

**Cross-Border
Cooperation**



Funded by
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Serbia – Bosnia and Herzegovina

NEWSLETTER
No. 13

STORIES THAT CONNECT

Results of projects implemented under the IPA II Cross-border
Cooperation Programme Serbia – Bosnia and Herzegovina
2014–2020.

NEWSLETTER NO. 13

INTRODUCTION

Cooperation between Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina continues through the new IPA III programming cycle, with new themes, partnerships and opportunities for local communities. However, every new cycle has a stronger foundation when it builds on what has already been created.

That is why Newsletter No. 13 is dedicated to the results of projects implemented under the IPA II Cross-border Cooperation Programme Serbia – Bosnia and Herzegovina 2014–2020. This issue brings a story about results that remained in communities: equipment that is being used, services that have become more accessible, knowledge that has been transferred, spaces that have been

improved, digital tools that have been developed, natural and cultural heritage that has gained new value, and partnerships that continue to connect institutions and people on both sides of the border.

In previous years, projects connected schools, museums, tourism organisations, public utility companies, civil protection services, civil society organisations, local self-governments, support centres, entrepreneurs, young people, professionals and many citizens.

Through selected examples, the newsletter shows how project results became part of everyday life in local communities on both sides of the border.

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

RESULTS IN FOCUS

When completed IPA II projects are observed, it becomes clear that cooperation addressed different needs of the cross-border area. In some cases, the result is new equipment, in others trained people, improved spaces, a new service, knowledge, documentation or a partnership network that remains as a basis for future work.

Projects contributed to strengthening local services, health and social support, nature protection, better waste management, preservation of cultural heritage, development of practical skills, support to young people and entrepreneurs, improvement of capacities for emergency response, and greater visibility of the shared resources of Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina.



Programme in Numbers

SOME OF THE KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- ◆ more than 1,435 km of walking, hiking and thematic trails developed, marked or improved
- ◆ 840.8 km of trails improved through Via Dinarica activities
- ◆ 595.5 km of trails developed and marked through the European walking route E7
- ◆ 40 birdwatching locations presented through digital maps
- ◆ 6,400 households included in primary waste separation
- ◆ 600 households included in home composting
- ◆ 10,000 bins and 600 composters procured to improve waste management
- ◆ almost 1,000 tonnes of bulky waste collected and treated
- ◆ 2 school kitchens equipped for practical teaching and the development of healthy gastronomic products
- ◆ 20 start-ups supported through business incubators and support programmes
- ◆ more than 150 services provided to start-ups
- ◆ 2 tourism training centres established and equipped
- ◆ at least 42 training participants employed in the tourism sector
- ◆ more than 2,600 preventive health check-ups conducted for older citizens
- ◆ 60 mobile team members trained for field work
- ◆ 91 children received direct support through services and programmes
- ◆ 121 informal caregivers and 120 professionals trained
- ◆ more than 100 participants included in online education in the field of disability sport
- ◆ 131 units of equipment procured for civil protection
- ◆ 151 persons certified in first aid
- ◆ 50 e-guides developed for museum content
- ◆ 2 virtual museums established as new digital content
- ◆ 2 archaeological parks improved through project activities
- ◆ 4 cross-border networks established in the field of cultural tourism and traditional crafts
- ◆ 364 persons improved their competences through trainings, workshops and project activities in the field of cultural tourism

These numbers are not only statistics. Their value lies in the fact that behind them are concrete services, equipment, spaces, knowledge and opportunities that remained available to people and institutions in the cross-border area.

