

Joint Operational Programme “Black Sea Basin 2007-2013”

Newsletter July 2012

Common borders. Common solutions.

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1. CURRENT STATUS OF THE PROGRAMME

In the first half of 2012, the Programme bodies continued the evaluation process of the proposals submitted under the Second Call for Proposals while in the meantime finalized the contracting process and continued to manage the implementation of the projects under the First Call for Proposals via intensive contacts with the beneficiaries in the past 6 months.

The sixth meeting of the Joint Monitoring Committee of the Programme was held in Bucharest in May 2012. As a result of this meeting, the Joint Monitoring Committee approved the results of the second step of

the evaluation process of the project proposals - technical and financial evaluation.

The results of the second step of the evaluation process were communicated to the Applicants through official letters.



The seventh meeting of the Joint Monitoring Committee of the Programme was held in Bucharest in June 2012.

As a result of this meeting, the Joint Monitoring Committee approved the results of the third step of the evaluation process - eligibility verification, as well as the list of the projects proposed to be funded under the Second Call for



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Proposals by the Selection Committee.

The EU financing for the Programme for the 2007-2013 period currently amounts to EUR 25.696.515,52, ENPI financing, and to EUR 7.000.000, IPA financing (for Turkish partners). The total budget (including co-financing of the participating countries) amounts to EUR 35.860.884,52 (ENPI + IPA).

2. FIRST CALL FOR PROPOSALS

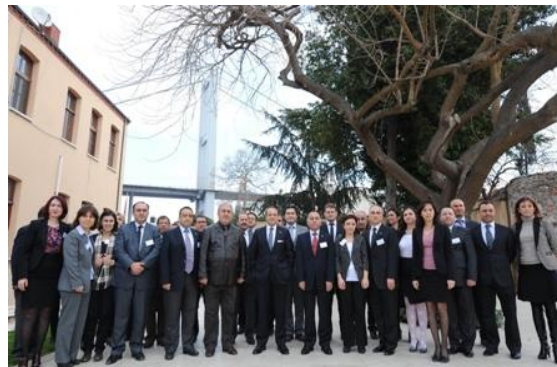
The Status of the First Call

Contracting of all 19 projects have been finalised in June 2012, which means all the projects under the First Call for Proposals are now under implementation. Besides the trainings that have been organised on grant implementation, the JTS of the Programme is providing day by day support to the project beneficiaries in project implementation. The first project is expected to be finalised in August 2012.

You can now discover the projects under implementation via the Project Fact Sheets prepared by the Programme. You can access and download the fact sheets on the Programme website, [Our Projects](#) section. The section is continuously updated as projects achieve more progress in implementation.

IPA Beneficiary Training

The Ministry for EU Affairs and the Central Finance and Contracts Unit (CFCU) from Turkey have organized training for the IPA beneficiaries of the projects under implementation under the First Call for Proposals, on 28 March 2012, in the Ministry Office in Istanbul, with participation of Egemen Bağış, Minister of EU Affairs of Turkey and EU Chief Negotiator.



IPA Beneficiary Training, 28 March 2012, Istanbul

In the first part of the training program, presentations were made regarding the contents of the 9 projects that involve Turkish (IPA) partners, latest stage in implementation and challenges encountered. In the second part, training for grant beneficiaries was held and information was provided to the participants by the representatives of CFCU regarding specific issues in implementation of the projects, especially issues related to procurement and awareness of irregularities.



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Study Visit by Turkish Delegation

A Turkish delegation comprising 5 monitors and 2 CBC experts from the Financial Cooperation Directorate of the Ministry of EU Affairs of Turkey, together with 6 contract managers from the Central Finance and Contracts Unit (CFCU) visited Bucharest between 25 and 29 June 2012. The focus was to exchange information with Romania as new member state on how monitoring of EU funding was performed during pre-accession and currently with structural funds. During the study visit programme which also included visits to the Ministry of EU Affairs and Managing Authorities, the delegation was received by the JMA and JTS representatives of the Black Sea Basin Programme and presentation was made regarding the management of the Programme as well as the project monitoring system.

