



INSTRUMENT FOR PRE-ACCESSION ASSISTANCE (IPA II) 2014-2020

MULTI-COUNTRY

Creative Europe Window for the Western Balkans

Action summary

The action will consist of increasing the financial support to Western Balkan cultural organizations through the opening of a dedicated window for the Western Balkans into the Creative Europe programme. The action contributes to reconciliation and good neighbourly relations in the Western Balkans, through culture, in line with the Commission Communication on "*A credible enlargement perspective for and enhanced EU engagement with the Western Balkans*" and the Sofia Priority Agenda. The specific objectives of this action are (i) to increase cultural cooperation within the region and with EU Members States and (ii) to strengthen the competitiveness of the cultural and creative industries in the region.

Action Identification			
Action Programme Title	IPA II Multi-country Action Programme 2019		
Action Title	Creative Europe Window for the Western Balkans		
Action ID	IPA 2019/NEAR>EACEA.12/MC/CreativeEurope		
Sector Information			
IPA II Sector	9. Regional and territorial cooperation		
DAC Sector	15160 (human rights)		
Budget			
Total cost	EUR 5 million		
EU contribution	EUR 5 million		
Budget line(s)	22.020401- Multi-country programmes, regional integration and territorial cooperation		
Management and Implementation			
Management mode	Direct management		
<i>Direct management:</i> Implementing Agency	Education, Culture and Audiovisual Executive Agency (EACEA) – Unit B1 (co-delegated by Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations)		
Implementation responsibilities	Education, Culture and Audiovisual Executive Agency (EACEA) – Unit B1		
Location			
Zone benefiting from the action	Western Balkans (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo*, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia)		
Specific implementation area(s)	N/A		
Timeline			
Final date for contracting including the conclusion of delegation agreements	At the latest by 31 December 2020		
Indicative operational implementation period	72 months from the adoption of the Financing Decision		
Policy objectives / Markers (DAC form)			
General policy objective	Not targeted	Significant objective	Main objective
Participation development/good governance	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>
Aid to environment	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gender equality (including Women In Development)	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>
Trade Development	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

* 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.

Reproductive, Maternal, New born and child health	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
RIO Convention markers	Not targeted	Significant objective	Main objective
Biological diversity	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Combat desertification	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Climate change mitigation	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Climate change adaptation	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

1. RATIONALE

PROBLEM AND STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

As stated in the EU Western Balkan Strategy, regional cooperation and good neighbourly relations are essential for the Western Balkans' respective European paths. The EU's enlargement policy aims at exporting stability and hence, an important emphasis is placed on reconciliation and restoring trust among Western Balkans societies in view of firmly anchoring peace, ensuring lasting stability and socio-economic development in the region.

Reconciliation cannot, however, be imposed from the outside. Bottom-up community and society ownership of actions as well as gender-inclusiveness are important success factors towards restoring trust among all categories of citizens and between communities.

This need to overcome the legacy of the past and rebuilding the social fabric is all the more important in a context where increased radicalism and hate speech are spreading in Europe, including the Western Balkans region. Ethnic-based radicalism and nationalist speech feed on unresolved issues and the denial of past atrocities.

In such a context, cultural cooperation can be mobilised as a tool to foster greater tolerance and promote EU values, while increasing socio-economic development in the region and thus creating an environment conducive to reconciliation. While the role of women is essential in the intergenerational transmission and the renewal of intangible cultural heritage in local contexts, as well as in the promotion of cultural diversity, the full potential of heritage-related and creative activities to foster gender equality and women's empowerment still needs to be realised.

Over the recent years, the EU Programme Creative Europe has opened its funding to neighbouring countries and provided financial support to transnational cooperation projects in the cultural and audio-visual sectors in the Western Balkans. However, the participation of Western Balkan organisations has been limited in practice, mainly due to the lack of the necessary central and/or local co-funding needed to match EU funds.

Cultural stakeholders in the region, particularly the independent sectors, need more dedicated support to overcome existing financial and political challenges to develop cultural and creative industries as well as cooperation within the region and with EU Member States.

