

COMMISSION DECISION

C(2008) 3642 of 18 July 2008

adopting the Multi-Beneficiary Financing Proposal 1 under the IPA Transition Assistance and Institution Building Component

THE COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Community,

Having regard to Council Regulation (EC) No 1085/2006 of 17 July 2006 establishing an Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA)¹, and in particular Article 14(2)(a) thereof,

Whereas:

- (1) Regulation (EC) No 1085/2006 lays down the objectives and main principles for pre-accession assistance to candidate and potential candidate countries.
- (2) In accordance with Article 7 of Regulation (EC) No 1085/2006, the assistance should be provided through multi-annual or annual programmes, which can be established by country and by component, or, as appropriate, by group of countries or by theme. These programmes should be drawn up in accordance with the general policy framework referred to in Article 4 of Regulation (EC) No 1085/2006 and the relevant multi-annual indicative planning document referred to in Article 6 of that Regulation.
- (3) The Council established for all candidate and potential candidate countries a European or Accession Partnership. The Commission has adopted on 29 May 2007 (SEC(2007)749) a Multi-Beneficiary multi-annual indicative planning document 2007/2009 which presents indicative allocations for the main priorities for pre-accession assistance to the countries concerned².
- (4) Therefore, the Multi-Beneficiary Financing Proposal 1 under the IPA Transition Assistance and Institution Building Component for 2008 aims at providing assistance to :
 - i. Reduce the vulnerability of IPA countries to natural disasters, in line with the Hyogo Framework for Action³, by building the capacity of local authorities and promoting a coordinated approach in disaster risk reduction;
 - ii. Foster and enhance durable, sustainable solutions, namely voluntary repatriation and reintegration including local integration for the remaining persons in displacement in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro, Serbia and Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244);

¹ OJ L 210, 31.7.2006, p. 82.

² SEC(2007)749, 29.5.07.

³ In January 2005, 168 governments adopted a 10-year plan to make the world safer from natural hazards at the World Conference on Disaster Reduction in Kobe, Hyogo, Japan. The Hyogo Framework aims at reducing disaster losses by 2015 in lives and in the social, economic and environmental assets of communities and countries.

- iii. Improve regional cooperation in the field of public administration, by strengthening the administrative capacity as required by the European integration process and by developing human resources in line with the principles of the European Administrative Space.
- (5) This decision meets the requirements of Article 90 of Commission Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2342/2002 of 23 December 2002 laying down detailed rules for the implementation of Council Regulation No 1605/2002⁴ (hereafter: “Implementing Rules”) and constitutes thus a financing decision within the meaning of Article 75 of Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002 of 25 June 2002 on the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities⁵ (hereafter: “Financial Regulation”).
- (6) It is appropriate to implement the Refugee Return in the Western Balkans project in joint management with the UNHCR, as the Commission and the UNHCR have elaborated this project jointly.
- (7) It is fitting to implement Activity 1 of the Disaster Risk Reduction in South East Europe Project in joint management with the UNDP as the Commission and the UNDP have elaborated the project jointly. Activity 2 of the Disaster Risk Reduction in South East Europe Project shall be implemented through a direct grant agreement with the World Meteorological Organisation given the extensive and exclusive experience and knowledge that the World Meteorological Organisation has in this area.
- (8) A tender for supplies will be launched by the European Commission for Activity 1 of the Regional School of Public Administration (ReSPA) project. A service contract will be signed with European Institute of Public Administration (EIPA) for the assistance to ReSPA in accordance with article 242 1b of the Implementing rules of the Financing Regulation. EIPA is a non profit institution and the services it will provide will be directed to institutional support of ReSPA and to the benefit of the civil servants and consequently of their administrations.
- (9) The measures provided for by this Decision are in accordance with the opinion of the IPA Committee,

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

Article 1

The Multi-Beneficiary Financing Proposal 1 under the IPA Transition Assistance and Institution Building Component for 2008, as set out in the Annex, is hereby adopted.

This programme shall be implemented by centralised management and partly by joint management with the UNHCR and the UNDP.

The programme is implemented without Financing Agreements.