WHERE COOPERATION HAPPENED

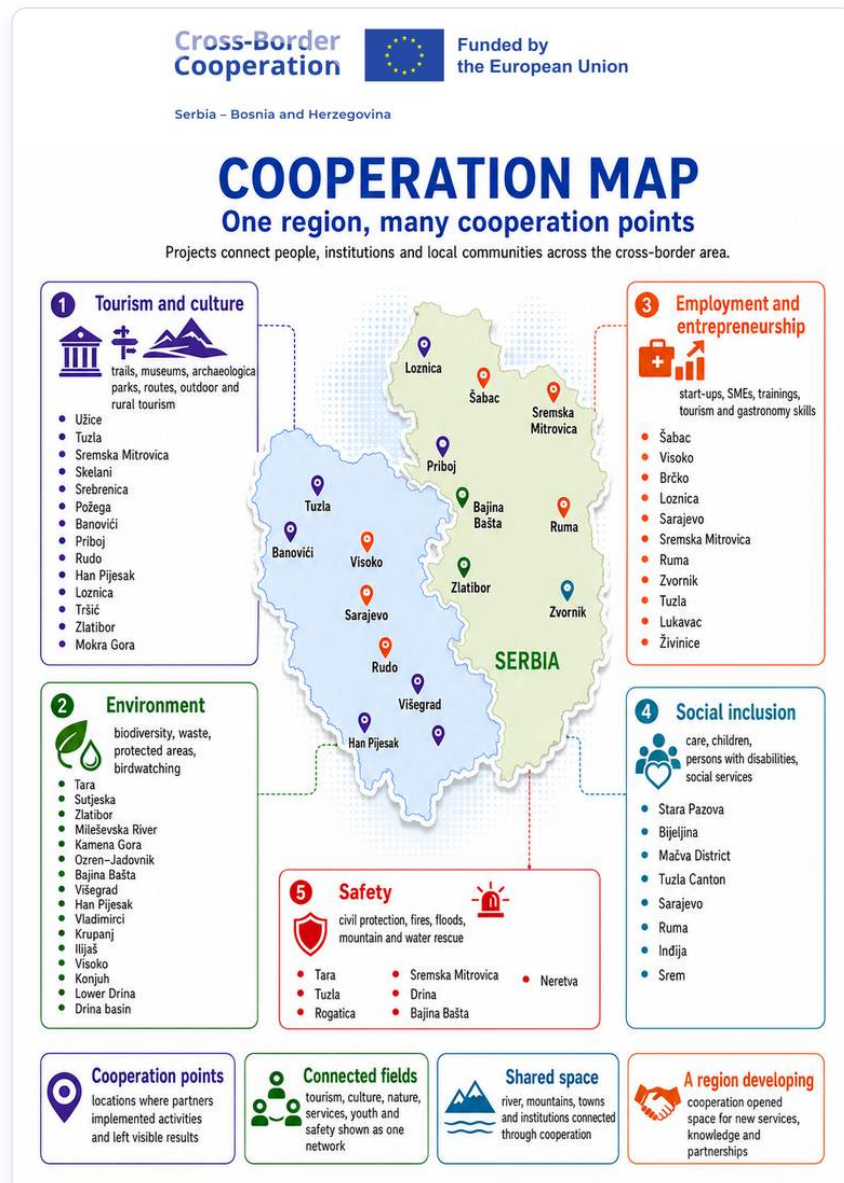
MAP OF COOPERATION

Cross-border cooperation is best understood when results are placed on a map. Then it is not only cities and municipalities that are visible, but places where cooperation took concrete form: in schools, museums, public companies, day centres, business incubators, civil protection services, natural areas, rural communities and cultural heritage sites.

Projects connected institutions and organisations dealing with similar challenges: how to improve

services, how to support young people, how to manage waste better, how to protect nature, how to make cultural heritage more accessible, how to respond in emergency situations and how to turn local resources into development opportunities.

That is why the cooperation map is not only a geographical overview. It is a picture of a network of people, institutions and ideas that developed on both sides of the border during the IPA II cycle.



Cooperation Map

TOURISM & OUTDOOR

NATURE, HERITAGE AND SPACES FOR VISITORS

One part of the projects was focused on better use of the natural and cultural potentials of the cross-border region. Via Dinarica, the European walking route E7, birdwatching offer, outdoor activities, rural tourism, Roman heritage, old railways, Neolithic sites, traditional crafts and sports-recreational content showed that the region has different, yet interconnected resources.

Through the projects, trails were improved and marked, digital maps were developed, signage was

installed, sites were equipped, guides and tourism actors were trained, and new content was developed to connect nature, culture, recreation and local communities.

The value of these results is not only in increasing the number of visitors. It lies in the fact that local communities gained new ways to present their heritage, involve local actors and create content that can be used even after the projects are completed.



