

EUROPEAN
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Brussels, 27.8.2014
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COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING DECISION

of 27.8.2014

**adopting a Support Measure for Monitoring Programme for the year 2014 under the
Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA II)**

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THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,

Having regard to Regulation (EU) No 236/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2014 laying down common rules and procedures of the implementation of the Union's Instruments for financing external action¹ (hereinafter referred to as 'CIR'), and in particular Article 3 (3) thereof,

Having regard to Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union and repealing Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002² (hereinafter referred to as 'Financial Regulation'), and in particular Article 84(2) thereof,

Whereas:

- (1) The IPA II Regulation³ lays down the objectives and main principles for pre-accession assistance to beneficiaries listed in Annex I of that Regulation.
- (2) In accordance with Article 7 of the IPA II Regulation the assistance should be implemented through annual or multi-annual, country-specific or multi-country programmes. These programmes should be drawn up in accordance with the framework for assistance referred to in Article 4 of the IPA II Regulation and the relevant country or multi-country indicative strategy papers referred to in Article 6 of that Regulation.
- (3) The Council established an Accession Partnership or a European Partnership for all beneficiaries listed in Annex I of the IPA II Regulation. The Commission adopted a Multi-country Indicative Strategy Paper for the period 2014-2020⁴ on 30 June 2014 which provides indicative allocations for the priorities for multi-country pre-accession assistance.
- (4) The monitoring programme for the year 2014 aims at providing assistance for monitoring action.
- (5) It is necessary to adopt a financing decision, the detailed rules of which are set out in Article 94 of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012 of 29 October 2012 on the rules of application of Regulation No 966/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union⁵ (hereinafter referred to as 'the Rules of Application').

¹ OJ L 77, 15.3.2014, p. 95.

² OJ L 298, 26.10.2012, p.1.

³ Regulation (EU) No 231/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2014 establishing an Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance, OJ L 77, 15.3.2014, p. 11.

⁴ C(2014)4293, 30.6.2014.

⁵ OJ L 362, 31.12.2012, p. 1.

- (6) The maximum contribution of the European Union set by this Decision should cover any possible claims for interest due for late payment on the basis of Article 92 of the Financial Regulation and Article 111(4) of its Rules of Application.
- (7) It is necessary to define the term "non-substantial change" within the meaning of Article 94(4) of the Rules of Application to ensure that any such changes can be adopted by the authorising officer by delegation, or under his or her responsibility, by sub-delegation (hereinafter referred to as the 'responsible authorising officer').
- (8) The measures provided for in this Decision do not fall in the categories of measures for which the opinion of the Committee referred to in Article 13 of IPA II Regulation is required. The IPA Committee should be informed of this Decision within one month following its adoption,

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

Article 1

Adoption of the measure

The support measure for the Monitoring Programme 2014 under the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA II) as set out in the Annex, is hereby adopted.

Article 2

Financial contribution

The maximum amount of the European Union contribution for the implementation of the support measure referred to in Article 1 is set at EUR 4 000 000 and shall be financed from the budget line 22.02.04.01 of the general budget of the EU for the year 2014.

The financial contribution referred to in the first sub-paragraph may also cover interest due for late payment.

Article 3

Implementation modalities

This programme shall be implemented by direct management.

Article 4

Non-substantial changes

The following changes shall not be considered substantial provided that they do not significantly affect the nature and objectives of the actions:

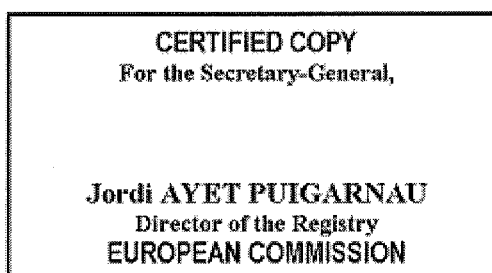
- a) increases or decreases of the contribution referred to in the first paragraph of Article 2 by not more than 20% of the initial contribution and not exceeding EUR 10 million;
- b) cumulated reassignments of funds between specific actions not exceeding 20% of the initial contribution;
- c) extensions of the implementation period;
- d) within the limits of 20% referred to in paragraphs a) and b) above, up to 5 % of the contribution referred to in the first paragraph of Article 2 of this financing decision may serve to finance actions which were not foreseeable at the time the present financing decision was adopted, provided that those actions are necessary to implement the objectives and the results set out in the programme.

The use of contingencies shall be taken into account in the ceiling referred to in this Article.

The responsible authorising officer may adopt such non-substantial changes in accordance with the principles of sound financial management and proportionality.