⁴ OJ L 357, 31.12.2002, p. 1 Regulation as last amended by Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 478/2007 (OJ L 111, 28.4.2007, p.13).

⁵ OJ L 248, 16.9.2002, p.1. Regulation as amended by Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1995/2006 (OJ L 390, 30.12.2006, p.1).

Article 2

The maximum amount of Community contribution shall be **EUR 6 million**, to be financed through Item 22.02.07.01 of the general budget of the European Communities for 2008.

Done at Brussels, [...]

For the Commission

[...]

Member of the Commission

ANNEX

MULTI-BENEFICIARY IPA PROGRAMME - FINANCING PROPOSAL 1

SUPPORT TO THE FOLLOWING INTERVENTIONS:

- (i) REFUGEE RETURN IN THE WESTERN BALKANS**
- (ii) DISASTER RISK REDUCTION IN SOUTH EAST EUROPE**
- (iii) REGIONAL SCHOOL FOR PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION IN SOUTH EAST EUROPE**

1. IDENTIFICATION

Beneficiaries	Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Kosovo (as defined by UNSCR 1244). In addition to the aforementioned Beneficiaries, Turkey is a Beneficiary of assistance provided under Disaster Risk Reduction.
CRIS number	2008/019-813, 2008/020-047
Year	2008
Cost	€6,000,000
Implementing Authority	Refugee Return: European Commission in joint management with the UNHCR. Disaster Risk Reduction: Activity I: European Commission in joint management with the UNDP Activity II: European Commission Regional School of Public Administration: European Commission
Final date for concluding the financing agreements	The programme is implemented without Financing Agreements.
Final dates for contracting	31 December 2009
Final dates for execution	2 years following the end date for contracting.
Sector Code	Refugee Return: 73010 (Reconstruction Relief and Rehabilitation) Disaster Risk Reduction: 74010 (Disaster Preparedness and Prevention)

	Regional School of Public Administration: 15140 (Government Administration)
Budget line(s) concerned	22.02.07.01: Regional and Horizontal Programmes
Programming Task Manager	Unit D3, Regional Programmes, DG Enlargement
Implementation Task Manager	Unit D3, Regional Programmes, DG Enlargement

2. PRIORITY AXES / (MEASURES) / PROJECTS

2. a Priority axes

This Multi-beneficiary Programme is designed to respond to Multi-beneficiary priority needs as indicated in the MIPD 2007-2009 taking into account activities taking place under the National Programmes, the guidance provided in the EU strategic documents, the lessons learned from the programming and implementation of previous EU assistance and the findings from consultations with amongst others, the Beneficiaries, International Financial Institutions, the Stability Pact, Civil Society Organisations and European Commission services.

The overall objective of aid to be provided under this Commission Decision is to address the following areas:

- i. Refugee Return in the Western Balkans (Supporting Civil Society, Section 2.2.6 of the Multi-beneficiary MIPD 2007-2009);
- ii. Disaster Risk Reduction in South East Europe (Justice and Home Affairs, Section 2.2.3 of the Multi-beneficiary MIPD 2007-2009);
- iii. Establish a Regional School for Public Administration in South East Europe (Public Administration, Section 2.2.5 of the Multi-beneficiary MIPD 2007-2009);

Assistance targets in particular, reconciliation, reconstruction and political cooperation, with a view to supporting the implementation of the Stabilisation and Association Process in South East Europe.

2. b Description of projects grouped per priority axis and (if relevant) per measure

A summary of the project purpose, results, measurable indicators and activities for each of the areas to be supported is provided below. Further details are provided in the annexed Project Fiches.

(i) Refugee Return in the Western Balkans:

Project Purpose:

- Work on and enhance voluntary return movements (including transport of belongings for vulnerable returning families) from Serbia, Republic of Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina and subsequent re-integration in the regions and countries of origin, in particular Croatia;
- Ensure access to property/housing rights/assistance in Croatia: Provide legal advice to refugees on housing matters such as repossession, housing reconstruction and housing care

programmes for ex- Occupancy and Tenancy Rights holders by ensuring that appropriate policies are formulated and implemented and agreed commitments fulfilled;

- Achieve non-discriminatory access to rights, including acquired rights such as pensions;
- Provide further technical assistance to the Task Forces of the respective countries on the completion of their national road maps and monitor and report on their implementation;
- Provide legal assistance to refugees/returnees/internally displaced persons (including coverage of legal fees, counselling, and court representation);
- Produce impartial quality information for internally displaced persons from Kosovo on return related issues and about their places of origin;
- Facilitate local integration of refugees in Serbia through inputs to economic self-reliance.