OUTLINE OF IPA II ASSISTANCE

The EU Programme Creative Europe is the European Commission's framework programme for support to culture and audio-visual sectors. It supports Europe's cultural and creative sectors, namely all sectors whose activities are based on cultural values or artistic and other individual or collective creative expressions. Under its scheme cultural cooperation (within the sub-programme culture), Creative Europe funds transnational cooperation projects to help cultural organizations to work together across borders. These may include: sharing artworks across borders through lending or borrowing, international touring and exhibitions; international exchanges and extended stays; co-production, touring and performances between cultural organisations from different countries.

This action will consist of opening a "dedicated Western Balkans window" into the EU Programme Creative Europe with a view to increase the participation of Western Balkans' cultural and creative industries to the cultural cooperation scheme under the EU Programme Creative Europe. Through increased financial support, Western Balkans' cultural organizations will be strengthened.

The proposed window will be put in place under a call for proposals under the overall EU Programme Creative Europe. It will specifically target Western Balkans' beneficiaries, including maintaining the possibility of their cooperation with cultural organizations from EU Member States and eligible countries for

participating in the call for proposals under IPA II (Article 10 of CIR). The aim of the call will be designed to support projects where the outcome will primarily benefit the Western Balkans region. The proposed window will potentially triple the number of grants distributed in the Western Balkans region. It will further allow for increasing the EU co-funding rate of the grants in view of overcoming one important hurdle for Western Balkans participation in the Programme. Under the window, Western Balkans' organizations will also be encouraged to act as project leaders, therefore playing a key role in the implementation of the project.

As a result, this action will increase opportunities for cross-border cooperation within the region and with the EU Member States, as well as support the development of Western Balkans cultural and creative industries.

The Education, Culture and Audio-visual Executive Agency (EACEA) of the European Union, which is responsible for the overall management of the EU Programme Creative Europe, will manage directly this action.

RELEVANCE WITH THE IPA II MULTI-COUNTRY STRATEGY PAPER AND OTHER KEY REFERENCES

The revised IPA II Multi-Country Indicative Strategy Paper 2014-2020¹ highlights the need to support the region in promoting a better understanding, reconciliation and good neighbourly relations, including through cooperation in culture.

Reconciliation and good neighbourly relations are further key elements of the enlargement and stabilisation and association process, as recalled in the February 2018 Commission Communication on “A credible enlargement perspective for and enhanced EU engagement with the Western Balkans” (“Western Balkans Strategy”).²

Enhancing cooperation in culture, including opening a window in the Creative Europe programme is one of the actions in support of Flagship Initiative 6 of the Western Balkans Strategy to foster reconciliation and good neighbourly relations. Opening such a dedicated window is further one of the priorities identified in the Sofia Declaration, which followed the adoption of the above-mentioned Communication.³ The promotion of cultural and creative sectors in the Western Balkans “through strengthened support from Creative Europe” is also affirmed in the New European Agenda for Culture.⁴

The proposed action will further contribute to the development of robust private sector in the culture area and to supporting socio-economic development in the region, in line with Flagship Initiative 3 of the Western Balkans Strategy and the Sofia Declaration.

LESSONS LEARNED AND LINK TO PREVIOUS FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

This is the first time that a dedicated window under the EU Programme Creative Europe will be opened to the Western Balkans.

¹ C(2018) 3442, 31.05.2018, p. 20-21.

² COM (2018) 65, 6.2.2018, pp. 7 and 18.

³ Sofia Declaration, 17.05.2018.

⁴ COM (2018) 267 final, 25.5.2018, p. 8.