Tourism routes and destinations

SOME OF THE ACHIEVED RESULTS

- ◆ 840.8 km of trails improved through Via Dinarica activities
- ◆ 595.5 km of trails developed and marked through the E7 route
- ◆ new and improved walking, hiking and thematic trails
- ◆ digital maps and promotional tools prepared for visitors and local actors
- ◆ eco-camping zones and outdoor content developed as part of the offer
- ◆ birdwatching sites mapped and promoted
- ◆ local guides and service providers trained for new content
- ◆ rural, natural and cultural resources connected through joint activities
- ◆ two tourism training centres established and equipped in Sarajevo and Užice
- ◆ training programmes for tourism occupations developed and improved, including cooks, waiters/sommeliers, receptionists, animators and housekeepers
- ◆ at least 42 training participants employed in the tourism sector
- ◆ two tennis courts built in Priboj and Rudo
- ◆ two tennis camps organised for 40 children and young people
- ◆ five licensed coaches for younger categories trained
- ◆ cycling and walking trails along parts of the old railway route maintained and improved

HERITAGE & IDENTITY

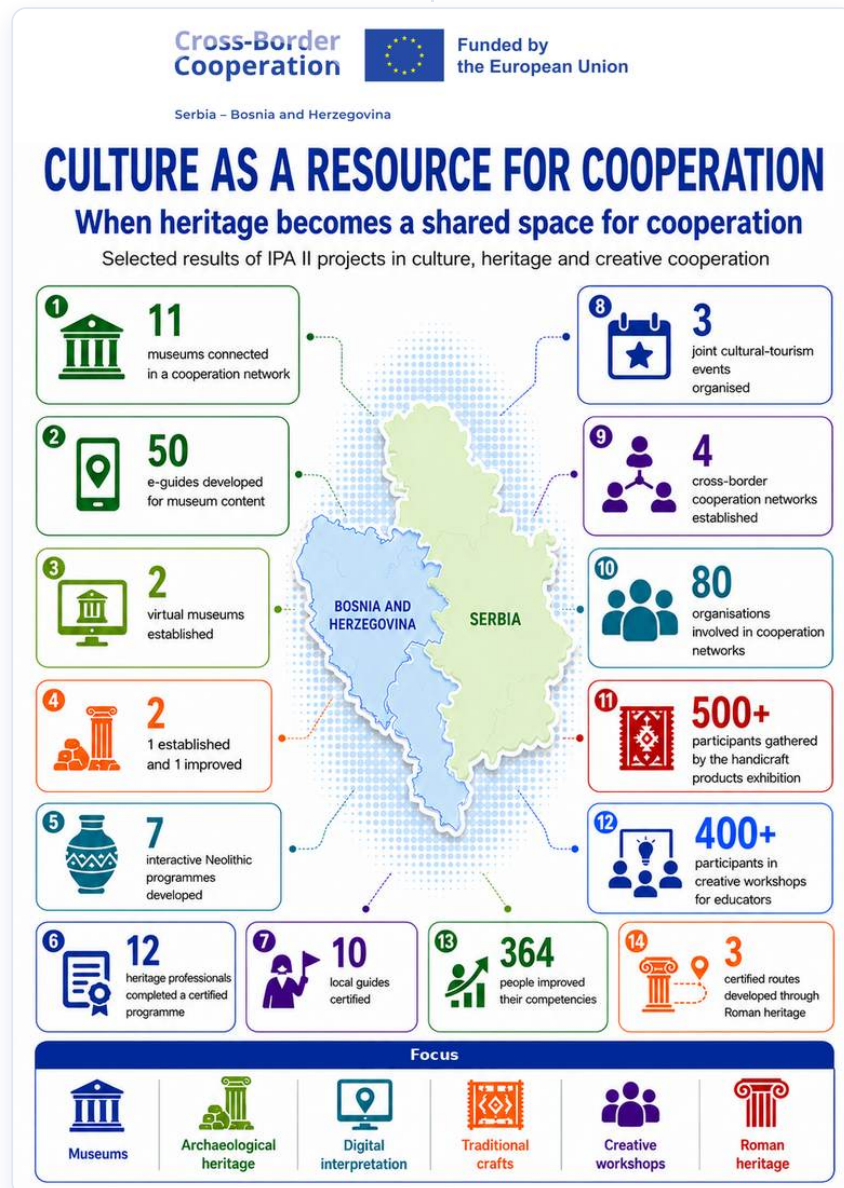
CULTURE AS A RESOURCE FOR COOPERATION

The cultural heritage of the cross-border area gained new visibility through museums, archaeological sites, old railways, Roman heritage, Neolithic sites, traditional crafts, cultural events and new interpretative content.

