



MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND WATER ECONOMY  
IPARD MANAGING AUTHORITY

IPARD programme 2021-2027 monitoring committee

Minutes of the third meeting of the IPARD programme 2021-2027  
monitoring committee

16 may 2024  
Hotel Aleksandar Palace  
Skopje

Arh.No. 20-\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

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## I. List of participants

Mr. Rexhail Ismaili – Chairperson of the IPARD programme 2021-2027 monitoring committee

### Members present at the IPARD programme 2021-2027 monitoring committee meeting:

1. Mr. Goce Georgievski - Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water economy,
2. Mr. Jovan Stojanovski - Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water economy;
3. Ms. Vase Simovska Boshkova - Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water economy;
4. Ms. Maja Lazareska Joveska - Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water economy;
5. Mr. Darko Dochinski- Ministry of Labour and Social Policy;
6. Ms. Nazmije Idrizi - Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning
7. Mr. Igor Mojanoski – Ministry of Transport and Communications;
8. Ms. Dana Petreska - Secretariat for European Affairs;
9. Mr. Dzemil Kjamili - National Extension Agency;
10. Mr. Vladimir Petkov - Faculty for Veterinary Medicine;
11. Ms. Aleksandra Martinovska Stojcheska – Faculty of Agricultural Sciences and Food;
12. Mr. Sasho Risteski - Macedonian association of processors;
13. Mr. Goran Mitev - Association of farmers;
14. Mr. Pero Mocan - Wines from Macedonia;
15. Mr. Sasho Krcoski - Network of young farmers;
16. Ms. Marina Tosheska – LAG Agro- Lider;
17. Ms. Robertina Brajanoska - Macedonian ecological group;
18. Ms. Maja Taseva – Agency for support of entrepreneurship;
19. Ms. Vaska Mojsovska- National Federation of Farmers.

### Present deputy members of the IPARD programme 2021-2027 monitoring committee meeting:

1. Ms. Jelena Spasova – Chamber of Crafts of North Macedonia;
2. Mr. Nikola Derebanov – Macedonian Chamber of Commerce;
3. Ms. Daniela Todevska – Faculty of agricultural sciences and food – UGD Stip.

### Representatives of the European Commission (EC) in an advisory role:

1. Mr. Frank Bollen – Directorate General for Agriculture and Rural Development;
2. Mr. Dick Van Dijk – Directorate General for Agriculture and Rural Development.

### Representatives of the European Delegation:

1. Ms. Margarita Deleva - Delegation of European Union in the Republic of North Macedonia.

### Representatives of NAO and NF:

1. Ms. Aleksandra Simjanovska – Ministry of Finance,
2. Mr. Vlado Karamanolevski- Ministry of Finance.

### Representatives from IPARD Managing Authority (MA):

1. Mr. Zhivko Brajkovski - Head of IPARD MA;
2. Mr. Igor Troshanski - Deputy Head of MA;
3. Mr. Viktor Mladenovski - Unit for monitoring of implementation of IPARD funds and reporting;

4. Ms. Jasmina Hadzibulik - Unit for monitoring of implementation of IPARD funds and reporting;
5. Ms. Gordana Smileska - Unit for monitoring of implementation of IPARD funds and reporting;
6. Mr. Kiril Ristoski - Unit for implementation of IPARD technical assistance;
7. Mr. Zlatko Kolevski - Unit for implementation of IPARD technical assistance;
8. Mr. Aleksandar Anteski - Unit for Programming and Evaluation of IPARD funds;
9. Mr. Dusko Jakimovski - Unit for Programming and Evaluation of IPARD funds;
10. Mr. Isa Imishti- Unit for Programming and Evaluation of IPARD funds;
11. Ms. Sadzide Demir - Unit for Programming and Evaluation of IPARD funds;

**Representatives from the Agency for Financial Support to Agriculture and Rural Development (IPARD Agency):**

1. Mr. Nikica Bachovski - Director of the IPARD Agency;
2. Mr. Vangel Nanevski - IPARD Agency;
3. Ms. Marija Blagoeva- IPARD Agency;
4. Ms. Elena Gavriloska - IPARD Agency;
5. Mr. Panche Arsov - IPARD Agency;
6. Ms. Nadezda Kuzmanovska- IPARD Agency;
7. Mr. Slavko Milosevski- IPARD Agency.