2. INTERVENTION LOGIC

LOGICAL FRAMEWORK MATRIX

OVERALL OBJECTIVE	OBJECTIVELY VERIFIABLE INDICATORS (*)	SOURCES OF VERIFICATION	
To foster reconciliation and good neighbourly relations in the Western Balkans region through cultural cooperation and creation	Level of cooperation within the region and with EU Member States	International and EU reports	
SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE	OBJECTIVELY VERIFIABLE INDICATORS (*)	SOURCES OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTIONS
<p><u>SO 1:</u> To increase cultural cooperation within the region and/or with EU Member States</p> <p><u>SO 2:</u> To strengthen the competitiveness of the cultural and creative industries in the region</p>	<p><u>SO 1:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of applications involving Western Balkans organizations • Number of selected projects allowing for cross-border cooperation within the Western Balkans region and with EU countries • Number of organisations participating in created partnerships within the region and/or with EU countries <p>Number of artists and cultural and creative professionals reached through projects supported by the Programme (including sex-disaggregated data)</p> <p><u>SO2:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of jobs generated in the region by selected projects (including sex-disaggregated data). • Number of artists and cultural works promoted (including sex-disaggregated data). 	<p>EACEA</p> <p>Final reports of awarded projects.</p>	<p>No deterioration of the regional cooperation</p> <p>Support from EU Member States to cross-border cooperation</p>
RESULTS	OBJECTIVELY VERIFIABLE INDICATORS (*)	SOURCES OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTIONS
R1: Increased capacity of the cultural and creative sectors to operate transnationally and internationally	R1 and 2: The number of supported project participants who report new or enhanced market	Results of the Creative Europe Call for Proposals and	Western Balkans organizations have access to relevant

<p>R2: Increased transnational circulation of cultural and creative works and transnational mobility of cultural and creative players</p> <p>R3: Enhanced inter-cultural dialogue between artists, cultural operators as well as the general public</p>	<p>or professional opportunities (including sex-disaggregated data)</p> <p>R3: Number of artists and cultural and creative professionals as well as general public, directly and indirectly, reached through projects supported by call</p>	<p>implementation of the granted projects.</p>	<p>information to apply to Creative Europe calls for proposals</p>
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DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES

Activity:

The action proposes to open a dedicated window for Western Balkans' beneficiaries in the EU Programme Creative Europe to support co-operation projects with a guaranteed participation of cultural actors and professionals coming from the Western Balkans in order to promote inter-cultural dialogue. This would allow the following main activities to be undertaken, in co-delegation with the Education, Culture and Audio-visual Executive Agency (EACEA) and through the publication of a call for proposals:

- Promote the transnational mobility of artists and professionals both within the Western Balkans and between the Western Balkans and the EU, with a view to enabling them to cooperate internationally and to internationalise their careers;
- Strengthen audience development as a means of improving access to European cultural and creative works and tangible and intangible cultural heritage and extend access to cultural works to children, young people, people with disabilities and underrepresented groups;
- Foster capacity building through innovative approaches to creation, develop and test new and innovative models of revenue, management and marketing for the creative and cultural sectors, in particular as regards the digital shift and developing new skills for creative and cultural professionals.

The action will encourage the participation of women by prioritising projects that promote gender equality. Indicators will be broken down by gender categories where relevant.

Activities dedicated exclusively to the audio-visual sectors are not eligible under the culture sub-programme. However, audio-visual activities may be eligible as long as they are ancillary to activities dedicated to the non-audio-visual cultural and creative sectors.

Expected Results:

The action is expected (1) to increase the capacity of cultural and creative players in the Western Balkans to operate transnationally and internationally, as well as (2) to increase the transnational circulation of cultural and creative works and transnational mobility of cultural and creative players. This action will also (3) enhance inter-cultural dialogue between artists, cultural operators as well as the general public.

RISKS

Three main risks have been identified for this action.

Risk 1: Uneven delivery of the grant scheme across the region and within the beneficiaries

Civil society organisations across the region may lack adequate capacity and/or interest to apply to the EU Programme Creative Europe calls for proposals. This may lead to an uneven pattern of grant awards between or within the beneficiaries (such as between urban and rural areas, or between beneficiaries).

To mitigate this risk, EACEA, in coordination with the Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture and the Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations, will take appropriate measures to promote widespread knowledge of the dedicated window into the EU Programme Creative Europe and ensure equal access for interested stakeholders.

Risk 2: Difficulty for the projects to meet the minimum quality threshold requirements

Past experiences with Creative Europe Calls for Proposals have illustrated gaps in the quality of proposals submitted by Western Balkans organizations and, thus, the possibility to award grants to them.

To mitigate this risk, the selection threshold will be adapted in the call targeting specifically the Western Balkans taking into account the specific context of the region. A minimum quality threshold will have, however, to be met for applications to be selected.

Risk 3: Deterioration of the regional cooperation or of the cooperation with EU Members States

A deterioration of the cooperation within the region or with EU Member States may potentially affect the implementation of cultural cross-border cooperation programmes and projects.