Projects showed that culture is not only a matter of preserving the past, but also a space for new content, education, digitalisation, local identity, women's entrepreneurship, social entrepreneurship and cooperation between institutions. When a museum

gets an e-guide, an archaeological site receives new interactive programmes, crafts gain new visibility, and old railway heritage gains a new function in presenting local identity, culture becomes an active resource for the community.

Particularly important are the results that brought heritage closer to visitors in a modern way: through virtual museums, digital content, e-guides, improved exhibition spaces, creative workshops, tourism colonies and new thematic stories.



SOME OF THE ACHIEVED RESULTS

- ◆ 11 museums connected in a cooperation network
- ◆ 2 virtual museums established as new digital content
- ◆ 50 e-guides developed for museum content
- ◆ 2 archaeological parks improved through project activities
- ◆ established archaeological park in Stapska Banja near Užice
- ◆ Pannonica archaeological park in Tuzla improved within the Pannonian Lakes complex
- ◆ permanent exhibitions prepared to present the Neolithic way of life, crafts, ceramics, weapon-making and food preparation
- ◆ seven interactive animation programmes developed for visitors, especially children and young people
- ◆ museum exhibitions in Požega and Banovići improved through multimedia content, VR and e-guides
- ◆ two virtual museums of narrow-gauge railways established as part of the offer based on local heritage
- ◆ 12 heritage professionals completed an internationally certified heritage interpretation programme
- ◆ local guides trained for cultural heritage interpretation
- ◆ auxiliary building of the Jevđević house in Priboj reconstructed and transformed into an art workshop and multifunctional cultural space
- ◆ two looms procured for the preservation of traditional crafts
- ◆ workshops organised for souvenir making and promotion of local heritage
- ◆ joint cultural-tourism product developed and presented through an exhibition
- ◆ three joint cultural-tourism colonies/events organised
- ◆ four cross-border cooperation networks established, with around 80 organisations involved
- ◆ more than 500 participants gathered through an exhibition promoting the work of local craftswomen
- ◆ two creative workshops for educators organised, with more than 400 participants
- ◆ 364 persons improved their competences through trainings, workshops and project activities
- ◆ regulatory framework for social entrepreneurship defined as support to craft initiatives and women's economic empowerment
- ◆ Roman heritage on the Drina and Sava further valorised through connecting sites, improving interpretation and including them in a wider cultural-tourism offer

Through these results, culture gained the role of a bridge between the past and the future, but also between communities on both sides of the border.

ENVIRONMENT

GREEN CROSS-BORDER REGION

Nature is one of the greatest shared resources of Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Rivers, mountains, forests, birds, protected species and natural habitats cannot be viewed only within administrative borders.

Projects in the field of environment were focused on biodiversity protection, strengthening institutional capacities, environmental education, management of

natural resources and promotion of a responsible attitude towards nature.

Activities focused on the protection of Pančić spruce, habitat mapping, development of birdwatching content, promotion of biodiversity and involvement of local communities show that green cooperation is not only an environmental topic, but also a matter of education, local development, quality of life and responsibility towards future generations.



SOME OF THE ACHIEVED RESULTS

- ◆ 40 Pančić spruce habitats researched and mapped
- ◆ biodiversity protection and promotion activities implemented in the cross-border area
- ◆ 2 digital birdwatching maps prepared for areas of importance
- ◆ 40 birdwatching locations presented through promotional and digital tools
- ◆ public companies and institutions included in activities of nature protection and improved resource management
- ◆ citizens, students and local communities included in educational and promotional activities
- ◆ natural heritage presented as a shared resource for education, biodiversity protection and sustainable local development

Through these projects, nature protection did not remain only a message. It gained concrete tools, locations, maps, equipment, knowledge and partnerships.