3. SECOND CALL FOR PROPOSALS

195 applications have been received under the Second Call for Proposals. Evaluation of project proposals started on the 14 of December 2011 with Opening & Administrative Check. The evaluation process finished on 19 of June 2012, when the Joint Monitoring Committee approved the Final Evaluation Report.

The final results of the selection process were communicated to the Applicants after the European Commission checked the projects selected to determine if there are any overlaps with other programmes and to avoid double funding.

In total, 37 projects were approved, with a total value of EUR 16.655.279,02 (ENPI financing) and EUR 4.253.385,70 (IPA financing) in the areas of economic and social development, environment protection and cultural cooperation, areas that correspond to the three priorities of the Programme.

Please find below some statistical data regarding the applications received:



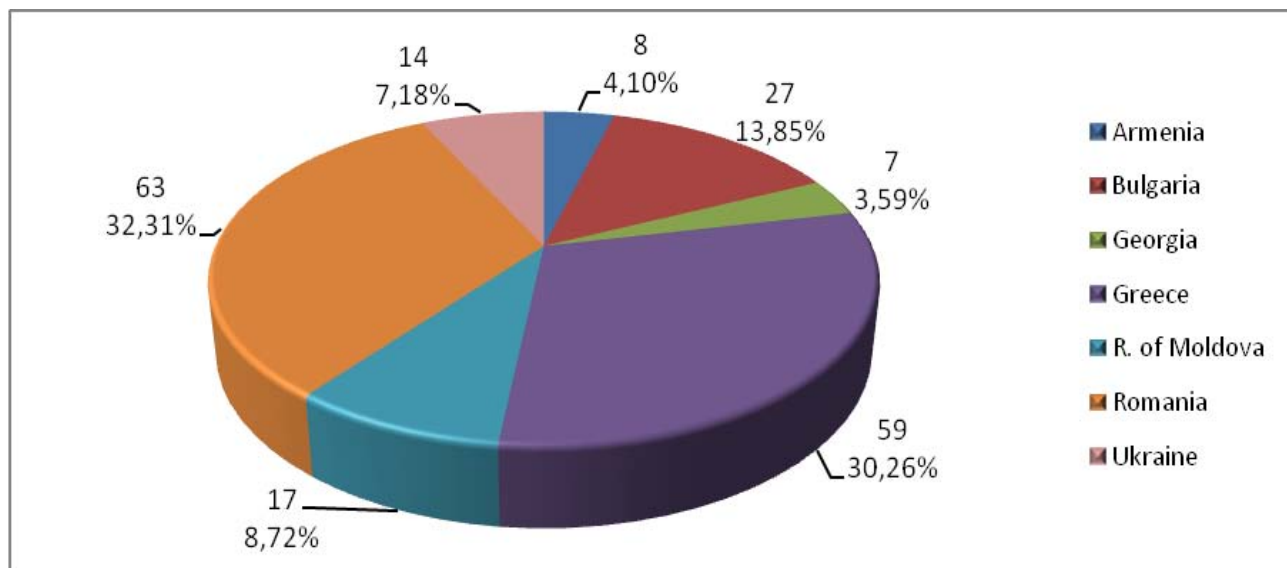
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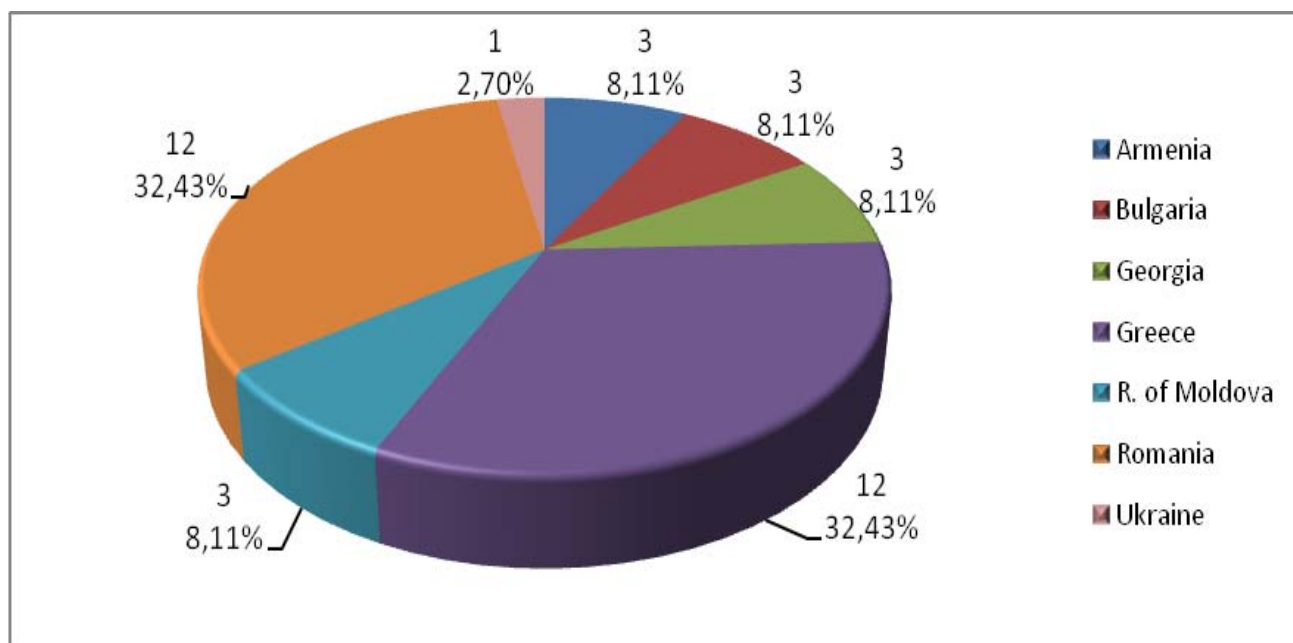
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a) Total number of applicants involved in the submitted projects, per country



