Republic of Turkey, Decision of the Council of Ministers No. 2002/4720 (Official Gazette: 22 September 2002 no. 24884).



Accordingly, NUTS II level equivalents became main territorial level for the preparation of Regional Development Plans, Regional Development Programmes and for the establishment of the DAs as the possible programme management units.

The Law on the Establishment and Duties of the Development agencies defines the role of the DAs in terms of regional development. Accordingly, the DAs shall be organized for the purpose of accelerating regional development, ensuring its sustainability and reducing inter-regional and intra-regional development disparities in accordance with the principles and policies set in the National Development Plans and Programmes through enhancing the cooperation among public sector, private sector and NGOs, ensuring the efficient and appropriate utilization of resources and stimulating local potential. One of the main duties and competences of the Development agencies is to promote activities related to bilateral or multilateral international programmes. Thus this is clear evidence that potential for strengthening of cross border collaboration on local levels exists.

The need for strong and sustainable partnerships is of great importance for the future project development and implementation and for the development of cross-border co-operation in many fields. The above presented local and regional development actors of both sides of the cooperation area are an evidence for opportunities for further development of cross border partnerships of mutual interest. Some very good examples for establishment of cross border linkages and exchange of good practices between the local stakeholders exist. For example clear evidence is the financed under Phare Programme 2004 Joint Small Project Fund projects. There are also good examples for cooperation between Chambers of Commerce and Industry in cooperation area as well.

3 SWOT-ANALYSIS OF THE CO-OPERATION AREA

The key strengths, weaknesses opportunities and threats (SWOT) of the cross border co-operation area have been identified through analysis of the statistical data, existing regional and national development plans and strategies and by participation of the key stakeholders at local, regional, and national levels. Also regional studies and recent direct information of competent authorities and international institutions have been taken into consideration as well as the assessment of the actors involved. Thus the SWOT analysis offers a wider view than the statistics and analyses of the programme area description.

In drafting of the SWOT analysis the following main rules were applied:

- Specially consider those elements that are connected to the common constraints and interactions in the cooperation area;
- Focus on the issues, that can be observed in the cooperation area, in cross border relations and regional development, and specially on those that show local factors and roots and then can be addressed using or involving local resources;
- Concentrate on most frequent elements observed in the cooperation area, taking into account that some issues can be relevant only in a part of the eligible area, and therefore can represent a second level of priority;
- Make a ranking of the topics identified in each category, in order to focus on the most relevant, for the future definition of most relevant objectives and priorities;
- Limit to the most relevant and frequently observed elements, in order to obtain in each part of the SWOT a restricted set of crucial elements



On the basis of the above mentioned criteria, the following SWOT matrix has been developed by the partner countries:

Field	Strengths	Weaknesses
Geography	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic geographical location between Europe, the Middle East and Asia Favourable natural, geo-morphologic and climatic conditions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peripheral location of the border regions within the two states, remote from the administrative centres of the countries Floods caused by Tundja/Tunca and Maritza/Meric Rivers
Demography	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The traditionally good relations among people of the two neighbouring countries form a basis of continuing cross-border cooperation of mutual interest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Worsened demographic indicators in the rural areas The large proportion of young population migrating out of the programming area; Well educated people are migrating to more developed urban areas
Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General increase of the main economic development indicators during the past several years Access to existing industrial infrastructure Access to newly developed Industrial sites Increased economic activity and improvement of quantification parameters of SMEs (increased number of employees, production and services) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High disparity of the co-operation area with the European union economic development trends Segmentation of the local economy, mono-sector and marginal nature Lack of mutual recognition of the market beyond the border and limited business information flow Lack of general SMEs' competitiveness Poor co-ordination between the two countries in terms of development or diversification of joint tourist products and services in the co-operation area Seasonal character is serious weaknesses of tourism at the Bulgarian side Low level of local entrepreneurship initiative
Labour market, education and training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased employment and activity rates Access of population to all levels of education Workforce with comparatively low pay expectations Good adult education system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discrepancy between existing professional qualification of the labour force and labour market demands and expectations Low mobility of the workforce High unemployment rate of vulnerable groups at the labour market Low level of adaptability and employability of people disadvantaged at the labour market
Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic location within the international transport network (Trans-European Transport corridors 4, 8, 9 and 10) Existence of basic transport infrastructure Availability of telecommunication services in the main cities Existence of good energy infrastructure Existence of three, well functioning Border Check Points 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inefficient road infrastructure in the BG part of the area Lack of ICT infrastructure in rural areas Inappropriate Water and Sewage (W&S) infrastructure and waste of drinking waters Inefficient Wastewaters treatment system in the co-operation area Inefficient solid waste treatment system in the co-operation area



Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moderately good environmental conditions • Protected areas (national and nature parks, reserves) with well-preserved unique bio-diversity and unique eco-systems • Abundance of natural resources that are good base for tourism and recreation initiatives development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local environment pollution • Inefficient cooperation in management of natural resources and inadequate coordination for environment protection purposes • No separate waste collection in both sides of co-operation area • Weakness of environmental consciousness
Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The rich, unique and diverse culture and traditions • Rich and unique cultural and historical heritage • Traditionally good relations between the people of the two countries • The co-operation area – a mosaic of rich historical and cultural heritage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low integration of the cultural heritage in the tourist product development • Inefficient cooperation in management of historical and cultural heritage resources
Local and Regional Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience in CBC cooperation in different levels • Good bilateral relations • Experience in implementation of common programmes and joint projects • On-going decentralization process that tends to leave more economic autonomy to the local administrations and their budgets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited administrative capacity and utilisation capacity at local level • Insufficiently developed cooperation within the cross-border region



Field	Opportunities	Threats
Geography	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accelerated integration opportunities in the economic and political space of EU Existing natural potential for development and diversification of different forms of tourism. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A trend of overall development of rural areas lagging behind, due to their peripheral and isolated location
Demography	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunities for improvement of the quality of life in the co-operation area based on appropriate and specific development measures Opportunities to develop potentials of co-operation area so to attract and detain qualified human resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further depopulation of the co-operation area Aging of the population at the Bulgarian side of co-operation area
Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunities for macroeconomic stability and economic growth Good opportunities for foreign investment Potential for improvement of quality characteristics of SMEs development based on local resources and regional competitive advantages, SMEs development and support could lead to further economic development of the co-operation area Abundance of cultural landmarks and natural resources is a precondition for the diversification of the currently available tourist products and services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The economy growth rates still remain insufficient for overcoming the considerable lagging behind of the Bulgaria- Turkey cross- border co-operation area as compared to the EU average values Low rate of adaptability and high level of competition to the common European market Presence of inter-regional economic disparities mainly between urban and rural areas Ongoing process of adaptability to the market economy on Bulgarian side
Labour market, education and training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promotion of the renewed European Union Lisbon Strategy and development of Lifelong Learning Opportunities Opportunities for cross-border labour market initiatives and exchange of know-how between related institutions Opportunities for cooperation among the educational institutions across the border Opportunities for cooperation between educational and training institutions and business community Development of crafts training can make contribution to tourism development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unemployment drives migration to other regions or abroad The vocational education is not labor market demands oriented Poor employment opportunities in the rural areas could lead to concentration of business activities and respective employment opportunities in the big towns mainly. Limited improvement of the educational system, which does not correspond to the dynamically changing economy and labour market
Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunities for development of small scale transport related infrastructure for the purposes of improvement of the safety standards and comfort during travelling Support activities due to development and construction of wastewaters and solid waste treatment facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The lack of investments in infrastructure facilities may lead to increase in the rate of isolation in the cross-border co-operation area;



Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross-border cooperation for sustainable use and management of natural resources of mutual interest • Possibilities for better public awareness in terms of environment protection measures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chaotic use of natural resources • Deterioration of bio-diversity • Inefficiency in water resources management and flood protection interventions • Soil erosion in the Sakar/Yildiz Mountain • Unauthorised construction on the Bulgarian part of the Black Sea coast line
Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The cultural and historical heritage, both movable and immovable, presents an important potential for cross border development from the social, economic and environmental aspect ▪ Opportunities for development of economically sustainable cultural products and services based on the demand for new tourist destinations and experience ▪ Culture as a potential generator of new products and employment possibilities in connection with other sectors ▪ Improvement of the opportunities for organising of variety joint cultural activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Low integration of the cultural and historical heritage in the tourist product development
Local and Regional Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of mechanisms for cross-border institutional support and sharing of good practices • Opportunities for further development of partnerships between the civil society and the public administration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local authorities fail to absorb for EU funds for cooperation • Different national laws and regulations in Bulgaria and Turkey



4 PREVIOUS CROSS-BORDER ACTIVITIES

4.1 Cross border activities until 2006

Cross border cooperation activities between Bulgaria and Turkey financially supported by the grants from European Community have been launched in 2003. Over the period of 2003-2006 the financial support has been stipulated by three Financing Memoranda signed between the Government of the Republic of Bulgaria and the European Commission in 2003, 2004, 2005 respectively and implemented through the corresponding CBC programmes, i.e.,

- External Border Initiative Programme 2003 financed “people to people” activities between Bulgaria and Turkey. The JSPF for 2003 was launched as a pilot action to introduce the 2004-2006 CBC programme between the two countries.
- Phare Cross Border Co-operation Programme between Bulgaria and Turkey in 2004 (Programme no. BG 2004/016-715) with the EC grant of 6 million euro (3 MEUR per country) that was available for project contracting until 30 November 2006;
- Phare Cross Border Co-operation Programme between the Republic of Bulgaria and Turkey in 2005 (Programme no. BG 2005/017-453) with the EC grant of 10 million euro (5 MEUR per country) that will be available for project contracting until 30 November 2007;

Preparation of this CBC Programme has taken into account that it will be implemented in parallel with two financed cross-border programmes as above mentioned.

The table below shows the state of projects for 2003 and 2005

Year	CRIS Number/ Title of the project	Project purpose	Available EU funds (€)	Number of applicants	Number of contracts	Total amount of EU funds within the contracts (€)
2003	JSPF - BG 2003/ 005-632.02.01	People to people actions aim at encouraging and supporting the establishment or further development of sustainable co-operation networks between local and regional stakeholders in the border region	500000 CfP: 465000	79	13	451511
	JSPF – TR 2003/ 0305.03		500000 CfP: 465000	29	11	456190
2004	JSPF – BG 2004/ 016-715-02.01	People to people actions aim at encouraging and supporting the establishment or further development of sustainable co-operation networks between local and regional stakeholders in the border region	500000 CfP: 465000		12	440596
	JSPF – TR 2004/ 0405.04		500000 CfP: 465000	25	13	462646
	BG -Construction of road Malko Tarnovo – Border Crossing checkpoint with Turkey	To facilitate the heavy traffic flow between Bulgaria and Turkey through the existing Border Crossing Check Point at Malko Tarnovo	2500000 2315000 173000 12000	N/A	TOTAL Works Supervision TA	2490000 2315000 163000 12000



	TR 2004/ 0405.03 Restoration of the Ekmekçizade Caravanserai in Edirne	To encourage the intensification of cross-border cultural and economic exchanges and relations by providing a venue for joint Turkish and Bulgarian cultural events, business forums, congresses, seminars, visits by commercial delegations, trade fairs and other bi-lateral events	2500000	N/A	TOTAL	1942503
2005	JSPF – BG 2005/ 017-453.02.01	People to people actions aim at encouraging and supporting the establishment or further development of sustainable co-operation networks between local and regional stakeholders in the border region	500000 CfP: 465000	61	Ongoing evaluation	
	500000 CfP: 465000		33	Ongoing evaluation		
	BG 2005/ 017-453.01.01 Capacity Improvement for Flood Forecasting in the BG-TR CBC Region	To strengthen the capacity for monitoring, timely detection and early warning of flood phenomena, and implement flood protection measures in the BG/TR border area.	2000000	Preparation of Tender dossier		
	BG 2005/017-453.01.02 Promotion of sustainable development in the Strandja/Yildiz Mountain area	The project purpose is to promote sustainable development in Strandja/Yildiz Mountain through protecting natural resources, creation of "green networks" and "green activities", and thus contributing to the region's sustainable economic growth.	2000000	34	Ongoing evaluation	

4.2 Lessons learned

The registered interest within this programme was taken into consideration when identifying the new priority areas over the preparation of the CBC Programme Bulgaria – Turkey 2007-2013 and guides towards the needs to develop further all priorities set in the Joint Programming Document Bulgaria – Turkey 2004-2006.

The following specific measures have been supported

Priority 1: Cross-Border Infrastructure

Measure 1.1: Development and modernisation of cross-border infrastructures

Priority 2: Protection, improvement and management of the Environment

Measure 2.1: Integrated management and protection of waters

Measure 2.2: Protection and sustainable development of natural resources and biodiversity

Measure 2.3: Co-operation in case of natural calamities

Priority 3: People to people actions

The main conclusions that could be derived as a result of programming and implementation of the previous Programmes are as follow:

- The positive experiences made by the two neighbour countries are the fundamental towards successful cross-border cooperation;
- Experience gathered in cross-border co-operation until 2006 shows improvement of capacities of the regional and local structures in the context of preparation for the period after accession in Bulgaria;



- The project quality has improved. This process also strengthened the absorption capacities of the border region;
- Numerous contacts at local levels were developed into partnerships aiming at continuous cooperation. Especially the Phare Small Projects Fund has assisted such development;
- The projects implemented under the previous Programme have led to a multitude of positive impacts and contributed to the development of the border area and the strengthening of bilateral cooperation structures;
- There was a strong demand for cross-border projects, but as the available funds were very limited, a high number of eligible project proposals were not supported;
- Applications came from municipalities, education and training institutions, and smaller institutions were more than expected.

Some critical issues and difficulties in programming and especially in implementation of the cross-border cooperation programme were as follows:

- There were some problems and difficulties in implementation as the procedures are being implemented for the first time on both sides of the border;
- Different regulations regarding financing

5 GENERAL PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES AND CO-OPERATION STRATEGY

5.1 Strategic Premises

The proposed strategy is an evolution of the strategy underpinning in the Joint Programming Document Bulgaria – Turkey 2004-2006. Besides the strategy has been drawn up within a clear framework established by the following important elements:

Bulgaria joined the European Union at the beginning of the programming period, and the border between two countries became external EU border;

The guidance from the European Commission concerning the preparation of Programmes under the European Territorial Co-operation Objective, and the provisions of Community Strategic Guidelines for 2007-2013 and the Lisbon Agenda;

Relevant key documents of Republic of Bulgaria and Republic of Turkey at the national, regional and local levels (NSRF respectively MIPD and other as described below in the section 8 "Correspondence with other EU and national programmes")

Within this CBC programme the detailed strategy builds upon the obstacles and weaknesses outlined in the analysis of the situation in the co-operation area as set out above, including the SWOT analysis, and it is designed to respond to the specific challenges faced in co-operation area. Moreover, as outlined above, the Strategy as a whole has been developed on the basis of consultation with, and involvement of key stakeholders at all levels.

In this context it must be noted that the CBC Programme has been prepared in the context of imperfect quantitative statistical data in relation to certain areas of activity. As it is pointed out above, such data is not currently gathered, especially at the NUTS III level equivalents in Turkey. Moreover, at the time of preparing the programme there has been relatively little possibility to draw lessons from previous co-operation activities in the cooperation area, as it is still too early in the implementation process to draw clear conclusions in relation to the current status of cross border co-operation initiative.

The strategy for co-operation in the eligible area is set within the framework of the specific financial resources available to the Bulgaria-Turkey cross-border co-operation area via the Co-operation programme. In addition, it is recognised that all territorial units within the co-



operation area are also eligible for support under national and regional development programmes supported via other financial sources. In this context, the CBC Programme is targeted at maximising the specific value that can be added within the described framework.

The strategy will thus focus on the key challenges as identified in the regional analysis, SWOT and the responses that are available to address problems that exist within the participating districts and provinces. The responses adopted will be those that are most appropriately addressed via the CBC programme. These are:

- Tackling the lack of competitiveness in the socio-economic development of the co-operation area as compared to EU development levels;
- Facing with the common challenges in the environment and nature protection as well as in specific aspects of readiness in relation to cross-border emergency situations.

5.2 Strategic objectives

The **Overall Strategic Goal** of CBC Programme is to achieve balanced sustainable development build upon the key strengths of the Bulgaria-Turkey cross-border co-operation area in contribution to stronger European co-operation and integrity.

