

Macedonia's lagging behind in efficient usage of EU Funds (IPA, the Framework Programmes) – Analytica's analysis



Table of contents

List of Abbreviations.....	2
Introduction.....	3
1. Introduction on EU Funds (what is IPA, what do Research Framework Programmes represent, who are potential beneficiaries of these funds in Macedonia).	4
1.1 Instrument for Pre-Accession.....	4
1.2 7th Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration activities (FP7).	5
1.3 Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme.	6
2. What is the missing link between institutions and organizations which are eligible to apply for funds and actually getting those funds?	7
2.1 How effectively IPA is used in Macedonia?	7
2.2. The missing link for successful use of EU Funds.	8
3. Analytica's recommendation for efficient use of EU funds.	10
3.1 Positive experiences – case of Croatia.	10
3.2 Recommendations for the Macedonian Authorities.....	10
3.3 Recommendations for the private and civil sector in Macedonia.	11
Conclusion Remarks.....	14
Bibliography	15

List of Abbreviations

CDCD - Central Financing and Contracting Department

CIP – Competitiveness and Innovation Programme

CODSC - Central Office for Development Strategy and Coordination

CSO – Civil Society Organisation

FP7 – Seventh Framework Programme

IPA – Instrument of Pre-Accession

MIPD - Multi Annual Indicative Financial Framework

MoU – Memorandum of Understanding

SEA – Secretariat for European Affairs

SME – Small and Medium Size Enterprise

WB – Western Balkans

Introduction

The progress regarding to Chapter 22 from the *acquis communautaire* which is connected to the regional policy and coordination of structural instruments, is crucial for the EU candidate and potential candidate countries in becoming proficient in European affairs. Different types of funds are provided by the EU for decades now to help regions that are lagging behind in their modernization and development. In order to take a full advantage of the benefits that IPA and later on the Structural Funds provide, the countries will have to keep on with the reforms and create an effective and properly functioning institutional and legislative system as well as an appropriate administrative capacity that will be able to successfully manage these funds.

Apart from the IPA and the Structural Funds there are also other EU Funding Opportunities as the Framework Programmes for Research and Innovation, open for research organizations and SME's from all over the world¹. EU's main idea behind this is that "in an open global economy, competitiveness lies in the capacity of businesses to create high value-added goods and services. A move towards innovation-based sustainable growth is therefore at the heart of the EU's response to globalisation."

As a candidate member state that only recently got the recommendation for start of the negotiations for full EU membership, Macedonia should by now be well acquainted with the EU funding opportunities. However this is not the case. The reasons for this lagging behind are the main interest of this paper. In this light, the paper will present the current EU Funds eligible for Macedonia and their potential beneficiaries. Furthermore, it will try to answer the question about what is the missing link between institutions and organizations which are eligible to apply for funds and actually getting those funds, which showed to be a major issue during the application process. As a comparison point, the positive examples from Croatia will be presented giving possible solutions for Macedonia's case. Last but not least, Analytica's recommendation for efficient use of EU funds will be presented which would not only serve as a policy suggestion to the authorities but also as a practical guide through the ways of applying for all interested civil society organizations (CSOs).

¹ Commission, E. (n.d.). European Commission: CORDIS: Practical Guide to EU Funding Opportunities for Research and Innovation. Retrieved from European Commission: http://cordis.europa.eu/eu-funding-guide/home_en.html

1. Introduction on EU Funds (what is IPA, what do Research Framework Programmes represent, who are potential beneficiaries of these funds in Macedonia).