**Representatives from Audit Authority:**














1. Ms. Svetlana Todorovska – Audit Authority,
2. Ms. Ljubica Lokvenec – Audit Authority,

**Results: The Chairperson of the Committee, 19 members and 3 deputy members with voting right (out of total 33 members with a right to vote) participated at the meeting. A quorum of 2/3 of the members with a right to vote was achieved to hold the meeting in accordance with article 8 paragraph 3 of the Rules of Procedure.**

***The checklist for presence of members from the third meeting of the IPARD programme 2021-2027 monitoring committee is shown in Appendix 1 of these minutes.***

***The list of observers is shown in Appendix 2 of these minutes.***

## II. Agenda for the 3<sup>rd</sup> IPARD programme 2021-2027 monitoring committee meeting

No.	Time	Topic	Presented by:	Documents
1	09:00 - 09:30	Confirmation of presence of members/deputies at the meeting	IPARD MA Secretariat	/
2	09:30 - 09:40	Opening of the meeting	Chairperson/Frank Bollen - Head of unit G4, DG Agri	Opening
3	09:40 - 09:50	Adoption of the draft Agenda for the 3 <sup>rd</sup> IPARD 2021-2027 monitoring committee meeting	Chairperson	 Draft Agenda
4	09:50 - 10:00	Adoption of the minutes from the previous IPARD MC meeting	Chairperson	 Final minutes
5	10:00 - 10:10	Information on the implementation of decisions taken at the previous IPARD MC meeting	Chairperson	 To be presented at the meeting
6	10:10 - 10:20	Information on IPARD implementation in all countries	DG AGRI	To be presented at the meeting
7	10:20 - 10:30	IPA monitoring committee a. Information on reporting to the IPA monitoring committee	NIPAC	 To be presented at the meeting
8	10:30 - 11:00	State of play of implementation of the IPARD programme a. General information about the programme/measures implementation on the basis of monitoring indicator tables	IPARD MA	 IPARD MA report
		b. Report of approved/rejected projects	IPARD Agency	 IPARD Agency report
9	11:00 - 11:10	Discussions/approval of programme modification, updates, modifications to the financial tables of the programme	IPARD MA	 To be presented at the meeting
10	11:10 - 11:30	Information on the financial implementation of IPARD including interest earned	NAO/MS	 NAO report
11	11:30 - 11:50	Information on controls a. Controls and audit undertaken b. Follow-up actions taken c. Annual audit report	IPARD Agency Audit Authority	 IPARD Agency report/AA report
12	11:50 - 12:00	Visibility and communication plan a. Review of activities against the annual action plan for communication and publicity	IPARD MA	 To be presented at the meeting
13	12:00 - 12:15	Technical assistance activities a. Review of actions from the last IPARD MC against the plan	IPARD MA	 To be presented at the meeting
14	12:15 - 12:30	Evaluation of the programme a. Review and update of evaluation activities and modification of the plan	IPARD MA	 To be presented at the meeting
15	12:30 - 12:40	Discussions/approval of the Annual Implementation Report	IPARD MA	 To be presented at the meeting

<b>16</b>	12:40 - 12:50	Any other business	Chairperson	/
<b>17</b>	12:50- 13:00	Proposals for the agenda of the next meeting/agreement on new date	Chairperson	/

### III. RESULTS OF THE IPARD PROGRAMME 2021-2027 MONITORING COMMITTEE MEETING

#### Opening of the meeting

The Chairperson of the Committee, Mr. Redzail Ismaili, opened the third meeting of the Committee by welcoming all attendees.