The CBC Programme will work towards its Overall Strategic Goal by pursuing interventions in the co-operation area to achieve the following **specific objectives**:

- Boost sustainable economic development in co-operation area build on the comparative advantages
- Improve the overall social development and promote social cohesion among people and communities
- Improve the quality of life by efficiently use of common natural resources as well as protection of natural, cultural and historical heritage values

The three specific objectives of the programme are expected to produce major impacts, all related to the different potentials characterising the border area:

Social impact:

- Improvement of standard of living
- Decrease in the unemployment

Economic impact:

- Contribution to local economies
- Stimulation of infrastructure investment

The feedbacks gathered within the regional meetings on the elaboration of the SWOT analysis show that the final programme beneficiaries give equal priority to all the priority issues, namely:

- Infrastructure;
- Economy;
- Environment;
- Social sphere;
- People to people actions.

Having in mind the limited funds available to the programme and the comparatively long period for its implementation, the partners and stakeholders from both Bulgaria and Turkey suggest that thematic priorities axes should be elaborated in a way so to encompass all possible areas of intervention eligible for support within the programme.



Each of the development areas (economic, social, cultural, environmental) represent an integral part of the term: “sustainable development” which corresponds to the overall strategic goal of the CBC Programme. The issues of sustainable development on other hand shall be addressed with an integrated approach, as the limited funds will not allow for special attention and separate funds to be spent for each issue.

Uniting all the possible intervention areas under the priority axes will allow for projects that prove integrated approach and complexity of the benefits in favour of balanced sustainable development of the cross-border area.

5.3 Priorities and spheres of intervention

In the context of the analysis presented above and in the framework of the strategic objectives of the CBC Programme, a total of three (3) priority axes have been selected for intervention.

PRIORITY AXIS 1 – SUSTAINABLE SOCIAL & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The overall objective of this Priority axis is to increase the overall competitiveness of the cross border economy and to improve social development and social cohesion.

Spheres of intervention within Priority Axis 1

Measure 1.1: Improvement of the social development and social cohesion links

- Human resources development in the context of meeting the goals of the Renewed Lisbon Strategy - promotion of the European Lifelong Learning Concept through a variety of joint cross border social initiatives and links such as development of joint training products and implementation of joint training and educational activities; targeted activities for improvement of skills of vulnerable groups so to match the labour market demands and requirements; transfer of know-how; development of networking channels between relevant institutions; and others;
- People-to-people collaboration projects: pilot actions and networking activities among local organisations and institutions by implementation of joint training and capacity-building in order to reinforce social and culture links, including actions to promote good practice in the less developed areas of the eligible co-operation area.

Measure 1.2: Economy Competitiveness increasing:

- Support schemes to facilitate cross border business development initiatives, economic contacts and entrepreneurship by improving the co-operation opportunities of mutual interest across the programming area. Such actions should focus but are not limited to the following key areas: partner-search, general business advice and training, PR activities and awareness raising about market development and conditions across the border, clustering opportunities, etc;
- Development and/or diversification of cross-border tourism and cultural, natural and historical heritage initiatives in order to promote the programming area as a unique destination; etc.

Measure 1.3: Infrastructural support for the improvement of the economic potential of the co-operation area

- Investments in improvement of small scale infrastructure;



- Elaboration of joint feasibility studies and performing of other preparatory work including elaboration of necessary documentation for investment activities with a cross border impact to apply for funding under different sources.

The **main beneficiaries** are:

- All levels of Local/Regional authorities;
- Associations of Local/Regional authorities and of other organisations;
- Regional offices and structures of central government institutions/ administrations;
- Euroregions and other joint cross border structures and institutions;
- Business support institutions and organisations - Chambers of commerce, industry and crafts; business incubators; business centres and others
- Social Partners;
- Institutions of labour market administration
- Tourist boards and associations;
- Educational and training institutions and organizations,
- NGOs;
- Community organisations and institutions involved in development of civil society and/or promotion of education, culture and sports.

PRIORITY AXIS 2 – IMPROVEMENT OF THE QUALITY OF LIFE

The overall objective of this Priority axis is to stipulate cooperation for protection of nature and specific fields of environment, protection of historical and cultural heritage as well as provision of assistance in emergency cases.

Spheres of intervention within Priority Axis 2

Measure 2.1: Protection of environment, nature and historical and cultural heritage

- Development of feasibility studies and other preparatory work including elaboration of necessary documentation for investment activities with clear cross border impact. A special focus will be given to preparation of projects related to improvement of environment and nature, emergency readiness, protection of historical and cultural heritage, for development of waste water treatment plants and solid waste infrastructure, cross border collaboration and joint activities and cooperative schemes for early warning and prevention of floods as well as water resources management;
- Investments in development of small-scale infrastructure with a clear cross-border effect for protection of natural, cultural and historical heritage, as well as for risk prevention.
- Restoration activities: Restoration of historical buildings and other forms of constructions; including survey, preparation of projects and construction.

Measure 2.2: Capacity building for sustainable use of natural resources, cultural and historical heritage

- Development and implementation of joint activities including information and awareness campaigns and exchange of know-how in the fields of environmental & nature protection, emergency readiness, protection of cultural and historical heritage;

The **main beneficiaries** are:

- All levels of Local/Regional authorities;
- Associations of Local/Regional authorities and of other organisations;
- Regional offices and structures of central government institutions/ administrations;
- Euroregions and other joint cross border structures and institutions;
- Educational and training institutions and organizations;



- Nature protection NGOs;
- Administrations of protected areas

PRIORITY AXIS 3 – TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The objective of this Priority axis is to provide effective and efficient administration and implementation of the CBC Programme.

Spheres of intervention within Priority Axis 3

Measure 3.1: Overall administration and evaluation of the Programme

- Support to Managing Authority and Joint Technical Secretariat for tasks related to preparation of the necessary documents, appraisal and selection of projects, monitoring and evaluation of activities, control and audit of the Programme;
- Daily allowances, travel accommodation costs covering the expenses for the Bulgarian and Turkish participants (representatives of MA, JTS, CA, AA, JMC, persons who are not directly involved, for example interpreters, drivers etc.) in events concerning the programme;
- Administrative costs concerning the JTS (Main and antennae) including rent of premises, repair works, furniture and equipment, expenditures for electricity, heating, phones, water, consumables etc
- Staff remuneration costs for the JTS (Main and JTS antennae)
- Support to Joint Monitoring Committee and any other structures involved in supervision of the Programme;
- Support to the Programme including ad-hoc, mid-term and ex-post evaluations;
- Elaboration of specific studies and surveys for the Programme;
- External expertise for development of programme implementation and monitoring procedures, information system for programme administration as well as assessment and first level control of projects;
- Organisation of capacity building exercises for Managing Authority and Joint Technical Secretariat (Main and JTS antennae) for development of know-how and skills in programme administration.

Measure 3.2: Publicity and communication

- Preparation, translation and dissemination of the Programme related information and publicity materials including but not limited to the programme website, official Programme documents, procedure manuals, bulletins, brochures, posters, etc.; as well as expenses for consumables as paper, files, folders, cases, diskettes, compact disks, etc.
- Organisation of public events as conferences, seminars, workshops, round table discussions, trainings for beneficiaries, networking and awareness-raising events, partner search forums etc. including rent of halls and equipment (audio-, video-, translation- equipment), expenses for interpreters, lecturers, trainers (should not be persons involved in the programme); expenses for coffee breaks, refreshments, business dinners and lunches for all participants in the events;
- Purchase of advertising materials as CDs, USBs, hats, bags, note books, folders etc. as well as expenses for publications in radio, TV and press

The **main target groups** are:

- Programme Managing Authority;
- Turkish National Authority
- Joint Programme Monitoring Committee;
- Joint Technical Secretariat (Main and JTS antennae);
- Assessors and controllers;



- All other structures/bodies related to development and implementation of the CBC Programme
- Programme beneficiaries.

Eligibility of expenditures

Eligibility rules laid down by participating countries and applicable to the cross-border programme will be part of the Description of management and control systems. The rules of eligibility of expenditures will be elaborated in accordance with the requirements of Articles 34 and 89 of the Commission Regulation (EC) No 718/2007 of 12 June 2007 implementing Council Regulation (EC) No 1085/2006 establishing an instrument for pre-accession assistance (IPA).

5.4 Horizontal themes and principles

The above described Overall strategic goal and Specific objectives are focused on the establishment of a sound basis for joint development of co-operation area. However, besides this the CBC Programme shall contribute to safeguarding and enhancing the balance concerning horizontal principles respected by all parties. By virtue of this approach, all interventions within the programme will respect the following horizontal themes and principles:

- Gender equality and equal opportunities
- Sustainable development
- Partnership
- Networking
- Innovation
- Good governance

5.4.1 Gender equality, equal opportunities and non-discrimination issues

Participation level of women in social and economic life is still lower than of men. The implementation of the measures according to the specific needs of women and men will be based on the European Union and national regulations aiming at equal opportunities.

In the framework of the CBC Programme an equal status of men and women will be observed and persons regarding to sex, race and origin will not be discriminated⁴⁸. The observance of the principle of equal chances for both sexes will be ensured during various stages of the programme implementation as well as the realization of the financial support from the funds. The principle will be also observed in the phase of defining the criteria for selection of projects. The policy aimed at promotion of equality of sex and prevention of discrimination will be screened throughout all stages of the programme and the realization of the project.

The programme will promote non-discrimination and address vulnerable groups as well as the inclusion and integration of the broader segments of the population.

5.4.2 Sustainable development

The improvement of quality of life is a crucial objective within the co-operation area, meaning quality of the environmental and natural resources, cultural and historical heritage values. In the framework of Priority Axis 2, many actions are addressing these objectives. In particular spheres of intervention in cross-border context regarding protection of natural resources, cultural and historical heritage (sustainable use of water, preservation of biodiversity, protection of cultural and historical values) as well as co-ordination of environmental protection measures (emergency management and readiness, risk prevention measures,) could be referred.

⁴⁸ Article 16 of Council Regulation 1083/2006 (11/07/2006)



Additionally in Priority Axis 1 sustainable development has its major reference to competitiveness in economic fields as issues and criteria of sustainability are crucial ones. Many opportunities to raise competitiveness are based on or linked with sustainable development. In practical implementation, issues of sustainability could play an important role in the field of joint business development and entrepreneurship projects, SMEs' projects, tourism projects and others.

At the level of project generation and project selection, many specific environmentally oriented criteria as proposed within the Strategic Environmental Assessment will be adopted, thus projects with a higher coherence with principles of sustainability will be implemented.

Project preparation (feasibility studies, preparatory, technical and detail design project works, etc) could be financed under this programme and should be prepared in line with the relevant environmental legislation, and the relevant sectoral directives (where applicable). The same applies to all investments in development of small-scale infrastructure activities and restoration works.

5.4.3 Partnership

The entire programme cycle, embracing the programme preparation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation alike, has been designed to ensure the active involvement of the relevant partners. As presented above, partners have been involved in the programming process, primarily through:

- Meetings of the Task Force;
- Consultation with the various partners;
- Consultations with Ministries and other related institutions
- Internet based consultation of the strategy.

The entire CBC Programme promotes the concept of a special form of partnership - cross-border partnership. Thus only joint projects of Bulgarian and Turkish partners can be supported. The application of the Lead partner principle also enhances partnership.

In addition, the implementation procedures and the structure and composition of the various institutions and bodies have all been designed to ensure balanced partnership of every relevant partner, from both counties, across the whole implementation process.

Finally, the promotion of the principle of partnership requires an active involvement of Civil Society (chambers of commerce, NGOs, etc), notably at the stage of CBC Programme design.

5.4.4 Networking

The networking is addressing the establishment of efficient and sustainable co-operation of different project actors. By this co-operation in particular a regular exchange of information, mutual exchange of experiences, involvement into cross-border events, and coordination of joint actions should be targeted. In order to create a sufficient number of sustainable networks also a pro-active approach in project development will be implemented and therefore sufficient project- and network development capacities have to be provided.

In the context of this programme networking is not regarded as a strategic field of action as such, but rather as an operative tool, which should be tailor-made for the specific requests of the respective projects, which may emerge. So the concrete targets of the networking actions will be defined and carried out within the individual projects.

This will contribute to the improvement of the quality of the co-operation and also the sustainability of the co-operation should exceed the life-time of the co-financed projects. Thus networking activities shall increase the efficiency and intensity of the partnership. Networking actions as part of a project expressively need a clear link to concrete project content and should contribute to the aims of the project.



The establishment of thematic, sector and cross sector networks and partnerships shall be supported to improve cross border project development and implementation in various fields, such as municipality cooperation, labour market, education and training, and others.

5.4.5 Innovation

Innovation in a wider sense in this CBC Programme will be regarded as a horizontal principle. Being faced with and aware of the European and global challenges there is a clear need to find a lot of new ways, new instruments and tools, new products, processes and even new partners. It is intended to gain innovative aspects in all proposed fields of actions and in particular at the project level.

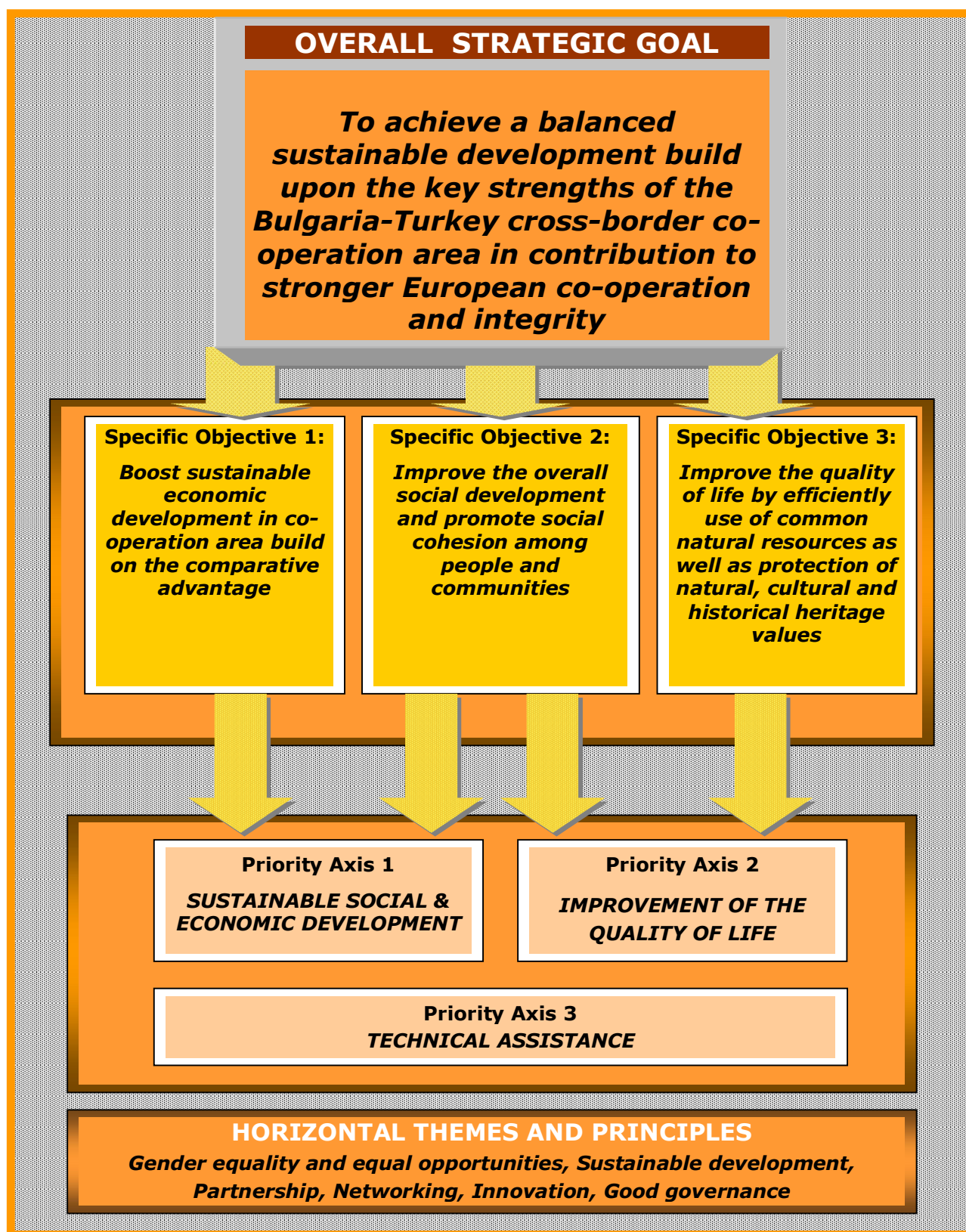
Innovation must be regarded as a permanent approach. Change of standard solutions should be encouraged by this CBC Programme. The common understanding of innovation within this programme is that of an innovative approach applicable to all measures and actions in their respective suitable manner. Thus, upgrading of existing solutions and making use of best practices should be addressed, in particular in the fields of marketing, development and co-operation processes and others. Networking with involvement of innovation oriented practices could also favour innovative results.

