

Newsletter №8, July 2022

Dear readers,

We are presenting you a summer edition of our newsletter „Joint Ideas for a Better Future“. In this eighth newsletter, you can read about the activities implemented in our Programme during the year 2022.

The Third Call for Proposals was published on March 9th with the deadline for submission of proposals on June 7th. This was the final call within the IPA 2014-2020 financial framework, and the last opportunity to support



Programme goals and cross-border ideas within joint initiatives of two countries on regional and local level in this programming period.

Kick off Conference took place on March 18th in Banja Koviljaca. The event was organized in hybrid form with the main actors on site and live streaming for the wider audience. Programme and the Third Call were presented as well as the projects within the Second Call for Proposals that are currently being implemented.



The first Info Session and Partner Search forum were organized online on March 21st, while the second Info Session took place on April 4th 2022. The events were an opportunity for the potential applicants to learn about the Call and its requirements as well as to get an insight into the application package.

Two hundred representatives of national and local institutions, development agencies and nongovernmental agencies attended the events. Attendees were given an opportunity to ask questions and actively participate in the discussions.

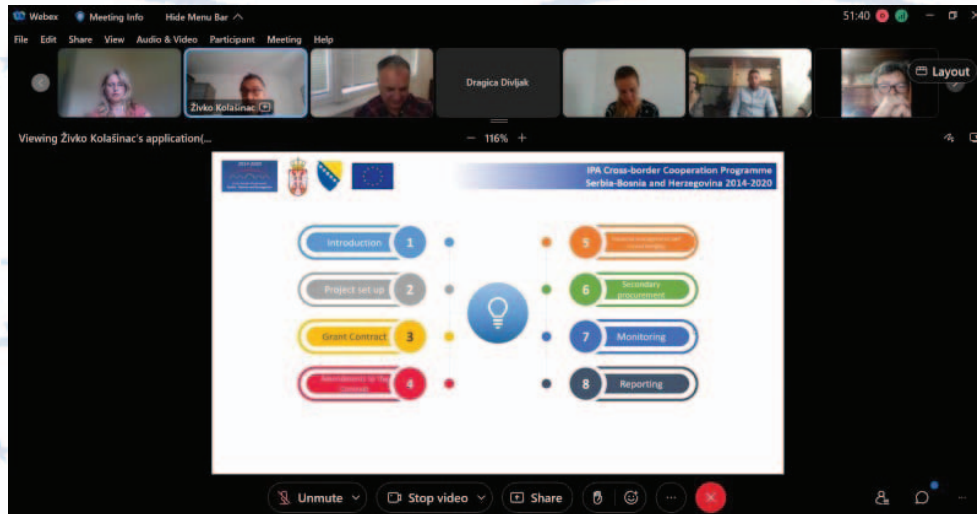
In order to ensure the continuation of the Programme, a multiannual financing decision was adopted this year. The decision constitutes from the multiannual work of the Programme for the period 2021- 2027.

The objectives pursued by the multiannual Programme are to promote good neighbourly relations, foster Union integration and enhance the socio-economic development of the Programme cross-border area through social and economic inclusion of specific groups, especially youth, and the competitiveness of tourism.