Done at Brussels, 27.8.2014

For the Commission
Štefan FÜLE
Member of the Commission



ANNEX 1

Support Measure for Monitoring Programme for the year 2014 under the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA II)

1 IDENTIFICATION

Beneficiary	Beneficiaries listed in Annex I of the IPA II Regulation (IPA II beneficiaries)
CRIS decision number	2014/031-607
Year	2014
Total cost	EUR 4 million
EU Contribution	EUR 4 million
Budget line	22.02.04.01
Management mode/ Entrusted Entity	Direct management by the European Commission
Final date for contracting	at the latest by 31 December 2015
Final date for operational implementation	at the latest by 31 December 2018
Programming Unit	DG Enlargement – Regional Cooperation and Programmes Unit – D3
Implementing Unit/ EU Delegation	DG Enlargement – Regional Cooperation and Programmes Unit – D3

2 DESCRIPTION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME

(1) Description of the programme, objective, expected results and key performance indicators

The overall objective of the monitoring programme is to enhance the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of assistance in the IPA Beneficiaries. Monitoring provides the Commission with regular analytical assessments on implementation of actions/projects and programmes. This programme covers the monitoring of actions/projects financed from the IPA I and II managed by Commission Headquarters or through EU Delegations.

EU assistance to Turkey has been and continues to be implemented through decentralised management and consequently the monitoring of programmes is principally undertaken by the Turkish authorities.

Today, the monitoring programme has six principal beneficiaries, namely Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, as well as Kosovo* but it also includes Turkey for the regional/multi-beneficiary IPA programmes.

The European Commission introduced results-oriented external cooperation in line with the principles of the Paris Declaration in Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Agenda for Action. This strategic choice has been translated on different levels, one of them being the Results-Oriented Monitoring (ROM) of projects and programmes. The ROM system was established in 2000 to provide external, objective and impartial feedback on the performance of aid projects and programmes financed by the EU. This includes the IPA I and II that support the pre-accession preparations of the IPA I and II beneficiaries. ROM is part of the overall quality assurance cycle of the Commission applicable to the whole project cycle.

The availability of independent, reliable, informative and timely information on programme performance makes an important contribution to those held accountable for the results of programmes, enhances the implementation of the evaluation function, improves the decisions for the present and future allocation of EU funds to programmes in the context of the monitoring and reporting framework set up for IPA II. ROM is beneficial for the Commission and to the administrations in the IPA I and II beneficiaries in providing useful feedback on the performance of programmes to date and on the lessons for further programming of IPA assistance. The results of the monitoring assessments will be taken into consideration by the IPA Monitoring Committee and Sectoral monitoring committees, set up by DG Enlargement and the IPA II beneficiaries, entitled to review the overall effectiveness, quality and coherence of all actions towards meeting the objectives set out in the IPA II strategic planning and programming documents and assess progress by means of indicators.

IPA I and II programmes are designed to help the IPA I and II beneficiaries modernise their legal and public service frameworks to meet the requirements for their accession to the EU. The IPA I and II programmes also seek to prepare the IPA I and II beneficiaries to take full advantage of EU membership while fully discharging their commitments to respect the EU treaty obligations that they assume on accession. They require a transfer of knowledge and expertise across a wide range of sectors and public administration disciplines. The monitoring and assessment of the performance of IPA I and II programmes is demanding and needs a coherent, professional based structure to be effective. The ROM methodology provides this.

The ROM system gathers information on actions/projects in the field and is based on analyses of the relevant action/project documents, site visits and consultations with relevant stakeholders in project implementation whether or not identified in the original design of the project. This will form a basis for a portfolio analysis of the performance of a cross section of programmes by country, by sector or by intervention type. This higher level analysis (country specific assessment, sector assessment, etc.) is particularly useful for informing higher level decision making on the direction of the intervention strategy. At the highest level, the ROM reporting system will include recommendations or lessons learned. This information is mainly provided to the Commission through reports on the technical and managerial aspects of project implementation and can assist the Commission in:

- ensuring that actions/projects and other activities remain on course to attain their objectives;

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence.

- obtaining early feedback from action/project implementation to subsequent project design in advance of conclusions from possible ex-post evaluations;
- reporting to the Member States, the European Parliament and the Council.

Both the ROM methodology and the organisation of ROM have evolved significantly since the IPA I was introduced in 2007. At present, the ROM reports are valued by the programme managers and by the Beneficiaries for providing useful and constructive observations on programme performance and reliable conclusions and analysis in cases of problematic performance.

A key lesson learned from recent ROM is that it is possible to achieve a high coverage of IPA programmes. This means that the current selection parameters for ROM assessments delivers a representative coverage which makes the information in the macro level analysis of ROM grades more useful to decision makers. Therefore, ROM will be more oriented towards performance review of the progress achieved related to results at the sector (programme and action/project) level focusing on the operational and intervention dimension. Furthermore, ROM should be focused on actions/projects and programmes both at national and multi-country level, in order to monitor their implementation and to provide relevant, balanced inputs for the implementation of the evaluation function. In selecting the actions/projects to be monitored the contracting authorities will emphasize the actions/projects, which present clear risks or are problematic and actions/projects in expertise areas not covered by existing staff.

