



## BULGARIA - TURKEY IPA CBC PROGRAMME 2014 – 2020

### FINAL Joint Working Group Meeting

#### Minutes

<b>Date:</b>	<b>20<sup>th</sup> August 2014</b>
<b>Venue:</b>	BEST WESTERN PLUS City Hotel, Sofia, Bulgaria
<b>Participants:</b>	According to the registration list (JWG members and guests – Annex 1)

#### **Part A Opening of the meeting and agreement on the agenda**

The meeting was opened by Ms. Maria DUZOVA, General Director of the Directorate General "Territorial Cooperation Management" at the Ministry of Regional Development of the Republic of Bulgaria and co-chairperson of the Joint Working Group (JWG).

Welcome speeches addressing the JWG members and guests were held by:

- Ms. Yordanka Chobanova, Deputy Minister of Regional Development;
- Ms. Şebnem Sözer – Coordinator, Cross-border Cooperation and Multi-beneficiary Programmes, within the Financial Cooperation Directorate at the Ministry for EU Affairs of the Republic of Turkey;
- Ms. Ann-Jasmin Krabatsch, Programme Manager in Competence Centre "Macro-regions and European territorial co-operation", Directorate General for Regional and Urban Policy;
- His Excellency Mr. Süleyman Gökçe, Ambassador of the Republic of Turkey to the Republic of Bulgaria.

In addition to his introductory words, the Ambassador highlighted that Turkey was an adamant supporter of the IPA CBC Programme in principle. He, however, regretfully expressed his concerns regarding unilateral confrontational statements and actions taken by some Bulgarian local authorities, parties to the IPA CBC Programme, targeting Turkey. He characterized these as incompatible with the spirit of good-neighborliness and trans-border cooperation. He further emphasized that these



statements/actions undermine the basis for cooperation, and also create undue difficulties in TR-BG IPA CBC Programme. On this note, the Ambassador cautioned that, in the existence of these statements/actions, Turkey views it difficult in supporting the implementation of the IPA CBC programme, and thus occurrence of similar cases should be prevented.

Ambassador Gökçe proposed that the projects that will be funded under the Priority Axis "Sustainable Tourism" with regard to the preservation of cultural heritage in the cross border region be chosen among the projects that were enlisted at the "Programme for Cooperation in the Field of Preservation of Immovable Cultural Heritage for 2012-2016" signed by the Ministries of Culture of both partnering countries. This proposal was agreed upon and it was decided to include related items/conditions in the Guidelines for Applicants.

In response to the remarks made by Ambassador Gökçe, the Deputy Minister Ms. Chobanova expressed once again the willingness of the Bulgarian side for the continuation and development of the bilateral cooperation with the Republic of Turkey and assured that the measures to be taken against the issues outlined in Mr. Ambassador's intervention could be discussed at the later stages. Ms. Chobanova emphasized on the need the IPA CBC Programme between the two partnering countries to be approved by the members of the JWG, ensuring its timely submission to the European Commission by September 22<sup>nd</sup> 2014 and its final adoption within the current calendar year for avoiding loss of IPA funds.

The agenda of the meeting was presented to the JWG members and it was adopted unanimously.

**Part B Presentations: Programming approach, Conclusions and Recommendations of the Ex-ante evaluation and SEA and Final version of the Bulgaria-Turkey IPA CBC Programme 2014 – 2020**

The meeting continued with presentations (*Annex 2, 3 and 4*) by consultants focused on: the programming approach and the scope and content of the final version of the Programming document. In addition, the conclusions and recommendations of the ex-ante evaluation were presented. The programming experts informed the JWG members on the forthcoming steps towards Programme approval by the EC.

During the meeting, various themes, proposals and questions on the scope and the content of the future Programme were raised and discussed.

The representative of the Municipality of Kırklareli, Mr. Üzeyir Koçtürk, supported by Ms. Şenay Çekiç





from Trakya Development Agency, explained that investment projects on Turkish territory with focus on nature preservation/protection (e.g. cleaning the riverbeds, projects with focus on forests or related to other environmental issues), are not in their entirety in the jurisdiction of the municipalities and require a special permission and participation of wider stakeholders by the relevant Turkish authorities.

In response to the abovementioned, Ms. Sözer clarified that the peculiarities of the Turkish legislation will be taken into account during the preparation of the Guidelines for applicants.

On behalf of the municipality of Edirne Ms. Özlem Uçar a proposal was made, actions for supporting the use of alternative energy sources also to be included as indicative actions under the Programme. The proposal was accepted by the Managing and National Authorities.

The pre-financing ratio of the projects for the new period was asked by Mr. Üzeyir Koçtürk, stressing the difficulties faced by project beneficiaries in the current period. Ms. Duzova replied that the pre-financing ratio for the project needed to be discussed by the MA and the CA.

In response to the questions raised by Mr. Momchil Markov, representative from the Ministry of Transport, Information Technologies and Communications, about the future implementation and especially about the result indicators, clarifications and detailed information were given by the EC representative Ms. Krabatsch, as well as from the two co-chairpersons – Ms. Duzova and Ms. Sözer.

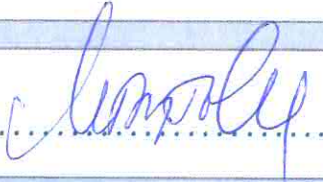

On behalf of the Ministry of Interior, a special gratitude to the JWG members and to the programming experts for their efforts and work on the preparation of the Bulgaria-Turkey IPA CBC Programme 2014-2020 was expressed by Mr. Julian Grancharov. It was stated, that the joint initiatives and actions focused on flood prevention foreseen in the Programming document were timely and needed especially taking into account the disasters in last few months.

### **Part C Closure of the meeting**

At the end of the meeting, the members of the JWG adopted with consensus and without any objections the Bulgaria-Turkey IPA CBC Programme 2014-2020, with minor adjustments to be made by the MA and the NA prior to its submission to the EC. The co-chairpersons thanked to the JWG members for their active participation during the process of preparation of the future IPA CBC Programme between the Republic Bulgaria and Republic of Turkey.



The co-chairpersons from the Bulgarian and the Turkish side have signed Decision (Annex 5), of which these present minutes are an annex and an integral part, and which reflects the results of the Final meeting of the JWG.

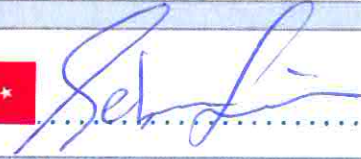

  


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