To mitigate this risk, the relevant European Commission services will continuously promote good neighbourly relations within the region and with EU Member States. Where relevant, beneficiaries will be required to factor in such a risk in their applications.

CONDITIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

EACEA is responsible for the management of parts of the EU's funding programmes in the fields of education, culture, audio-visual, sport, citizenship, and volunteering, including the EU Programme Creative Europe. The mandate of EACEA is foreseen to be amended to include culture for IPA II.

Failure to comply with the requirements set above may lead to a recovery of funds under this programme and/or the re-allocation of future funding.

3. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

EACEA will manage and implement this dedicated window into the EU Programme Creative Europe, under the supervision of and in close coordination with the Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture and the Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations. EACEA will provide regular information on the implementation progress and results to the European Commission and the relevant Committees.

IMPLEMENTATION METHOD(S) AND TYPE(S) OF FINANCING

The action is co-delegated to EACEA. It will be implemented in direct management by EACEA through Creative Europe Call for Proposals.

The indicative duration of the action will be 48 months.

4. PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

METHODOLOGY FOR MONITORING (AND EVALUATION)

The European Commission may carry out a mid-term, a final or an ex-post evaluation for this action or its components via independent consultants, through a joint mission or via an implementing partner. In case a mid-term or final evaluation is not foreseen, the European Commission may, during implementation, decide to undertake such an evaluation for duly justified reasons either on its own decision or on the initiative of the partner. The evaluations will be carried out as prescribed by the Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations Guidelines on linking planning/programming, monitoring and evaluation. In addition, the action might be subject to external monitoring in line with the European Commission rules and procedures.

EACEA will continuously monitor the action through the analysis of progress reports, financial statements and final reports prepared by the beneficiaries as well as through monitoring visits.

The outcomes of the action will further be measured against the number of and volume of awards granted so far to the beneficiaries under the Creative Europe Programme (in the absence of a dedicated window for Western Balkans). The same monitoring and evaluation exercise applied for the other Creative Europe Calls for Proposals will be also applied for this specific window.

INDICATOR MEASUREMENT

Indicator	Baseline (value + year)	Target 2020	Final Target (year)	Source of information
Number of applications involving Western Balkans organizations	21 applications (involving Western Balkans organizations) in 2017 35 applications (involving Western Balkans organizations) in 2018	Increase by 35-40 % (including data on projects focusing on gender equality in culture)	Increase by 35-40 % (including data on projects focusing on gender equality in culture)	Results of the Creative Europe Call for Proposals and implementation of the granted projects (final reports)
Number of selected projects allowing for cross-border cooperation within the Western Balkans region and with EU countries	4 projects in 2017 5 projects in 2018	Increase by 35-40 % (including data on projects focusing on gender equality in culture)	Increase by 35-40 % (including data on projects focusing on gender equality in culture)	Results of the Creative Europe Call for Proposals and implementation of the granted projects (final reports).
Number of organizations participating in created partnerships within the region and/or with EU countries.	88	Increase by 35-40 % (including projects focusing on gender equality in culture)	Increase by 35-40 % (including projects focusing on gender equality in culture)	Results of the Creative Europe Call for Proposals and implementation of the granted projects (final reports).
Number of artists and cultural and creative professionals reached through projects supported by the call	0	Increase by 35-40 %	Increase by 35-40 %	Results of the Creative Europe Call for Proposals and implementation of the granted projects (final reports).
Number of jobs generated in the region by selected projects (including sex-disaggregated data)	0	Disaggregated by female/male	Disaggregated by female/male	
Number of artists and cultural works promoted (including sex-disaggregated data).	0	Increase by 35-40 % Disaggregated by female/male	Increase by 35-40 % Disaggregated by female/male	Results of the Creative Europe Call for Proposals and implementation of the granted projects (final reports).
Number of and volume (in Euro) of grants awarded to organisations from the region	Total grants awarded for the participating organisations from the region: EUR 4 732 783,49	Increase by 35-40 %	Increase by 35-40 %	Results of the Creative Europe Call for Proposals and implementation of the granted projects (final reports).

	(2014-2018)			
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5. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

GENDER MAINSTREAMING

Women have been particularly marginalized from cultural life. They face many barriers to access, contribute and participate equally in culture, which prevents them from developing their full potential and impedes social and inclusive sustainable development. Women further play a key role in reconciliation processes, as conflicts affect differently men and women (including gender roles).

