



The preparation of the Programming Document for the „**Hungary-Serbia IPA Cross-border Co-operation Programme 2014-2020**” is in progress by the Task Force (group of relevant ministries and regional/county level organizations from Hungary and Serbia) with the assistance of an external Hungarian-Serbian joint expert Consortium (HBH Euroconsulting, VitalPro, InTER, Razbor).

What happened in the past months in programming?

- A **Workshop** was organized at the end of November in Subotica to discuss the proposed topics of the priority axis of the Draft Operative Programme with the most important local and sectoral stakeholders involved in the programme implementation. At the Workshop over 130 participants took part.
- Based on local sectoral discussions and interest reconciliations between the parties, as well as the outcomes of the Workshop in November, the **new version of the Draft Operative Programme**, as well as an **Interim Report** – giving account on the programming work so far – were submitted by the Consortium to the Task Force for its upcoming 5th meeting held in December.
- The **5th Task Force meeting** took place at the end of December 2013 in Novi Sad. At the meeting the Interim Report was approved, and a request was stated to further develop the contents of the probable Thematic Priorities, focusing also on the elaboration of the Economic Development Thematic Priority, as well as to clarify the technical maturity of possible Strategic Project initiatives.
- In order to assess the Strategic Project initiatives an assessment guide and a project screening template was elaborated by the Consortium and approved by the Task Force. These tools served as the basis for the **independent project assessment** which was carried out afterwards. The Task Force asked the project holders to further develop their projects, which will be assessed again in the first part of June. Based on the further elaborated Economic Development Thematic Priority proposal, worked out by the Consortium, at the 6th Task Force meeting held in March, the scope of Thematic Priority was approved by the Task Force. The specified contents of the Thematic Priorities are yet to be finalized (activities, financial allocation etc.). The chosen Thematic Priorities (TP) are the following based on the relevant IPA guidelines:

- **TP2: Protecting the environment and promoting climate change adaptation and risk prevention**
- **TP3. Promoting sustainable transport and improving public infrastructures**
- **TP4: Encouraging tourism and cultural heritage**
- **Economic development through TP7 or TP8 – yet to be decided**
 - TP7: Enhancing competitiveness, business and SME development, trade and investment
 - TP8: Strengthening research, technological development, innovation and ICT

What's going on now?

- The relevant **2014-2020 IPA II (Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance) Regulation** is under finalization by the European Commission. When the document is available the Draft Operative Programme is going to be adjusted according to that to be submitted to the EC in the second part of 2014.
- Further **finalization of the Draft Operative Programme** is carried out by the Consortium and is to be submitted to the Task Force for its upcoming meeting.

What's coming next?

- The **7th Task Force** meeting will be held in May 2014 in order to discuss and decide about the final set of Thematic Priorities (especially in terms of Economic Development) and their contents, as well as to finalize the Draft Operative Programme.
- An online **Public Consultation** will provide an opportunity for the wider public to comment on the Draft Operative Programme in June 2014.
- A further **Newsletter** will inform the public about the status of the programming process and the proposed content of the draft OP.