



European Commission

Mid-term Meta Evaluation of IPA Assistance Evaluation Report*

Project No. 2010/231987 – Final Version

*This evaluation covers principally Component I of IPA.
IPA Components II-III-IV-V are covered only to a limited extent as explained in the report.

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A project implemented by





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Mid-term Meta Evaluation of IPA Assistance*

Evaluation Report Final Version

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Glossary of Acronyms

Acronym	Description
AIR	Annual Implementation Report
ALB	Albania
BENF	Beneficiary / Beneficiaries
BIH	Bosnia and Herzegovina
CARDS	Community Assistance for Reconstruction, Development and Stabilisation (former EU instrument for assistance, 2000-2006)
CBC	Cross Border Cooperation
CFCU	Central Contracting and Financing Unit / Central Finance and Contracts Unit
CRO	Croatia
DAC	Development Assistance Committee (OECD)
DG	Directorate General
EA	External Assistance
EAR	European Agency for Reconstruction
EBRD	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
EC	European Commission
ECLO	European Commission Liaison Office
EIB	European Investment Bank
ELARG	DG Enlargement
ENPI	European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument
EPAP	European Partnership Action Plan
EQ	Evaluation Question
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
EU	European Union
EUD	European Union Delegation
HQ	Head Quarters
IBRD	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development
IDA	International Development Association
IDPs	Internally Displaced People
IE	Interim Evaluation
IFI	International Financing Institutions
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IPA	Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (EU instrument for assistance 2007-2013)
ISPA	Instrument for Structural Policy for Pre-Accession (2000-2006)
KfW	Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (Reconstruction Credit Institute)
KOS	Kosovo ¹

¹ Under UNSCR 1244/1999

Acronym	Description
MB/R	Multi-Beneficiary and Regional (programmes under IPA Component I)
MIFF	Multi-Annual Indicative Financial Framework
MIPD	Multi-Annual Indicative Planning Document
MK ²	The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia ³
MNE	Montenegro
MTBF	Medium-Term Budget Framework
NAO	National Authorising Officer
NDP	National Development Plan
NIPAC	National IPA Coordinator
NPAA	National Plan for the Adoption of the <i>Acquis</i>
NPISAA	National Plan for the Implementation of the SAA
NSDI	National Strategy for Development and Integration
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OOF	Other Official Flows
OP	Operational Programme
PBA	Programme Based Approach (also referred to by some donors as SBA)
PIU	Project Implementation Unit
ROM	Results Orientated Monitoring
SAA	Stabilisation and Association Agreement
SAPARD	Special Accession Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development (2000-2006)
SBA	Sector Based Approach (also referred to by some donors as PBA)
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Available, Relevant, Time-bound
SMEs	Small and Medium Sized Enterprises
SPO	Senior Programming Officer
SRB	Serbia
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats
TA	Technical Assistance
TA-IB	Transition Assistance and Institution Building
TAIEX	Technical Assistance and Information Exchange
TUR	Turkey
TW	Twinning
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution

² Provisional 2-letter code, which does not prejudice in any way the definitive nomenclature for this country

³ As defined under UNSCR 817/1993 and United Nations General Assembly Resolution 47/1993

Executive Summary

This evaluation covers mainly Component I for which the EC has undertaken interim evaluations covering programming and implementation of IPA assistance as part of the specific regulatory requirement for evaluation and programming needs under this Component.

For Components II to V, interim evaluations covering implementation of IPA assistance have not been completed by the time this meta-evaluation was undertaken. For Component II, the meta-evaluation has used a recent evaluation on Governance Structures and procedures. For Components III, IV and V the meta-evaluation has used ex-ante evaluations. This has limited the analysis of these three components in the current report to the area of the intervention logic of programming.

Introduction

- E1. The primary objective of this Mid-term Meta Evaluation of the EU Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance⁴ (IPA) is to analyse and consolidate the relevant findings, conclusions and recommendations resulting from different evaluations on IPA assistance. These evaluations were contracted by the European Commission (EC) to support its planning and programming of IPA Component I (Transition Assistance and Institution Building, TA-IB).
- E2. The specific objectives for the Mid-term Meta Evaluation are to: (i) provide a consolidated, comprehensive and comparative assessment of the intervention logic used, to date, in the planning, programming and management of IPA assistance and, for IPA Component I, to assess the feasibility of adopting a Sector Based Approach in planning future interventions; (ii) provide a consolidated, comprehensive and comparative overview of existing strategies in the different IPA Beneficiaries (BENF) and the mapping of on-going external/donor assistance to the IPA BENF; and (iii) provide a consolidated evaluation of the judgement on the performance of IPA assistance deployed under 2007-2009 IPA Component I programmes (relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability), as well as of the key recommendations to improve performance of this assistance.

Key Evaluation Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations

Assessment of the IPA Intervention Logic

- E3. IPA intervention strategy is framed by the following documents: (i) EC Enlargement Strategies; (ii) EC Progress Reports per BENF; (iii) the Accession/European Partnerships; (iv) Multi-Annual Indicative Financial Frameworks (MIFFs); (v) Multi-Annual Indicative Planning Documents (MIPDs); (vi), the annual and/or multi-annual programmes (according to the requirements for each of the five IPA Components); and (vii) BENF European integration/accession and national development strategies. The overall quality of the intervention logic used in programming IPA assistance was assessed by examining the quality of the intervention objectives and indicators in the key programming documents, namely the MIPDs and the IPA Component I-V programmes, and the linkages between the different programming documents.
- E4. MIPDs aim to provide direction and focus to the programming process through formulating strategic objectives for IPA assistance, and by identifying specific objectives and/or priorities to be met per IPA Component, for actions over the three year period covered. In relation to TA-IB, the contributory evaluations found that the 'strategic choices process' was particularly useful for programming. Nevertheless, the evaluations found that the strategic objectives in MIPDs are

⁴ Council Regulation (EC) No 1085/2006 of 17 July 2006

defined at a high policy level and were too broad and generalised, e.g. ‘to support [BENF] move towards EU membership’.

- E5. MIPDs also define specific objectives/priorities at a lower level which, unlike strategic objectives, are potentially measurable. The quality of specific objectives / priorities and related indicators has improved over time in terms of SMART requirements. Nevertheless, the quality was still mixed (with the proportions judged to be ‘SMART’ ranging from 35-86%) and further improvements are recommended.
- E6. Overall, contributory evaluations reported that MIPDs do not define sufficient indicators to support the measurement of the achievement of strategic objectives or specific objectives / priorities.
- E7. The annual revision of MIPDs has resulted in a tendency since the first MIPDs for the number and/or the scope of specific objectives/priorities to increase. The majority of 2007-2009 TA-IB projects are either under implementation, or yet to start and therefore the results of these interventions will only be realised from 2011 onwards, when new MIPDs will be in place. This makes the assessment of the performance of IPA problematic. The annual revision of MIPDs has also made it difficult to measure performance, as the MIPD timeframe for the delivery of expected results also shifts annually.
- E8. At the level of the Component I Annual programmes the quality was judged to have improved across the 2007-2009 programming period. Evaluations which included detailed quality assessments of the Project Fiches found notable increases in the number of ‘SMART’ objectives and indicators. The proportion of 2009 Project Fiche indicators which met four of the five ‘SMART’ criteria was 75% compared with just 56% under the 2007 programmes. As with the MIPDs, the most frequent reasons for the negative assessment of ‘SMART’ objectives or indicators are non-compliance on ‘time-bound’, ‘specificity’ and ‘measurability/quantification’ criterion.
- E9. Whilst recognising that there were improvements to the quality of indicators during the period assessed and that the formulation of ‘SMART’ indicators is a complex task (particularly for political criteria which are key for IPA assistance), the contributory evaluations concluded that further improvements in this regard are recommended in order to enhance both the effectiveness and impact of future programming.
- E10. IPA funding is, and will continue to be, small in comparison to the scale of the European integration/accession needs of the BENF. Therefore, a key challenge for IPA assistance is to focus funds efficiently on interventions that address the accession priorities, ensuring that these are well-targeted so as to achieve impacts. In this regard the IPA programming, project selection process was judged to be appropriate in the majority of the BENF, with adequate quality control to ensure that projects are well-targeted on Accession/European Partnership requirements and have priority in the BENF European integration/accession programme. This process is less efficient where the BENF NIPAC provides limited rather than pro-active leadership.
- E11. The prioritisation and sequencing of interventions within a coherent medium-term framework are recognised programming mechanisms to improve the effectiveness and the impact of interventions. The intervention frameworks of IPA Components II-V mirror, to a great extent, those of the EU/EC Structural Instruments. They are planned on the basis of sector/thematic/regional strategies adopted by the BENF and corresponding multi-annual programmes prepared by the BENF for IPA co-financing. IPA Component I is focused-on transitional and institution building actions. It is programmed on an annual basis, set within the framework of the three year MIPDs and the BENF European integration/accession and national development strategies. While there is some evidence of the sequencing of interventions across successive Component I Annual programmes and of IPA assistance successfully leveraging other donors’ assistance, programming has been a genuine annual programming process.
- E12. Multi-annual programming under IPA Component I should provide a suitable framework to facilitate prioritisation and sequencing of assistance. It would improve the predictability of financing at sector / priority level, facilitate donor coordination and promote BENF ownership. It

would also alleviate the increased workloads in programming TA-IB for the BENF and the EU Delegations and the EC Liaison Office (ECLO).

Recommendations (for IPA TA-IB)

Recommendation 1: *The scope of the strategic objectives in the MIPDs should be better defined and measurable; more ‘SMART’ indicators should be provided for specific objectives/priorities; the scope of the specific objectives/priorities should be realistic so as to be achievable in the IPA implementation time-frame.*

Recommendation 2: *Further effort should be made by the EC and BENF NIPACs to make TA-IB Annual Programme objectives more quantified so that they, and their indicators, define time-bound targets against specified MIPD objectives/priorities. Project objectives should more focussed and link to individual MIPD objectives/priorities.*

Recommendation 3: *In order to improve the quality of IPA programming and increase BENF ownership, NIPACs should take a more proactive role throughout the project preparation and selection process. In particular, they should enhance their role in the prioritisation, sequencing and quality assessment of project proposals, before their submission to the EC.*

Recommendation 4: *The EC services should consider the introduction of multi-annual programmes for TA-IB where this is based on a SBA, covering the three year periods of MIPDs.*

Overview and Mapping of Existing Strategies in and Financial Assistance to the IPA Beneficiaries

- E13. The EU and other donors contribute to the BENF reform efforts, with the OECD reporting official external commitments to the IPA BENF, between 2005-2009, as 43157 M\$ (c.32370 M€) and disbursements at 34475 M\$ (c.25850 M€). EU Institutions’ commitments to the region represent 39% of the total; with the (DAC) EU Member States’ bilateral assistance included the EU commitments to the region are 59% of the total.
- E14. The EC, and increasingly the BENF, are actively engaged in promoting donor coordination, with a number of mechanisms to support coordination and the programming of IPA. Donor coordination by the EC linked to IPA was judged to have been effectively undertaken, with donors acknowledging the leadership role the EC plays in the region. The MIPDs role as an orientation guide for the other donors was judged to be good. A more focussed and measurable definition of the MIPD objectives could increase the role of MIPDs as an overarching donor orientation mechanism.
- E15. In order to guide their reform efforts and achieve longer-term development goals each of the BENF has adopted a number of sectoral strategies, on average 40 sectoral strategies per BENF. The majority have also adopted overarching, national strategies to provide a medium-/long-term focus of efforts linked to European integration/accession and broader, national economic-social development and reconciliation. Progress has also been achieved by most of the BENF in terms of the development of medium-term economic programmes and medium-term budget frameworks.
- E16. However, while an important number of strategies have been adopted, there is limited evidence that they are functioning and embedded in the BENF national policy and budget framework. The strategies provide an adequate basis for the planning and prioritisation of government and sectoral work programmes. Nevertheless, the quality of subsequent implementation action and budget plans are generally inadequate to support informed decision-making. The majority of strategies are unfunded or with no evident linkage to the BENF budget. Despite the sizeable number of strategies adopted very few implementation monitoring reports exist.
- E17. In late 2008 the donors to the IPA BENF agreed to strengthen their coordination efforts further via the adoption, where appropriate, of a mid-term Sector Based Approach (SBA) to the management of assistance. The SBA has clear advantages for both the BENF and the donors. Namely, it could

facilitate and strengthen further the coordination and the alignment of external assistance with the strategies of the BENF. This would facilitate the development of a results-oriented framework against which the effectiveness of interventions (funded by the BENF and the donors) could be measured.

- E18. The BENF, EC and other donors in many of the IPA BENF have since established a series of sectoral Working Groups to define an appropriate sectoral intervention strategy, needs-prioritisation, multi-annual action plan, administrative and monitoring processes, results frameworks etc. At the time the TA-IB evaluations were undertaken (4Q/2009-3Q/2010) the process was still very much at the planning-phase. While there was some confusion as to the goals and operation of this approach, the evaluations found that both the BENF and donors are committed. A number of the evaluations also highlighted the plan for the sectoral Working Groups in the BENF to be included into the programming exercises linked to the MIPDs 2011-2013 and future IPA Annual TA-IB programmes.
- E19. Adopting a SBA under IPA TA-IB would increase the effectiveness of IPA programming by facilitating prioritisation and sequencing. Greater predictability of sectoral funding would also serve as a mechanism for leveraging donor assistance. However, realistically a SBA can only be introduced progressively in accordance with the readiness (in terms of administrative capacity) of the different Ministries in the different BENF. Accordingly a certain portion of assistance would be programmed under SBA with the remainder programmed in the normal way. It is recognised that this will lead to increased workloads for the principle actors in the programming coordination process (namely NIPACs and EC). In view of the accession horizon assumed for Croatia, the applicability of introducing the approach there is less evident.

Recommendations (for IPA TA-IB)

Recommendation 5: *The EC services should decide on the minimum quality standards for sector strategies and programmes which need to be met before they can be judged suitable for TA-IB.*

Recommendation 6: *The EC, in collaboration with the BENF authorities and consultation with the other donors, should decide which sectors would be appropriate for a SBA. This decision should mainly be based on the relevance of sectors to EU integration/accession, the quality of existing strategies and the administrative capacity to implement and monitor the corresponding multi-annual programmes.*

Judgement on the Performance of the IPA 2007-2009 (Component I) Programmes

- E20. Regarding the 2007-2009 TA-IB programmes, the evaluations judged that the relevance of these, in terms of their linkage to the objectives/priorities of accession, continues to be good. The continued relevance of programmes/projects is ensured by the EC (the EU Delegations and ECLO) prior to procurement start-up through the fulfilment by the BENF of specified pre-conditions focussed on implementation.
- E21. Efficiency of the management operations linked to the procurement of IPA assistance was initially undermined by several factors. On average delivery of the 2007 TA-IB programmes was delayed at least one-year compared to the delivery planned in the Project Fiches. While for six of the eight IPA BENF the TA-IB programmes are based on centralised management by the EC (primarily based on de-concentration to the EU Delegations and ECLO in the BENF), it is noted that the causes for delayed efficiency were primarily linked to the non-fulfilment of programme/project conditionalities by the BENF. But efficiency was also initially slowed by the focus, of the EC and the BENF, on implementing the pre-IPA EU assistance programmes first. The pace of contracting and implementation of the TA-IB programmes has generally improved since calendar year 2009. In most of the BENF a faster pace of contracting of the 2008 and 2009 programmes has been achieved than those of 2007.

- E22. In Croatia and Turkey implementation of the IPA 2007 and 2008 assistance was originally delayed due to the preparation process for the conferral of decentralised management authority. In Bosnia-Herzegovina and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia⁵ implementation of the IPA 2008 programmes was affected by some temporary problems with the institutional set-up. In these cases risks to the timely implementation of the assistance exist, as procurement has been pushed close to the deadline for contracting, leaving little room for potential delays.
- E23. The predominant form of TA-IB assistance in terms of projects/contracts is in the provision of services. The majority of contracts are in the form of Technical Assistance, although there is an increasing demand from most of the BENF for Twinning (TW) actions (both classical TW and TW Light). TW has clear advantages in providing BENF with the most appropriate, hands-on experience with the modalities of *acquis* transposition and administrative operation. TW also provides added-value in terms of institutional partnership relations between TW providers and BENF.
- E24. However, the efficiency of interventions, whether based on TW or the supply of other services, requiring inter-agency cooperation was reported to be weak by the TA-IB evaluations. This was mainly due to the difficulties in securing the active collaboration of all the actors to the process. Investment type actions, whether supply or works, were judged to be less efficient due to delays in implementation often linked to the late fulfilment of conditionalities by the BENF.
- E25. Effectiveness of the 2007-2009 TA-IB programmes is still an 'on-going process' as only some of the 2007 TA-IB Multi-BENF programmes are already closed for execution. Nevertheless, based on the evidence available the TA-IB evaluations judged that the majority of the intervention objectives are expected to be delivered. Effectiveness was judged to be strongest in those areas where actions are related to the alignment/adoption of the *acquis*, notably where the *acquis* is clearly defined in terms of a legal and administrative framework to be achieved. The increased trend in demand for use of the TW instrument to deliver such *acquis* related interventions will also strengthen the effectiveness of the assistance.
- E26. For cross-cutting themes, e.g. public administration reform, where inter-agency cooperation is necessary, effectiveness will be highly dependent on the commitment and ownership of the range of actors involved in the process. While useful outputs are assumed to be delivered in such areas, the translation of these into immediate and mid-term results and impacts will need the stakeholders' ownership across a series of sequenced actions.
- E27. Management contribution and involvement on the side of the BENF in the project design and implementation of assistance is a key determinant for efficiency and effectiveness of the assistance as well as a means to ensure impact and sustainability. While this is improving across the BENF, the IPA BENF under centralised management will continue to require targeted support to assist them further strengthen their management capacity.
- E28. Croatia and Turkey are the only two IPA BENF operating IPA TA-IB on the basis of decentralised management at the time of the evaluations, and thus also responsible for managing the monitoring function. The efficiency and effectiveness of the monitoring functions in these BENF can be strengthened by improving the linkage of information management at the various levels of monitoring (contracts/projects/sectors/programmes) and by improving the content of reports so as to better target the decision-making needs.
- E29. The prospects for impact of the IPA 2007-2009 TA-IB programmes was, generally, judged to be good, though with a mixed picture. The issue of the adequacy of BENF planning and staffing (numbers and competence) will determine the extent of achievement. Equally the prospects for sustainability were judged to be good, though mixed. While prospects are reasonable for many of the IPA-actions they are variable across and within individual BENF and clear risks exist that will test sustainability over the medium-term. Notably, all the TA-IB evaluations highlighted the risks

⁵ As defined under UNSCR 817/1993 and United Nations General Assembly Resolution 47/1993

in terms of the provision of adequate staffing and the capacity of the BENF institutions to retain skilled staff in an environment of high turn-over and re-organisations. The TA-IB evaluations in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo⁶ highlighted that a significant number of projects have been assessed as 'with problems' by the monitoring system, due to the level of ownership and capacity of the BENF to provide for effective follow-up.

- E30. While sustainability is one of the criteria used to select projects and interventions during the programming phase, the TA-IB evaluations highlighted different levels of detail of project conditionalities and of post-assistance planning requirements across the IPA BENF. The variable level of conditionalities in terms of post-assistance planning may undermine sustainability (and impact) of some projects.
- E31. The key determinant (and thereby the greatest risk) in terms of achieving impact and sustainability is the BENF ownership of the reform agenda and the capacity of the administration to provide effective follow-up operations and the linkage of outputs/immediate results delivered by the assistance into the BENF wider policy agenda.
- E32. While the TA-IB evaluations assessed that the quality of project objectives and indicators has, generally, improved with the successive set of annual IPA programmes, further improvements are needed to provide the basis to measure progress achieved in terms of effectiveness and impact.

Recommendations (for IPA TA-IB)

Recommendation 7: *EC services: indicators of achievement at project-level for IPA 2008-2010 programmes should, as appropriate, be revised (by the BENF, coordinated by the NIPAC and EU Delegations/ECLO) so as to support the effective supervision, monitoring and evaluation of the assistance. This relates to the indicators for efficiency, effectiveness and impact and the need for baseline data at impact level.*

Recommendation 8: *NIPACs/NAOs and the EU Delegations/ECLO should agree a consistent approach to be applied to post-assistance planning requirements and their follow-up compliance, for instance:*

- (i) Key institution building projects, notably where Twinning was used, should be supported by a brief, follow-up mission to assess and make further recommendations as to the follow-up operation of the delivered results and take-up of the final Twinning recommendations. Indicatively this should be conducted 3-6 months after the delivery of the support.*
- (ii) BENF of the IPA projects should be required to submit brief, post-assistance, operational reports (on impact and sustainability). Indicatively this should be provided 6-12 months after the completion of the delivery of the IPA assistance.*

⁶ Under UNSCR 1244/1999

Main Report

This evaluation covers mainly Component I for which the EC has undertaken interim evaluations covering programming and implementation of IPA assistance as part of the specific regulatory requirement for evaluation and programming needs under this Component.

For Components II to V, interim evaluations covering implementation of IPA assistance have not been completed by the time this meta-evaluation was undertaken. For Component II, the meta-evaluation has used a recent evaluation on Governance Structures and procedures. For Components III, IV and V the meta-evaluation has used the ex-ante evaluations. This has limited the analysis of these three components in the current report to the area of the intervention logic of programming.

1. Introduction

1. The Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance⁷ (IPA) was established by the Council of the European Union (EU) in July 2006 as the Community's main legislative instrument under the 2007-2013 financial framework to underpin EU policy and provide financial assistance to the eight recipient Beneficiaries (BENF) which are Candidate Countries or Potential Candidate Countries for membership of the EU, namely: Albania (ALB), Bosnia and Herzegovina (BIH), Croatia (CRO), the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia⁸ (MK), Montenegro (MNE), Serbia (SRB) and Turkey (TUR), as well as Kosovo⁹ (KOS).
2. The IPA created a single framework to provide assistance to the BENF, replacing the series of 2000-2006 EU financial instruments supporting accession preparations (Phare, ISPA, SAPARD and Turkey pre-accession instrument), as well as supporting the stabilisation and association process in the Western Balkans (CARDS).
3. IPA consists of five Components with the first two targeted to all of the IPA BENF, the latter three only to the BENF recognised by the EU as Candidate Countries:
 - Component I Transition Assistance and Institution Building (TA-IB),
 - Component II Cross-Border Cooperation (CBC),
 - Component III Regional Development,
 - Component IV Human Resources Development, and
 - Component V Rural Development.