Expected Results and Measurable Indicators:

Expected Results

- Decreased number of refugees and internally displaced persons through repatriation and integration.

Measurable Indicators

- Increased numbers of refugees/ internally displaced persons in Serbia fully informed about the situation in Kosovo and able to take a decision on their return or non-return;
- Increased number of refugees/ internally displaced persons aware about their rights before going back to their country of origin;
- Increased number of refugees/ internally displaced persons who found durable solutions to be fully integrated in their hosting country.

Activities:

- Legal advice and counselling to return candidates and returnees in Bosnia & Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia and Croatia;
- TV activities fostering informed decisions for refugees from Croatia and Internally Displaced Persons from Kosovo in Serbia;
- Go-and-see visits to and go-and-inform visits from Kosovo;
- Provision of partial self help, agricultural inputs and assistance in self-employment (trainings) for refugees from Croatia and Bosnia & Herzegovina who opted for local integration in Serbia as their durable solution;
- Repatriation assistance to eligible refugees in the form transportation of persons and refugee belongings from Serbia and Bosnia & Herzegovina;
- Monitoring and facilitating activities pertaining to the 3x4 Initiative including coordination and visibility-oriented activities.

(ii) Disaster Risk Reduction in South-East Europe:

Project Purpose:

- Facilitate the establishment of a regional strategy for disaster risk reduction in the Western Balkans and Turkey.
- Increase the availability of reliable regional level data that is crucial for vulnerability assessment.

Expected Results and Measurable Indicators:

Activity 1

Results

- Disaster risk reduction integrated into the national development plans
- Harmonized disaster risk reduction plans and procedures.

Measurable Indicators

- Drafted regional strategy for disaster risk reduction;
- Drafted legislation or updated existing legislation in disaster risk reduction;

Activity 2

Results

- Developed mechanism for information sharing and networking among all the countries in the region;
- Established centralized database on variables required for vulnerability and risk assessment, risk modelling and preparing management plans at regional level.

Measurable Indicators

- The IPA countries succeed to avoid the occurrence of recurrent natural disasters (floods, forest fires) or to mitigate their consequences;
- Available regional level data for vulnerability assessments and forecasts.

Activities:

Activity 1

- Technical assistance to the public administration to (i) better coordinate the existing disaster risk reduction plans at the national level between the various public services (ii) integrate the disaster risk reduction in the development plans
- Development of an harmonized disaster risk reduction plan at the regional level

Activity 2

- Development and strengthening of meteorological and hydrological monitoring and forecasting systems, both at the country and the regional levels. This support should increase data-gathering capacity and data quality, and to enhance data-sharing between the countries of the region as well as with the EU countries such as Greece, Bulgaria and Romania.
- Development of early warning systems through media such as radio and TV.
- Regional workshops between civil servants from public administrations for knowledge dissemination and sharing, and further cooperation between services of relevant countries.

(iii) Establish a Regional School for Public Administration in South East Europe:

Project Purpose:

- Assist in the development of a Regional School of Public Administration (ReSPA) and to develop its capacity to deliver professional training, in liaising with the National Schools and Agencies in order to develop coherent and complementary actions to upgrade the professionalism of the Civil Service and to promote European Integration.

Expected Results and Measurable Indicators:

Activity 1

Results

- The equipment (IT equipment; mechanical equipment; electro-technical equipment; furniture; other school equipment) necessary for the operation of the School is in place.