5.4.6 Good governance

Promotion and particular attention of good governance as a horizontal principle will be given with by development and implementation of all Priority Axes.



5.5 Objectives' logics





6 FINANCING PLAN

The division of financial support between priorities 2007-2013:

Priority	Community Funding		National Public Funding	Total Funding	Co- financing rate (%)
	a		b	c=a+b	a/c100 : b/c100
Priority 1	10 824 559	40.93 %	1 910 216	12 734 775	85 : 15
Priority 2	12 977 305	49.07 %	2 290 113	15 267 418	85 : 15
Priority 3	2 644 651	10 %	466 703	3 111 354	85 : 15
TOTAL	26446515	100 %	4667032	31113547	85 : 15

The national public funding (co-financing) for the Programme will be provided from the Bulgarian and Turkish state budgets.

The annual allocations of EURO are indicated below

Community Funding (€)	
2007	2194560
2008	2923821
2009	4098380
2010	4180348
2011	4263954
2012	4349234
2013	4436218
TOTAL	26446515



7 PROGRAMME INDICATORS

The aim of the indicators is to measure whether the CBC programme has achieved its strategic objectives or not and to measure the effectiveness of the chosen intervention. The choice of appropriate indicators is important for the programme and its adoption by the joint monitoring committee (JMC).

Two levels of indicators could be distinguished:

Horizontal level:

Indicators on the horizontal level comprise measurements referring to transversal principles that need to be upheld at all impact levels of the programme (short-term, medium-term and long-term).

Four key areas need to be evaluated:

- **Effectiveness** (whether the programme produces impacts corresponding to its vision, strategic objectives and overall design);
- **Sustainability** (whether the impacts will stay stable beyond the intervention period);
- **Efficiency** (whether the programme was the optimal solution to needs identified);
- **Relevance** (in both its correspondence to national planning, and its responsiveness to local needs).

Vertical level:

The achievement of specific objectives of the programme will be measured by specific impact, output and result including the cooperation indicators.

- **Impact indicators** refer to the consequences of the programme beyond the immediate effects. Impact indicators are linked to CBC OP's vision and strategic objectives. Two concepts of impact can be defined: Specific impacts are those effects occurring after a certain time period but which are, nonetheless, directly linked to the action taken and the direct beneficiaries. Global impacts are longer-term effects affecting a wider population. Their own nature explains the need to quantify impact indicators at Programme level.
- **Result indicators** relate to the direct and immediate effect on direct beneficiaries brought about by a programme on its direct beneficiaries. They are quantified on priority level. They provide information on changes to, for example, the behaviour, capacity or performance of beneficiaries. Result indicators are linked to specific objectives.
- **Output indicators** relate to activity. They can be quantified for measures and projects. The measure level is referred to a single or a group of activities directly related to the content of projects under that measure. They are linked to operational objectives/results of the programme.

By concentrating on a set of basic indicators a basis for the qualitative evaluation of projects and the programme impact as a whole should be possible.

In accordance with:

- 1) Working Document No. 2 – Indicative Guidelines on Evaluation Methods: Monitoring and Evaluation indicators, 2007-2013
- 2) The core indicators on cross-border co-operations,

the following key indicators are set at the level of the CBC Programme:



Table 6: Programme level key indicators

PRIORITY	MEASURE	OUTPUT	QUAN	RESULT	QUANT
PRIORITY AXIS 1 – SUSTAINABLE SOCIAL & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	1.1: Improvement of the social development and social cohesion links	Joint cooperation projects on development of skills and knowledge	15	Increased number of social and cohesion links	4 %
		Training places created	4		
		People participating in training	500		
		People with enhanced skills	300		
		Management and job-related training courses	10	Improved environment for development of relationships across the border	4 %
		Networking structures created/developed	5		
		People from vulnerable groups trained	10		
		Number of people to people collaboration projects	35		
		Number of institutions reached	250		
		Number of people involved	700		
	1.2. Economy Competitiveness increasing	Business and educational linkages created	20	Number of Joint information services established	3
		Communities & institutions participating in knowledge economy	10		
		Access to and usage of new technology	15		
		SMEs involved/addressed in CBC projects	15	Increased cross-border movement of people and exchange of goods and services in the region	2.5 %
		New jobs created	60		
		Number of projects concerning common cultural heritage	30		
		Tourist destinations created/ developed	15		
		Tourist services created/ developed	15		
		Surrounding area of cultural spots improved	10	Increased common cultural capital	3 %
		Joint cultural events carried out	30		
		Institutions / bodies reached by programme activities	500		



PRIORITY AXIS 2 – IMPROVEMENT OF THE QUALITY OF LIFE	1.3. Infrastructural support for the improvement of the economic potential of the co-operation area	Awareness campaigns	25		
		Number of small-scale infrastructural projects	15	Improved small-scale infrastructure	3 %
		Feasibility studies prepared	5	Projects actually applied	3 %
		Preliminary and detailed design works	10		
		Project environmental assessments	2		
	2.1: Protection of environment, nature and historical and cultural heritage	Number of joint environmental friendly projects	30	Decreased pollution in the region	2 %
		Joint Eco-itineraries created/ developed	15	Increased attractiveness of the region based on preservation of natural resources and historical/cultural heritage	2 %
		Partnerships for cases of natural disasters established	2		
		Environmental management plans	2		
		Networks for environmental and cultural/historical heritage protection and reasonable utilization of resources	6		
		Number of small-scale infrastructural projects concerning environmental and cultural heritage protection	15		
		Feasibility studies prepared	5		
		Preliminary and detailed design works	10		
		Project environmental assessments	2		
	2.2: Capacity building for sustainable use of natural resources, cultural and historical heritage	Number of awareness campaigns carried	15	Increased sustainable utilisation of natural and historical/cultural resources	2 %
		Number of institutions involved in joint activities and exchange of know-how;	30		
		Number of people reached by joint information and awareness campaigns	500		

The above indicators will be monitored using the Reports from beneficiaries, relevant statistical data, analysis and regular Reports of Regional Employment Services, regional Statistical offices, regional inspections of Environment and Water, Bulgarian Small and Medium Enterprises Promotion Agency, Bulgarian Regional Development Agencies and Turkish Development Agencies.



8 CORRESPONDENCE WITH OTHER EU FUNDED AND NATIONAL PROGRAMMES

Following the Lisbon strategy and objective “to become the economy of the most competitive knowledge and most dynamic entrepreneurship of the world, capable of a durable economic growth accompanied by a quantitative and qualitative improvement of employment and by a greater decision” within coming years, the cross-border co-operation area between Republic of Bulgaria and Republic of Turkey sees its advantage as cultural, healthy and natural precious area for living and working.

In order to meet revised Lisbon Strategy goals the specific added value of cross-border co-operation derives from the fact that cross-border co-operation always adds value to national measures. This added value results from:

- supplementary character of cross-border programmes and projects,
- synergies through cross-border co-operation,
- cross-border networking,
- exchange of best practice and know-how,
- spin-off effects by overcoming borders,
- efficient cross-border resource management.

The joint development priorities set in the CBC programme do not contradict one another and are complementary to the wider development priorities of the two countries. The key of them are described below:

Bulgarian National Development Plan (NDP) 2007-2013

The Bulgarian authorities and social stakeholders in partnership have agreed on the strategic vision for the country: By 2013 Bulgaria should become a country with a high standard of living, based on a sustainable socioeconomic growth in the process of full integration in the European Union.

To achieve its vision, Bulgaria has two strategic medium-term goals:

- To attain and maintain high economic growth by dynamic knowledge-based economy in accordance with the principles of sustainable development.
- To improve the quality of human capital and to achieve employment, income and social integration levels, that provides high living standards.

In order to achieve the above mentioned strategic goals interventions till 2013 will be focused on the following strategic priorities for development:

- Improvement of the competitiveness of the Bulgarian economy;
- Development of human resources and improvement of the social infrastructure;
- Improvement and development of the basic infrastructure;
- Development of agriculture and rural regions;
- Sustainable and balanced regional development.

National Strategic Reference Framework (NSRF) and Sectoral Operational Programmes (OP) for Bulgaria 2007- 2013

In addition to the NDP the new regulations on the EU international investment policies for the period 2007-2013 require that each Member State has to prepare a set of strategic documents defining and justifying the financial support of the EU funds. The above mentioned strategic priorities will be implemented via the National Strategic Reference Framework (NSRF) which key priorities are as follow:

- Improving basic Infrastructure;
- Increasing the quality of human capital with the focus of employment;
- Fostering entrepreneurship, favorable business environment and good governance;



- Supporting balanced territorial development

Current CBC Programme is in line with above mentioned priorities and will contribute to achieve goals of the NSRF.

With respect to the above key priorities of the Bulgarian National Strategic Reference Framework 2007 – 2013 the following Sectoral Operational Programmes (OP) will be implemented:

- Transport
- Environment
- Human Resource Development
- Development of the Competitiveness of the Bulgarian Economy
- Administrative Capacity
- Regional Development
- Technical Assistance

The selected priorities of the current CBC programme Bulgaria - Turkey will complement the priorities of the Bulgarian Sectoral Operational Programmes for 2007-2013 as follows:

OP Transport

Some small-scale activities of the current CBC programme Bulgaria - Turkey are oriented to the clear cross-border impact could supplement the following priorities in the OP Transport

- Development of road infrastructure along the Trans-European and major national transport axes
- Improvement of intermodality for passengers and freights

OP Human Resource Development

The human resources development seeks improvement of quality of the human capital and achievement of higher living standard through better employment and the introduction of the concept of lifelong learning.

In the current CBC programme Bulgaria - Turkey the promotion of human resources capital is foreseen as a theme, addressed to the needs of the region in a clear cross-border manner. The programme aims to improve the mobility of qualifications, and achieve a greater flexibility of regional labour markets, to support initiatives to raise awareness, development of permanent contacts and local partnership networks in the area as a pre requisite of many other projects, to increase educational, cultural and sporting exchange and enhance social and cultural integration of the cross border area.

The following priorities of the OP Human Resource Development are relevant:

Priority axis 1. Promotion of job creation and development of inclusive labour market

Priority axis 2. Raising the productivity and adaptability of the employed persons

Priority axis 3. Improving the quality of education and training in correspondence with the labour market needs for building knowledge-based economy

Priority axis 4. Improving the access to education and training

Priority axis 5. Social inclusion and promotion of social economy

Priority axis 6. Improving the efficiency of labour market institutions and of social and healthcare services

Priority axis 7. Trans-national and interregional cooperation

OP Environment

The activities under the current CBC programme Bulgaria - Turkey are expected to support the joint action-based solutions for safeguarding biodiversity, and facilitating cooperation between existing institutions, joint research studies and transfer of information between relevant institutions, data collection and know how exchange on cross border area's natural resources protection, joint training and rising of environmental conservation and protection awareness.



Activities of the CBC programme Bulgaria - Turkey correspond to the following priorities defined by the OP Environment:

- Improvement and development of water and waste water infrastructure in settlements with over 2 000 PE
- Improvement and development of waste treatment infrastructure
- Preservation and restoration of biodiversity

The key distinctive feature of current CBC programme Bulgaria - Turkey is its cross-border orientation. Nevertheless the activities under the two programmes have to be coordinated in detail in order to avoid overlapping funding (especially for Preservation and restoration of biodiversity).

OP Development of the Competitiveness of the Bulgarian Economy

There is 1 out of 5 priorities defined in the above OP which could be taken into account:

- Strengthening the international market positions of Bulgarian economy

The indicative activities specified in the current CBC programme Bulgaria - Turkey are foreseen to emphasize the economic and social advantages and opportunities for development of the border area and stimulate the benefits of cross-border economic cooperation.

Coordination among the different activities of the OP Development of the Competitiveness of the Bulgarian Economy and the OP CBC programme will be necessary.

OP Regional Development

Activities of the current CBC programme Bulgaria - Turkey will stimulate achieving the specific objectives of the OP Regional Development as follows:

- Developing sustainable and dynamic urban centres connected with their less urbanized hinterlands, thus enhancing their opportunities for prosperity and development
- Mobilising regional and local technical and institutional opportunities and resources for implementing regional development policies

Some small-scale activities of the current CBC programme Bulgaria - Turkey could supplement the following operations of the OP Regional Development:

Priority Axis 1: Sustainable and Integrated Urban Development

Operation 1.1.Social Infrastructure

Operation 1.2.Housing

Operation 1.3.Organisation of Economic Activities

Operation 1.4.Improvement of Physical Environment and Risk Prevention

Operation 1.5.Sustainable Urban Transport Systems

Priority Axis 2: Regional and Local Accessibility

Operation 2.1.Regional and Local Road Infrastructure

Operation 2.2.ICT Network

Operation 2.3.Access to Sustainable and Efficient Energy Resources

Priority Axis 3: Sustainable Tourism Development

Operation 3.1.Enhancement of Tourism Attractions and Related Infrastructure

Operation 3.2.Regional Tourism Product Development and Marketing of Destinations

Operation 3.3.National Tourism Marketing

Priority Axis 4: Local development and co-operation

Operation 4.1.Small-scale Local Investments

Operation 4.2.Inter-regional Cooperation

Priority Axis 5: Technical Assistance

Operation 5.1.Management, Monitoring, Evaluation and Control

Operation 5.2.Communication, Information and Publicity

Operation 5.3.Capacity building of OPRD beneficiaries



The current CBC programme Bulgaria - Turkey activities will support the regional and local partnership and will be implemented in collaboration and in coordination with OP Regional Development measures.

Bulgarian Rural Development programme

The current CBC programme Bulgaria - Turkey will contribute the development and improvement of the quality of life and diversify opportunities in rural areas as well as the improvement of access and quality of basic services and infrastructure in rural areas and the preservation and upgrading of the natural and cultural heritage. OP CBC Bulgaria - Turkey will support the objective of Axis 3 under Rural Development programme and will enhance the following measures: Encouragement of Tourism Activities, Basic Services for the Economy and Rural Population, Village Renewal and Development.

Black Sea Basin Joint Operational Programme 2007-2013

The Black Sea Basin cross-border co-operation programme involves ten countries, including Bulgaria and Turkey. Four NUTS III level equivalents (Burgas and Yambol in Bulgaria; Edirne and Kırklareli in Turkey) under the BG-TR CBC P are target regions under this ENPI programme as well.

Institutions and organization will benefit from assistance in the following priority axes:

Priority 1: Supporting cross-border partnerships for economic and social development based on common resources

Priority 2: Sharing resources and competencies for environmental protection and valorisation

Priority 3: Supporting cultural and educational networks for the establishment of a common cultural environment in the basin

9th Development Plan of Republic of Turkey (2007-2013)

Regarding economic and social development, the objectives Turkey intends to pursue are set out in the 9th Development Plan (2007-2013) namely:

- Increasing competitiveness;
- Increasing employment;
- Strengthening human development and social solidarity;
- Ensuring regional development;
- Increasing the quality and effectiveness of public services.

Multi-annual Indicative Planning Document (MIPD) Turkey 2007 - 2009⁴⁹

Building on initial achievements under the cross-border co-operation activities supported in the period 2004 – 2006 and in accordance with the requirements of the IPA regulation (1085/2006), for the years 2007 – 2009 under the Component II "Cross-border co-operation of MIPD Republic of Turkey refers to the following elements:

Major areas of intervention

Existing cooperation should be continued and new cooperation developed in line with the objective of fostering good relations and promoting economic integration. In view of the restricted budget, particular attention should be given to the concentration of resources.

