



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

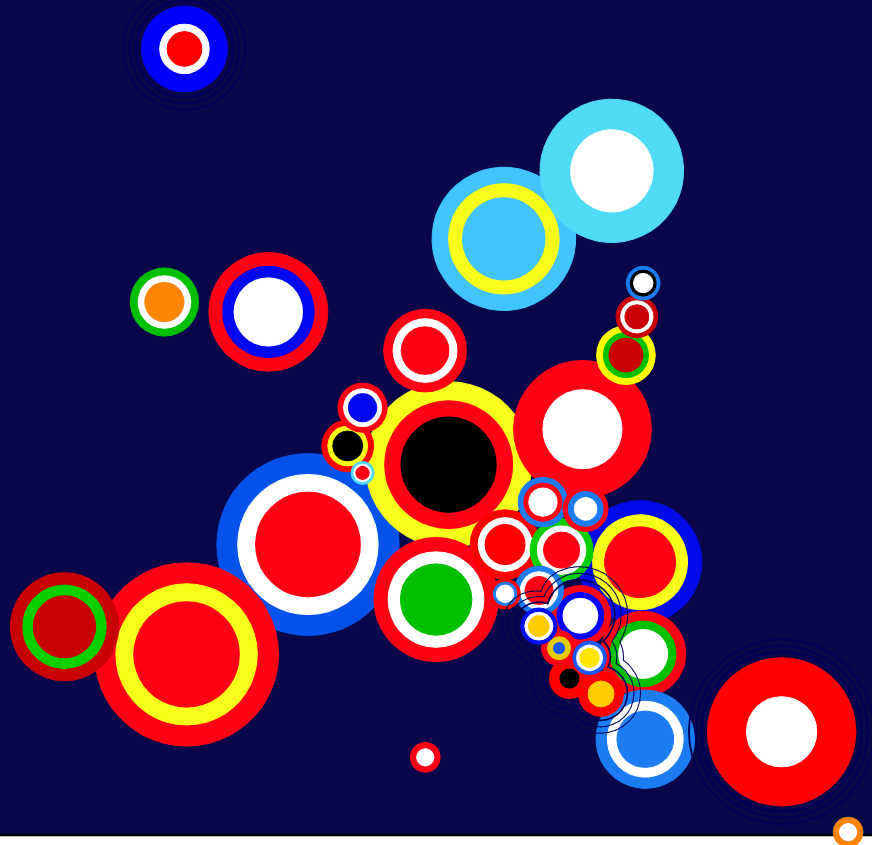
Directorate-General Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations

D – WESTERN BALKANS

D.5 – WESTERN BALKANS REGIONAL COOPERATION AND PROGRAMMES

MULTI-COUNTRY PROGRAMMES:

ACTIVITY REPORT: July – December 2014



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CONTACT

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For any additional information on specific projects, contact us via the same address and your e-mail will be forwarded to the relevant Task Manager in unit D.5 – WESTERN BALKANS REGIONAL COOPERATION AND PROGRAMMES.

LINK

http://ec.europa.eu/near/instruments/multi-country-programme/index_en.htm

CHAPTER 1: PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION REFORM (PAR)

1.1 SUPPORT FOR IMPROVEMENT IN GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT (SIGMA)

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary Programme under IPA Transition Assistance and Institution Building Component for the year 2013, IPA 2013/024-091
Project title:	Support for Improvement in Governance and Management (SIGMA) in the Western Balkans and Turkey
EU contribution:	EUR 10 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans and Turkey
Type of contract:	Contribution agreement with OECD
Contract reference:	CN 2013/319-423
Duration of activities:	01/07/2013 – 30/06/2015
Links:	http://www.sigmaweb.org
Contact :	Alberto Costa, alberto.costa@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

SIGMA supports Public Administration Reform (PAR) in the Western Balkans and Turkey, providing the beneficiaries with assistance to strengthen their legal frameworks, administrative capacities and processes for sound implementation of the EU *acquis*. Areas of intervention are: 1) legal framework and civil service management, 2) policy making and co-ordination, 3) public finance management, 4) public procurement, 5) public governance strategy and reform.

ACTIVITIES (JULY – DECEMBER 2014)

SIGMA provided analysis, advice and on-the-job-assistance to strengthen the functioning of Public Administration. In particular, SIGMA reviewed and provided input on: the Law on High State Control and on the Law on Public Procurement in Albania; the Law on Public Procurement in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; the Law on General Administrative Procedures in Kosovo* and Montenegro and assisted the Beneficiaries in improving a number of national

* 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.

strategies and action plans, such as the PFM Strategy; the Public Procurement Strategy and the Strategy for Development and Integration in Albania; the Anti-Fraud Strategy in Montenegro; the Strategy for the development of the Serbian Public Procurement System and the Public Administration Reform Strategies and Action plans in Albania, Kosovo and Serbia.

Following the specific country priorities, SIGMA also reviewed the Guidelines on Recruitment of the Civil Servants in Albania and the Internal Audit Manual in Montenegro and provided the beneficiaries in Albania, Kosovo and Serbia with targeted training covering internal and external audit, policy making and public procurement. In Montenegro, SIGMA delivered a training programme on legislative drafting.

In Montenegro and Serbia SIGMA participated in the PAR Special Group to provide technical support to policy discussions.

In addition, SIGMA finalised the Principles of Public Administration, which outline the key requirements of a well-functioning public administration and provide a common analytical framework to be used for SIGMA annual assessments. In fact the Principles also include a set of qualitative and quantitative indicators which allow to measure and track progress over time. The Principles have been presented during a ministerial Conference in Brussels and in country follow-up events where SIGMA also presented the operation tools for data collection.

OUTPUTS (JULY – DECEMBER 2014)

- Principles of Public Administration and related data collection sheets delivered in English and in local languages and shared with the Beneficiaries;
- Ministerial Conference on Public Administration Reform (Brussels, 12 November 2014) and 7 country-specific follow up events (November –December 2014);
- 7th Regional IPA Public Procurement Conference (Vlore, 9-10 September 2014);
- Publication on the most recent Public Procurement Cases in the EU Courts of Justice;
- Serbian PAR strategy and Action plan approved.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

- Delivery of SIGMA Baseline Measurement Country Reports based on the Principles of Public Administration;
- Publication of updated SIGMA Public Procurement Manual;
- Albanian PAR Strategy approved;
- Evaluation report of Montenegro PAR Strategy approved;
- New Public Private Partnership Legislation approved in Albania.

1.2 REGIONAL SCHOOL OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION (RESPA)

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary Programme, IPA 2013/024-091
Project title:	Mainstream of ReSPA Activities
EU contribution:	EUR 3.5 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans and Turkey
Type of contract:	Grant contract
Contract reference:	CN 2013/331-241
Duration of activities:	14/11/2013 – 15/11/2015
Links:	http://www.respaweb.eu/
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PURPOSE

The principal aim of ReSPA is to help improve regional cooperation in public administration among the Western Balkans; to strengthen administrative capacities as required by the European integration process; and to develop human resource capacities.

ACTIVITIES (JULY – DECEMBER 2014)

ReSPA mainly focused on networking activities for European Integration, Community of Practice on HRM, Public Private Partnership, e-Government, Ethics and Integrity, Public Administration Reform (PAR).

The Governing Board Meeting at Ministerial Level was held in Skopje where Ministers reconfirmed their support to ReSPA as an organization of great importance for sharing of experience, lessons learned and carrying out activities that are of common interest to all Members.

A new Mechanism for Urgent Needs of ReSPA Member States was introduced which enables member countries can have bilateral assistance from ReSPA in terms of expertise.

Moreover, several workshops were organised related to leadership development, human resources recruitment and retention strategies, as well as strategic planning in e-Government projects.

OUTPUTS (JULY – DECEMBER 2014)

Trainings/workshops, comparative studies, mobility schemes programmes and networking events contributed to strengthening capacities of the practitioners and identification of the main trends in the field of Public Administration Reform and EU integration. More specifically:

- The comparative study "Abuse of Information Technology for Corruption" was presented in a meeting in Tirana. The study comprises analysis of concrete cases illustrating how corruption offenders exploit weaknesses in IT structure for their personal benefit.

- The EU Integration (EUI) Programming Committee held two meetings where the members adopted the Rules of Procedures guiding the future work of this body, as well as discussed their role in assuring that ReSPA programme activities are in line and complementary to the national reform programmes.
- The members of the community of Practitioners on HRM discussed and reconfirmed the outline and the methodology of the comparative study in the area of HRM.
- The comparative study on Methodologies used for the Development of PAR Strategies was successfully completed and published.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

- Presentation of the comparative study on Development of PAR strategies at the PAR network meeting in January in Sarajevo.
- Consultation with stakeholders on the Work Program for 2015.
- Strengthening the focus on the work of the EU Integration Programme Committee and PAR network.
- Conducting long-term impact assessment of ReSPA activities.
- Planning of conducting comparative studies on Public Private Partnership; HRM related issues, PAR.
- In spring a conference on HRM, ReSPA Annual Conference

1.3 STATISTICAL COOPERATION

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary Programme, IPA 2011/023-176
Project title:	Statistical cooperation for the Western Balkans and Turkey
EU contribution:	EUR 8.2 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans, Iceland and Turkey
Type of contract:	Service contract and grants to 5 national statistical offices
Contract reference:	Service contract with GOPA Consultants, EUR 3.2 m Grant to Central Bureau of Statistics of Croatia, EUR 1.10 m Grant to Hagstofa Íslands, EUR 0.81 m Grant to State Statistical Office of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, EUR 0.88 m Grant to Statistical Office of Serbia, EUR 1.10 m Grant to Turkish Statistical Institute, EUR 1.08 m.
Duration of activities:	Service contract 01/07/2012 – 30/06/2014 Grants 01/09/2012 – 31/08/2014 (the grant to Statistics Iceland was terminated on 8/06/2014)
Link:	http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/about/our-partners/cooperation
Contact:	Torbioern.Carlquist@ec.europa.eu Eurostat

PURPOSE

The overall objective is to prepare the statistical authorities in the beneficiaries for future EU membership by aligning their present methodologies and practices with the EU acquis in statistics and integrating them into the European Statistical System.

ACTIVITIES (JULY – DECEMBER 2014)

Under the grants, participation in working group meetings and training events continued until August 2014. The main activity during the reporting period has been the closing of the projects.

OUTPUTS (JULY – DECEMBER 2014)

The final reports from the grant countries were provided end of November 2014 and were still being checked by Eurostat at the end of 2014. The final report from Statistics Iceland was approved and the project closed. For the service contract, a draft final report was provided and discussed with the contractor in September 2014. At the end of the reporting period the revised final report was still pending.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

As activities were closed in 2014, the remaining issues are the approval of final grant reports and final payments, and recoveries from some of the grant beneficiaries (HR, MK and TR).

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary Programme IPA 2012, IPA 2012/023-625
Project title:	Statistical cooperation for the Western Balkans and Turkey
EU contribution:	EUR 10 million (of which 9.3 million contracted)
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans and Turkey
Type of contract:	Service contract and grants to 4 national statistical offices
Contract reference:	Service contract with GOPA Consultants, EUR 4.4 m Grant to Central Bureau Statistics of Croatia, EUR 1.42 m Grant to State Statistical Office of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, EUR 1.21 m Grant to Statistical Office of Serbia, EUR 1.34 m Grant to Turkish Statistical Institute, EUR 0.94 m.
Duration of activities:	Service contract 01/12/2013 – 30/11/2015 Grants 01/01/2014 – 30/11/2015
Links:	http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/about/our-partners/cooperation
Contact:	Torbioern.CARLQUIST@ec.europa.eu , Eurostat,

PURPOSE

The overall objective is to prepare the statistical authorities in the beneficiaries for future EU membership by aligning their present methodologies and practices with the EU acquis in statistics and integrating them into the European Statistical System.

ACTIVITIES (JULY – DECEMBER 2014)

Statisticians attended Eurostat working groups and training courses in a wide number of statistical fields. International experts provided advice to statisticians in the beneficiaries, either in workshops common for the whole region, or directly in the premises of each statistical office. A number of young statisticians from the beneficiaries were on traineeships in Eurostat and in statistical offices in selected EU Member States from September – December 2014.

Eurostat organised a meeting on the design of the future MBP IPA 2015 statistical cooperation programme in December 2014 and representatives from future beneficiaries attended the meeting.

OUTPUTS (JULY – DECEMBER 2014)

The second 6-monthly progress report for the service contract was provided mid-December 2014.

Reports from missions show that statisticians in the region are learning more and more about the EU standards in their statistical domain.

Documentation of statistical sources and methods continues.

Data is increasingly being sent to Eurostat in formats compatible with common standards.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

Activities will continue: workshop participation, training events, workshops, expert missions to the national statistical offices, study visits.

A number of young statisticians from the beneficiaries will be on traineeships in Eurostat and in statistical offices in selected EU Member States from January – June 2015.

The 2nd progress meeting with the contractor is planned for January 2015.

1.4 CUSTOM AND TAXATION

Programme reference :	Multi-beneficiary Programme IPA 2013/024-091
Project title:	Maintenance of the SEED (Systematic Electronic Exchange of Data) system in the Western Balkans II
EU contribution:	EUR 0.77 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	Service contract - Agenzia delle Dogane e dei Monopoli - Italy
Contract reference:	CN 2014/345-232
Duration of activities:	15/07/2014 – 14/07/2016
Links:	http://www.eu-seed.net/
Contact:	Petra.SCHLUETER@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

Support the Customs Administrations of the Beneficiaries to continue to use the SEED platform and INES+ software, by providing regional coordination, maintenance and slight improvement of the existing SEED/INES infrastructure and functionalities. Support the Customs Administrations of Serbia and Kosovo to maintain electronic data exchange via middle server located at the premises of Italian Customs Agency in Rome.

