

1st Regional Consultative Forum

A border can be a barrier, but it can also be a gateway, an opportunity and a resource! Cross-border cooperation has the potential to transform border into a possibility for development. This is particularly important in the case of the border region between Bulgaria and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, being on the external border of the European Union. The future of this region will depend on coordinated action to exploit the opportunities and tackle the challenges.

Which topics call for cross-border co-operation? How can the IPA CBC Programme Bulgaria - the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia 2014-2020 contribute to the development of the region?

An important step in preparing the new Programme is to seek the views of stakeholders on the shape and content of the future programme. The wide public consultations shall contribute to the programming with experience and know-how. Furthermore, it shall help to identify specific demands and expectations towards the new programme among potential target groups.

The IPA CBC Programme Bulgaria - the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia invites its stakeholders to:

- Learn about results of the situation and SWOT analysis, which has taken place in the last months.
- Match experts' findings with practitioners' reality and needs.
- Define the fields in which cross-border cooperation is needed.
- Discuss the Programme's thematic concentration (selection of thematic/investment priorities).

PROGRAMME

<i>Date and Time:</i>	<i>Place:</i>	<i>Address:</i>
26 February 2014 (10:30)	Strumica	Hotel Sirius, Strumica
27 February 2014 (10:30)	Stip	Hotel Oaza, Stip
28 February 2014 (10:30)	Kumanovo	Restoran NA-MA, square M.Tito No.10 - shopping center NA-MA, Kumanovo
6 March 2014 (13.30)	Kyustendil	Joint Technical Secretariat 7 "Marin Drinov", Kyustendil
7 March 2014 (9:30)	Blagoevgrad	Hotel Ezerec, 2 "Peyo Yavorov" Blvd., Blagoevgrad

**The duration of the event is approximately 4 hours.*

	Registration
	Welcome & Introduction
	A long term vision for the Cross-border Border Area - <i>Presentation of results of the situation and SWOT/needs analysis</i>
	Coffee-break
	Strategic framework of the future cross-border Programme - <i>Presentation of possible thematic priorities and arguments for selection</i> - <i>Discussion</i>
	End of event

