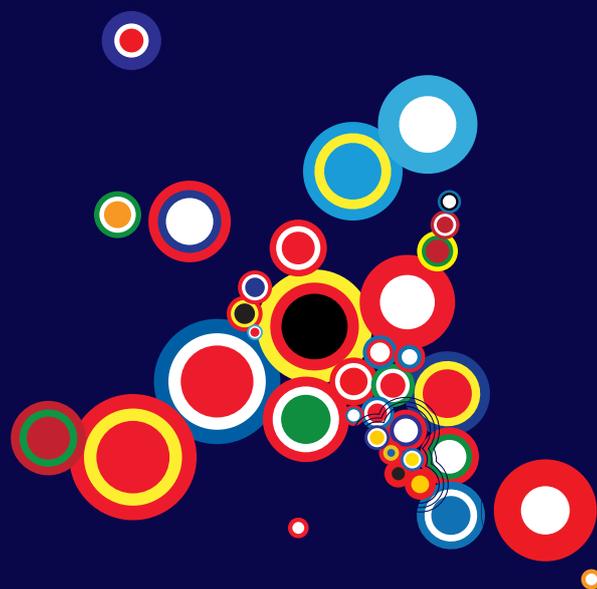




INSTRUMENT FOR PRE-ACCESSION ASSISTANCE (IPA II) 2014-2020

Kosovo*

Facility for implementation of
Political Priorities, including
Pristina-Belgrade Dialogue



Action Summary

The main objective of the action is to support Kosovo institutions in implementing measures related to urgent political priorities in support of Kosovo's European perspective, including those that may arise from the Pristina-Belgrade dialogue, the normalisation of relations with Serbia, the EULEX strategic review, visa liberalisation and any other political developments.

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

Action Identification	
Action Programme Title	2015 Annual Action Programme for Kosovo
Action Title	Facility for implementation of political priorities, including the Pristina-Belgrade dialogue
Action ID	IPA 2015/038065.2/Kosovo/Facility for implementation of political priorities, including the Pristina-Belgrade dialogue
Sector Information	
IPA II Sector	Democracy and Governance
DAC Sector	43010
Budget	
Total cost	EUR 3 000 000
EU contribution	100%
Management and Implementation	
Method of implementation	Direct Management
EU Delegation	European Union Office in Kosovo
Implementation responsibilities	European Union Office in Kosovo
Location	
Zone benefiting from the action	Kosovo
Specific implementation area(s)	Kosovo
Timeline	
Deadline for conclusion of the Financing Agreement	31 December 2016
Contracting deadline	3 years following the date of conclusion of Financing Agreement
End of operational implementation period	6 years following the date of conclusion of Financing Agreement

1. RATIONALE

PROBLEM AND STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

The European Union's involvement in Kosovo is based primarily on the Stabilisation and Association Process (SAP) with the Western Balkans, including the Progress Report. It provides support and guidance through the SAP Dialogue, the Indicative Strategy Paper for Kosovo (ISP), and the Stabilisation and Association Agreement, which was submitted to Council for signature and conclusion at the end of April. However, the European Union is also directly concerned by developments that fall outside the immediate scope of the SAP and should be able to support these where needed. The below provides a non-exhaustive summary of such developments:

Pristina-Belgrade Dialogue

On the basis of the UN General Assembly (UNGA) resolution adopted on 9 September 2010, a process of dialogue between Pristina and Belgrade started on 8 March 2011. The UNGA Resolution welcomed the readiness of the European Union to facilitate a process of dialogue between the parties; the process of dialogue in itself would be a factor for peace, security and stability in the region, and that dialogue would be to promote cooperation, achieve progress on the path to the European Union and improve the lives of people. The dialogue has been facilitated by the European External Action Service (EEAS), in close cooperation with the Commission. Agreements have been reached on civil registries, free movement, cadastre, customs stamps acceptance of university diplomas, Integrated Border Management and regional cooperation and representation. On 19 April, Pristina and Belgrade reached a mile-stone 'first agreement of principles on the normalisation of relations'. In May 2013, an action plan to help implement the agreement was agreed. The dialogue has not ended and will continue. For the implementation of existing and future agreements, financial and/or technical assistance will continue to be required.

Northern Kosovo

The European Commission has confirmed repeatedly that the people living in the north of Kosovo also need to benefit from the European perspective. To that end, the Commission underlined the importance of Kosovo launching a comprehensive agenda for the North. The municipalities in the North have been benefiting from EU assistance since 1999 with projects in areas of rule of law (return and reintegration, border/boundaries' management), reconstruction of cultural heritage sites, municipal infrastructure facilities, economic development and environment.

