

Citizen's Summary of Annual Implementation Report for the financial year 2016

In 2016, the Managing Authority (MA) continued to coordinate and carry out the activities related to implementation of the Programme and setting up of the system structure that included: setting up of the management and control system, launching the 1st Call for Proposals, coordinating evaluation of the submitted applications, preparing the evaluation plan, organizing the technical meetings with the National Authorities (NAs), employment of the Joint Secretariat (JS) staff, improving functionalities of the electronic monitoring system (eMS), and implementing Programme communication and information activities.

Setting up the management and control system

During 2016, the MA continued with setting up of the management and control system and preparation of the Description of the Management and Control System and other related documents. The MA submitted to the AA the first version of the designation package for examination of the compliance with the designation criteria on 18 November 2016.

The submitted designation package consisted of the Description of the Management and Control System and related annexes: Manual of Procedures of the Managing Authority, Manual of Procedures of the Joint Secretariat, Manual of Procedures of the Certifying Authority, Control Guidelines for IPA CBC Programmes, Description of National Control System in the Republic of Croatia, Description of National Control System in the Republic of Serbia, Manual for Managing Technical Assistance and Fraud Risk Assessment.

Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC) meetings

One Joint Monitoring Committee meeting was held in 2016: on 1 March 2016 in Novi Sad, Serbia, during which the Programme rules on eligibility of expenditures and Guidelines for Applicants for the 1st Call for Proposals were adopted.

There were also five JMC written procedures launched by the Managing Authority during 2016. The first one, which was launched in May 2016, resulted in adoption of the Annual Implementation Report on implementation of the Programme in financial years 2014 and 2015 and the Citizen's summary - Annex 1 to the Annual Implementation Report. The second one, launched in July 2016, resulted in adoption of the Rules of Procedures of Joint Steering Committee and Joint Steering Committee members and deputy members. The third was launched in August 2016 and resulted in approval and adoption of the Evaluation plan for the Programme. The fourth was launched in November 2016 and ended with approval of the nominated replacement of the Chairperson of the Joint Steering Committee (JSC) under the 1st Call for Proposals. Finally, the fifth was launched in December with the aim of examination and approval of the Technical Assistance budget and Annual work plan of the Joint Secretariat.

Technical meetings of MA and NAs

During 2016, the MA held three technical meetings with the NAs in order to discuss and agree on the system set up and TA budget and to draft relevant documents for the Description of the Management and Control System.

The first technical meeting was held in Zagreb on 3 February 2016. The MA and NAs discussed Programme rules on eligibility of expenditures, Memorandum of Understanding, Descriptions of national control systems in Croatia and in Serbia, Application Package for the 1st CfP and the Programme budget.

The second meeting was held in Novi Sad on 29 February 2016. The MA and NAs reached final agreements on open issues within Programme rules on eligibility of expenditures and Guidelines for Applicants, discussed and agreed on the TA budget for National Authority in Serbia and discussed the TA Agreement in detail.

The third meeting was held in Zagreb on 17 October 2016 where the participants discussed employment of JS staff, the TA budget, procedure for the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between Programme bodies, and applications submitted within the 1st Call for Proposals.

Human resources

During 2016, there were no further employments in the MA.

The procurement procedure for employment of JS staff (Project Manager), launched in October 2015, was completed in March 2016. Project Manager was employed in April 2016. Another employment procedure (2 Financial Managers) was launched in October and completed in December 2016.

In total, the MA and JS staff members attended 17 different trainings/workshops/seminars during 2016.

The 1st Call for Proposals (CfP)

At the beginning of 2016, the MA started to prepare the Application Package for the 1st CfP and to adjust the electronic monitoring system (eMS) for launching of the 1st CfP. Additionally, the eMS was tested and prepared for other relevant implementation phases: evaluation of project proposals, contracting, reporting, etc.

The 1st CfP was launched through the eMS on 15 March 2016 and was opened until 30 June 2016. The Application Package consisted of the following documents:

1. Guidelines for Applicants (GfA),
2. Application Manual,
3. Template of the Lead Partner Statement,
4. Template of the Project Partner Statement,
5. State Aid self-assessment questionnaire,
6. Template for Partnership Pre-agreement,
7. Model Partnership Agreement,
8. Model Subsidy Contract,
9. Offline template for Application Form
10. Offline template for budget.