1.1 Instrument for Pre-Accession.

IPA was created with Council Regulation (EC) 1085/2006 of 17 July 2006 and its implementation provisions in Commission Regulation (EC) 718/2007. It put under the same umbrella the previous funds available for the pre-accession countries like: PHARE, ISPA, SAPARD, CARDS. It is intended to mirror the EU Structural Funds and help the countries that are on the way to join the Union to learn how to manage them. This is done in order to get the experience for successful participation in the Cohesion Policy and for successful absorption of the funds upon accession to the EU. IPA has several components:

- I. Transition Assistance and Institution Building;
- II. Cross-BorderCo-operation (with EU Member states and other countries eligible for IPA);
- III. Regional Development (providing support to transport, environment infrastructure and enhancing competitiveness and reducing regional disparities);
- IV. Human Resources Development (strengthening human capital and combating exclusion);
- V. Rural Development (rural development type of measures).

Components I and II are open to all beneficiary countries whereas Components III, IV and V are open to the Candidate Countries only (current Candidate Countries are: Croatia, Turkey and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia).²

The funds for the WB countries and Turkey were open in 2007. The end beneficiaries can be the public administration units, SMEs, local government institutions or other entities. Their participation depends mostly on the purpose and type of calls for the operational programme and the component. The important thing to remember is that all of the activities go directly through the organs of the Government (ministries, agencies) since they are the direct link between the IPA and the end beneficiaries³.

When it comes to Macedonia the overall budget frame for the period of 2007-2013 is 622.5 million euro. The only operational programme functioning at the moment is the Regional Development one, with the transport and environmental sector included in it instead of being separated in different operational programmes. The Multi Annual Indicative Financial Framework for the period of 2007-2009 is⁴:

Component	2007	2008	2009	Total
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² Commission, E. (n.d.). How IPA works. Retrieved from Regional Policy InfoRegio European Commission: http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/funds/ipa/works_en.htm

³ Note: Macedonia for now will only manage component III and IV, the other components, at least until next year are still centrally managed through the office of the EU Mission in Skopje.

⁴ Commission Decision C(2007) 1853 of 30/04/2007 on Multi-annual Indicative Planning Document (MIPD) 2007-2009 for the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Macedonia's Lagging Behind in Efficient Usage of EU Funds (IPA, Framework Programmes) – Analytica's Analysis

I – Institution Building	41.6	39.9	38.1	119.6
II – Cross Border Cooperation	4.2	5.3	5.6	15.1
III – Regional Development	7.4	12.3	20.8	40.5
IV – Human Resources Development	3.2	6.0	7.1	16.3
V – Rural Development	2.1	6.7	10.2	19
Total	58.5	70.2	81.8	210.5

Up until this year the implementation of IPA was centralized which means all of the funding went through the EC Delegation Mission. From July and October 2009, the country got the accreditation from EU to apply decentralized implementation of the assistance for the III and IV component.⁵ In addition a new sector has been created that will i.e. “has a sole responsibility for all tendering, contracting and payment activities related to projects financed under the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) of the European Commission in the Republic of Macedonia.”⁶ It is called [Central Financing and Contracting Department within the Ministry of Finance](#) and it is in charge



of the implementation of the tenders' procedures according to EC Rules; contracting agreements with the chosen carriers of the projects; delivering their payments; accounting and overall supervision of the projects' implementation.⁷

However, this is not the only institution that announces the calls for tenders.

For instance the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy is responsible for the Human Resource Development, while some of the calls for cross-border cooperation are being published on the web page of the Ministry for Local Self Government.

⁵ Biljana Stojanovska, I. B.-R. (2009). Implementation of IPA in Republic of Macedonia, Structures of the implementation of IPA in Republic of Macedonia. 11th Experts Forum "European Economic Integration: IPA Funds as a mean to stimulate the economic transition and help the market economy". Skopje.

⁶ Central Financing and Contracting Department, Ministry of Financing of the Republic of Macedonia, <http://cfcd.finance.gov.mk/Home.html>

⁷ Biljana Stojanovska, I. B.-R. (2009).

Macedonia's Lagging Behind in Efficient Usage of EU Funds (IPA, Framework Programmes) – Analytica's Analysis

1.2 7th Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration activities (FP7).