Main priorities

- Small infrastructure (environmental, transport, border crossing, tourism) for the improvement of the economic potential of the border regions,
- Technical assistance for joint spatial, economic or environmental planning (including river basin management)
- Reinforcing cross-border social and cultural links,

Expected results and time frame

⁴⁹ As per the October 30th 2006 version



- The projects related to economic development priority are expected to support the economic contacts of the neighbouring regions by encouraging initiatives for entrepreneurship and cooperation between the institutions of the partner countries;
- Environment problems of the neighbouring regions, including issues such as river basin management, flood protection and fire prevention, are expected to be addressed;
- Cultural resources of the border region are expected to be protected and promoted;
- Cooperation networks and people to people contacts will be established.

Strategic Coherence Framework of Turkey, 2007 – 2013⁵⁰

The Main Objective of Strategic Coherence Framework (SCF) is

To contribute to the economic and social development of Turkey both at national and regional levels by reducing regional disparities and improving the human resources

The areas that are covered under Strategic Coherence Framework are as follows:

Regional Development

- Transport
- Environment
- Regional Competitiveness

Human Resources Development

- Education and Training
- Employment
- Social Inclusion

With respect to the above key priorities of the Strategic Coherence Framework of Turkey 2007 – 2013, the following Sectoral Operational Programmes (OP) will be implemented:

- OP Transport;
- OP Environment;
- OP Regional Competitiveness;
- OP Human Resources Development.

In terms of targeted areas only two of them (OP Environment and OP Transport) are in correspondence with the CBC OP. The selected priorities of the current CBC programme Bulgaria - Turkey will complement the relevant priorities of those OPs.

OP CBC activities will complement the measures of the mentioned OPs. Representatives of the Managing Structures of the Turkish sectoral OPs will be in close contact with the National Authority in Turkey. They could also participate in the JMC sessions. Thus coordination and avoidance of overlapping of activities will be assured.

OP Transport

The overall objective of the OP is: To improve the transportation infrastructure considering safety and intermodality on future TEN-T Network, while maintaining an efficient and a balanced transportation system.

The priorities under this OP are as follows:

Priority 1: Improvement of railway infrastructure

Measures:

1.1 New construction and/or rehabilitation of railway lines on future TEN-T railway network or in connection with existing TEN-T

Priority 2: Improvement of port infrastructure

2.1 New construction of ports on future TEN-T with necessary multimodal hinterland connections

Priority 3: Technical Assistance

⁵⁰ Source: uko.tubitak.gov.tr/Toplantidokumanlari/70e01826-4749-45d1-8ca5-223c493a85cc.pdf



- 3.1 Support to OP implementation including management, programming, monitoring and evaluation
- 3.2 Support for information and publicity matters
- 3.3 Support for enhancing the project pipeline management, programming, monitoring and evaluation
- 3.2 Support for information and publicity matters
- 3.3 Support for enhancing the project pipeline

OP Environment

The OP Environment focuses upon improving and developing basic environmental infrastructure especially for water, wastewater and solid waste management. It will be implemented through priorities and measures namely:

Priority 1: Improved water supply, sewerage and wastewater treatment services.

Measure 1.1: Improving the quality of the drinking water supply;

Measure 1.2: Improving the quality of receiving water bodies.

Priority 2: Improved integrated solid waste management.

Measure 2.1: Increasing the quantity of recycled waste and improving final disposal.

Priority 3: Technical Assistance (TA).

Measure 3.1: Enhancing management of the EOP;

Measure 3.2: Enhancing beneficiary planning capacity

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Rural Development Plan

Strategic Objective 1: Economic Development and Increasing Job Opportunities

- Priority 1.2: Diversification of rural economy

Strategic Objective 2: Strengthening Human Resources, Organizational Level and Local Development Capacity

- Priority 2.3: Strengthening Local Development Capacity

Strategic Objective 4: Protection and Improvement of Rural Environment

- Priority 4.2: Protecting forest ecosystems and sustainable utilization of forest resources
- Priority 4.3: The management and improvement of protected areas

The coordination of IPA CBC programme with other plans and programmes will be achieved by the national coordination structures in both participating countries. The representatives of national coordination structures participate in JMC sessions.

Summary

The financial resources available to the CBC P Bulgaria –Turkey do not allow large-cost and durable infrastructural investments, but mainly soft and small-scale activities. The projects must be designed by representatives from both sides of the border, must clearly integrate the ideas, priorities and actions of stakeholders on both sides of the border. They must have a clear cross-border impact which is impossible to be covered by the sectoral operational programmes.

The coordination of CBC programme including demarcation with other plans and programmes and avoiding overlapping will be achieved by the national coordination structures in both participating countries. In order to ensure complementarity and avoid overlapping the representatives of national coordination structures participate in JMC sessions. Moreover representatives from ministries managing sectoral programmes will participate as advisors in JMC sessions which will ensure coordination and avoidance of overlapping of activities. The Management Information System is a useful tool for this purpose.

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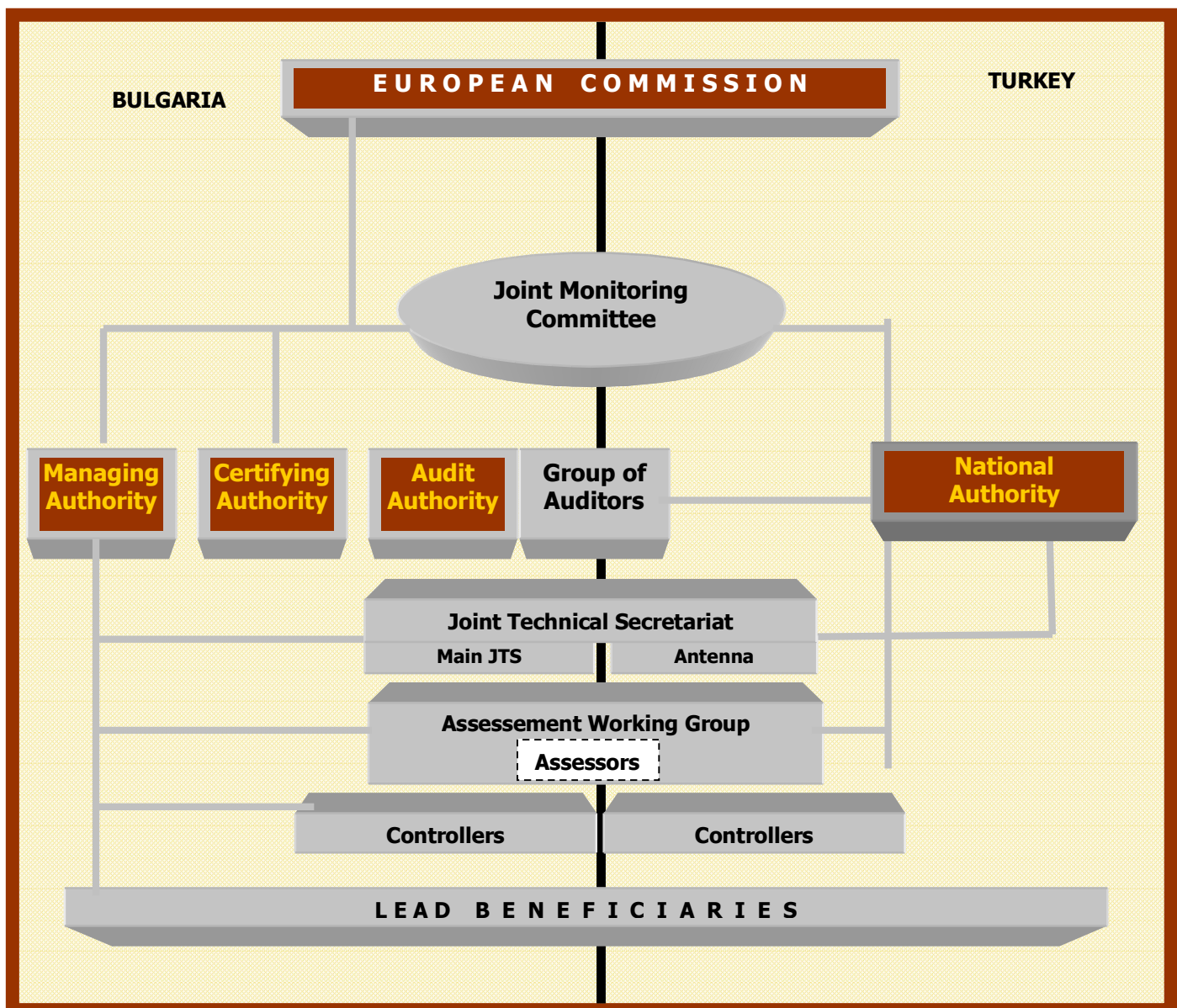
9 IMPLEMENTING AND FINANCIAL PROVISIONS

The implementation structures and procedures described in this section have been agreed in partnership between the participating authorities of Bulgaria and Turkey and drawn up based on the following overall principles:

- Respect of the partnership principle;
- Efficient and effective structures;
- Clear definition of tasks and responsibilities;
- Balance between structures on national and cross border level;
- Previous co-operation experience.

The programme will be implemented using the **Shared management approach** as defined in Article 33 and Article 98 (1) of Commission Regulation (EC) No 718/2007 of 12 June 2007 and following the common agreement between the two countries and official Turkish Embassy in Sofia Note No 2007/Sofya BE/5801 of 10 May 2007 to Bulgarian Ministry of foreign affairs.

Chart of Management, Monitoring, Control and Implementation Structures





9.1 Management and implementation structures

9.1.1 Managing Authority (MA)

Legal provision for the establishment and operation of the MA:

COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 1085/2006 of 17 July 2006 establishing an Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA)

Article 9 – Cross-Border Cooperation Component, item 3

Article 13 – Management of Assistance, reporting, item 2

COMMISSION REGULATION (EC) No 718/2007 of 12 June 2007 implementing Council Regulation (EC) No 1085/2006 establishing an instrument for pre-accession assistance (IPA).

Article 102 – Designation of authorities

Article 103– Functions of the managing authority

The Bulgarian and Turkish programme partners have agreed that the responsibility of a **Single Managing Authority (MA)** will be given to the **Directorate General Territorial Cooperation Management at Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works of the Republic of Bulgaria**.

The Managing Authority is responsible for managing and implementing the cross-border programme in accordance with the principle of **sound financial management** and in particular for:

- ensuring that operations are selected for funding in accordance with the criteria applicable to the cross-border programme and that they comply with applicable Community and national rules for the whole of their implementation period;
- ensuring that there is a system for recording and storing in computerised form accounting records of each operation under the cross-border programme and that the data on implementation necessary for financial management, monitoring, verifications, audits and evaluation are collected;
- verifying the regularity of expenditure. To this end, it shall satisfy itself that the expenditure of each final beneficiary participating in an operation has been validated by a controller.
- ensuring that the operations are implemented according to the public procurement provisions (adopted by the JMC) referred to in Article 121 (1) of Commission Regulation (EC) No 718/2007 of 12 June 2007;
- ensuring that final beneficiaries and other bodies involved in the implementation of operations maintain either a separate accounting system or an adequate accounting code for all transactions relating to the operation without prejudice to national accounting rules;
- ensuring that the evaluations of cross-border programme are carried out in accordance with Article 109 of Commission Regulation (EC) No 718/2007 of 12 June 2007;
- setting up procedures to ensure that all documents regarding expenditure and audits required to ensure an adequate audit trail are held in accordance with the requirements of Article 134 of Commission Regulation (EC) No 718/2007 of 12 June 2007;
- ensuring that the certifying authority receives all necessary information on the procedures and verifications carried out in relation to expenditure for the purpose of certification;
- nominating Bulgarian representatives and guiding the work of the Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC) and in cooperation with the Joint Technical Secretariat (JTS) providing it with the documents required to permit the quality of the implementation of the cross-border programme to be monitored in the light of its specific goals;
- participating in preparation of job descriptions, selection of the experts and signing contracts with all members in the JTS (Main and JTS antennae).
- drawing up and, after approval by the joint monitoring committee, submitting to the Commission the annual and final reports on implementation referred to in Article 112 of Commission Regulation (EC) No 718/2007 of 12 June 2007;



- inform about the programme and calls for project proposals in cooperation with the Joint Technical Secretariat (JTS) as well as ensure compliance with the information and publicity requirements laid down in Article 62 of Commission Regulation (EC) No 718/2007 of 12 June 2007;
- preparation of all standardised forms for the implementation of Programme such as application package, evaluation, contracting, implementation, monitoring and reporting in cooperation with National Authority.
- approval of the Call for Proposals packages in cooperation with National Authority,
- deciding on the date of launch for the CfPs and launching the CfPs officially together with National Authority.
- after a selection procedure nominates/determines controllers and evaluators/assessors from Bulgarian side;
- Signing framework agreement and contracts with evaluators/assessors/controllers from Bulgarian side;
- laying down the implementing arrangements for each operation and enters into agreement (signing contract) with the lead beneficiary.
- carrying out monitoring of the programme by reference to financial indicators, as well as the indicators referred to in Article 94 (1) (d) of Commission Regulation (EC) No 718/2007 of 12 June 2007;
- signing on behalf of Bulgaria the bilateral Memorandum of Understanding.
- approves any addendums to the contracts that are not related to change in budget or duration of the project (for example: change of address, bank account, experts, etc.);

9.1.2 National Authority

The National Authority of Turkey cooperates in joint programming, management and implementation of the programme and will take all necessary measures to provide assistance to the MA, CA, AA in their respective duties, mainly through:

- Participating in joint programming and generation of operations in accordance with the programme objectives, modification if necessary and implementation;
- Nominating Turkish representatives in the Joint Monitoring Committee;
- Participating in preparation of job descriptions and in the selection of the experts in the JTS (Main and JTS antennae).
- After a selection procedure nominating/determining controllers and evaluators/assessors from Turkish side.
- Signing framework agreement and contracts with evaluators/assessors/controllers from Turkish side.
- Coordinating the designation of representative(s) of Turkish side in the group of auditors. Audit Authority on the Turkish side is responsible for the nomination of representatives of Turkish side in the Group of Auditors.
- Signing the agreement (or Memorandum of Understanding) with the MA regulating the responsibilities between the two countries for implementation of the programme;
- Inform about the programme and calls for project proposals in cooperation with the MA and JTS,
- Preparation of all standardised forms for the implementation of Programme (Grant schemes) such as application package, evaluation, implementation, monitoring and reporting in cooperation with MA,
- Coordinating with the MA the date of launch of Call for Proposals and parallel launching the Call for Proposals officially on the Turkish side.
- Providing the reimbursement to the CA of the amounts unduly paid to the final beneficiaries on its territory as described in Article 114 (2) of Commission Regulation (EC) No 718/2007 of 12 June 2007;
- Participates in Call for Proposals packages preparation to be approved by the JMC;



- Ensuring access to information of Managing Authority, Certifying Authority and Audit Authority in order to fulfil their respective tasks.

The National Authority of the Cross-Border Cooperation Programmes under the Second Component of IPA is the Republic of Turkey Ministry for European Union Affairs.

9.1.3 Certifying Authority (CA)

Legal provision for the establishment and operation of the CA:

COMMISSION REGULATION (EC) No 718/2007 of 12 June 2007 implementing Council Regulation (EC) No 1085/2006 establishing an instrument for pre-accession assistance (IPA).

Article 102 – Designation of authorities

Article 104 – Functions of the certifying authority

The certifying authority of the programme is the National Fund Directorate at the Ministry of Finance of Republic of Bulgaria. The Certifying Authority receives the payments made by the Commission and transfers funds to the Managing Authority at the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works and is responsible for:

- drawing up and submitting to the Commission certified statements of expenditure and applications for payment;
- certifying that: the statement of expenditure is accurate, results from reliable accounting systems and is based on verifiable supporting documents; the expenditure declared complies with applicable Community and national rules and has been incurred in respect of operations selected for funding in accordance with the criteria applicable to the programme and complying with Community and national rules
- ensuring for the purposes of certification that it has received adequate information from the managing authority on the procedures and verifications carried out in relation to expenditure included in statements of expenditure;
- taking account for certification purposes of the results of all audits carried out by or under the responsibility of the Audit Authority;
- maintaining accounting records in computerised form of expenditure declared to the Commission. The managing authorities and the audit authorities shall have access to this information. At the written request of the Commission, the certifying authority shall provide the Commission with this information, within ten working days of receipt of the request or any other agreed period for the purpose of carrying out documentary and on the spot checks;
- keeping an account of amounts recoverable and of amounts withdrawn following cancellation of all or part of the contribution for an operation. Amounts recovered shall be repaid to the general budget of the European Union prior to the closure of the cross-border programme by deducting them from the next statement of expenditure;
- sending the Commission, by 28 February each year, a statement, identifying the following for each priority axis of the cross-border programme: the amounts withdrawn from statements of expenditure submitted during the preceding year following cancellation of all or part of the public contribution for an operation; the amounts recovered which have been deducted from these statements of expenditure; a statement of amounts to be recovered as at 31 December of the preceding year classified by the year in which recovery orders were issued.