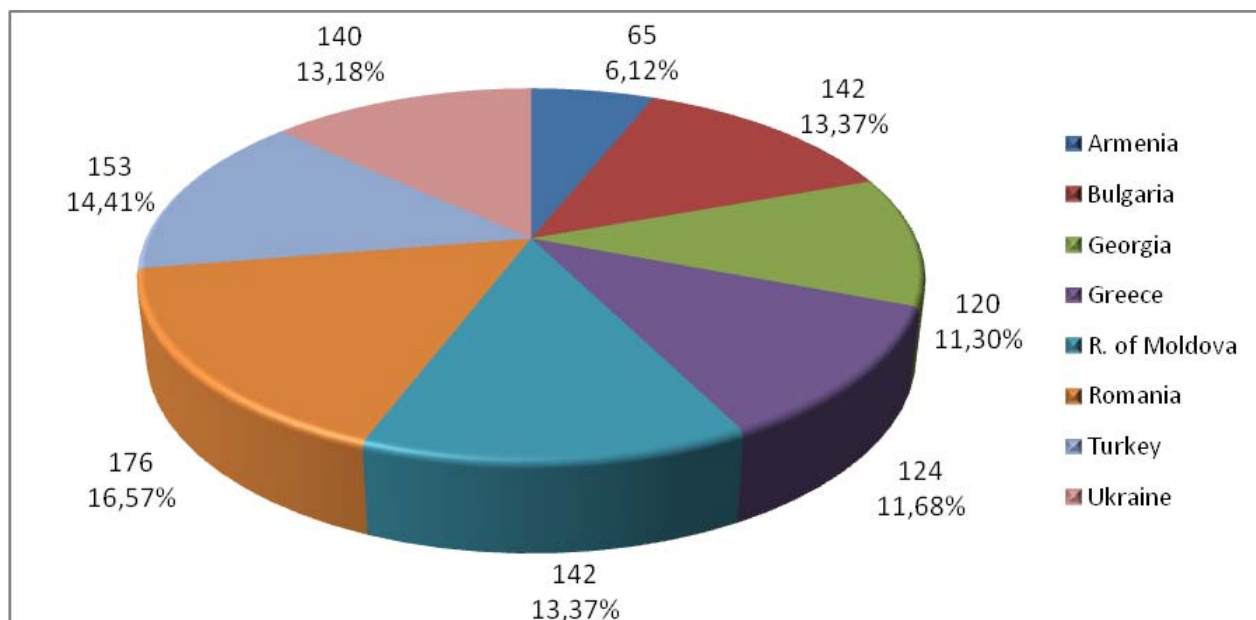
b) Total number of applicants involved in the approved projects, per country