Mr. Frank Bollen, Head of Unit G4 at DG AGRI, welcomed the members of the IPARD III MC and also congratulated the authorities of North Macedonia, as they were the first to announce and successfully complete a public call from IPARD 3 and even more praised the interest of the applicants in this public call. Compared to the countries of the Western Balkans, North Macedonia is a leader in the implementation of the IPARD programme. He indicated the need of improving the situation with human resources in the IPARD structures as a guarantee for the successful implementation of the programme and encouraged the Macedonian authorities to speed up the process of introducing new measures.

Mr. Bollen believes that, as before, in the new programming period, European Commission will pay special attention to prevention against risks, violations and irregularities and also expects IPARD structures, committee members and all stakeholders involved in the implementation to do the same.

#### **With reference to item 3 of the Agenda: "Adoption of the draft agenda for the third meeting of the IPARD III monitoring committee":**

None of the members of the Committee had any remarks regarding the agenda, and the following decision was adopted:

**Decision No. 1: IPARD III monitoring committee adopted the agenda for the third meeting of the monitoring committee.**

#### **With reference to item 4 of the Agenda: "Adoption of the Minutes of the previous (second) IPARD III MC":**

The Chairperson of the IPARD III MC informed that the minutes from the previous meeting of the monitoring committee held on 21<sup>st</sup> of December 2023, were sent to the members of the Committee on 16<sup>th</sup> of January 2024 and by 1<sup>st</sup> of February 2024 no comments were submitted from the members to the Secretariat.

The members of the IPARD III MC had no remarks on the minutes and adopted the following decision:

**Decision No. 2: The IPARD III monitoring committee adopted the minutes of the second IPARD III monitoring committee meeting as final.**

#### **With reference to item 5 of the Agenda: "Information on the implementation of the decisions /conclusions adopted at the previous second meeting of the IPARD III MC".**

The Head of IPARD Managing Authority, Mr. Zhivko Brajkovski, informed about decisions/conclusions adopted at the previous meeting of the IPARD III MC, as well as the two decisions brought by written procedure for the second modification of the IPARD III programme and modification of the APTA for 2024.

Regarding this item, the members of the Committee adopted the following conclusion:

**Conclusion No. 1: The IPARD III monitoring committee was informed on the progress made in implementing the decisions/conclusions of the second meeting of the IPARD III monitoring committee.**

**With reference to item 6 of the Agenda: "Information on IPARD implementation in all countries".**

The representative of DG AGRI, Mr. Dick van Dijk, presented the results of the implementation of IPARD 2 and IPARD 3 in Western Balkan countries, noting that the Republic of North Macedonia is the only country that started implementing the IPARD 3 programme. He encouraged the Macedonian authorities to continue working on the implementation of the new measures, i.e. Agro-ecological measures, LEADER, Advisory Services, Rural Public Infrastructure. Regarding publicity, he emphasized that the use of publicity tools is a legal obligation, not an option. Compliance with visibility requirements should be checked by the IPARD Agency, while the Audit Authority should determine whether the Agency controls these requirements.

A message was passed to the Macedonian authorities on the need of strengthening the human capacities and retention policy for the existing staff, implementation of new measures as well as implementation/use of the electronic application system.

Regarding this item, the members of the Committee adopted the following conclusion:

**Conclusion No. 2: The IPARD III monitoring committee was informed regarding IPARD implementation in all countries.**

**With reference to item 7 of the Agenda: "Information regarding the IPA monitoring committee".**

**Sub item 7 (a) of the Agenda: "Follow-up, feedback from the IPA monitoring committee".**

The representative of the National IPA Coordinator, Ms. Dana Petreska, informed about the meeting of the IPA monitoring committee which was held on 17<sup>th</sup> of April 2024 in a hybrid way. The representative of the IPARD Agency at the meeting informed about the reforms related to direct payments, ensuring the sustainability through the IACS system as well as the use of the IPARD software. 28 conclusions and recommendations were adopted at the meeting.