Measurable indicators

- Equipment purchased and installed

Activity 2

Results

- Operation of ReSPA as a Regional professional School on Public Administration
- Administrative capacity of the beneficiaries strengthened

Measurable indicators

- Annual programmes elaborated
- +/-2.500 man/days /training delivered per year
- Cooperation between public administration institutions from the region and similar institutions in the European Union, as well as participation in international networks established
- Mobility schemes developed
- Web page and electronic news letters developed and /or maintained
- Methodological guidelines based on good practice for training and education programs developed
- Training sessions organised in cooperation with regional and EU institutions.

Activities:

Activity 1

- Refurbishment of the building and campus of ReSPA, including procurement of office equipment and furnishing of offices, meeting rooms, classrooms, library room, campus documentation and information room;
- IT equipment procurement and installation;

Activity 2

In order for ReSPA to become fully operational, assistance shall be provided both for the operation of the institution (development of its administrative capacity and of its capacity to prepare training programmes) and for the actual delivery of training. The assistance to ReSPA will be provided by the European Institute of Public Administration (EIPA) following the signature of a service contract. The long-term experience of EIPA will be transferred to ReSPA in order to enable it to operate on its own capacity in the future.

EIPA will assist ReSPA in fulfilling its objectives, as described in the Protocol of Cooperation for the Creation of ReSPA and focusing on:

- Improving regional cooperation in the field of public administration;
- Strengthening administrative capacity as required by the European integration process;

- Developing human resources in line with the principles of the European Administrative Space.

To this end EIPA will assist ReSPA to implement the activities described in the Protocol such as:

- Stimulating cooperation between public administration institutions from the region and similar institutions in the European Union, as well as participation in international networks;
- Holding seminars and summer/winter schools for public administration professionals, as well as an annual conference for public administration training and education institutions;
- Acting as a catalyst for trans-national communities of practice, through the implementation of training by mobility schemes allowing public servants to gain experience of different contexts;
- Sharing information resources through the publication of a newsletter, the creation of a joint electronic library, and the issuing of other specialized publications such as training materials.
- Developing methodological guidelines based on good practice for training and education programs, and encouraging innovation by reviewing existing ones;
- Strengthening the research base of training and education for public administration through joint study groups for comparative research on topics of immediate interest;
- Advising on the strengthening of the institutional framework for the management of quality training and education for public administration, including under the auspices of the network;
- Improving the availability and quality of training and education by delivering, in cooperation with national institutions, high quality programmes on issues relevant to the European integration process.

2. c Overview of past and on going assistance (EU / IFI / Bilateral and national assistance) including lessons learned and donor coordination

Past and ongoing assistance

From 2000 to 2007, over €57 million has been provided in assistance to candidate and potential candidate countries through the CARDS Regional, Phare Multi-Country and IPA Multi-beneficiary programmes. In financial terms, assistance provided under these programmes has addressed, in particular, socio-economic development through extensive and close collaboration with International Financial Institutions, which have helped the development of a functioning financial sector capable of supporting the expansion of the private sector and the needs of municipalities.

Equally important is the support that has been given to the regional cooperation process in the Western Balkans and certain areas of key importance for the European integration, such as tax and customs, statistics, public administration (SIGMA) and horizontal support via TAIEX.

Additional details on the assistance allocated under the CARDS, Phare and IPA programmes are provided in the table below:

Year	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	Total
CARDS	20,2	20	43,5	31,5	22	47,5	57,5		242,2

Phare					28,4	91,1	194,7		314,2
IPA								100,7	100,7
Overall Total	20,2	20	43,5	31,5	50,4	138,6	252,2	100,7	657,1

Table 1: Total European Community allocations to the CARDS Regional, Phare Multi-Country Programmes and IPA Multi-beneficiary Programme (*amounts in Euro millions*)¹

Lessons learned

In the management of previous and ongoing Multi-beneficiary IPA, CARDS Regional and Phare Multi-Country programmes a number of pertinent lessons have emerged through the project monitoring and evaluation reports as well as the evaluation report on the implementation of CARDS assistance to the Western Balkans which are applicable to this programme. In particular, the need for improved programme management, including the need to enhance communication and coordination with the Beneficiaries, is highlighted.