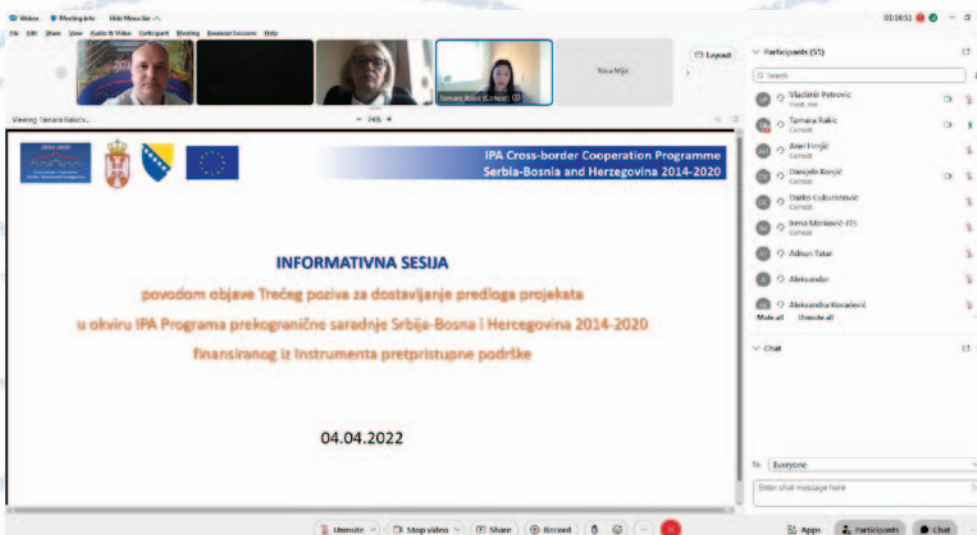
The priorities selected for the financing of the Program are Youth, Education and Skills as well as Encouraging Tourism and Cultural and Natural Heritage. The maximum European union contribution for the implementation of the Programme is set at EUR 14 000 000.



There are 13 projects under implementation at the moment. They are undertaking numerous activities in order to improve sustainable environmental planning and promote biodiversity, enhancing the employability of the labor force, and increase the employment opportunities, and to improve the management system for emergency interventions. Our team continued to provide full support to project beneficiaries during this year both via phone and e-mail contacts and during on-site monitoring visits.



The online Implementation workshop for the awarded grant beneficiaries within the 2nd Call for Proposals was held on June 14, 2022. With regard to provide support to grant beneficiaries in the implementation of the project, the workshop was organized by the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Serbia, Department for Contracting and Financing of EU Funded Programmes (CFCU), with the assistance of the Joint Technical Secretariat of the Programme. The workshop was attended by 70 participants. It was an excellent occasion to pose questions to the Programme Managers and receive direct answers.



The results we have achieved in the first part of the year guarantee achievement of the set goals in the future and successful implementation of the Programme!

Common Ideas for Better Future!

Cross-border region of Tara and Rogatica ready for the fire season

Municipality of Rogatica and National Park Tara improved their readiness for fire season with the newly acquired firefighting equipment. Two institutions will even more improve their efficiency in the cross-border area when the ongoing procurement of the firefighting vehicles is completed.

During the workshop attended by the associations of the firefighter volunteers it was concluded that Serbia does not have many operational firefighting associations. Having in mind that forest fights require a lot of resources both in equipment and manpower it is important that associations are included in capacity building and later in the field actions, especially in the case when there are forest fires on multiple locations.



Marko Tomić, project coordinator pointed out how important is the use of magnetic maps: *"Magnetic maps has shown as very operational and can be used in other activities not necessarily connected to forest fights. It is my opinion that other institutions will also have these maps in the future to fight other risks not only forest fires"*.

Project team pointed out that they are the only institution to use GIS technology for the creation of potential scenarios of forest fires in the National Park Tara. This has been accomplished by the completion of the document "National Park Tara – forest fires risk estimation". Each scenario presented in the document includes risk estimation, potential damage, and consequences of the forest fires. The document also includes map of the forest areas with higher risk for fire spreading, network of roads with fire hydrants, potential danger of spring fires, risks associated with the dry thunderstorms, and scenarios of forest fights with the worst outcomes. The estimation of potential risks presented in the document is a base for the creation of the Tactical and Operational Plan for the protection from forest fires. Fire station Bajina Basta will also use the findings from the document by using GIS application.



Bridging

One of the first activities in the project was equipping of the Center for professional retraining of the unemployed and education of workers in tourism. The equipment purchased for the School of Economics in Uzice will be used in the future for the adult education.