As it was mentioned in the introduction besides the IPA funds Macedonia is also eligible for the others



Community funds such as the FP7 and CIP. This part will give short info on what exactly is their purpose.

For research projects special programme is the [FP7](#). It has a budget of over 50 billion Euros and it is created for the period of 2007-2013. It provides funding to co-finance research, technological development and demonstration projects based on competitive calls and independent peer review of project proposals. There are four major blocks under which calls for proposal are published:

Cooperation – between industry and academia, Ideas – it is supporting basic research, People – supporting career development and mobility of research and Capacities – it develops the capacities of Europe to become a knowledge-based society. There are six possible funding schemes: Collaborative Projects, Networks of Excellence, Coordination and Support Actions, Individual Projects, Support for training and career development of researchers. Most of the projects are given to consortiums made up of several partners from the EU and all around the world. The main idea behind it is the networking possibility and the sharing of ideas and knowledge in research that will help Europe to thrive as a knowledge-based society.

1.3 Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme.

For innovation purposes and boosting of the competitiveness of the European enterprises and SMEs there is [CIP](#). “The programme supports innovation activities (including eco-innovation), provides better access to finance and delivers business support services in the regions. It encourages a better take-up and use of information and communications technologies (ICT) and helps to develop the information

society. It also promotes the increased use of renewable energies and energy efficiency.”⁸ It has total budget of 3621 million euro and same as the other programmes it runs from 2007 to 2013.



CIP has three major components: Entrepreneurship and Innovation Programme (EIP) which is more focused on the development of SMEs, their entrepreneurial spirit and new innovative products; Information

⁸ Competitiveness and Innovation Programme 2007-2013 (CIP), European Commission, http://ec.europa.eu/cip/index_en.htm

Communication Technologies Policy Support Programme (ICTPSP) with basic focus on development of the ICT sector; and Intelligent Energy Europe (IEE) which is for finding new sustainable energy solutions.

Macedonia as a candidate member state is in the group of the association countries eligible for applying under the CIP. Recently the Government paid the entry ticket⁹ for this Programme which gives Macedonian enterprises and especially the SMEs possibility to apply for funds with their project ideas. The National Contact point for Macedonia is the Ministry of Economics. "This entry ticket is provided by the budget and supported by IPA. The MoU is signed for EIP component only, while there is still an ongoing procedure for ICT and IEE. The Ministry of Economy also plans promotional activities to raise the awareness for this Programme through conferences, its web-page, public events, TAIEX seminar, etc¹⁰ However, by now there have not been any visible activities for promoting CIP in Macedonia as many if not all SME's are not aware of this funding opportunity.

2. What is the missing link between institutions and organizations which are eligible to apply for funds and actually getting those funds?

2.1 How effectively IPA is used in Macedonia?

When the efficiency of the IPA funds is being discussed it is important to know under what criteria we are measuring this successful usage. Is it the number of contracted projects per year? Or is it the amount of funds being used each year? Or maybe according to the number of successfully finished projects? We cannot talk about successful usage of the IPA if we only take into account the funds that are spent in the year they are projected for. Instead, we will have complete overview if we look at how much of the funds have been used once the financial agreements are signed i.e. from the moment they are contracted.¹¹

Macedonia got the accreditation for the decentralised management of the III and IV IPA components¹², in July and September 2009. The accreditation for component I and II are expected latest in spring 2010. This is important because from now on the government and the responsible ministries will take charge

⁹ Entry tickets are contributions that the country has to pay to the Commission in order for legal entities and individuals from that country to be able to apply for funds under the Framework Programmes.

¹⁰ Sofija Kuzmanoska, Sofija Kuzmanoska, M. o. (2009). 11th Experts Forum "European Economic Integration: IPA Funds as a mean to stimulate the economic transition and help the market economy". Ministry of Economy, November 2009, Skopje.