The core elements of the ROM methodology are suitable for use in the context of IPA in the Beneficiaries but would benefit from further evolution. Ex post ROM (in between classic ROM and ex-post evaluation) was successfully introduced to the region from 2011. The demand for ex post ROM has grown and it is seen as a useful tool for IPA in the context of follow-on IPA funded interventions. As the IPA II beneficiaries move closer to accession the factors influencing programme performance will change and this has consequences for the use of the ROM methodology.

ROM complements the monitoring and performance framework set up on IPA II programmes¹ and co-exists with other monitoring mechanisms such as self-monitoring by project managers, internal monitoring by the EU Delegations and partner countries' own monitoring mechanisms, which should all complement each other. It is also part of the overarching risk assurance system of the IPA I and II programmes and makes a potentially direct contribution to the successful spending of every IPA I and II allocation which falls within its remit. ROM provides benefits on three levels:

- at the micro level of an action/project or programme. ROM gives feedback to project managers on the performance of the operations under their responsibility and gives recommendations on how to improve this performance and, if necessary, put risk mitigation strategies in place.
- at the macro level of IPA I and II programme implementation and review. ROM provides a statistical overview of the performance of the pre-accession support with data comparable over time, across regions and between sectors.

¹ DG Enlargement Annual Management Plan 20014, Annex 5 Framework for monitoring, evaluation and reporting on programmes in the MFF 2014-2020.

- at the level of programming and learning. Quantitative and qualitative studies based on ROM data identify lessons learned and best practices that contribute to the programming and planning of new actions.

In addition, ROM plays a key role for the evaluation of programmes and projects. The recently adopted Communication² on improving evaluation recalls for strengthening the monitoring systems as a fundamental condition for better evaluation performance. Better evaluation is anchored in efficient and streamlined monitoring systems, which on the one hand ensures data on the performance of assistance and on the other hand supports decision making processes and enable taking corrective actions in a timely manner. Therefore, the ROM system and reports will be more closely linked with the evaluation function and the overall performance framework of IPA II assistance.

The key performance indicators for measuring the programme are:

Indicator	<i>Targets</i>	
	Year 2015	Year 2016
the minimum satisfaction ratings on ROM response sheets	80%	80%
minimum target percentage of number and value of eligible projects covered by ROM per year	90%	100%

(2) Assumptions and conditions

It is assumed that all Beneficiaries and other stakeholders are fully committed to the implementation of the programme. The commitment of the Beneficiaries to cooperate closely and to share knowledge as well as experiences is essential for the success of the programme.

The ROM approach requires the programme to be implemented in close cooperation with operational tasks managers in Headquarters and in EU Delegations and Beneficiaries in order to obtain an effective support to the decision-making process, to enhance the ownership of the ROM results by key stakeholders and to ensure that lessons learned from ROM reports are taken into consideration on the programming and implementation of assistance.

Contracting authorities put ROM at the centre of the assurance strategy and select actions/projects with difficulties in terms of risks, complexity and specialised expertise.

It is assumed that the Beneficiaries have the necessary understanding of the ROM methodology for a constructive engagement with the ROM contractor to derive the targeted benefit from the ROM outputs.

² COM(2013) 686 final, 2.10.2013 - Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions Strengthening the foundations of Smart Regulation – improving evaluation.

(3) Essential elements of the programme

Procurement:

- a) the global budgetary envelope reserved for procurement is EUR 4 000 000.
- b) the indicative number and type of contracts: a service contract following an international restricted tender to be managed centrally by the programming task manager.
- c) the indicative timeframe for launching the procurement procedure: third quarter of 2014. Contract to be signed in the first quarter of 2015.

3 BUDGET – INDICATIVE BUDGET TABLE – SUPPORT MEASURES

	Total for 2014 Monitoring programme (EUR)
DG Enlargement	4 000 000
Totals	4 000 000

4 IMPLEMENTATION MODALITIES AND GENERAL RULES FOR PROCUREMENT PROCEDURES

This programme shall be implemented in direct management by the Commission in accordance with article 58(1)(a) of the Financial Regulation and the corresponding provisions of its Rules of Application.

Procurement shall follow the provisions of Part Two, Title IV Chapter 3 of the Financial Regulation No 966/2012 and Part Two, Title II, Chapter 3 of its Rules of Application.

Parts One and Three of the Financial Regulation and its Rules of Application shall apply to external actions except as otherwise provided in Part Two, Title IV.

The Commission may also use services and supplies under its Framework Contracts concluded following Part One of the Financial Regulation.

5 PERFORMANCE MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS

As part of its performance measurement framework, the Commission shall monitor and assess progress towards achievement of the specific objectives set out in the IPA II Regulation on the basis of pre-defined, clear, transparent measurable indicators. The progress reports referred to in Article 4 of the IPA II Regulation shall be taken as a point of reference in the assessment of the results of IPA II assistance.

The Monitoring Programme is one of the tools established by the Commission to support performance measurement of financial assistance.

