

## IPA Cross-border Cooperation Programme Bulgaria – the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia 2014-2020



### On- line survey February 2014

#### Background

In the context of programming the IPA CBC Programme 2014-2020 between Bulgaria and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia an on-line survey had been undertaken for exploring the opinion of regional stakeholders on the focus of the future Programme.

The survey was organized in February 2014. It has been completed from numerous institutions and private persons from both Republic of Bulgaria and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The survey was published on the web site of the programme on the 3<sup>th</sup> of February 2014. The public had the possibility to complete the questionnaire until the 14<sup>th</sup> of February. The JTS additionally contacted relevant organizations from their database by e-mail inviting them to complete the survey.

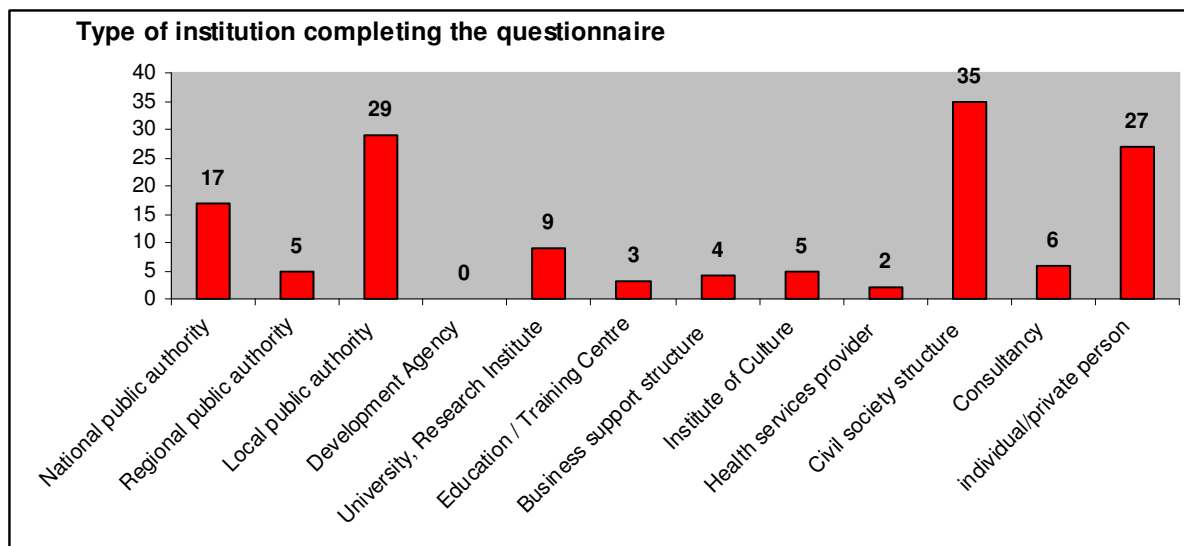
A total of 142 responses to the on-line survey had been registered with a balanced participation from both countries:

Country of residence / establishment	responses	share
Republic of Bulgaria	67	47,2%
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	75	52,8%
<b>total</b>	<b>142</b>	

#### Respondent's identification

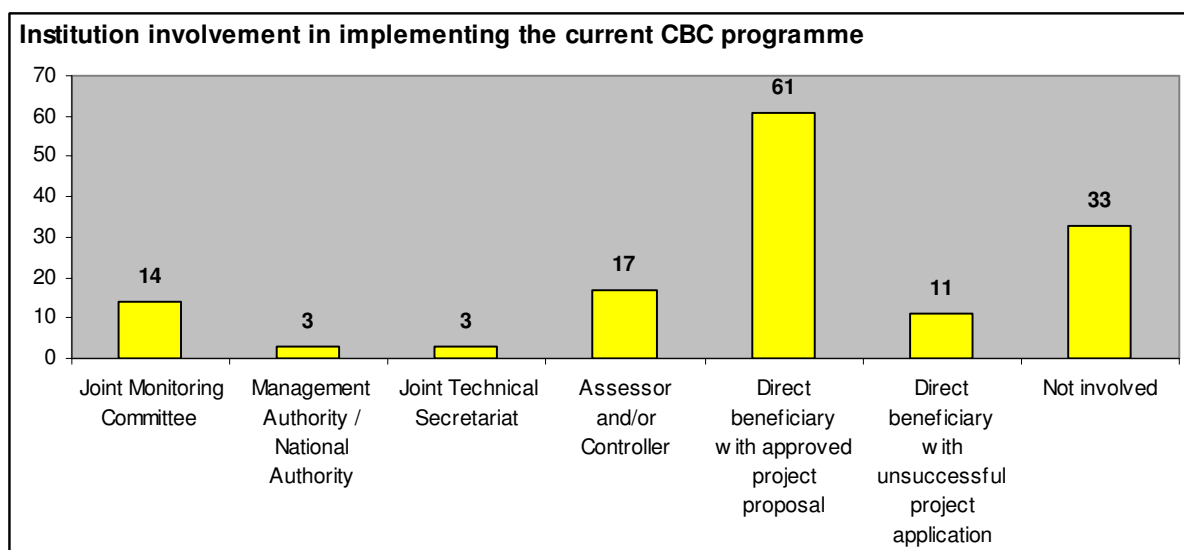
Most of the questionnaires have been completed by Civil society structures from both countries (25%) and Local public authorities (20%), followed by private individuals with 19,0% of the responses.