Paying Unit

The body responsible for making payments to the lead beneficiaries is the Paying Unit located in the Ministry of the Regional Development and Public Works in Bulgaria.



9.1.4 Audit Authority (AA)

Legal provision for the establishment and operation of the AA:

COMMISSION REGULATION (EC) No 718/2007 of 12 June 2007 implementing Council Regulation (EC) No 1085/2006 establishing an instrument for pre-accession assistance (IPA).

Article 102 – Designation of authorities

Article 105 – Functions of the audit authority

The Audit Authority for the programme is the Audit of European Union Funds Executive Agency at the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Bulgaria, and it is assisted by a Group of Auditors. The Audit Authority is functionally independent of the Managing Authority and the Certifying Authority and is responsible for:

- ensuring that audits are carried out to verify the effective functioning of the management and control system of the cross-border programme;
- ensuring that audits are carried out on operations on the basis of an appropriate sample to verify expenditure declared;
- by 31 December each year from the year following the adoption of the cross-border programme to the fourth year following the last budgetary commitment: submitting to the Commission an annual control report setting out the findings of the audits carried out during the previous 12 month period ending on 30 June of the year concerned and reporting any shortcomings found in the systems for the management and control of the programme; issuing an opinion, on the basis of the controls and audits that have been carried out under its responsibility, as to whether the management and control system functions effectively, so as to provide a reasonable assurance that statements of expenditure presented to the Commission are correct and as a consequence reasonable assurance that the underlying transactions are legal and regular
- submitting to the Commission at the latest by 31 December of the fifth year following the last budgetary commitment a closure declaration assessing the validity of the application for payment of the final balance and the legality and regularity of the underlying transactions covered by the final statement of expenditure, which shall be supported by a final control report. This closure declaration shall be based on all the audit work carried out by or under the responsibility of the audit authority.
- ensuring that the audit work takes account of internationally accepted audit standards;
- Where the audits and controls are carried out by a body other than the audit authority, the audit authority shall ensure that such bodies have the necessary functional independence.
- giving the reasons and estimating the scale of the problem and its financial impact in the case described in Article 105 (4) of Commission Regulation (EC) No 718/2007 of 12 June 2007;
- nominating the Bulgarian experts in the group of auditors and carrying out training of all members of the group.
- preparing compliance assessment report on the management and control systems.

9.1.5 Joint Technical Secretariat (including JTS antennae)

Legal provision for the establishment and operation of the JTS:

COMMISSION REGULATION (EC) No 718/2007 of 12 June 2007 implementing Council Regulation (EC) No 1085/2006 establishing an instrument for pre-accession assistance (IPA).

Article 102 – Designation of authorities

The Managing Authority in cooperation with National Authority establishes a Joint Technical Secretariat. It is placed in Haskovo, Republic of Bulgaria. JTS has an antennae in Turkey. The JTS (including its antennae as part of the same body) consists of equal number Bulgarian and Turkish experts contracted by the MA or NA.

JTS provides daily help to the Managing Authority and the Joint Monitoring Committee of the Programme and assists where appropriate the Certifying Authority and Audit Authority in carrying out their respective duties. The JTS also takes part in preparation and implementation



of the decisions of Joint Monitoring Committee and carries out usual duties of a secretariat. The JTS is in particular responsible for the following joint tasks:

- Participation in planning and organisation of programme information campaigns and other activities related to raising public awareness on the programme;
- Establishing and managing a joint projects data base and project partners data base;
- supporting projects generation and development,
- Supporting MA and National Authority for the preparation of all standardised forms for the implementation of Programme such as application package, evaluation, contracting, implementation, monitoring and reporting,
- Preparing the full application package for CfPs and submit to MA and National Authority for approval,
- advising beneficiaries on the implementation of operations and financial administration;
- receiving and registering of applications submitted;
- performing a formal check of project applications in terms of administrative compliance and eligibility;
- presenting a work plan via the Managing Authority to the Joint Monitoring Committee once a year for approval;
- organising all meetings and events, draft the minutes, prepare, ensures the administrative management of tasks and services;
- Providing secretariat services for Evaluation Committees and submitting the results of the project technical evaluation sessions to the JMC;
- monitoring of project implementation, collecting of information from the lead beneficiaries and updating data in the Management Information System;
- coordinating the work of the controllers;
- collecting and checking project reports from the lead partners before submitting to the MA;
- assisting the MA in preparation of the reports on programme implementation;
- receiving requests from the lead beneficiaries on any modifications as well as preparation of addendums to projects and submitting them to MA or JMC respectively for approval;
- cooperation with the programme implementing authorities in Bulgaria and Turkey, and with other territorial cooperation programmes;
- collaboration with central, regional and local stakeholders involved in the CBC Programme.

9.1.6 Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC)

Legal provision for the establishment and operation of the JMC:

COMMISSION REGULATION (EC) No 718/2007 of 12 June 2007 implementing Council Regulation (EC) No 1085/2006 establishing an instrument for pre-accession assistance (IPA).

Article 87 - Partnership

Article 102 – Designation of authorities

Article 110 - Joint monitoring committee

The Joint Monitoring Committee is being set up within three months from the approval of the programme and consists of representatives appointed by the two participating countries according to the partnership principle. The JMC meets minimum twice a year at the initiative of the participating countries or of the Commission and it is co-chaired by the Managing Authority (Bulgaria) and the National Authority (Turkey). Representative/s of the European Commission or other relevant bodies participate in the work of the JMC in an advisory capacity.

The JMC is responsible for the following tasks:

- considers and approves the criteria for selecting the operations financed by the cross-border programme and approves any revision of those criteria in accordance with programming needs;
- periodically reviews progress made towards achieving the specific targets of the cross-border programme on the basis of documents submitted by the managing authority;
- examines the results of implementation, particularly achievement of the targets set for each priority axis and the evaluations referred to in Article 57(4) and Article 109 of



Commission Regulation (EC) No 718/2007 of 12 June 2007;

- considers and approves the annual and final reports on implementation referred to in Article 112 of Commission Regulation (EC) No 718/2007 of 12 June 2007;
- be informed of the annual control report, referred to in Article 105 (1)(c) of Commission Regulation (EC) No 718/2007 of 12 June 2007 and of any relevant comments the Commission may have after examining those reports;
- for selecting operations;
- may propose any revision or examination of the cross-border programme likely to make possible the attainment of the objectives referred to in Article 86(2) of Commission Regulation (EC) No 718/2007 of 12 June 2007 or to improve its management, including its financial management;
- considers and approves any proposal to amend the content of the cross-border programme.
- carries out monitoring of the programme by reference to financial indicators, as well as the output and result indicators;
- approves any addendums to the contracts that are related to change in budget or duration of the project;
- approves all internal documents concerning the programme implementation between the two countries;

All operations will be selected through single calls for proposals covering the whole eligible area. Joint operations outside calls for proposals may be also identified any time after the adoption of the programme in a decision taken by the Joint Monitoring Committee.⁵¹

Details on composition, chairmanship and decision making in the Joint Monitoring Committee will be determined by the Rules of Procedure of the JMC, drawn up in agreement with the Managing Authority and National Authority and adopted on the first JMC meeting. Decisions will be taken by consensus. Composition of the JMC will be in accordance with the partnership principle. Representatives of regional and local authorities, economic, social and environmental partners as well as relevant non-governmental organisations will participate in the work of JMC.

9.1.7 Group of Auditors

The Group of Auditors shall assist the Audit Authority by carrying out the audit activities under its responsibility. The Group of Auditors comprises at least one representative of each country participating in the programme. The group of auditors will be set up within three months of the decision approving the cross-border programme. It shall draw up its own rules of procedure. It shall be chaired by the audit authority for the cross-border programme.

9.1.8 Controllers

Legal provision for the establishment and operation of the Control System:

COMMISSION REGULATION (EC) No 718/2007 of 12 June 2007 implementing Council Regulation (EC) No 1085/2006 establishing an instrument for pre-accession assistance (IPA).

Article 108 – Control system

In order to validate the expenditure Bulgaria and Turkey will set up a control system making it possible to verify:

- the delivery of the products and services co - financed;
- the soundness of the expenditure declared for operations or parts of operations implemented on its territory;
- the compliance of such expenditure, related operations, as well as tendering procedures with Community rules and its national rules;

⁵¹ Article 95, paragraph (1) of Commission Regulation (EC) No 718/2007 of 12 June 2007



- the compliance of such expenditure, related operations, or parts of operations to the eligible costs given in the application.

For this purpose each country will designate controllers responsible for verifying the legality and regularity of the expenditure declared by each beneficiary participating in the operation. Procedure/s for selection of controllers will be carried out according to the respective national legislation of the two countries. They will be contracted as physical persons by MA or NA (framework agreement and contract). Depending on the number of contacts and control needs respective number of controllers from each country will be used.

Where the verification of the delivery of the products and services co-financed can be carried out only in respect of the entire operation, such verification shall be performed by the controller of the participating country where the lead beneficiary is located or by the Managing Authority.

Expenditures will be validated by the controllers within a period maximum of three months from the date of its submission by the lead beneficiary to the controllers.

9.1.9 Assessment working group

JTS will be responsible for the administrative and eligibility check of project proposals. The technical evaluation of project proposals will be carried out by the Assessors appointed by the Managing Authority or National Authority –comprising equal number of participants (assessors) from both countries depending on the size and number of the project proposals. Where the applications received are particularly numerous or highly technical, the Assessment Working group could be assisted by equal number of assessors from both countries. Assessors are expected to have an in-depth knowledge and extensive experience on the issues covered by the CBC Programme. The responsibility for selecting operations to be financed remains within the JMC.

Assessors will be contracted by MA or NA (framework agreement and contract). MA and National Authority keep its right to appoint assessors out of the pre-selected list of experts by getting agreement with other side. The secretariat services of the Assessment process will be carried out by JTS. Rules of procedures for the Assessment process will be drawn up by MA and National Authority with the support of JTS and adopted by the Head of MA.

9.2 Generation, application selection and control of operations

9.2.1 Lead beneficiary/partner

The responsibilities of the lead beneficiary and the other beneficiaries are in compliance with Article 96 of Commission Regulation (EC) No 718/2007 of 12 June 2007.

The final beneficiaries of an operation shall appoint a lead beneficiary among themselves prior to the submission of the proposal for the operation. The lead beneficiary assumes the following responsibilities:

- lays down the arrangements for its relations with the partners participating in the operation in an agreement comprising, inter alia, provisions guaranteeing the sound financial management of the funds allocated to the operation, including the arrangements for recovering amounts unduly paid;
- is responsible for ensuring the implementation of the entire operation;
- is responsible for transferring the relevant budget amount to the partners participating in the operation according to the partnership agreement and certified costs;
- ensures that the expenditure presented by the partners participating in the operation has been paid for the purpose of implementing the operation and corresponds to the activities agreed between the partners participating in the operation;



- verifies that the expenditure presented by the partners participating in the operation has been validated by the controllers referred to in Article 108 of Commission Regulation (EC) No 718/2007 of 12 June 2007;
- collects the information from the project partners, cross-checks the certified activities with the progress of the project and submits the reports to the JTS;
- signs the agreement for implementation of the operation with MA;
- informs JTS about project modifications.

9.2.2 Other beneficiaries/partners

Each partner participating in the operation needs to:

- assume responsibility for irregularities in the expenditure which it has declared;
- repay the lead beneficiary the amounts unduly paid in accordance with the agreement existing between them
- send the statement of costs and content report to the lead partner for the first level control;
- submit the certification of costs and information to the lead beneficiary.

9.2.3 Project generation/preparation:

Potential beneficiaries will be adequately informed on the programme objectives and priorities for support, the prerequisites for obtaining funds and the individual procedures to be followed. Active public relations work will be provided by JTS and its antennae in agreement with the MA. JTS and its antennae will also provide technical support to potential beneficiaries during project generation and preparation including a partner search facility.

9.2.4 Application:

The date of the launch for CfPs will be decided by MA and National Authority unanimously, and CfPs will be launched officially by MA and National Authority. Calls for proposals will be launched by the JTS. Applications for funding shall include at least two beneficiaries (one from each partnering country) with residences in the programme area. These beneficiaries shall cooperate in at least one of the following ways for each operation: joint development, joint implementation, joint staffing and joint financing. Full application packages and other necessary supporting documents according to the guidelines for the different Calls for proposals will be submitted to the JTS and its antennae in Turkey. Official language for the application forms will be English with summaries in Bulgarian and Turkish languages.

9.2.5 Project assessment:

All projects will be assessed according to the evaluation criteria previously approved by JMC. Assessment will be carried out in three steps:

- First, opening session carried out by the JTS. Basic information on each submitted project and its beneficiaries will be recorded in Management Information System (MIS).
- Second, administrative compliance and eligibility check carried out by the JTS.
- Third, technical/quality assessment carried out by independent assessors from both Bulgaria and Turkey appointed by the MA.

The assessment process will be organised and secretarially supported by JTS. The results of all assessment steps will be summarised in the form of a report and presented to the JMC for a decision.

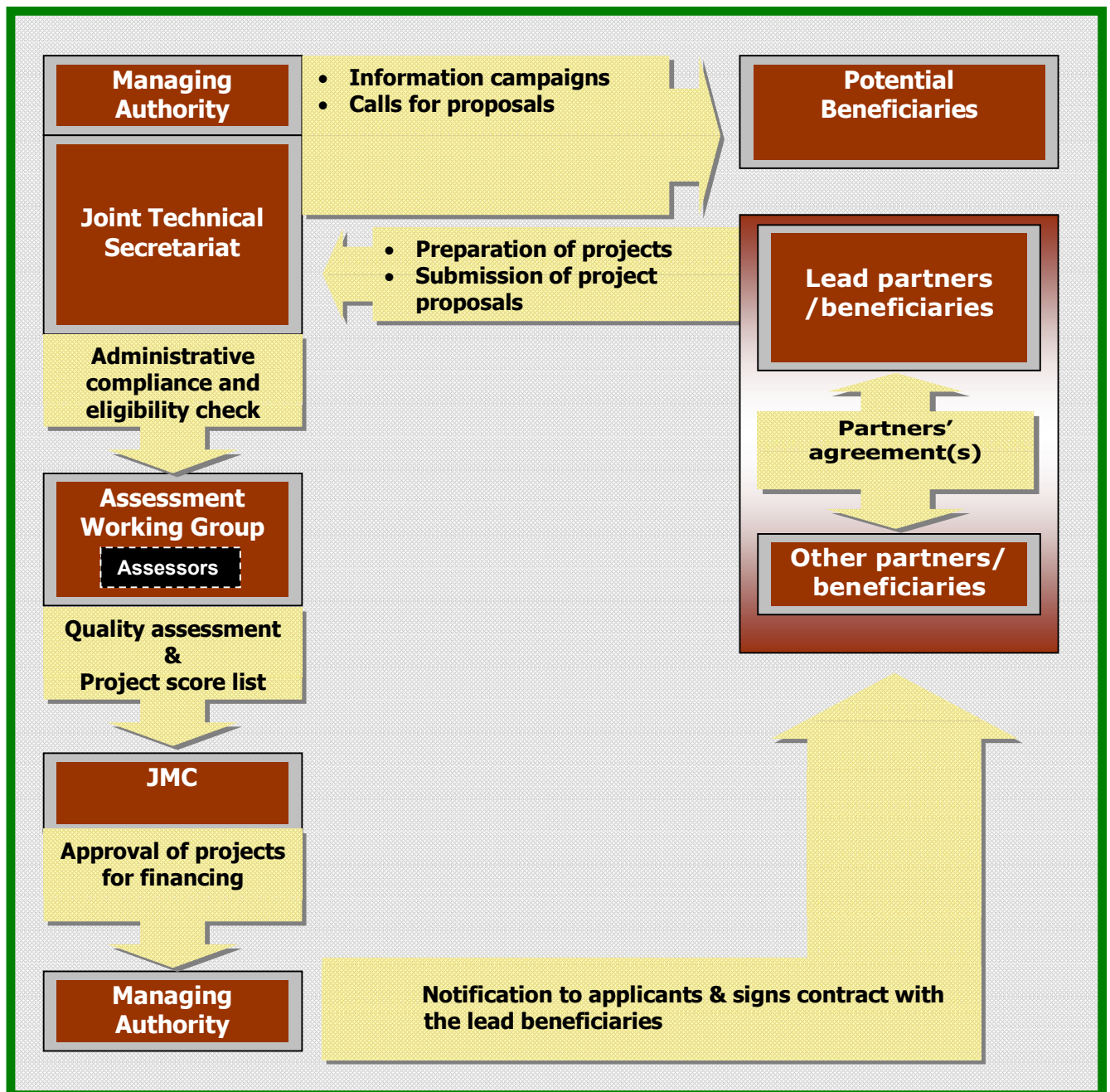
9.2.6 Project selection and approval:

The JMC will decide on the approval of projects and the amount of programme's financial contribution to each operation. Following that, each Lead beneficiary will be informed with an official letter about approval/rejection of their project. For the approved projects this letter will also provide information on the next steps. Detailed rules on decision making will be included in the rules of procedure of the Monitoring Committee.