Beneficiaries have emphasized the importance of regular and timely communications regarding the Financing Proposals to facilitate their involvement and ownership of the programme. Consequently, detailed programme plans, which include timelines and the process for the distribution of draft documents for comment have been drafted, discussed and communicated to the Beneficiaries. Furthermore, Multi-beneficiary coordination meetings which take place regularly throughout the year allow for discussion on the status of programming and project implementation.

Further lessons learned at a project level are provided below:

(i) Refugee Return in the Western Balkans:

UNHCR has implemented the regional programme for the last two years and has drawn some lessons from this experience. Among them, the need to move away from a sheer refugee return process to the provision of durable and sustainable solutions to the refugees and Internally Displaced Persons has been raised during the Steering Committee. The European Commission shares this view and the programme has been rearranged taking into account this new orientation. As an example, besides the assistance to the voluntary repatriation of refugees from Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia to Croatia, other activities have been proposed to enable local integration, such as the provision of partial self help and agricultural inputs for refugees who opted for local integration in Serbia as their durable solution.

Another element to take into consideration is the increased internally displaced persons representation in Kosovo amongst the associations. Any project will have to make the best of these new developments in the ground.

(ii) Disaster Risk Reduction in South-East Europe:

Since the projects proposed are the very first steps in the IPA disaster risk reduction initiative, it is too early to draw lessons from past experience in this area. However, recent risk and

¹ Note: The CARDS figures indicated include assistance from Phare and Obnova where relevant in 2000 and from CARDS 2001 and onwards. In 2005 and 2006, the amounts indicated for Phare include those allocated to multi-country programmes from the Turkey pre-accession instrument. The CARDS Regional Programmes of 2004, 2005 and 2006 include respectively €15m, €15m and €1.9m for Cross-Border Cooperation.

vulnerability assessments, as well as analysis of national disaster management plans in South Eastern Europe, have developed a series of recommendations based on the results of previous and/or ongoing activities in the region:

- National policies and legislation in most of the countries are focused on rescue and relief activities. There is a need to shift from this approach to disaster preparedness and prevention by incorporating disaster management into the development plan of the country and by giving ample scope for trans-boundary cooperation and activities for disaster risk management;
- It is observed that there are a greater number of regional bodies/committees constituted than effective coordinated activities in the region for disaster risk management. Future activities should be focused to reviving and strengthening the existing bodies rather than establishing new ones;
- At country level, a single ministry should handle disaster management activities within the country. There should be active association and coordination of national and local government, emergency managers, NGOs, WMO representatives, and media in each country.

(iii) Establish a Regional School for Public Administration in South East Europe:

Phase zero and one of the project have proven that all beneficiary countries are strongly committed to this project. It should, however, be noted that for each step a long consultation procedure between the Commission and the beneficiary countries should take place. The selection of the seat of ReSPA and the purchase of the relevant equipment, so that it would be fully operation would speed up the development of the institution and its establishment in the region.

Donor Coordination

Coordination and coherence of assistance and activities is particularly important, given the large number of players involved. The need for improved coordination and coherence has been highlighted to the Commission during consultations as a continuing concern by the authorities of the region.

Efforts are being made by DG Enlargement to improve coordination in this area. Regular meetings are organised throughout the year for example, with Beneficiaries, Delegations and stakeholders (including for example an International Financial Institutions (IFI) days, Donor Coordination days).

The Commission has endeavoured to establish a transparent consultation process with in particular the Beneficiaries. This process is aimed at enhancing, as far as possible, local ownership of the choices, content and design of the programmes. Consultations take place at a regular interval during the programming phase with the Beneficiaries and other stakeholders. Particular importance should be given to the role of the Regional Cooperation Council as the interlocutor for the Beneficiaries in particular for the Regional Cooperation Process in the Western Balkans.