ACTIVITIES (JULY – DECEMBER 2014)

Organised:

Meeting with senior management of Serbian Customs (SRB) related to the further improvement of the operational use of the SEED.

15 bilateral meetings at the border Customs Offices regarding the operational use of the SEED at the local level organised: 1 MNE-ALB, 2 MNE-BiH, 1 MNE-KOS, 4 MNE-SRB, 5 SRB-BiH, 2 MAK-SRB.

11 training sessions for the operational use of the SEED organised at the level of border offices: 46 officers from Montenegro and Serbia directly trained in the train-the-trainers format. Four training sessions (2 in SRB, 1 in BiH and 1 in MNE) organised covering the use of the INES+ software modules.

Regional Workshop in Becici, Montenegro

OUTPUTS (JULY – DECEMBER 2014)

The SEED Operational guidelines significantly improved in Serbia - new organisational units (Investigation, Internal Audit) involved in the SEED. SEED related procedures included into the regular check-list of the Revision Department.

The new SEED software release (V 5.0.0) implemented. New version of the SEED adopted. Several improvements to the available functionalities introduced: new features of the alarm functions, cross-border cash flow module, more user-friendly preview of SEED data, etc.

The Macedonian and Serbian Customs established maintaining the interconnection between the national NCTS systems and the SEED system.

The SEED data exchange established at the railway border crossing between Montenegro and Serbia, at the railway track Belgrade-Bar.

The new INES+ system, fully aligned with the COPIS system of the EU, in production in Montenegro. Customs officials for the IPR Units and officers from the local Customs Offices better informed and skilled to explore the functionalities of and able to properly use the INES+ software.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

The new Version (V5.5.0) of the SEED2 software will be deployed to all 7 SEED servers.

The installation of the latest version of the INES+ software for the Kosovo Customs.

The new version of the e-IPR module of the INES+ software (fully aligned with the latest IPR regulation in EU) will be developed and installed in Serbia.

The second regional event of the SEED maintenance project will be organised at the end of March in Albania.

1.5 ECONOMIC GOVERNANCE

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary Programme, IPA 2010/022-028
Project title:	Improving Public Financial Management in the Western Balkans
EU contribution:	EUR 1.00 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	Administration Agreement with the World Bank
Contract reference:	CN 2011/258-142
Duration of activities:	21/12/2010 – 30/11/2014 (to be extended until November 2016)
Links :	www.worldbank.org/
Contact :	Alberto.COSTA@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The purpose of this World Bank-led project is to provide a platform for systematic improvement of public financial management across the Western Balkans through coordinated action by donors, using a common diagnostic and analytical framework (Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability -PEFA- methodology) to guide intervention and encourage cooperation and dialogue between Beneficiaries. The interventions are carried out through small grants based on applications submitted by target countries.

ACTIVITIES (JULY – DECEMBER 2014)

The Bosnia and Herzegovina PEFA assessment was completed in July 2014 and is available on the website of PEFA Secretariat since October 2014.

The Agreement with the World Bank has been extended until December 2016 to allow a PEFA Assessment in Serbia. The Concept Note for the Serbia PEFA has been prepared and circulated to Peer Reviews and the first field mission and initial workshop have been carried out in November 2014.

OUTPUTS

- Bosnia and Herzegovina PEFA assessment.
- Concept Note for the Serbia PEFA.
- 1st training in Serbia on the PEFA methodology.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

- Delivery of the draft Serbia PEFA.

Programme reference :	Multi-beneficiary Programme IPA 2012/022-966
Project title:	Strategic Planning and Budgeting (SPB)
EU contribution:	EUR 1.0 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans and Turkey
Type of contract:	Direct Grant to the Center of Excellence in Finance (CEF)
Contract reference:	CN 2012/310-295
Duration of activities:	21/03/2013 – 20/09/2015
Links:	http://www.cef-see.org/bcpdi/spb
Contact :	Konstantina.MARAGKOU@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The purpose of the project is to strengthen beneficiaries' governance for growth by strengthening their capacity to design and implement medium-term macro-fiscal policies. It provides a comprehensive approach to strengthen countries' policy-making practices and to encourage incorporation of good practices and standards.

ACTIVITIES (JULY – DECEMBER 2014)

Most of the activities were training and networking on strategic planning and budgeting. CEF extended the project's target audience to beneficiary institutions in line ministries. In the second half of 2014, four workshops have been delivered, attended by 65 participants (56 fully-funded SPB beneficiaries), covering capital budgeting, budget submissions of line ministries, macroeconomic forecasting, and writing of strategic documents.

In September, the SPB Project Steering Committee met to review the progress made, and to monitor the impact of project activities assuring complementarity with beneficiaries' own reform efforts.

OUTPUTS (JULY – DECEMBER)

Delivered activities raised awareness among public administration professionals of institutions coordinating and contributing to medium-term macro-fiscal frameworks about the need and opportunities to improve those frameworks. Capacities of public administration officials' preparing those frameworks were strengthened; experience and good practices were shared; and informal networks among officials were created. Back-to-office interviews with several beneficiaries illustrated the project's value (available at <http://www.cef-see.org/news/>).

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

In the first half of 2015, four SPB learning and networking activities will be delivered: e-learning courses on Budget Formulation and Budget Execution, as well as another workshop on Medium-term Budgeting. In addition, the CEF will train beneficiaries' own experts (especially those from line ministries) to become trainers; some of them could be involved in the delivery of future learning and networking activities as lecturers and co-facilitators.

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary Programme, IPA 2013/024-091
Project title:	Improving Economic Governance in the Western Balkans & Pilot Project for Albania: Public Financial Management, Tax Policy and Tax Administration
EU contribution:	EUR 500,000
Beneficiary region:	Albania and Western Balkans
Type of contract:	Contribution agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF)
Contract reference:	CN 2013/333-621
Duration of activities:	01/01/2014 – 31/12/2014
Contact :	Rodolfo.Lazarich-Gener@ec.europa.eu Inga.Stefanowicz@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The pilot project aims at strengthening public financial management (PFM), tax policy, and tax administration in Albania, and at sharing the Albanian experience with other Western Balkan beneficiaries. The project builds upon the IMF's long-standing technical assistance engagement in Albania in these areas, as well as the initial progress made by the authorities.

ACTIVITIES (JULY – DECEMBER 2014)

Under this project, three short-term expert (STX) visits on IT and business redesign took place during August-November 2014. The visits helped to implement an ongoing wholesale replacement of the main tax administration IT system, redesigning business processes to match the capacity of the new IT system, and aligning these with good international practices. Also, one STX worked on specific issues related to tax compliance (during July–December 2014). This was in addition to various related IMF-financed activities (e.g. including IMF missions, and STX visits on IT & business process redesign, and on tax compliance). Owing to the additional resources provided under this project, it is expected that the new IT system will be fully operational by end-January 2015.

As a direct follow-up to the March visit (but financed from IMF resources), a team of IMF staff and experts visited Tirana in September-October 2014 and provided guidance on the implementation of a modern market-value based immovable property tax.

Public Financial Management (PFM): In April-May 2014, a team of IMF staff and experts visited Tirana to review the implementation of the arrears prevention and clearance strategy and made recommendations for strengthening both. With the help of this visit (and subsequent visits financed from IMF resources), the government was able to make major advances in controlling arrears. In addition, under this project, a regional workshop titled “Managing Spending and Keeping the Budget on Track” was held in Ljubljana in December, and was attended by four Albanian representatives and officials from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey.

OUTPUTS

The main formal outputs under this project related to formulation of the revised reform strategies in the three main areas covered, including detailed implementation guidance, as agreed with the Albanian government and documented in the following reports delivered in December 2014:

1. Tax Administration: Strengthening Tax Administration Governance and Value-Added Tax Refund Management (March 2014); Supporting the Introduction of New Processes and Systems (July 2014); Update on Phasing in Modern Compliance Management Methods (December 2014); Supporting the Introduction of New Processes and Systems (December 2014).
2. Tax Policy: A Tax Reform Strategy for Consolidation and Growth (May 2014);
3. PFM: Implementing the Arrears Prevention and Clearance Strategy (June 2014); Evaluation report of the “Managing Spending and Keeping the Budget on Track” Workshop (December 2014).

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

The project ended on 31 December, 2014.

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary Programme, IPA 2013/024-091
Project title:	Technical Cooperation Programme with the central banks of the Western Balkans preparing their accession to the European System of Central Banks (ESCB)
EU contribution:	EUR 500,000
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	Contribution agreement with the European Central Bank (ECB)
Contract reference:	CN 2013/334-681
Duration of activities:	19/12/2013 – 18/06/2015
Contact :	Rodolfo.Lazarich-Gener@ec.europa.eu Inga.Stefanowicz@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Action is to strengthen the institutional capacity of the Bank of Albania (BoA) and the Central Bank of the Republic of Kosovo (CBRK) by identifying the legal, organisational and resource requirements for alignment with the standard institutional and operational framework of the ESCB and the ECB. Moreover, this Action aims at prioritising technical cooperation needs of the National Bank of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (NBRM).

ACTIVITIES (JULY – DECEMBER 2014)

May – July 2014, Tirana – Stocktaking missions to BoA

July 2014, Frankfurt am Main – Experts meeting of ESCB experts on BoA

July 2014, Skopje – Expert meeting on priorities of NBRM

September 2014, Frankfurt am Main – Programme Steering Committee Meeting

October 2014, Pristina – Organisational meeting launching work with CBRK

October 2014, Pristina - Benchmark meeting between experts of CBRK and of European System of Central Banks (ESCB)

October – December 2014, Pristina - Stocktaking missions to CBRK.

OUTPUTS

May – July 2014, Tirana – Stocktaking missions to BoA.

Output: End of mission reports outlining recommendations on the functioning of the central bank.

July 2014 - Article in EMEA Finance Magazine by Tim Burke about the programme based on an interview with the ECB and the Central Bank of Kosovo.

July 2014, Frankfurt am Main – Experts meeting of ESCB experts on BoA.

Output: Summary of the meeting.

July 2014, Skopje – Expert meeting on priorities of NBRM.

Output: End of mission report.

September 2014, Frankfurt am Main – Programme Steering Committee Meeting.

Output: Summary of the PSC meeting, BoA Needs Analysis Report.

October 2014, Pristina - Benchmark meeting between experts of CBRK and of European System of Central Banks (ESCB).

Output: Summary of the benchmarking meeting, Documents with the list of benchmarks.

October – December 2014, Pristina - Stocktaking missions to CBRK.

Output: End of mission reports defining the gaps to the benchmark in the respective business area and outlining recommendations how to close them.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

January 2015, Frankfurt am Main – Experts meeting of ESCB experts on CBRK.

Output: Summary of the meeting.

February 2015, Skopje – Second Expert meeting on priorities of NBRM.

Output: End of mission report.

March/April 2015, Pristina – Programme Steering Committee Meeting and press conference (visibility event).

CHAPTER 2: RULE OF LAW AND FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS

In the area Rule of Law, the beneficiaries need in particular to join forces and cooperate to fight organised crime. This involves strengthening cooperation with international law enforcement organisations operating in criminal justice, police investigations and witness protection. IPA assistance in this area also encompasses transitional justice. The respect of human rights - including those of minorities – is a core European value enshrined in the Lisbon Treaty. In the enlargement perspective, the protection of minorities and vulnerable groups effectively means complying with the Copenhagen political criteria. The EU has also identified policy areas and priorities relevant to the field of social inclusion in its enlargement strategy, e.g. the Regional Housing Programme.

2.1 FIGHT AGAINST ORGANISED CRIME AND CORRUPTION

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary Programme, IPA 2013/024-091
Project title:	International Cooperation in Criminal Justice: the Prosecutors' Network of the Western Balkans
EU contribution:	EUR 5.0 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	Grant Contract with GIZ GmbH, in partnership with Center for International Legal Cooperation (CILC) and United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)
Contract reference:	CN 2014/350-650
Duration of activities :	19/11/2014 – 18/10/2017
Contact :	Henk Visser, henk.visser@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

- To strengthen the operational capacity and capabilities of the Public/State Prosecutors' Offices in the beneficiaries to prosecute and investigate serious and trans-border organised crime, including linked cases of illicit trafficking destined to the EU, in particular trafficking in firearms, drugs and human beings.
- To prepare the beneficiaries for gradually applying the main provisions of the European Arrest Warrant.

ACTIVITIES (JULY – DECEMBER 2014)

The project started as of 19 November 2015. In December, the management team undertook a so-called road show. During this visit to all the beneficiaries of the Action, the team discussed the secondment of the EU MS, the national legal officers, location of the project offices and the

composition of the Steering Committee. Furthermore, the management team assessed the state of affairs in the sector in order to reflect the most accurate state of play in the Inception Report. During the visits to the Beneficiaries, all EUD, German and Dutch Embassies were informed as well about the start of the Action.

OUTPUTS (JULY – DECEMBER 2014)

A signed contract, agreements between the project and the beneficiaries about the candidates for the position of EU MS seconded prosecutors, agreements on the location of the project offices.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

Drafting of the Inception Report and presentation of the project and the Inception Report to other essential stakeholders in and outside the region.

Co-ordination meeting with EUROJUST, European Judiciary Network (EJN) and the project on the Fight against organised crime and corruption: international cooperation in criminal justice managed by the Italian Ministry of the Interior, Public Security Department, WINPRO II. Finalization of the recruitment of the EU MS seconded prosecutors and national legal officers. Project offices will become operational.