9.2.7 Contracting:

Contracts with the lead beneficiaries of the approved projects will be prepared by JTS based on the standard template with annexes previously developed and approved by the JMC. Implementation of the projects may start only after the contracts are signed by both - the MA and the lead beneficiary.

Chart: Project selection cycle



9.2.8 First level control and payments:

The first level control and payments are carried out in the following steps:

- Once works are contracted and/or services are provided, invoices are issued by the contractor or supplier and submitted to the Beneficiary. After delivery of goods or



services the Beneficiary checks and pays the invoices with its own resources/pre-financing (up to 20 % of the total project costs) received from the Paying unit at Managing Authority.

- All project partners under the coordination of the Lead beneficiary submit to the respective controller (Bulgarian partners – to Bulgarian controller and Turkish partners – to Turkish controller) all documents necessary for the verification and certification of the delivery of the products and services, the soundness of the expenditure declared for operations implemented;
- The controllers provide a 100 % control and verify the delivery of the products and services; the soundness of the expenditure declared for operations implemented on; the compliance of such expenditure, related operations, as well as tendering procedures with Community rules and when relevant with its national rules and the compliance of such expenditure, related operations and part of operations to the eligible costs given in the application.
- The controllers submit to the Lead beneficiary/beneficiary a Report on verification;
- The Lead beneficiary compiles all verifications and a single report on verification on the delivery of goods or services together with the paid invoices and submits a statement of expenditures on a quarterly bases to the MA/JTS;
- The MA/JTS cross checks all Reports on verification according to the “four eyes principle”;
- MA ensures the aggregation of information on expenditures and submits to the CA a report on verification and a request for funds;
- Turkish side will transfer its national co-financing to Bulgaria;
- The Certifying Authority is responsible for drawing up and submitting statement of expenditure and applications for payment as well as receiving funds from the Commission;
- The CA transfers funds via the Paying unit at the MRDPW to the Lead beneficiary;
- Lead beneficiary shares the funds with other project beneficiaries;

9.2.9 Auditing

The auditing process based on periodic reports provides CA with reasonable assurance that the request and certification processes are functioning properly.

Internal Audit Unit (IAU) within the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works implements the functions of internal audit of all structures, activities and processes carried out by the ministry, including structures managing the EU funds (the Managing Authority of the CBC Programme between Bulgaria and Turkey) and the lower budget level spending units. The unit is subordinated and reports directly to the minister. The functions of this unit are in compliance with the Law on Internal Audit in the Public Sector. The Internal Audit Unit will carry out the internal audits for the purposes of CBC Programme between Bulgaria and Turkey in accordance with the international accepted standards for internal audit.

9.2.10 Project modifications:

The lead beneficiary needs to inform the MA/JTS in written form about any changes made to the original project application. All the requested modifications will be assessed following the rules for project modifications previously developed and approved by the JMC. Depending on the content of modification, it may require approval either by MA or JMC respectively. Approval of the modifications will be recorded either in the letter of approval or may require changes to the contracts in the form of special addendums.

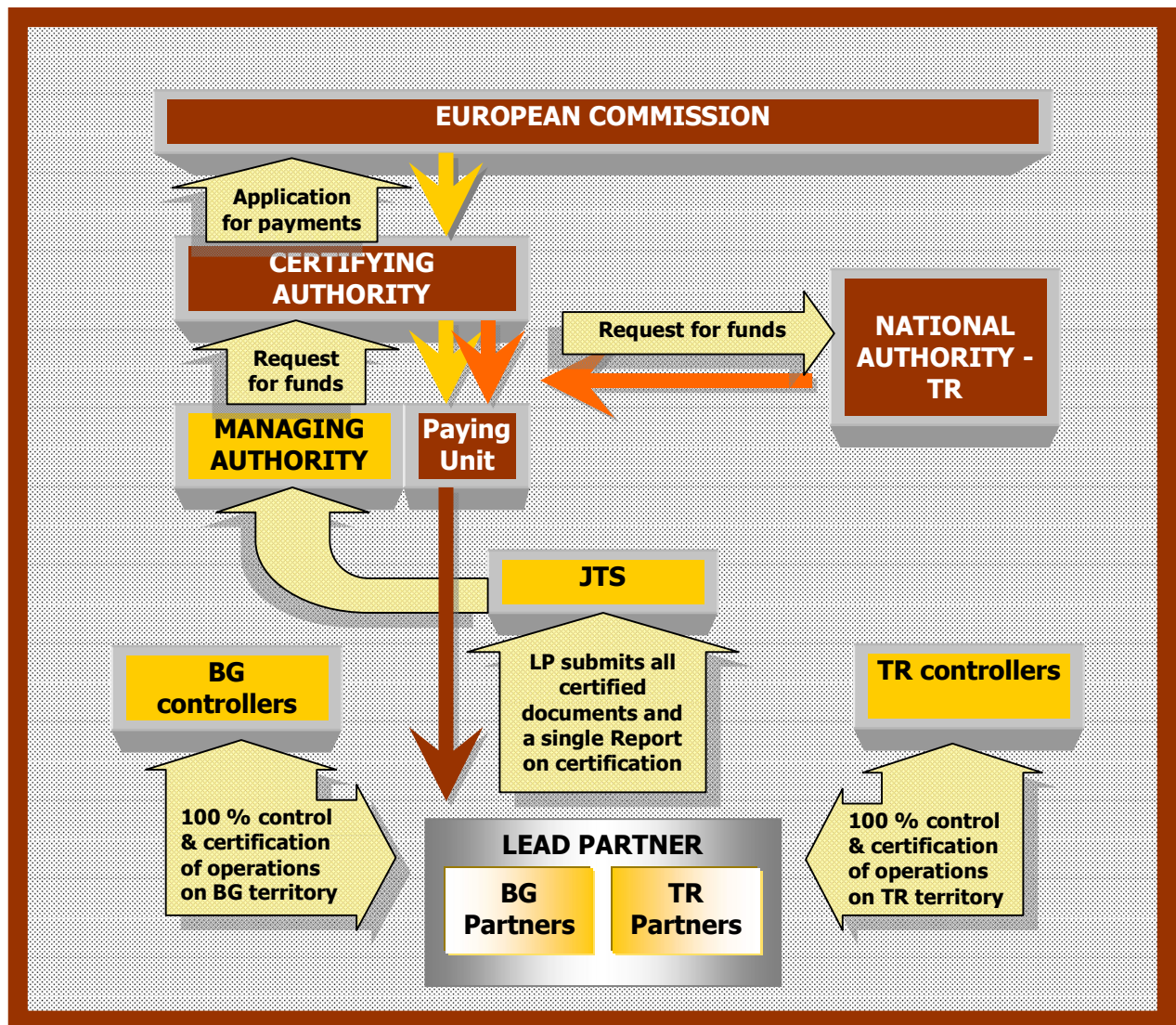
9.2.11 Irregularities

MA will be responsible for reporting procedures for irregularities to the responsible national body and OLAF and for recovery of amount unduly paid to the lead beneficiaries/final beneficiaries located on the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria.



NA will be responsible for reporting procedures for irregularities to the MA, CA and OLAF and for recovery of amount unduly paid to the lead beneficiaries/final beneficiaries located on the territory of the Republic of Turkey.

Control and financial flows



* national Turkish co-financing is given indicatively - the transfer of funds will be clarified in the MoU



IPA funds

National cofinancing

Total Grant



9.3 Monitoring

The Managing Authority and the Joint Monitoring Committee will ensure the quality of the implementation of the programme. They will carry out monitoring by reference to the given indicators.

Lead Partners will submit a progress report every six months. These reports will be the central source to monitor implementation of operations.

The JTS on behalf of Managing Authority will provide all relevant information to the Joint Monitoring Committee to ensure proper implementation of the programme: For monitoring of progress, the JTS will regularly provide a report on the progress of the operations, commitments and payments.

Computerised exchange of data at EC level

In order to ensure the monitoring process of the programme by all actors involved, a Management/ Monitoring Information System (MIS) will be set up to ensure ability to exchange electronic data. The Managing Authority will ensure that all data related to CBC Programme is entered in MIS and that all reports submitted are based and/or identical with the information in that system.

9.4 Evaluation

9.4.1 Ex-ante Evaluation

The ex-ante evaluation was carried out in accordance to Article 109 (2) of Commission Regulation (EC) No 718/2007 of 12 June 2007.

The final ex-ante evaluation report will be submitted and attached to the final version of the programme (Annex 2).

Executive Summary Ex-ante Report

The main purposes of the ex-ante evaluation process are to optimise the allocation of budget funds, and to improve the quality of programming.

As laid down in relevant guidance, the ex-ante evaluation has the following structure:

- Appraisal of the socio-economic analysis and the relevance of the strategy to the needs identified
- Evaluation of the rationale of the strategy and its consistency
- Appraisal of the coherence of the strategy with regional and national policies and the Community Strategic Guidelines
- Evaluation of expected results and impacts
- Appraisal of the proposed implementation systems

The Final Ex-ante Evaluation Report is based on the draft Programme dated May 31st 2007, with two previous ex-ante comments prepared on the basis of drafts dated May 1st 2007, and February 16th 2007.

The overall assessment of the Programme is positive. The document has a clearly defined and well-elaborated structure, covering almost all requirements of relevant EU regulations and guidelines, with the exception of a defined logic for the distribution of funds across priority axes. Chapters have a clear logic, focusing on key analytical and strategic elements following the general shift towards a more strategic character of CBC programmes for the 2007-2013 programming period. The content of chapters also follows relevant EC guidance, ensuring that formal requirements are well met and that all necessary content has been included. However, chapter conclusions and the way the logic flows from one section to



the other to finally produce a clear basis for the identification of priority axes and spheres of intervention, should be better elaborated.

The drafting team has made considerable progress in the sections on the socio-economic analysis, the SWOT analysis, and the intervention framework following previous ex-ante comments. The present state of the analysis can be described as providing a **clear, balanced and reliable view over the needs and constraints, as well as the potential of the region**. Important differences between the two regions have been noted and appropriately addressed in the analysis, especially in the sections on demographic features and economic development. The analysis is correctly focusing on developments and trends, as opposed to cross-sectional conclusions, enabling the better integration of different data sources on the two sides of the border (as suggested in our previous comments). The analysis benefits from a clear presentation, with a good methodological background, of relevant factual data. The analysis makes use appropriately of a variety of primary data sources, generally complemented well by secondary analysis. A notable achievement is the provision of baselines and benchmarks, which set the discussion in context as opposed to reporting absolute values only. While this has been already done for some components of the analysis, the ex-ante evaluation team recommends a more thorough examination of the institutional and organization capacity for cross-border cooperation in each heading, as well as some more deliberation on the specific value added of cross-border cooperation in each level. It also recommends further strengthening of the links specifically between these chapters. The analysis remains relatively distant from the SWOT, with certain items in the SWOT appearing without sound analytical support. Concurrently, some items in the SWOT remain unaddressed in the strategic part. The SWOT analysis in terms of content does not seem to cover all issues identified in the problem analysis. A number of inconsistencies and errors have been found, which are described in the report.

The development of the intervention design seems to have progressed in compliance with best practices, involving relevant stakeholders in the production of both the SWOT analysis and the priority axis. However, in the process it seems the team may have strayed a bit from the analytical conclusions drawn in the first chapters. It must be reemphasized that the good linkage between these three chapters is indispensable for the good quality of the programme, since local stakeholders may lack the holistic and strategic overview of the region that is required for a sound intervention. This is one of the areas where some further work is required.

The intervention logic is well defined and follows a clear rationale. Priority axes and their respective spheres of intervention are integrated in a strong logical and strategic framework. However, a general comment stresses that the strategic framework seems to focus a lot on infrastructure, with community development allowed under one sphere of intervention of one priority axis only. Given the strong emphasis placed on culture and cultural heritage as powerful factors that bring the region together, a little attention has been paid to the promotion of culture, the dissemination of culture, and cultural activities altogether. In addition, while provisions for networking of institutions and enterprises have been made, no such provisions are readily visible as it regards communities. It is strongly suggested that this particular feature of the Programme be amended, since CBC programmes in general place great reliance on community involvement and support as a key success factor. What the programme lacks is the planning of interventions targeted at encouraging joint action in the field of innovation, R&D, or activities aiming to link public research institutions with local businesses and/or business support structures. Since the region is a peripheral one for both of the partnering countries and lags behind in its economic and social development, some interventions to facilitate innovations, research collaboration, to support ICT and information society (both infrastructure and services) are strongly recommended. However, the general conclusion is that the intervention is well designed and responds comparatively well to the needs of the region.

As properly noted in the Programme, indicators for programme progress and success are vital for achieving sustainable impacts. A typology of indicators has been developed comprising



horizontal and vertical levels of observation. The methodology used in the document is particularly strong and well suited. However, in terms of implementation some problems have been identified. It is recommended that the methodology be used to its full potential, which will necessitate minor reworking of the available indicator matrix, or that it not be used at all (it could potentially confuse readers). Furthermore, the Programme makes a commendable effort to define quantitative indicators of success, naming concrete values for each indicator used. This can significantly facilitate data collection and both the ex-ante and the ex-post evaluation process. As a cautionary note, however, without a clear view of the number of projects to follow within each priority, and how they would be distributed along sphere of intervention and activity, fixed quantitative indicators may be indicative only. It is therefore recommended that a sentence to that effect be added to the Programme to aid readers with a less complete understanding of the programme impact evaluation process.

It is evident that the measures envisaged in the Programme to promote cross-border cooperation will be complementary, consistent, coordinated, and compliant with other Community assistance instruments operating in both countries. Further, the implementation structure is very well elaborated, with a clear division of functions and responsibilities within and among bodies and relevant procedures clearly identified. The annual financial allocations also allow for a comparatively slower start to allow stakeholders to adapt to the programme. In terms of financial allocation, it is suggested that perhaps too much focus is being placed on infrastructure in the programme. It is further recommended that the Priority Axis which deals with more community-oriented and networking activities should be allocated the larger share of the funds, for example: 50% of funding for Priority Axis 1, 40% for Priority Axis 2, and 10% for Priority Axis 3 (TA).

A weakness of the Programme as of its previous drafts was the low quality of English language presentation. It should be reiterated the utmost importance of a clear and easily understandable text if the Programme for its further functioning and successful implementation.

The summary recommendations are as follows:

RECOMMENDATIONS	COMMENTS
To improve the clarity of presentation of the way the conclusions from the analytical chapter translate into the strategy	Accepted
To restate the SWOT analysis or replace it with another analytical tool	Accepted
To redirect funding towards the soft and network building measures under Priority Axis 1, with allocations recommended 50% for Priority Axis 1, 40% for Priority Axis 2, and 10% for Priority Axis 3	Accepted
The co-financing of Beneficiaries to provide through the National Budgets of partnering countries	Accepted
To improve English language presentation	Accepted
To deliberate further on the specific value added of cross-border cooperation as a means to solve regional problems should be included in each level of analysis	Specific value added issues (gender, minorities, etc.) are horizontal issues and will be taken in account in the project assessment process.
To elaborate on challenges to Bulgarian enterprises resulting from EU membership, especially for those in the agricultural sector	N/A
To expand the analytical section on culture	Accepted
To elaborate further and strengthen the importance of soft	Accepted



measures in the strategy section, since the strategic framework seems to focus too much on infrastructure To elaborate on school-firm partnerships, R&D activities and innovation identified as drivers of growth in analysis but not elaborated in the Programme	
To elaborate on the measurement and quantification of output indicators	Accepted
To focus the programme clearly on the development of local communities to achieve maximum synergy with other Community initiatives	Accepted

The overall conclusions are positive. The last version of the Programme has made impressive and tangible progress towards becoming a very good CBC programme. The programme will make a clear contribution to the sustainable development of the cross-border region.

