



Minutes from the 18th Stakeholders' Group Meeting for cross-border region "Prespa"

09th March, 2018, Municipality of Resen
Republic of Macedonia

Participants in the meeting:

The structure of participants in the 18th Stakeholder Group meeting included 44 participants from the Prespa cross-border Region. The meeting was organized and facilitated by the staff of the Project Management Unit, with the assistance of the President of the Stakeholders Group for the Prespa cross – border region.

The full list of participants' contacts and details can be found at:

ANNEX 1: Participants list of 18th Prespa stakeholder group meeting 09.03.2018

ANNEX 2: PPP_New ABD 5 phase

ANNEX 3: PPP_LEIWW Grant Scheme for Prespa cross-border region

Program of the meeting:

18th Meeting of Stakeholders Group for the Cross-Border Region of “Prespa”

09:30 – 10:00 **Arrival of the participants and welcome gathering**

10:00 – 10:15 **Welcome speech**

Mr. Zivko Gosharevski, Mayor of municipality of Resen (TBC)

Ms. Viola Bogdani, President of SHG “Prespa” Cross-border Region

Mr. Damjan Surlevski Project Manager SWG

10:15 – 10:40 **Presentation and discussion of the new ABD phase of the EU project “Regional cooperation and networking in the field of agriculture, rural and economic development of cross-border areas”**

Mr. Damjan Surlevski Project Manager SWG

10:40 – 11:00 **Informative session on the outcomes of the People to People Call for “Prespa” cross-border Region**

Mr. Darko Buzarovski, Regional Manager of “Prespa” Cross-border Region

11:00 – 11:20 **Presentation on cluster initiative working groups for the sectors development of tourism and agriculture in “Prespa” region**

Ms. Etleva Thimo, Regional Coordinator of “Prespa” Cross-border Region

11:20 – 11:40 **Discussion and presentation of new nominated stakeholder group members and future activities**

Ms. Etleva Thimo, Regional Coordinator of “Prespa” Cross-border Region

11:40 – 12:00 **Conclusions of the meeting**

12:00 – 13:00 **Lunch**

Minutes of the meeting

The meeting started with the welcome speech of the Project Manager of SWG, Mr. Damjan Surlevski who welcomed the participants and expressed the pleasure for the high interest and presence of the stakeholder group members confirming the intensification of good cooperation between stakeholders in Prespa region through ABDA implementation approach. In addition, he introduced the new regional manager, Mr. Darko Buzarovski and invited all the participants and the new nominated members to make an introduction and expectation of their presence in the stakeholder group meeting.

On behalf of Resen municipality Mr. Zivko Gosharevski, mayor of Resen municipality, welcomed the participants and expressed his pleasure for hosting the 18th stakeholder group meeting in Resen municipality. He stressed the importance of these activities in the region, expressing the maximum support for future cooperation and wished a fruitful collaboration with all the stakeholders.

In addition, Ms. Viola Bogdani, President of stakeholder group for Prespa cross-border region thanked the host of the 18th meeting – Municipality of Resen, for the warm hospitality and all the participants for their presence. After the welcome speech the project manager of SWG presented the program of the meeting, focusing on each session and the issues to be discussed.

Session 1

Presentation and discussion of the new ABD phase of the EU project “Regional cooperation and networking in the field of agriculture, rural and economic development of cross-border areas”

The session started with the presentation of Mr. Damjan Surlevski, project manager SWG, who gave an overview of the new ABD 5 phase of the EU project “Regional cooperation and networking in the field of agriculture, rural and economic development of cross-border areas”. The presentation was focused on the general and specific objectives of the project regarding ABDA implementation approach and implementation of future activities during the new phase of the project. This project phase of the EU founded project: “Regional cooperation and networking in the field of agriculture, rural and economic development of cross-border areas”, for Prespa cross-border region will include the implementation of activities such as regional People-to-People events, workshops for capacity building for the stakeholders, facilitation of development of project applications, regular stakeholder meetings, as well as activities to enhance cooperation and networking among IPA II beneficiaries in order to accelerate the EU accession process of the Western Balkans in the agriculture and rural development sectors.

Session 2

Informative session on the outcomes of the People to People Call for “Prespa” cross-border Region and cluster initiative working groups in “Prespa” region

The presentation started with the overview of the People to People Call for the four regions of “Drina – Tara”, “Drina – Sava”, “Sharra” and “Prespa”. During the presentation, additional

information was given regarding the evaluation process and the main outcomes for the open call for People to People events. In total, there were seventy-four (74) applications submitted for the all four regions. Regarding the cross-border region of Prespa, eleven (11) applications were submitted. After the evaluation process only six (6) project applications of Prespa region succeeded with the necessary points for financial support. Meanwhile, because of insufficient funds four (4) project application that succeed the evaluation process with the necessary points were put in the waiting list for future possible support. Only one (1) application from Prespa region didn't succeed to get the necessary point for financial support after the evaluation process.