¹¹ IPA funds projected for one year do not have to be used that exact year. They should be spent in a certain time frame once the financial agreement between the authorities from the country and the EC is signed. This period adds up to 5 years. For example the funds predicted for 2007 will be used once these financial agreements are signed which does not have to be in that year exactly but will have to be efficiently used in period of 5 years. This period consist of the funds being contracted, the projects being delivered and the payments being completed.

¹² All of the IPA five components can be managed centralised (through the offices of the EU/EC mission in the country) and decentralised (through the organs of the government of the country in question). The idea is to transfer all responsibilities to the country as the IPA funds are a practice that should help the institutions later with the handling of the Structural Funds.

of the projects' calls and implementation. There is however certain fear in the EC about the possibility of failure once the responsibilities are being transferred to the ministries sine the capacities of the administration have always been under question and the issues of corruption and partisanship are still prevalent. As this accreditation has just been awarded it remains to be seen in the period that comes if these fears were legitimate or not.

When it comes to the funds predicted for 2007, the estimation is that around 80% have been contracted by now. However, when it comes to how much money has actually been used the situation changes. According to the Macedonian Centre for European Training "only several projects from Component I...are in implementation phase, those being: Support for Implementation of the Police Reform Strategy (9 million Euros), Support to Local Infrastructure for Social and Economic Cohesion (7 million Euros), Support to the State Statistical Office (2 million Euros), Support to the implementation of the Public Administration Reform (2 million Euros), Preparatory Measures for the Lifelong Learning and Youth Action Programmes (0,9 million Euros), Participation in Community Programmes and Agencies (0,95 million Euros) and Project Preparation Facility, Audit and Evaluation (3 million Euros)."¹³

From the money allocated for 2007, which estimates 58.5 million Euros, only 42% have actually been allocated into projects. Unofficially the reason for the low usage of the funds from 2007 is that the level of preparedness of the Macedonian authorities is still not sufficiently high. Another issue that arises is the priorities that the government established together with the EC when the indicative planning was created prior to 2007. The result was only one contracted Operational Programme – for building of the institutional capacity and the infrastructure of the country. Unlike the case of Croatia and Turkey, in Macedonia there is a feeling that for now the capacities of the institutions as well as the economic sector are not high enough for them to handle the applying and enforcing procedures. Therefore Regional competitiveness¹⁴ is left out in the projected period 2007/2013 and remains a challenge for the authorities to put it as a priority for the projected period of 2013/2016.

Consequently the overall feeling is that compared to Croatia and Turkey Macedonia is lagging behind in terms of IPA usage. Institutional capacity has been a persistent problem and there have not been sufficient trainings of the private sector in the past years either, which adds to the situation Macedonia is in. These issues together with the others that contribute to this poor usage of EU money in Macedonia will be discussed in detail in the next chapter of the report.

2.2. The missing link for successful use of EU Funds.

¹³ IPA Community Survey – Macedonia, DRAFT Version, Macedonian Centre for European Training, 2009, page 6.

¹⁴ Through the Regional Competitiveness Operational Programme the countries try to "achieve higher competitiveness and a balanced regional development by enhancing SMEs competitiveness...IPA funds therefore support business advisory services, cooperation between enterprises, strengthening of entrepreneurial skills in the academia, promoting investment climate, developing business-related infrastructure. In addition the aim is to develop the administrative and management capacity of those institutions implementing the programme. " (http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/funds/ipa/croatia_competitiveness_en.htm)

1. There is confusion over who exactly is doing what in which department in what ministry and under whose authority. The efforts of the authorities to explain the EU Fund schemes are less than satisfactory. "...Up to date, the Government has produced 3 brochures, and the IPA brochure is 8 pages long, printed in font size 8, which is hardly readable, and the language used in is not user-friendly. Crucial information is missing...on Community Programmes, such as the names of the persons in charge within the line ministries..."¹⁵ The inaccessibility of SEA was already discussed in Analytica's previous Report¹⁶ and this situation unfortunately has not changed. What is even more concerning is that all other ministries and their departments responsible for managing of IPA and other EU Programmes are also unavailable and unwilling to share any sort of data over how Macedonia is managing the funds.