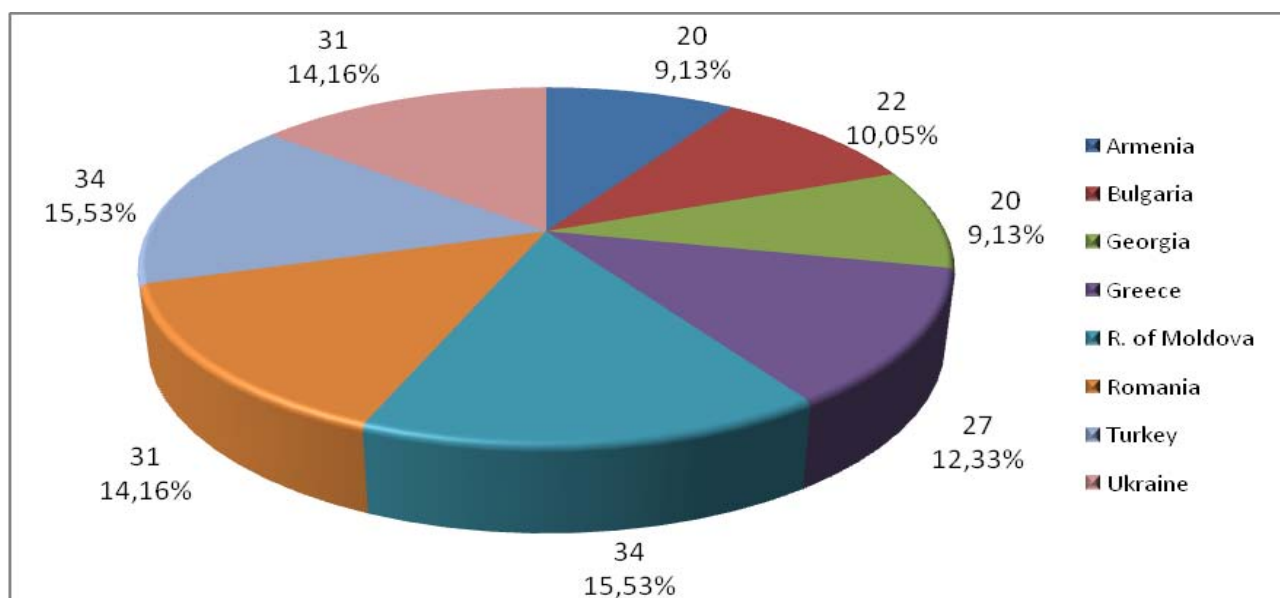
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c) Total number of entities involved in the submitted projects, per country