Regarding this sub- item, the members of the Committee adopted the following conclusion:

**Conclusion No. 3: The IPARD III monitoring committee was informed regarding IPA monitoring committee.**

**With reference to item 8 of the Agenda: "State of play of implementation of the IPARD programme 2014-2020 and 2021-2027".**

**Sub item 8 (a) of the Agenda: "General information about programme/measure implementation on the basis of monitoring indicators, tables".**

Regarding this sub-item, Mr. Viktor Mladenovski presented in details the results of the implementation of the programme by public calls, measures, types of sectors in the measures and types of investments. He also referred to the geographical aspect of the implementation of the programme.

The representative of the National Federation of Farmers, Ms. Vaska Mojsovska, opened a discussion regarding the legal status of the applicants, i.e. how many natural persons and how many legal entities have used funds from the IPARD programme. She added that a small number of small farmers applied for the call from the IPARD 3 programme. The increased threshold for Measure 1 to €20,000, an amount that small farmers can not provide, was listed as the main problem they face. As a second problem, the consulting companies that prepare a business plan, but all the necessary documentation that had to be collected was borne by the farmers, which created their reluctance to apply.

Mr. Zhivko Brajkovski, as well as Mr, Viktor Mladenovski, answered that the increase of the threshold in Measure 1 was, among other things, was a request of the Federation itself and other representatives, i.e. stakeholders. The increase of the threshold came as a result of the increased inflation of prices at global level and the increase in the prices of the costs that are financed through the programme, but also due to compliance with the requirements of the EC for the overlapping of programmes and measures. The request of the small farmers was to make a distinction, i.e. investments bigger than €20,000 should be covered by the IPARD programme, and smaller ones by the National Program for Rural Development, where the application conditions/criteria are easier to meet.

The representative of the IPARD Agency, Mr. Vangel Nanevski added that by visiting the website of the IPARD Agency, within one call and for a specific measure, you can see how many individuals and legal entities have concluded contracts and in what amount.

Regarding this sub-item, the following conclusion was adopted:

**Conclusion No. 4: The IPARD III monitoring committee was informed on the results from the implementation of the IPARD II and IPARD III programme through data/indicators for monitoring.**

**Sub item 8 (b) of the Agenda: "Report of approved/rejected/paid projects of IPARD programme 2014-2020".**

Mr. Vangel Nanevski informed about the Public call from IPARD 3 for measures 1 and 7.

He added that the main reason for rejection is the incompleteness of the applications as well as the incomparability of the offers submitted in the request but also the newly introduced document in IPARD 3 - Confirmation that no indictment for a criminal offense has been initiated against the applicant.

A new public call for measures 1 and 7 is expected at the end of the third or fourth quarter of 2024.

Regarding this sub-item, the following conclusion was adopted:



**Conclusion No. 5: The IPARD III monitoring committee was informed on approved, rejected and paid requests from the IPARD programme.**

**With reference to item 9 of the Agenda: "Discussions/approval of programme modification, updates, modifications to the financial tables of the programme".**

Mr. Zhivko Brajkovski, informed that the second modification of the IPARD 3 programme, adopted by written procedure, was adopted in order to avoid the potential loss of funds. The 2025 allocations for measures 4, 5 and 10 were transferred to measure 7 for 2024.

Regarding this item, the following conclusion was adopted:

**Conclusion No. 6: The IPARD III monitoring committee was informed on programme modification, updates, modifications to the financial tables of the programme.**

**With reference to item 10 of the Agenda: "Information on functioning of the Management and Control System (MCS) and financial implementation of IPARD, including interest earned".**

The IPARD III MC was informed about the internal audits carried out during 2023 by the Internal Audit Department within each institution, as well as the reports from the Audit Authority.

The representative of NAO, Ms. Aleksandra Simjanosta, added that the package for accreditation of IPARD 3 measure 6 - Investments in public rural infrastructure has been submitted to the Audit Authority for performing the 'external auditor's' compliance assessment.