Also, the presentation was focused on the discussion about the progress work done for the two working groups established in the main priorities for the development of the cross-border region of Prespa such as agriculture and tourism. The presentation included the main activities organized till now by both working groups and planned future activities regarding their action plan. During the open discussion it was suggested to include a new initiative idea regarding the preservation of biodiversity and to merge it within the cluster group of Apple Processing initiative. In addition, it was suggested that they can potentially create a strategic document and indicate the priorities for this region.

Regarding the tourism cluster initiative, it was stressed that the field of environment and tourism is becoming actual along with cultural heritage. Part of this initiative is to gather all organizations and initiatives that are working in the preservation of the cross-border region. The creation and consolidation of a working group in tourism is necessary for the region of Prespa.

It was stressed that these two working groups are a very good initiative for stakeholders to help them increase the wider cross-border cooperation and create opportunities to further development of the region. Also, concluding it was emphasized that Project Management Unit Prespa and SWG will support these cluster initiatives in the region and will try to find additional funds for the financial support of future activities of two working groups.

Session 3

Informative session on the outcomes of the ABD Grant Scheme within the LEIWW project

The session started with the presentation of Mr. Darko Buzarovski, Regional Manager of Prespa cross-border region, who gave an overview of the ABD Grant Scheme implementation within the LEIWW project in Prespa cross-border region. During the presentation, general information was given regarding the main outcomes of results for the first and second call for the Prespa cross-border region. In the first call for proposals five (5) applications were received and only one was contracted but was cancelled due personals reasons of the beneficiary. During the second call for proposals in the cross-border region Prespa in total, there were nineteen (19) project applications submitted, from which ten (10) project applications succeeded in the evaluation process and because of insufficient grant funds, one (1) project application that succeed the evaluation process with the necessary points was later supported after receiving additional funds. In total eleven (11) project applications were supported within the grant scheme in Prespa cross-border region. Also, it was stressed that the project applications submitted were mainly focused in the sectors of agriculture and tourism.

During the open discussion it was stressed that the grant scheme implementation was a good opportunity to improve the business conditions and the integrated economic development of the Prespa region. In addition, it was suggested that in the future the business sector participation should be increased and included to actively participate in the stakeholder group.

Conclusions and future activities

In the last session the following conclusions were drawn:

- This project phase of the EU founded project: “Regional cooperation and networking in the field of agriculture, rural and economic development of cross-border areas”, for Prespa cross-border region will include the implementation of activities such as regional People-to-People events, workshops for capacity building for the stakeholders, facilitation of development of project applications, regular stakeholder meetings, as well as activities to enhance cooperation and networking among IPA II beneficiaries in order to accelerate the EU accession process of the Western Balkans in the agriculture and rural development sectors;
- During the open call for People to People events eleven (11) application were received for Prespa cross-border region. After the evaluation process for financial support six (6) project applications succeeded with the necessary points for future financial support and because of insufficient funds four (4) project application that succeed the evaluation process with the necessary points were put in the waiting list for future possible support. Only one (1) application form Prespa region didn't succeed to get the necessary point for financial support after the evaluation process;
- The two working groups established in the region are a very good initiative for stakeholders to help them increase the wider cross-border cooperation and create opportunities to further development of the region. Also, it was suggested to include a new initiative idea regarding the preservation of biodiversity and to merge it within the cluster group of Apple Processing initiative. The group can potentially create a strategic document and indicate the priorities for this region;
- Project Management Unit Prespa (PMU) and SWG will support the cluster initiatives in the region established in the main priorities for the development of the cross-border region of Prespa such as agriculture and tourism and will try to find additional funds for the financial support of future activities of two working groups initiatives;
- The grant project applications submitted for Prespa cross-border region were mainly focused in the sectors of agriculture and tourism. In total eleven (11) project applications were supported within the grant scheme in Prespa cross-border region. It was stressed that the grant scheme implementation was a good opportunity to improve the business conditions and the integrated economic development of the Prespa region;
- It was suggested that in the future the business sector participation should be increased and included to actively participate in the stakeholder group;
- Prespa PMU and SWG will continue to serve as an information point where members of the stakeholder group will obtain the necessary information on new calls for proposals and programs. They will continue to support the preparation of applications for different call for proposals and will provide possible partners for active IPA CBC programs in the region and other open calls.



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