Future mentors in companies were trained in Sarajevo, acquiring new skills and knowledge. They prepared for the future work with new trainees, total of 35 of them, who will undergo education to become waiters/sommeliers, cooks, chambermaids, receptionists, and animators. The training for trainees took place during June with over 100 classes in theory and practice. Theory classes took place at the Center for Education within the Chamber of Commerce of Sarajevo Canton while the practical training took place in the local hotels.



In Uzice project partner promoted jobs in tourism in primary and secondary schools. 10 presentations were organized during May promoting the following occupations: cook, waiter, sommelier, animator, pastry chef and tourist technician.

Also, during May interviews with the unemployed women registered at the National Employment Agency in Uzice were organized. The aim of the interview was to inform the women on the retraining programs offered within the project.

Project “Enhance” provided an opportunity for the companies from wood, food, and metal industries to improve their businesses, and for export and innovation

Project team organized Project Academy for the representatives of more than 80 SMEs, institutions and NGOs in Gorazde and Zlatibor in May 2022. The Academy consisted of the education for project planning and writing. With this type of education companies gain knowledge that can lead to easier acquiring of different project-based funding.

“This is a contemporary education that we need to follow to be closer to European and other funds. I can only thank this team for including me into the education. I have brought my daughter here today so that she can learn and continue my work in the future. We are only pioneers in project writing” said Haris Vučinić, director of Sigma Plast Gorazde.



Two documents were created within the project to provide support for the companies in the future: “Market analysis of the small and medium enterprises, their intelligence, innovations, and ability for commercialization” and “State of innovations and industry priorities in the region”. [Documents can be downloaded here: \(kfbih.com\)](https://kfbih.com).



“We are pleased to see the genuine interest in innovation within the Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia businesses. What is evident is low level of investments in innovation and knowledge. This is where importance of the projects such as this one is shown since it enables exchange of experiences and best practices” said Almin Mališević, Enhance project manager.

Common Ideas for Better Future!

Modernization of the Training Center in Šabac

The project established workshops for the training of welders/machinist and forklift operators within the Training Center in Sabac. These workshops will provide new possibilities for employment in Macva County.



Nemanja Pajić, project manager and President of the City of Šabac Assembly said: *"City of Sabac established Training Center with an attempt to match the needs of the businesses in Sabac with the needs of the unemployed citizens. By providing new training opportunities within the Center this initiative is further expanding."*



Project „3E“, enabled City of Visoko to establish Business Council with the goal to follow the situation on the local labor market. The City also created Local Action Plan for Employment introducing the measures for local employment policy until 2024.

"We have established cooperation with the Mixed Vocational Highschool in Visoko and agreed to create training unit within the school. School teachers from Visoko and Sabac are trained to work on new equipment that will be purchased within the project and they will continue to educate adults on how to use 3D printer, CNC simulators and different type of welding", said Azra Husić, project coordinator from Visoko.

Project is improving the work of Mountain Rescue Services improved

Rescuers of the Mountain Rescue Service and members of Mountaineering Club Tara underwent several different trainings within the project. The first training in skiing and training of rescue dogs took place on Bjelasnica mountain. The training for 50 trainees lasted for 14 days. Most of the trainees were new recruits.



Project partners prepared a document "Analysis of the legal framework for the disaster management and establishing of cooperation between local communities in the cross-border region of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia". The research on the opinion of citizens regarding the prevention, and readiness for potential disasters also took place. The results of the research will serve as a base for future project awareness raising campaign.

Equipment that was purchased within the project will positively affect the work of mountain rescue services and education centers.



MRS Serbia purchased motor sleds, a quad vehicle, the trailer for transporting the injured, and medical equipment.

MRS Sarajevo purchased office equipment for workshops, artificial climbing wall, platform for helicopter rescue simulation. and individual equipment (belts, helmets, ropes).

Mountaineering Club Tara equipped Mountain Lodge Rastište thus improving field conditions for the rescuers in this part of the Tara mountain.

Zero waste municipalities

Seeding Circular Economy and Zero Waste Roots in Serbia and BiH local policies.

Low awareness of the benefits and the importance of waste prevention, reuse, and recycling is one of the major problems that Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina are facing.