The total amount available within 1st CfP was EUR 15.009.809 out of which EUR 12.758.338 represents the EU funding (Programme co-financing) and the remaining EUR 2.251.471 represents the national funding. The 1st CfP was opened for all 4 Priority Axes.

The total amount allocated for 1st CfP is broken down per Priority Axis as follows:

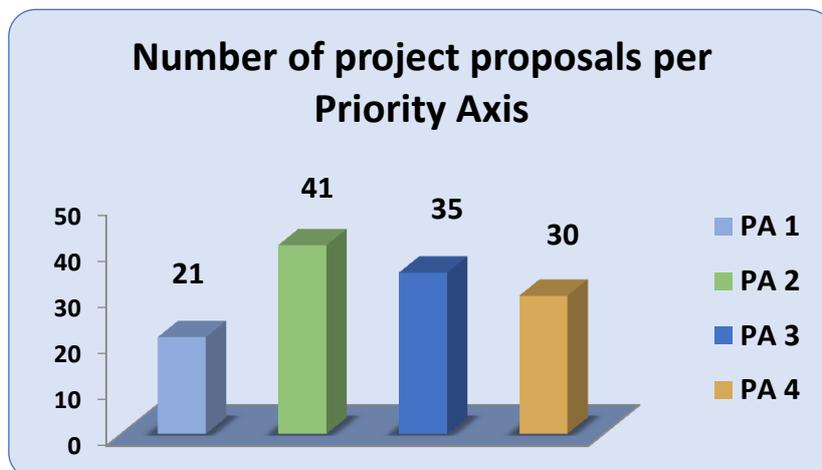
Priority axis	Union funding	National co-financing	Total
Priority axis 1	2.126.390	375.245	2.501.635
Priority axis 2	4.961.576	875.572	5.837.148
Priority axis 3	3.118.705	550.360	3.669.065
Priority axis 4	2.551.667	450.294	3.001.961
TOTAL	12.758.338	2.251.471	15.009.809

In total, 127 applications were submitted by 501 project partners out of which 259 are based in the Republic of Croatia and 242 in the Republic of Serbia. Distribution of Lead Partners per country during the 1st CfP is as follows:

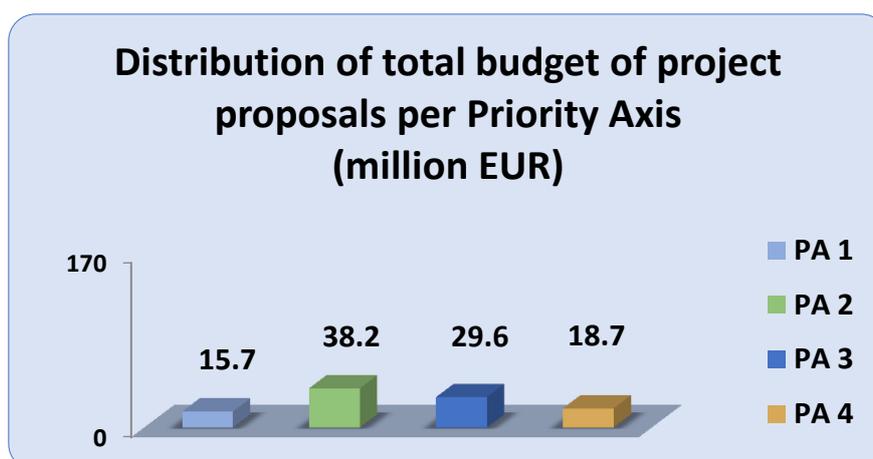


The highest number of project applications was related to Priority axis 2 (PA 2 - Protecting the environment and biodiversity, improving risk prevention and promoting sustainable energy and energy efficiency), while PA 3 (Contributing to the development of tourism and preserving cultural and natural heritage), PA 4 (Enhancing competitiveness and developing business environment in the Programme area) and PA 1 (Improving the quality of public social and health services in the Programme area) sectors were to follow.