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary Programme, IPA 2014/024-091
Project title:	Fight against organised crime and corruption: international cooperation in criminal justice in the Western Balkans (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo*, Montenegro, Serbia and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia)
EU contribution:	EUR 5.0 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	Delegation Agreement with the Italian Ministry of the Interior, Public Security Department
Contract reference:	CN 2014/341-116
Duration of activities:	12/07/2014 – 11/07/2017
Contact :	Henk Visser, henk.visser@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

To improve international law enforcement strategic and operational cooperation among Beneficiaries as well as between Beneficiaries, EU Member States and EU/regional/international law enforcement organisations, through the support of international investigations and prosecutions, the promotion of secured exchange of information and intelligence, the use of modern communication technology and data protection mechanisms aligned to EU standards.

ACTIVITIES (JULY – DECEMBER 2014)

The Agreement was concluded in July 2014. After this a four-month inception period started, dedicated to the establishment of logistics and administrative arrangements, including the set-up, staffing and equipment of local offices, the relocation of Resident Experts and the fine tuning of administrative procedures. During the inception phase, the overall work plan was presented to the beneficiaries while a fully detailed work plan was drafted.

This phase ended with an opening conference held in Roma last December, presenting the aims, the actors and the activities of project, ensuring maximum EU visibility.

OUTPUTS (JULY– DECEMBER 2014)

Permanent project offices and structures were established. Inception report was finalised.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

Co-ordination meeting with EUROPOL and with the other project "Fight against organised crime and corruption", dealing with the Prosecutors and managed by GIZ.

Map on-going investigations on major transnational criminal phenomena, focusing on those which offer scope for judicial and police cooperation between the Beneficiaries and EU MSs.

Identify options to strengthen operational links to border police authorities, judicial authorities, Europol, Frontex, Eurojust, Interpol, EU Member States, and SEPCA as well as within the Western Balkans countries and region.

Assess Beneficiaries' forensic capacities notably on DNA, fingerprints and ballistic exams.

Assess the status quo and analyse gaps in the Beneficiaries and at regional level related to the implementation of the European Guidelines for data protection.

Review existing databases and identify technical and legal requirements for access to SIENA.

Assess the good practices used for the exchange of information between ILECU, EU Member States and liaison officers from other countries.

Initiate a detailed mapping of major organised criminal groups operating within the Beneficiaries' territories.

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary Programme, IPA 2012/022-966
Project title:	Cooperation in Criminal Justice: Witness Protection in the Fight against Organised Crime and Corruption (WINPRO II)
EU contribution:	EUR 7,00 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	Delegation agreement with Northern Ireland Co-operation Overseas (NI-CO)
Contract reference:	CN 2012/305-554
Duration of activities:	01/12/2012 – 30/11/2015
Links:	http://www.nico.org.uk/
Contact :	Henk Visser, henk.visser@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

To reinforce the institutional capacity of the Witness Protection Units (WPU) and other relevant agencies in the beneficiary countries to offer protection to witnesses and collaborators of justice, before, during and after a trial, within and/or outside their territory.

ACTIVITIES (JULY – DECEMBER 2014)

Guidelines on procedural and non-procedural protection measures for the judiciary and prosecution services in relevant beneficiaries were finalised for Serbia and Kosovo. The work continues on the guidelines for Montenegro, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. Guidelines for Albania are yet to be drafted.

Further harmonisation of legislation in the region as well as further work on organisational and operational structures, including human resources management was pursued.

International cooperation initiatives - several study visits were organised and delivered: a joint visit of the representatives of prison services and WPU from Serbia and Bosnia-Herzegovina to Northern Ireland was held in September 2014; in November 2014 a study visit to Poland was organised for the WPU from Bosnia-Herzegovina and in December 2014 a study visit to Estonia was organised for the WPU from Serbia. WINPRO II supported 6 beneficiary units in the participation in a conference on international co-operation in witness protection that was held in Brasov (Romania) in September 2014.

A further meeting of the Balkan Network, hosted by the Montenegrin WPU was held in Budva on 2 October 2014.

WINPRO II Regional Meeting and Regional Judicial Conference, was held in Split on 28 -29 October 2014.

Stakeholder training in basic counter and anti-surveillance, close protection and medical skills for Judicial Police in Bosnia-Herzegovina was completed. Training on management of collaborators of justice and 'special units' in prison systems was conducted for Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Croatia.

Client (witness) assessment courses for prosecutors and investigators and general awareness courses for WP stakeholders were held in Serbia and Croatia.

Training courses for WPUs on close protection, counter & anti-surveillance, medical skills, operational & personal security and risk assessment continued. WPU skills were tested through practical exercises.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

Co-ordination meeting with EUROPOL and with the other project on the Fight against organised crime and corruption, dealing with the Prosecutors and managed by GIZ.

Map on-going investigations on major transnational criminal phenomena, focusing on those which offer scope for judicial and police cooperation between the Beneficiaries and EU MSs.

Identify options to strengthen operational links to border police authorities, judicial authorities, Europol, Frontex, Eurojust, Interpol, EU Member States, and SEPCA as well as within the Western Balkans and region.

Assess Beneficiaries' forensic capacities notably on DNA, fingerprints and ballistic exams.

Assess the status quo and analyse gaps in the Beneficiaries and at regional level related to the implementation of the European Guidelines for data protection

Review existing databases and identify technical and legal requirements for access to SIENA.
Assess the good practices used for the exchange of information between ILECU, EU Member States and liaison officers from other countries.
Initiate a detailed mapping of major organised criminal groups operating within the Beneficiaries' territories.

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary Programme, IPA 2013/024-091
Project title:	Strengthening National Integrity Systems in the Western Balkans and Turkey, and tracking developments of anti-corruption efforts
EU contribution:	EUR 1.71 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans and Turkey
Type of contract:	Grant Agreement with Transparency International
Contract reference:	CN 2014/339-583
Duration of activities:	01/05/2014 – 30/04/2017
Contact :	Henk Visser, henk.visser@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The implementing partner will carry out an institutional 'health check' in the Western Balkans and Turkey on the readiness of the countries to address corruption threats. This will be undertaken in form of the so-called National Integrity Systems (NIS) assessments, a methodology already tested in around 100 countries worldwide. In addition, a monitoring mechanism will be developed to track developments in each country in their fight against corruption.

ACTIVITIES (JULY – DECEMBER 2014)

Meetings took place to update the group on the on-going research, formation of the advisory groups and the outreach activities in countries, so that all the partners can start the active research phase, submitting the first draft pillars.

OUTPUTS (JULY – DECEMBER 2014)

Article

http://www.transparency.org/whatwedo/activity/turkey_and_western_balkans_national_integrity_systems

Blog post on the need for more transparency in the enlargement negotiations:
http://www.transparency.org/whatwedo/activity/turkey_and_western_balkans_national_integrity_systems

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

Active research to finalise (NIS) assessment reports by the end of April.

Second project meeting on Advocacy and Communications, to take place in Serbia on 2-4 March 2015.

2.2 TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary Programme, IPA 2013/024-091.
Project title:	Strengthening Regional News Exchange from the International War Crimes Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), the International Court of Justice (ICJ) and the International Criminal Court (ICC)
EU contribution:	EUR 0.2 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	Grant Contract with SENSE News Agency
Contract reference:	CN 2013/316-563
Duration of activities:	01/06/2013 – 31/01/2015
Links:	www.sense-agency.com
Contact :	Henk Visser, henk.visser@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

To inform the public on the work of the international courts in The Hague, in particular the work and mission of the ICTY, and to raise public support for cooperation with the ICTY and the local prosecution of war crimes.

ACTIVITIES (JULY – DECEMBER 2014)

- Opening of the multimedia SENSE Documentation Center in Srebrenica in September 2014, followed by more than 10.000 individual and group visits.
- Close to 500 daily reports and in depth analysis in Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian and English on trials and other developments at the ICTY; production of 21 weekly TV updates entitled “The Tribunal”, on trials and appeals proceedings.
- Regular coverage of two defense cases (Ratko Mladic and Goran Hadzic); Hadzic's one month long testimony in his own defense; closing arguments in the case of Radovan

Karadzic, provisional release of the accused Vojislav Seselj; coverage of five appellate proceedings.

- Continued digitalisation of SENSE audio-visual trial archive.
- Participation in educational and media events and regional and international conferences about war crimes trials, transitional justice and the role of media.

OUTPUTS (JULY– DECEMBER 2014)

- SENSE - Srebrenica Documentation Center established in September 2014 within the Memorial Center in Potocari shows how the crimes committed in the area in July 1995 have been investigated, reconstructed and prosecuted by the ICTY.
- SENSE daily reports and weekly TV programmes are the main source of information on trials for war crimes committed in the former Yugoslavia and the work of the ICTY, both for the media and general public in Balkans,. SENSE website is a reference for international justice and human rights “watchers”, journalists, lawyers, academics, diplomats and general public.
- SENSE documentary films are used by many NGOs, Institutes, Universities and individual researchers all around the world in the course of lectures, conferences, seminars and symposiums on international criminal justice. SENSE documentaries were also added to the research material at dozens of universities all over the world.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

- Drafting of the final reports for the current project
- Preparation of the project description and budget for the follow-up project (coverage)

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary Programme, IPA 2012/022-966
Project title:	Joint European Union and the International Criminal Tribunal of the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) Training Project for National Prosecutors and Young Professionals from the former Yugoslavia
EU contribution:	EUR 0.95 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	Contribution Agreement with the ICTY
Contract reference:	CN 2012/296-002
Duration of activities:	15/08/2012 – 31/12/2014
Contact :	Henk Visser, henk.visser@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

To strengthen the capacity of countries of the former Yugoslavia to effectively investigate and prosecute war crimes. National prosecutors for domestic war crimes cases and young professionals with a legal or other relevant background participate in the action.

ACTIVITIES (JULY – DECEMBER 2014)

- Visiting National Prosecutors from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia continue their work in the Office of the Prosecutor (OTP).
- The OTP supported the Visiting National Prosecutors during searches for investigative material.
- The second group of 9 young legal professionals ended their internship in July.
- The third group of 9 young legal professionals started their internship in July.

OUTPUTS (JULY – DECEMBER 2014)

- Several requests for Legal Assistance received.
- Visiting Young Professionals trained in the use of OTP databases and other available judicial tools.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

- The third group of Visiting Young Professionals will end their term in February 2015
- Drafting of a final report for the current project as well as a new project description and budget for the follow-up project.

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary Programme, IPA 2013/024-091
Project title:	ICTY Outreach programme 2014/2015 - International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia
EU contribution:	EUR 0.5 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	Grant Contract with ICTY
Contract reference:	CN 2014/342-964
Duration of activities :	21/08/2014 – 20/08/2015
Links:	http://www.icty.org/action/outreachnews/7
Contact :	Henk Visser, henk.visser@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

To strengthen the Tribunal's legacy as its mandate draws to a close and to ensure that people across the region of the former Yugoslavia have access to, understand and foster its legacy.

ACTIVITIES (JULY – DECEMBER 2014)

- Organised educational visits to the ICTY for around 4,000 visitors, who attended the trials and received briefings about the work of the ICTY.
- Published documentary entitled "Crimes before the ICTY: Central Bosnia".
- Coordinated broadcast of Outreach Programme's documentary "Through their Eyes: Witnesses to justice" by eleven local and regional TV stations in Bosnia and Herzegovina.
- Initiated the production and completed rough cut of the next documentary entitled "Crimes before the ICTY: Visegrad".
- Delivered 25 presentations and lectures about the work of the ICTY for high school and university students in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia, Kosovo and Montenegro.
- Organised one day pilot training session in delivering effective presentations about the work of the ICTY for five high school teachers from Sarajevo.
- Organised a two-day study visit to the ICTY for five university lecturers from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia and Kosovo.
- Organised essay writing competition on the topic of war crimes trials for high school students from Sarajevo.
- Held workshops for more than 100 elementary school pupils on the topic of war crimes trials.
- Created new pages on the ICTY and MICT websites, and redesigned some of the existing features.
- Produced and published a book "20 years of the ICTY".
- Produced and published a brochure on the achievements of the ICTY Youth Outreach project.

OUTPUTS (JULY – DECEMBER 2014)

- More than 1,200 young people from the countries of former Yugoslavia received first-hand information about the work and achievements of the ICTY through lectures, presentations and workshops.
- A group of 10 high school and university teachers from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia and Kosovo gained first-hand, in-depth understanding of the work of the ICTY, by attending a training or a study visit to the Tribunal.

- More than 5,000 partners and stakeholders were informed about the ICTY's achievements in the first two decades of its work (through the book "20 Years of the ICTY), as well as about the ICTY's efforts to reach out to young people in the former Yugoslavia (through the brochure "ICTY and the Next Generation").
- Tens of thousands of citizens in the former Yugoslavia and worldwide gained better understanding of the work of ICTY after watching Outreach produced documentaries, visiting the ICTY web pages and/or ICTY social media profiles (as measured based on TV broadcast information, documentary screening attendance, and statistics on number of visits and views of ICTY web and social media pages).
- Progress in establishment of the Information Center in Sarajevo.
- Around 4,000 visitors experienced ICTY trials first-hand and had opportunity to gain better understanding of the institution.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

- Organisation of presentations and visits to the ICTY for 3,000 - 4,000 law professionals, students and members of the public;
- Screening, promotion & distribution of the documentary 'Crimes before ICTY: Central Bosnia', in the former Yugoslavia and elsewhere;
- Completion of new documentary "Crimes before ICTY: Visegrad"
- Preparing content and logistics for 20 lectures and presentations on ICTY in high schools & universities in former Yugoslavia;
- Initiation of the production of next documentary, which will deal with crimes committed in Croatia;
- Preparation and publication of a book on 15 years of the ICTY Outreach Programme;
- Signing of memorandum of understanding with the City of Sarajevo on the establishment of the ICTY Information Centre in Sarajevo (ICS); furthering the preparations and raising funds for the establishment of the ICS;
- Production of online exhibition on the siege of Sarajevo to be posted on the ICTY website.