1.1. Objectives of the Meta Evaluation

4. The primary objective of this Mid-term Meta Evaluation of the EU Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) is to analyse and consolidate the relevant findings, conclusions and recommendations resulting from different evaluations on IPA assistance. These evaluations were mainly contracted by the European Commission (EC) to support its planning and programming of IPA Component I with the view to best responding to the strategic goals of enlargement policy and improving performance of the support.
5. The specific objectives/requested services for the Mid-term Meta Evaluation are to:
 - Provide a consolidated, comprehensive and comparative assessment of the intervention logic followed in the 2007-2009, 2008-2010 and 2009-2011 Multi-Annual Indicative Planning

⁷ Council Regulation (EC) No 1085/2006 of 17 July 2006

⁸ As defined under UNSCR 817/1993 and United Nations General Assembly Resolution 47/1993

⁹ Under UNSCR 1244/1999

Documents and relevant annual programmes for Component I, including to which extent assistance is/should be programmed and implemented through a sectoral approach, plus also report on good practices identified for specific programmes and how these could be applied to other programmes.

- Provide a consolidated, comprehensive and comparative overview of existing strategies in the different IPA BENF as well as a mapping of on-going projects and financial assistance per external donor, BENF and sector.
- Provide a consolidated evaluation of the judgement, as provided in the contributory evaluations, on the performance (either actual or expected) of IPA assistance deployed under 2007-2009 IPA Component I (TA-IB) programmes particularly as regards its relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability, as well as of the key recommendations to improve the performance of this assistance.

6. Linked to the specific objectives set for this Meta Evaluation the terms-of-reference established six Groups of Evaluation Questions (EQ) comprising in total a series of 26 specific EQ. These are each treated, with the evaluation, assessment and findings presented, then followed by the conclusions (lessons learned) and recommendations to the EC to support it in the planning of IPA and to improve the performance of on-going and future assistance. The structure of the Meta Evaluation report and its coverage of the six Groups of EQ and the 26 EQ is shown below:

Meta Evaluation – Report Structure		EQ Group / No. of EQ
1.	Introduction	
2.	Evaluation, Assessment and Findings	
2.1.	Assessment of the IPA Intervention Logic	EQ Group 2 / EQ = 9
2.2.	Overview and Mapping of Existing Strategies in and Financial Assistance to the IPA Beneficiaries	EQ Group 1 / EQ = 3 +EQ Group 3 / EQ = 2 +EQ Group 4 / EQ = 2
2.3.	Judgement on the Performance of the IPA 2007-2009 (Component I) Programmes	EQ Group 5 / EQ = 4
3.	Conclusions (Lessons Learned) and Recommendations	
3.1	The Programming Framework – Improving its Strategic Focus	EQ Group 4 / EQ = 4
3.2	On-going IPA (Component I) Assistance – Improving its Performance	EQ Group 6 / EQ = 2

1.2. Approach and Methodology

7. This Mid-term Meta Evaluation was prepared principally on the basis of a series of contributory evaluations. These evaluations fall into four categories, the first three following the structure of the IPA instrument, as summarised below (see Annex 3 for a list of the contributory evaluations):

- IPA Component I: Nine interim evaluations¹⁰ linked to the TA-IB programmes, eight evaluations on the EU assistance in the individual IPA BENF plus one evaluation on the IPA Multi-Beneficiary/Regional assistance programmes. The evaluations were conducted (in terms of research) primarily in the 2nd quarter of 2010, but for Croatia and Turkey the 4th quarter of 2009 and for Montenegro the 3rd quarter of 2010. Specifically linked to the mapping of BENF strategies, three evaluations – on Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey – conducted in the 4th quarter of 2010 were also provided.

¹⁰ Covering the TA-IB programmes in Albania (ALB), Bosnia and Herzegovina (BIH), Croatia (CRO), the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (MK), Montenegro (MNE), Serbia (SRB), Turkey (TUR), as well as Kosovo (KOS) and also covering the TA-IB Multi-Beneficiary/Regional (MB/R) programmes

- IPA Component II: One evaluation on Governance Structures and procedures covering the eight ‘intra-Western Balkans’ Cross Border programmes, conducted in the first-half of 2010.
- IPA Components III-V: Nine of the thirteen ex-ante evaluations conducted in 2007 on the range of programmes in the eligible BENF, i.e. the Candidate Countries (then three¹¹): Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey.
- Other Evaluations (as relevant): An ad hoc evaluation of Donor Coordination in the Western Balkans, which was conducted across mid-2008.

8. Regarding the approach and methodology for the Meta Evaluation, this is based on ‘desk-research’ and not original ‘field-research’ as the latter was already an integral element of the series of contributory evaluations themselves. The following remarks are provided as to how the evaluations have been utilised in terms of the analysis presented in this Meta Evaluation:

IPA Component I

- Of the nine interim evaluations provided six were based on a common set of EQ – the evaluations on Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia and Multi-Beneficiary/Regional programmes, as well as Kosovo. These evaluations were specifically tasked to focus on the IPA.
- The other three interim evaluations, on the then three Candidate Countries, covered both the IPA and the EU’s pre-IPA instrument as relevant to the specific BENF. Two of these evaluations followed a common set of EQ – those on the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey – while the evaluation on Croatia followed a further set of EQ. Their evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations that related only/specifically to the pre-IPA instruments and programmes are not referred to in this Meta Evaluation.
- The most significant difference in terms of the EQ posed between the evaluations at bullet one and bullet two linked to the mapping of the BENF strategies and donor activities, i.e. EQ Group 1 under this Meta Evaluation. These were not required of the three TA-IB evaluations under bullet two, the then Candidate Countries. However, these EQ were addressed in subsequent mapping exercises linked to the three BENF conducted in the 4th quarter of 2010.
- As such, while the contributory evaluations are constructed on a variable basis the EQ posed are, to a large degree, sufficiently comparable to serve as the basis for this Meta Evaluation.
- The 26 EQ posed for this Meta Evaluation are significantly aligned with those in the six evaluations based on a common set of EQ: 22 of the EQ for this Meta Evaluation were posed in those evaluations (1 now with a minor re-definition), while the other four EQ in this Meta Evaluation are new EQ, reflecting the ‘higher’ level of a Meta Evaluation.
- However, limits to the Meta Evaluation result from the level of analyses provided in response to the individual EQ in the contributory evaluations. Whereas common EQ and judgement criteria have, generally, been followed, the level of quantitative data provided to support the qualitative findings is not always consistent across the contributory evaluations. Thus the comparative findings, conclusions and recommendations presented in this Meta Evaluation are qualified, as relevant. Notably, the interim evaluations linked to TA-IB programmes for Montenegro, Serbia and the Multi-Beneficiary/Regional programmes were still at the stage of commentary feedback from the stakeholders invited to review the reports, notably the EC, prior to final decision on their acceptance/adoption. As such, the findings from these evaluations have been utilised as relevant to this Meta Evaluation insofar for those areas they provide findings supported by adequate analysis.
- Finally, as the series of Component I evaluations were conducted over a period of one-year and thus provide no consistent set of financial data for the purposes of comparison, use of publicly-available materials has been undertaken to fill this gap, notably so use of:
 - The IPA Annual Reports (2007-2009) and ad hoc information provided by the EC for financial data on the implementation (contracting/disbursement) of IPA assistance and
 - OECD/DAC data on the provision of External Assistance to the eight BENF (2005-2009).

¹¹ The European Council agreed to give Montenegro the status of Candidate Country on 17/12/2010

IPA Components II-V:

- Analysis of these Components was requested in this Meta Evaluation in the context of the IPA intervention logic (EQ Group 2) and the strategies in the BENF (EQ Group 1+3). This analysis should contribute mainly to the identification of lessons learned and best practices which are transferrable to TA-IB.
 - This is provided, where feasible, but it is noted that:
 - Component II: The evaluation on Governance Structures and procedures covers the eight ‘intra-Western Balkans’ Cross-Border Cooperation (CBC) programmes. The CBC Programmes between the IPA BENF and the EU Member States (which are implemented under shared management with the participating Member State/s) were not covered under the evaluation.
 - Components III-V: Nine ex-ante evaluations were provided. A sample selection of the Annual Implementation Reports (2007-2009) prepared by the individual BENF linked to the IPA Component III and IV programmes were also provided. However, no interim evaluations of the programmes were available at the time of this Meta Evaluation.
 - As such an assessment of the performance of IPA Components II-V is not provided in this Meta Evaluation.
9. This Mid-term Meta Evaluation was prepared (research and preparation of the first draft) over the period November 2010 – January 2011. The draft evaluation report was circulated by DG ELARG to the relevant EC services and stakeholders for comments. The comments thus provided were reviewed by the evaluator and, as appropriately, have been reflected in this Final Version.

2. Evaluation, Assessment and Findings

2.1. Assessment of the IPA Intervention Logic (EQ Group 2)

10. The nine Group 2 Evaluation Questions (EQ) focus on the quality of the intervention logic used in the programming of IPA assistance. According to EC guidelines¹², intervention logic is defined as: 'the set of all assumptions used to explain how the intervention will produce its expected effects and which can be represented as a progressive sequence from activities to results and from results to different levels of expected impacts'. The logic should be assessed in the context of the 'intervention rationale' and 'related policies' as part of the evaluation of intervention strategy¹³.
11. Issues of the intervention rationale/logic are addressed by EQ 1-3 and 8, while EQ 4-7 address the quality of programming and its relation to the policies of the Beneficiaries (BENF) and donors.
12. IPA intervention strategy is defined in the following documents: (i) the EC Enlargement Strategies¹⁴; (ii) EC Progress Reports per BENF; (iii) revisions and amendments to the Accession/European Partnerships (if necessary); (iv) Multi-Annual Indicative Financial Frameworks (MIFFs); and (v) Multi-Annual Indicative Planning Documents (MIPDs); (vi) BENF European integration/accession and national development strategies; (vii) BENF Annual and multi-annual programmes; (viii) BENF Strategic Coherence Frameworks¹⁵ (only for Candidate Country BENF).
13. MIFFs are multi-annual financial planning documents, based on the IPA (IPA-IR) Regulation (Article 5), showing planned budget allocations of IPA funds for each IPA component in each BENF. MIPDs are established as being BENF-specific documents that describe strategic objectives and specific objectives/priorities for programmes to be funded by IPA assistance in the BENF. Both MIFFs and MIPDs are reviewed every year and cover a three year period on a rolling basis, i.e. each year the three year period is extended by one year (with MIFFs being one year ahead of MIPDs).
14. The EC (Headquarters, HQ) is responsible for preparing MIFFs and MIPDs. In the case of MIPDs it is usual to incorporate inputs from the EU Delegations and ECLD and also from the BENF into the drafting process. MIPDs are intended to focus IPA assistance on the priorities, as identified in the EC Enlargement Strategies and Progress Reports, to be addressed by means of the three year MIFF funding allocations.
15. The contributory evaluations for this Meta Evaluation covered the eight IPA BENF plus the Component I Multi-Beneficiary/Regional (MB/R) programmes. The evaluations for ALB, BIH, CRO, KOS, MNE, SRB, MB/R each examined three MIPDs, namely: MIPDs 2007-2009, 2008-2010 and 2009-2011. Whilst the MK evaluation examined MIPDs 2007-2009, 2008-2010 and the TUR evaluation examined MIPD 2007-2009. In total, these evaluations contain assessments of the intervention strategy provided in 24 MIPDs. It should be noted that whilst these evaluations focussed on Component I, MIPDs cover all five IPA components.
16. IPA financial assistance is implemented by means of annual and/or multi-annual programmes, according to the requirements for each component under the IPA Regulation and its Implementing

¹² Evaluation Methods for the European Union's External Assistance, (Volume 1 Methodological Bases for Evaluation), DG External Relations, DG General Development, EuropeAid Cooperation Office (08/12/2006)

¹³ The evaluation of intervention strategy is based on the assessment of 3 elements: (i) rationale of the intervention to satisfy needs, solve problems or tackle challenges that are considered to be priorities and that cannot be addressed more effectively in another way; (ii) intervention logic; (iii) related policies of European institutions, Member States and other donors so as to understand where complementarities, potential synergies, risks of duplication and coordination needs lie.

¹⁴ Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges: 2006-2007, 2007-2008, 2008-2009 and 2009-2010

¹⁵ A planning document for Components III and IV, established under Article 154 of the IPA (IR) Regulation

Regulation. The process of preparing MIPDs and programmes (plus associated Project Fiches where applicable) is referred to as programming.

17. MIPD specific objectives/priorities for IPA Component I are implemented by means of Annual programmes that are drawn up on the basis of projects prepared by the BENF in a standard Project Fiche format provided by the EC and annexed to each programme. The nine TA-IB BENF evaluations thereby carried out assessments of all (27) IPA 2007-2009 TA-IB programmes.
18. MIPD specific objectives/priorities for IPA Components II-V (Components III-V are only for the Candidate Country BENF) are implemented on the basis of multi-annual programmes that are prepared by the BENF and must be ex-ante approved by the EC before they can be implemented. The duration of the EC Decision on the financing of programmes varies by IPA Component: annual or multi-annual for Component II, for Components III-V initially the period 2007-2009.
19. These programmes are as follows:
 - Component II: Cross-Border (Cooperation) Programmes (CBC), potentially a CBC per bordering pair of BENF or a BENF and an EU Member State and the multilateral 'Adriatic' CBC, plus BENF-specific participation in Trans-National Programmes (TUR in the ENPI Sea-Basin).
 - Component III: Regional Development Operational Programmes prepared on the themes of: Regional Competitiveness and Environment and Transport.
 - Component IV: Human Resource Development Operational Programmes.
 - Component V: Agricultural and Rural Development Programmes.

The quality of intervention strategy of eight CBC and eight Component III-V programmes was assessed in the contributory evaluations to this Meta Evaluation. This represents all CBC programmes not involving the EU Member States and just over half of the (15) Component III-V programmes.

20. In relation to EQ 9, addressing the gaps/weaknesses of the current programming framework, the MIPDs, Annual programmes plus associated Project Fiches and the above listed multi-annual programmes are considered to be key elements in the current IPA programming framework.

2.1.1. Analysis of Objectives and Indicators

Group 2: EQ 1

To what extent are the objectives at different levels (strategic, MIPDs and programmes) 'SMART'?

Group 2: EQ 8

To what extent programming includes 'SMART' indicators to measure progress towards achievement of objectives?

21. In relation to EQ 1, the 'SMART' criteria for objectives have the following meanings: Specific (appropriately positioned, scoped and focused within the objectives hierarchy); Measurable (quantified, or potentially quantifiable, through the use of appropriate indicators); Achievable (in the light of position in the intervention logic and assumptions made at the preceding level); Relevant (to EU accession requirements); Time-bound (provide a time frame by which planned benefits should be achieved).
22. In the hierarchy of programming documents, strategic objectives for IPA assistance are first formulated in the MIPDs¹⁶. These are inevitably broad since, under EC guidelines¹⁷, they should

¹⁶ MIPD section 2.2.1

¹⁷ IPA Programming Guide, Volume 1, for Component I (TA-IB) and Component II (CBC); Annex 4: IPA planning guidelines on MIPD (31/03/2008).

- be based on a ‘consolidated operational assessment of the challenges, needs and relative importance of priorities’ as identified in: Stability and Association Agreements (SAAs); Accession/European Partnerships; EC Enlargement Strategies, Progress Reports and BENF strategies. These broad objectives are further focussed by making ‘strategic choices’¹⁸ and identifying specific objectives and/or priorities¹⁹ plus expected results and indicators for each IPA Component for the three year period covered²⁰.
23. The quality of MIPD objectives was assessed by eight TA-IB evaluations²¹, however, it is difficult to summarise their findings succinctly. Assessments were not carried out on a uniform basis and varied in response to different EQs and to different interpretations of these. All evaluations agreed that the strategic objectives in MIPDs were of necessity broad (for the reasons given above) and that the sector-specific analyses given under strategic choices were important for both focussing the strategic objectives and for informing annual programming.
 24. The contributory evaluations for CRO, MK and TUR also included evaluations of pre-IPA assistance. The CRO evaluation concluded that the division of funding allocations by priority axis under IPA programming made the strategic objectives more accession relevant and better linked to accession, as compared to pre-IPA assistance. Nevertheless, the TUR evaluation reported that the strategic choice of priorities in MIPDs was insufficiently linked to the sector priorities of higher strategic documents (notably the AP, Enlargement Strategy and the NPAA). The evaluations for ALB, KOS and MK reported that the strategic objectives and priority areas chosen in the MIPDs lacked sufficient sector prioritisation and were too broad to guide TA-IB programming. Whilst the BIH evaluation concluded that given their broad based derivation, MIPD strategic objectives could not be expected to be SMART.
 25. On the basis of the above, MIPD strategic objectives are judged not to have sufficiently to have fulfilled the SMART criteria. This is mainly because they are not sufficiently linked to specific priorities identified in the EC and BENF strategic documents and, overall, they are too wide to be achievable within the life-times of the MIPDs and, therefore, not effectively time-bound.
 26. However, it is important to note that:
 - All evaluations found MIPD strategic objectives to be clearly stated and accession relevant.
 - Most evaluations found that there were significant improvements in the quality of MIPD strategic objectives since 2007²². These MIPDs became more specific, measurable and relevant from 2008 onwards, with the integration of the Copenhagen criteria under three priority axes namely: (1) political requirements / criteria; (2) economic requirements / criteria; (3) European standards / obligations of membership.
 - Detailed assessments of the quality of specific objectives/priorities in a sample of 12 MIPDs²³ found that the proportion of SMART MIPD specific objectives/priorities had increased since 2007 and that the majority in the 2009-11 MIPDs (76/105=72%) were SMART.
 27. The objectives of projects in IPA TA-IB Annual programmes 2007-2009 were assessed by seven evaluations (ALB, BIH, CRO, KOS, MNE, SRB, MB/R). With the exception of MNE, overall these evaluations found that the formulation of project ‘overall objectives’ and ‘purposes’ (as

¹⁸ MIPD section 2.2.2

¹⁹ The terminology used in the MIPDs varies, in some strategic choices lead to a series of specific objectives, whilst in others they lead to priorities. To cover this range of usage, the term specific objectives/priorities is used throughout this report.

²⁰ IPA Programming Guide, Explanatory notes, Annex 4, section 2.3 (3): ‘The following general structure should be followed as far as possible for each component (except Component II): ‘Expected results by the end of the covered period and measurable indicators.’

²¹ The exception is the MNE evaluation, which assessed priorities and objectives in the European Partnership and in TA-IB Annual programmes but not in MIPDs.

²² With the exception of the TUR evaluation where the analysis was based on the examination of one MIPD (2007-2009)

²³ Taken from the ALB, KOS, MB/R evaluations

given in Project Fiches) was generally acceptable. However, it was found that: (i) the scope of most overall objectives was very broad and there was a general tendency towards over-abstraction as shown by the frequent use of phrases such as ‘meeting EU criteria’ or ‘alignment with the *acquis*’; (ii) given the known difficulties in predicting when programmed projects actually will be implemented, it was found that very few project objectives (less than 20%) were quantified or measurable against time-bound targets.

28. In the nine Annual programmes assessed, the proportions of objectives fulfilling at least four of the SMART criteria ranged from 30% to 86% and on average over half (140/264=53%) of project objectives were assessed as being SMART. However, this average figure is a combined figure for both overall objectives and purposes and disguises the generally high quality of project purposes²⁴. In fact, project purposes were consistently found to be of higher quality than overall objectives and on average 67% of them were judged to be SMART, as compared only 39% of overall objectives. The two most frequent reasons for overall objectives receiving negative assessments were that they either lacked measurability or were judged to have too wide a scope for projects to achieve realistic impacts and results.
29. The evaluation for MNE reported deficiencies in the quality of project objectives in Annual programmes. In this regard, the EU delegation has contracted technical assistance to support beneficiary institutions in reviewing and improving the quality of objectives (and indicators) of previously programmed projects and in preparing the intervention hierarchies of future projects.
30. However, it should be noted that all seven of the evaluations referred to above found that there were significant improvements in the quality of both project overall objectives and purposes from 2007 onwards. The CRO evaluation also reported that there were marked improvements in the formulation of IPA 2007-8 project objectives as compared to those for the preceding Phare 2005-6 programmes. On the basis of these assessments the proportion of project objectives meeting at least of four of the SMART criteria was found to have doubled over the 2007-9 period; increasing from 31% in 2007 to 62% in 2009.
31. The Component II evaluation assessed the quality of objectives in eight Cross Border Cooperation (CBC) programmes between candidate and potential candidate BENF. For CBC programmes objectives are identified from the analyses of the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) in border regions. The objectives and the priorities of the CBC programmes were found to be clear and to address the issues covered in the SWOT analyses. The overall objectives of all eight programmes were similar, and focussed on the development of cross-border regions through cooperation in partnerships and networks. The specific objectives focussed on cooperation on SME development, tourism, trade, environment, culture and sport. These objectives were judged to be both adequately linked to, and consistent with, the strategic objectives and Component II specific objectives/priorities in MIPDs.
32. CBC programmes are expected to elaborate strategies showing how the identified needs are prioritised and addressed by planned interventions. The Component II evaluation found that whilst the CBC SWOT analyses were supported by appropriate needs assessments and socio-economic analyses, the corresponding strategies in the initial (2007) CBC programmes were in most cases very short, broad and did not sufficiently explain why certain choices had been made in relation to the socio-economic and SWOT analyses undertaken. The objectives hierarchies for these programmes were judged not to be SMART on the criterion of relevance since the strategies did not provide adequate linkage between objectives and needs assessments. However, in response to the EC’s comments and advice, these weaknesses were addressed in a 2009 revision

²⁴ Project Purposes are objectives which are one level below Overall Objectives and are defined as being the central specific objectives that should be achieved by projects. IPA TA-IB intervention logic is, therefore, as follows: achievement of Project Purposes contributes to the achievement of Overall Objectives which, in turn, contributes to the achievement of, first, the Specific Objectives/Priorities and then the Strategic Objectives given in the MIPDs.

of CBC programmes which resulted in significant improvements in the quality of intervention strategies and their objectives.