In its Conclusions of 5 December 2011, the Council invited Kosovo to launch an inclusive and long-term agenda for the North and welcomed the Commission's intention to offer its full support to this agenda. The Commission is implementing a special programme in support of the Pristina-Belgrade dialogue financed under IPA 2013, which has a particular focus on the North. To streamline Kosovo's and donors' efforts and thus improve the effectiveness and impact of assistance, the government has increased its overall efforts in terms of donor coordination. A detailed donor coordination structure with sector working groups and sub-sector working groups was established. Kosovo has set up an Aid Management Platform with the support of the donor community, notably the European Commission and the United States. This initiative should further improve aid management and coordination, facilitate the linkage between donor assistance and the government's work programme, improve the alignment with the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF), reduce transaction costs in gathering and reporting on donor assistance, improve the alignment of donor assistance with the government's sector wide strategies where available, and provide up-to-date and publicly available information on ongoing and planned aid activities. The European Commission itself puts strong emphasis on coordination with all other parties (bilateral and multilateral donors) through the regular bi-monthly coordination meetings chaired by the EU Office. This "Member States+" group comprises EU Member States, United States, Norway, Switzerland, Turkey, Japan, World Bank, Organization

for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), EULEX, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the United Nations (UN) resident representative.

Over the last two years, the implementation of projects in the four Northern municipalities has become more feasible, as the interest of municipalities and businesses, including farmers, as well as civil society organisations to address their needs through EU projects has steadily increased.

EULEX

EULEX Kosovo is the EU's largest Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) mission. The current EULEX mandate ends in June 2016. It provides for the gradual handover of responsibilities from EULEX to the Kosovo authorities. This process is accompanied by financial assistance from the EU within the framework of Kosovo's Rule of Law Assistance Strategy. Developments in the area of rule of law are likely to necessitate additional financial and/or technical assistance beyond the current EULEX mandate.

RELEVANCE WITH THE IPA II STRATEGY PAPER AND OTHER KEY REFERENCES

The Commission's annual Progress Reports on Kosovo identify the challenges Kosovo needs to address and the measures the EU can take to help Kosovo advance on the path of its European perspective. The Indicative Strategy Paper for Kosovo sets out the priorities for EU financial assistance for the period 2014-2020 to support Kosovo in fulfilling its European perspective. It translates the political priorities set out in the enlargement policy framework into key areas where financial assistance is most needed to meet the relevant criteria. All actions financed under this facility will be directly or indirectly related to the EU approximation process and Kosovo's EU reform agenda. Specific reference is included in the section IV of the Strategy Paper for Kosovo, where it is explicitly mentioned that IPA II will support the implementation of the EU facilitated Dialogue between Pristina and Belgrade, as well as all the developments of the EULEX mission.

SECTOR APPROACH ASSESSMENT

The activities under this project are horizontal and cut across several sub-sectors. Given their ad-hoc nature they will not be part of the sector approach. At the same time due care will be taken to ensure that all actions financed under this envelope will be coordinated with other IPA interventions that are programmed on the basis of the Indicative Strategy Paper for Kosovo.

LESSONS LEARNED AND LINK TO PREVIOUS FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Experience has shown that Kosovo requires financial assistance that responds quickly and flexibly to political developments and processes. While the General Technical Assistance Facility supports preparation and/or implementation of activities related to planned or ongoing IPA assistance and actions identified as necessary within the IPA programme and Kosovo's general EU reform agenda, this Facility specifically supports Kosovo in addressing the needs and requirements arising from the political developments and processes described above.

2. INTERVENTION LOGIC

LOGICAL FRAMEWORK MATRIX

OVERALL OBJECTIVE	OBJECTIVELY VERIFIABLE INDICATORS (OVI)	SOURCES OF VERIFICATION	
<p>To support measures related to urgent political priorities in support of Kosovo's European perspective, including those that may arise from the Pristina-Belgrade dialogue, the normalisation of relations with Serbia, the EULEX review, and any other political developments that cannot be foreseen</p>	<p>Progress by Kosovo on the political criteria</p>	<p>Annual Progress Report</p>	
SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE	OBJECTIVELY VERIFIABLE INDICATORS (OVI)	SOURCES OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTIONS
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To support the practical implementation of agreements reached within the Pristina-Belgrade Dialogue; 2. To support an inclusive and long-term agenda for Northern Kosovo; 3. To support Kosovo authorities during and after EULEX phasing-out; 4. To support any other action directly relevant to Kosovo's European perspective and EU reform agenda. 	<p>Agreements reached within the Pristina-Belgrade dialogue are being implemented;</p> <p>Number of businesses established or supported in Northern Kosovo</p> <p>Number of benchmarks met on transition of tasks between EULEX and GoK</p>	<p>Annual Progress Report.</p> <p>Project reports.</p> <p>EULEX reports.</p>	<p>Government allocates sufficient resources to and capacity to implement the agreements reached in the Pristina-Belgrade Dialogue;</p> <p>Kosovo starts implementing its agenda for Northern Kosovo;</p> <p>The security situation in Northern Kosovo allows for unimpeded</p>