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary Programme, IPA 2011/022-964
Project title:	Strengthening and supporting the RECOM Process
EU contribution:	EUR 458,00 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	Grant contract with Humanitarian Law Centre, Belgrade (HLCB),
Contract reference:	CN 2012/292-650
Duration of activities:	27/06/2012 – 26/11/2014
Links:	http://www.hlc-rdc.org
Contact :	Karl Giacinti, karl.giacinti@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

Establishment of the Regional Commission for the facts about war crimes and other serious human rights violations in the former Yugoslavia (RECOM). The initiative was launched by the

Coalition for RECOM which brings together about 2,000 civil society organisations from post-Yugoslav countries. The Coalition has won support from 550,000 citizens, drawn up a draft RECOM Statute and received strong political backing for the establishment of RECOM. Presidents of states in the region have confirmed their support by appointing their envoys to RECOM, the envoys' task being to examine the constitutional and legal possibilities in each of the countries concerned for the establishment of RECOM. This marks the beginning of the process of transferring the RECOM Initiative from a civil to a political level which should result in the establishment of RECOM.

ACTIVITIES

- A visual campaign to drum up support for RECOM.
- Amending the RECOM Statute.
- Organising the Seventh Assembly of the Coalition for RECOM.
- Organising the Tenth Forum for Transitional Justice in Post-Yugoslav Countries.
- Mapping the camps in Bosnia and Herzegovina operating during the period between 1992 and 1995.
- Making available an Online Register of people who were killed or went missing in Kosovo during the period between 1998 and 2000.

OUTPUTS

The Tenth Forum for Transitional Justice, held on 15 November 2014, the same day that ICTY indictee Vojislav Šešelj organised a rally in Belgrade's main square, demonstrated that the victims had learned, largely thanks to the RECOM process, to fight for their voice and dignity. Not one of the participants cancelled their appearance at the Forum out of fear of Šešelj.

By the end of 2014, the Association 'Transitional Justice, Accountability and Remembrance in Bosnia and Herzegovina' (TJAR) and the Center for Democracy and Transitional Justice (CDTP) had documented 150 camps in Bosnia and Herzegovina in which over 7,000 civilians and prisoners of war were held and at least 2,500 were killed during the war.

On the occasion of Human Rights Day, the HLC and the HLC Kosovo displayed on the Kosovo Memory Book website the Online Register of 13,517 people who were killed or went missing in Kosovo during the period between 1998 and 2000.

In October and November 2014, the Coalition organised a campaign in seven towns in post-Yugoslav countries during which the message 'I support RECOM' was displayed on billboards. In response to the campaign, over 2,000 people visited the RECOM website and expressed their support for the establishment of the Commission.

At the end of October 2014, the Coalition finished incorporating Presidents envoys amendments to the draft RECOM Statute drawn up by the Coalition and submitted the draft to members for consideration.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

Although the current grant is ended, the project continues thanks to other donors and will receive a new grant under IPA II. The main activities planned for the next semester are:

- Consultations with the newly-elected members of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina and with the new President of Croatia on the RECOM Statute Changes that were approved by two former members of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina and by the former President of Croatia, Ivo Josipović
- Public presentations in Pristina and Belgrade of the evaluation of the Kosovo Memory Book Database
- A public presentation of 150 files on camps in Bosnia and Herzegovina
- A presentation of a publication dealing with reconciliation and transitional justice accomplishments

Programme reference:	2013 / 024-091 - Multi-beneficiary programme under the IPA-Transition Assistance and Institution Building Component for the year 2013- part DG ELARG
Project title:	Joint History Project Phase II - Extending the proven tool for Reconciliation to the sensitive recent history of Southeast Europe
EU contribution:	EUR 0.6 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	Grant
Contract reference:	2014 / 350-782
Duration of activities:	01/11/2014 – 31/10/2016
Links:	http://www.cdsee.org/projects/ihp
Contact:	Karl.giacinti@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

Enhancing reconciliation and mutual understanding of the recent past in the Western Balkans and Turkey by means of multiperspective research and analysis on the last 60 years of history in the Western Balkans. The purpose is to trigger reform of education in Southeast Europe, promoting historical analysis that is constructive and critical and that can be utilised for reaching a more holistic understanding of the recent history. The region benefits from a

shared democratic effort, working towards a future-oriented history education that nurtures the emergence of citizens who are empowered to defend and promote such values

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED

The action, started beginning of November, can be divided into three activity clusters:

The first cluster resembles an inclusive multistakeholder process for producing teaching materials, which will go through four stages. Recruit contributors, plan and research materials; Compose and edit the English language editions of the two new volumes of history education materials; Evaluate the English language edition, finally layout and print of the English language edition. The result of this first activity cluster is that "Academia, teacher associations and ministries are able through transnational co-operation to create multi-perspective materials on the past 60 years that are acceptable for all Western Balkan societies." The published materials and expert reviews serve as output indicators.

The second activity cluster directly targets history teachers through training, participation in the evaluation phase of the materials and in their dissemination to peers. Four regional events are foreseen with protagonist and active multipliers, the project team will organise 3 Regional Teacher Training Workshops and 1 Regional Teacher Conference and advocate with ministries, universities and schools. The activities result in a group of competent teacher trainers, who are able to propagate the new teaching methodologies. Output indicators are a total of 140 teachers trainers from 7 countries that participate in the events and the Teacher Associations who multiply training materials on their websites and reach out to a minimum of 7000 teachers.

The third activity cluster concerns the outreach to the general public multiplying a multiperspective state of mind and its visibility. It includes three sets of activities, advocate with international actors, disseminate materials and simultaneously publicise the initiative in the media. As a result of the awareness raising initiative "All segments of society are able to access a multi-perspective account of Balkan history post WW II." Output indicators are the media coverage of the project at least 100 print articles, and 25 TV appearances.

Programme reference:	2013 / 024-091 - Multi-beneficiary programme under the IPA-Transition Assistance and Institution Building Component for the year 2013- part DG ELARG
Project title:	Balkan Transitional Justice
EU contribution:	EUR 0.3 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	Grant
Contract reference:	2014 / 350-410
Duration of activities:	02/11/2014 – 01/11/2016
Links:	http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/page/balkan-transitional-justice-home
Contact:	Karl.giacinti@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The project aims to contribute to reconciliation processes in the WB through professional and objective journalistic reporting on transitional justice issues. More specifically, it aims to advance the state of media in the said region securing continued support to investigative media production on transitional justice issues. The project will directly support media and journalists with capacity building and media production portfolio related to transitional justice issues raising thus the profile of professional and objective journalism in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, FYROM, Montenegro and Serbia.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED

The project aims at achieving the following results:

R1- Created intensive media production portfolio to increase number of media reports related to transitional justice issues in the overall media landscape;

R2- Created a unique war crimes' verdicts online map to help media understand better the scope of war crimes prosecuted by national courts and ICTY;

R3- Enhanced capacities of local journalists and students of journalism to conduct qualitative reporting on transitional justice;

R4- Increased general awareness of all project stakeholders and public on transitional justice issues and the role of media in that process.

Preparatory activities for the action will take place in the first month of the project. Online publishing, including on-job-training for BTJ journalists, will be implemented throughout the project while TV and radio production will be implemented only in the first 12 months. One cross-regional multimedia investigation will be completed both in the first and in the second year.

Creation of the online interactive war crimes' verdicts map will be done in the second year, while the research and assessment of documents will take place in the first year. Regional training for journalists will take place in the second year. Lectures at the Universities across the WB region and internships for students of journalism will be spread throughout both project years.

Programme reference:	2013 / 024-091 - Multi-beneficiary programme under the IPA-Transition Assistance and Institution Building Component for the year 2013- part DG ELARG
Project title:	Historija, Istorija, Povijest – Lessons for Today
EU contribution:	EUR 0.38 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	Grant
Contract reference:	2014 / 351-243
Duration of activities :	07/11/2014 – 06/05/2017
Contact:	Karl.giacinti@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The action aims to raise awareness and encourage discussion about the recent history in the Western Balkans region that has divided and generated conflict over the past century. By promoting critical thinking about historical events and their relevance for contemporary challenges, the Anne Frank House with its local partners seeks to generate dialogue about the common past, thus fostering reconciliation.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED

The project aims at achieving the following results:

- Produce and disseminate joint history-education materials (post World-War II – today), in the region of the Western Balkans;
- Develop teacher training and joint history-education promoting activities, together with the Anne Frank – a History for Today traveling exhibition and with focus on local recent history panels created in each country involved;
- To develop, together with youth from Croatia, Serbia, BiH and FYROM, 10 Memory Walk video clips, to be used as vehicles of discussion about history, remembrance and memory in classrooms in 40 cities throughout the region;
- Educate teachers throughout the region on innovative history education methodologies;
- Encourage students and school staff to look beyond the classroom and the official curriculum for relevant information – e.g. by visiting the exhibition – and, by doing so, actively shape the content and form of their education;

- Create a website to serve as an educational resource by schools and teachers throughout the region, with clear and user friendly lesson plans and materials;
- Spark debates in the classroom about history, remembrance, prejudice and discrimination, thereby
 - Carefully exposing and deconstructing students' own stereotypes and prejudices, and
 - endowing students with critical thinking and public speaking skills

Activities planned for the first 6 months are:

- History education local experts coming to Amsterdam to get introduced and to learn about Anne Frank House innovative education methodologies;
- History education local experts meeting again to present their materials and lesson plans, at a follow up meeting in Western Balkans;
- Production of history education materials, incl. local exhibition panels + Memory Walk Teacher Manual;
- Creation of the HIP website/online platform/resource depository & action social media strategy.

2.3 HUMAN RIGHTS AND MINORITY PROTECTION

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary Programme, IPA 2011/022-964
Project title:	Promoting Human rights and minority protection in South East Europe
EU contribution:	EUR 3.60 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	Contribution Agreement with the Council of Europe (CoE)
Contract reference:	CN 2011/277-251
Duration of activities:	29/11/2011 – 28/12/2016 (suspended July – December 2013)
Contact :	Liane Adler, Liane.adler@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

To improve access to rights for minorities in line with European minority protection standards and in particular the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (FCNM) and the European Charter for Minority Languages (ECRML).

ACTIVITIES (JULY-DECEMBER 2014)

Project implementation started immediately after signature of the second addendum to the contribution agreement on 3 July 2014.

In August 2014, the Project secretariat issued the call for expression of interest to municipalities in South East Europe to apply for small grants to be used to enhance policies and capacity for the implementation of minority rights. 152 applications were received out of which 36 local governments were selected in the 7 IPA Beneficiaries. The evaluation committees consisted of members of the Steering Committee, the EU Delegations and the project team.

In parallel, two tenders were launched, one for short term consultants and the other to carry out a baseline research and final survey in the 36 local governments.

The First Regional Conference was held on 26-27 November 2014 in Skopje gathering more than 130 representatives from local governments.

More than 120 visits were paid in total to the 36 selected municipalities by the project team and the short term consultants with the purpose to evaluate the current state of affairs and to build the capacity of local stakeholders on minority rights related issues.

OUTPUTS

Following the re-orientation of the project:

- More than 700 representatives of local governments were sensitized to integrate national minorities through the development of project proposals that will affect more than 650,000 members of minority communities at the grass root level living in 36 municipalities.
- The 36 selected local governments developed their individual project proposals with the support of CoE experts based on CoE legal instruments relating to national minorities.
- An expert pool of 67 short term consultants, many of whom are civil society representatives including academics, supported this process.
- An independent research institution started the baseline research.
- The regional conference increased awareness of minority protection standards and good practices in the region among local municipal leaders.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

The small grants will be disbursed and implementation start in the 36 selected municipalities from February 2015.

Results of the baseline research study will be available in March 2015.

The project will continue to provide ad hoc legal advice to beneficiaries in the field of protection of national minorities.

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary Programme, IPA 2012/022-966
Project title:	Regional support for Inclusive Education
EU contribution:	EUR 4.64 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	Contribution agreement with the Council of Europe (CoE)
Contract reference:	CN 2013/308-048
Duration of activities :	01/01/2013 – 28/11/2015
Links:	http://pjp-eu.coe.int/web/inclusive-education
Contact :	Liane Adler, liane.adler@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The project drives efforts to enhance social inclusion and social cohesion in the education sector within the region. In order to achieve the objective, the project promotes the concept of inclusive education as a reform principle that respects and caters for diversity amongst all learners with a specific focus on those who are at a higher risk of marginalisation and exclusion.

ACTIVITIES (JULY – DECEMBER 2014)

49 pilot projects for inclusive schools were developed and project implementation began, supported by a small grants scheme. The 2nd Annual Conference “Inclusive Education in Practice”, the “Expo for Inclusion” and the 4th Steering Board meeting were held in Zagreb.

The awareness raising campaign was designed. A scenario for the production of educational TV and radio programmes on inclusive education has been developed featuring good practices from pilot schools. Scenarios touch upon the real life stories behind the project and the changes it is bringing to the school and the community.

A working group with representatives from the three Inclusive Networks (SchoolNet, TeacherNet and PolicyNet) in cooperation with a team of international experts and the University of Edinburgh, worked on designing tools for upgrading the teacher training programmes on inclusive education in SEE.

Two regional meetings and seven national policy meetings were held to develop inclusive education policy recommendations for SEE. A study visit for policy makers was carried out to Slovenia.

OUTPUTS

Around 1700 members of school staff, parents and representatives from 49 local communities increased their understanding on the concept of inclusion through “learning by doing”, that is, through developing pilot projects on inclusive education in their schools.