Regarding this item, the following conclusion was adopted:

**Conclusion No. 7: The IPARD III monitoring committee was informed on functioning of the Management and Control system and financial implementation of IPARD, including interest earned.**

**With reference to item 11 of the Agenda: "Information on controls".**

**Sub-item 11 (a) of the Agenda: "Controls and audit undertaken".**

The representative of the IPARD Agency, Mr. Panche Arsov informed about on the spot controls. What was stated as a conclusion from on the spot controls is that the number of ascertained differences has been reduced without any major irregularities.

**Sub-item 11 (b) of the Agenda: "Annual Audit Report".**

The representative of the IPARD Agency, Ms. Marija Blagoeva, informed about the audits carried out in 2023 as well as the Annual plan for internal audit for 2024.

**Sub-item 11 (c) of the Agenda: "Follow-up actions taken".**

The representative of the Audit Authority, Ms. Ljubica Lokvenec, informed on the undertaken activities as well as planned activities for 2024.

Based on the initial conclusions of the conducted system audits, most of the recommendations and weaknesses from previous years have not been overwhelmed. Most of these findings are related to

retention policy, motivation of employees to stay in the IPA environment, work premises and IT issues which are also the main challenge for the Macedonian authorities to take immediate actions to address these weaknesses.

Regarding this item, the following conclusion was adopted:

**Conclusion No. 8: The IPARD III monitoring committee was informed on controls, follow-up actions taken and Annual Audit Report.**

**With reference to item 12 of the Agenda: "Visibility and communication plan"**

**Sub-item 12 (a) of the Agenda: "Review of activities of the annual action plan for communication and publicity".**

IPARD MA representative, Mr. Kiril Ristoski, informed about the activities within the publicity campaign for the IPARD III programme, foreseen in the annual action plan for communication and publicity of the IPARD III programme for 2024.

Regarding this sub-item, the following conclusion was adopted:

**Conclusion No. 9: The IPARD III monitoring committee was informed on the progress of activities related to the communication and publicity of the IPARD III programme.**

**With reference to item 13 of the Agenda: "Technical Assistance activities".**

**Sub-item 13 (a) of the agenda: "Review of actions from the last IPARD MC against the plan"**

Mr. Kiril Ristoski, informed about the realized activities of APTA for 2024.

Regarding this sub-item, the following decision was adopted:

**Conclusion No. 10: The IPARD III monitoring committee was informed on the progress of APTA 2024 implementation.**

**With reference to item 14 of the Agenda: "Evaluation of the programme".**

**Sub-item 14 (a) of the agenda: "Review and update of evaluation activities and modification of the plan"**

IPARD MA representative, Mr. Aleksandar Anteski presented the details regarding the evaluation of the IPARD, as well as planned activities. For realization of these activities, it is planned to engage external experts through Technical Assistance measure. A workshop on strengthening evaluation capacities is also planned for 2024.

Mr. Zhivko Brajkovski, added that the IPARD 2 programme ends on 31<sup>st</sup> of December 2024, and an ex post evaluation will be conducted.

Regarding this sub-item, the following decision was adopted:

**Conclusion No. 11: The IPARD III monitoring committee was informed on implementation of the Evaluation Plan.**

**With reference to item 15 of the Agenda "Discussions/approval of the Annual Implementation Report":**

Viktor Mladenovski informed that the Annual Report on the implementation of IPARD 2 programme for 2023 is in the final stage of preparation and it will be adopted through a written procedure.

Regarding this item, the following conclusion was adopted:

**Conclusion No. 12: The IPARD III monitoring committee was informed on the Annual Implementation Report.**

**With reference to item 16 of the Agenda: "AOB"**

The representative of the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy, Mr. Darko Docinski pointed out that among large number of farmers there is a great lack of information regarding their obligations in the field of safety and health at work and the ways in which they can protect themselves. He made a proposal to find ways/opportunities to acquaint farmers with their obligations and rights and raise awareness of safety and health at work, which was accepted by Mr. Zhivko Brajkovski and further cooperation was announced.

