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Republic of Bulgaria  
Ministry of Regional Development – DG Territorial  
Cooperation Management  
**EX-ANTE EVALUATION AND SEA OF THE**  
**Bulgaria – the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia IPA II CBC**  
**PROGRAMME 2014-2020**  
**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**



## Executive Summary

According to Art. 55 of the Regulation (EU), No 1303/2013 laying down common provisions, ex-ante **evaluations shall be carried out to improve the quality of the design of each programme**, under the responsibility of the authorities in charge of the preparation of the programme. Ex-ante evaluations shall be submitted to the Commission at the same time as the programme, together with an executive summary.

The purpose of this section is therefore to highlight the **main findings of the Ex-ante evaluation on the Bulgaria- the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia IPA Cross-border Final Draft Programme 2014-2020** for each **evaluation component**, namely:

- Programme Strategy;
- Indicators, monitoring and evaluation;
- Administrative capacity, data collection procedures and evaluation;
- Consistency of financial allocation;
- Contribution to the Europe 2020 Strategy.

The Ex-ante Evaluator also assessed the **programming process itself**, analysing how **lessons learned** during the 2007-2013 programming period were taken into account in the elaboration of the new Operational Programme as well as the modalities adopted for **involving relevant stakeholders** in the programme design.

The following Tables aim to give evidence to **the main outcomes and recommendations drawn on the Bulgaria-the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia IPA CBC Final Draft OP (version 3.2 – 5th August 2014)** as well as to **related changes in the OP** implemented by the programmer following previous Ex-ante Evaluator's suggestions<sup>1</sup>.

The following table shows the main findings of the Draft Ex-ante evaluation.

Ex-ante Evaluation Component	Conclusions and recommendations
<b>Involvement of stakeholders</b>	
<i>Involvement of stakeholders in the programme design</i>	<i>The process for involving stakeholders appears to have been implemented properly and with satisfactory results.</i>
<i>Continuous involvement of stakeholders throughout the programme implementation</i>	<i>The approach of using different methods, enabling their and their outcomes' visibility appears a good practice to be empowered during the Programme for its implementation (e.g. online tools).</i>
<b>Programme strategy</b>	
<i>External coherence</i>	<i>Strong external coherence with all the three frameworks taken into account. A special coherence has been detected with the Macedonian framework and needs</i>

<sup>1</sup> See "Ex-ante evaluation and SEA of the Bulgaria-the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia IPA CBC Cross-border Programme 2014-2020"- DRAFT, June 2014



Ex-ante Evaluation Component	Conclusions and recommendations
Internal coherence	<i>Good coherence among SOs though their influence on each other could be strengthened. Actions should be foreseen and defined taking advantage of the envisaged expected results so as to better define the appropriate interventions/typologies of actions</i>
Linkage between supported actions, expected outputs and results	<i>The link appear to be strong and featured by a consequential and logic linkage between the related indicators</i>
Horizontal principles	<i>The Programme appear to cope with the principles though they could be better defined in the SO and in the selected actions</i>
<b>Indicators, monitoring and evaluation</b>	
Relevance of proposed indicators	<i>The suggestion of resorting only to quantitative data is very appealing though challenging. A common understanding of the data (indicators) to be monitored should, therefore be mandatory.</i>
Clarity of proposed indicators	<i>The results indicators seem to be better defined since their first definition, though some room for improvement seems still existing. It appears more appropriate a monitoring which is not too ambitious (e.g. yearly) and that is in any case according with the state of implementation of the actions;</i>
Quantified baseline and target value	<i>As for the output indicators, they seem to be coherent and quite exhaustive. It appears important to underline that it is essential to have a deep look into the final budget allocation for each SO. The final figures would surely enable a sound assessment not only of baseline and target values but also of the relevance of the results identified. In this sense, as for the results indicators, it appears essential to define better the baseline so as to identify a proper and realistic target. Regarding the output indicators it would be interesting to have more information related to the strategic projects the implementation of which could affect the actual figures.</i> <i>As far as figures identified as Target Values are concerned, they appear so far consistent. Nevertheless, given the lack of such figures for some indicators as well as of better explanation about some indicators' monitoring methodology, the Evaluator suggests to proceed to a re validation of those figures and their related methodology at an early stage of OP's implementation and later again at regular pace.</i>
<b>Programme delivery mechanisms and structure</b>	
Composition and functions of the Joint Monitoring Committee	<i>The list of members of the JMC shall identify more precisely which are the institutions and organizations which will take part in the work of the body. The number of members of the JMC is rather high, and this can affect the efficiency of its functioning in general and of decision making process in particular. It could be considered a selection of the most relevant types of organizations, simplifying the structure of the JMC, ensuring in the meanwhile that all relevant institutions and organizations are represented.</i> <i>The Programme may use the possibility of involving more bodies and/or individual experts in the work of the JMC with advisory role, since they can provide valuable input for the programme coordination.</i>
Description of the functions of the bodies responsible for the management and of the programme	<i>The set up and functionality of the management and control system should be better described. Programme specific information is needed in relation to the functions of the institutions involved</i> <i>More details are advisable related to the procedure of setting up the Joint Secretariat.</i> <i>The tasks of the JS should be better outlined, explained and clarified.</i> <i>The role of the JS in coordinating the work of the controllers is questionable</i>