33. In relation to EQ 8, the 'SMART' criteria for indicators have the following meanings: Specific (closely linked to, and influenced by, what they are trying to measure); Measurable (variables which can be objectively assessed and numerically expressed); Available (already exist or can be collected at reasonable cost and effort); Relevant (related to the core problems and needs addressed by interventions); (v) Time-bound (give information about what will be achieved by interventions within a given time or date). It should be noted that indicators are normally used to make objectives SMART. Therefore, the analysis of objectives and indicators are closely linked to each other.
34. The MIPDs do not specifically define indicators for either strategic objectives or specific objectives/priorities. Often, MIPDs describe results and indicators together. However, contributory evaluations²⁵ found that in many cases (but not all) it was possible to derive indicators from the formulation of the expected results identified for each specific objective/priority, to be achieved within the three year period covered²⁶.
35. The BIH evaluation concluded that separating expected results from indicators did not provide any clear added value since both served the same purpose, e.g. the reduction in the time taken for legal cases to pass through the court system could be regarded as both a result and indicator. However, it was found that not all expected results listed in MIPDs could be formulated into SMART indicators. The evaluations for ALB, KOS, MB/R identified 94 indicators from a total of 226 results and concluded that further improvements were needed to include indicators in MIPDs.
36. Regarding the quality of these indicators the evaluations found that the proportions of indicators fulfilling four of the five SMART criteria ranged from 55-100%. On average, 76% of MIPD indicators were judged to be SMART in this sense. The remaining indicators mostly failed on two criteria, either: (i) they were not specific enough to reflect the result being measured or (ii) they were not available without a specific study being undertaken.
37. For IPA TA-IB Annual programmes indicators are formulated at project level and defined in the logical frameworks annexed to the Project Fiches. Each project defines indicators for results, purposes and overall objectives. In further answer to EQ 8, the quality of indicators in Annual programmes was assessed by eight BENF evaluations. Evaluations²⁷ found that the proportion of indicators judged to have fulfilled at least four of the five SMART criteria, ranged from 44% (MB/R, 2007) to 80% (KOS, 2009). The two main reasons for indicators not being assessed as SMART were because they were: (i) not time-bound (e.g. ALB, KOS, MB/R); (ii) not measurable or quantified (e.g. ALB, SRB, BIH, CRO). The BIH, MK and MNE evaluations found that the lack of available baseline data was one of the principle reasons for the difficulties experienced in establishing measurable, quantified, time-bound SMART indicators.
38. However, the ALB, BIH, CRO, KOS, MNE and MB/R evaluations found that the quality of project indicators had markedly improved since 2007, with progressively increasing numbers of SMART indicators in successive Annual programmes (on average it was found that the proportion of SMART indicators had increased by some 20% from 56% to 75% over the period 2007-2010). To a certain extent (depending on BENF), the improvements were attributed to the past/on-going training and technical support provided to beneficiary institutions by the NIPAC and the EU Delegations and ECLO and technical assistance projects.
39. IPA Components II-V are implemented by means of multi-annual programmes, developed by the responsible BENF authorities in order to achieve the MIPD strategic objectives and component specific MIPD specific objectives/priorities. These programmes are developed on the bases of needs assessments covering the relevant sectors, themes or regions, from which programme

²⁵ Particularly the evaluations for ALB, BIH, KOS, MB/R

²⁶ Guidance notes Section 2.3 standard IPA MIPD template. IPA Programming Guide 2008

²⁷ ALB, BIH, CRO, KOS, MK, MNE, SRB and MB/R

objectives and priorities/priority axes are identified. These are to be achieved by means of linked actions and activities which are grouped together in a number of specified programme measures (the generic structure of Multi-annual Programmes is described in Section 3.1).

40. The Component II evaluation found that the quality of CBC programme indicators had improved since the programmes were prepared in 2007. The initial indicators were judged to be relatively weak and not useful for monitoring progress on the programmes. The indicators were revised for most of the programmes (except those involving CRO, which were already more developed in the original versions) in 2009. The new sets of indicators included result and output indicators measuring the performance of grant schemes and grant projects. The type of indicators and their formulation were judged to be SMART and in line with indicators used for CBC programmes in the EU Member States. These indicators focussed on the development of cooperation networks etc. and were in line with the programme objectives. The indicators included targets, timeframes as well as sources of verification. Some programmes e.g. BIH-MNE also included baselines, set a "0", which is common for these types of CBC indicators.
41. The *ex-ante* evaluations for Component III-V programmes also found that the indicators given in the initial programmes lacked SMART indicators, particularly at the results and impact levels. Typically, these programmes contained large numbers of output indicators which were often either not quantified or which set unverifiable targets. Each of the evaluations examined, made detailed suggestions for improving the quality of indicators and the targets which they establish. These inputs, together with advice given by EC services, once incorporated into subsequent programme revisions, should lead to substantial improvements in the quality of indicators defined throughout programmes, i.e. for measures, priority axes and objectives.
42. The preparation and progressive revision of multi-annual programmes, as described above, is an example of good-practise which could be for IPA TA-IB in the context of future sector-based approaches to programming.

2.1.2. Programming and Needs Assessment

Group 2: EQ 2

To what extent planning and programming provide adequate assessment of needs (both financial & time) to meet all accession requirements/strategic objectives?

43. European integration and EU-accession requirements for the IPA BENF are given in the appropriate SAAs, the Accession/European Partnerships and the annual Progress Reports. In response the BENF are expected to prepare national programmes for fulfilling these requirements in the short- to medium-term. In answering EQ 2 the BENF contributory evaluations assessed the extent to which IPA funding reflects cost-estimates for implementing national programmes/strategies/plans for meeting EU integration/accession requirements.
44. In order to efficiently target IPA assistance to areas of greatest need it is necessary for the BENF to estimate the costs of meeting EU requirements and to incorporate these into their strategies for EU integration/accession. The TA-IB evaluations found that the BENF are at different stages in this process. In ALB and SRB the integration of cost estimates into national strategies was found to be well advanced.
45. In SRB the government has prepared a 'Needs Assessment' document which identifies projects and programmes, including related budgets and potential funding sources, for addressing priority needs per sector. Cost estimates and budgets are prepared by the responsible sector line ministries and linked to the domestic budgetary process via the Ministry of Finance. In ALB, the government has adopted a 'National Strategy for Development and Integration' (NSDI). The NSDI includes both national development goals and the government's response strategy for meeting SAA obligations and European Partnership priorities. It contains an assessment of the financial needs for meeting EU requirements, in the mid-term,

46. The scale of BENF financial needs can be gauged from the example of ALB. On the basis of sector needs assessments the government's estimated total cost of implementing the NSDI over the period 2011-2013 is almost 26000 M€ The greatest financial needs are for investments in: (i) transport infrastructure, (ii) water infrastructure, and (iii) education; and collectively the implementation costs for these sectors are estimated to be 9400 M€ Thus, whilst the NSDI provides a basis for estimating the costs of meeting national development and accession requirements, these are greatly in excess of the funds available to ALB under IPA (the MIFF national allocation is 269.4 M€ for the period 2009-11). Similar considerations hold for all the BENF, e.g. the TUR Ministry of Environment has carried out a detailed financial needs assessment for compliance with EU requirements and estimated the cost of TUR meeting these requirements as 70,000 M€ for the period 2009-2014, of which only 400 M€²⁸ will be available from IPA.
47. IPA funding is, and will continue to be, limited in comparison to the scale of financial needs in the BENF. Therefore, the question of how IPA assistance can maximise its catalytic role and its financial leverage in support of key reforms and increased access to other alternative funding sources is an important consideration in improving the efficiency of IPA funds.
48. However, whilst the available funding is relatively small as compared to BENF needs, some BENF experienced problems in absorbing these funds. The capacity of beneficiary institutions to manage external assistance (particularly due to problems of high staff turnover, institutional restructuring and lack of skills) was reported by all TA-IB evaluations as being one of the main causes for the absorption problems.
49. National development strategies and plans which integrate the costs of meeting EU integration/accession requirements, such as those for ALB and SRB provide a sound platform for coordinating, targeting and prioritising external assistance (including IPA).
50. National development strategies and plans are, however, not so advanced in other BENF. The KOS evaluation reported that the financial needs of EU integration have not yet been fully assessed by the government, although work was in progress. In BIH, EU integration requirements in the context of national development priorities were described and budgeted in the 'Mid-Term Development Strategy 2004-2007'. The succeeding national strategy the 'Country Development Strategy' has been under preparation since 2007 but at the time of the BIH evaluation was still to be formally adopted. For other BENF, the contributory evaluations did not provide similar analyses.
51. For MB/R, it is difficult to assess the full budgetary and financial implications of the regional programmes (especially those under political criteria) given their trans-national nature, although, at the time of the MB/R evaluation, cost estimates for horizontal projects (i.e. those aimed at region-wide efficiencies and economies of scale) were being undertaken.
52. Regarding assessments of time needs (for meeting accession requirements), it is difficult to judge the extent to which programming incorporates these since the accession timeframes for each BENF are not known. However, it can be noted that the programming mechanisms for all IPA components have shown sufficient resilience to accommodate the time required by both CRO and TUR to prepare for the conferral of decentralised management authority. Also it should be noted that in terms of future IPA programming, CRO has entered the final stages of accession negotiations and pre-accession assistance will be phased out in the foreseeable mid-term. Therefore, in the case of CRO, the introduction of a multi-annual programming approach for IPA TA-IB (as discussed in Sections 2.2 and 3.1 of this report) may not be appropriate since it will be limited by the time remaining until accession.

²⁸ The total allocation for Component III over the period 2009-13 is 1,460 M€ This allocation should cover the costs of transport, regional development and environment operational programmes. (Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament: Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance, Multiannual Indicative Financial Framework (MIFF) for 2009-13. COM (2009) 543 final).

2.1.3. Analysis of Financial Resources

Group 2: EQ 3

To what extent are annual IPA component I allocations (MIFFs) adequate in relation to the strategic objectives of the MIPDs?

53. MIFFs are multiannual planning documents which provide, for successive three-year periods, the financial envelopes within which MIPD objectives/priorities and programmes are developed (as explained in section 2.1.1). The financial allocations and their distribution, both within, and between IPA components are determined by the EC services on the basis of operational analyses and political discussions at the EU level. MIFF allocations for each BENF are established early in the planning process before MIPD strategic objectives are prepared. They are determined by three factors²⁹:
- The volume of previous EU financial assistance ('BENF will receive no less in 2007 than it did in 2006').
 - BENF GDP per capita³⁰ (as a measure of needs and impact).
 - The needs and absorption capacities of the BENF administrations.
54. MIPD financial allocations are expected to mirror those planned in the MIFFs. This was generally the case for Annual programme budgets (2007-9) in all BENF except KOS, where additional allocations were made available to meet some of the specific needs related to KOS's status.
55. For IPA TA-IB, in order to establish balanced Annual programmes the MIPDs divide annual budgets between the three main priority axes. Some limited budgetary flexibility is introduced by the use of indicative, ranges for each priority axis. This allows financial resources to be focussed (within the limits set) on high priority objectives by maximising allocations to a selected axis in successive programmes. The funding allocations per priority axes given in MIPDs vary amongst the BENF since these are intended to reflect the different economic and social situations in the BENF.
56. MIPD priority axis allocations changed over the 2007-2010 period. From 2008 onwards, increased emphasis was placed on political criteria and the allocations for this priority axis increased for all BENF as a result. The magnitude of the increased allocations varied according to the situation of each BENF; for CRO and MB/R there was a 15% increase whereas for KOS the increase was much smaller at 2%. This large increase in allocation to priority axis 1 resulted in CRO experiencing difficulties in the absorption of its 2008 annual allocation.

2.1.4. Project Selection

Group 2: EQ 4

To what extent is the project selection mechanism appropriate in the sense of selecting the most relevant, efficient and effective projects to meet the strategic objectives?

57. For IPA TA-IB, project selection is part of a wider process which includes project identification, the prioritisation of proposals and preparation of Project Fiches and is the responsibility of the

²⁹ Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament: Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance, Multiannual Indicative Financial Framework (MIFF) for 2008-10. COM (2006) 672 final.

³⁰ MIFF 2008-10: 'As a proxy for needs and impact per capita allocations have been quoted in the past. Against this measure, each country of the Western Balkans will reach at least the 2004-2006 per capita average of 23€received under CARDS.'

BENF³¹, specifically of the National IPA Coordinator (NIPAC)³² in each BENF. The exception is project selection for MB/R, for which the EC is responsible.

58. Each BENF is responsible for the identification, preparation and submission of project proposals; and the BENF together with the EC is jointly responsible for final project selection. Nevertheless, the EC (HQ and EUDs/ECLO) are to varying degrees (depending on IPA is centrally managed -as in ALB, BIH, KOS, MNE, SRB, MB/R or decentralised -as in CRO and TUR) actively involved in project preparation.
59. The great majority of TA-IB projects' beneficiaries are government institutions. Projects are prepared by potential beneficiary line institutions and project preparation is supported and coordinated by the NIPAC (in cooperation with the EU Delegations and ECLO in the centrally managed BENF). The EC has issued an IPA Programming Guide which includes a standard template for Project Fiches. Each BENF has developed a set of procedures and documents, centred on the NIPAC, to deal with inter-actions between the EC services, the NIPAC and the line institutions so as to guide project selection.
60. Project selection cannot be considered separately from project preparation because proposed projects need to reach a minimum quality standard before they are included in the Annual programmes. In order to ensure that acceptable quality standards are reached, quality control checks are carried out by the NIPAC during, and at the end of, project preparation. Line institutions preparing projects submit draft Project Fiches for quality control according to an internal programming timetable issued, prepared and distributed by the NIPAC. It is good practice for the NIPAC to also distribute the checklists used for quality control at the start of Project Fiche drafting.
61. The sequence of annual programming activities, generalised to cover all BENF, is presented in Annex 1. With the exception of SRB, TA-IB project selection is divided into two stages: (i) a project proposal stage when line institutions submit brief outlines of proposed projects (these have different names in the various BENF, e.g. Concept Notes in KOS, Project Information Sheets in TUR); and (ii) a project preparation stage when selected project proposals are further prepared according to standard IPA Project Fiches. In ALB, CRO and MK, line institutions also prepare sector analyses in support of their project proposals. For BIH, KOS, MNE and MB/R, there is no formal requirement for sector analyses and the related steps shown in Annex 1 are not relevant.
62. Line institutions carry out sector analyses according to the priorities in their respective national strategies and draft project proposals which they submit to the NIPAC. The NIPAC then undertake quality assessments of sector analyses plus project proposals and draw-up lists of potential projects which are of acceptable quality and are consistent with national priorities. These are often referred to as 'long lists' since they usually contain more projects than there is available funding for. This represents the first stage of project selection.
63. Long lists of project proposals are submitted to the EC (HQ and the EU Delegations and ECLO) for revision. The first stage project selection is completed when joint decisions are reached between the NIPAC and the EC on the 'short lists' of project proposals to be used for the preparation of Project Fiches for inclusion in Annual programmes. NIPAC staff and EU Delegation and ECLO task managers interact with responsible staff in the line institutions to prepare Project Fiches. Projects are selected for inclusion into Annual programmes when a series of conditions have been met, namely: (a) the final Project Fiches are judged to be of acceptable quality; (b) the EU Delegations and ECLO have confirmed that conditionalities have been, or will

³¹ IPA Implementing Regulation (Commission Regulation (EC) No. 718/2007), Article 69(3): Each year, following discussions with the beneficiary country about the project proposals, project fiches shall be submitted to the Commission by the beneficiary country.

³² IPA Implementing Regulation (Commission Regulation (EC) No. 718/2007), Article 22(b): Bear overall responsibility for... the annual programming for the [TA-IB] component at national level.

be, met and (c) that co-financing (if any) has been approved by 'Ministries of Finance'. This stage represents the second stage of the project selection process.

64. For SRB, there is no project proposal stage and institutions start to prepare Project Fiches soon after the programming timetable is published. Project selection takes place once, towards the end of the programming sequence based on the assessment of the prepared Project Fiches. One advantage of this approach is that it allows for better-informed decision making during project selection since this is based on Project Fiches which include more information than is normally available in project proposals. However, this approach has two potential disadvantages as compared to those where project proposals are prepared first, namely: (i) it may not be the most efficient use of resources since it involves more preparatory work for projects which will not be finally selected (e.g. for 2010 annual programming, 70 Project Fiches were prepared by line institutions of which only 35 were selected for inclusion in the Annual programme); and (ii) there is a risk that line institutions undertaking the complex and lengthy task of preparing Project Fiches that are not subsequently selected may be deterred from preparing projects for future Annual programmes.
65. The process of preparing Project Fiches is interactive, involving the EC and beneficiaries at different levels, and lasts for a period of 10-14 months. Typically the quality of Project Fiches improves over this period as a result of advice and inputs from the NIPAC and the EC. Often, the NIPAC provides line institutions with advice, training and technical assistance to support the preparation of Project Fiches and associated procurement documents. The NIPAC offices also carry out quality control checks of Project Fiches submitted by line institutions during the preparation period using standard quality control checklists. The number of checks carried out varies among the BENF but usually checks are carried out for the initial/early and final draft Project Fiches. For BENF where IPA is centrally managed quality control checks are carried out jointly with the EU Delegations and ECLO.
66. The main criterion for making judgements on project selection is the extent to which there is a clearly defined administrative process for each step of project selection and preparation, which includes the participation of senior and operational staff from line institutions, which is quality control checked. On this criterion all BENF were judged to have established a functioning project selection mechanism.
67. The evaluations for ALB, CRO, KOS, MK, MNE, SRB, TUR examined the quality control checklists, guidance notes and standard templates used by NIPACs and the EU Delegations and ECLO to guide project preparation and selection and found that generally they were good quality documents and were appropriate for the selection of relevant and effective projects for IPA financing. For BIH, CRO and KOS the contributory evaluations reported that prioritisation of project proposals during the screening carried out by the NIPAC was not sufficiently thorough. This resulted in the NIPAC submitting excessively long 'long lists' of project proposals, whose values greatly exceeded the available annual TA-IB allocations, e.g. the CRO 2008 and KOS 2010 programmes were respectively, 362% and 380% over-programmed. In practise this meant that the responsibility for prioritisation, and its associated work-load, was shifted from the BENF to the EC. It should be noted that subsequent to the CRO evaluation, the CRO NIPAC has strengthened procedures for screening and prioritising project proposals and has improved its cooperation with the EU Delegation in project selection.
68. For KOS, MNE and TUR the NIPACs role during programming was confined to the coordination of inputs from line institutions. Their added value to improving the quality of programming documents was judged to be weak. One reason reported for the NIPACs in BIH and MNE not exercising a more active and effective leadership role was the difficulties they had in developing functional interactions with the networks of Senior Programme Officers (SPOs) which are the main counterparts for NIPACs in the line institutions. These were weak or not yet established, effectively meaning that the NIPAC had no counterparts in line institutions. In BIH there were too

many SPOs (57) to represent individual institutions and the system was in the process of reform. In MNE the SPOs were established but they lacked sufficiently well trained staff.

69. In answer to EQ 4, the main mechanisms for ensuring the selection of relevant, efficient and effective projects in the BENF are: (a) the use and enforcement of appropriate selection criteria for project proposals; and (b) undertaking regular quality control checks of draft Project Fiches using detailed checklists. All the contributory evaluations judged that both mechanisms were established, functional and operating satisfactorily.

2.1.5. Sequencing and Prioritisation

Group 2: EQ 5

To what extent programming provides adequate prioritisation and sequencing of assistance?

70. In the context of programming, prioritisation means giving preference to certain areas, or types of intervention over others. Prioritisation of project proposals takes place within the strategic and budgetary limits set by the MIPDs and MIFFs, and is part of the annual programme preparation process. MIPD objectives/priorities span the broad range of BENF EU accession/integration requirements and often are not detailed enough to provide sufficient guidance for prioritising individual project proposals. This means that criteria for prioritisation should be introduced at the project preparation level, namely during project screening and selection procedures.
71. Sequencing is understood to mean the order in which projects under each MIPD priority axis are selected, prepared and implemented in successive Annual programmes. There are two main reasons for sequencing interventions; the first is purely practical e.g. a particular key BENF institution is already managing previously programmed projects and has little capacity for additional ones. In such a case priority projects may be deferred to future programmes and the sequence of assistance will be determined by the absorption capacity of the institution. The second reason for sequencing assistance is to increase its impact in agreed priority sectors. In principle, a well-sequenced project is one which builds directly, and within a short space of time, on the results of a preceding project and whose results, in turn, will be the basis of a succeeding project. The sequence would stop when the sector strategic target has been achieved. In effect, sequencing is therefore also a mechanism for maximising impacts. A sector-based approach (SBA) is expected to facilitate project sequencing.
72. Progressive sequencing of projects under subsequent programmes was found and reported by most evaluations (ALB, BIH, CRO, KOS, MK, MNE, SRB and MB/R programmes). Sectors where sequencing was evident in six BENF are shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Areas of Intervention with Sequenced Projects, IPA TA-IB 2007-2009

MK	MNE	KOS	SRB	MB/R	CRO
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Investments police reform ▪ SME support ▪ Employment policy ▪ IT for customs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tax and customs ▪ Border controls ▪ Public administration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Refugees and internally displaced people (IDPs) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Civil Society ▪ Refugees and IDPs ▪ Public administration ▪ Agricultural disease control ▪ Enterprise competitiveness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Public administration ▪ Justice and Home Affairs ▪ Civil society ▪ Infrastructure ▪ Nuclear safety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Justice and Home Affairs ▪ Integrated Border Management

73. Most notably, good examples of projects, showed good quality sequencing (linkage and continuity), were reported in the area of Refugees and Internally Displaced People (IDPs), in KOS and SRB. In KOS the 2007 project builds policy and administrative capacity for managing the return process and providing basic services such as health care. The 2008 project builds on improving the living conditions for returnees both physically in terms of reconstructed dwellings

and infrastructure and finally the 2009 project builds on creating jobs and local businesses. Continuity is provided by three linked components: (i) reconstruction (2007 & 2008); (ii) support for business and job creation (2008 and 2009); and (iii) capacity building of local, receiving, administrations. Similarly IPA 2007-2009 projects dealing with refugees and IDPs in SRB were found to be well sequenced with initial projects providing basic support measures and consequent projects focussed on employment and improved living conditions.