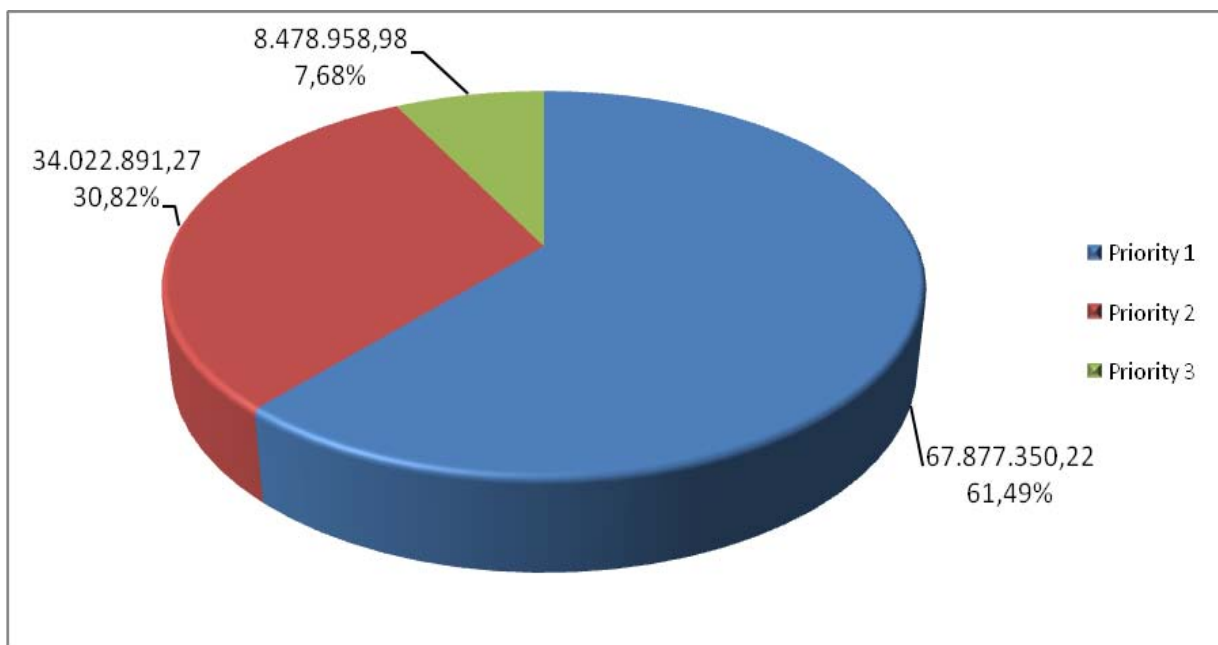
d) Total number of entities involved in the approved projects, per country



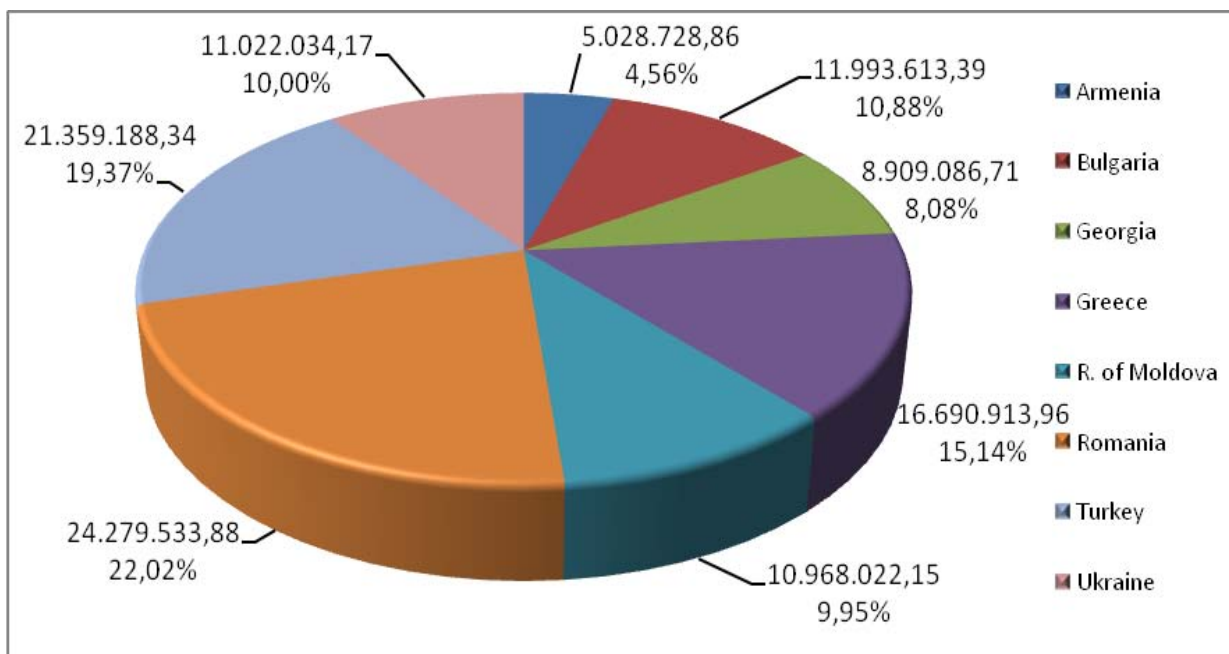
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e) Total funds (ENPI+IPA) requested for submitted projects