			implementation of projects; The Strategic Review of EULEX, including the relevant benchmarks, is implemented;
Results	Objectively verifiable indicators (OVI)	Sources of Verification	Assumptions
<p>1. Substantial progress has been made in the implementation of agreements reached within the framework of the Pristina-Belgrade dialogue;</p> <p>2. Substantial progress has been made in the socio-economic development of Northern Kosovo and mutual trust between communities has increased;</p> <p>3. The capacity of Kosovo authorities to assume their responsibilities has been strengthened following EULEX phasing out</p> <p>4. Kosovo's capacity to make progress on its European perspective and implement its EU reform agenda has been improved.</p>	<p>Agreements reached within the Pristina-Belgrade dialogue are being implemented;</p> <p>Number of businesses established or supported in Northern Kosovo</p> <p>Number of benchmarks met on transition of tasks between EULEX and GoK.</p>	<p>Annual Progress Report.</p> <p>Project reports.</p> <p>EULEX reports.</p>	
ACTIVITIES	MEANS	OVERALL COST	ASSUMPTIONS
Depending on the needs related to the Pristina-Belgrade dialogue, the future of EULEX mission, and other political processes described above, the project will be implemented through twinning/twinning light /service /framework /grant contracts as well as works and supply contracts where the need for a rapid response of the Commission to non-programmable events is such that the duration of the procedure to amend this decision would frustrate the purpose of such response.	Service, supplies, and works contracts, grants, twinning, twinning light,	EUR 3.0 million	

ADDITIONAL DESCRIPTION

The specific activities foreseen under this facility are yet to be identified. Assistance under this facility will target, but not exclusively, areas such as the rule of law, decentralisation, trade, economic development (including macro-economic and fiscal mechanisms), private sector development, public administration reform, employment and social policies, education, training and research, culture and the EU perspective and minority communities, sectorial approximation (energy, the environment and transport) and building institutional capacity. Activities will include institution-building and investment that are directly related to the EU approximation process, Kosovo's European perspective and its EU reform agenda, with particular focus on the implementation of the Pristina-Belgrade Dialogue, the Visa Liberalisation Process and the future of EULEX.

3. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The EU Office in Kosovo is in charge of implementing the EU assistance to Kosovo and it will work closely with the Government of Kosovo, mainly Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Internal Affairs to ensure that the actions identified under this facility are in line with the Strategy Paper and Kosovo's development strategies in different sectors.

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

Depending on the needs related to the Pristina-Belgrade dialogue, the future of EULEX mission, and other political processes described above, the project will be implemented through twinning/twinning light /service /framework /grant contracts as well as works and supply contracts where the need for a rapid response of the EU to non-programmable events is such that the duration of the procedure to amend this decision would frustrate the purpose of such response.

Actions to be financed in the context of this action document will tend to be politically sensitive and require particularly speedy implementation and/or high level of discretion. Limited absorption capacities of the potential IPA II beneficiaries of the action will also have to be taken into account, particularly in Northern Kosovo. The implementation modalities of the projects arising under this action will be closely discussed with the Kosovo Unit in DG NEAR as well as the IPA II beneficiaries and the best possible option will be considered.

For these reasons, a number of derogations from standard PRAG procedures may be required. Possible derogations include: use of negotiated procedure, shortening of deadlines for work tenders, lowering of thresholds for contracts.

4. PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

METHODOLOGY FOR MONITORING (AND EVALUATION)

The Commission may carry out a mid-term, a final or an ex-post evaluation for this Action or its components via independent consultants, through a joint mission or via an implementing partner. In case a mid-term or final evaluation is not foreseen, the Commission may, during implementation, decide to undertake such an evaluation for duly justified reasons either on its own decision or on the initiative of the partner. The evaluations will be carried out as prescribed by the DG NEAR guidelines for evaluations. In addition, the Action might be subject to external monitoring in line with the EC

rules and procedures set in the Financing Agreement. The projects arising under this facility will be subject to ROM monitoring and the findings will feed into future project implementation.