**Graphic 1 – Type of institution completing the questionnaire**

Graphic 2 provides an overview if and how the respondents have already been involved in the current IPA CBC Programme Bulgaria – the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (2007-2014). The highest share in the survey had direct beneficiaries with approved project proposals (43,%).



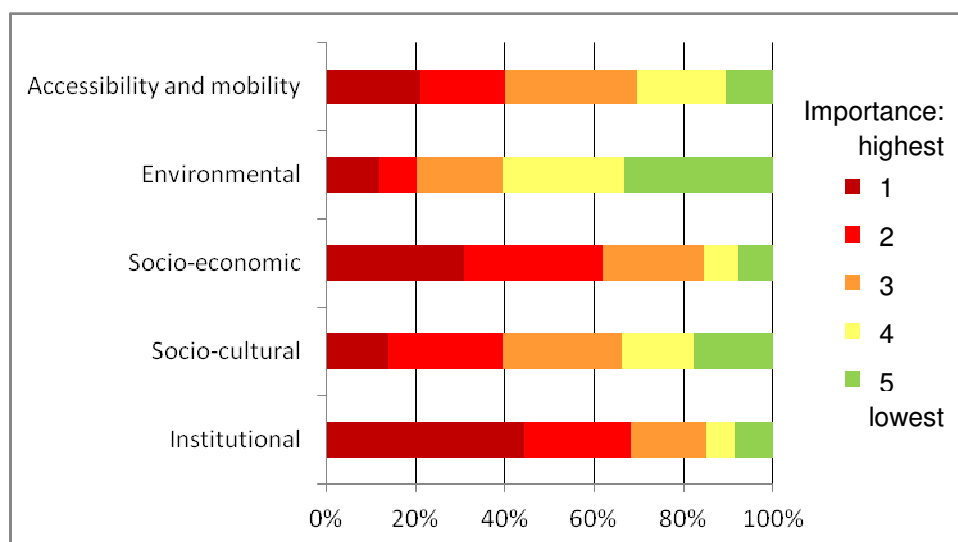
**Graphic 2 –involvement in implementing the current CBC programme**



## Results of the on-line survey

### Challenges and opportunities for cross-border cooperation

The following 3 tables represent the perceived major problems, barriers, challenges, opportunities and threats for future cross-border cooperation between Republic of Bulgaria and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

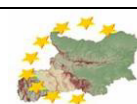


**Graphic 3: Major problems and barriers for Cross-border Cooperation between Bulgaria and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia**