With the startup of the implementation of the pilot projects on inclusion, students at a higher risk of marginalization and exclusion from 49 pilot schools received tailored support and assistance to overcome barriers for inclusion. Furthermore, teacher competencies to deal with diverse learners increased and were strengthened through receiving tailored training. Cooperation with parents was strengthened and parents were involved in school life through various actions (ex: joint training of school staff and parents to deal with students with special needs in the mainstream classroom, IT literacy workshops for parents facing socio-economic marginalisation risks or minority parents, summer schools for children with special needs, creative and art workshops, etc).

Via “Expo for inclusion”, over 170 school staff and ministry officials from seven Beneficiaries promoted their achievements in inclusion through an exhibition of almost 200 good practices and experiences from the region. 600 project stakeholders used the web platform or community of practice as a space for online learning and the exchange of good practices and experiences on inclusion.

Policy recommendations for inclusive education in primary, secondary and vocational education and training (VET) were developed using a 360 degree approach.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

The implementation of the pilot school projects will be monitored and evaluated. Experience from the field will be incorporated into policy recommendations. A study visit to Turkey for pilot schools will be carried out and two peer exchange meetings will be held.

A 2nd TeacherNet workshop and study visit to Edinburgh will be carried out in cooperation with the University of Edinburgh.

TV and radio programmes on inclusive education will be produced within the awareness raising campaign.

Policy meetings in each Beneficiary and a final regional meeting for PolicyNet will be held to endorse the policy recommendations prior to the Ministerial Conference in November.

Policy meetings in each Beneficiary and a final regional meeting for PolicyNet will be held to finalise the policy recommendations prior to submitting them to Ministers for endorsement at the regional conference in Sarajevo planned in November.

2.4 REGIONAL HOUSING PROGRAMME

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary Programmes, IPA 2011/023-537, IPA 2012/024-133 and 2013/024-134,
Project title:	Regional Housing Programme (RHP)
EU contribution:	Contributions to the RHP Fund: EUR 110 million Implementation costs: EUR 28.0 million
Beneficiary region:	Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro, Serbia
Type of contract:	Contribution Agreements with CEB, UNHCR
Contract reference:	CN 2012/307-562; CN 2013/325-468; CN 2013/325-470; CN 2012/297-405; CN 2012/ 305-516; CN 2013/314-991
Duration of activities:	30/11/2017 (end date)
Contact :	Liane Adler, liane.adler@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The Regional Housing Programme (RHP) addresses in a regional framework the housing needs of the most vulnerable refugees and internally displaced persons from the armed conflict in the 1990s in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro and Serbia. The RHP contributes to a satisfactory resolution of the protracted displacement situation in the four Partner Countries (PCs). It does so by providing durable and sustainable housing solutions, with full respect for the rights of refugees and internally displaced persons still in need and of the mutual obligation of the signatories to closely cooperate and synchronise their activities. The durable housing solutions will take place through voluntary return and reintegration, or local integration.

The RHP consists of four Country Housing Projects (CHPs), one in each country, and will assist about 27,000 households or 74,000 individuals. The total budget of this housing programme is estimated at EUR 584 million with a planned duration of 5 years. The European Commission has pledged EUR 230 million, while other international donors pledged EUR 31 million with additional EUR 30 million likely to follow in the coming years.

The programme is financed mainly through donor contributions by the international community. A multi-donor Trust Mechanism, managed by the Council of Europe Development Bank (CEB), provides grants to CHPs. UNHCR and OSCE are responsible for monitoring the beneficiary selection process as well as the implementation of the programme.

Until the end of 2014, donors pledged in total EUR 268.3 million to the RHP Fund, out of which 148.1 million have been committed and 119.5 million paid. Out of these, the European Commission has disbursed EUR 84 million.

Funds committed as direct contributions to the RHP Fund and will be spent on investment, i.e. housing solutions financed through Grants to the Partner Countries. Grants are approved by the Assembly of the RHP Donors.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

During the reporting period the actual physical implementation of the RHP started with the opening of the first construction site in Croatia. The other three Partner Countries also prepared and launched the first tender dossiers for the implementation of the first wave of housing sub-projects.

In addition to the twelve grant applications approved by the Assembly of Donors in 2014 for a total amount of EUR 60.9 million, additional five grant applications were approved in 2014 for a total amount of EUR 78.5 million. These include:

- Bosnia and Herzegovina: 1 grant application of EUR 14.4 million;
- Croatia: 1 grant application of EUR 1.4 million;
- Montenegro: 1 grant application of EUR 4 million;
- Serbia: 2 grant applications for a total amount of EUR 58.7 million.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

Technical Committee meeting: 3 March 2015.

Assembly of Donors: 26 March and 30 June 2015.

Regional Coordination Forum: 29 January and 12 May 2015.

CHAPTER 3: PRIVATE SECTOR DEVELOPMENT

Support in the area of private sector development and investments aims to provide access to finance, raise regional competitiveness, increase competence of human capital, attract investments, facilitate trade and establish a business climate conducive to the development of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). Private Sector Support Facilities established under the Crisis Response Package are also included.

3.1. WESTERN BALKAN ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT AND INNOVATION FACILITY (WB EDIF)

Programme reference :	Multi-beneficiary Programmes for the years 2011-2013, IPA 2011/021-964; IPA 2012/022-966 and IPA 2013/024-091
Project title:	Western Balkan Enterprise Development and Innovation Facility (WB EDIF)
EU contribution:	EUR 64.60 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	Contribution agreements (CA) with OECD (TA) CA with European Investment Fund (EIF) (coordination) CA with EIF (Guarantee Facility) Delegation agreement with EIF (ENEF) Delegation agreement with EIF (ENIF)
Contract reference:	CA with World Bank (Support to TA) CN 2012/295-825; CN 2012/306-154; CN 2012/306-653; CN 2013/319-472; CN 2012/306-667; CN 2013/333-444; CN 2013/318-776; CN 2013/331-504 ; CN 2014/334-654
Duration of activities:	05/12/2012 – 30/11/2025
Links:	www.wbedif.eu
Contact :	Inga.Stefanowicz@ec.europa.eu Lara.Beltrame@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

EDIF promotes emergence and growth of innovative and high-potential companies and creation of a regional Venture Capital market.

Coordinated by EIF, EDIF is implemented in close cooperation between the governments of the Western Balkans, the European Commission, the European Investment Bank (EIB) Group and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD). IFIs, international organisations and bilateral donors active in the region, such as Italy, Kreditanstalt für

Wiederaufbau (KfW), Deutsche Investitions und Entwicklungsgesellschaft, OECD, World Bank and others participate in order to streamline the Western Balkan private sector development efforts, providing for:

- early-to-development stages equity financing in innovative SMEs through the Enterprise Innovation Fund (ENIF);
- development and expansion capital to established high-potential SMEs through the Enterprise Expansion Fund (ENEF) to be implemented alongside the EBRD Local Enterprise Facility;
- improved access to bank lending and lower costs of borrowing by providing SME loan portfolio guarantees to financial intermediaries under a regional Guarantee Facility (GF);
- support to beneficiary governments in implementation of priority reforms to create favourable regulatory environment for innovative and high-potential SMEs, as well as direct support to SMEs through the Support Services Facility.

ACTIVITIES (JULY – DECEMBER 2014)

Platform level

EIF ensured coordination and facilitated the EDIF governance, including organisation of the Platform Advisory Group (PAG) meeting on 10 December in Luxembourg (hosted by EIF), back to back with the Steering Committee of the Western Balkans Investment Framework (WBIF). One EDIF Working Group meeting was organised prior to the PAG.

Following the recommendations of the Results Oriented Monitoring visit, as requested by the European Commission, during the months of February and March 2014 and, as indicated during the previous PAG meeting, EIF published a WBEDIF slide presentation on the www.wbedif.eu website in order both, to serve as a more visual explanation of the platform structure and details to interested visitors of the website, and to serve the PAG members as a basis for any eventual presentation in promoting EDIF. The EIF furthermore launched its first edition of the WB EDIF quarterly leaflet in early October (reporting on Q3 2014) which was well received by the PAG members.

During the December 2014 PAG meeting the EIF further presented the governance issues, which are to be addressed in the updates to the EDIF procedures (which includes also the incorporation of the Support Services presentations).

Following the EIB's nomination as Support Services Manager, the EIF and EIB presented a joint communications plan which will allow both institutions to work together in improving marketing and outreach for EDIF. This plan includes various updates to marketing material,

optimisation of the www.wbedif.eu website, including further interactivity elements and the possibility of a log-on area for PAG members, as well as an envisioned EDIF-wide event and short promotional videos to highlight SME success stories.

EIF sent representatives to several events to raise awareness of the WB EDIF platform and its underlying pillars, including the 7th Annual Southeast Europe M&A and Private Equity Forum in Serbia in October and the Balkan Venture Forum in Slovenia in November (the latter was also attended by the ENIF Fund Manager).

ENIF

EIF, as part of its responsibilities as Platform Coordinator has been charged with the selection of the private sector Fund Manager for ENIF. Following the selection of the Fund Manager in 2014 there has been extensive negotiations, mostly concerning commitments from KfW and the beneficiaries.

With the ENIF term sheet finalised to accommodate for the ODA requirements for KfW's investment and the resulting cascade system, EIF has focused on drafting the contractual basis of the subscriptions into ENIF via a Limited Partnership Agreement (LPA). A preliminary draft was made available to PAG members in order for them to take the local decision making process forward and to secure their subscriptions, A subsequent version will be provided in early 2015.

During the December 2014 PAG meeting, the EIF proposed a 2-stage closing scenario in order to subscribe the fund and thus allow ENIF to become operational in early 2015. A first close phase would target a size of EUR 25 million (involving EC, EBRD, beneficiaries and private investors), to be then followed by a subsequent closing to target the full size of EUR 38m (involving EC, EIF, private investors and KfW). Such bridge solution would be in place for an estimated 3-6 months with the first close phase to be completed as soon as the LPA is finalised and agreed with the partners.

EIF also continues discussion with other potential investors in ENIF.

ENEF

EBRD continued with the ENEF promotional roadshows on the ground into July 2014. They were well received and generated wide-spread press coverage which was also shared on the www.wbedif.eu website.

The Fund held its second Board of Directors meeting on July 9, 2014, and the third meeting on December 12, 2014 whereby decisions were taken on subjects including procurement rules, integrity guidelines, treasury guidelines & legal advisors.

The ENEF Investment Committee has been assessing the first projects from various WB countries and expects the first signatures for Q1 2015; a sound ENEF deal pipeline has been put in place.

The EBRD, in its role as Investment Advisor, has appointed a senior representative to act as the ENEF Chief Operational Officer based in Belgrade; two additional principle bankers have also been recruited. In parallel the EBRD has been negotiating with a new institutional investor for a potential contribution of EUR 5 million – thus bringing the capital base to EUR 48.5 million).

Guarantee Facility

The months of August and September saw the signatures of Unicredit Serbia (for a portfolio of EUR 30 million) and CKB Montenegro (for a portfolio of EUR 7.9 million). The sixth and final signature under the current EUR 20 million allocation by the EC, with Raiffeisen Croatia was under negotiation during H2 2014 and is expected to be signed in January/February of 2015. Utilisation at the end of 2014 is healthy with all operations absorbing market demand well.

With the entire budget having been allocated in support of approximately EUR 118 million, EIF and EC are negotiating a replenishment for the Guarnantee Facility for a further EUR 17.5 million (IPA 2014) . This will enable the EIF to continue assessing additional applications received under the 2014 Call for Expression of interest and to open a second Call later in 2015 to allocate the remaining funds.

EIF obtained a positive interpretation by the EC on the subject of regulatory capital relief in October 2014; capital relief is a critical element of guarantee products for banks in light of Basel III (EIF AAA guarantee) and was raised by a number of applicants & FIs expressing an interest under the Call.

Support services

Following the launch by the OECD of the first projects under the Support Services Facility in the first part of the year, the implementation phase started:

- EU Small Business Act (SBA) monitoring: a review of the methodology was carried out following consultations with partner institutions, external experts and SBA coordinators. Dedicated monitoring dimensions have been added in order to monitor and assess the achievements on the identified EDIF policy reform priorities.
- Triple Helix: an assessment of the existing frameworks was carried out in all three economies in collaboration with government representatives, researchers, businesses, donors, and innovation support organisations. Best practice and experience sharing initiatives were also organised with key local stakeholders.

Two additional Support Services implementation agreements were signed in the 2nd half of 2014 between the Commission and the World Bank, for implementation under EDIF of the

REPARIS programme and for the roll-out of new Venture Capital and Investment Readiness projects. Implementation will start in 2015.

Following the endorsement by the PAG in June of EIB's proposal for a coherent and coordinated administration of the Support Services pillar, the EIB took up its management and coordination role. Two meetings of the Support Services Working Party followed (7 October 2014 and 3 November 2014) where the implementing organisations discussed and agreed on the modus operandi and on the operational principles of the Pillar, reviewed the progress of the actions under implementation and discussed proposals for new technical assistance.

OUTPUTS

Platform level

With the five PAG meetings held since December 2012 (and relating Working Group meetings in preparation for these), EDIF governance arrangements are being well consolidated. Enough experience has also been gathered to draw lessons for the future operations and streamlining of the EDIF Terms of Reference and Rules of Governance which EIF has endeavoured to carry out; furthermore EIF has delivered measures for the improvement in EDIF communications

ENIF

ENIF operationalisation is still in progress.

ENEF

The ENEF Investment Committee meeting in October 2014 discussed four projects at concept stage for a cumulative amount of EUR 21 million. The immediate pipeline contains four potential deals for a total proposed amount exceeding EUR 30 million. Furthermore, an exploratory pipeline for a total proposed amount of EUR 31million, covering 14 deals across six countries and three sectors. As at end-2014 no signatures had taken place.