Teamed up by common will and enthusiasm on environmental protection, Center for Energy, Environment and Resources – CENER 21 from BiH and Environmental Engineering Group - EEG from Serbia, are devoted to ensuring long-term resource efficiency in the waste management sector in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia. Through IPA cross-border cooperation efforts, the team seeks to contribute to the strengthening of the economic development in six pilot municipalities: Bajina Bašta, Vladimirici, Krupanj, Visoko, Ilijaš and Sarajevo Centar, through the introduction of a zero-waste concept. Since this principle requires a shift in the mentality and the attitude of citizens towards the problem, the team is off to a bold start with stakeholder capacity-building and public awareness-raising.



Until today, the duo has trained close to 300 representatives of waste management utilities, local governments, system operators, waste collectors, social enterprises, NGOs, green entrepreneurs and academia in the cross-border region. The trainees were familiarized with the technical part of the strategies for achieving zero waste at the local level, through examples of best available practices and proven technologies in the field. Additionally, they learned which strategies are the best for supporting business models based on the principles of zero waste, how to apply economic incentives, and which communication methods to use for involving the local community in the zero waste transition process. These activities aimed to initiate a dialogue and promote good waste management practices that are necessary in the process of transition from a linear to a circular concept of waste management.

"Current capacities for separate waste collection are insufficient and amount to only about 5% of required infrastructure. In order to reach a satisfactory level, it is necessary to provide investment in infrastructure as well as in educating citizens on proper waste management. This project will certainly be helpful in improving the system of the separate waste collection while contributing to the realization of our strategic goals related to waste reduction in Sarajevo Canton" – emphasized Mr Adnan Šaćirović, representative of waste management utility KJKP Rad from Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The concept is still in its early stages in both countries, but the team strongly believes in its potential to develop further.

Through IPA cross-border cooperation efforts, Zero Waste Municipalities delivered two key documents to encourage local actors to reduce waste and use resources in a more rational manner: Guidelines BAT/BEP on zero waste concept in municipalities and Guidelines on municipal waste monitoring and reporting.

For pilot municipalities, Ilijaš, Visoko, Sarajevo Centar, Vladimirci, Krupanj, and Bajina Bašta, the tailor-made Zero Waste Action Plans have been prepared with the purpose of establishing a concrete plan of activities and strategic vision that reduces waste at the local level, following the principles of zero waste and circular economy. Thus, the six pilot municipalities will serve as an example of good practice by demonstrating the benefits of introducing the zero waste concept, which has already taken root in countries in the European Union. The results of the changes implemented will be presented to the general public and stakeholders in the sector.

"The problems I encounter most often, and which I consider one of the most significant, are definitely challenges in communication between relevant institutions, public utilities and decision makers with citizens and civil society organizations. I think we have lost the culture of dialogue and public participation in the decision-making process which is directly related to the quality of our lives. Once the local community is empowered, it can serve as a model by which other local communities can be organized. I would especially like to emphasize the cross-border importance of this project, which additionally connects residents of neighboring countries in the fight for a cleaner and healthier future" – highlighted Ms Milica Lukić, an ecological activist, representative of NGO sector, and a member of the International Association for Urban Climate.

Currently, extracurricular activities for six pilot high schools are prepared, with the aim of educating students and their teachers about the concept of a circular economy in which recycling and reuse are recognized as new business opportunities. Each school will receive valuable plastic-recycling equipment for practical applications of the acquired knowledge of circular economy.

In the coming period, project activities will be focused on concrete solutions for improving the waste management system through the procurement and distribution of adequate equipment - bins for a two-line waste collection system, composters, and containers, as well as GIS mapping of illegal landfills and the cleaning of landfills.