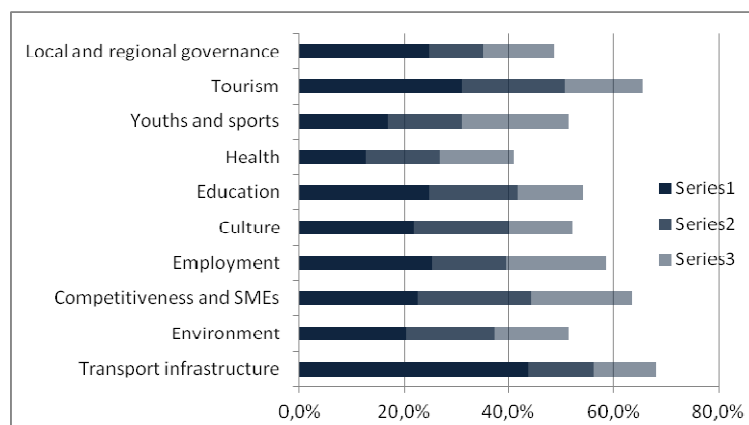
Institutional obstacles are seen as the major barrier for cross-border cooperation between the two countries. About 2/3 rank this aspect 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>. 62 % of the respondents also consider socio-economic differences as important obstacles for cooperation followed by problems with accessibility and mobility (40%). Respondents from both countries had very similar views in this respect.

Challenges and opportunities for further strengthening CBC										
	Transport infrastructure	Environment	Competitiveness and SMEs	Employment	Culture	Education	Health	Youths and sports	Tourism	Local and regional governance
1	43,7%	20,4%	22,5%	25,4%	21,8%	24,6%	12,7%	16,9%	31,0%	24,6%
2	12,7%	16,9%	21,8%	14,1%	18,3%	16,9%	14,1%	14,1%	19,7%	10,6%
3	12,0%	14,1%	19,0%	19,0%	12,0%	12,7%	14,1%	20,4%	14,8%	13,4%
4	2,8%	12,0%	9,2%	12,7%	10,6%	11,3%	10,6%	11,3%	11,3%	12,0%
5	6,3%	9,2%	9,2%	4,9%	14,8%	11,3%	9,2%	8,5%	7,0%	15,5%
6	3,5%	3,5%	4,9%	9,2%	6,3%	5,6%	7,0%	7,7%	3,5%	4,2%
7	7,0%	4,9%	2,1%	1,4%	4,2%	5,6%	7,0%	7,0%	4,9%	3,5%
8	3,5%	4,2%	3,5%	5,6%	4,9%	7,0%	11,3%	3,5%	0,7%	3,5%
9	2,1%	8,5%	2,8%	3,5%	5,6%	4,2%	7,0%	4,2%	2,1%	5,6%
10	6,3%	6,3%	4,9%	4,2%	1,4%	0,7%	7,0%	6,3%	4,9%	7,0%

1...most important; 10...least important

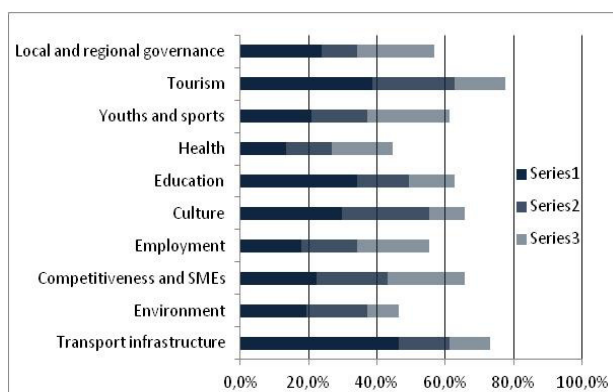


**Table 1: Major challenges and opportunities for further strengthening CBC between Bulgaria and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia**

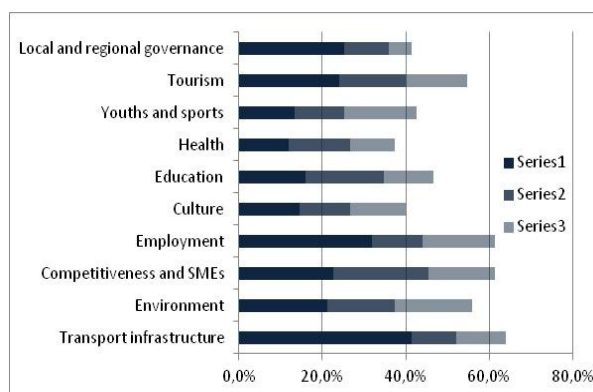


The results listed in Table 1 show that Transport infrastructure (almost 70,0%), Tourism (65,5%) and Competitiveness of the SMEs (63,3%) have been marked as most crucial challenges/opportunities (adding the marks 1,2 and 3) for future cross-border cooperation between Bulgaria and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

### Bulgaria



### the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia



Comparing the responses from the two countries reveal that both consider transport infrastructure very important (BG 71%, MK 64%), but Bulgarian consider Tourism even more important (78%) whereas Macedonian also consider Competitiveness and SME development (61%) and Employment (61%) and even Environment (56%) more important than Tourism (55%).