Guarantee Facility

Implementation continues with four banks reporting 436 loans for an aggregate loan volume of EUR 24.2 million as at 31.10.2014. Operations under Unicredit Serbia expect to commence during December and Raiffeisen Croatia remains to be signed in January/February 2015.

Support Services In the context of the Triple Helix Partnership the OECD delivered best practice sharing seminars and "study trips" for the beneficiaries. Regarding SBA, the new SME Policy Index Methodology was finalised.

The 2015 work programmes for WB's REPARIS and EBRD's Small Business Support (SBS) were finalised.

The operational principles on the management and administration of the Pillar were agreed among the parties. The Support Services Working Party discussed new proposals for targeted TA measures presented by the EIB.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

Platform level

The next PAG meeting is scheduled for the second week of June 2015 in Rome (host to be confirmed), with WB EDIF and WBIF secretariats coordinating on logistics. A PAG Working Group meeting is expected to take place approximately 5 weeks prior in conjunction with the Support Services Working Party (SUPWP). The Platform Coordinator PAG Annual report 2014 will also be prepared.

EIF's work during the 1st half of 2015 will focus on proposing governance restructuring to reflect the evolving nature of EDIF and new investors, to be incorporated within the revisions to the ToR and RoG. In addition EIF will continue to roll out its quarterly newsletters and will review the EDIF leaflet as well as explore and implement ways of improving the interactivity of the www.wbedif.eu website.

ENIF

The first stage of closing at approximately EUR 25 million is expected for early 2015 and will act as a bridge solution for 3-6 months in leading up to the second stage of closing at approximately EUR 40 million. Further negotiations with additional institutional investors will continue.

ENEF

First investments are to materialise in the 1st half of 2015. Further negotiations with a new institutional investor will continue.

Guarantee Facility

Signature of a guarantee agreement with Raiffeisen Croatia is scheduled for January/February 2015. The Guarantee replenishment (under IPA 2014) is to be contracted between the EC and EIF.

Support Services

Within the Multi-country Programme 2014 the two remaining Support Services agreements will be finalised, one with EIB for the coordination of the Support Services Facility and one with EBRD for the inclusion under EDIF of the SBS programme.

The existing projects with the OECD will continue, with SBA data collection, evaluation and verification and with the formulation of comprehensive and sustainable Triple Helix frameworks. The REPARIS, VC Ecosystem Assessment, Investment Readiness Pilot and SBS programmes will begin the implementation phase.

3.2 EUROPEAN FUND FOR SOUTHEAST EUROPE (EFSE)

Programme reference:	CARDS 2006/018-264 and Multi-beneficiary Programme IPA 2007/019-344, IPA 2008/020-300, IPA 2009/021-373 and IPA 2013/024-091
Project title:	European Fund for Southeast Europe (EFSE)
EU contribution:	EUR 83.9 million
Beneficiary region:	14 countries including Western Balkans and Turkey
Type of contract:	Contribution agreements with the European Investment Fund (EIF)
Contract reference:	CN 2006/124-240; CN 2008/154-338, CN 2009/201-622, CN 2009/222-012, CN 2011/268-296
Duration of activities:	04/08/2006 – 23/10/2017
Links:	http://www.efse.lu/
Contact :	Lara Beltrame, lara.beltrame@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

EFSE extends loans to selected financial institutions in the region of Southeast Europe (at present 44 in the IPA Region), including the European Eastern Neighbourhood Region, for on-lending to micro and small enterprises and low-income private households with limited access to financial services. EFSE's partner lending institutions include commercial banks, microfinance banks, microcredit organisations and non-bank financial institutions.

ACTIVITIES (JULY–DECEMBER 2014)

By 30 June 2014, the outstanding investment portfolio in the EFSE amounted to EUR 816.3 million, thereof EUR 478.8 million in the Western Balkans and Turkey. During 2H2014, EFSE signed 31 investments totalling EUR 201.4million, of which EUR 144.9 million with 18 Partner Lending Institutionss (PLIs) were in the Western Balkans and Turkey. This brings the total number of PLIs with active investments to 74 and an outstanding investment portfolio by year-end of EUR 940.4 million - EUR 563.4 million in the Western Balkans and Turkey.

In terms of the sub-loan portfolio, data for the full second half of 2014 will only be available during Q1 2015. By 30 September 2014, the outstanding sub-loan portfolio amounted to EUR

764.6 mn, including EUR 479.2 million in the Western Balkans and Turkey. This translates into an on-lending rate of 90% for the total Fund and 95% for the Western Balkans and Turkey by 30 September 2014.

On the TA side, EFSE had 23 ongoing projects in the Western Balkan region and Turkey with a total volume of EUR 1.5 mn. For example, in Bosnia and Herzegovina EFSE supported the banking sector in cooperation with the Association of Professional Risk managers by organising several trainings and workshops (e.g. on Basel III). In Serbia, EFSE, in cooperation with the Serbian banking association, held a workshop on Mobile Financial Services.

By the end of 2014, EFSE successfully raised additional EUR 30 millionn in funding from private investors. This was enabled by the Fund's strong performance also in the Western Balkan region and Turkey. Overall, fund performance remains very solid with continuously low impairment levels, very good financial performance, and continued growth further leveraging the Fund's C Shares.

OUTPUTS

EFSE investment portfolio figures as at end Q4 | 2014*

1. Total Invested Portfolio (Q4 2014 figures)	EUR 940.5 million
2. Number of current Partner Lending Institutions	(Q4 2014 figures) 74
4. Type of Partner Lending Institution	(Q4 2014 figures) 66% Commercial Banks, 19% Micro-finance Institutions 15% Non-Bank Financial Institutions

EFSE sub-loan figures as at end Q3 | 2014*

5. Active End Borrowers	(Q3 2014 figures) 137.604
6. Reached End Borrowers since inception	(Q3 2014 figures) 559,011
7. Average sub-loan outstanding	(Q3 2014 figures) EUR 5,556
8. Disbursed sub-loans since inception	(Q3 2014 figures) EUR 3.8 billion

* Figures shown are aggregate for both, the region of Southeast Europe and the European Eastern Neighbourhood Region.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

For 1H2015, EFSE is facing a strong investment pipeline, for example, in Turkey and also in Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Moreover, EFSE TA will further increase its activities covering a broad variety of topics to support sustainable financial sector development. One of the planned activities in 1H2015 includes, for instance, a workshop on agrifinance in Turkey.

3.3 CRISIS RESPONSE PACKAGE

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary programme, IPA 2009/021-373
Project title:	Private Sector Support Facility for Turkey - Crisis Response Package
EU contribution:	EUR 22.5 million
Beneficiary region:	Turkey
Type of contract:	Contribution agreement with EBRD
Contract reference:	CN 2009 / 228-868
Duration of activities:	18/12/2009 – 30/11/2021
Links:	http://www.turseff.org ; http://www.midseff.com ; http://www.msmeturkey.com
Contact :	Carlo Coppola, carlo.coppola@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The EU/EBRD programme "Turkey Private Sector Support Facility" (PSSF) assists economic actors in Turkey through loans, grants and technical assistance (TA) in increasing their competitiveness in products and services to face the challenges of the economic and financial crisis in the short and long term. To this end, it provides necessary financial and human resources as well as technical skills.

ACTIVITIES (JULY-DECEMBER 2014)

MSME Finance Window is currently in its 3rd phase, focussing on agricultural lending capacity building, sustainability of TA and graduation of partner banks. Under the TA, consultants have developed a Client Assessment Programme (CAP) providing a risk assessment model for easier processing of loan applications and increasing access to finance for agricultural MSMEs. The CAP has been transferred to the Turkish Kredit Bureau (KKB) under the name “TARDES”. Tailor-made versions of TARDES have been developed in line with the needs, demands and risk appetite of each partner bank. CAP Tool/TARDES is regularly updated with regional agronomic data (i.e. average yield, sales price, working capital requirement, production processes and related costs etc.). Partner banks have been supported with on-the-job and classroom trainings held during the period. Isbank, with the support of the consultants, launched a new specific section for agriculture sector on its website “İs`te KOBİ”. A joint workshop on agricultural finance together with the Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock was conducted in Ankara on 25 November 2014.

Energy Efficiency Window.

The first phase of TurSEFF was successfully finalised early in 2013, having disbursed EUR 200 million to finance 370 sustainable energy measures in Turkey through 269 sub-loans. The sub-loans under TurSEFF are now being verified.

Under MidSEFF, six new projects were requested in the second half of 2014: two for wind power plants, and four hydro. The Project Consultant started monitoring Karadere wind power plant. This increased the number of MidSEFF projects under monitoring to seven.

Small Business Support (SBS) / Enterprise Growth Programme (EGP). One EGP project was approved in the second half of 2014 and one project completed. The total number of projects is now 17 started and 9 completed. Business Advisory Services (BAS) started 2 projects and 26 projects were completed during the semester. The total number of BAS projects implemented is 165, of which 69 have been completed and 94 have undergone a one year completion evaluation. In order to increase demand for local consultancy services, improve their quality and consolidate the industry, as well as to disseminate success stories and best practices, eight market and one sector development activities were undertaken. Twenty-seven local consultants received training on ‘Management Consulting Essentials’.

OUTPUTS

MSME Finance Window.

Following the transfer of “TARDES” and launch of the system to the whole Turkish banking sector in January 2014, it is currently in use by Isbank, Kuveyt Turk, Akbank, ABank, Bank Asya

and Fibabanka. In addition, a tailored CAP tool has been developed and integrated into Vakifbank's systems in early 2014. A joint training session for the whole banking sector with KKB was organised in July 2014, covering the use of data entry and updated screens on TARDES. A guideline for programming the new modules in TARDES has been prepared and presented to KKB. The total number of tech-cards and agricultural products in the system reached 1,651 and 131 respectively. More than 40,000 agricultural loan applications have been assessed through TARDES during the period. 140 Isbank staff were trained on Agricultural Lending and a total of 24 staff of Vakifbank and TEB attended the agricultural study tour. Two Agricultural Sector Reports and 47 Agricultural Product Reports have been produced and delivered to the TARDES user banks and KKB during the period. Sixteen agriculture-related questions from MSMEs have been answered and published on Isbank's "Is'te KOBİ" website since June 2014.

Energy Efficiency Window.

Of the EUR 700 million in EBRD funds allocated for MidSEFF, EUR 175 million had been reserved for direct risk participation in selected transactions. Due to the difficulty in implementing these types of transactions, there had been no use of the direct risk funds under MidSEFF so far. Therefore, in the second half of 2014, EBRD cancelled the direct risk participation allocation and is in the process of reallocating them as new MidSEFF senior loans. The first new loan (expected to be EUR 100 million) should be signed early in 2015.

SBS /EGP.

89% of the evaluated projects have been rated as successful or highly successful. In addition, 87% of enterprises increased their turnover with a median increase of 25%; 65% of enterprises increased their productivity, with a median increase of 24%. 77% of BAS-assisted enterprises reported an increase in the labour force, creating over 600 new jobs. 11% of assisted enterprises received external investments within one year after completion of activities, for a total of EUR 10.2 million. Lastly, BAS interventions contributed to raising demand for external advice: 97% would consider using a local consultant again, whereas 52% of beneficiary enterprises have in fact already engaged another advisor within one year after completion of the BAS project.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

MSME Finance Window.

The facility is now fully invested in the MSME sub-loans and the focus will be on capacity building with PFIs on agricultural lending processes through TA and monitoring the sub-loan portfolio against the requirements of the first loss cover. The consultants will continue assisting KKB in TARDES marketing and promotion activities in order to attract new financial institutions for the use of TARDES. Garanti Bank is expected to start using TARDES in the upcoming period.

Agricultural product and sector reports will continue to be produced and shared with PBs and uploaded to TARDES. In order to ensure sustainability of agricultural lending training programmes, an intensive agricultural training of trainers (ToT) programme will be initiated for Vakifbank. Also an agricultural banking vision meeting will be organized for Vakifbank. An agricultural project finance risk management training programme will be designed for the PFIs. The regional structure of the TARDES/CAP tool will be adjusted to a province based structure (from 26 regions to 81 provinces). The number of tech-cards is expected to exceed 3,000 within the new structure.

Energy Efficiency Window will continue to encourage the development of MidSEFF sub-projects from non-mainstream renewable technologies with the aim of allocating all MidSEFF funds by the middle of 2015. It will also continue to monitor the implementation of active MidSEFF projects and complete the verification of the final TurSEFF sub-loans.

SBS/EGP.

Project selections are now complete for new potential signings and four more projects are expected to be completed in 2015. BAS plans to continue the implementation of BAS projects as well as market development activities (MDAs).

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary programme, IPA 2009/021-373
Project title:	Private Sector Support Facility for the Western Balkans – Crisis Response Package
EU contribution:	EUR 31.5 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	Contribution agreement with EBRD
Contract reference:	CN2009/229-273
Duration of activities:	23/12/2009 – 30/11/2015
Links:	http://www.sme-finance.mk / http://www.cropssf.hr / http://www.webpssf.com
Contact :	Inga Stefanowicz, inga.stefanowicz@ec.europa.eu Lara Beltrame, lara.beltrame@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The EU/EBRD programme “Private Sector Support Facility for the Western Balkans” (PSSF) provides loans, supported by grants and technical assistance (TA) to the WB Region for (i)

industrial investments for SMEs to be in line with acquis and (ii) energy efficiency investments in the private sector. The Facility includes three windows: (i) the SME Competitiveness Support Window (SME-CSF – EUR 21.5 million), (ii) the Energy Efficiency Window (SEFF – EUR 5.0 million), and (iii) the EBRD SBS (formerly TAM/BAS) Programme Window (EUR 5.0 million).

ACTIVITIES (JULY – DECEMBER 2014)

SME-CSF Window.