E-learning in Disability Sport Sector / Strengthening the Employment Perspective in Disability Sport Sector – STEPIn

Set up of STEPIn Moodle platforms and organising two online education sessions marked the first half of the year. The sessions on both platforms encompassed various topics such as leadership and teamwork in disability sport sector, sport training and nutrition, communication and marketing, organisation of sport events for people with disabilities, classification principles of paralympic sport, health benefits and good practices. The topics have been carefully selected in cooperation with STEPIn project team to allow participants to acquire diverse knowledge and skills in disability sport sector. It is important to highlight that both platforms have been open for participants from CBC area (from BiH and Serbia), with over 100 participants successfully e-learning and socialising on the platform.



The STEPIn online education has been closed on the June 1, 2022 as the practical sessions have commenced and lasted until the middle of June both in Sarajevo and Ruma. Practical sessions are open for all to participate, but the emphasis has been placed on those who have participated the online education, to be able to practically apply the knowledge acquired during STEPIn online training.

Omar Emrić, one of the online STEPIn education participants and selected candidate for STEPIn job shadowing shared his impressions: „I really enjoyed the online sessions, and the opportunity to follow the sessions on both STEPIn platforms. I was able to e-meet a lot of participants from Serbia and to learn how sport for people with disability looks like in Serbia. I am thankful for being selected to participate the Jobshadowing activities in Ruma, and now I will be able to also see in practice how sport experts work with people with disabilities in Ruma“.

Jobshadowing activities took place in the second half of June, when four best participants from both STEPIn online education platforms visited sport clubs which work with parathletes in Sarajevo and Ruma. The emphasis has been placed on those parasports which are the most successful in BiH and Serbia.

„On behalf of the STEPIn project team, which has been working diligently to finalise the STEPIn project activities, we are very satisfied with the positive feedback we have been getting from our STEPIn online education participants. They are happy that this type of education was organised, and especially regarding the video material delivered by experts in the field of sport for people with disability. The project has certainly made an impact on raising awareness on the needs of disability sport sector and the knowledge and skills acquired will help in developing much needed human resources“, said Aela Ajdinović, STEPIn project manager.

Collected – shredded – saved!

New system for the management of bulky waste has been established at 40 different locations in the cities of Uzice and Tuzla. Bulky waste is largely collected not only from the city locations but from the rural communities also. Hundreds of tons of bulky waste have been collected and treated so far thus extending the life of existing landfills. Collected bulky waste is treated at the recycling yard, separated and shredded with the specialized machinery purchased within the BWL project. Further products are either offered on the recycling market, incinerated in the cement industry, or placed on the landfill.



"This newly established system should lead to total eradication of the old habits to leave bulky waste by the roads, in the nature, by the dumpsters etc. We hope that soon enough we will no longer see bulky waste everywhere around us" says Milomir Milanovic, Director of the Regional Landfill Duboko.

"We have purchased mobile shredders within the project, they are everything we were looking for. We are happy that we managed to complete the procurement procedures before the disruption on the market. We already see the need for getting more of such equipment for use in our public companies" emphasized Mr. Milanovic.

BWL project is trying to bring a systemic change in bulky waste management, while in parallel working on the capacity building in the key institutions. So far, 13 thematic workshops took place in both cities. Total of 280 participants attended the workshops with the aim to create sustainable public policies in the management of bulky waste at the local level.

Mirela Uljić, Assistant Mayor in Tuzla, pointed out that the new bulky waste management system was previously planned in the city of Tuzla, only to be implemented within the BWL project.

The project intensively works on the active participation of citizens to provide sustainability of the newly established management system. More than 40 public events have been organized with almost 700 participants. The information activities will be continued in the remaining three months of the project implementation.

Naila Mrkaljević, secretary of the local community "Stari Grad" Tuzla, pointed out: *"New system for bulky waste collection is very well accepted in the city. Before the BWL project this type of waste was collected 2 times in a year, now it is 12 times in a year. The results are visible – there are no waste by the dumpsters, or in the buildings, or in the local rivers. Amounts collected every months are increasing and it is obvious that the citizens are changing old habits for the better."*

During the previous 7 months orange garbage collectors have become well recognizable invitation for the citizens in two cities to dispose of their bulky waste. We expect that the established system will be sustainable in both cities in the future.