CIRCULAR ECONOMY

FROM WASTE TO RESOURCES

Waste management is an area in which project results are directly visible in the everyday life of local communities. New bins, containers, composters, equipment for public utility companies, cleaned illegal dumpsites and the involvement of households and schools showed how the system can change step by step.

Projects showed that waste is not only a municipal problem. It is also a matter of habits, infrastructure, education, local planning and responsibility. When households, schools, public companies and local self-governments become part of the system, waste can move from problem to resource.



From Waste to Resources

SOME OF THE ACHIEVED RESULTS

- ◆ 6,400 households included in primary waste separation
 - ◆ 600 households included in home composting
 - ◆ 10,000 bins procured for waste separation
 - ◆ 600 composters distributed to households
 - ◆ 1,440 sets for waste separation and composting procured
 - ◆ almost 1,000 tonnes of bulky waste collected and treated
 - ◆ 40 containers for bulky waste procured
 - ◆ at least 6 illegal dumpsites cleaned
 - ◆ public utility companies equipped for more efficient work
 - ◆ public laboratories equipped for control and improvement of services
- ◆ schools and households included in education, separation and composting activities
 - ◆ local communities received practical tools for improving waste management in urban and rural areas

This is one of the themes where it is clearly visible how European support turns into concrete change: cleaner spaces, better services and greater citizen participation.

HEALTH & SOCIAL INCLUSION

PEOPLE AT THE HEART OF COOPERATION

The most important project results are often not the most visible at first glance. They are seen in the lives of people who received support, in children included in programmes, in caregivers who gained new knowledge, in older citizens to whom services were brought closer, in persons with disabilities who gained more opportunities, and in professionals who now have better capacities for their work.

Projects in this field dealt with healthy ageing, support to children with behavioural disorders, improvement

of competences of informal caregivers and professionals, support to persons with disabilities, social inclusion and involvement of vulnerable groups in social and economic life.

Their value lies in the fact that they addressed concrete human needs. Instead of support remaining distant from users, through projects, services, knowledge, equipment and professional capacities were brought closer to communities.



SOME OF THE ACHIEVED RESULTS

- ◆ more than 2,600 preventive health check-ups conducted for older citizens in rural areas
- ◆ 60 members of 12 local mobile teams trained for field work
- ◆ mobile teams equipped with medical and field equipment
- ◆ 4 vehicles procured for mobile teams, two in Serbia and two in Bosnia and Herzegovina
- ◆ older citizens included in counselling on preventive health care, nutrition, physical activity and mental health
- ◆ 91 children received direct support through specialised services
- ◆ day centres and workspaces improved or established
- ◆ 121 informal caregivers trained
- ◆ 120 professionals from the social protection system trained
- ◆ manuals, trainings and online courses developed for caregivers and professionals
- ◆ persons with disabilities supported through sports, educational and inclusive activities
- ◆ more than 100 participants from Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina included in online education in the field of disability sport
- ◆ practical trainings in the field of disability sport implemented in Sarajevo and Ruma
- ◆ job shadowing activities enabled participants to gain practical experience in sports clubs working with para-athletes
- ◆ 18 sports wheelchairs procured
- ◆ 2 adapted vans procured
- ◆ professionals from different institutions connected through joint models of work
- ◆ vulnerable groups included in programmes for acquiring new knowledge and skills, with a focus on employability and social inclusion

These results show that cross-border cooperation is strongest when it turns into an accessible service, practical support and a new opportunity for people.