74. The BIH and MNE evaluations concluded that the national authorities did not have sufficient knowledge and experience and that the sequencing of projects has been problematic. The BIH evaluation found that this was mainly due the slowness of government in adopting reforms needed for successful sequencing of projects (e.g. a project on census preparation cannot start until the census law, prepared under a previous project, is adopted) and the generally low capacity of beneficiary institutions. Both evaluations concluded that the advice and direction provided by the EC (HQ and the EU Delegations and ECLO) were key inputs for the improvement of sequencing. In the case of MNE, in order to improve sequencing the EU Delegation has imposed specific screening criteria for future IPA programming, these are as follows:
- No more than one project within a Ministry in each programming year.
 - No support to a new project before the previous project has finished.
 - No support to long projects with long phases.
75. The MK evaluation concluded that the quality of sequencing was generally good and that inter-related, subsequent or consequent projects were common in the sectors that were reviewed (shown in Table 1 above). However, it was concluded that in MK, as in all the other BENF, sequencing is challenging because of the long period between programming and implementation of each element, which means in some cases that consequent projects must be tendered before earlier programmed actions have achieved their results. The MK evaluation concluded that efficiency and effectiveness of sequenced projects would be improved if they did not directly follow on from each other. It was recommended that beneficiary institutions be given a gap of one financing year between sequential projects in order to give time for results to be achieved and institutional changes to become embedded. This recommendation, therefore, mirrors the above screening criteria introduced by the EU Delegation in MNE.

2.1.6. Alignment with the Beneficiaries' Strategies

Group 2: EQ 6

To what extent programming takes adequate and relevant account of beneficiaries' policies, strategies and reform processes in relevant key areas?

76. In relation to EQ 6, 'adequate and relevant account' is understood to mean that the programming process incorporates regular consultations with the BENF authorities responsible for policy and strategies in accession-related sectors (EQ 6 'key areas') and that programming documents take appropriate account of the existing government's policies and strategic plans.
77. The preparation of MIPDs included consultations, usually through the NIPAC with BENF authorities. In most BENF, workshops were organised by the NIPACs and the EU Delegations and ECLO to discuss draft MIPDs and to encourage the BENF institutions to provide inputs.
78. Despite the existence of a formal consultation process, MIPDs focus on high level policy documents on the BENF EU accession / integration plans (e.g. NPAAAs, NPISAA and EPAP). However, the evaluations concluded that MIPDs make few references to national sector policies and strategies. This may be justified by the fact that MIPDs are strategic documents constrained to a maximum length and, therefore, with little margin for the provision of details at lower levels (i.e. sectors/sub-sectors); these should be covered in Annual programmes and Project Fiches.

79. The standard template for IPA TA-IB Project Fiches, provided by the EC, includes four separate sections where information on the linkage to BENF policies and strategies could be given (Project Fiche sections 2.3, 2.5, 2.6 and Annex 4). These sections specifically ask for explanations of how projects are linked to the BENF accession/integration programmes, national development plans and sector strategies and investment plans.
80. The extent to which BENF policies and strategies were taken account in Annual programme Project Fiches was analysed by the evaluations for ALB, BIH, KOS, MNE, SRB and MB/R (this analysis was not provided in the MK and TUR evaluations). In ALB, BIH, KOS, SRB and MB/R, Project Fiches generally showed good linkage to national policies, laws and sector strategies. The link to domestic policies and strategies was judged to be particularly good for ALB, BIH and SRB. In CRO, the evaluation reported that the links between projects and sector strategies were often missing, or not sufficiently explained. Only 37% (6/16) and 25% (4/16) respectively of 2007 and 2008 Project Fiches contained adequate references to sector strategies. In the majority of Project Fiches this item was marked as 'not applicable' without further elaboration.

2.1.7. Coordination with Key Donors

Group 2: EQ 7

To what extent programming takes adequate and relevant account of assistance provided and reforms promoted by key donors where applicable?

81. To answer this EQ, contributory evaluations assessed whether the IPA programming process took 'adequate and relevant account' of on-going and planned donor assistance so as to identify and enhance potential synergies and avoid duplication or contradiction. To achieve this aim, evaluations examined whether there were institutionalised systems for donor coordination and whether programming documents indicated how IPA will coordinate with interventions supported by donor assistance.
82. The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness calls for effective coordination between the providers of External Assistance (EA). It includes around 25 OECD/DAC and associated-DAC Countries, the EU Institutions (the EC and the EIB), the World Bank Group, United Nations agencies, the EBRD and other Multilaterals (see section 2.2.3).
83. The EC has been active in seeking donor involvement in IPA programming. Donors are regularly consulted by the EC on the preparation of MIPDs and annual programmes which are routinely sent to them for comments/suggestions. For the most recent MIPDs (2009-2011) a series of Donor Coordination conferences were organised by the EC in the BENF (e.g. the 2008 conference in KOS was attended by representatives of 37 countries and 16 Multilaterals).
84. The role of the EC (HQ and the EU Delegations and ECLO) in leading external donors' coordination efforts was judged positively by the contributory evaluations which also reported that this role is endorsed by other key donors (namely, multilateral bodies and DAC Countries) who consider MIPDs as supportive orientation-mechanisms for their own coordination and programming exercises. Equally, initiatives such as the IFI Advisory Group and the Donor Coordination Conferences were found to be effective mechanisms to build consensus on common development goals.
85. The EU Delegations and ECLO are actively engaged in the coordination of donor inputs to programming. In CRO the EU Delegation cooperates with the Multilaterals and the EU Member States that have bilateral agreements with CRO through regular meetings, information exchanges and consultation during the whole lifetime of each intervention. This high level of engagement has worked well and led to joint projects with other donors (e.g. the EU-World Bank project on land registration). In ALB the EU Delegation is head of the Donor Technical Secretariat, which organises regular coordination meetings between the donors and with the government at technical/working-level and bi-annual high-level meetings.

86. Also the BENF NIPACs take steps to involve key donors in the early stages of annual programming. This is particularly so in ALB and SRB where the NIPAC function is supported by strong donor coordination capacity. In ALB, MK and SRB the BENF manage comprehensive databases of external assistance which facilitate the early identification of potential overlaps or synergies with existing donor funded projects and programmes. In SRB donors are included in the first stages of Project Fiche preparation. In CRO the cooperation of the NIPAC, EU Delegation and World Bank in the coordination of donor assistance has been important in maintaining the cohesion of external assistance interventions.
87. Regarding the extent to which programming documents take account of donor assistance, the ALB, BIH, KOS, MNE, SRB and MB/R evaluations found that both MIPDs and Project Fiches contained adequate references to donor assistance (equivalent analyses were not provided in the CRO, MK and TUR evaluations), However, the following should be noted in relation to:
- MIPDs: Information on donor activities (MIPD Section 1.2.2) is not always relevant because some donors listed are no longer active in the BENF or have changed their assistance priorities. With regard to the description of donor activities, the nomenclature of intervention areas varies among the MIPDs, reflecting differences in donor assistance in the various BENF. This difference in nomenclature makes it difficult to compare donor activities in the BENF.
 - Project Fiches: These were judged to be of variable quality. Whilst the majority describe the specific nature of related donor assistance, others simply list donor interventions within the sector and do not explain how they are linked to the proposed project. It was recommended that the NIPAC and the EU Delegations and ECLC issue clearer guidance on the completion of the appropriate section in the standard IPA Project Fiche (Section 3.6 'Linked Activities').
88. The contributory evaluations reported on several cases where IPA financial assistance has been used together with that of other donors to support a number of significant projects in the BENF. Notable in this regard is the Western Balkans Infrastructure Initiative which is a joint intervention by the EC, EIB, EBRD and Central European Bank aimed at coordinating investment support to BENF. This project provides a joint-grant facility, based on a multi-donor fund of 150 M€ (of which 100 M€ will be available from MB/R programmes) for non-investment actions (e.g. support for SMEs) and a joint-lending facility for priority investments at municipal level.
89. Also notable is the multi-donor trust fund set-up in ALB to support the implementation of an 'Integrated Planning System'; this trust fund is managed by the World Bank and, to date, has a value of 8.0 M€ made up of contributions from seven donors (the EC, Austria, Italy, Netherlands, Sweden, UK and Switzerland).
90. On the basis of the findings summarised above, the contributory evaluations concluded that that programming of TA-IB took adequate and relevant account of relevant assistance provided by key donors.

2.1.8. Weaknesses of the Current IPA Programming Framework

Group 2: EQ 9

What are the main gaps/weaknesses of the current programming framework?

91. The IPA programming framework is defined by the documents described in Section 2.1. MIPDs are the essential, operational, core of this framework since their prime function is to focus MIPDs funding allocations to the priority areas identified for each BENF in the EC's Enlargement Strategies and Progress Reports. BENF-specific focus is provided by the MIPDs objectives/priorities which, as described in relation to EQ 1, are at the top of the intervention hierarchy addressed by both annual (Component I) and multi-annual (Component II-V) programmes.

92. The main finding of the contributory evaluations is that MIPDs contain neither sufficient SMART objectives nor indicators by which the achievement of strategic objectives and specific objectives/priorities can be measured. However, it should be pointed out that the formulation of SMART objectives and defining their related indicators is a complex and time-consuming task. This is particularly so for political criteria which are a key intervention area for IPA assistance. With regard to the expected results and indicators listed in MIPDs, the evaluations for ALB, KOS and MB/R collectively found that the majority of results in the 6 MIPDs examined (199/293=68%) did not have any associated indicators. The largest deficit was found to be in priority axis 3 (European standards / Obligations of membership).
93. The BENF have many EU integration/accession requirements and this is reflected in the, generally, large number of specific objectives/priorities in the MIPDs and typically MIPDs list between 20-33 specific objectives/priorities. These are regularly revised and updated as new information becomes available. As a consequence, some evaluations (ALB, SRB, MB/R) found that the number of specific objectives/priorities in MIPDS had increased since 2007 (for ALB, SRB, MB/R respectively increases were: 16 to 33; 10 to 22; and 25 to 30).
94. The evaluations for ALB, KOS and TUR found that not all of the specific objectives/priorities in MIPDs had been addressed by projects in Annual programmes and concluded that the number of these was high in relation to the size of the TA-IB annual allocations.
95. For Annual programmes, there was a notable improvement in quality of indicators over the 2007-2009 period and three quarters (75%) of the indicators in 2009 Annual programmes were judged to be SMART. The main reasons for indicators not being SMART were that they were neither time-bound nor measurable. Further improvements in the development of SMART indicators for project objectives will strengthen the programming framework by increasing the linkage between Annual programmes and MIPDs.
96. Insufficient leadership and added value provided by the NIPACs during annual programming, particularly with regard to the prioritisation and good quality preparation of project proposals, is another part of the programming process which should be addressed. Improvements in this area should lead to improvements in the quality, ownership and, therefore, future sustainability IPA assistance.
97. Insufficient capacity in beneficiary institutions (as recorded by the BIH, KOS and MNE evaluations) has meant that project readiness and institutional absorption capacity were highly emphasised as project selection criteria. This is a potential weakness in programming because it can lead to the selection of the most implementable projects at the expense of the strategically most important projects.
98. The effective sequencing of assistance is, in some cases, problematic because often follow-on projects must be tendered before earlier projects have been successfully completed. Several solutions have been put in place by different EU Delegations and ECLO to address this issue, although these solutions also entail some risks as discussed in Section 2.1.5. In MK, in order to maintain the flexibility needed to adapt to changing future situations, the drafting of Project Fiches was deliberately vague with the aim of defining specific actions only in subsequent tender documents. Although this was judged to be an appropriate method of practical programming, it was concluded that this introduces potential weaknesses into the programming framework because it leads programmers to omit or to limit important planning elements such as quantified objectives, target indicators and detailed conditionalities.

2.2. Overview and Mapping of Existing Strategies in and Financial Assistance to the IPA Beneficiaries (EQ Groups 1 + 3)

2.2.1. The Existing Strategies in the IPA Beneficiaries

Group 1: EQ 1

What are the existing sectoral strategies in the IPA Beneficiaries?

99. In order to guide their reform efforts and achieve longer-term development goals each of the IPA BENF has adopted a number of sectoral strategies, on average 40 sectoral strategies per BENF. These provide a definition of development objectives in specific intervention sectors/sub-sectors, e.g. fighting poverty and social exclusion, promoting equal rights, public internal financial control, food safety etc. Additionally the majority of the BENF have adopted overarching, national strategies to provide a medium-/long-term focus of their efforts linked to European integration/accession and broader, national economic-social development and reconciliation.
100. A basic summary of the existing national and sectoral strategies per BENF is provided below:

Table 2: Basic Summary of Strategies per IPA Beneficiary

Strategy	ALB	BIH	CRO	KOS
National	National Development Plan (NDP) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (= National Strategy for Devp. and Integration)	NDP <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (=Country Devp. Strategy & Social Inclusion Strategy prepared, but not yet adopted)	NDP <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (For IPA purposes concentrated into the Strategic Coherence Framework)	NDP <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NPISAA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (The adopted European Partnership Action Plan & the Plan for European Integration are the initial, overarching strategic statements)
	National Programme for the Implementation of the SAA (NPISAA) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NPISAA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (Action Plans were adopted in 2008 but these do not yet represent an overall NPISAA)	National Programme for the Adoption of the <i>Acquis</i> (NPAA) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Sectoral	27 strategies adopted; a further 11 await adoption	At state level 32 strategies adopted; 4 await adoption	Min. 65 strategies adopted for the current time-frame	21 strategies adopted; a further 7 await adoption
Strategy	MK	MNE	SRB	TUR
National	NDP <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (For IPA purposes concentrated into the Strategic Coherence Framework)	NDP <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (Development Strategy 2010-15 adopted; NDP to be developed with IPA 2009 support)	NDP <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (= Needs Assessment of the Republic of Serbia)	NDP <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (For IPA purposes concentrated into the Strategic Coherence Framework)
	NPAA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NPISAA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (An Action Plan was adopted 2007 but this does not yet represent an overall NPISAA)	NPISAA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (= National Programme for Integration, adopted in 2008 & Action Plan)	(NPAA) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Sectoral	Min. 60 strategies adopted; a further 15 are foreseen	Min. 21 strategies are being implemented	71 strategies adopted	Min. 25 strategies adopted for the current time-frame

101. While the quality of the mapping exercise varied across the evaluations, this exercise at sectoral level in each IPA BENF provides a potentially useful long-list of strategies (both formally adopted and foreseen to be prepared and adopted) in the context of the programming of financial assistance. The overall findings of the mapping exercise can be summarised as follows:
- The mapping exercise in some of the BENF identified a potentially higher number of sectoral strategies, e.g. up to 112 in CRO, 101 in MK, 95 in MNE and 52 in TUR. However, some of those were still to be prepared and/or reviewed prior to the process of adoption, or the validity of their time-period was not available. The number of sectoral strategies per BENF in Table 2 represents those confirmed as valid at least 3-years over the 2008-2012 period.
 - Sectors for which each BENF has adopted/are anticipated to adopt strategies soon (c. 2011) include: Agriculture; Food Safety; Rural Development; Employment; Energy; Transport; Environmental Protection; aspects of Business policy (e.g. SMEs, trade, investment); aspects of Education policy (e.g. schools, pre-university, university, life-long); and aspects of Social policy (e.g. inclusion, protection, children/youth, gender equality).
 - Sectors for which most of the BENF have/are anticipated to adopt strategies include: Integrated Border Management; Combating Organised Crime/Corruption/Human Trafficking; Public Administration; the protection of Minorities' Rights and, where relevant, the reintegration of Returnees; Science, Technology and Innovation; Health; Information Society; Tourism; and Cultural Heritage.
 - Sectors for which at least four of the BENF have/are anticipated to adopt sectoral strategies soon include: Statistics; Customs; Migration; Regional Development; and Public Internal Financial Control. Specific strategies were identified in at least three BENF linked to: Consumer Protection; Taxation; and Intellectual Property.
 - Other than the sectoral strategies, the NPAA/NPISAA adopted by the BENF (or for BIH, KOS and MNE an Action Plan) provide guidance on the short- and medium-term goals of the BENF linked to the different aspects of their alignment with/adoption of the *acquis*.

2.2.2. The Process of Implementing the Strategies by the IPA Beneficiaries

Group 1: EQ 2

To what extent are the strategies actually functioning and embedded into beneficiaries' policies/budget?

102. Each of the BENF has made some progress in terms of strengthening its capacity and mechanisms to support public-sector, strategic planning and decision-making processes. The evaluations found that a significant number of the sectoral strategies were adopted by the BENF over the recent years. Although some were judged to be primarily donor-driven rather than BENF-driven, the evaluations assessed the ownership by the BENF of the strategic planning process to be increasingly positive.
103. In each BENF a central coordination body exists to guide the strategic planning process. Nevertheless, the evaluations highlight the varying degrees to which these bodies provide hands-on support, guidelines, instructions and standard templates to assist line institutions in preparing strategies. The corresponding guidance provided by the bodies on quality assurance processes was often assessed as weak, with the guidance for the preparation of the strategy's related implementation Action and Budget Plans notably limited.
104. The capacity of line institutions in preparing strategies was judged to be mixed. In some cases too many strategies exist, but this entails the risk that they do not provide focussed support to management in specific areas. In other cases strategies do not provide sufficient analysis of the administrative needs to undertake subsequent implementation and monitoring of the strategies.
105. The evaluations underline the important role of the BENF long-term, national strategies (such as the NPAA/NPISAA and the NDP) and their update processes as a mechanism to support embed

sectoral priorities into the wider BENF development framework. In this respect the adoption of long-term national strategies and plans is still to be achieved by BIH, KOS and MNE.

106. Progress has also been achieved by most of the BENF in terms of the development of medium-term economic programmes and medium-term budget frameworks (MTBF), traditionally a 3-year period updated on an annual-rolling basis. However, the evaluation on MK highlights that while medium-term economic and public investment programmes exist a MTBF is yet to be established.
107. The TA-IB evaluations on ALB, BIH, KOS and SRB conducted detailed assessments of a selection of the accessible BENF sectoral strategies. The strategies-mapping exercises in CRO, MK and TUR also provided an assessment of accessible sectoral strategies. No comparable analysis was provided in the MNE evaluation.
108. The evaluations found that the strategies form an adequate basis for the planning and prioritisation of government work programmes. However, in the majority of cases further effort is required to improve the quality of the problem analysis and the definition of strategic priorities so as to ensure strategies form a good basis for planning. Key weaknesses were identified in terms of the scoping of the objectives, with the lack of a clear mission/focus in the definition of strategic objectives and/or in the setting and sequencing of realistic sub-objectives and targets. Additionally, the quality of cross-cutting strategies was judged weaker than for sectoral strategies.
109. However, the evaluations found that in most cases the quality of the Action and Budget Plans accompanying the strategies was inadequate. Specifically, the lack of a clear linkage to the BENF budget framework was highlighted across the BENF. Thus while the implementation/financing needs arising from the adopted strategies are, generally, considered by line institutions in their budget submissions to the 'Ministry of Finance', the norm is that the budget establishes financial ceilings per line institution. Therefore funding of sectoral strategies is limited to the outcome of the budget-planning process, with a number of strategies unfunded.
110. Finally, strategies were assessed in terms of the existence of administrative structures and procedures to implement, monitor and report on progress achieved. At the level of national strategies, where these exist, the structures and procedures were judged, overall, to be adequate. Notably, each BENF ensures the monitoring, progress review and update of its NPAA/NPISAA/ Action Plans.
111. At the level of sectoral strategies the existence of administrative structures and procedures was judged to be mixed; weaker for cross-cutting strategies. Most common are insufficient information on how priority actions will be realized; unclear allocation of responsibilities for implementation and monitoring; and no, or limited use of SMART indicators to measure progress. A number of the evaluations noted the existence of procedures for the annual review of strategic plans, within the context of the line institutions' preparation of its budget submission. However, the evidence that strategies are regularly monitored and reported-on is very limited and despite the sizeable number of strategies that have been adopted by the BENF few progress reports exist.
112. Overall, the extent that the sectoral strategies are actually functioning and embedded into the BENF long-term operational structure, policies and budget was judged to be limited.

2.2.3. The Alignment of EU and Donor Assistance with the Strategies

Group 1: EQ 3

To what extent is EU/donor assistance aligned with/embedded into existing strategies?

113. OECD/DAC³³ reports EA commitments to the IPA BENF between 2005 and 2009 at 43157 M\$ (c.32370 M€) – split 48% Official Development Assistance (ODA), 52% Other Official Flows (OOF) – and disbursements at 34475 M\$ (c.25850 M€) – ODA = 54%, OOF = 46%. Detailed

³³ OECD/DAC: Creditor Reporting System, data extracted 24/12/2010; data for 2009 is not yet final

data on the provision of EA per donor per BENF is provided in Annex 2. In addition a number of OECD, associated-DAC members are also active EA providers, e.g. Korea (data is included in the DAC statistics) and the EU Member States acceding during the fifth EU enlargement, e.g. Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland (data for the EU-12 is not yet included in the DAC statistics).

114. ODA commitments were provided: 58% by DAC Countries (the five lead DAC Country donors were Germany, Japan, USA, France and Spain), 38% by the EU Institutions and 4% by other Multilaterals. OOF commitments were provided: 5% by DAC Countries (the five lead DAC Country donors Germany, France, Korea, USA and Austria), 40% by the EU Institutions and 55% by other Multilaterals (principally the IBRD, but also the EBRD).
115. As shown in Table 3 below, the EU Institutions (the EC and the EIB) commitments to the region represent 39% of the total EA 2005-2009. With the (DAC) EU Member States' bilateral EA also included the total EU commitments to the region represent 59% of Official EA to the IPA BENF.

Table 3: External Assistance, Key Donors per IPA BENF, 2005-2009 (Commitments)

Official External Assistance (ODA + OOF)	ALB (%)	BIH (%)	CRO (%)	KOS (%)	MK (%)	MNE (%)	SRB (%)	TUR (%)	TOTAL (%)
1. EU Institutions	22.13	34.99	43.09	43.24	28.28	25.35	33.37	43.62	38.91
2. World Bank Group	13.92	8.31	33.65	0	27.14	10.91	12.43	36.58	26.66
3. DAC Countries	57.23	50.52	15.13	56.22	39.22	55.23	46.70	18.37	30.27
EU-15 DAC	40.45	33.31	11.99	29.01	19.50	44.52	30.19	11.77	19.76
Non-EU Europe DAC	3.46	5.45	1.20	9.60	7.02	2.58	5.76	0.04	2.34
Non-Europe DAC	13.32	11.77	1.94	17.62	12.69	8.13	10.76	6.56	8.17
1-3 TOTAL	93.28	93.82	91.87	99.46	94.63	91.5	92.51	98.57	95.85
EU Institutions + EU-15 DAC	62.58	68.29	55.09	72.25	47.78	69.88	63.56	55.39	58.68

EU Institutions = EC + EIB. World Bank Group = IBRD + IDA. Non-EU Europe DAC = Norway and Switzerland; Non-Europe DAC = Australia, Canada, Japan, Korea and USA.