This action will be implemented through an approach that promotes gender equality. This will be achieved through giving particular consideration to ensuring gender balance and active participation of women and girls into the grants awarded under this action as well as the participation of organisations focusing on gender equality in culture.

Where possible, the action will provide for sex-disaggregated data, such as for measuring the number of people participating or attending cultural experiences and the number of artists and cultural works promoted. This sex-disaggregated data may then inform the future implementation of the dedicated window into Creative Europe.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

EACEA will design and assess calls for proposals under this dedicated window into Creative Europe to ensure and encourage equal participation of women and men.

MINORITIES AND VULNERABLE GROUPS

Since this action seeks to promote trust between citizens and communities in the region, EACEA will design and implement calls for proposals under this dedicated window into Creative Europe to support projects fostering greater tolerance and promoting EU values.

Where possible, the window will promote youth inclusion and empowerment.

ENGAGEMENT WITH CIVIL SOCIETY (AND IF RELEVANT OTHER NON-STATE STAKEHOLDERS)

Non-profit or non-governmental organisations are the largest group of eligible applicants to this dedicated window into Creative Europe. They will thus be fully associated in designing and implementing projects awarded under this action. A potential issue of concern is, however, the capacity and skills of Western Balkans civil society organizations to submit quality proposals.

ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE (AND IF RELEVANT DISASTER RESILIENCE)

This action has no link with the EU environmental acquis.

Where possible, the impact of this action on the environment will be taken into consideration, including in designing and assessing calls for proposals.

Climate action relevant budget allocation: EUR 0
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6. SUSTAINABILITY

The results of the granted projects are likely to continue benefitting the region beyond the implementation period. As the grants will be awarded to projects with a view of increasing the cultural cooperation within the region and with EU Members States, this – in turn - will create opportunities for the establishment of partnerships and networking that could last longer and have positive outcomes also in a long-term perspective. The projects will further strengthen the competitiveness of the cultural and creative industries in the region, and this should have a positive impact beyond the projects implementation period. The level of ownership of the beneficiaries in the region will be high since they will be encouraged to act as leaders of the cooperation projects, and the outcome of the funded activities will benefit primarily the Western Balkans region. Therefore, their institutional management capacities should increase and be further explored afterwards.

7. COMMUNICATION AND VISIBILITY

Communication and visibility will be given high importance during the implementation of the action. The implementation of communication activities will be the joint responsibility of the beneficiaries, and shall be funded from the amounts allocated to the action.

All necessary measures will be taken to publicise the fact that the action has received funding from the EU in line with the EU communication and visibility requirements in force. All stakeholders and implementing partners shall ensure the visibility of EU financial assistance provided through IPA II throughout all phases of the programme cycle.

Visibility and communication actions shall demonstrate how the intervention contributes to the agreed programme objectives and the accession process, as well as the benefits of the action for the general public. Actions shall be aimed at strengthening general public awareness and support of interventions financed and the objectives pursued. The actions shall aim at highlighting to the relevant target audiences the added value and impact of the EU's interventions and will promote transparency and accountability on the use of funds.

Visibility and communication aspects shall be complementary to the activities implemented by the Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations and the EU Delegations in the field. The European Commission and the EU Delegations should be fully informed of the planning and implementation of the specific visibility and communication activities.

All projects funded under this Dedicated Western Balkans Window into Creative Europe Programme will include measures aimed at ensuring their visibility as well as the one of the Programme. The beneficiaries will be requested to acknowledge the European Union's support in all communications or publications, in whatever form or whatever medium or on the occasion of activities for which the grant is used. The visibility of this action will also be implemented through disseminating information about the awarded projects, their objectives and expected results, as well as in promoting Creative Europe's contribution thereto. Visibility and communication actions will particularly articulate how the selected projects contribute to Creative Europe Programme's objectives and the accession process.

The European Commission and the EU Delegations will further be fully informed of the planning and implementation of specific visibility and communication activities. Such activities will, for example, consist of information or promotional material, 'press releases' or articles published in newspapers, magazines, websites or newsletters; creating an e-group, a web space, a photo-gallery or blog on the Internet, etc.