f) Total funds (ENPI+IPA) requested for submitted projects, per country



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4. EURO VILLAGE INITIATIVE



The EU Delegation to Ukraine has launched an initiative “European Village - Our Continent. Our Future” in Kiev, Ukraine in parallel with the EURO 2012 Football Championship during the period 2 June - 1 July. The initiative aimed at showing cooperation between the EU and Ukraine and the CBC programmes involving Ukraine, were invited to showcase projects and initiatives involving Ukrainian regions.



Euro Village Conference Tent

In order to ensure visibility of the Programme and projects, the JMA and the JTS coordinated participation of the projects and organised participation of the Programme at this initiative.

The initiative comprised 11 themes and under each theme specific events took place at different times throughout June, namely thematical conferences, round table meetings, visibility at the temporary and permanent exhibition tents.



Presentation by the Ukrainian partner on their project funded by the Programme

The Black Sea Basin Programme was represented with 5 projects under 4 themes. These themes are: Save our planet, Destination Ukraine-Sustainable Economic Development, Study in Europe and Cultural Heritage.

The Programme level participation was also performed during 5th of June 2012, with a stand dedicated to the programme, at the temporary exhibition tent. The programme publications and visibility materials were presented and information on the programme was provided to the visitors at the stand.



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Programme stand with visibility materials during the Initiative events

More information on the Initiative and events can be found on the website of the Initiative: <http://eurovillage2012.org/>

5. KEEP SYSTEM



The INTERACT ENPI has developed KEEP (Knowledge and Expertise in European Programmes), a complex system that consists of three major elements:

- 1) Database
- 2) Mapping system
- 3) Public website

KEEP has been developed by the INTERACT PROGRAMME and is supported by the Member States involved and the European Commission. INTERACT is a Programme co-financed by the European Regional Development Funds (ERDF) under its

objective “European Territorial Cooperation” (ETC) in the funding period 2007 - 2013. As a sort of horizontal Programme, INTERACT is supporting other ETC Programmes in achieving their objectives in a most efficient way.

KEEP is conceived as an online tool and internet portal that utilises, capitalises and ensures the transfer of knowledge of both, INTERACT and European Territorial Cooperation programme information. At the same time KEEP serves as an information, communication and visibility platform. It allows users to view and analyse the workings of cooperation on a much wider scale and with greater depth than has ever been possible before

The data of the projects under the Programme was provided to INTERACT to be included in the system and the info is now online. You can discover the projects and gather statistics on this online platform, from the following link:

<http://www.territorialcooperation.eu/>

6. WHAT'S NEXT?

Annual Conference

The Annual Conference of the Programme is planned to be held on 18 and 19 September in Chisinau, Moldova. The Conference will focus on the synergy between entities active in the Black Sea Basin and will also serve as a platform for discussions for the Programme's future in the new programming period (2014-2020). Entities active in the Basin are welcome to request invitations to participate in the



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conference.

European Cooperation Day



On 21 September, European Cooperation Day will be celebrated all over Europe and in neighbouring countries.

Almost 40 countries will come together to celebrate cooperation and bridge-building between local communities across borders. Public events will take place during the week of 17-23 September all over Europe. Besides the fun, this will also be an opportunity to discover all the improvements local initiatives have brought to all aspects of your daily life; from creating jobs, to improving health care services, and the protection of environment, transport or energy. More information on the initiative can be found on the initiative website: <http://www.ecday.eu/> The initiative and activities can also be followed from social media:

Facebook ([facebook.com/cooperationday](https://www.facebook.com/cooperationday));

Twitter (twitter.com/cooperationday);

Youtube ([youtube.com/cooperationday](https://www.youtube.com/cooperationday)).