116. While the individual BENF-evaluations did not establish a common data-set in the mapping of EA at sectoral level, sufficient analysis was conducted to establish that the key sectors supported by EA intervention include: economic development/services and production; employment and social development; infrastructure (energy, transport and environment); and good governance, administration and the rule of law. Other significant sectors include: agriculture, health education, reconciliation/returnees and minorities' rights. However, a more precise analysis of the spread of EA per donor across the intervention sectors is not possible based on the evaluations.
117. The extent to which EU/donor assistance is aligned with/embedded into the existing strategies is based on the effective operation of donor coordination/management systems to guide the orientation of EA and its linkage/coordination with BENF strategies in the programming of EA.
118. The role of the EC in leading external donors' coordination efforts was judged positively and is endorsed by the other key donors (see section 2.1.7). Most of the BENF have also made good progress in terms of strengthening their capacity/processes to support donor coordination and the orientation of EA, although ownership of the process is mixed.
119. ALB and SRB have demonstrated strong ownership of donor coordination as a means to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of EA and to ensure its alignment with national development objectives, both define detailed statements of national policy in the area of EA. While at an earlier phase in taking the lead role in donor coordination BIH and KOS have also made progress in the development of their systems, e.g. donor mapping, donor EA databases. Since 2009 MK has taken

steps, with the support and encouragement of donors, to re-build its coordination/ monitoring mechanisms, although the extent to which MK utilises donor coordination to actively define its strategic objectives or to direct the programming of EA by donors has been limited. Progress in MNE is weaker with local ownership and leadership on the direction of EA less established, although an initial system was established by the authorities in May 2010. There is no integrated structure for donor coordination in CRO or TUR. In CRO the level of technical cooperation between the three responsible coordinators (Bilateral, EU/EC funds and other Multilaterals) was judged to be adequate and each to provide functional coordination, direction and monitoring in its sphere. In TUR it was judged that some progress has been made in terms of donors sharing information but that further efforts are necessary to enhance donor coordination.

120. The degree to which the management systems support both donor coordination and the alignment of EA with BENF strategies is also being strengthened in most of the BENF, with the support of the donors, by steps in the institutionalisation of a Programme or Sector Based Approach (SBA). Via such an approach detailed strategies, leading to measurable programmes/plans (for BENF and donor funding), are now being defined in close cooperation between the partners, with the sector Working Groups led by one of the donors, e.g. World Bank, EC, UN or a Bilateral donor.
121. However, the real extent to which EA flow is actually aligned with the BENF strategies is not possible to establish based on the series of contributory evaluations. The evaluations confirm that IPA makes reference to national strategies in the context of the MIPDs and to sectoral strategies primarily in the context of individual projects. As such, it demonstrates linkage/coordination with the BENF strategies. However, while the evaluations confirm that the other donors actively collaborate with and provide financial support to the BENF, the contributory evaluations did not include an assessment of other donors' programming of assistance and therefore do not provide sufficient, comparable data on the extent to which other donors' EA programmes make reference to the BENF national or sectoral strategies.
122. The Donor Coordination evaluation assessed to what extent "aid flows are aligned on national priorities" (as defined by the 'Paris Declaration' indicator), i.e. percent of aid flows reported on partners' national budgets. The evaluation reported that in ALB an estimated 27% and in MK an estimated 74% of EA is not specifically detailed on the partners' national budget. In this context the Survey on Monitoring the Paris Declaration is taking place in 2011, which is expected to provide updated analysis of the 'Paris Declaration' indicators at the level of the individual BENF of EA.

2.2.4. The Orientation of IPA Programme Support via a Sector Based Approach

Group 3: EQ 1

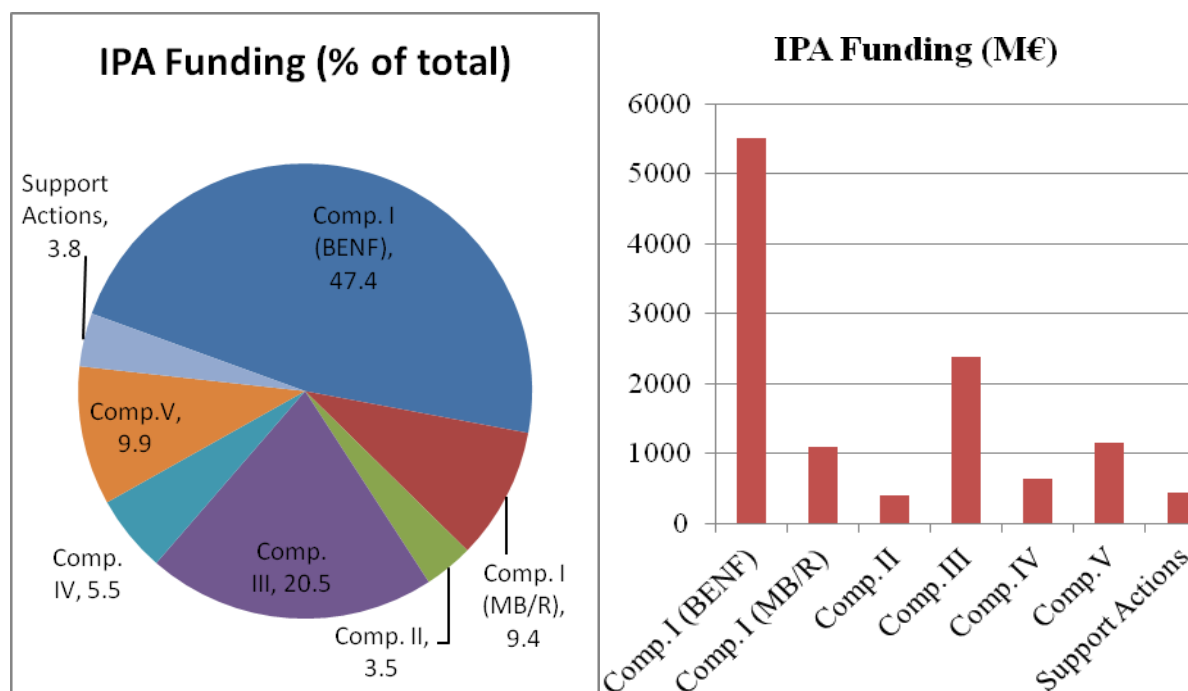
To what extent has IPA assistance been programmed and implemented through a sector based approach? In which specific sectors and beneficiaries?

123. As an initial response and as already noted in the introduction to the assessment of the IPA intervention logic (see section 2.1), IPA Components II-V are implemented on the basis of sectoral strategies adopted by the BENF and corresponding multi-annual programmes prepared by the BENF for IPA co-financing assistance. They were subject to an independent ex-ante assessment and the commitment of IPA funds approved in the form of an EC Decision.
124. The following multi-annual programmes are supported by IPA under Components II-V:
 - Component II: 21 Cross-Border Cooperation programmes are adopted. 17 programmes are based on bilateral partnerships and strategies to guide cooperation and development: nine are between a BENF and an EU Member State and eight between bordering pair of BENF. The remaining four programmes are based on regional or trans-national cooperation/development.
 - Component III-V: seven Regional Development Operational Programmes (OPs) are adopted: covering the themes Environment, Regional Competitiveness and Transport in CRO and

TUR, with a single Regional Development OP in MK covering Environment and Transport. Three Human Resource Development OPs and three Agricultural and Rural Development Programmes are also adopted, one per CRO, MK and TUR.

125. As set by the MIFFs, c.39% of IPA funding commitment (2007-2013) is planned to Components II-V, as shown below.

Figure 1: MIFFs – Allocation of IPA Funding per IPA Component, 2007-2013



126. Implementation of the Component III-V programmes is based on the EC's conferral of decentralised management authority to the BENF: for Components III-IV initially with the EC's ex-ante control, for Component V only without ex-ante controls. For Components III and IV programmes this was granted to CRO in late 2008 and to MK and TUR across July-October 2009. For Component V an initial set of programme measures were accredited in CRO and MK in 2009. Following the conferral of management authority implementation of the programmes (initial procurement) thus started in 2009, with the delivery of support primarily from 2010 on.
127. Regarding the extent that IPA Component I has adopted a sector based approach (SBA), this is, until recently, relatively limited. However, this partially reflects that while a number of medium-term programming framework documents exist on the side of both the BENF and the EC, the Annual programmes have not been formally programmed on the basis of a multi-annual SBA and that funding streams to support the sectors' development are thus not predictable.
128. However, the programming process in the BENF is based on the requirement for demonstrated linkage of proposed actions to national reform strategies, e.g. the NPAA/NPISAA and, as relevant, the NDP, plus sectoral strategies where these exist (see section 2.1.4). On the side of the EU, the EC ensures that actions are linked with the European integration/accession framework, notably the MIPDs and to the BENF-specific NPAA etc., with TA-IB assistance traditionally referring to strategies in the context of individual projects (section 2.1.6). The programming process, for both the BENF and the EC, also allows for actions not linked to a specific, adopted strategy to be selected where linkage to the MIPDs objectives/priorities can be demonstrated.
129. The annual programming process has, partially, provided for the sequencing of interventions with a sectoral focus in such a way as to show (i) linkage, (ii) continuity and (iii) appropriate time-phasing of the assistance. The progressive sequencing of projects was found for programmes in several BENF (see section 2.1.5). Nevertheless, programming has mainly been an annual process,

which makes the prioritisation and sequencing of interventions to be financed across a multi-annual framework difficult.

130. For MB/R programmes the MIPDs establish a series of strategic objectives to be addressed and detail the corresponding strategic choices to guide implementation of the range of programmes. The MB/R evaluation found this to be sufficient in a number of areas that they form the outline for a series of regional action plans, with eight such outline sectoral action plans identified as supporting implementation of the MB/R MIPD 2011-2013, e.g. public administration and governance; justice, freedom and security; infrastructure. These were assessed by the evaluator and found to be adequate, the public administration and governance plan good for its needs assessment and the prioritisation of actions. As such, MB/R MIPD 2011-2013 was judged to have been partially programmed on a sectoral approach. However, the extent that the MB/R programmes and regional strategies are implemented across a multi-annual sectoral framework is also determined by the linkages achieved with the BENF policies and annual budget, which therefore makes implementation of MB/R via a sector based approach more complex to achieve.

Group 4: EQ 5

What lessons can be learned from different approaches in developing and implementing strategies?

131. In response to this EQ, which was not included in the EQ for the TA-IB evaluations, lessons learned in developing and implementing strategies have been drawn based on approaches under IPA Components II-V, as the programmes under these Components are based on sector strategies prepared by the BENF and implemented by means of multi-annual programmes. The collective experiences of the BENF and responsible EC services in developing and implementing strategies are now sufficient for lessons to have been learned and for good practice to have been identified.
132. The contents of Component II-V programmes are defined in the appropriate articles of the IPA Implementing Regulation³⁴, following a common core structure, as given below:
- A quantified description of the current situation leading to an assessment of needs based on strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in the relevant sector/theme/region.
 - A description of the chosen strategic priorities/priority axes and the rationale for their selection.
 - Information on associated measures and their targets (as quantified by a limited number of results indicators).
 - Evaluation and monitoring indicators, their targets and modalities.
 - A financial table showing annual funding allocations for each priority / priority axis and each related measure by funding source.
 - A description of the operating structure responsible for programme implementation together with implementation arrangements, including monitoring and evaluation.
133. IPA Component II-V programmes are prepared by the designated BENF operating structures with the support of the responsible EC services³⁵ which provide comments and suggestions on draft programmes throughout the preparation period. Programmes must be independently ex-ante evaluated and approved by the EC before they can be implemented. Ex-ante evaluations aim to optimise budgetary allocations within programmes and improve the quality of programme intervention strategies and pay particular attention to: (i) quality of the needs analysis; (ii) the linkage of objective hierarchies at measure and programme levels; (iii) indicators at programme and measure levels and their use in quantifying objectives and setting targets, all are expected to

³⁴ IPA Implementing Regulation: Article 94 (Component II), Articles 154, 155 (Components III and IV), Article 184 (Component V)

³⁵ DG Enlargement for Component II, DG Regional Policy for Component III, DG Employment for Component IV and DG Agriculture for Component V

set targets against verifiable baseline data; and (iv) procedures /arrangements for implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

134. The nine ex-ante evaluations of Component III-V programmes examined as part of this evaluation made detailed recommendations for improvements in programme-design; these were mostly in three areas: (i) the length and relevance of needs analyses (most programmes present too much unfocussed data); (ii) the quantified targets (most were quantified only at the outputs level against variable quality baseline data); (iii) the implementation arrangements (in particular the responsibilities for the collection and processing of monitoring data). All the ex-ante evaluations concluded that, once recommendations had been acted on, programmes would be effective and have positive impacts.
135. An additional lesson learned from Components II-V is that managing multi-annual programmes has high associated workloads and requires staff to learn new managerial and technical skills as new procedures are introduced. For this reason the heads of the operating structures managing these programmes are expected to carry out regular workload analyses and skills audits of their staff and adjust staffing levels and internal staff training programmes accordingly. Workloads are higher than for TA-IB because, in addition to managing individual projects/measures, there is a need to manage and report on the programme as a whole. All Component II-V programmes have a provision for technical assistance to support this programme management function.
136. For this reason the heads of the operating structures managing these programmes are expected to carry out regular workload analyses and skills audits of their staff and adjust staffing levels and internal staff training programmes accordingly. Workloads are higher than for TA-IB because, All Component II-V programmes have a provision for technical assistance to support this programme management function.
137. The structure of Component II-V programmes is very similar to that found in the BENF sectoral strategies assessed by the TA-IB evaluations; the great majority of which are structured as follows: Chapter 1: Current conditions; Chapter 2: Vision, strategic priorities and goals; Chapter 3: Policies; Chapter 4: Resource implications; Chapter 5: Accountability, monitoring and evaluation.
138. However, whilst the situation analyses, needs assessments and priority identification in the BENF sectoral strategies (Chapters 1-2) were of similar quality to those in Component II-V programmes, the quality of measure definitions, selection of indicators, target setting and descriptions of implementation arrangements are much poorer in the BENF sectoral strategies.

2.2.5. The Programming of External Assistance via a Sector Based Approach

Group 3: EQ 2

If applicable, which lessons can be learned from EC and donors attempts to programme financial assistance on a sector based approach?

139. The benefits of a SBA in terms of enhanced donor coordination and harmonisation, plus also in terms of the BENF ownership of EA is outlined in section 2.2.3. The evaluations found that the approach has been adopted by the authorities in ALB, KOS, MK and SRB (with five to ten Working Groups per BENF) and in TUR (the number is not specified in the evaluation). In BIH the authorities have conducted an assessment of ten potential sectors, though a decision to partially adopt a SBA was not confirmed at the time of the specific evaluation. In CRO the introduction of a SBA for TA-IB may not provide clear added-value at this stage, in view of the accession horizon assumed, however, discussions between the CRO authorities and donor representatives are initiated by the EU Delegation so as to support the planning of large investment projects. The evaluation on MNE indicates that several line institutions and donors have established coordination practices, notably the Ministry of Justice and in the areas of education and tourism.

140. As a SBA was only taken-up by the BENF from 2009-2010, the contributory evaluations were therefore conducted at the early phase of operation of the SBA, namely the planning phase, before any results of actual implementation are available. Therefore, the evaluations highlight lessons learned as to the process of the EC and the donors' attempts to programme financial assistance on a SBA. The findings and the lessons learned that can be identified are summarised below as:
- At the time the evaluations were conducted there was a degree of confusion among the BENF and even donors as to 'what is meant by a sector based approach'. Clear guidance will thus need to be agreed between the various actors as is most appropriate per BENF. However, the commitment of the key donors to the approach was judged to be good, with a range of donors taking the lead coordination role to guide the operation of the different Working Groups.
 - To introduce the approach it was judged necessary that this be a gradual/incremental process so that the application of the SBA may be tested and lessons learned utilised to build successful operation on a wider basis. As the readiness of sectors and BENF varies a 'gradual' introduction seems a suitable approach.
 - It is clear that the BENF have agreed to review the feasibility and planning for a SBA but that they seek to do so within their existing resources. The high-level support of the BENF government, both nationally and at the level of the targeted line institutions, will be a key factor for the SBA approach to be successful.

Group 4: EQ 3

To what extent would it be feasible and operational to move further into a sector based approach on the future programming of IPA (MIPDs and national programmes)? Under which conditions?

141. This EQ was common to six of the contributory evaluations (ALB, BIH, KOS, MNE, SRB, MB/R) which made their assessments of BENF SBA-readiness on the quality of government-approved strategies and the capacity of BENF administrations to manage SBAs.
142. The feasibility of introducing SBA on the basis of the following basic conditions which the BENF should meet in order to adopt a SBA:
- i. The existence of sector strategies and policies which outline government objectives and can be used to develop multi-annual /annual plans based on agreed priorities.
 - ii. The national budget should reflect sector policies and strategies and be developed within a mid-term perspective, linked to the national expenditure planning process.
 - iii. The existence of a monitoring system that focuses on results and can be used to assess progress towards the achievement of the strategic and specific objectives.
 - iv. A formalised, government-led, process that involves all significant stakeholders.
 - v. Sufficient administrative capacity (both institutional and staff) to effectively coordinate and support the line institutions (and donors) which will implement and monitor SBA.
143. The evaluations found that two of these conditions [(i) and (iv) above] were met by all BENF and that whilst the remaining conditions were in various stages of being developed, the extent to which BENF met the remaining conditions was found to be variable and limited.
144. It was concluded that, whether or not the introduction of a SBA is an operational option depends, to large extent, on the manner in which it is introduced into the next programming period, i.e. 2011-2013. Initially only a limited number of sectoral and cross-sectoral strategies will be prepared to an acceptable level. It will therefore be necessary that the programming process gradually introduces SBA as, and when, the five conditions listed above are met.
145. This will entail only a certain portion of Annual programmes composed of SBA projects, with the remainder programmed in the normal way. However, it is predicted that the workloads for the principle actors in programming (NIPAC and the EU Delegations and ECLO) will escalate sharply and that coordination tasks will become more difficult.

2.3. Judgement on the Performance of the IPA 2007-2009 (Component I) Programmes (EQ Group 5)

146. To support their participation in IPA management – programming and implementing – and to serve as the basis for the future conferral of EC decentralised management authority for implementing IPA, each BENF has established a set of authorities and structures as designated in the IPA Implementing Regulation and IPA Programming Guide³⁶³⁷. These entities collaborate with the EC (HQ and the EU Delegations and ECLO) in the management of the assistance.
147. In providing a judgement on the performance (either actual or expected) of IPA Component I assistance, the contributory evaluations were required to differentiate two levels of analysis: (i) at the programming level and (ii) at the implementing level.
148. At the programming level (as noted in section 2.1.4, project selection), the NIPAC per BENF is responsible for the identification of needs, the preparation and submission of project proposals to the EC. The BENF NIPAC and the EC are then jointly responsible for final project selection.
149. At the implementing level the BENF, responses to the Group 5 EQ should take into consideration the distinction between the programmes under centralised management and those under the EC's conferral of management authority for the daily management functions linked to IPA Component I (TA-IB), e.g. its coordination, procurement, delivery, monitoring and control. Most of the IPA 2007-2009 TA-IB programmes are implemented on the basis of the EC's centralised management (primarily based on de-concentration to the EU Delegations and ECLO), whereby the EC provides the key management functions through the 'project cycle'. The exceptions are the 2007, 2008 and 2009 programmes in CRO and TUR and the 2009 programme in MK, which were programmed on the basis that the BENF undertake the implementing functions based on the conferral of decentralised management authority. The conferral of management authority is granted by EC Decision. This Decision is based on the EC's assessment of the readiness of the individual BENF management systems to take-on the tasks. Initially the authority is granted on the basis of the EC's ex-ante control over procurement, contracting and payments, which is the current level in CRO and TUR. The evaluation on MK was conducted in spring 2010, when the preparations by the authorities to put suitable management systems in place were still on-going.

2.3.1. Capacity of the Administrative, Organisational and Monitoring Structures

150. Performance of the IPA 2007-2009 TA-IB programmes was based on the judgement of the extent to which the different management functions have been appropriately performed by the relevant IPA actors. Group 5 EQ 1 addresses issues of the institutional setting and management functions supporting the implementation. EQ 2 the monitoring systems put in place.

Group 5: EQ 1

Are the administrative and organisational structures in place ensuring efficient and effective implementation of financial assistance?

Programming Level

151. The IPA programming process is intended to allocate limited EU resources in the most efficient and effective manner to address the European integration/accession policy priorities of the BENF authorities. Programming of the TA-IB Annual programmes is an interactive process between the BENF and the EC. On behalf of the BENF the NIPAC is responsible to manage and coordinate

³⁶ Such as the NIPAC (National IPA Coordinator), the NAO (National Authorising Officer), CFCU ("Central Contracting and Financing Unit"), SPOs (Senior Programme Officers) etc

³⁷ However, in BIH and KOS the full set of IPA structures was not in place at the time of the evaluations: in BIH the appointment of official SPOs was yet to be confirmed, while in KOS the technical structures (NIPAC and SPOs) are established but not yet financial management and control structures.

the overall process, primarily in cooperation with the line institution SPOs whom are responsible to coordinate and support the submission of inputs from technical units and agencies.

152. The efficiency and effectiveness of the programming management contribution on the side of the BENF is mainly determined by the extent to which clearly defined administrative processes exist and are operated so as to guide each step of the process. As noted in section 2.1.4 (Project selection), the evaluations found that all the NIPAC have established functioning project selection mechanisms and that (with the exception of BIH) the NIPAC have provided appropriate technical guidance to line institutions to support the selection of relevant and effective projects. However, in some BENF the effectiveness of the NIPAC management of the process was judged to be limited, notably linked to the screening of project proposals from the line institutions.
153. The role of the SPOs to provide an effective contribution is, generally, adequate, although for some BENF it was noted that the network of SPOs are still relatively newly appointed and will thus need time to embed operational processes. In order to develop the capacity of the SPOs training is offered to them and their support staff (e.g. to familiarise them with the IPA environment and the EC's project cycle management), although in MNE the evaluation found that the provision of training had been limited.
154. Once an initial list of potential projects is agreed between the NIPAC and the EC the process of drafting detailed projects is undertaken, with the EC (depending on the BENF) actively involved in the process. The interactive process of cooperation, spread across a period of months, is essential in terms of the timely and quality preparation of the final Project Fiches.