Threats for CBC between BG and FYROM										
	Ageing population and trends for depopulation of the region	Decreased accessibility to education	Unemployment	Social exclusion and poverty	Absence of economic growth and diversification of economic activities	Aggravation of inner competition in the region through the development of parallel tourism capacities on	The absence of good cross border transport connections	Migration of the younger generation	Competences of local governments to deal with specific border problems	Poor cooperation between public and private/civil society organizations
1	35,2%	7,0%	35,2%	28,9%	23,2%	8,5%	28,2%	31,7%	18,3%	24,6%
2	19,0%	9,2%	21,1%	25,4%	17,6%	15,5%	17,6%	23,2%	16,9%	16,9%
3	11,3%	14,1%	9,9%	17,6%	29,6%	16,9%	12,7%	6,3%	12,0%	11,3%
4	11,3%	14,1%	12,7%	9,2%	9,2%	11,3%	7,0%	12,7%	11,3%	10,6%
5	3,5%	13,4%	9,2%	4,9%	6,3%	11,3%	8,5%	5,6%	8,5%	11,3%
6	5,6%	8,5%	4,2%	4,2%	3,5%	7,7%	4,2%	4,2%	8,5%	2,8%
7	2,8%	4,9%	3,5%	2,8%	4,2%	7,0%	4,9%	5,6%	6,3%	1,4%
8	4,2%	10,6%	0,7%	1,4%	2,1%	4,9%	7,0%	4,9%	3,5%	7,0%
9	2,1%	9,9%	2,1%	3,5%	3,5%	6,3%	2,1%	2,8%	7,7%	8,5%
10	4,9%	8,5%	1,4%	2,1%	0,7%	10,6%	7,7%	2,8%	7,0%	5,6%

1...most important; 10...least important

**Table 2: Major threats for CBC between Bulgaria and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia**

The participants in the survey from both countries recognized the social exclusion and poverty (around 72%), the current absence of economic growth (around 70%) and unemployment and the ageing population and trends for depopulation of the region (both around 66%) as the biggest threats (adding the marks 1, 2 and 3) for the future cooperation between Bulgaria and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

	Ageing population and trends for depopulation of the region	Decreased accessibility to education	Unemployment	Social exclusion and poverty	Absence of economic growth and diversification of economic activities	Aggravation of inner competition in the region through the development of parallel	The absence of good cross border transport connections	Migration of the younger generation	Competences of local governments to deal with specific border problems	Poor cooperation between public and private/civil society organizations
BG	70%	36%	63%	72%	76%	39%	61%	60%	49%	55%
MK	61%	25%	69%	72%	65%	43%	56%	63%	45%	51%

**Table 3: Major threats for CBC, responses by country (first / most important 3 marks)**

Comparing responses from the two countries show that social exclusion and poverty are equal important for both parties (72% each). However Macedonians consider the absence of economic growth and diversification of economic activities even more important (MK 76%, BG 65%).



## Cross-border cooperation added value in the perspective 2014-2020

The following 3 tables represent the main expectations and considerations of the participants in the survey for the up-coming programme period of the cross-border cooperation between Bulgaria and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

Most value added of the CBC BG-FYROM 2014-2020					
		Organisational and policy learning	Solutions to, or progress towards, solving common problems	Mobilisation of critical mass	Building structures for further cross-border cooperation
	1	39,4%	40,1%	20,4%	56,3%
	2	34,5%	39,4%	36,6%	23,9%
	3	12,7%	16,9%	28,2%	9,2%
	4	13,4%	3,5%	14,8%	10,6%
1...most important; 4...least important					