To date EBRD signed 13 loan agreements with Participating Banks (PBs) for financing of EUR 105 million in 4 countries. Out of the 13 projects, one is related to SEFF sub-window, whilst the remaining 12 fall under SME-CSF. In the second half of 2014 the PB Serbia Unicredit submitted a request to EBRD for consideration and approval of a third tranche of EUR 2 million under the SEFF sub-window. This is currently being reviewed by EBRD for approval in Q1 2015, when the amendment to the Loan Agreement is expected to be signed.

Energy Efficiency Window.

The first tranche of EUR 50.0 million of investment funds under WeBSEDF, to which the PSSF EUR 5.0 million contributed, were fully committed to 12 projects by September 2012. Further progress was made with their implementation in the second half of the year, with 3 additional projects completed and verified during the period. This brings the total to 10 (out of 12), including the projects supported by sources other than the PSSF.

SBS Window.

Under SBS, the Enterprise Growth Programme (EGP) has started 47 projects in the region and 1 sector development activity. Two projects were started during the reporting period. Out of these, 27 have been completed, including the sector development activity, 10 cancelled and 10 are under implementation. Business Advisory Services (BAS) delivered 317 projects, of which 11 are on-going, 21 have been completed and 17 cancelled. 268 projects have already been evaluated one year after completion with 14 being evaluated during the reporting period. On average, beneficiaries contributed 46% of project costs. In total, 18 projects have been implemented in Albania, 67 in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 94 in Croatia and 49 in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, 37 in Montenegro and 52 in Serbia. Under PSSF, 18 new projects started during the second half of 2014 in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Furthermore, 9 market development activities have been implemented to provide training to local enterprises and consultants and to consolidate the consultancy industry in the region.

OUTPUTS (JULY – DECEMBER 2014)

SME - CSF Window. EBRD disbursed EUR 6.36 million to Participating Banks (PBs) in the period bringing the total disbursements under the Facility to EUR 105 million. The current sub-loan portfolio stands at 221 for the value of EUR 79.4 million. 36 projects have been completed and verified. Cumulatively 157 sub-projects have been successfully verified by the end of reporting period (Croatia 63; the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia 39, Serbia 45, Bosnia and Herzegovina 10). The cumulative total amount of IPA and SSF Grants disbursed by the first half of 2014 stands at EUR 11.2 million, of which EUR 10.2 million from IPA. EUR 2.84 million has been disbursed for consultancy services.

Energy Efficiency Window.

During the period, two additional projects qualified for incentive payment from the PSSF for a total of EUR 1.8 million. One of the payments for EUR 0.56 million was made, while the other will be made in the first half of 2015, if the remaining conditions are fulfilled by the borrower. These developments brought the total number of verified projects under the PSSF to 4 (out of 7). The cumulative amount of incentive payments to these 4 verified projects under the PSSF reached EUR 2.64 million (of which EUR 0.84 already paid out). Among these verified projects there are two small hydropower projects in Albania and one in Kosovo, as well as one biomass-fired cogeneration facility in Croatia. Of the remaining 3 projects supported under the PSSF, one has encountered significant difficulties and may not be completed (the incentive payment would not be disbursed), the other one has not been initiated yet (which may mean that it would also lose its entitlement to an incentive payment), while the third one is close to completion and is expected to be verified in 2015. The two projects that face implementation difficulties are being closely monitored; the PSSF funding committed to them is EUR 1.3 million.

SBS Window.

67% of evaluated projects have been rated as successful or highly successful. In addition, 70% and 49% of BAS assisted enterprises report an increase in turnover and labour force, respectively, and BAS interventions contributed to the creation of over 315 (net) new jobs. Furthermore 26% of BAS-assisted enterprises received external investments within one year after completion of activities, with a median investment of around EUR 250.000. Lastly, BAS interventions contributed to raising demand for external advice. 97% would consider using a local consultant again, whereas 35% of beneficiary enterprises have in fact already engaged another adviser within one year after project completion.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

CSF-SME activities will focus on signing eligible sub-projects under the third tranche for Serbia Unicredit EE, as well as on the disbursement of the existing signed loans and financial

incentives. The consultancy teams on the ground are working closely with all PBs and EBRD to ensure successful completion of the Facility by the end of implementation period in November 2015. Implementation of projects under WeBSEDF will continue. It is anticipated that the verification of one more project will be initiated in the 1st half of 2015 and incentive payments to two projects that have been already verified will be paid out. SBS plans to start a few more EGP projects in 2015 in Croatia and will continue implementing BAS activities under the WB PSSF where applicable.

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary programme, IPA 2009/021-373
Project title:	SME Recovery Support Loan for Turkey – Crisis Response Package
EU contribution:	EUR 30.00 million
Beneficiary region:	Turkey
Type of contract:	Contribution Agreement with EIB
Contract reference:	CN2009/228-929
Duration of activities:	22/12/2009 -22/12/2016
Links:	http://www.eib.org/projects/pipeline/2009/20090580.htm http://www.eib.org/projects/press/2010/2010-131-eib-provides-eur-150-million-innovative-recovery-support-loan-to-smes-in-turkey.htm
Contact :	Carlo Coppola, carlo.coppola@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The overall objective of the SME Recovery Support Loan is to mitigate the crisis impact for SMEs and contribute to the development of the Turkish economy and employment sector. The main objective is to support SMEs with concrete productive investments by providing access to attractive and longer-dated debt financing.

ACTIVITIES (JULY–DECEMBER 2014)

The two facilities were fully disbursed between October 2010 and April 2011.

- Halkbank: Their share of the Facility (EUR 74.82 million) is fully allocated to 148 SMEs since the end of 2011. The average size of allocation is EUR 0.51 million.
- Akbank: Their share of the Facility (EUR 74.82 million) is fully allocated to 89 SMEs since the end of June 2012. The average size of allocation is EUR 0.8 million.

The monitoring of the repayments from the final beneficiaries continued (to be covered by the Annual Report to be released in March 2015).

The 2014 ROM mission took place on 13-14 October: two SMEs beneficiaries of the EIB credit lines in the area of Gaziantep (Eastern Turkey, less developed area) were visited. The discussion on the reutilization of the funds, which was kicked off at the Steering Committee in June 2014, continued between EIB and DG ENLARG in Brussels as well as with the EUD in Ankara.

OUTPUTS (JULY–DECEMBER 2014)

The impact of the Facility on employment is substantial, with an estimated total number of more than 4,000 jobs created. The facility was very well received by the SMEs that found it extremely convenient (affordable interest rate) and was disbursed to SME final beneficiaries at record time. Total investment reaching final beneficiaries stands at around EUR 300 m (EUR 149,74 million EIB loan, matched 50:50 by the intermediaries' own resources).

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

The success of the first operation, particularly its attractiveness and efficient implementation has been broadly appreciated and various follow-up scenarios are being considered. Even though Turkey is out of the financial crisis and has been experiencing some credit expansion in successive years, there are still niches where access to finance for SMEs is very critical such as health and safety investments.

3.4 COMPETITIVENESS

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary Programme, IPA 2013/024-091
Project title:	Next Generation Competitiveness Initiative (NGCI)
EU contribution:	EUR 4.9 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	Contribution agreement with OECD
Contract reference:	CN 2013/ 316-772
Duration of activities :	22/04/2013 – 31/12/2015
Links:	http://www.oecd.org/investmentcompact/
Contact :	Gabriela Negut, gabriela.negut@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The purpose of the NGCI is to improve competitiveness of the Western Balkan economies by assisting with the implementation of the South East Europe (SEE) 2020 Strategy, in partnership

with the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC). This will be achieved by: (i) assisting with the development of SEE 2020 national action plans by identifying short-term implementation measures, (ii) developing a transparent and publicly-accessible monitoring process to ensure the SEE 2020 Strategy is being implemented (“The SEE Competitiveness Outlook”); and (iii) developing an open, sector-based, regional network of Western Balkan businesses and government officials to enhance competitiveness of key sectors in the Western Balkans economies.

ACTIVITIES (JULY –DECEMBER 2014)

Within the monitoring component of the NGCI, the data-collection process was carried out. This involved providing support to the regional expert organisations, which had been co-ordinating the government self-assessment process. This support involved attending these organisations’ working group meetings, which included government representatives conducting the data-collection, as well as holding telephone conferences with the expert organisations, in order to explain the methodology and build capacity of the regional organisations for data collection. Between July and December, 27 such teleconferences were held. In addition, the assessment grids that were received by the governments and the consultants were revised for consistency and compared. Additional requests for clarification were sent through the regional organisations to the governments.

Regarding the sector component, for both priority sectors defined (food and beverages processing; tourism), analysis as well as the elaboration of strategies and policy recommendations to foster competitiveness continued. This effort was driven by the OECD and guided by two Sector Expert Groups composed of representatives of the private sector as well as representatives from the relevant ministries in charge of the priority sectors in each economy, including members of the Country Economic Teams (CET). Each of the Expert Groups hence consists of a core group of about 30 members from the seven SEE economies.

Following the first set of Expert Group meetings in spring, a second set of Sector Expert Group meetings was held jointly by the OECD’s SEE Division and the RCC. While the Food and Beverages Processing Expert Group (FBEG) convened at the OECD headquarters in Paris on 2 October 2014, the TEG met in Paris on 20 October 2014. During these meetings, OECD analysis was presented, its implications discussed and key decisions taken to pave the way of the future project work.

Key decisions by the Expert Groups and OECD Investment Committee’s analysis were presented on 4 November at the 16th Meeting of the South East Europe Investment Committee organised by the RCC Secretariat and Croatia (Ministry of Economy), which vetted the project methodology. Additionally, the OECD analyses performed as well as the decisions by the Sector Expert Groups were endorsed in the meeting.

OUTPUTS (JULY – DECEMBER 2014)

Under the short-term implementation measures component, discussion papers with potential priority actions for 2014 were produced, as well as short lists of three to five short term reform priorities for 2014. These activities concluded this project-segment.

Within the SEE Competitiveness Outlook, 68 completed government assessment grids and 89 completed consultant assessment grids were produced and analysed. At the same time, capacity building occurred within the regional organisations, helping them become acquainted with OECD methodologies.

Within the sector component, OECD analysis was performed to create the fact base for fostering competitiveness in the food and beverages processing as well as in the tourism sector. For both, the food and beverages processing as well as the tourism sector, the specific skills gaps as the main barrier to sector competitiveness were determined and best practices to bridge skills gaps presented and prioritised for the further work. For the food and beverages processing sector, potential opportunities for regional supply chain integration were analysed and prioritised. This will be the basis for drafting policy advice to unleash the potential. Furthermore, levers for increased value creation were reviewed and prioritised. Finally, the analysis of the tourism sector included the identification and review of international good practices to drive regional integration through an integrated offer as well as strategies to foster the development of high-value tourism segments.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

Under the SEE Competitiveness Outlook, key activities will include the data-reconciliation and consultation phase, which will comprise of in-country consultation meetings, as well as a regional meeting in Paris with the regional expert organisations to finalise the draft scores per indicator. This will result in the following outputs: a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation of progress in the implementation of the SEE 2020 Strategy; an independent and rigorous assessment of policy settings and reform in SEE 2020 priority areas against international best practice; and guidance for policy reform and development.

With regards to the sector component, a third set of Sector Expert Group meetings will be held in spring 2015. In preparation of these meetings, analysis will be performed to develop initial recommendations to bridge the identified priority skills gaps in the food and beverages processing as well as in the tourism sector. Furthermore, company surveys will be used to analyse the underlying reasons for a lack of supply chain integration in the food and beverages processing sector and initial recommendations to increase value added will be elaborated. Finally, strategies to create a regional offer in the tourism market through a SEE regional brand will be designed and initial policy recommendations to foster the identified high-value tourism segments developed.

3.5 HUMAN CAPITAL

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary programme IPA 2013/024-091
Project title:	FRAME: Frame skills for Future - Supporting the development of a comprehensive HRD (Human Resource Development) strategic vision in the Enlargement countries
EU contribution:	EUR 1.4 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans (except Croatia) and Turkey
Type of contract:	Delegation Agreement with European Training Foundation (ETF)
Contract reference:	CN 2013/316-651
Duration of activities :	08/05/2013 – 30/09/2014 extended until 08/12/2014
Links:	http://www.etf.europa.eu
Contact :	Bo.Caperman@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

Strategic policy advice for human resource development in enlargement countries for promoting sustainable economic development and social cohesion with particular reference to the Europe 2020 Strategy.

To strengthen the capacities of national actors in Enlargement countries to further develop and embed evidence based policy making, implementation and review of institutional arrangements and monitoring of HRD.

ACTIVITIES (JULY –DECEMBER 2014)

The Foresight exercise has been finalised in all the beneficiary countries.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo, validation workshops of the FRAME process have been organised in November upon request of the national authorities.

The Foresight methodological guide is available as interactive PDF on the website. The Guide has been translated in the four languages of the region and the EN version has been professionally printed.

The Review of Institutional Arrangements (RIA) exercise (including Medium Term Expenditure Framework - MTEF) has been finalised in all the beneficiary countries.

The RIA methodological guide has been finalised and is available on the website as publication. The RIA annexes (Interview Guidelines and Governance matrix) have been translated in the four languages of the region.

On Monitoring, the list of common indicators – including the analysis and selection of national indicators for skills generation - and the monitoring tool have been finalised and agreed with the countries.

The Monitoring guidelines have been finalised and are available on the website as interactive PDF. The Guidelines have been translated in the four languages of the region and the EN version has been professionally printed.

On Regional cooperation, the FRAME validation event took place on 6 October 2014 in Tirana and peer learning activity on Monitoring took place in Bucharest on 28 and 29 October as planned. The ETF has been represented in the majority of the regional events and workshops.

The Skills 2020 Reports have been harmonised and finalised for all the countries together with the FRAME regional report.