Implementing Level

155. Efficiency in terms of timely management operations linked to the procurement of IPA initially faced delays. With the exception of MB/R programmes, no other IPA funds were contracted in 2007 and limited number of tenders/call for proposals launched (in ALB, KOS and MK). Overall delivery of the 2007 TA-IB programmes was delayed at least one-year compared to delivery planned in the Project Fiches. The pace of contracting/delivery of the programmes have generally improved since calendar year 2009. As shown in Table 4 below, in most BENF a faster pace of contracting of the 2008 and 2009 programmes has been achieved than those of 2007.

Table 4: 2007-2009 IPA TA-IB Funds Contracted/Disbursed by 'End n+1'

IPA TA-IB*	ALB (%)	BIH (%)	CRO (%)	KOS (%)	MK (%)	MNE (%)	SRB (%)	TUR (%)
2007 Contracted	15.0	47.0	0	48.0	24.8	20.0	14.0	0
2008 Contracted	41.4	13.5	12.5**	52.8	0.3	48.2	23.0	26.5**
2007 Disbursed	4.0	10.7	0	9.8	8.3	4.0	1.0	0
2008 Disbursed	12.6	6.7	12.1**	19.7	0.1	10.9	1.5	26.0**

* Data source: 2008 and 2009 Annual IPA Reports

** Primarily IPA support provided for participation in the EU programmes

156. The major causes of the delayed programme delivery were: the pace of ratification of the IPA Framework Agreement (BIH and TUR), the pace of preparedness in achieving the conferral of management authority (CRO, MK and TUR), and, for some actions, the delayed fulfilment by BENF of programme/project conditionalities, e.g. co-financing, staffing, availability of premises etc. Efficiency in terms of timely implementation in each BENF was also initially slowed by the focus on implementing the on-going pre-IPA assistance first. The improved pace of deployment of the 2008 and 2009 TA-IB programmes indicates that the back-log can be reduced but this trend needs to be maintained, or even improved, to manage increased IPA funding.

157. Key findings highlighted in the TA-IB evaluations linked to the management contribution of the BENF to support the implementation of the assistance are summarised as:
- All the BENF have achieved some progress in the establishment and further operational development of its set of administrative and organisational structures to support its involvement and coordinate its IPA management contribution. However, insufficient BENF administrative capacity to support the implementation of assistance was reported as one important constraint in the management of the assistance. This is most notable in terms of staffing: the number of dedicated officials, their competence to manage EU funds and their retention in-post under circumstances of generally high staff turn-over in the public service (whether via departure from service or re-organisation of). The evaluations highlighted the need for those BENF that are preparing for eventual request for the conferral of management authority for TA-IB to increase staff-levels to meet the future work-load. Such additional staff will need training support etc. prior to the conferral of authority.
 - In CRO and TUR the NIPAC and/or the CFCU provide regular technical and training support to SPOs, PIU and other relevant staff in the BENF line institutions to familiarise them with the IPA implementation-environment. In the other six BENF, where IPA is implemented by centralised management, a series of training and operational support measures for the central IPA actors has/is being provided (via IPA assistance) to support the transition to the conferral of decentralised management authority. Equally the EU Delegations and ECLO, as appropriate, have provided hands-on training support linked to IPA procedures, notably to the CFCU. These actions are assumed to achieve the further strengthening of the management capacity on the side of the BENF, which are expected to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the programmes.
 - The commitment of the central IPA actors and the efficiency of the management contribution were, generally, judged positively in CRO, SRB and TUR. While with room for further improvement in terms of effectiveness (e.g. the quality of technical dossiers submitted to the EC to support procurement), good communication and operational follow-up mechanisms for procurement-planning and the implementation of programmes/projects exists between the central actors, e.g. the NIPAC, CFCU and SPOs, in these BENF.
 - In ALB, BIH, KOS and MNE there is a need for clearer definition of the role of SPOs (and the support PIUs) and their inter-action with other relevant actors in the BENF institutions. Staffing, in terms of sufficient number of staff, was also reported as a problem in some PIUs.
 - Capacity of the BENF line institutions to support timely management of delivery of the assistance in BIH, KOS, MK and MNE was judged to be variable, but generally weak.

Group 5: EQ 2

To what extent are the monitoring mechanisms and structures appropriate and correctly functioning?

158. In the BENF where IPA is implemented through centralised management the programme monitoring function is undertaken by the EC (HQ and the EU Delegations and ECLO). In each BENF the EC coordinates regular project and/or contract Steering Committees. These committees provide the opportunity to monitor the status of delivery of projects outputs and to identify implementation problems, including delays in output delivery or absorption problems to be reviewed in detail by the partners (EC and BENF) and, where applicable, contractors. The evaluation on ALB highlighted the EU Delegation maintaining a list of 'current key problems' in implementation, judging that this represented good practice. In the BENF implementing IPA based on the conferral of decentralised management authority such steering committees are coordinated by the BENF, with the EU Delegation participating in these.
159. Formal monitoring of and reporting on progress under the TA-IB programmes is, usually, undertaken bi-annually. Traditionally this involves the EC or, where practical, the BENF preparing an Implementation Status Report for submission to the 'shadow' Sector (TA-IB) Monitoring Committee or IPA Joint Monitoring Committee. Monitoring data is provided,

primarily, on the basis of the regular project monitoring undertaken by the EU Delegations and ECLO via the series of operational project/contract Steering Committees outlined above.

160. Additionally the project monitoring function is supported and monitoring data provided via the external assessment of projects in the framework of the Results-Oriented Monitoring (ROM) of EU-funded external cooperation operations. A number of the TA-IB evaluations highlighted that the operations of the ROM contractor were, generally, conducted in close coordination with the EC (HQ and the EU Delegations and ECLO), with regular reviews of the plan of action of upcoming projects to be subject to the ROM. The value of the process was highlighted in a number of the evaluations, notably the production of concise and independent assessments on the quality of projects and their implementation (based on the five 'standard' evaluation criteria).
161. The evaluations on ALB, BIH, KOS, MNE, SRB and MB/R (where TA-IB is implemented by centralised management) found that the EC's monitoring mechanisms and structures were appropriate and correctly functioning.
162. The BENF are at different levels of preparedness and capacity to play a role in the monitoring of IPA assistance, though for all of them setting adequate monitoring structures is the goal as part of the conferral of decentralised management authority. Training and operational support is provided (via IPA assistance) to the BENF. The evaluations reported that in ALB, BIH, KOS, MNE and SRB the capacity of the BENF to undertake monitoring of IPA is presently limited or only at the early phase of development. In BIH an IPA Monitoring and Evaluation Unit was established in mid-2010 and a manual of procedures and training plan are now under development. However, it was judged that it would require some time for the NIPAC to establish the system, let alone for it to embed it at the level of SPOs and to make effective use of the results. In ALB the NIPAC has started to analyse needs in the area and to develop monitoring systems, with this also driven by the wider government goal to establish a results-based and outcomes-focussed planning and budgeting system linked to its 'NDP' (NSDI). In SRB the development of IPA monitoring capacity is also driven by government policy (since 2008) to develop its monitoring capacity linked to External Assistance and Aid Effectiveness. In this context the NIPAC is presently developing its IPA monitoring system and in 2010 already introduced the requirement that Project Monitoring Reports be prepared.
163. In MK the development of IPA monitoring systems is more advanced but the evaluation highlighted the need for the function of the NIPAC to be further defined and that, at the level of programme monitoring, the Sector Annual Implementation Report to be more impact oriented. CRO and TUR are both well practised with the function of programme/project monitoring due to their experience of managing the process under both IPA and the pre-IPA EU assistance programmes. Yet for both BENF the evaluations noted that while their monitoring capacities have clearly improved across the years, some weaknesses remain. In particular weakness was reported in terms of the linkage of the monitoring templates and information systems that inform the various levels of monitoring (MIPD/programmes/sectors/projects/contracts). Thus while the monitoring systems provide detailed Project Monitoring Reports the systems do not yet provide a means by which such project data is then sufficiently focussed for reporting processes at the sector and programme levels. The length of Sector Monitoring Reports was judged excessive and the overall information utility limited as they were not adequately targeted to the needs of the audience. The TA-IB evaluations were conducted in late 2009, since then both BENF has further adapted their systems linked to taking the lead role in the management of interim evaluations.
164. A common deficiency highlighted for all TA-IB programmes (including MB/R) is the limited quality of target indicators in the original programming dossiers. While it was judged the quality of project indicators has, generally, improved with the successive annual programmes, still not sufficiently SMART – notably not time-bound or without baseline data. This makes it difficult to measure progress in achieving results. The timeframe that elapses between the programming and the implementation of actions and the delivery of results, also makes difficult the definition of indicators which would be relevant at the time results and impacts would be realised.

2.3.2. Relevance, Efficiency and Effectiveness of the on-going Programmes

Group 5: EQ 3

To what extent on-going IPA financial assistance has been/is contributing to achieving the strategic objectives/priorities linked to accession preparation?

165. The extent to which on-going IPA financial assistance has been/is contributing to achieving the strategic objectives/priorities linked to accession preparation is based on the judgement of:
- The Relevance and appropriateness of the programmes/projects-design in terms of the intervention objectives addressing real needs linked to accession,
 - The Efficiency with which the assistance has/is/will be deployed and risks managed so as to ensure the provision of appropriate, value-for-money solutions and the timely delivery and hand-over of the intended results, and
 - The Effectiveness with which the outputs/results has/is/will be delivered and used by the direct BENF.

Programming Level

166. The purpose of TA-IB is to support institution building actions or measures related to the *acquis*, as well as actions supporting the BENF comply with the Copenhagen political and economic criteria. To establish a balanced Annual programme the MIPDs divide annual budgets between the three priority axes around the three Copenhagen criteria, though with some limited budgetary flexibility in order to support the programming process.
167. The evaluations found that the programming process is generally accurate in the identification of relevant areas for IPA intervention. The process is based on the requirement for demonstrated linkage of proposed actions to the BENF reform strategies (e.g. the NPAA/NPISAA, the NDP), plus sectoral strategies where these exist, and also to the MIPDs. The BENF of the projects are primarily line institutions and judicial and law enforcement institutions, as befits the purpose of TA-IB. Other BENF target groups include civil society organisations and social partners (e.g. trade unions, employers' groups). IPA programmes (with the exception of KOS) also support the participation of the BENF in the EU Programmes, e.g. the 7th Framework Programme for Research and Development.
168. The annual programming process usually takes between 14-18 months from its formal inception i.e. the NIPAC request to line institutions to submit project proposals based on the programming deadlines agreed with the EC, to its formal conclusion i.e. adoption of the corresponding EC Decision. Of the 14-18 months programming process the project selection/preparation process traditionally lasts 10-14 months. The quality of the Project Fiches clearly improves as a result of the substantial interactive processes between the NIPAC and line institutions and the NIPAC and the EC. Nevertheless, this exhaustive process entails the risk of undermining the efficiency of the process, in terms of time and, to a lesser extent, staff resources. In some BENF the weak screening of line institution proposals at a sufficiently early phase by the NIPAC was noted as a problem for efficiency as it results in too many proposals being prepared compared to resources available. It also involves an increased workload for the EU Delegations and ECLO in terms of the provision of commentary feedback, which finally results in longer programming periods.
169. In this regard, commonly, a minimum two years are needed from launching the programming-cycle before the tendering and procurement processes, i.e. of the contracts that shall deliver the project results. While variable, dependent on the necessary actions, e.g. Twinning, TA, grant scheme, or supply/works, and the efficiency of the procurement process, delivery of outputs may require three years or even longer after the programming process. This therefore requires significant forward planning during the programming process and clearly makes sequential programming of sector interventions complex.

170. The evaluations have identified two methods used by the EC and the BENF to shorten the length of time between the programming and the implementation of the assistance. The first focuses on improving the project readiness during the programming process (e.g. via implementability checks by the NIPAC and/or the CFCU, or the formulation of draft technical dossiers for procurement during the programming process). While this requires additional inputs at the programming phase, it does promote the efficiency of the subsequent implementation phase.
171. The second programming solution has been to draft Project Fiches with broad objectives with the aim of defining specific actions only in the subsequent procurement documents. This was judged to be an appropriate method of practical programming that provides flexibility to adapt to changing future situations. However, it does introduce potential weaknesses into the implementing framework because it leads programmers to omit or to limit important planning elements such as quantified objectives, target indicators and detailed conditionalities.

Implementing Level

172. The continued relevance of the TA-IB programmes is checked via two key mechanisms: the EC's control of programmes/projects for the fulfilment of pre-conditions and/or other conditionalities and the subsequent monitoring of projects, e.g. via the ROM, and evaluation of programmes, e.g. via interim sectoral and/or programme evaluations. The TA-IB evaluations highlight that the fulfilment of pre-conditions etc. are controlled by the EC, as a means to ensure the implementability of actions and, when necessary, also the sufficiency of ownership. The evaluations note that for a number of programmes/projects delays have arisen due to the slow fulfilment of pre-conditions (e.g. the building of premises, the appointment of dedicated staff), but none of the evaluations highlight this as potential threat to the delivery of the planned assistance.
173. The BIH evaluation noted that in some cases, an alternative path could be proposed at the programming stage which could be used if the conditions are not met. This may be particularly relevant when the project is intended to include a reform dimension and capacity building. The evaluation reported that some projects have already included in their design a risk mitigation strategy. The approach suggested in the BIH evaluation could facilitate future programme implementation when risks do materialise as it would allow assistance still be delivered in some form which is relevant to the identified needs.
174. The evaluations on ALB, BIH, KOS, MNE and SRB also analysed the findings arising from a selection of ROM reports (i.e. at the level of projects). Based on the selection of ROM reports assessed under the evaluations a min. 80% of projects were rated by the ROM as good for relevance.
175. A number of the evaluations also highlight the relevance of the TA-IB support activities, e.g. TAIEX, the Project Preparation and TA facilities, in terms of their function of providing rapid response and/or short-term support for urgent needs as these arise.
176. The evaluations suggest that the greatest threat to the relevance would be insufficient BENF input at the stage of programmes' design.
177. Overall, the continued relevance of IPA TA-IB programmes in terms of linking to the strategic objectives/priorities of accession preparation was thus judged as good.
178. Efficiency of IPA 2007-2009 TA-IB programmes is initially assessed in terms of the achieved deployment of the IPA funds; accordingly data provided in the 2009 Annual IPA Report on the status of contracting/disbursement of IPA TA-IB is summarised in Table 5 below. This is then followed by an assessment of the process of delivery of the achievements of IPA in terms of its contribution to the accession-preparation objectives/priorities.

Table 5: IPA 2007-2009 TA-IB: Status of Contracting and Disbursement (end 2009)

BENF	EC Commitment		Contracted (%) End 2009	Disbursed (%) End 2009
	(M€)	(% of total)		
ALB	183.17	6.39	27.28	8.01
BIH*	196.99	6.87	29.74	6.55
CRO	131.38	4.58	14.83	10.26
KOS	348.30	12.15	43.05	16.95
MK	109.12	3.81	20.14	9.94
MNE	79.10	2.76	41.39	11.05
SRB	504.03	17.58	48.17	16.57
TUR	716.88	25.01	34.57	31.77
MB/R	597.88	20.85	70.50	43.74
TOTAL	2866.85	100	43.42	23.80
2007 IPA	839.69	29.29	57.92	31.61
2008 IPA	1040.09	36.28	40.53	18.52
2009 IPA**	987.07	34.43	34.12	22.71

Date source: 2009 Annual IPA Report

179. The efficiency of the procurement of the MB/R TA-IB programmes and the TA-IB programmes in KOS has, generally, been consistently good, although some delivery weaknesses were identified: for MB/R the need for the EU Delegations and ECLO to play a stronger, supportive role in planning the implementation of programmes with the BENF; for KOS the weakness of procurement-planning in the original programme/projects design (2.4 times more contracts have been realised compared to plan), which may potentially impede future efficiency due to the increased needs arising, e.g. for supervision. Efficiency of the procurement of TA-IB programmes in MNE has greatly improved following completion of the, successful, transition of operations (for pre-2007 EU assistance) from the European Agency for Reconstruction (EAR) to the EU Delegation (the end of 2008), although IPA disbursements have been relatively slow. Improved efficiency of the procurement and implementation in ALB and SRB has also been demonstrated. For both the period for contracting of the IPA 2007-2008 programmes is three-years (following conclusion of the Financing Agreements) rather than the more standard period of two-years. As such few specific risks to impede successful deployment of the 2007-2008 programmes were identified, while the capacity of the structures (predominantly the EU Delegations but also the BENF) to implement 2009 IPA with a two-year contracting period is credible.
180. Following the conferral of management authority for the IPA TA-IB both CRO and TUR faced a back-log in terms of the simultaneous procurement/delivery of the successive, annual IPA programmes. Both have since continued to strengthen their implementation structures and increase staff-levels (notably at the 'CFCU') and have achieved improved efficiency (e.g. the reduced duration of the tendering process), although both continue to suffer inadequacy in terms of the submission of procurement/contract dossiers for the EC's ex-ante control. As such, clear risks exist that may impede the successful contracting of IPA assistance.
181. The efficiency of the TA-IB programmes in BIH and MK in terms of procurement and delivery, initially reasonable, struggled during year 2009. For both, the performance of IPA 2008 has significantly lagged behind that of IPA 2007 (as shown in Table 4, section 2.3.1). In BIH this reflects that whereas the conclusion of direct grant agreements has proceeded well, the bulk of the assistance awaited the full adoption by BIH of the IPA Framework Agreement (achieved late 2008). Also, that the organisation of structures on the side of BENF faced a period of increased

instability during 2009, reducing the effectiveness of the administration. In BIH there is also a very notable lag in terms of funds' disbursement. While the evaluation noted an improved contracting performance during 2010, risks to the successful deployment of the assistance exist as procurement has been pushed closer to the contracting deadline, leaving little room for delays or mishaps that may occur during the procurement process. In MK the transition of operations from the EAR to the EU Delegation negatively affected the timely implementation, notably the delayed start-up of IPA 2008 and there exist certain risk for the successful contracting of funds. IPA 2009 has also been delayed due to the slower pace of the process of conferral of management authority for TA-IB than originally assumed.

182. The predominant type of TA-IB assistance is via the provision of services, of which the majority of contracts are in the form of Technical Assistance (TA) although there are a significant number of Twinning (TW) actions for which there is also an increasing demand from the BENF (both classical TW and TW Light). TW has clear advantages in providing the BENF with the most appropriate, hands-on experience with the modalities of acquis transposition and administrative operation. TW also provides in terms of institutional partnership between the TW providers and the BENF. Therefore the capacity-level of the BENF to actively participate in covenant negotiation and the subsequent management and realization of the planned results is a major element to ensure the efficient delivery of TW actions.
183. Investment type actions, whether in supply or works, were judged to be less efficient in terms timely delivery of intended outputs. Often this is due to implementation delays linked to the fulfilment of conditionalities (e.g. securing and contracting co-financing, or securing permits, or the completion of the construction of premises/offices). However, the relevance of well targeted investment support in the framework of capacity development is evident. The ALB evaluation found that IPA assistance had high leverage for development bank loans. The combined IPA financing for two infrastructure projects 'Secondary and local roads' and 'Water and sewerage systems' was 32.1 M€ which was co-financed by 65.9 M€ of loans from, provided by international financial institutions. This example shows a high leverage ratio with 1€ of IPA assistance to 2€ of bank-loans, greatly increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of IPA.
184. A number of interventions are implemented on the basis of centralised indirect management or direct grant/joint management agreements with national or Multilaterals public-sector/service bodies or with Community bodies. The efficiency of such arrangements was judged to be mixed: in some cases they have allowed for the rapid deployment of funds (notably with national bodies), in other cases the length of time to negotiate a detailed agreement has delayed the implementation of actions (notably with Multilaterals). It was also suggested that the work-load for the EC in terms of follow-up supervision and review of agreements is more demanding than for standard contracts. Additionally, such agreements are not immune to difficulties that may occur in the delivery of assistance; the EU Delegation's (ALB) list of 'current key problems' has covered one.
185. The efficiency of actions based on the need for inter-agency cooperation in the BENF was often highlighted to be weaker than for actions where this is not a key or at all a requirement. The development of operational mechanisms for such cooperation and/or in securing the commitment and active collaboration of all actors to the process and/or ownership of the results were judged to be the key reasons for the reduced efficiency.
186. Generally, while institutional arrangements for all programmes/projects are set-out in the respective programming document, at projects-level the information on the management structures that shall operate coordination and the development and delivery of the results is often insufficient to support the efficient implementation of actions.
187. Six of the TA-IB evaluations also analysed the findings arising from a selection of ROM reports (i.e. at the level of projects). They found that the efficiency of actions was significantly variable: in SRB 80% of projects were rated by the ROM as good, 68% in both BIH and KOS, dropping to 40% in ALB and 33% in MNE. The efficiency rating of the MB/R TA-IB programmes was reported to be poorer than the overall average for the individual BENF programmes.