2. Another prevailing problem is the uncoordinated planning of the programming process and its execution. The Secretariat for European Affairs is responsible for this planning which in no case is strategic or coordinated. The inside procedure is as follows: "SEA sends to all government ministries, agencies and public institutions the financial envelop specified within the MIPD and asks from them to develop projects that can be addressed as priority. After a certain period of time they collect all the projects developed and select those that are viable and well-drafted, up to the amount allocated."¹⁷ This shows no coherent policy whatsoever and does not really reflect what and where funds are really needed as there are ministries and agencies that urgently need new funds, but still lack the capacities of developing project ideas.

3. An additional difficulty is the lack of strategic documents. The National Development Plan of 2008-2010 is not with good quality. There is no strategy for what kind of projects are really essential in the time frame of 2007/2013 and there is a general belief that even the authorities don't know themselves what exactly should be put as priority.

4. The CSOs involvement in the IPA funds. With the issues mentioned above, consultation with the CSOs could help a great deal as they know the situation on ground and can give a significant input in preparing these important documents. Even so this is not the case. Firstly, there is no statistical or any data whatsoever on how many of Macedonia's CSOs have got funds from IPA and the other Community Programmes and there is no possible way to tell how big the awareness about these issues is among the civil society. Second, in the consultation process for preparing the MIPD from which depends for what kind of projects will Macedonia get money, only one CSO out of 6000 was selected in a process that no-one heard about. In addition, the consultations are usually badly scheduled (during vacation periods or with not enough time between announcements of the meetings and their holding) or they happen after the projects are determined which leaves CSOs comments futile.

¹⁵ IPA Community Survey – Macedonia, DRAFT Version, Macedonian Centre for European Training, 2009, page 2.

¹⁶ Four Years from the Candidacy Status: what has been done and what can be expected? <http://analyticamk.org/files/ReportNo29.pdf>, September 2009.

¹⁷ Lidija Dimova, Executive Director, Macedonian Centre for European Training. Interview conducted on 17th of November 2009.

When to all of these issues the general issue of lack of administrative capacity is added, it is clear that Macedonia's overall systematic capacity for effective usage of EU funds is not on a satisfactory level. Certainly, the deficiency of initiatives from the EC Delegation itself in promoting its funds as well as the lack of strongly organized civil society adds to the problem of low funds' flow in Macedonia. In the next chapter, Analytica will propose some of its own recommendations for more systematic approach towards better management of EU funds, increased applying and improved representation of Macedonia in the Community Programmes and the IPA.

3. Analytica's recommendation for efficient use of EU funds.

3.1 Positive experiences – case of Croatia.

Croatia has a positive example in managing IPA funds that Macedonia could follow and build upon. What is noticeable at first glance in the Croatian case is the transparency and organizational level of the government institutions when it comes to EU Funds. There is a Central Office for Development Strategy and Coordination (CODSC) of EU Funds which "performs expert and administrative tasks related to preparing the Development Strategy of the Republic of Croatia and...is responsible for the overall coordination of EU funds..."¹⁸ All EU Programmes are explained, the CODSC holds courses and training for the Programmes, all calls for tenders are published at their web site, together with the necessary contacts. Also all important strategic documents for the operational programmes which are usually quite big and thorough are written in English and public. Just as an illustration: the Transport Operational Programme for 2007-2009 is 120 pages long, in English, with all the details concerning the complete SWOT and socio-economic analysis of the transport sector in Croatia completed with the strategic priorities and the programme strategy as well as all the other issues concerning the funding for this operational programme. This is also done for the Environment, Regional Competitiveness, Human Recourse Development Operational Programmes, as well as for the Agriculture and Rural Development Plan 2007-2013 IPARD Program and for the Cross Border Operational Programmes. Croatian CODSC is also very accessible and open for any questions even from foreigners, which shows the high level of professionalism they have.