**With reference to item 17 of the agenda: "Proposal for the Agenda of the next fourth IPARD 2021-2027 MC meeting/ agreement on indicative date":**

The Chairperson informed that the date for the next 4<sup>th</sup> meeting will be agreed in accordance with the availability of the representatives of the European Commission.

The Chairperson of the monitoring committee closed the meeting and declared it as successful.

<b>FOR THE IPARD MONITORING COMMITTEE:</b>	<b>FOR THE SECRETARIAT:</b>
<b>Rexhail Ismaili</b>	<b>Zhivko Brajkovski</b>
Title: Chairperson	Title: Head of IPARD Managing Authority
Signature:	Signature:
Date:	Date:



**Appendix 1: List of members (or their deputies) present at the meeting of the IPARD programme 2021-2027 monitoring committee meeting**

No.	Name of member	Institution	Present	Present (deputy member)	Deputy	Number of absences
1	Mr. Rexhail Ismaili	MAFWE	√			
МИНИСТЕРСТВА						
2	Ms. Vase Boshkova	MAFWE	√			0
3	Mr. Goce Georgievski	MAFWE	√			0
4	Ms. Maja Lazareska Joveska	MAFWE	√			0
5	Mr. Jovan Stojanovski	MAFWE	√			0
6	Ms. Dana Petreska	SEP	√			0
7	Mr. Jumni Ademi	Ministry of Economy	/	/		2
8	Mr. Vullnet Arifi	MLS	/	/		1
9	Mr. Dejan Kotevski	Ministry of Culture	/	/		1
10	Ms. Nazmije Idrizi	Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning	√			0
11	Mr. Igor Mojanoski	Ministry of Transport and Communications	√			0
12	Mr. Darko Dochinski	Ministry of Labour and Social Policy	√			0
13	Mr. Vanco Novoselski	FVA	/			2
AGENCIES						
14	Mr. Xhemil Qamilli	NEA	√			0
15	Ms. Maja Taseva	Agency for support of entrepreneurship	√			0
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL PARTNERS						
16	Mr. Vasko Ristovski	Macedonian Chamber of Commerce	/	√	Mr. Nikola Derebanov	0
17	Mr. Goran Gjorgjievski	Macedonian Chambers of Commerce	/	/		1
18	Ms. Vaska Mojsovska	National Federation of farmers	√			0
19	Mr. Sasho Risteski	Macedonian Association of processors	√			0
20	Mr. Stevche Stevanovski	Local self-government units	/	/		2
21	Ms. Aleksandra Martinovska Stojcevska	Faculty of agricultural sciences and food	√	/		0
22	Mr. Agron Fazliji	Faculty of agricultural sciences and food	/	√	Ms. Jelena Spasova	0
23	Mr. Ljupco Mihajlov	Faculty of agricultural sciences and food – UGD Stip	/	√	Ms. Daniela Todevska	0

24	Ms. Marina Toshevska	LAG Agro- Lider	√			0
25	Mr. Petar Gjorgjievski	Rural Development Network of the Republic of Macedonia	/	/		1
26	Mr. Vladimir Petkov	Faculty for Veterinary Medicine	√			0
27	Mr. Sasho Krcoski	Network of young farmers	√			0
28	Ms. Robertina Brajanoska	Macedonian ecological group	√	/		0
29	Ms. Liljana Jonoski	Rural Coalition	/	/		1
30	Mr. Goran Mitev	Association of farmers	√			0
31	Mr. Pero Mocan	Wines from Macedonia	√			0
32	Mr. Arben Halili	Economic Chamber of North West Macedonia	/			1
33	Mr. Bardilj Dauti	University of Tetovo	/			1
TOTAL:			23			

## Appendix 2: List of observers

### Representatives of governmental institutions:

- **Ms. Ajisha Drpljanin** – Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy;
- **Ms. Dzejljan Murtezani** - Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy;
- **Mr. Behar Ramadani** – Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy;
- **Ms. Pavlinka Topuzovska**- Ministry of Labour and Social Policy;
- **Ms. Aneta Stojanoska** - Ministry of Labour and Social Policy.