188. The evaluations suggest that the greatest threat to the efficiency of the assistance is the level of ownership and the absorption capacities of the BENF; highlighted as a general finding for the BENF (e.g. delays in the fulfilment of conditionalities, provision of co-financing, inadequate management structures to support the development and delivery of results), but specifically as a threat where there was only limited BENF input at the stage of programmes' design.
189. Overall, the efficiency of the IPA TA-IB programmes in terms of contributing to achieving the objectives/priorities linked to accession preparation, while initially experiencing important difficulties, has generally improved since year 2009. Nevertheless, the performance across the eight BENF and the MB/R programmes is clearly variable.
190. Effectiveness of the IPA 2007-2009 TA-IB programmes is, naturally, still an 'on-going process'. Only some of the 2007 MB/R programmes are already closed for execution. The majority of the 2007 programmes were under implementation at the time the contributory evaluation were undertaken. Equally, the 2008 programmes (except some of the MB/R programmes) are all still open for funds' contracting. Therefore the contributory evaluations could provide only a series of initial judgements as to the effectiveness of the IPA assistance.
191. The effectiveness of IPA TA-IB in terms of its contribution to achieving the objectives/priorities linked to accession preparations is judged to be strongest in those areas where actions are related to the alignment/adoption of the *acquis*, notably where the *acquis* is well defined in terms of a clear legal and administrative framework to be achieved. The increased trend in use of the TW instrument across the 2007-2009 programmes (which is particularly used for *acquis* related interventions), across most of the BENF, is expected to strengthen effectiveness of the assistance.
192. Where the *acquis* is defined in a looser framework or there is not a formal *acquis* chapter (e.g. public administration), effectiveness is less evident. For this type of interventions the BENF needs to establish its own, appropriate strategic/implementation frameworks, often involving inter-agency cooperation. Effectiveness depends then largely on the stakeholders' ownership across a series of actions and the combined capacity of the BENF, the EC and, for interventions like TW and TA, also contractors in securing the commitment of all actors to the process.
193. Where the *acquis* is defined in a looser framework, e.g. public administration, effectiveness is less evident, as each BENF needs to establish its own, appropriate strategic/implementation framework in order to achieve compliance. Thus while useful support is assumed to be delivered linked to strategy and policy development and analysis of administrative operations, the effectiveness of take-up depends on the stakeholders' ownership across a series of actions. The effectiveness of actions based on the development and operation of inter-agency cooperation will be highly dependent on the effectiveness of the BENF and contractors (and the EC) in securing the commitment of all actors to the process.
194. While the levels of BENF participation in the management and implementation of the IPA assistance has been variable, each BENF has/is effectively being influenced to further build-up their administrative and organisational capacities to play a more active role. In this broader sense the assistance has/is supporting institution building in the BENF.
195. The greatest threat to the effectiveness of the assistance is the level of ownership and adequacy of the BENF management structures to support the take-up of results and to embed them in the institutional operations of the BENF. Too rarely is the management system and institutional procedure for the effective absorption of the results detailed in project documentation or indicators of such processes provided. As the majority of TA-IB actions aim to support institutional reforms in the BENF and thus a change of specific behavioural patterns in the targeted institutions the limited consideration as to 'how' this will be achieved procedurally within the overall operational/administrative framework of the BENF is a design weakness.
196. The evaluations judged that the majority of the intervention outputs and immediate results are expected to be effectively delivered, although partially delayed. Some risks for the quality of

outputs/results exist where the BENF input to the process is weak or where the current programmes and back-log from the past are implemented simultaneously.

197. While the effectiveness of IPA at the level of programmes/projects is judged to be satisfactory, the evaluations highlight that the effectiveness of IPA programmes in terms of a contribution to achieving the strategic objectives/priorities of the MIPDs is only broadly measurable, due to the limited provision of indicators in the MIPDs.
198. Six of the TA-IB evaluations analysed the findings arising from a selection of ROM reports (i.e. at the level of projects). Based on the ROM reports assessed the effectiveness of actions was found generally good in SRB, generally satisfactory in KOS and MNE, but only adequate in ALB and BIH, while the MB/R programmes were below the overall average of the BENF programmes.
199. Overall, the effectiveness of IPA TA-IB programmes in terms of contributing to achieving the strategic objectives/priorities linked to accession preparation is thus judged to be satisfactory, stronger for actions closely linked to the *acquis*.

2.3.3. The Prospects for Impact and Sustainability of the on-going Programmes

Group 5: EQ 4

What are the prospects for the immediate and long-term impact and sustainability of the assistance? Are there any elements which are/could hamper the impact and/or sustainability of the assistance?

200. The prospects for the immediate and long-term impact and sustainability of the assistance and the assessment of risks that could hamper their achievement is based on the judgement of:
 - The extent to which the delivered outputs/results are expected to provide a contribution to the achievement of intermediate and wider societal-impacts/benefits.
 - The extent to which the delivered outputs and immediate results are embedded into the BENF administration and policy framework and expected to continue to be operated/generated and supported by adequate administrative/organisational capacities, including adequate staffing and financial resources and demonstrated BENF 'ownership'.
 - The extent to which post-assistance planning takes place.
201. As with the effectiveness of the IPA assistance, the evaluations contributory to this Meta Evaluation were only able to provide a series of initial judgements as to the likely (expected) impact and sustainability, reflecting that the delivery of support was then in the early stages. The analyses distinguished between the programming and the implementing level.

Programming Level

202. The evaluations highlight that the conditions for sustainability are assessed by the EC during the project selection process. In particular, assessment of the suitable conditionalities is part of the project preparation and selection process. These cover pre-conditions to be fulfilled before the start-up of project implementing and, where considered appropriate, also post-assistance commitments. This assessment during the project definition and selection process is already a factor which enhances the expected sustainability of the assistance.
203. Regarding impacts, the main concern linked to programming stems from the lack of sufficiency of SMART objectives and related indicators at impact/results level. The broad scope of the MIPDs and the sometime broad definition of project objectives also entail a risk for the future measurement of actual impacts. However, while this represents a risk it does not necessarily indicate the unsuccessful achievement of future impact at the intermediate level (e.g., more efficient judiciary, lower corruption levels).

Implementing Level

204. Impact of the IPA 2007-2009 TA-IB programmes in terms of providing a contribution to the achievement of wider societal-impacts was, generally, judged to be good, although with a mixed picture in terms of the extent to which these shall be achieved as immediate as opposed to medium-/longer-term impacts.
205. Across the BENF evaluations the prospects for immediate and long-term impacts were judged to be most positive in the context of the BENF alignment/adoption of the *acquis*. This reflects that *acquis* related actions are well linked in the BENF strategy and the prospects for embedding the reforms are generally positive. Each BENF operates regular monitoring of progress in fulfilling the goals in its NPAA etc., which will also facilitate the embedding and follow-up planning processes. As the reforms are operationally deployed benefits in terms of the enhanced delivery of the related public services will progressively achieved. The impact of IPA support in terms of its contribution to the process of EU integration/accession (the achievement of wider societal-impacts/benefits) is thus good in this area. In CRO positive impact was also noted in terms of the delivered benefits facilitating the fulfilment of specific negotiation requirements.
206. Prospects for impacts were also judged to be good linked to the development of the necessary BENF operational functions to support the future management of EU/EC funds, pre-accession and eventually post-accession. While each of the eight IPA BENF is at its own stage of preparedness to operate the different management functions through the project-cycle, it is evident that IPA support (training and operational support in developing systems) is facilitating the progressive strengthening of the BENF capacities and their involvement in the implementation of IPA.
207. In these intervention areas the level of ownership is, generally, good to very good, although the issue of the adequacy of staffing (numbers and competence) will dictate the extent to which impacts are actually achieved in the immediate or medium-/longer-term.
208. The prospects for immediate and intermediate impacts are weaker linked to horizontal/cross-cutting themes and actions based on the operation of inter-agency cooperation. This includes key areas of IPA interventions such as public administration, judicial reform, or the promotion of civil society.
209. The prospects for impact of the MB/R programmes were found to be good in terms of the immediate impact on strengthening regional cooperation between BENF in the Western Balkans. In this regards, IPA is building on the initial achievements in this area under the CARDS programme.
210. A key determinant (and thereby also the key risk) in terms of achieving impact will be the BENF ownership of the reform agenda and capacity of the BENF administration to provide effective follow-up operations and their linkage in the development of the wider policy agenda and benefits to be generated. Ownership is expected to be weaker where there was only limited BENF input at the stage of programmes' design. Risks in this regards were reported in the evaluations on MK and MNE (linked to the 2007-2008 Annual programmes), BIH (linked to the challenges for horizontal and vertical inter-agency cooperation) and KOS (associated to the capacity of the administration to provide effective follow-up of interventions). The selection of ROM reports (i.e. at the level of projects) analysed by the evaluations highlighted a significant minority of actions to have problematic issues as regards impact in BIH, KOS and MNE: on average 18% of the ROM reports rated projects as 'with problems'.
211. Sustainability of the IPA 2007-2009 TA-IB programmes was, generally, judged to be good, although with a mixed picture. While the prospects are reasonably positive for many of the IPA-actions the overall prospects are variable across and within individual BENF and clear risks exist that will test sustainability over the medium-term.
212. Across the BENF the greatest risks to sustainability are the level of ownership, the adequacy of financial support post-assistance (e.g. for staffing, the maintenance of equipment and the running-costs of actions) and the capacity of the BENF to retain skilled staff in an environment of high

turn-over and re-organisations. As for impacts, this is notably a weakness where there was only limited BENF input at the stage of programmes' design and/or the implementation management of support.

213. The evaluations on assistance to BIH and KOS found clear risks to the sustainability of the assistance in terms of the variable extent of BENF post-assistance maintenance and follow-up planning and the operational capacity of the administrations. The selection of ROM reports analysed by the evaluations also highlight a significant number of actions in BIH and KOS facing challenges: 23% and 36% of projects were rated as 'with problems' for sustainability.
214. For the MB/R programmes a key determinant of sustainability will be the extent to which regional cooperation actions are gradually transferred into the regional planning actions of the individual BENF, in part to be funded via future IPA Component II programmes and future Structural Policy instruments. However, as each of the BENF across the region is clearly at a different level of development and accession preparedness so is their capacity to participate in the sustainable co-financing of such regional cooperation actions.
215. While sustainability is a judgement criterion in terms of the selection of actions during the programming phase, a key deficiency is the variable level to which post-assistance planning and risk-analysis is subsequently monitored at key stages during the IPA implementation phase.
216. The evaluations highlight different levels of detail of the conditionalities and post-assistance planning required across the BENF. In ALB the checks of sustainability planning/management by the EU Delegation were judged to have improved across the successive, annual programming phases, with a greater emphasis now being provided in the project conditionalities on the minimum institutional and staffing conditions to be operational post-assistance. This is then monitored by the EU Delegation during the implementation phase and builds on lessons learned from the weakness of such sustainability planning and control systems of the earlier programmes. In BIH the evaluation found that while sustainability was much considered at the programming and implementation phases, the evidence that post-assistance maintenance strategies are actually prepared by the BENF was mixed. In CRO and TUR the level of information provided by the IPA monitoring and reporting systems on post-assistance financing and follow-up is often lacking.

3. Conclusions (Lessons Learned) and Recommendations

3.1. The Programming Framework – Improving its Strategic Focus (EQ Group 4)

217. As established in the specific objectives/requested services for this Meta Evaluation the Group 4 Evaluation Questions (EQs) present the Conclusions and Recommendations that arise from the Findings linked to the Group 1-3 EQ (see sections 2.1 and 2.2).

3.1.1. The IPA Programming Framework

Group 4: EQ 1

How can programming of IPA assistance be enhanced to more efficiently and effectively reach strategic objectives?

Group 4: EQ 2

How can programming of IPA be enhanced to improve the impact and sustainability of financial assistance?

218. In answer to these EQ, both effectiveness and impact of programming can be enhanced by improving the quality of key IPA programming documents, namely the: (i) MIPDs; (ii) Annual programmes (for TA-IB); and (iii) the Component II-V programmes (see paragraph 133).
219. The MIPDs are key programming documents, essential for providing direction and focus to the programming process, this is particularly so for TA-IB annual programming. MIPDs present a series of key issues, based on the most recent Progress Reports, for key areas relevant to EU accession/integration. They provide a large amount of sector-specific information and define specific objectives / priorities for the three year period covered. On the basis of the contributory evaluations, the main conclusions on MIPDs can be summarised as follows:
- In relation to TA-IB, the BENF evaluations found that the overall quality of MIPDs was good and that the ‘strategic choices process’ (MIPD Section 2.2.2) was particularly useful for annual programming.
 - The evaluations for CRO, MKD and TUR (which addressed both IPA and pre-IPA assistance) concluded that IPA MIPDs were substantially better than the equivalent documents for pre-IPA programmes.
 - The strategic objectives and specific objectives/priorities are, however, too broad (given the amount of financial assistance available to achieve them) and there are insufficient indicators to measure their achievement. It should be noted that quantification is especially important when, as is the case of MIPDs) objectives are broad.
 - The contributory evaluations also reported that, as a consequence of the annual revision of MIPDs, there has been a tendency to increase the number and, in some cases, the scope of specific objectives/priorities.
 - The annual revisions of MIPDs make it difficult to measure the extent to which objectives / priorities have been achieved and the time period over which they are expected to be achieved.
220. The quality of the Annual programmes and Project Fiches, by which MIPDs are implemented, was also assessed. On the basis of the contributory evaluations, the main conclusions on TA-IB Annual programmes can be summarised as follows:
- Overall, the quality of Annual programmes has improved over time with a notable increase in the number of SMART project objectives and indicators over the period 2007-2009. This improvement was in large part attributed to the steady growth in the capacity of NIPACs and

their steadily increasing provision of guidance, technical support and training for beneficiary line institutions.

- However, the majority of project objectives and indicators were judged not to be SMART, principally because the overall objectives were not specific and the indicators were not time-bound.
- The contributory evaluations concluded that the effectiveness and future impact of financial assistance could be enhanced by further improving the quality of objectives and related indicators in Annual programmes and Project Fiches (i.e. increasing the numbers which are SMART) and by linking project overall objectives to the objectives / priorities in MIPDs.

221. Recommendations are made to (1) the EC services and (2) the EC services and the BENF NIPAC, with the intention of improving the quality of key programming documents and thereby enhance the effectiveness and improve the prospects for future impact of IPA TA-IB financial assistance:

Recommendation 1: MIPDs:

- *The scope of strategic and specific objectives / priorities should be more focussed (and even reduced) so as to become more achievable in the light of available TA-IB (and other donor) financial assistance and realistic implementation time-frames.*
- *The measurability of objectives in MIPDs should be improved by the introduction of relevant indicators.*

Recommendation 2: Annual Programmes /Project Fiches:

- *The quality of Annual programmes and Project Fiches should be further improved by enhancing the 'SMARTness' (particularly the time-bound criterion) of objectives and their related indicators and by linking these to the objectives / priorities in MIPDs.*
- *An increased role for NIPACs in improving the quality of Project Fiches would be an important action in this regard.*

222. Most BENF are in the process of estimating the financial needs of meeting their EU accession/integration requirements. The existing information shows that the financial needs of the BENF, particularly for infrastructure investments, are greatly in excess of the financial resources available under IPA. In this context, focussing programming on a limited number of selected priority sectors and sequencing assistance within these sectors are potential mechanisms for enhancing the effectiveness and future impact of IPA assistance.

223. The contributory evaluations reported good examples of project sequencing although sequencing was found to be problematic for some infrastructure projects (which accounted for some 30% of available funds). In addition, some evaluations found that a key problem for developing effective sequencing was that sometimes follow-on projects were implemented before earlier projects had been completed and delivered their outputs and results.

224. The contributory evaluations also reported good examples of the use of IPA as leverage to attract financing (grants and /or loans) from other donors and international bodies particularly for infrastructure projects.

225. On the basis that: (i) progressive sequencing of projects improves their effectiveness and impact prospects; and (ii) the BENF have made good, albeit limited, use of project sequencing to date; recommendations are made for TA-IB programmes:

Recommendation 3: *The EC and NIPACs should consider the further prioritisation and focussing of financial assistance across a limited number of priority sectors as a means of increasing the effectiveness and impact of IPA assistance.*

Recommendation 4: *The EC and NIPACs should, wherever possible, further enhance the catalytic effect of financial assistance by leveraging loans and other donor financing particularly in areas where BENF financial needs are most significant, namely infrastructure. This should also increase the effectiveness and potential impact of IPA assistance. The consultation process with key donors during the preparation of MIPDs provides a good opportunity to coordinate donor co-financing for this purpose.*

226. All the BENF have established functioning project selection procedures which actively involve line institutions in project identification and preparation. Nevertheless, annual programming is more effective and efficient in BENF where the NIPAC takes a more proactive role (particularly as regards the quality and prioritisation of project proposals) than in BENF where the NIPAC role is restricted to coordination tasks. Such a limited role of NIPACs may result in poor screening and prioritisation of project proposals and lead to a decrease in the efficiency of programming because the submission of non-prioritised, excessively long 'long lists' of projects increase the overall workloads for both the BENF and the EC.
227. However, it should be pointed out that the contributory evaluations concluded that the notable improvement in the quality of Annual programmes over the 2007-2009 period was, in large part, attributed to the growing capacity of BENF NIPACs to provide guidance, technical support and training for beneficiary line institutions.
228. Recommendations are made to BENF NIPACs with the intention of increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of TA-IB programmes:

Recommendation 5: *NIPACs should further enhance their leadership role throughout the project preparation and selection process. This should include the development of screening procedures, based on agreed and transparent project selection criteria, which ensure the strategic relevance of selected project proposals.*

3.1.2. Adopting a Sector Based Approach

Group 4: EQ 4

To what extent are beneficiaries ready to operate a shift towards a sector based approach in their own strategies, and in planning and programming sector based actions and finances?

229. The commitment of the BENF to adopting SBAs was judged to be high and the majority of them are actively collaborating with the EC and other donors on the introduction of SBA. A number of sector Working Groups have been established with a view to agreeing comprehensive sector programmes, including relevant, detailed implementation processes, budget and results frameworks. While at the initial stages of evolution, it is expected that this cooperation will lead to the progressive improvement in the quality of the BENF strategies. It should be noted that Working Groups had only recently been established at the time the contributory evaluations were carried out. The evaluations highlighted that there was a certain degree of confusion about what is meant by SBA and the modalities by which it might be realised.
230. The contributory evaluations assessed the quality of a sample of sector and cross-sector strategies and concluded that implementation action plans, budget plans and institutional arrangements of more than half of these strategies needed to be improved. Only a few of these existing strategies were monitored. In BIH, KOS and MNE it was reported that the capacity of line institutions for the implementation and monitoring of strategies was generally low and would need to be increased before SBA could be successfully adopted. For these reasons it was concluded that the BENF were not ready for the immediate introduction of a SBA. However, it was further concluded that the BENF were ready to start operating a gradual shift to SBA, but that the quality of strategies would need to reach a certain minimum standard in order for them to support a SBA.
231. The assessment of Component II-V programmes as compared to Component I (TA-IB) and the strategies prepared by the BENF, leads to the following reflections and conclusions:
- The quality of strategies is greatly improved by the provision of EC support during the preparation process and by the incorporation of inputs made by ex-ante evaluators.
 - The preparation of programmes in Components II-V takes significantly longer time than project-preparation for TA-IB Annual programmes.

- Managing multi-annual programmes has high associated workloads and requires staff to learn new technical skills. This is because in addition to the management of individual projects/measures, there is a need to manage and report on programmes as a whole.
- The preparation and progressive revision of multi-annual programmes is an example of good-practise to be used in the context of future sector-based approaches to programming TA-IB.

232. Recommendations are made to support the introduction of SBA to TA-IB programmes:

Recommendation 6: *The EC and the BENF should decide which sectors would be appropriate for SBA. This decision should be based firstly on the relevance of sector to EU integration/accession and secondly on the quality of BENF strategies and the administrative capacity to implement and monitor these.*

Recommendation 7: *The EC should decide on the minimum quality standards for sector strategies which need to be met before selected sectors are judged to be suitable for SBA. The EC should consider carrying out ex-ante controls of strategies/action plans to be used to support SBA for TA-IB funding.*

Recommendation 8: *The EC should consider the introduction of multi-annual programmes to TA-IB covering say the three year periods of MIPDs rather than requiring detailed Annual programmes.*

Recommendation 9: *BENF authorities should ensure sufficient capacity in line institutions to manage the implementation of strategies in the sectors selected for SBA. The BENF could undertake workload analyses and skills audits for each institution that will be managing the sectors selected for SBA.*

Group 4: EQ 6

How can the EC enhance its coordination with key donors to enhance the performance of IPA assistance?

233. The mechanisms for the coordination and harmonisation of EU external assistance (Member States and the EC) are well established, with many donors acknowledging the leadership role played by the EC in the region, including the supportive role of the MIPDs as an orientation-mechanism to guide their own coordination /programming exercises.
234. The EC's coordination with donors operates effectively at the central-level and, largely, in the individual BENF too. This included consultation with the donors in the BENF on the programming and orientation of MIPDs (2009-2011).
235. In a number of IPA BENF, the intensity of coordination between the donors and between the donors and the BENF is now developing in the context of preparations to adopt a Sector Based Approach to support EA operations.
236. In terms of measures to enhance donor coordination so as to enhance the performance of IPA assistance, the efficiency, effectiveness and leadership of the EC's coordination efforts is already good, however some weaknesses were identified that may limit effectiveness of donor synergy.
237. Some further improvements would be suitable as regards the description of donor activities in the MIPDs and even more importantly at the level of TA-IB Project Fiches. The degree to which Project Fiches explained the relevance of donor assistance IPA interventions was found to be variable, with information provided largely in the context of demonstrating non-duplication rather than the linkages and potential synergy of actions. It was concluded that it was inefficient to simply list donor actions in the wider sector if there was no added-value from the information.
238. Recommendations are made to the EC, intended to enhance its donor coordination efforts to enhance performance of the IPA TA-IB programmes:
- Recommendation 10:** *NIPACs and the EU Delegations and ECLO should issue clearer guidance on the completion of the information in the IPA Project Fiches as regards other donor activities in order to ensure that linkages and potential synergies are properly identified.*

3.2. On-going IPA (Component I) Assistance – Improving its Performance (EQ Group 6)

239. As established in the specific objectives/requested services for this Meta Evaluation the Group 6 Evaluation Questions (EQs) present the Conclusions and Recommendations that arise from the Findings linked to the Group 5 EQ (see section 2.3).

Group 6: EQ 1

Are there any potential actions which would improve the efficiency and effectiveness of on-going assistance?

240. The need for and the subsequent definition of potential actions which would improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the on-going IPA Component I assistance is based on the identification of weaknesses linked to the deployment of the assistance and the timely delivery and hand-over of the intended results, or the take-up of the results and further utilisation/operation of these as appropriate, e.g. the embedding of results in the institutional operations of the BENF.
241. In relation to the operation of the different management functions supporting the implementation (procurement and delivery), monitoring and management follow-up of the IPA assistance, the following key conclusions were reported by the contributory TA-IB evaluations:
- Efficiency of the IPA assistance was initially undermined by problems linked to the timely procurement of the interventions. The causes were primarily linked to the fulfilment of programme/project conditionalities by the BENF. Nevertheless, slow contracting of IPA was also due to the focus, of the EC and the BENF, on implementing pre-IPA EU assistance first.
 - The pace of delivery (contracting) has generally improved since year 2009. However, there exist some risks for the timely procurement of the 2008 programmes for BIH and MKD and the 2007-2008 programmes in CRO and TUR. In BIH this is due to institutional setting issues, in MKD due to specific issues related to the transition of responsibilities from the EAR to the EU Delegation, and in CRO and TUR the conferral of management process has required that the 2007 and 2008 programmes are almost simultaneously procured / delivered.
 - All the BENF have achieved some progress in the establishment of a set of administrative and organisational structures to support implementation of IPA. However, improvements are needed in all the BENF although these needs, and mainly their prioritisation, are different depending on whether the countries are under centralised or decentralised management.
 - In the six BENF where IPA is implemented by centralised management, training and operational support measures are being provided (via EU assistance and hands-on training by the EU Delegations and ECLO) to strengthen the contribution of the BENF institutions to the management of IPA and to achieve preparedness for the conferral of decentralised management authority.
 - An important constraint in terms of the provision of BENF management contribution to support IPA implementation is the insufficient administrative structures in terms of staffing levels, notably at the level of line institution SPO/PIUs.
 - The efficiency of interventions supporting *acquis* related areas was judged as positive by the evaluations. The efficiency of interventions based on horizontal areas needing inter-agency cooperation was, however, judged to be undermined due difficulties associated in cooperation and/or active collaboration among different actors, together with ownership problems.
 - There is an increasing demand from most of the BENF to deploy services via the Twinning instrument, particularly to support *acquis* transposition and administrative operation. Nevertheless, the evaluations underlined the risk that the BENF absorption capacity to actively participate in the management of Twinning assistance and the realisation of the planned outputs and results was often insufficient.