**Table 4: Most value added of the CBC Bulgaria and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia 2014-2020**

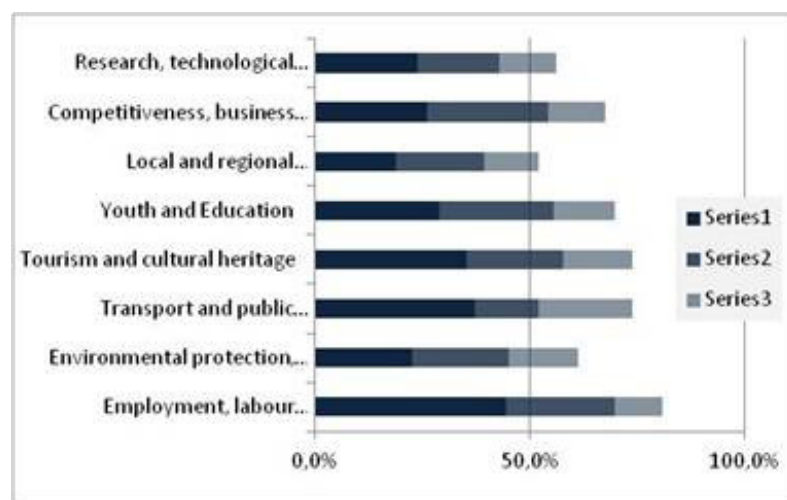
Most of the respondents consider the building of structures for future cross-border cooperation (56%) as the most significant expected value added from the perspective programme period. Around 40% of the participants see the organizational and policy learning as well as the solutions of common problems as major value added.



Priority area in CBC 2014-2020 bringing community value added								
	Employment, labour mobility and social inclusion	Environmental protection, climate change and risk prevention	Transport and public infrastructures	Tourism and cultural heritage	Youth and Education	Local and regional governance, planning and administration capacity building	Competitiveness, business and SME development, trade and investment	Research, technological development and innovation and ICT
1	44,4%	22,5%	37,3%	35,2%	28,9%	19,0%	26,1%	23,9%
2	25,4%	22,5%	14,8%	22,5%	26,8%	20,4%	28,2%	19,0%
3	11,3%	16,2%	21,8%	16,2%	14,1%	12,7%	13,4%	13,4%
4	4,9%	10,6%	5,6%	10,6%	9,2%	19,7%	8,5%	10,6%
5	5,6%	6,3%	7,0%	4,9%	7,0%	8,5%	10,6%	9,2%
6	3,5%	7,0%	5,6%	6,3%	4,2%	7,0%	4,9%	9,9%
7	4,2%	7,0%	2,1%	2,1%	4,2%	10,6%	4,9%	7,0%
8	0,7%	7,7%	5,6%	2,1%	5,6%	2,1%	3,5%	7,0%

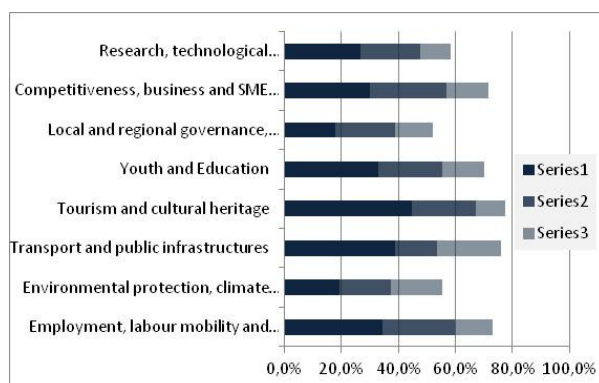
1...most important; 8...least important

**Table 5: Priority area in CBC 2014-2020 bringing community value added**

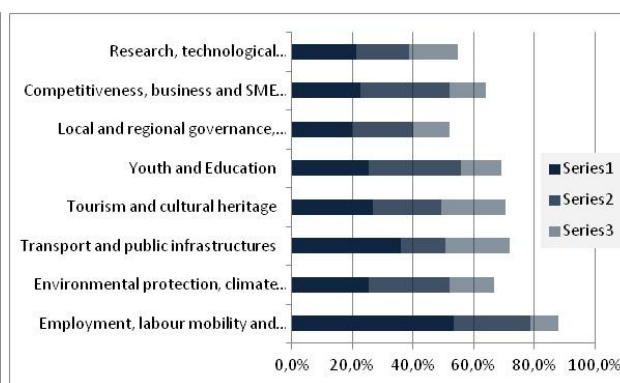


Respondents from both countries consider priority areas of greatest significance for the community are employment, labor mobility and social inclusion (as per more than 80%), transport and public infrastructure as well as tourism and culture heritage (both 74%) and youth and education (70%)(counting marks 1, 2 and 3).