EMPLOYMENT & SKILLS

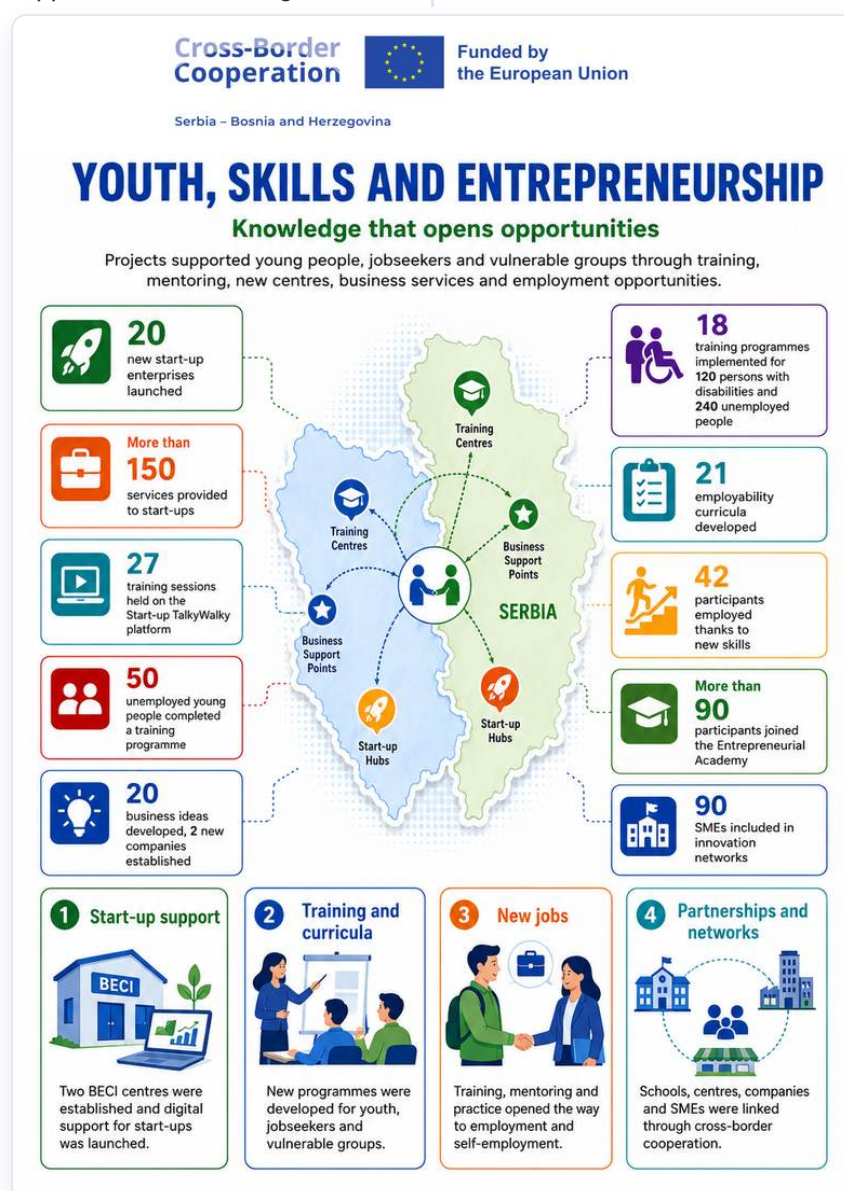
YOUTH, SKILLS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Support to young people, unemployed persons, women, vulnerable groups and small enterprises was one of the important lines of project activities. Projects developed training centres, business incubators, one-stop-shop services, curricula, platforms, mentoring, practical trainings and direct links with employers.

What is particularly important is that support did not remain only at the level of training. It was directed towards the practical application of knowledge:

development of business ideas, launching start-ups, strengthening competences, connecting with the labour market, development of new products and improvement of local economies.

This area is also a natural bridge towards the new programming cycle, because it shows what has already been established as a basis for further investment in young people, education and skills.