9.4.2 Strategic Environmental Assessment

Non-technical summary of the SEA Report

Environment Assessment Methodology

The EA has been produced in accordance with the requirements of Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 June 2001 on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment and Bulgarian Ordinance for the conditions and the procedures for performing ecological assessment of plans and programmes (Prom. SG. 57/2 Jul 2004, amended by SG. 3/10 Jan 2006).

The final SEA report will be submitted and attached to the final version of the programme (Annex 3).

The EA is focused on an evaluation of the analysis of the current environmental status and on identifying the needs, including an assessment of the possible development without implementation of the Cross-Border Cooperation Programme "Bulgaria – Turkey 2007 – 2013". The EA examines the coherence of the strategy of the Cross-Border Cooperation Programme "Bulgaria – Turkey 2007 – 2013" with regard to other national plans, strategies and operational programmes. The EA attempts an assessment of the anticipated environmental impacts by the Cross-Border Cooperation Programme "Bulgaria – Turkey 2007 – 2013", with reference to its objectives, priority axes and operation spheres, and proposes measures for mitigation of the negative impacts on the environment and gives recommendations for qualitative improvement of the CBC Programme.

The assessment methodology is based on:

- Manual for Environmental Assessment of plans and programmes in Bulgaria;
- EU Manual for preliminary evaluation of programme documents under the EU structural funds;
- The experience of the team gained in the process of development of the preliminary evaluation National Strategy of Regional Development (NSRD), the Regional Development Plan (RDP) of the Southern Central Region for the period 2007 – 2013, the EA of the Cross-Border Cooperation Programme "Bulgaria – Turkey 2007 – 2013", etc.

The EA of the Cross-Border Cooperation Programme "Bulgaria – Turkey 2007 – 2013" was carried out in parallel with the development of the programme, and multiple meetings and discussions with the planning team were held in the course of the assessment. The consultations with the bodies in charge of the preparation of the Cross-Border Cooperation



Programme “Bulgaria – Turkey 2007 – 2013” and the participation of the public were conducted in the process of formulation of the EA scope and of the EA Report.

Existing State of the Environment

Protected territories and biodiversity in the cross-border region:

- *For Bulgaria:* The Strandzha Natural Park is the largest protected territory in Bulgaria characterized by abundant biodiversity and a variety of habitats and ecosystems, as well as numerous endemites largely in excess of the relevant amounts for Europe. Sakar Mountain, the Eastern Rhodopes and the wet zones in the vicinity of the town of Burgas and the Ropotamo River have been acknowledged as protected territories of global importance by the European Ornithological Society. Via Pontika/Northern Anatolika migratory route passes along coast, crossing the District of Burgas and the Province of Kirkclareli.
- *For Turkey:* One of the most important protected territories is the Gala Lake National Park, located within the Province of Edirne whose management plan is an example for the implementation of a wet zone management methodology. There are two protected territories in the Province of Kirkclareli: The Kastura Körfezi Reservation featuring a population of *Pinus nigra* Arn, and the Saka Lake Reservation including endangered forest vegetation species and rare wild fauna in a natural ecosystem.
- Other joint initiatives for biodiversity preservation exist along the border regions: joint projects for the delta of Maritza/Meriç/Euros and the Strandzha/Yıldız Mountain. The currently effective grant scheme under the PHARE Programme is an important step toward sustainable development in the Strandzha/Yıldız Mountain.

Main environmental problems by environmental component:

Air – The principle air polluters are the emissions from the industry and domestic heating, and gases from the transport. Air quality in Bulgaria is comparatively good, while air quality in both Turkish provinces is not satisfactory but is improving.

Water – The major part of the industries in Bulgaria have local WWTP. In the District of Burgas there are 7 WWTP, 5 of which require rehabilitation. Two WWTP are under construction in the District of Haskovo. There are no constructed WWTP for the settlements on the Turkish side of the cooperation zone; WWTP for several industries were recently constructed in the Province of Edirne, while other are under construction.

Waste – The majority of the settlements on the Bulgarian side have sanitary landfills; however, uncontrolled waste disposal represents a serious problem in some of the small municipalities and in the villages. Separate waste collection is being introduced. Most settlements on the Turkish side have no sanitary landfills, and the capacity of some of the landfills of the larger settlements has already been exhausted, which serious environmental problems.

Soils – The status of the soils within the cooperation zone is relatively good. This mostly applies to Bulgaria where most of the pollution generating industries have been closed. Erosion has been observed in recent years. 655,000 ha of soils in the Province of Kirkclareli are at risk; the amount of endangered soils in Bulgaria is less. Erosion is observed in the coastal area and in forest soils.

With regard to transport, the roads in Bulgaria, more precisely the second and third class roads are in a very poor condition and require serious rehabilitation, while road network condition in Turkey is much better, although some critical locations exist.

Specific Conclusions and Recommendations

Priority Axes of Development	Anticipated environmental effects	Mitigating environmental impact measures to be taken during Programme's implementation
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<p>Priority Axis 1</p>	<p>Operations under this Priority Axis will have a <u>positive effect</u> on the environment by means of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development of feasibility studies including drafting of document for application for funding under other programmes and other preparatory work for a large-scale investment activity with cross-border effect. • The activities of the type 'people-to-people', especially the encouragement of pilot activities and projects increasing the awareness of the population and institutions (on environmental issues), and the potential for implementation of environmentally friendly practices on both sides of the border. • The successful implementation of the activities related to alternative tourism development, the investments in the development of small-scale infrastructure for protection and/or renovation of the natural heritage and the monuments of the cultural and historic heritage, increasing the priority importance of environment protection on the part of the population and business. • The investments in the development of small-scale infrastructure for actions in case of disasters and breakdowns, aiding the protection of the environment and human health <p>Operations under this Priority Axis will have a <u>negative effect</u> on the environment by means of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The increase of the tourist flow in the region due to the generated pollution and waste, and the stress on the ecosystems and the biological species implied by the tourist activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When designs for new projects are prepared, new low- or no-waste technologies, know-how as well as alternative water, energy and material saving technologies and production methods should be employed and priority should be given to: technologies with minimal waste generation, construction of local wastewater treatment plants (LWWTP), and implementation of waste management systems. • Measures to limit harmful emissions of dust, noise, vibrations and waste during construction activities. • When preparing designs for infrastructure works, the boundaries of the adjacent protected territories and cultural monuments and of their protection zones should be taken into consideration, and provisions should be made for protection of the local ecosystems and habitats. • Encouragement of the cross-border cooperation between educational and research institutions in the field of environment protection, by giving particular attention to improving the material base and education of cadres for monitoring and solution of the regional environmental problems. • Encouragement of the active cooperation between scientific-research institutions and business organizations from both countries with a view to efficient and timely implementation of the new practices and technologies in the field of environment protection • Improving awareness about environmental problems, the environmental culture, the principles and practices of environmentally friendly life style as permanent part of the educational, cultural and sportive measures and activities of the 'people-to-people' type.
<p>Priority Axis 2</p>	<p>Operations under this Priority Axis will have a <u>positive effect</u> on the environment by means of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development of WWTP rehabilitation projects and the application for funds for their construction under other programmes, reducing the pollution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouraging of the development of joint projects by both parties in the field of environment protection. • Biodiversity and environmental protection should be taken as criteria by the selection of the activities. • Formulation of clear environmental priorities in cross-border aspect. • Facilitation of the communication



	<p>of the major rivers in the cross-border region – the Maritza and Tundzha Rivers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development of projects for prevention of floods and for the river basin management, as such projects will contribute to protection of the soils and the surface waters. • The development of projects for sanitary landfills and the application for funding of their construction under other programmes • The elaboration and implementation of joint initiatives and exchange of know-how in the field of environment protection and protection of nature on both sides of the border. • The realization of joint initiatives and the exchange of know-how to environmental issues between specialists, institutions, business organizations and NGOs on both sides of the border • Increasing the degree of information of the public with regard to environmental problems • The information campaign in respect of waste management, which will also lead to a decrease of the risks to human health. Cessation of non-regulated waste disposal will insert a <i>direct positive effect</i> on the state of the components of the environment. The reduction of environment pollution will lead to a decrease of the risks to human health. • Information campaigns to themes related to environment protection , and the campaigns for improvement of the readiness for actions in case of disasters and breakdowns • The joint activities and cooperation schemes aimed at prevention of floods from the rivers within the cooperation zone. Such activities will increase the degree of information and the potential of the population and the institutions for action in such cases and for protection of the environment and the health and lives of the people. 	<p>between the governmental institutions, local administration, scientific organizations and NGOs in the field of environment protection and protection of the cultural and historic heritage by both countries.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achievement of a good readiness state for reaction to and timely elimination of environmental damages due to disasters and breakdowns, including cross-border environment pollution • Encouragement of active communication and establishment of operative connection between experts, competent bodies and institutions in the field of environment protection and protection of the cultural and historic heritage by both countries. • Coordination of the procurement and arrangement of systems and facilities related to the environment protection and prevention of disasters and breakdowns in a cross-border aspect. • The projects for tourism development should be prepared under observation of the norm for recreational loading and the status of the territory. • Priority development of eco-tourism and other alternative form of tourism. • When designing tourist objects, the boundaries of the monuments of culture and their protection zones, the protected zones and habitats, as well as the necessity of construction LWWTP and implementation of a waste management system should be taken into consideration. • By tourism-related building activities measures should be taken to limit the harmful emissions of dust, noise, vibrations and waste. • Planning and implementation in of activities for preservation of biodiversity and prevention of the negative impacts from the increased tourist flow on the ecosystems in the region.
Priority Axis 3	No significant effect on the environment from the measures incorporated in this Priority Axis can be expected.	No special measures for reduction of the potential effects have been envisaged, since no significant effect on the environment from the activities related to



this Priority Axis can be expected.

Required Measures with Regard to Monitoring

The proposed measures for monitoring and control during implementation of the Cross-Border Cooperation Programme "Bulgaria – Turkey 2007 – 2013" are listed in the below table by environmental component:

Components and Factors	Measures	Periodicity Deadlines	Responsible Body
Surface Waters and Groundwater	Surface water and groundwater monitoring	Every trimester or as per approved plans	Basin Directorates RIPCPH EEA
Biodiversity and Protected Natural Territories	Control and observation of the requirements of the BA and PTA Implementation of particular measures for protection of the biodiversity, protected natural territories and habitats, depending on the type of the project./ The establishment of a tourist infrastructure should be in conformity with the existing protected natural territories and habitats of rare and endangered species Non-admittance and control during cutting woods, use of wildlife and fish reserves. Biodiversity protection and environment quality should taken as criteria by the selection of activities.	Prior to approval and during project implementation During designing and construction During designing and construction Permanent Permanent	RIEW MoEW MoEW MAF MoEW
Waste	Control of non-regulated waste disposal	Permanent	RIEW The Municipalities
Harmful Physical Factors	Noise level monitoring	During construction of new projects	RIPCPH EEA
Cultural Heritage	Monitoring by archaeologists and experts during excavations for the presence of cultural monuments	During excavation works	The Municipalities The Site Superintendents NIMC

Overall Conclusions and Recommendations of the Programme

It is evident from the conducted environmental analysis that the Programme may have a neutral or a slight positive effect on the environment, for the following reasons:



- **The Programme has a limited scope and scale**, due to the limited funds, so that all activities are of limited scope and scale.
- **The Programme does not contain provisions for execution of large infrastructural projects.** However it contains provisions for drafting of documents for application under other programmes where such project can be included. It is necessary that such projects be in compliance with the existing legislation in the field of environment and the measures recommended in the EA for decrease of their impact.
- **In the Programme there are almost no activities, which contain potential threat** for the environment. The activities that may affect the environment are related to the preparation of projects and the implementation of the latter for rehabilitation and construction of WWTP and sanitary landfills (their anticipated effect during construction will be a negative impact, while during operation they will have a positive effect), as well as the development of alternative tourism as most suitable in respect of sustainable development (development of tourism may have a negative impact on the biodiversity if improperly practiced).
- **A large number of activities have been incorporated in the Programme** that might have a favourable effect on the environment notwithstanding the fact that they are limited in their scope and effect.
- **With a view to improve the effect of the Programme on the environment**, it is recommended to focus on the cooperation between the municipalities especially with the framework of Priority Axis 2: Improvement of the Quality of Life.

It can be added as conclusion that:

The anticipated effect from the implementation of the Cross-Border Cooperation Programme "Bulgaria – Turkey 2007 – 2013" on the components of the environment as a whole will be favourable, admit will be necessary to implement the recommended measures for decrease of the effect and to provide for monitoring of the large infrastructure and other projects due to the impact these may insert on the environment.

Information on the public consultation process

In connection to the preparation of an EA and in accordance with requirements, public consultations have been held, including:

- announcement on the web-site of the MRDPW for conducting public consultations, containing following information: bodies responsible for implementation of the programme, place and time for access to the CBC Programme and SEA report, deadline for comments (14 days according to the Bulgarian legislation), way of submission of comments - via mail on paper or (but not only) via e-mail or other electronic devices;
- announcement on notice board at the MRDPW
- official letters to the environmental authorities at central and NUTS III level equivalents, district governors, mayors and municipal councils of all eligible municipalities in the CBC area;
- The necessary technical possibility and experts available for consultation were provided.

The following table shows the results of the public consultations:

Institution	Statement/Recommendation	Accepted/ Rejected
<i>On Bulgarian side</i>		
Municipality of Dimitrovgrad, Bulgaria	Accepts without remarks the priorities and spheres of intervention and suggestions of the SEA report.	A



Institution	Statement/Recommendation	Accepted/Rejected
Municipality of Bourgas, Bulgaria	Accepts the strategy of the programme and supports the recommendations made in the SEA report. Considers that foreseen measures are relevant in view of environmental impact mitigation and prevention.	A
	Suggests that pollution of the Black Sea coastal waters should be taken in account.	N/r
Municipality of Pomorie, Bulgaria	Accepts the strategy of the programme and agrees with the conclusions of the SEA report.	A
	Suggests: to increase implementation of environmental friendly technologies; priority should be given to environmental friendly projects;	A
District administration, Bourgas, Bulgaria	Fully supports the strategy of the Programme and accepts the SEA report.	A
Black Sea Basin Directorate, Varna	Proposal to include additional priorities: "Developing of the opportunity for preservation of the underground water resources as strategic reserve for drinking water needs" ; "Quality improvement of the bathing water"; "Increasing the number of the biological wastewater treatment facilities for stock-farms"	R
East Aegean Sea River Basin Directorate	- To add following activities to the Priority Axis 1: Increasing of the environmental awareness and knowledge of the young generation starting with the primary school.	A
	Elaboration of educational programmes for the population aimed at increasing disaster management awareness of inhabitants and preparation for adequate reaction in case of disaster events.	A
	- To add following activities to the Priority Axis 2 Starting of activities related to building of net of facilities for disaster prevention and early warning. Immediately find financial sources for those activities.	Partially A
	Plan and annually finance activities on clearing of river beds and canals aiming avoiding floods; Specify sections of river beds within the river settlements to be corrected and fortified.	Partially A
	Find finance sources (as a priority) to fund infrastructure projects on the Bg-Tr BCCPs – such as landscape activities, local WWTP, waste collection, etc.	Partially A
	Finance projects aimed at restoring and preservation biodiversity on the territory of Maritsa, Tundja and Arda river basins.	A
	Find possibilities to finance building up of engineering infrastructure within small settlements (below 2000 inhabitants) as potential regions for development of	A



Institution	Statement/Recommendation	Accepted/Rejected
	environmentally friendly tourism and agriculture.	
	During the implementation period of the programme consultations to be carried out with the East Aegean Sea River Basin Directorate	A
Ministry of Environment and Waters, Bulgaria	Remarks on the SEA report: To the table 9 bullet 1: the text to be edited as follows: "...priority should be given to projects aimed at implementation of new low- or no-waste technologies, new know-how as well as other water, energy and material saving technologies, environmentally friendly technologies and production methods should be employed and priority should be given to: technologies with minimal waste generation, construction of local wastewater treatment plants...".	A
	To include a non-technical resume of the SEA report.	A
	To precise the text about participation of the directorate "Preventive activities" in the Monitoring Committee.	N/a
	Remarks on the description of how the public consultations have been carried out	A
	Remarks of how results of public consultations are taken into account.	A
Ministry of Environment and Waters, Bulgaria	Instructions for detailed description of categories for water pollution	R
	Instructions regarding table 11 of the SEA Report: indicators "Rehabilitated or constructed WWTP" and "Rehabilitated or constructed sanitary landfills" to be taken out; the indicator "Woods cut-down (area reduction)" to be moved to priority axes 1 and re-edited.	R
On Turkish side		
<i>The Turkish side agrees in general with the priorities and suggestions of the SEA report; and makes remarks and comment including:</i>		
On chapter of the SEA report: 1.3.2.1 "Air and Greenhouse Gas Emissions" (page 13)	Corrections regarding updating of data on sulphur dioxides (latest available data).	A
On chapter 1.3.2.10 Global Warming (page 22)	Precising the text	A
Chapter 1.3.2.10, table1 (pages 23 and 24)	Precising the text in the report	A



Description of the measures decided concerning monitoring

(in accordance with Art. 9(1)c and Art.10 of the SEA Directive 2001/42/EC)

A quality and effective system of monitoring and evaluating of the environmental impacts of the CBC Programme implementation will contribute not only to preventing the programme's possible negative environmental impacts, but it will also help to enhance its positive effects, not only in terms of the environment, but also in terms of a higher quality of the projects submitted.