The Black Sea Basin Programme is one of the participating ENPI CBC programmes and will organise an exhibition with the visuals of the Projects existing at the Programme level. Project fact sheets prepared by the

Programme, accompanied by the photographs from the Project activities will be exhibited on the exposition stands at the Conference venue during the Annual Conference of the Programme, on 18-19 September 2012, with the aim to promote both the Programme and the achievements of cooperation through the Programme. In addition, following the conference in order to have a better outreach to the public the exposition materials will be available for EC Day (20-21 September) at a public place in Chisinau to promote the European border cooperation to the public and to the media.

FAQ Project Implementation

The Joint Technical Secretariat (JTS) is in preparation of Frequently Asked Questions section on the website specifically designed for the project implementation. It will contain information on specific rules and recommendations in project implementation in order to assist project beneficiaries and their partners properly manage their projects that have been funded under the Programme.

RCBI E-support for Project Implementation



The RCBI E-support which was already launched with the Project Identification and Development modules is now being developed with a new section with Managing and Implementing ENPI CBC Projects modules.

Support was already provided to RCBI in



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elaboration of the first section for potential applicants and partners in order to contribute in their efforts of project preparation and submission of the whole proposal package.

The new section aims at moving the previous support to the project implementation level.

The module “Managing and Implementing ENPI CBC projects” is more detailed, targets the grant beneficiaries and their partners and is made up of 7 modules, which are divided into several sub-categories. Each sub category is also made up of sections containing information on specific issues as well as quizzes to measure the level of awareness of the beneficiary/partner regarding the Programme’s project implementation rules.

It covers topics that have primary importance in the management of projects during the implementation process, namely subjects such as the contractual obligations of the partners, reporting, financial management, visibility requirements, control etc.

7. RCBI EXPERIENCE IN WORKING WITH PARTNER COUNTRIES

The RCBI Project ended in June 2012. The Project has made a valuable contribution in implementation of the Programme by enhancing the capacity of the potential applicants/partners as well as of the beneficiary organisations from partner countries, member states and Turkey, in

project preparation and implementation. Below is the presentation by Veronica Vann, RCBI Team Leader, regarding RCBI Project and experience in working with the partner countries, with specific emphasis on the Black Sea Basin Programme:



The RCBI Team

RCBI - the project ends but support continues...

By the time you read this, the Regional Capacity Building Initiative (RCBI) project will have ended after 6 years of supporting the Black Sea Basin Programme and Partner Countries. The project may have ended but the RCBI support continues -tools and resources produced by the project will be available via the [RCBI website](#) until June 2014.

For those of you who do not know RCBI, it was an EU project that provided support to the participation of currently 12 Partner Countries in 13 ENPI CBC programmes from January 2007 to June 2012. This included training and support for programme management, identifying and developing projects, finding partners and project



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management and implementation.

RCBI provided support specifically for the four Black Sea Basin programme Partner Countries included:

- Nine information seminars for 456 people on how the programmes can help to address common regional problems
- 37 workshops for 1130 people on preparing project proposals
- Six partner search forums to help 923 people to find partners on both sides of the EU border.
- Two project management and implementation workshops for 81 beneficiaries and partners awarded a grant
- Three programme management workshops for 93 participants
- Support for representatives from Partner Countries to participate in nine programme events such as partner forums and programming meetings
- Contributions from RCBI experts at 14 programme meetings and comments and advice

But what do we leave behind? Again, specifically for the Black Sea Basin beneficiaries and partners there is online support available 24/7 (24 hours a day, seven days a week) including 30 modules for project management and implementation under six topics, guides to national requirements in Armenia, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine which give practical advice on the national rules and procedures to follow when implementing ENPI CBC projects, and all the presentations made at RCBI Black Sea Basin events with many of them available in national languages.