Improvement of the position of youth in the employment area

Project „System“ aims to improve possibilities of the employment for the young people while strengthening capacities and improving cooperation among local communities and newly established enterprises. In an attempt to reach its goal, the project established a network called Local Partnership for Employment BiH-Serbia. The network enables synergy of different actors from public, government, private, non-governmental, and educational sectors.

Partnership gathers 10 members from Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia. They have signed the Memorandum of Understanding in December 2021.

General Secretary of the National Youth Council of Serbia, Miljana Pejic pointed out the importance of MoU as a means for networking among actors that are engaged in self-employment and employment in Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Unemployment is an endemic problem in the entire region thus it is important to work together on the improvement of the position of youth in this area.

In the previous period project partners launched Call for Proposals for the participation in the Program for the support of self-employment. The program is created to speed up the development of business ideas via education and mentoring. Participants will receive support to strengthen their capacities for entrepreneurship, develop models of business plans for their enterprises, implementation of products and/or services envisaged, and presentation of their business ideas to potential investors.



Solid waste management and wastewater management in the cross-border area

Project „Upgrading of the waste management public service capacities in cross border region” in its first year of implementation is working on the improvement of the solid waste management and wastewater management. Relevant institutions using new equipment improved monitoring and control of the objects.



“It is sure that the results of the project will have increased capacities of the institutions in charge of the environment protection, increased efficiency of the inspections in charge of environment protection, improved system of monitoring of the environment, and improved cooperation with the non-governmental organizations dealing with ecology” – said project manager Nemanja Erceg, acting assistant of the provincial secretary in the Provincial Secretariat for Spatial Planning and Environment Protection. He

specifically pointed out the importance of the cooperation with the project partners representing institutions in charge of the waste management in the programme area, as well as with the non-governmental organizations. Cooperation with the relevant NGOs largely contributes to solving issues related to the environment protection.

Main focus of the project is improvement of capacities of the public services in charge of waste and wastewater management via expert seminars, round table sessions, workshops, cooperation with citizens and non-governmental organisations.

During the project implementation several field vehicles were purchased as well as mobile laboratory for speedy detection of pollution. A laboratory in Banja Luka was also equipped.

Expert training took place in Novi Sad on January 20, 2022 with the aim to educate employees on how to use newly purchased laboratory equipment.

Expert training in environment protection took place in Bijeljina on March 31, 2022. The following topics were covered: EU goals and regulations in environment protection and waste

management, principles of circular economy, risk estimation and monitoring of illegal dump sites, and examples of successful waste management models.

Training for non-governmental organizations, public services and citizens took place in Sremska Mitrovica on May 24, 2022. Project was presented at the training as well as the legal framework for the waste and wastewater management, as well as the work of the environmental inspectors.

Participants had an opportunity to see promotional video and the web site of the project. A mobile application was created for the citizens to use and report illegal dump sites and was presented by Nikola Maodus, PhD. He pointed out that with the application work of the environmental inspectors, and the communication between the actors should be much easier. So far apart from the information on the project, partners and activities, maps of the existing illegal sites are marked, and the citizens invited to report new sites if observed.



About Us

IPA Cross-border Cooperation Programme Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2014-2020 is implemented under the framework of the Instrument of Pre-accession Assistance (IPA II).



The Programme is implemented jointly by both countries. Ministry of European Integration of the Republic of Serbia and Directorate for European Integration of Bosnia and Herzegovina are in charge of the overall coordination of the Programme as the Operating Structures. Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Serbia, Department for Contracting and Financing of EU Funded Programmes (CFCU) is responsible for all contract as the Contracting Authority (CA). Programme is assisted by Joint Technical Secretariat (JTS).

The overall budget of the Programme for the period 2014-2020 is 14,000,000 EUR while Beneficiaries co-financing is expected to be 2,223,529.41 EUR.

So far, since its establishment in 2007 the Programme has funded 62 projects, providing 19,50 million EUR of EU funds across the Programme area.

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