INDICATOR MEASUREMENT

Indicator	Baseline (2010)	Milestone (2017)	Target (2020)	Final Target (beyond 2020)	Source of information
Agreements reached within the Pristina-Belgrade dialogue are being implemented;	n/a	50%	100%	100%	AOSD reports produced by the EU office in Kosovo Mid-term review of IPA 2014-2020
Number of businesses established or supported in Northern Kosovo <i>(this indicator has no baseline and the number of businesses supported is based on the no of contracts from the north GS)</i>	0	60	100	100	Project reports
Number of benchmarks met on transition of tasks between EULEX and GoK					EULEX Reports

5. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND GENDER MAINSTREAMING

The EU Office in Kosovo has done a lot of work during the preparation of IPA 2015 programme to ensure that gender is mainstreamed. The more specific objectives of this support have been to increase the gender equality-related specific actions and to further mainstream gender within IPA 2015 Annual programme for Kosovo; and to assist Ministry of European Integration and Agency for Gender Equality, the line ministries to develop their capacities to assess the Action Documents from a gender perspective through tailored and sector-wide on-the-job training and coaching. This is particularly important for the EU approximation process, as EU gender equality acquis is a very voluminous and crucial component of the acquis. As institutional learning and capacity development takes time, MEI, AGE and line ministries will continue to undergo capacity building towards gender mainstreaming in all IPA programming. This includes in particular improving a participatory approach to programming that considers the potentially differing needs of women and men, as well as improving the collection and usage of data disaggregated by gender, towards better informing all programming.

Equal opportunities and non-discrimination against women, minority and vulnerable groups (including children, disabled and elderly people) will be taken into consideration in all aspects of EU-funded activities, particularly in relation to public services, legislative matters and socio-economic support programmes.

ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE (AND IF RELEVANT DISASTER RESILIENCE)

Environmental considerations will be duly reflected in all IPA-financed activities, in addition to specific actions supporting the environment, in particular environmental impact assessments. This is particularly relevant where there could potentially be a strong environmental impact, such as in the case of financing of investments, new legislation, etc. Disaster resilience and risk prevention and management will be integrated in the planning, preparation and implementation of projects where relevant

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

Civil Society /Stakeholders involvement will be taken into consideration in all aspects of EU-funded activities, particularly in relation to all rule of law, public services, legislative matters and socio-economic support programmes in order to support civil society organisations to strengthen their capacities and professionalism, allowing them to engage in an effective dialogue with public and private actors and to monitor developments in areas such as the rule of law and respect for fundamental rights.

MINORITIES AND VULNERABLE GROUPS

During the implementation of the activities under this action, a special focus will be given to offering equal opportunities for everyone, including minority groups involved in the public sector as well as in the private service sector. The aim will be to contribute to multi-ethnic representation in the institutions benefiting from this projects, which will address the ethnic groups fairly and equitably in accordance with the law, along with other marginalised groups. Special attention will be paid to ensuring involvement of women from diverse minority groups, many of whom are particularly marginalized from decision-making processes.

6. SUSTAINABILITY

Not applicable as the individual measures to be financed under this project cannot be identified yet, nevertheless this type of assistance has proved to be extremely useful for the sustainability of the overall EU assistance to Kosovo especially as the interest and ownership of the Government of Kosovo for these types of activities is increasing continuously.

7. COMMUNICATION AND VISIBILITY

Communication and visibility will be given high importance during the implementation of the Action.

The implementation of the communication activities shall be the responsibility of the IPA II beneficiary, and shall be funded from the amounts allocated to the Action.

The European Union Office in Kosovo has developed clear visibility guidelines and ensures that all projects which are implemented in Kosovo are fully in line with these guidelines. Project visibility is also clearly stipulated in all contractual documents whereby the contractors/implementers are obliged to adhere to all EU visibility requirements as stipulated in the Communication and Visibility Manual for EU External Actions.

Visibility and communication actions shall demonstrate how the intervention contributes to the agreed programme objectives and the EU approximation process. Actions shall be aimed at strengthening general public awareness and support of interventions financed and the objectives pursued. The actions shall aim at highlighting to the relevant target audiences the added value and impact of the

EU's interventions. Visibility actions should also promote transparency and accountability on the use of funds.

It is the responsibility of the IPA II beneficiary to keep the EU Office fully informed of the planning and implementation of the specific visibility and communication activities.

The IPA II beneficiary shall report on its visibility and communication actions in the report submitted to the IPA monitoring committee and the sectoral monitoring committees.

Many of the projects developed in the context of the above-mentioned processes will be politically sensitive and therefore require a certain level of discretion. In such cases, in order not to endanger the success of such projects, deviation from the standard visibility guidelines will be required.