- The management system/operational procedures on the side of the BENF for the effective absorption of the delivered results and immediate benefits are rarely detailed. As the majority of TA-IB projects support institutional reforms in the BENF and are thus within a wider institutional environment, planning for the absorption of the results and the involvement of appropriate decision-makers at key phases in the project is essential.
- A key determinant of the efficiency and effectiveness of the assistance is the level of management contribution on the side of the BENF, both the central IPA actors and also at the level of the technical BENF of the assistance. Weaknesses on the side of the BENF relate to the definition of the role of the SPOs/PIUs and their capacity to play an active role in support of the implementation and monitoring of the assistance and the variable level of guidance from the NIPAC and/or CFCU in the area. The efficiency and effectiveness of the monitoring functions operated by CRO and TUR can be strengthened by improving the utility of reporting so as to better target the needs for decision-making.

242. Recommendations are made to the EC, intended to support the efficiency and effectiveness of the on-going IPA TA-IB programmes:

Recommendation 11: *For institution building projects the BENF should provide more complete information on the involvement of appropriate decision-makers at key phases in implementation of the project-cycle and on the administrative/operational processes in place to ensure the absorption/institutionalisation of the outputs and immediate results by the BENF.*

Group 6: EQ 2

Are there any actions which would improve prospects for impact and sustainability of on-going assistance?

243. In order to ensure the achievement of sustainable benefits, the delivered results need to be embedded in the BENF policy and operational framework and the continued operation/generation of these benefits delivered, as appropriately.
244. The evaluations found that the prospects for immediate and long-term impacts were judged to be most positive in the context of the BENF alignment/adoption of the *acquis*, reflecting that these actions are well linked in the BENF strategies and that the prospects for embedding the reforms are generally positive.
245. The prospects for immediate impacts are weaker linked to horizontal/cross-cutting themes and actions based on the operation of inter-agency cooperation. In some areas it will be necessary for a number of specific development objectives to be addressed over the medium-term and the overall inter-linkage of the progressive results to be managed carefully before a measurable impact (in terms of societal-benefit) will be achieved.
246. Overall the measurement of impact is hampered by the deficiency in the quality of the indicators of achievement. Specifically the impact indicators should provide both intermediate and longer-term targets in order that the effectiveness of the assistance can be assessed not just via interim but also ex-post impact evaluations. It is also important for baseline data to be provided.
247. Sustainability is a criterion used for the selection of project proposals during the programming phase. This is a widely accepted good practice standard to enhance the likely/expected sustainability of assistance. Nevertheless, some improvement on the information to be provided by the BENF on post-assistance planning is suitable, e.g. including indicative minimum staffing and financial resources necessary for the first-year of operations.
248. Recommendations are made to the EC, intended to support the impact and sustainability of the on-going IPA TA-IB programmes:

Recommendation 12: *Indicators of achievement at project-level for IPA 2008-2010 programmes should, as appropriate, be revised (by the BENF, coordinated by the NIPAC and the EU*

Delegations and ECLO) so as to support the effective supervision, monitoring and evaluation of the assistance. This relates to the indicators for efficiency, effectiveness and impact.

Recommendation 13: *NIPACs/NAOs and the EU Delegations and ECLO should agree a consistent approach to be applied to post-assistance planning requirements and their follow-up compliance.*

- *For key institution building projects, notably where TW is used, a short follow-up mission should be undertaken to assess and make further recommendations as to the follow-up operation of the delivered results and final TW recommendations. Indicatively such assessments should be conducted 3-6 months after completion of the delivery of the final recommendations. As such follow-up would primarily relate to TW projects it would seem practical for it to be provided, as necessary, via the TAIEX instrument.*
- *Brief, post-assistance, operational reports (on impact and sustainability) should be required of the BENF for each project, indicatively 6-12 months after the completion of the delivery of the IPA support.*

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Annex 1: Generalised Sequence of Annual Programming Activities

Project Proposal Stage	
1	Programming timetable established by the EC. The EU Delegation / ECLO sends the programming timetable to the NIPAC with a request for project proposals.
2	NIPAC prepares internal programming timetable and sends it together with a formal letter explaining the internal deadlines, plus guidelines (if any) and standard templates for sector analyses/project proposals to all line institutions.
3	Line institutions submit project ideas/sector analyses supported by standard documents to the NIPAC by the due date.
4	NIPAC assesses the relevance of project ideas/proposals according to the Accession/European Partnership, the MIPD and NPAA/NPISAA etc and identifies programming priorities. The list of priorities is sent to the EC and subsequently to donor coordination structures (Working Groups, Round Tables etc).
5	NIPAC sends programming priorities to line institutions for comments plus a formal letter asking for project proposals. Standard templates for project proposals plus guidance notes are included with this letter.
6	Line institutions draft project proposals according to templates and guidelines provided and submit proposals to the NIPAC by the due date.
7	NIPAC screens and prioritises project proposals.
8	NIPAC sends a list of potential projects to the EU Delegation / ECLO ('long list'). NIPAC and EC (HQ and the EU Delegation / ECLO) assess project proposals and jointly select which projects should be further prepared (short list).
	← 1st selection
9	NIPAC organises a kick-off meeting for all line institutions that have submitted short listed project proposals to follow up on comments and inputs made by the EC and to discuss issues arising from the NIPAC quality checks of proposals. Line institutions re-draft project proposals in the light of the comments provided by the EC and the NIPAC and submit re-draft to the NIPAC. NIPAC submits proposals for government approval.
Project Preparation Stage	
10	NIPAC sends a formal letter to line ministries informing them of the deadline for the submission of Project Fiches. A standard template for IPA Project Fiches is included with this letter.
11	Line institutions prepare Project Fiches (as necessary supported by TA) in discussion with the NIPAC and the EU Delegation / ECLO task managers.
12	NIPAC and EU Delegation / ECLO carry out quality control checks on draft Project Fiches.
13	NIPAC and EU Delegation / ECLO revise Project Fiches in consultation with line institutions and select those to be included in Annual Programme.
	← 2nd selection
14	NIPAC submits Project Fiches for government approval.
15	NIPAC submits Project Fiches to EC (HQ) for intra-DG Enlargement quality and legal checks plus for EC inter-service consultation.
16	Amendments made to Project Fiches as a result of inter-service consultation.
17	EC (HQ) prepares the Annual programme as a Financing Proposal (to which Project Fiches are annexed). Submission of the Financing Proposal for approval by the IPA [Management] Committee.
18	EC (HQ) prepares Commission Decision and Financing Agreement.
19	Signature of Financing Agreement between the EC and the BENF government.

Annex 2: External Assistance to the IPA Beneficiaries, 2005-2009

Annex 2A: Official External Assistance per IPA BENF, 2005-2009 (Commitments)

Official External Assistance (2005-2009 Overview)		ALB M\$	BIH M\$	CRO M\$	KOS M\$	MK M\$	MNE M\$	SRB M\$	TUR M\$	TOTAL M\$
Official Ext. Assistance (TOTAL)		2252.451	3577.156	4032.826	738.899	1445.591	618.496	8587.037	21904.257	43156.713
(A)	ODA	1913.778	2522.561	1328.718	718.011	987.702	432.370	6198.560	6680.842	20782.542
(1)	DAC Countries	1271.629	1771.177	439.222	394.545	565.137	250.624	3796.102	3488.771	11977.207
	<i>EU MS (EU-15)</i>	893.680	1155.936	319.341	193.446	281.545	184.408	2388.042	2186.498	7602.896
	Austria	36.275	151.152	34.427	23.667	26.444	20.060	173.309	121.985	587.319
	Belgium	1.385	4.244	6.200	0.000	0.920	0.079	30.391	37.856	81.075
	Denmark	5.664	4.619	0.057	3.040	0.011	2.659	7.143	4.397	27.590
	Finland	2.937	14.323	1.261	13.325	0.970	0.155	27.449	2.491	62.911
	France	32.702	72.695	18.159	0.958	14.969	9.032	270.142	1020.423	1439.080
	Germany	192.713	219.294	231.228	68.917	88.775	70.549	910.108	570.379	2351.963
	Greece	202.434	35.696	1.152	32.763	11.622	2.326	163.078	26.172	475.243
	Ireland	4.518	6.035	0.000	0.000	0.164	0.000	7.118	0.000	17.835
	Italy	259.619	37.557	1.878	2.362	14.301	44.685	184.988	0.556	545.946
	Luxembourg	4.694	0.512	0.107	7.966	0.344	15.150	28.074	0.000	56.847
	Netherlands	35.954	141.844	0.951	5.764	69.972	2.234	26.136	2.246	285.101
	Portugal	0.000	20.115	0.437	10.730	0.075	0.000	47.775	0.206	79.338
	Spain	48.212	187.208	3.468	0.110	3.111	7.679	27.156	357.707	634.651
	Sweden	50.225	217.784	15.643	12.877	43.845	8.323	173.525	32.419	554.641
	UK	16.348	42.858	4.373	10.967	6.022	1.477	311.650	9.661	403.356
	Non-EU Europe	78.022	194.821	48.345	70.902	101.542	15.929	494.417	8.026	1012.004
	Norway	24.108	105.330	47.803	24.502	51.360	14.127	223.831	2.182	493.243
	Switzerland	53.914	89.491	0.542	46.400	50.182	1.802	270.586	5.844	518.761
	Non-European	299.927	420.420	71.536	130.197	182.050	50.287	913.643	1294.247	3362.307
	Australia	0.028	0.051	0.042	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.727	0.190	1.038
	Canada	0.139	19.864	0.597	0.000	0.000	0.044	43.759	0.563	64.966
	Japan	121.797	172.662	4.259	0.153	23.398	11.250	148.162	1234.938	1716.619
	Korea	0.004	50.110	0.045	0.000	0.000	1.016	3.584	2.981	57.740
	New Zealand	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
	USA	177.959	177.733	66.593	130.044	158.652	37.977	717.411	55.575	1521.944
(2)	Multilateral	642.149	751.384	889.496	323.466	422.565	181.746	2402.458	3192.071	8805.335
	EU Institutions	385.200	510.109	872.704	319.503	396.234	150.535	2147.975	3158.857	7941.117
	IDA	182.060	167.350	0.000	0.000	0.000	19.000	202.000	0.000	570.410
	IMF	24.850	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	24.850
	UN (AIDS; DP; FPA; ICEF)	15.881	12.244	7.382	3.963	10.863	5.854	19.084	21.101	96.372
	Global Fund (AIDS, TB, Malaria)	6.200	13.758	1.580	0.000	8.518	5.277	26.359	3.273	64.965
	Global Environment Facility	9.080	16.950	7.830	0.000	6.950	1.080	7.040	8.840	57.770
	Others	18.878	30.973	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	49.851
(B)	Other Official Flows	338.673	1054.595	2704.108	20.888	457.889	186.126	2388.477	15223.415	22374.171
(1)	DAC Countries	17.400	35.994	170.829	20.888	1.758	90.967	214.391	535.990	1088.217
	Austria							38.508		38.508
	Belgium							4.647		4.647
	Finland		1.933							1.933
	France								177.731	177.731
	Germany	13.689	33.515	164.271	20.888		90.967	160.720	214.457	698.507
	Greece	3.711				0.404		0.517		4.632
	Netherlands								0.537	0.537
(2)	Multilateral	321.273	1018.601	2533.279	0.000	456.131	95.159	2174.086	14687.425	21285.954
	EU Institutions	113.268	741.511	865.215	0.000	12.552	6.276	717.739	6395.772	8852.333
	EBRD	76.445	147.090	310.914	0.000	51.299	40.383	591.077	201.454	1418.662
	IBRD	131.560	130.000	1357.150	0.000	392.280	48.500	865.270	8012.085	10936.845
	Others	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	78.114	78.114

Source: Creditor Reporting System online on OECD.Stat

Annex 2B: Official External Assistance per IPA BENF, 2005-2009 (Disbursements)

Official External Assistance (2005-2009 Overview)		ALB M\$	BIH M\$	CRO M\$	KOS M\$	MK M\$	MNE M\$	SRB M\$	TUR M\$	TOTAL M\$
Official Ext. Assistance (TOTAL)		1944.818	2778.218	2833.052	762.912	1323.868	442.063	6033.005	18357.481	34475.417
(A)	ODA	1745.091	2298.521	967.521	753.164	1045.027	335.866	5085.459	6438.374	18669.023
(1)	DAC Countries	1164.389	1585.923	358.166	425.570	723.562	208.847	3413.716	3825.701	11705.874
	EU MS (EU-15)	859.625	1069.401	212.387	151.820	369.097	133.934	2176.985	2304.681	7277.930
	Austria	34.677	155.129	34.707	21.400	26.353	13.380	167.529	122.523	575.698
	Belgium	1.385	4.234	2.724	0.000	0.700	0.079	29.328	27.735	66.185
	Denmark	0.614	3.249	0.057	2.725	0.011	0.288	5.176	1.480	13.600
	Finland	1.848	14.598	1.051	13.049	0.776	1.402	31.591	1.921	66.236
	France	47.313	124.092	19.739	0.958	15.615	9.522	338.635	1003.747	1559.621
	Germany	220.367	156.358	120.986	32.548	122.908	42.402	622.640	632.613	1950.822
	Greece	202.434	35.696	1.152	32.763	11.622	2.326	163.078	26.172	475.243
	Ireland	4.518	6.035	0.000	0.000	0.164	0.000	7.118	0.000	17.835
	Italy	173.359	35.818	2.025	3.282	23.498	32.146	187.807	0.789	458.724
	Luxembourg	4.694	0.512	0.107	7.966	0.344	15.150	28.074	0.000	56.847
	Netherlands	47.765	114.128	0.819	0.448	88.483	1.313	43.835	12.106	308.897
	Portugal	0.000	64.841	0.436	10.730	0.075	0.000	47.776	0.205	124.063
	Spain	47.317	130.284	3.161	0.931	11.577	2.002	31.205	434.875	661.352
	Sweden	54.016	184.815	19.404	14.697	57.541	12.447	162.726	28.443	534.089
	UK	19.318	39.612	6.019	10.323	9.430	1.477	310.467	12.072	408.718
	Non-EU Europe	77.993	179.253	46.099	66.157	89.651	13.805	453.129	11.625	937.712
	Norway	23.209	89.238	45.443	21.170	47.571	12.072	190.393	3.727	432.823
	Switzerland	54.784	90.015	0.656	44.987	42.080	1.733	262.736	7.898	504.889
	Non-European	226.771	337.269	99.680	207.593	264.814	61.108	783.602	1509.395	3490.232
	Australia	0.018	0.042	0.856	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.725	0.152	1.793
	Canada	0.514	42.127	0.764	0.000	0.000	0.230	53.905	1.110	98.650
	Japan	26.939	55.840	4.244	0.152	87.417	9.727	146.849	1428.613	1759.781
	Korea	21.712	34.651	0.045	0.000	0.000	0.711	2.907	41.773	101.799
	New Zealand	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
	USA	177.588	204.609	93.771	207.441	177.397	50.440	579.216	37.747	1528.209
(2)	Multilateral	580.702	712.598	609.355	327.594	321.465	127.019	1671.743	2612.673	6963.149
	EU Institutions	329.134	484.177	585.041	315.913	280.100	74.171	1375.029	2575.752	6019.317
	IDA	189.356	200.937	0.000	6.502	13.306	42.223	251.365	0.000	703.689
	IMF	24.850	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	24.850
	UN (AIDS; DP; FPA; ICEF)	15.789	12.236	7.365	3.963	10.795	5.838	19.034	20.079	95.099
	Global Fund (AIDS, TB, Malaria)	4.815	8.673	3.476	1.216	10.715	3.850	19.523	3.273	55.541
	Global Environment Facility	8.771	2.834	13.473	0.000	6.549	0.937	6.792	11.608	50.964
	Others	7.987	3.741	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	1.961	13.689
(B)	Other Official Flows	199.727	479.697	1865.531	9.748	278.841	106.197	947.546	11919.107	15806.394
(1)	DAC Countries	17.400	35.994	55.573	9.748	0.529	75.450	143.117	655.947	993.758
	Austria							38.508		38.508
	Belgium					0.124		4.647		4.771
	Finland		1.933							1.933
	France							320.940		320.940
	Germany	13.689	33.515	55.573	9.748		75.450	89.447	214.457	491.879
	Greece	3.711				0.404		0.517		4.632
	Netherlands							0.537		0.537
(2)	Multilateral	182.327	443.703	1809.958	0.000	278.312	30.747	804.429	11263.160	14812.636
	EU Institutions	73.302	243.380	603.786	0.000	50.907	0.000	511.960	4140.914	5624.249
	EBRD	79.850	200.259	344.497	0.000	13.178	28.033	236.749	152.135	1054.701
	IBRD	24.038	0.064	861.675	0.000	214.227	2.714	55.720	6959.045	8117.483
	Others	5.137	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	11.066		16.203

Source: Creditor Reporting System online on OECD.Stat

Annex 3: List of the Contributory Evaluations Used in Completing the Meta Evaluation

Author / Issuer	Title	Date of Issue
HTSPE Limited	Strategic/Interim Evaluation of IPA in Albania	November 2010
IBF International Consulting	Strategic/Interim Evaluation of IPA in Bosnia and Herzegovina	November 2010
The European Evaluation Consortium	Country Programme Interim Evaluation of EU Pre-Accession Assistance to Croatia	March 2010
HTSPE Limited	Strategic/Interim Evaluation of IPA in Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244/99)	November 2010
Rambøll Management Consulting	Country Programme Interim Evaluation of EU Pre-Accession Assistance to the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	December 2010
SOGES SPA	Strategic/Interim Evaluation of IPA in Montenegro	DRAFT
IBF International Consulting	Strategic/Interim evaluation of IPA in Serbia	DRAFT
Ernst & Young et Associés	Country Programme Interim Evaluation of EU Pre-Accession Assistance to Turkey	August 2010
IBF International Consulting	Strategic/Interim evaluation of regional cooperation in the Western Balkans and Turkey (financed under Component I)	DRAFT
COWI A/S	Interim Evaluation of Cross-Border Programmes (Intra-Western Balkan Borders) Phase I	July 2010
European Policies Research Centre	Ex-Ante Evaluation of IPA Component III (CRO): Transport Operational Programme (OP)	April 2007
IDC Group	Ex-Ante Evaluation of IPA Component III (MK): Regional Development OP	INTERIM DRAFT
GTZ International Services	Ex-Ante Evaluation of IPA Component III (TUR): Environment OP	INTERIM PAPER
GTZ International Services	Ex-Ante Evaluation of IPA Component III (TUR): Transport OP	INTERIM PAPER
European Policies Research Centre	Ex-Ante Evaluation of IPA Component IV (CRO): Human Resources Development OP	April 2007
GTZ International Services	Ex-Ante Evaluation of IPA Component IV (TUR): Human Resources Development OP	September 2007
Orbicon	Ex-Ante Evaluation of IPA Component V (CRO): Rural Development Plan	May 2007
HTSPE Limited	Ex-Ante Evaluation of IPA Component V (MK): Rural Development Plan	DRAFT FINAL
Scanagri Denmark A/S	Ex-Ante Evaluation of IPA Component V (TUR): Rural Development Plan	July 2007
MWH Consortium	Donor Coordination Ad Hoc Report	April 2009
SOGES SPA	Mapping of CRO National Strategies	January 2011
Rambøll Management Consulting	Mapping of MK National Strategies	February 2011
SOGES SPA	Mapping of TUR National Strategies	December 2010

Annex 4: List of Other Documents and Materials Used in Completing the Meta Evaluation

Source	Author / Issuer	Title	Date of Issue
European Union	Council of the European Union	Council Regulation (EC) No. 533/2004 on the establishment of European partnerships in the framework of the stabilisation and association process (as amended)	22/03/2004
	Council of the European Union	Council Regulation (EC) No. 1085/2006 establishing an Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA)	17/07/2006
European Commission	European Commission	Commission Regulation (EC) No. 718/2007 implementing Council Regulation (EC) No. 1085/2006 establishing an Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA)	12/06/2007
	Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament	Multi-annual Indicative Financial Framework for 2008-2010 – COM(2006) 672	08/11/2006
		Multi-annual Indicative Financial Framework for 2009-2011 – COM(2007) 689	06/11/2007
		Multi-annual Indicative Financial Framework for 2010-2012 – COM(2008) 705	05/11/2008
		Multi-annual Indicative Financial Framework for 2011-2013 – COM(2009) 543	14/10/2009
	Report from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament and the Economic and Social Committee	2007 Annual IPA Report +Technical Annexes – COM(2008) 850	15/12/2008
		2008 Annual IPA Report +Technical Annexes – COM(2009) 699	23/12/2009
		2009 Annual IPA Report +Technical Annexes – COM(2010) 687	25/11/2010
	Communication from the Commission	The Western Balkans on the road to the EU – COM(2006) 27	27/01/2006
	Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council	Western Balkans: Enhancing the European perspective – COM(2008) 127	05/03/2008
	Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council	Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges +Technical Annexes – COM(2006) 649	08/11/2006
		Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges +Technical Annexes – COM(2007) 633	06/11/2007
		Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges +Technical Annexes – COM(2008) 674	05/11/2008
Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges +Technical Annexes – COM(2009) 533		14/10/2009	
Enlargement Strategy and Main Challenges +Technical Annexes – COM(2010) 660		09/11/2010	
DG Enlargement	IPA Programming Guide (Ver. 2008)	31/03/2008	
DG Enlargement	Updated financial performance data for IPA Component I	Valid 31/12/2010	
OECD	Creditor Reporting System	Creditor Reporting System statistics (on-line database)	Valid 24/12/2010