In order to ensure monitoring of environmental impact the following measures will be taken:

- To incorporate the environmental guiding questions / indicators into the overall system of monitoring the programme implementation impacts
- To connect the monitoring system to the system of evaluating and selecting the projects and also for further project monitoring;
- To link monitoring of the programme to monitoring of the single projects;
- To publish the results of monitoring;
- To ensure sufficient personnel and professional capacities for environmental areas within the programme monitoring;
- To involve the Ministry of Environment and Waters into the discussion about the overall system of monitoring and especially the way of incorporating environmental issues into the overall system before it is launched;
- To ensure that the applicants are informed sufficiently about environmental issues and about possible links of the draft projects to the environment;
- To invite environmental organizations to take part in the Joint monitoring committee established for the programme.

The whole monitoring system includes the following activities:

- Monitoring of environmental guiding questions / indicators **with special attention to those related to NATURA 2000 Network**;
- Examination of the monitoring results, i.e. revision of changes in environmental indicators
- Initiation of respective steps in case the programme negative environmental impacts were found
- Publishing of the results of monitoring;
- Selection and modifications of environmental guiding questions / indicators with respect to the character of the projects submitted;
- Communication with the respective assessment authority (Ministry of Environment and Waters) and other authorities working in environmental protection
- Providing environmental consulting to people working in the programme implementation structure, i.e. especially to the assessors;
- Providing advisory services to applicants submitting projects in the environmental field
- Providing information on environmental issues related to the programme to all parties interested

The above mentioned activities will ensure a quality and effective system to monitor environmental effects of the programme implementation.

As stated in the Environmental Assessment, there might be potential negative impacts on environment due to the increase of tourist flow. The proposed measures for monitoring and control during implementation of CBC Programme Bulgaria – Turkey 2007-2013 will be strictly followed and thus potential negative impact will be minimized.

Statement summarising how the environmental considerations and the opinions expressed have been taken into account

(in accordance with Art. 9(1)b of the SEA Directive 2001/42/EC)

Organisation	Comment/Recommendation	How the comment/recommendation have been integrated into the
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		Programme
SEA Evaluators	The Programme does not contain provisions for execution of large infrastructural projects. However it contains provisions for drafting of documents for application under other programmes where such project can be included. It is necessary that such projects be in compliance with the existing legislation in the field of environment and the measures recommended in the EA for decrease of their impact.	This recommendation was incorporated into the Chapter 5.4.2, namely: "Project preparation (feasibility studies, preparatory, technical and detail design project works, etc) could be financed under this programme and should be prepared in line with the relevant environmental legislation, and the relevant sectoral directives (where applicable). The same applies to all investments in development of small-scale infrastructure activities and restoration works."
SEA Evaluators	Development of tourism may have a negative impact on the biodiversity if improperly practiced.	This recommendation was taken into account during the elaboration of the section 9.4.2 (page 74): "The proposed measures for monitoring and control during implementation of CBC Programme Bulgaria – Turkey 2007-2013 will be strictly followed and thus potential negative impact will be minimized."
SEA Evaluators	With a view to improve the effect of the Programme on the environment, it is recommended to focus on the cooperation between the municipalities especially with the framework of Priority Axis 2: Improvement of the Quality of Life.	All the municipalities in the eligible for this programme region are regarded as main potential beneficiaries. There are no obstacles or any unfavourable conditions limiting the cooperation between them in the process of implementation of the eligible programme actions. In this context special focus on cooperation between municipalities seems unnecessary.
Municipality of Bourgas, Bulgaria	Suggests that pollution of the Black Sea coastal waters should be taken in account.	The issues concerning pollution of the Black Sea coastal waters are not in the focus of this programme. However the overall objective of Priority axis 2 is to stipulate cooperation for protection of nature and specific fields of environment. Thus some activities concerning quality of the Black Sea coastal waters might be executed under Priority axis 2, complementing other national and international programmes.
Municipality of Pomorie, Bulgaria	Suggests: to increase implementation of environmental friendly technologies; priority should be given to environmental friendly projects	Each of the development areas (economic, social, cultural, environmental) in the CBC P target sustainable development of the region which corresponds to the overall strategic goal of the CBC Programme.



		<p>At project application stage applicants will fill in a standard form regarding possible environmental impact of the proposed operation as an integral part of the application process.</p> <p>Proposals of environmental friendly projects will be encouraged.</p>
Black Sea Basin Directorate, Varna	<p>Proposal to include additional priorities: "Developing of the opportunity for preservation of the underground water resources as strategic reserve for drinking water needs" ; "Quality improvement of the bathing water"; "Increasing the number of the biological wastewater treatment facilities for stock-farms"</p>	<p>The proposed priorities can not be included in the CBC P as separate priority axes.</p> <p>However some activities concerning these issues might be executed under Priority axis 2, complementing other national and international programmes.</p>
East Aegean Sea River Basin Directorate	<p>- To add following activities to the Priority Axis 1: Increasing of the environmental awareness and knowledge of the young generation starting with the primary school.</p>	
	<p>Elaboration of educational programmes for the population aimed at increasing disaster management awareness of inhabitants and preparation for adequate reaction in case of disaster events.</p>	<p>Such type of interventions is foreseen in measure 2.2 of the Priority 2. The exact activities will be specified in the Internal Document.</p>
	<p>- To add following activities to the Priority Axis 2 Starting of activities related to building of net of facilities for disaster prevention and early warning. Immediately find financial sources for those activities.</p>	<p>This type of activities is included in measure 2.1 under Priority 2. Financial sources for the programme are definite and additional funds are not available.</p>
	<p>Plan and annually finance activities on clearing of river beds and canals aiming avoiding floods; Specify sections of river beds within the river settlements to be corrected and fortified.</p>	<p>Such type of activities is included in measure 2.1 under Priority 2. Priorities on which the particular Call for proposals will be announced and respectively projects to be financed will be decided by the JMC.</p>
	<p>Find finance sources (as a priority) to fund infrastructure projects on the Bg-Tr BCCPs – such as landscape activities, local WWTP, waste collection, etc.</p>	<p>The improvement of BCCPs and the adjoining areas is a matter of national importance. However, in view of improvement of the BCCPs, some activities (measure 2.1) under this CBC P could complement national plans and programmes.</p>



	Finance projects aimed at restoring and preservation biodiversity on the territory of Maritsa, Tundja and Arda river basins.	Implementation of such type of activities is foreseen under measure 2.2
	Find possibilities to finance building up of engineering infrastructure within small settlements (below 2000 inhabitants) as potential regions for development of eco-tourism and environmental friendly agriculture.	Implementation of such type of activities is foreseen under measure 1.2
	During the implementation period of the programme consultations to be carried out with the East Aegean Sea River Basin Directorate	The East Aegean Sea River Basin Directorate is a structure within the Ministry of Environment and Waters. A representative of this Ministry will be a member of the Joint Monitoring Committee and coordination and consultation will be able at any time.
Ministry of Environment and Waters, Bulgaria	To include a non-technical resume of the SEA report.	A non-technical summary of the SEA report has been included in the CBC P (Chapter 9.4.2)
	To precise the text about participation of the directorate "Preventive activities" in the Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC).	A representative of the Ministry of Environment and Waters will participate in the JMC sessions. Nomination of this representative is a responsibility of the Minister of environment and waters.
	Remarks on the description of how the public consultations have been carried out	Detailed description of how the public consultations have been carried out has been provided in the Chapter 9.4.2
	Remarks of how results of public consultations are taken into account.	This table shows how the results of public consultations are taken into account and it has been added in the final version of the CBC P.

9.4.3 Evaluations during the programme period

On-going evaluation is a process taking the form of a series of evaluation exercises. Its main purpose is to follow on a continuous basis the implementation and delivery of CBC programme and changes in its external environment, in order to better understand and analyse outputs and results achieved and progress towards longer-term impacts, as well as to recommend, if necessary, remedial actions.

During the programme period the two countries participating in the programme will carry out evaluations closely linked to the monitoring of the programme, in particular where the monitoring of the programme reveals a significant departure from the goals initially set or where proposals are made for the revision of this programme.



During the implementation of the programme evaluations will be made. The scope of the evaluations will be targeted to specific needs of the programme identified in the monitoring, e.g. to impacts of the finalised operations and the programme.

The Joint Monitoring Committee shall decide on the execution of such evaluation. The evaluations shall be carried out by external experts. The results of the evaluations will be sent to the Commission.



10 PUBLICITY AND COMMUNICATION

The participating countries Bulgaria and Turkey shall provide information on and publicise CBC Programme and its operations. The information shall be addressed to the citizens and beneficiaries, with the aim of highlighting the role of the Community and ensuring transparency (see Article 62 of Commission Regulation (EC) No 718/2007 of 12 June 2007). The Managing Authority is responsible for carrying out the information and publicity measures.

The information and publicity measures are presented in the form of a communication plan. The information and publicity measures within the scope of the CBC Programme are designed:

- to target potential and final beneficiaries and serve the purpose of informing on the possibilities offered by the European Union, Bulgaria and Turkey and guaranteeing the transparency of the joint interventions;
- to inform the general public of the role that the European Union plays together with Bulgaria and Turkey in the respective interventions and of their results;
- to guarantee transparency vis-à-vis potential and final beneficiaries by a general information on the programme. Furthermore to give an overview of competencies, organisation and project selection procedures as well as standardised information on project applications. Also the selection criteria and valuation mechanisms for tenders and project applications will be published. All the information will be available for downloading on the respective programme websites;
- to inform the public about announcements on the start of the programme in the media, giving an appropriate presentation of the participation of the European Union. Ongoing communication on the stages of a project's implementation throughout the entire programme planning period and the presentation of the final results of the programme.

The general strategic goal of the information and publicity measures is to create a uniform public image which should achieve the status of a brand name or a "corporate identity" with time. To this end, a common logo is used on printed matter, publications, in the printed and electronic media. For the strategic implementation of the contents listed above, the following shall be used:

- A programme-specific website providing ongoing information to the general public, potential and final beneficiaries as well as structured networks in the Internet, which are to be prepared by the Technical Secretariat in close co-operation with the JTS antennae;
- Information material in the form of leaflets, information binders and brochures;
- Ad hoc press releases, press conferences to inform the national, regional and local media (e. g. on the start of the programme, best practices, project completions, Monitoring Committee meetings, annual implementation reports, enlargement);
- Regional and local information events and networking of project organisers, financing institutions and funding bodies (kick-off event at the start of a programme at the regional level as well as information events at the regional level);
- Contributions to special-interest events, articles in special-interest magazines.

The application of the above-mentioned information and publicity measures are differentiated within the programme planning period by three phases each of which having different requirements:

- Information on the start and the announcement of programme: The objective of this phase is to spread the information as widely as possible (potential and final beneficiaries as well as the general public) and to inform in general about the programme, contact partners, info points, procedures and decision-making structures, etc. Communication means: Kick-off events in Bulgaria and Turkey; leaflet, press



conferences, press releases on the start of the programme (as fast as possible after the programme has been approved by the EC);

- Ongoing information, communication and presentation: In this phase, the public is regularly informed on the current status of the implementation of the programme and on the completion of successful projects. Furthermore, clear information (homogenous) at the regional and local level on the administrative procedures and information on the selection criteria and valuation mechanisms are provided. Regular information and networking events by project organisers, financing institutions and funding bodies are crucial in this phase for the implementation of the joint programme planning document. Communication means: Brochures, information events, organisation of events to share experiences among projects, press releases on the status of the implementation, etc;
- Presentation of results and review: As of the end of the programming planning period, a presentation of the completed projects and a review of the co-operation projects created are given. Communication means: Brochures, final events, etc.



11 MAIN DOCUMENTS AND PUBLICATIONS USED

1. Bulgarian National Statistical Institute - Yearbook 2005;
2. Bulgarian National Statistical Institute - "Regions, districts and municipalities in Bulgaria, 2004";
3. Statistical data and Labour market analyses of Bulgarian National Employment agency;
www.az.government.bg
4. District development strategy 2005 – 2015 of district Burgas;
5. District development strategy 2005 – 2015 of district Yambol;
6. District development strategy 2005 – 2015 of district Haskovo;
7. Eurostat Yearbook 2006–07;
8. Turkish Statistical Institute, Yearbook 2005, <http://www.turkstat.gov.tr>;
9. Turkish Statistical Institute, on-line data <http://www.turkstat.gov.tr>;
10. Turkish Statistical Institute, Household Labour Market Surveys,
11. Republic of Turkey, Ministry of labour and social security, General Directorate of Turkish Employment Organization, Statistical yearbook 2005 available at <http://www.iskur.gov.tr>
12. Environment Status Report Kırklareli, 2005;
13. Environment Status Report Edirne, 2005
14. Written questions from the European Commission and related answers of Turkey on CHAPTER 27: ENVIRONMENT, <http://www.abgs.gov.tr>
15. EU Strategy on the Sustainable Use of Natural Resources,
<http://ec.europa.eu/environment/natres/>
16. Written questions from the European Commission in the screening process of and related answers given of Republic of Turkey, on Chapter 22;Regional development,
<http://www.abgs.gov.tr/indexen.html>

**GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS**

Acronym	Description
AA	Audit Authority
ARDPSS	Agriculture and Rural development Programme for Strandja-Sakar
CA	Certifying Authority
CARDS	Community Assistance for Reconstruction, Development and Stabilisation
CBC P	Cross-Border Cooperation Programme
CC	Candidate Countries
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
EC	European Council / European Commission
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
EU	European Union
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IPA	Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance
IAU	Internal Audit Unit
ISPA	Instrument for Structural Policies for Pre-accession
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
JMC	Joint Monitoring Committee
JSPF	Joint Small Projects Fund
JTF	Joint Task Force for programming
JTS	Joint Technical Secretariat
MA	Managing Authority
MIPD	Multi-annual Indicative Planning Document, former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
MIS	Management Information System
MoEW	Ministry of Environment and Water, Bulgaria
MRDPW	Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works, Bulgaria
NDP	National Development Plan
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
NSRF	National Strategic Reference Framework
NUTS	Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics
OP	Operational Programme
PCC	Potential candidate countries
Phare CBC	Phare (P oland H ungary A id for R econstruction of the E conomy) Programme for Cross-Border Cooperation
R&D	Research and Development
SAPARD	Special accession programme for agriculture and rural development
SCF	Strategic Coherence Framework, Turkey
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SF	Structural funds
SMEs	Small and Medium sized Enterprises
SWOT	Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities, Threats
TA	Technical Assistance