## Bulgaria



## the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia





Comparing the respondents from both countries show that Macedonian consider Employment, labour mobility and social inclusion by far as most important (88%) for community value added, whereas Bulgarian rank tourism and cultural heritage first (%) followed by Transport and public infrastructures (76%) and Employment, labour mobility and social inclusion (73%).

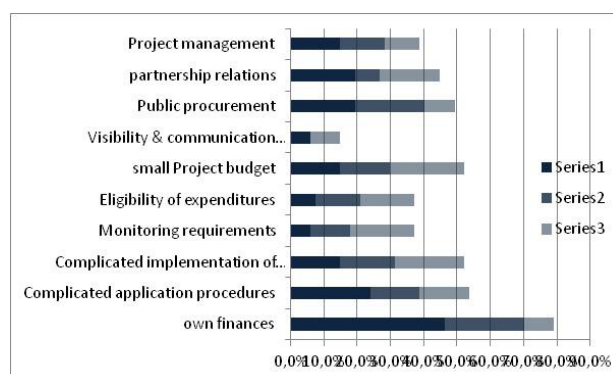
Major problems faced at implementing projects funded under IPA CBC Programmes										
	Lack of financial resources for co-financing and pre-financing of projects	Complicated application procedures (application forms, eligibility and selection criteria, supporting documents, language barrier – English, timing of the assessment process)	Complicated guides, templates an forms for project implementation	Monitoring requirements and CBC-specific indicators	Eligibility of expenditures	Project budget (set out limits do not allow implementation of major investment projects, incl. in business infrastructure)	Visibility and communication requirements	Public procurement	Difficulties in partnerships' relations (incl. difficulties in finding suitable and reliable partners)	Overall project management
1	50,7%	29,6%	16,9%	7,7%	12,0%	21,8%	6,3%	15,5%	17,6%	13,4%
2	19,0%	16,2%	19,0%	14,1%	10,6%	14,1%	6,3%	14,8%	11,3%	14,1%
3	7,7%	12,7%	17,6%	20,4%	19,7%	21,8%	7,0%	12,0%	13,4%	9,9%
4	4,9%	12,0%	11,3%	7,7%	12,7%	10,6%	10,6%	7,7%	9,9%	9,2%
5	7,0%	9,2%	9,2%	11,3%	14,8%	9,2%	6,3%	12,0%	7,7%	9,9%
6	4,2%	7,0%	7,0%	10,6%	9,2%	6,3%	9,9%	15,5%	5,6%	8,5%
7	1,4%	2,1%	8,5%	9,9%	7,0%	4,9%	10,6%	4,2%	8,5%	5,6%
8	2,1%	2,8%	4,2%	8,5%	5,6%	3,5%	7,7%	5,6%	9,2%	12,7%
9	0,7%	2,8%	4,2%	2,8%	4,2%	4,9%	14,1%	8,5%	6,3%	4,9%
10	2,1%	5,6%	2,1%	7,0%	4,2%	2,8%	21,1%	4,2%	10,6%	12,0%

1...most important; 10...least important

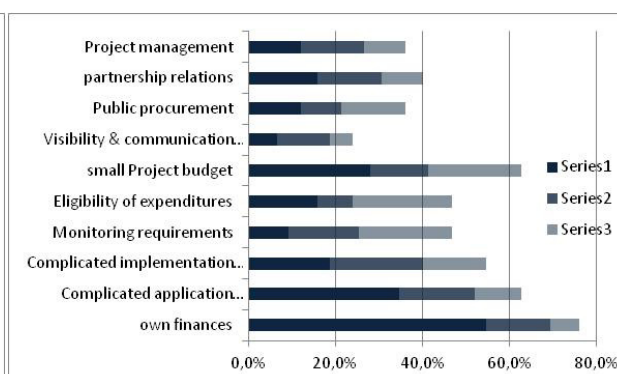
**Table 6: Major problems faced at implementing projects under IPA CBC Programmes**

Most of the participants in the survey consider the lack of own finances (78%) as the most significant problem for project implementation under the IPA CBC programmes. On second place as major problems for project implementation are listed the complicated application procedures within the programmes and the limited project budget (both around 60%).

## Bulgaria



## the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia





The answers from both countries are similar, however with slightly different weight of the most problematic aspects.

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