3.2 Recommendations for the Macedonian Authorities.

Recommendation No. 1: Coordinated and simplified management of the EU funds.

Having one or two departments or agencies that will coordinate everything connected with the IPA and other EU Funds is of an essential importance for everyone who needs information to know where to get it. Open and transparent working, with qualitative strategic documentation is a must-have if Macedonia wants to have the benefits from the EU funds. Listed contacts of people who are acquainted in sufficient manner with the procedures must be published on the ministries' and agencies' web pages and to serve to everyone interested in getting information about IPA funds.

¹⁸ Strategija.Hr, Central Office for Development Strategy and Coordination of EU Funds <http://www.strategija.hr/Default.aspx?sec=82>

Recommendation No.2: Developing instruments for dissemination and information.

Closely connected to the first one, second recommendation addresses the way the Government is promoting the EU Funds in Macedonia. Apart of having reliable contacts that are easy to get through, public informational campaign is an important component of the promotion. Printed brochures that are easily understandable, disseminating them around the country, organizing regular INFO-days, including the CSO sector in these activities and creating interactive IPA forum either on SEA or CFCD web page where questions will be answered and ideas will be exchanged, are only some of the mechanisms for increased awareness for IPA and the other Community Programmes within the society.

Recommendation No.3: Regular consultations while preparing the strategic documents like MIPD with the civil and private sector and the EC Mission.

One of the most important issues is the full scale cooperation between all the interested parties in EU financing. On one side is the EU Mission which "gives" the money. On the other is the government which coordinates and manages the funds and on third are the CSOs and the other end beneficiaries. All parties should work closely while developing the strategic national documents as well as the MIPD. The Government should provide access to all comments communicated during these consultations. The EC should require the government to make and publish consultation plans on different agendas that arise from IPA funding for at least a year in advance with set dates on which these consultations will be held. "The consultation plan should be accompanied by a capacity building plan that initially could have the form of pre-consultation meetings where participants would learn what is expected from them in context of the complex IPA programming procedures."¹⁹

Recommendation No.4: Education

Non-formal education for the EU funding programmes is a precondition for successful applications and projects. The positive experience from Croatia emphasizes the benefits of the education process in increasing the knowledge of EU funding schemes. "...Education of all the actors and especially potential beneficiaries has key influence on the increase of usage of allocated funds each year. The education is being implemented through different seminars and workshops. The promotion and informing wider public of EU funded projects through media has significantly increased the „popularity “of applying with potential projects."²⁰

3.3 Recommendations for the private and civil sector in Macedonia.

How to write a successful project application?

¹⁹ IPA Community Survey – Macedonia, DRAFT Version, Macedonian Centre for European Training, 2009, page 10.

²⁰ Nikša Tkalec, Central Office for Development Strategy and Coordination of EU Funds, Croatia. Interview conducted on 19th November 2009.

As for the private sector, CSOs and all other research institutions that want to apply with their projects for the other Community Programmes (FP7, CIP), Analytica together with an experienced project manager²¹, prepared a list of the required elements for successful project application.

Proposal Preparation for EC funding:

1. <u>Project concept</u>
a. Does the idea match the funding call?
b. Does the idea have relevance and need in geographical context (targeted actors/stakeholders) and call text (e.g. topic, EC objectives, scientific novelty)?
c. It is important to address the call text completely – the core of the proposal should contain the elements requested by the EC
d. The proposal should be ambitious without having unreasonable or unobtainable outputs
2. <u>Project consortium</u>
a. A strong consortium will give strength to the proposal
b. Should have a balance number of participants – large consortia are difficult to manage, whereas small consortia may not have enough breadth of experience to carry out a project
c. All partners should have clearly identified roles in the project and be involved (ideally) in creating the proposal
d. A strong project coordinator with experience is vital
e. A good management structure should have scientific and administrative coordinators assisting the general coordinator, if relevant
f. Actions/Workpackage leaders are important to manage individual working components of the proposal
g. For non-geographically specific proposals, consortia should be represented by partners from a diverse range of countries, without compromising the integrity of the work

²¹ Dr. Matthew Wade, Technology Transfer Center in Bremerhaven, Germany, (www.ttz-bremerhaven.de).