Other coordination activities include:

European Commission chairs an Advisory Group with the International Financial Institutes, with sub-groups for the areas of energy, transport, environment and the social sector;

An amended Memorandum of Understanding was signed in 2006 with several International Financial Institutions, and the Commission in liaison with the European Investment Bank confirmed its commitment to enhancing cooperation with the International Financial

Institutions supporting the pre-accession process of candidate and potential candidate countries;

European Commission has played an active role in the Stability Pact for South East Europe and as mentioned above, close collaboration will be ensured with its successor organisation, the Regional Cooperation Council;

European Commission maintains bilateral relations with governments to ensure its actions complement and build on national efforts;

European Commission Delegations and the European Agency for Reconstruction (EAR) as appropriate organise regular meetings between Member States, Beneficiaries and other involved organisations (such as International Financial Institutions) to ensure monitoring and coordination throughout the programming cycle;

DG Enlargement staff responsible for the implementation of the Multi-beneficiary programmes participate in regional networks and structures to facilitate coordination amongst the stakeholders and donors active in the region.

2. d Horizontal issues

- **Equal opportunities and non-discrimination** will be respected as regarding gender as well as minorities;
- **Minority and vulnerable groups' concerns** will be reflected in all activities programmed under IPA, in particular when it concerns public services, legislative matters and socio-economic development;
- **Environmental** considerations will be duly reflected in all IPA financed activities in addition to specific actions in particular as concerns Environmental Impact Assessments.

2. e Conditions

There should be a political consensus within the countries as well as in the region to support the initiatives pertaining to this Financing Decision.

2. f Benchmarks

	N		N+1(cumulative)		N+2 cumulative)	
	EU	NF*	EU	NF*	EU	NF*
Number of tenders launched ReSPA			1			
Number of Contribution Agreements UNHCR UNDP			2			

Number of Direct Grants						
World Meteorological Organisation			1			
Number of Service Contracts (negotiated procedure)						
ReSPA			1			
Contracting Rate (%)			100			

* In case of parallel national co-financing

3. BUDGET (AMOUNTS IN EUR)

3.1 Indicative budget table

	EU – IPA assistance				Total co-financing *		Total (IPA plus Co-financing)	
	Institution Building	Investment	Total in EUR	Total in %	EUR	(%)	EUR	(%)
Priority Axe 06: Horizontal and Regional Support								
(i) Refugee Return								
Refugee Return	1,000,000		1,000,000				1,000,000	
Sub-total							1,000,000	
(ii) Disaster Preparedness								
Technical Assistance	1,000,000		1,000,000				1,000,000	
Development of early warning systems	1,000,000		1,000,000				1,000,000	

Sub-total							2,000,000	
(iii) Regional School for Public Administration								
Refurbishment of the building and campus	1,000,000		1,000,000				1,000,000	
Technical Assistance	2,000,000		2,000,000				2,000,000	
Sub-total							3,000,000	
TOTAL			6,000,000				6,000,000	100%

* public and private national and/or international contributions

3.2 Principle of Co-Financing applying to the projects funded under the programme

The Community contribution which represents up to 100% of the total budget allocated to this programme has been calculated in relation to the eligible expenditure which in the case of centralised and joint management is based on total expenditure. The final percentage of the Community contribution of the total budget allocated to this programme will be determined in the Contributions Agreements depending on the contribution from International Organisations.

4. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

4.1 Method of implementation

(i) Refugee Return in the Western Balkans:

It is appropriate to implement the Refugee Return in the Western Balkans project in joint management with the UNHCR, as the Commission and the UNHCR have elaborated this project jointly. To this end the Commission and the UNHCR will conclude a Contribution Agreement.

The contractual agreements to be signed with the International Organisation will fully observe the conditions laid down in articles 53 (d) of the Financial Regulation and 43 of its Implementing Rules. For UNHCR, the general conditions of the standard mode for International Organisations published on the AIDCO Website (revised version of 2007) will thus supplement the Financial and Administrative Framework Agreement signed in April 2003 between the European Commission and the United Nations Organisation.

(ii) Disaster Risk Reduction in South-East Europe:

Activity 1:

It is fitting to implement Activity 1 of the Disaster Risk Reduction in South East Europe Project in joint management with the UNDP as the Commission and UNDP have elaborated the project jointly. To this end the Commission and the UNDP will conclude a contribution agreement.