Distribution of applications per Priority Axis is as follows:



The total amount of funds requested by applicants is EUR 102.179.501,80, and is distributed per Priority Axis as follows:



Both phases of the evaluation of the project proposals (administrative and eligibility check and quality assessment) were done through the eMS. The quality assessment was carried out by the independent team of external assessors that were supervised by the JSC, acting under the responsibility of the JMC. Two JSC meetings were held in 2016, in September and November respectively, both in Zagreb.

Information and communication activities

In line with the Programme Communication Strategy and Annual Communication Plan for 2016, the MA implemented number of information and communication activities.

The Programme launching conference, marking the publication of the 1st CfP and the beginning of the implementation of the Programme, was held on 16 March 2016 in Vukovar, Croatia. The conference was attended by more than 200 national, regional, local and other relevant stakeholders from both participating countries.

After the publication of the 1st CfP, the MA and JS organised four information sessions (Novi Sad, Vukovar, Loznica and Osijek) attended by more than 320 participants. The MA and JS staff presented the Programme, Guidelines for Applicants, application process through the eMS, project budget, details of the assessment and selection process and technical information relevant for the application. The presentations provided at the information sessions were published on the Programme website.

Furthermore, during June 2016, the MA and JS organised two project clinics: in Novi Sad and Osijek. The aim of the project clinics was to provide assistance to applicants whose project proposals were at the advanced stage of preparation and needed final assistance concerning the preparation of project design or project budget. In total these sessions were attended by more than 120 participants.

In addition, the MA and JS managed the constant inflow of question and inquiries: seven sets of Q&A documents were published on the Programme website, with more than 220 answers, explanations and clarifications.

The MA organized the European Cooperation Day celebrating the achievements of cross-border, transnational and interregional cooperation in the regions and countries throughout Europe in Skradin on 23 September 2016. The MA presented the achievements of both Interreg IPA Programmes.

The MA maintained the Programme website and social networks. Around 40 posts on Programme's activities were published on the Programme website in 2016 providing information on general activities, project implementation tips&tricks and the Programme itself, including notifications, documents and materials.

Priority Axis 5

Technical assistance activities were implemented by the MA and other authorities involved in the management of the Programme. Under Priority axis 5, the following actions were carried out during 2016:

- JS supporting the managing authority and assisting the joint monitoring committee in the implementation and day-to-day management of the Programme set up and managed;
- 1st Call for proposals, including the development of guidance documents setting out the conditions for the support of operations prepared and published;
- procedures for the quality assessment, monitoring and control of operations implemented under the cooperation programme, making use of experts where relevant, and contributing to the reduction of administrative burden for beneficiaries set up and implemented;
- Programme evaluation plan drafted and adopted;
- computerised system (eMS) to record and store data on each operation necessary for the monitoring, evaluation, financial management, verification and audit (including data on individual participants in operations where applicable, in compliance with electronic data exchange requirements provided for in Article 122(3) of the CPR and in related implementing acts) and contributing to the reduction of administrative burden for beneficiaries set up whereas running and maintenance started;

- trainings and capacity building to the programme management structure ensured;
- information documents for applicants and beneficiaries to guide them in the preparation of applications and the implementation, evaluation, control and communication of approved operations drafted;
- consultation, information, training and exchange events to strengthen the capacity of applicants to develop applications directly contributing to the Programme specific objectives and expected results organised;
- information and exchange tools (e.g. analytical documents, bilateral meetings, targeted events, etc.) and organising cross-border and national events to strengthen the involvement of relevant partners in the implementation of the Programme developed.

Indicator	Measurement unit	Current value	Target value (2023) (optional)
Calls for proposals successfully launched and closed	Number	1	
Joint Monitoring Committee meetings held	Number	1	9
Programme e-Monitoring System developed, implemented and used	Number	1	1
Information documents addressed to applicants and beneficiaries	Number	25	
Consultation, information, training and exchange workshops for applicants and beneficiaries organised	Number	6	
Training and building capacity for programme management structure ensured	Number	17	
Number of employees (Full time equivalents) whose salaries are co-financed by technical assistance	Number	6,33	12

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