3. Proposal content

- a. Address the content of the call text and guideline documents
- b. Explain as clearly as possible your objectives, expected outputs and workplan, whilst providing insight into background concept (science, state-of-art)
- c. Clearly demonstrate the strength of the consortium and why each partner was selected. Demonstrate the consortium has good cohesion and there is a clear management structure
- d. Do not overwrite, but keep structure succinct and fluid (a clear pathway from concept to goals)

4. Budget

- a. Even a brilliant proposal can be rejected by being too ambitious in the budget request
- b. Keep budget in line with expected workload and resources
- c. Plan budget as early as possible ensuring that individual partner funds are commensurate with workload in the project and resource allocation
- d. Consider the financial guidelines in detail (very important). Most projects require some "own contribution" from companies. Make this clear to the partners when forming the consortium, to ensure everyone can manage to participate economically and to avoid conflict at start of project

5. Other issues

- a. Dissemination and Intellectual Property Rights have to be addressed in the project. Clearly identify how the project will be disseminated to a wider audience (what methods) and what will be the fate of any concrete outputs at the end of project. A clear IPR strategy can assist in ensuring proper use of final outputs from a project (e.g. software, training material, etc)
- b. Demonstrated success in other related projects will also strengthen this proposal. Follow the guidelines with regard to description of partners and related activities
- c. Start early! The average full proposal may take 3-6 months to complete, with first-step proposals taking 2 months. Background work, acquiring documentation (often replaced now with electronic submission of the proposal) and clarification of budget

and finalizing draft proposals, are all time consuming tasks that should be planned.

Conclusion Remarks

- ✓ As Macedonia approaches the EU, the funding schemes available for the country are increasing. IPA is just one of the instruments which main objectives include assistance to candidate and potential candidate countries in their harmonisation and implementation of the *acquis communautaire*.
- ✓ There are other available Community Programmes in which Macedonia can participate such as the FP7 and CIP²². The 'entry tickets' have been paid and Macedonian companies and CSOs as well as individuals can submit their project proposals whenever they find a suitable project call.
- ✓ The government recently got the accreditation for decentralized management of the III and IV components and for the I and II they will get it in spring 2010. All the tenders from 2010 will be published on the web page of Central Financing and Contracting Department within the Ministry of Financing of the Republic of Macedonia.
- ✓ However, issues connected to the IPA funding and the utilization of the other Community Programmes have been identified. Only several projects from Component I have been implemented from 2007. There is no clear strategy or essential strategic documents produced by the authorities for this matter.
- ✓ There is fear that the lack of administrative capacity is diminishing the country's role in the funding. Also the communication with other sectors of the society concerning these issues is on a worryingly low level.
- ✓ Measures like: better dissemination of information, quality brochures, accessibility of people working with the funds, clear and coordinated web-pages on which all the necessary data and the call for tenders will be published, compulsory consultations with the civil sector, training sessions and work-shops about the IPA procedures and the other Community Programmes, can help and improve Macedonia's capacity in management and usage of the EU Funds.
- ✓ The end conclusion that can be drawn from the analysis is that Macedonia's does really lags behind in usage of the IPA and other Community Funds because of various interconnected reasons that mirror the weak institutional capacity and lack of qualitative strategies of the country. The measures proposed can help the country to change this situation.

²² Note: There are other Community Programmes too such as Life+ or Erasmus, etc. For the purposes of making this paper short and concise the author extracted two of them which are more general.

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