

EVALUATION / FITNESS CHECK ROADMAP

Roadmaps aim to inform citizens and stakeholders about the Commission's work to allow them to provide feedback and to participate effectively in future consultation activities. Citizens and stakeholders are in particular invited to provide views on the Commission's understanding of the problem and possible solutions and to share any relevant information that they may have.

TITLE OF THE EVALUATION	Mid-term evaluation of cross border cooperation programmes between IPA II beneficiaries
LEAD DG – RESPONSIBLE UNIT	DG NEAR A4
INDICATIVE PLANNING (PLANNED START DATE AND COMPLETION DATE)	Q4 2019- Q3 2020
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/instruments/multi-beneficiary-programme_en https://www.cbibplus.eu/programmes-0

The Roadmap is provided for information purposes only. It does not prejudice the final decision of the Commission on whether this initiative will be pursued or on its final content. All elements of the initiative described by the document, including its timing, are subject to change.

A. Context, purpose and scope of the evaluation

Context [max 15 lines]

This study is included in the [multiannual strategic evaluation plan for 2019-2023](#) of DG NEAR — Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations. It follows the EU Better Regulation requirements, which emphasise the need of systemic and timely evaluation of European Commission programmes, activities, instruments and non-spending activities in order to demonstrate accountability and to promote lesson learning to improve policy and practice.

Cross-Border Cooperation is the most common form of Territorial Cooperation and aims (particularly in the case of the Western Balkans) to promote good neighbourly relations, foster EU integration and promote socio-economic development in border areas between countries through joint local and regional initiatives combining both external aid and economic and social cohesion objectives.

Regarding IPA II, Territorial Cooperation Programmes include:

- the IPA II Cross-Border Cooperation (CBC) programmes (i.e. CBC programmes between IPA II Beneficiaries and Member States, between IPA II Beneficiaries themselves and between IPA II Beneficiaries and ENI countries);
- the participation of IPA II Beneficiaries in ERDF-funded (i.e. part of the EU Regional Policy) Transnational and Interregional Cooperation Programmes and ENI Cross-Border Cooperation Programmes - mainly participation in Sea Basin programmes (part of the EU Neighbourhood Policy).

IPA CBC Programmes between IPA II Beneficiaries, subject to this evaluation, primarily aim at promoting good neighbourly relations, confidence building and reconciliation. While doing so, the CBC Programmes also contribute to the economic, social and territorial development of (often-marginal) border areas and increase the capacity of local authorities and local civil society organisations to implement projects. The intensification and the consolidation of the dialogue between bordering regions constitutes a fundamental aspect of this type of CBC Programmes, as they help in establishing institutional relationships between local administrations and other relevant local or regional stakeholders. The rules for implementation of these CBC Programmes are detailed in the [IPA II Implementing Regulation](#). Contrary to [IPA I](#), these programmes are managed by a single contracting authority, either the EU Delegation (i.e. in direct management) or the IPA II Beneficiary to which budget implementation tasks have been entrusted (i.e. in indirect management).

Purpose and scope [max 15 lines]

The generic purpose of the mid-term evaluation is to provide an independent assessment and evidence on the performance of IPA CBC Programmes between IPA II Beneficiaries from their launch in 2014 until 2019. The evaluation will assess the relevance of the intervention logic of IPA CBC programmes in relation to the needs of the target beneficiaries, the efficiency and effectiveness of their implementation and prospects for achieving the set objectives. It will also analyse the level of coherence, coordination and complementarity of each programme

with national/sectorial and regional policies/strategies and other programmes addressing the same target beneficiaries. It will look into prospects for sustainability of the actions and the overall EU added value of the CBC programmes.

The evaluation will cover the following cross border cooperation programmes between IPA II Beneficiaries:

- Serbia - Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Serbia – Montenegro
- Montenegro – Kosovo*
- Montenegro – Albania
- North Macedonia – Albania
- Kosovo – North Macedonia
- Albania – Kosovo
- Bosnia and Herzegovina – Montenegro
- Serbia - North Macedonia

The evaluation will identify good practices, successful stories and lessons learned, and produce recommendations for future programming and policy purposes for territorial cooperation in the context of the [next Multiannual Financial Framework \(MFF\)](#) and the Commission proposal for the [Instrument for Pre-Accession III](#).

B. Better regulation

Consultation of citizens and stakeholders [max 10 lines]

As the present study does not refer to a major initiative (not being an evaluation in the sense of the Better Regulation guidelines), it will not develop an on-line open public consultation ([OPC](#)). Furthermore, as the present study is not linked to legislative and non-legislative initiatives, delegated acts or implementing measures, no impact assessment is required.

However, stakeholders' consultation activities will be undertaken to gather data, opinions and test hypotheses during the entire evaluation exercise from inception to final/reporting phase (either via interviews, workshops and/or surveys). The categories of stakeholders to be consulted include:

- National authorities and other institutions in candidate countries and potential candidates responsible for the design, implementation, monitoring and reporting of IPA CBC programmes between IPA II Beneficiaries (e.g. National IPA coordinators, Contracting Authorities, Operating Structures, members of the Joint Monitoring Committees, the Joint Technical Secretariats and Antennae and CBC project beneficiaries and final beneficiaries);
- EU stakeholders (non-exhaustive list): EU Delegations/EU Offices in candidate countries and potential candidates, DG NEAR, DG REGIO, the EC Secretariat General and the Committee of the Regions;
- International stakeholders (non-exhaustive list): the Council of Europe, civil society organisations and research institutions, international and regional Associations of Local Authorities that unite national associations.

The list will be further defined during Inception phase.

Data collection and methodology [max 10 lines]

The evaluation process includes four phases: an Inception Phase, a Desk Phase, a Field Phase, and a Synthesis Phase. Among the pool of main methodological techniques, the following key elements can be already pinpointed:

- A. Evaluation Questions: a draft set will be presented in the Terms of Reference and the evaluation team, in consultation with the Inter-service Steering Group, will finalise and complete it (with Judgement criteria, corresponding indicators and relevant data collection sources and tools) during the inception phase. When relevant, cross-cutting issues will be considered. The indicators will need to allow cross-checking, triangulation and strengthening the evidence base on which the questions are answered. The evidence gathered for each indicator will be presented as an annex of the desk and final reports.

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence

B. Data collection: several tools will be used for collecting, structuring, processing and/or analysing data throughout the evaluation process: inventory of CBC contracts, documentary review, interviews, case studies, survey(s), quantitative and qualitative analysis.

Deliverables in the form of reports and/or slide presentations will be submitted at the end of the corresponding phases.

Key sources of information already available are (the list will be further detailed during inception and desk phases):

- EU and Enlargement beneficiaries' policy and strategic documents;
- IPA CBC programmes documentation (action programmes, annual implementation reports, project monitoring reports);
- Previous evaluation of IPA CBC programmes

The Terms of reference will provide a non-exhaustive list.