Other resources include an organogram for partner country beneficiaries and partners outlining who to turn to for support when implementing projects, and generic guidelines and check lists for auditors. These generic guidelines check-lists give the information necessary for auditors performing expenditure verification checks to fully understand the applicable rules and the engagement described in Annex VII of the beneficiary's grant contract. Just remember, the generic guideline should be adapted for the programme specific rules. There is also a comprehensive generic Project Implementation Manual which provides practical guidance on the ENPI CBC project rules (but remember to also check the specific rules for the Black Sea Basin programme) and a report on Partner Country involvement (see opposite for more details). The e-modules will soon be available on the [Programme website](#). Check the [Useful Material](#) page on the RCBI website for the resources mentioned and more.

Partner Country involvement in the Black Sea Basin programme - a good start and growing...

Balanced participation in the Black Sea Basin programme and other ENPI CBC programmes is put under the spotlight in a report on Partner Country involvement produced by RCBI in June 2012. Building on an earlier evaluation in 2009, the report assesses the current level of Partner Country involvement at project level, identifies barriers and facilitating factors for involvement and makes recommendations at programme and at country level on action that can be taken



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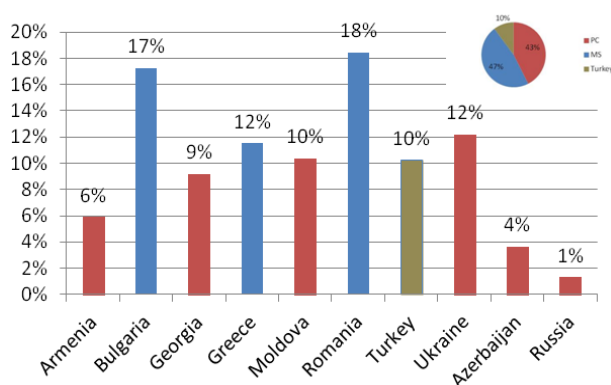


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to further facilitate involvement. Three criteria were used, participation as applicants and as partners in calls for proposal, success rate as applicants and budget share. For the Black Sea Basin programme, only the results from the first call were analysed as the results of the second call was not known when data was gathered.

Graphic - Applicants and partners by country



*Turkey participates only as a partner

Overall, participation by Partner Countries was lower than Member States. Partner Countries make up 60% of the countries but 43% of applicants and partners. Participation as applicants was particularly low (28%).

Of the budget share, together the Partner Country beneficiaries and partners account for less than one third of all funds.

The key barriers to Partner Country involvement include, language barriers, problems with co-financing and finding and working with partners, insufficient experience, the complexity the ENPI CBC application process, insufficient human and financial resources and incompatibility between national legislation and Programme rules.

Among the main factors that facilitated partner country involvement were support

by the National Info Points and by the programme and particularly requirements and incentives to facilitate involvement. For example, requirements such as those in the Mediterranean Sea Basin and Italy Tunisia programmes for 50% of the project budget to be spent on activities in the Partner Countries, or incentives such as that introduced by the Black Sea Basin in the second call where extra points were awarded if the project partnership included three out of the four Partner Countries and Turkey.

ENPI CBC brings a new approach to cross border cooperation particularly for Armenia and Georgia and some regions in Ukraine which did not participate in the Neighbourhood Programmes, and it will take some time to the Partner Countries to reach the level of experience of the Member States who have been participating in CBC for much longer. However, balanced participation is crucial to the success of the Black Sea Basin programmes (as it is for all ENPI CBC programmes). The programme Joint Monitoring Committee agreed measures in the second call to facilitate participation by Partner countries, but more action needs to be taken if there is to be a true partnership.

Much can be done in this current implementation phase of the programme to build capacity for the next programme period. The report also makes recommendations for the next programming period, but then, you can read these for yourself in the report, available on the [RCBI website](#).



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Are you a representative of a youth organisation in the Black Sea Basin? National Youth Council in Moldova initiated a project for cooperation and they need your assistance in needs assessment of the youth from each of the 9 states in the Black Sea Basin that are involved in the project. To assist by filling out the questionnaire please [click here](#) ; to obtain more information about the organisation please [click here](#).

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“Black Sea Basin 2007-2013”
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