Ex-ante Evaluation Component	Conclusions and recommendations
	The role and tasks of the National Authority should be described and explained
Compliance with the principle of separation of tasks between the management bodies	A brief description of the organization of the most important Programme management procedures shall be included in order to have an overview of the system.
Efficiency and functionality of the management and control system	The description of the management and control system is missing.
Consistency of financial allocation	
External coherence	The financial allocation between priorities appears coherent with what has emerged from the Thematic Concentration and SWOT. Further information on the intended projects (enabled by the clarification of the actions) would empower a more deepen assessment
Internal coherence	
Selected forms of support	
Contribution to Europe 2020 Strategy	
Links to Europe 2020 Strategy	The objectives and results identified by the Programme appear to properly feed the aims of the Strategy

The following Table covers the ex ante recommendations dashboard.



Ex-ante Evaluation Component	Conclusions and recommendations	Recommendation delivery	Acceptance	Comments
<i>Involvement of stakeholders in the programme design</i>	The process for involving stakeholders appears to have been implemented properly and with satisfactory results.	<b>30<sup>th</sup> June Draft Final Report</b>	☺	<b>Accepted for information</b>
<i>Continuous involvement of stakeholders throughout the programme implementation</i>	The approach of using different methods, enabling their and their outcomes' visibility appears a good practice to be empowered during the Programme for its implementation (e.g. online tools).	<b>30<sup>th</sup> June Draft Final Report</b>	☺	The recommendation will be taken into account during programme implementation stage. The following text is included in point 5.7. of the OP: "During Programme implementation, the Programme bodies will foster the active participation of stakeholders through both on-line instruments and periodic events aimed at sharing progresses gradually made."
<i>External coherence</i>	Strong external coherence with all the three frameworks taken into account. A special coherence has been detected with the Macedonian framework and needs	<b>30<sup>th</sup> June Draft Final Report</b>	☺	<b>Accepted for information</b>
<i>Internal coherence</i>	Good coherence among SOs though their influence on each other could be strengthened. Actions should be foreseen and defined taking advantage of the envisaged expected results so as to better define the appropriate interventions/typologies of actions	<b>30<sup>th</sup> June Draft Final Report</b>	☺	Definition of such actions to be provided in the OP by PPM and reflected in this table.
<i>Linkage between supported actions, expected outputs and results</i>	The link appear to be strong though in some cases could be enabled by a simplification/rationalization of the actions	<b>30<sup>th</sup> June Draft Final Report</b>	☺	Actions are revised according to the recommendation.
<i>Horizontal principles</i>	The Programme appears to cope with the principles though they could be better defined in the SO and in the selected actions	<b>30<sup>th</sup> June Draft Final Report</b>	☺	SO and actions to be revised accordingly by PPM and reflected in this table.