Youth, Skills and Entrepreneurship

SOME OF THE ACHIEVED RESULTS

- ◆ 2 business and entrepreneurship centres and incubators established and equipped in Brčko and Loznica
- ◆ 20 start-ups supported through incubation programmes
- ◆ more than 150 services provided to start-ups
- ◆ Start-up TalkyWalky digital platform launched as support to entrepreneurs
- ◆ 27 trainings delivered for start-ups, young people, entrepreneurs and support users
- ◆ feasibility studies and business plans prepared as a basis for incubator sustainability
- ◆ 2 school kitchens equipped in Ruma and Zvornik for practical teaching and development of new products
- ◆ healthy nutrition programmes and allergen-free nutrition programmes developed
- ◆ 80 young cooks trained for preparation of new gastronomic programmes
- ◆ 20 teachers trained to work with students in the field of healthy and safe nutrition
- ◆ 100 parents and 200 young people improved their knowledge of healthy nutrition
- ◆ online market portal established for promotion of healthy gastronomic products
- ◆ 50 young people completed a six-month training programme
- ◆ 20 business ideas developed
- ◆ 2 companies established as a result of support
- ◆ training centres equipped for practical programmes
- ◆ new curricula developed in accordance with labour market needs
- ◆ unemployed persons, young people, women and vulnerable groups included in practical skills acquisition programmes
- ◆ small and medium-sized enterprises connected through innovation and business networks
- ◆ mentors, employers and local institutions included in programmes connecting education, training and the labour market
- ◆ self-employment programmes, local support mechanisms and one-stop-shop services developed through partnerships of local communities and organisations

These results show how project support can become a concrete opportunity: for employment, a new business idea, independent work or strengthening an existing business.

SAFETY & RESILIENCE

CIVIL PROTECTION AND EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

Floods, fires, mountain accidents and other emergency situations do not stop at the border. That is why projects in the field of civil protection and emergency situations were focused on equipment, training, coordination and rapid response.

Through the projects, vehicles, rescue and firefighting equipment were procured, specialised trainings were

organised, digital systems were improved and the capacities of services that respond when help is most needed were strengthened.

These results have particular importance because their value is best seen in crisis moments — when good equipment, trained people and coordinated action can save time and save lives.



Civil Protection and Emergency Response

SOME OF THE ACHIEVED RESULTS

- ◆ 131 units of equipment procured for civil protection
- ◆ 31 experts trained in the field of risk management
- ◆ 151 persons certified in first aid
- ◆ operational training centre established for trainings and exercises
- ◆ rescue, firefighting and field vehicles procured
- ◆ 2 ATV vehicles procured for access to difficult terrain
- ◆ 50 participants completed ski and alpine training
- ◆ equipment for rescue on water, in mountains and in winter conditions put into use
- ◆ digital tools and databases improved for the needs of rescue services
- ◆ local communities included in awareness-raising and prevention activities
- ◆ capacities improved for response in case of fires, floods, mountain accidents and other emergency situations
- ◆ services and institutions on both sides of the border connected through joint trainings, exercises and exchange of experience

Good equipment saves time. Good training saves lives. Good cooperation enables help to arrive faster.

WHAT COMES NEXT

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

IPA II projects have been completed, but their results are not a finished story. They remain as a basis for new ideas, new partnership initiatives and a new cycle of cooperation within the IPA III Programme.

The new programming period opens space for themes already recognised as important in the previous cycle: young people, education, skills, sustainable development, cultural and natural

heritage. The difference is that new cooperation now has something to rely on — partner experience, established networks, equipment, knowledge and results already tested in practice.

Borders may be lines on a map. But through cooperation, they become spaces of encounter, development and shared opportunities.

CLOSING WORD

EUROPE IN EVERYDAY LIFE

The greatest value of projects is seen in what remains after their completion. These are centres that continue to operate, equipment that is being used, vehicles that go into the field, trails that visitors use, digital platforms that remain available, plans and strategies that guide future work, and partnerships that continue through new initiatives.

These are some of the results that became part of everyday life in local communities through IPA II

projects. They show that European support did not remain only in project documentation, but in practical solutions that people, institutions and organisations can use.

The European Union is not just about politics and regulations. It is also about tangible support reflected in better services, modern equipment, improved infrastructure, new knowledge, and opportunities that have a lasting impact on people's lives.

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ABOUT US

IPA Cross-border Cooperation Programme Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2021-2027 is implemented under the framework of the Instrument of Pre-accession Assistance (IPA III).

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 2021-2027 is 14,000,000 EUR while Beneficiaries co-financing is expected to be 2,223,529.42 EUR.

So far, since its establishment in 2007 the Programme has funded 75 projects, providing a little over 23 million EUR of EU funds across the Programme area.

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