The contractual agreements to be signed with the International Organisation will fully observe the conditions laid down in articles 53 (d) of the Financial Regulation and 43 of its Implementing Rules. For UNDP, the general conditions of the standard mode for International Organisations published on the AIDCO Website (revised version of 2007) will thus supplement the Financial and Administrative Framework Agreement signed in April 2003 between the European Commission and the United Nations Organisation.

Activity 2:

Activity 2 of the Disaster Risk Reduction in South East Europe Project shall be implemented through a direct grant agreement with the World Meteorological Organisation given the extensive and exclusive experience and knowledge that the World Meteorological Organisation has in this area.

(iii) Establish a Regional School for Public Administration in South East Europe:

A tender for supplies will be launched by the European Commission for Activity 1.

A service contact will be signed with European Institute of Public Administration (EIPA) for the assistance to ReSPA in accordance with article 242 1b of the Implementing rules of the Financing Regulation. EIPA is a non profit institution and the services it will provide will be directed to institutional support of ReSPA and to the benefit of the civil servants and consequently of their administrations.

4.2 General rules for procurement and grant award procedures

Procurement shall follow the provisions of Part Two, Title IV of the Financial Regulation and Part Two, Title III, Chapter 3 of its Implementing Rules as well as the rules and procedures for service, supply and works contracts financed from the general budget of the European Communities for the purposes of cooperation with third countries adopted by the Commission on 24 May 2007 (C(2007)2034).

Grant award procedures shall follow the provisions of Part One, Title VI of the Financial Regulation and Part One, Title VI of its Implementing Rules.

The Commission shall also use the procedural guidelines and standard templates and models facilitating the application of the above rules provided for in the "Practical Guide to contract procedures for EC external actions" ("Practical Guide") as published on the EuropeAid website² at the date of initiation of the procurement or grant award procedure.

The general rules for procurement and grant award procedures shall be defined in the Contribution Agreement between the Commission and the UNHCR as well as the UNDP or another specialised agency of the UN implementing the Refugee Return in the Western Balkans project and the Disaster Risk Reduction in South East Europe project.

² http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/implementation/practical_guide/index_en.htm

5. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

5.1 Monitoring

The Commission may undertake any actions it deems necessary to monitor the programmes concerned. These actions may be carried out jointly with the international organisations concerned.

5.2 Evaluation

Programmes shall be subject to ex ante evaluations, as well as interim and, where relevant, ex post evaluations in accordance with Articles 57 and 82 of IPA Implementing Regulation, with the aim of improving the quality, effectiveness and consistency of the assistance from Community funds and the strategy and implementation of the programmes.

The results of ex ante and interim evaluation shall be taken into account in the programming and implementation cycle.

The Commission may also carry out strategic evaluations.

6. AUDIT, FINANCIAL CONTROL AND ANTI-FRAUD MEASURES

The accounts and operations of all parties involved in the implementation of this programme, as well as all contracts and agreements implementing this programme, are subject to, on the one hand, the supervision and financial control by the Commission (including the European Anti-Fraud Office), which may carry out checks at its discretion, either by itself or through an outside auditor and, on the other hand, audits by the European Court of Auditors. This includes measures such as ex-ante verification of tendering and contracting carried out by the Delegation in the Beneficiary Country.

In order to ensure the efficient protection of the financial interests of the Community, the Commission (including the European Anti-Fraud Office) may conduct on-the-spot checks and inspections in accordance with the procedures foreseen in Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) 2185/96³.

The controls and audits described above are applicable to all contractors, subcontractors and grant beneficiaries who have received Community funds.

7. LIMITED CHANGES

Limited changes in the implementation of this programme affecting essential elements listed under Article 90 of the Implementing Rules to the Financial Regulation, which are of an indicative nature⁴, may be undertaken by the authorising officer by delegation (AOD), or by the authorising officer by sub-delegation (AOSD), in line with the delegation of powers conferred upon him by the AOD, in accordance with the principles of sound financial management without an amending financing decision being necessary.

³ OJ L 292; 15.11.1996; p. 2

⁴ These essential elements of an indicative nature are, for grants, the indicative amount of the call for proposals and, for procurement, the indicative number and type of contracts envisaged and the indicative time frame for launching the procurement procedures.