Ex-ante Evaluation Component	Conclusions and recommendations	Recommendation delivery	Acceptance	Comments
<p><i>Relevance of proposed indicators</i></p> <p><i>Clarity of proposed indicators</i></p>	<p>The suggestion of resorting only to quantitative data is very appealing though challenging.</p> <p>A common understanding of the data (indicators) to be monitored should, therefore be mandatory.</p> <p>It appears that a cooperation programme could not completely avoid to measure qualitative aspects in a cost effective manner.</p> <p>Regarding the results indicators they seem, in some cases, not well defined (hence not clearly linked to their correspondent result/s) and/or too overlapping with the related results. The approach of having one result indicator for each expected result may not always be exhaustive. It appears more appropriate a monitoring which is not too ambitious (e.g. yearly) and that is in any case according with the state of implementation of the actions;</p> <p>As for the output indicators, they seem to be too many and not always exhaustive and sometimes could be classified as result indicators; It appears important to underline that it is essential to have a deep look into the final budget allocation for each SO. The final figures would surely enable a sound assessment not only of baseline and target values but also of the relevance of the results identified.</p>	<p><b>30<sup>th</sup> June</b> <b>Draft Final Report</b></p>	<p>😊</p>	<p>Result Indicators are revised according to ex-ante and MA comments and recommendation. Result Indicator 1.1.2 is revised as qualitative.</p> <p>The revised Result Indicators in Table 2: Overview of the investment strategy of the cooperation programme on p. 31 to be transferred to the relevant sections of the OP – by PPM.</p> <p>Output Indicators are revised according to ex-ante and MA comments and recommendation.</p>



Ex-ante Evaluation Component	Conclusions and recommendations	Recommendation delivery	Acceptance	Comments
Quantified baseline and target value	It is essential to quantify as soonest the baseline so as to define realistic target for the results. Output indicators targets, though apparently in line with past experience and financial allocation, need more clarification as far as the methodology for their identification is concerned. Finally more info on strategic projects could be useful for a efficient assessment of those quantification	31 <sup>st</sup> July Final Report	☹	
	As for the values identified, given the lack of further information provided in the OP, it is suggested to proceed to a re validation of figures and their related methodology at an early stage of the OP's implementation	13 <sup>th</sup> September Final Report	☹	
Administrative capacity, data collection procedure and evaluation	It could be considered a selection of the most relevant types of organizations, simplifying the structure of the JMC, ensuring in the meanwhile that all relevant institutions and organizations are represented.	31 <sup>st</sup> July Final Report	☹	
	The Programme may use the possibility of involving more bodies and/or individual experts in the work of the JMC with advisory role, since they can provide valuable input for the programme coordination			
	The set up and functionality of the management and control system should be better described			
	Procedures of establishing, role and tasks of the Secretariat could be stressed			
	The role and tasks of the National Authority should be described and explained			
	A brief description of the organization of the most important programme management procedures shall be included in order to have an overview of the system.			

Ex-ante Evaluation Component	Conclusions and recommendations	Recommendation delivery	Acceptance	Comments
	The description of the management and control system is missing Considering outcomes of the evaluation of 2007-2013 programming period			
<i>External coherence</i> <i>Internal coherence</i> <i>Selected forms of support</i>	The financial allocation between priorities appears coherent with what has emerged from the Thematic Concentration and SWOT. Further information on the intended projects (enabled by the clarification of the actions) would empower a more deepen assessment	<b>30<sup>th</sup> June Draft Final Report</b>	☺	<b>Accepted for information</b>
<i>Links to Europe 2020 Strategy</i>	The objectives and results identified by the Programme appear to properly feed the aims of the Strategy	<b>30<sup>th</sup> June Draft Final Report</b>	☺	<b>Accepted for information</b>

Legenda ☺ Accepted ☺ Partly accepted ☹ Not yet accepted