Promotional material has been produced to ensure wide dissemination of the FRAME initiative.

OUTPUTS (JULY –DECEMBER 2014)

The Foresight Guide is published. The Foresight Skills 2020 vision papers are finalised for all the countries.

The RIA Guide is published. The RIA reports and the Capacity development plans are finalised for all the countries.

The monitoring tool (including the set of indicators and related national targets) has been finalised together with the Monitoring guidelines in full compliance with the EU 2020 and SEE 2020 strategies. The Monitoring guidelines are published.

The Skills country reports, summarising the results of the Foresight, RIA and Monitoring exercises have been finalised for all the countries.

The FRAME regional report is published.

The national and regional events have been organised as planned.

Enhanced collaboration amongst the Enlargement countries on HRD issues proven also by the number of future areas for cooperation and support at regional and country level that have emerged from the Skills country reports and the latest events under FRAME.

Close cooperation with key organisations in the region as RCC and ERISSEE has been ensured through regular contacts and exchange of information.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

N/A

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary programme, IPA 2012/022-966
Project title:	EC/RCC/World Bank/Western Balkans Countries Partnership on Employment and Social Inclusion
EU contribution:	EUR 1.0 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans (except Croatia)
Type of contract:	Administration Agreement with World Bank
Contract reference:	CN 2013/325-267
Duration of activities:	16/10/2013 – 15/01/2016
Links:	https://collaboration.worldbank.org/groups/jobs-challenges-western-balkans (registration obligatory) JKoettl@worldbank.org
Contact :	Bo.Caperman@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

Support to the development of regional learning networks on employment and social inclusion, to the RCC and national administrations in strengthening the capacities of countries to achieve the headline targets for the inclusive growth pillar of the SEE 2020 Strategy.

ACTIVITIES

The website to host a regional learning network on employment and social inclusion (South East Europe Jobs Gateway) was successfully launched with a live broadcast on youth employment policies and followed up with a second event, an online debate on priorities in employment policies (“What comes first, skills or jobs”). In the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the field work for the employer skills demand survey was launched and the analysis of the skills household survey was initiated. A work plan to develop a National Employment Strategy was agreed upon with the government and other donors (ILO, UNDP). In Montenegro, a workshop was organised and attended by government stakeholders (Ministries of Labor, Economy, Finance and Education) to identify main challenges, issues, constraint and policy priorities in the labour market area to be addressed in the upcoming Human Development and Employment Strategy 2016-2020. In addition, a consultant was hired to lead the drafting the upcoming strategy. In Serbia, finally, the survey firm to conduct the skills demand and household surveys was contracted. A series of three workshops was held with the government to discuss reform priorities for the National Employment Service, active labour market programs, and activation of social assistance beneficiaries.

OUTPUTS

More than 60 stakeholders are now connected via a regional online learning network on employment and social inclusion and actively exchange ideas and opinions. In the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Montenegro, governments committed and started concrete actions to develop a comprehensive employment strategy. In Serbia, finally, the government developed a concrete roadmap to completely overhaul the National Employment Service and improve the quality of their services, the targeting and design of active labour market program, and expressed full commitment to the proposed reforms by linking reform outcomes to World Bank loan disbursements. The government is developing a similar approach for reforming Social Welfare Centres and the design of social benefits to improve activation of social assistance beneficiaries.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

Further knowledge exchange events on the online platform and possibly in the region; in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, finalization of the employer survey data collection, finalization of data analysis for household survey, and initialization of employer survey analysis; workshops with the government to develop employment strategy; in Montenegro, a workshop to be attended by main stakeholders to discuss the draft Human Development and Employment Strategy prepared using technical assistance provided by the Bank; in Serbia, further workshops with the government to refine the reform program for national employment service, active labour market programs, activation, and to continue developing a national employment strategy.

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary Programme, IPA 2013/024-091
Project title:	Developing the entrepreneurial society in Western Balkans and Turkey – support to the South East European Centre for Entrepreneurial Learning
EU contribution:	EUR 2.55 million and EUR 0.85 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans and Turkey
Type of contract:	Grant Contract with SEECEL
Contract reference:	CN 2013/316-501; CN 2013/334-013
Duration of activities:	01/05/2013 – 30/04/2016; 01/01/2014 – 31/12/2016
Links:	www.seecel.hr
Contact :	Bo Caperman, bo.caperman@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

To further work on a systematic approach of the development of the entrepreneurially literate societies across the region and to support alignment of national policies with EU recommendations and policy essentials related to lifelong entrepreneurial learning, as well as to further develop the lifelong entrepreneurial learning system in line with the Human Capital Dimension of the SBA for Europe.

ACTIVITIES (JULY –DECEMBER 2014)

Developments in entrepreneurial learning as a key competence for the following ISCED levels of education: 1, 2, 3, 5 and 6 and Teacher Training Authorities (TTA)

- Instruments for piloting at ISCED Level 1 and 3 fully developed.
- Trainings held - preparation for piloting took place in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro and Turkey (trainings in Kosovo, the former Yugoslav of Macedonia and Serbia were held in the previous piloting period). Trainings were attended by the representatives of ISCED Level 1, 2, 3, 5 and 6 pilot institutions and national Teacher Training Authority.
- In total 17 Higher Education Institutions from eight countries confirmed their participation as the piloting institutions in the project.
- Five monitoring missions organised and conducted (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, the former Yugoslav of Macedonia, Serbia and Turkey).
- On-line mentoring and monitoring tool – Taskbox was developed and in constant use
- On-line knowledge exchange through Community of Practice (in total 122 - ISCED 1, 2, 3, 5 and 6 and TTA pilot institutions).

Training Needs Analysis (TNA)

- Required data sample for all eight countries collected.
- First round of data analysis commenced.
- Ongoing on-line exchanges and networking of experts in regards to the Quality Assurance criteria via the CoP.

Small Business Act Assessment Methodology

- Finalisation of upgrading the SBA indicators with ETF.
- SBA Entrepreneurial Learning national expert teams established.

- 1 ETF-SEECEL regional training workshop with national SBA Entrepreneurial Learning Experts addressing the upgraded SBA indicators.
- Transformation of the SBA Sub dimension 1.2. - Women's Entrepreneurship into the new methodology, as proposed by OECD for the SBA 2015 Assessment by ETF and SEECEL.
- Ongoing on-line exchanges and networking of experts in regards to the SBA 2015 Assessment via the CoP.
- Networking and know-how exchange through EU Thematic Working Groups (e.g. Entrepreneurship 360 and ET2020 Working Group on Transversal Skills).

OUTPUTS (JULY – DECEMBER 2014)

- ISCED 1 and ISCED 3 publication published and publicly available online.
- First newsletter developed by the Entrepreneurial Learning Students' Club (ELSC) published and publicly available online.
- Capacity building of the national SBA Entrepreneurial Learning experts through the preparatory meeting for the SBA 2015 Assessment process.
- New SBA assessment methodological approach for sub dimension 1.2. Women's Entrepreneurship applied and ready for assessment.
- Collection of data with the second generation TNA Toolbox resulted in 2557 fully filled in questionnaires.
- IT tool for facilitation of the piloting developed (Taskbox).

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

- Piloting the Entrepreneurial Learning Package with entrepreneurship as a key competence in the ISCED Level 1, 2, 3, 5 and 6 and TTA institutions. Continuation of other planned piloting activities (collection of the reports and other inputs).
- Result oriented monitoring (ROM) missions to each country.
- Publication of the second ELSC newsletter.
- Final analysis and publication of the Training Needs Analysis for the SEET countries based on the data collected via the online second generation TNA Toolbox.
- Discussion and finalisation of criteria for Quality Assurance.
- Organising the SBA 2015 Dimension 1 and 8a Assessment meetings in SEET countries with ETF and ongoing on-line exchanges and networking of experts in regards to the assessment process.

3.6 TRADE

Programme reference	Multi-beneficiary Programme, IPA 2011/022-964
Project title:	Reducing Regulatory and Administrative Constraints Related to Trade Logistics and Harmonising Cross-Border Clearance Systems and Services in the Western Balkans
EU contribution:	EUR 1.5 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	Administration Agreement with International Finance Corporation (IFC), World Bank Group
Contract reference:	CN 2011/276-335
Duration of activities :	21/11/2011 – 20/11/2014
Link:	http://www.ifc.org
Contact :	Alberto Costa, alberto.costa@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The Western Balkans Regional Trade Logistics Project aims to improve the competitiveness of companies in the Western Balkans by reducing administrative barriers to (and thus, time and costs associated with) cross-border clearance procedures. The project works with public and private sector stakeholders to streamline/ simplify export, import and transit procedures through inter-agency and cross-country coordination and harmonization, wider use of risk management, and process automation.

ACTIVITIES (JULY - DECEMBER 2014)

Risk Management Advisory

- Expert Advisory to the CEFTA Customs Risk Management Working Group.
- Introductory Risk Management Workshops for the Montenegrin Inspection Administration and for the Serbian Plant Protection Directorate.
- Risk Management Training for Border Inspectors of the Veterinary Office of Bosnia and Herzegovina.
- 2nd Risk Communication Training Workshop for the Macedonia Food and Veterinary Agency.

- Presentation by the Macedonia Food and Veterinary Agency of its new risk-based import controls at the IFC Global Trade Logistics Conference in Manila, developed with project support.
- Post Clearance Audit Controls Workshop with Montenegro Customs.
- In total 5 workshops/training events held with 138 participants, 64% of whom women; 6 media mentions.

Support to Automation of Clearance Procedures

- Upgrade of Albania Customs ASYCUDA IT System with the support of UNCTAD, co-financed by Albania Customs.
- Development of software modules for the Macedonia Food and Veterinary Agency upgrading the Agency's border inspection software, enabling data collection from accredited laboratories, and creating a rapid alert system for unsafe food/feed consignments.
- Development of a software module for Montenegro Customs to reduce the number of documents required to be presented by traders for consignment clearance.

OUTPUTS (JULY - DECEMBER 2014)

- Customs Brokers Instruction, Kosovo Customs, Review and Recommendations (July 2014).
- Survey of regional SPS Border Agencies' documentary requirements, inspections practices and time needed to inspect and sample (September 2014).
- Analysis of the Macedonian EXIM system and recommendations for improvement related to technical border agencies (September 2014).
- Analysis of goods subject to multiple inspections by Macedonian technical border agencies (October 2014).
- Guidance Document for CEFTA Parties: Lessons Learned during the research for the report on Documentary Requirements by SPS Agencies in the Western Balkans for the Import of Heat-Treated Dairy Products (October 2014).
- Contributions to the Montenegro Customs Service Law (July-November 2014).
- Post Clearance Audit Standard Operating Procedures for Montenegro (November 2014).

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

- Final Report

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary Programme, IPA 2011/022-964
Project title:	Support to CEFTA Secretariat 2011-2014
EU contribution:	EUR 0.68 million; EUR 60,000.00
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans and Moldova
Type of contract:	2 Contribution agreement with the CEFTA Secretariat
Contract reference:	CN 2011/271-151; CN 2014/350-131
Duration of activities:	15/09/2011 – 30/11/2014; 01/12/2014 – 31/03/2015
Links:	http://www.cefta.int/
Contact :	alberto.costa@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The overall objective is to enhance economic development through supporting liberalisation and facilitation of intra-regional trade in the context of the Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA). The Project supports the operation of the CEFTA Secretariat, which provide technical and administrative support to the CEFTA Structures (Chair in Office – CiO, the CEFTA Joint Committee – JC and the CEFTA Subcommittees and Working Group).

ACTIVITIES

The CEFTA Secretariat assisted the CEFTA Parties in the implementation of priorities set up by the 2014 Work Programme and facilitated the organisation of all regular meetings of the CEFTA Structures.

The CEFTA Secretariat in co-operation with TAIEX organised a workshop on customs risk management (Skopje, 24 September 2014) involving Italian, Austrian, and Slovenian Customs Authorities. The workshop was followed by a meeting of the Working Group on Customs Risk Management (Skopje, 25 September 2014).

With the objective to support the trade in services negotiations, the CEFTA Secretariat in co-operation with the WTO organized a Workshop on Foreign Affiliates Statistics (Brussels, 9-10 December 2014) addressing the importance of good quality statistics on trade in services. The event gathered around 25 participants from CEFTA Parties, Central Banks and statistical offices as well international partners including the OECD, DG TRADE and EUROSTAT.

The CEFTA JC decided to launch negotiations between Customs Administrations for simplification of inspections and exchange of data (negotiations formally launched on 21

November 2014). A number of decisions were also prepared for adoption by the JC meeting: 1. Decision on Establishment of CEFTA Open Fund; 2. Decision on National Seconded Experts; 3. Decision on Establishment of the Sub-Committee on Trade in Services and Amendment of Decision no. 4/2010; 4. Decision on Establishment of the Working Group on Electronic Exchange of Data; 5. Decision on Establishment of Committee of Trade Facilitation; 6. Decision on the Amendment to the Decision No 8/2007 Establishment of a Selection Committee for the Recruitment of the CEFTA Secretariat's Director. It is expected that these decisions will be adopted in early 2015.

In November 2014 the CEFTA Secretariat organized the "CEFTA Week 2014" where participants presented the progress achieved in the last six years and shared information on current regional and global challenges. A special report on the highlights of the event will be made available at the beginning of 2015.

OUTPUTS

- Bi-annual and annual Reports on activities of CEFTA Structures.
- Regular meetings of the CEFTA Subcommittees and Working Groups.
- Technical workshops in cooperation with TAIEX, IFC, WTO and GIZ.
- Establishment of the Subcommittee on Trade in Services and its subordinate bodies.
- First round of negotiations on liberalisation of trade in services launched.
- Establishment of Task Groups on SPS matters.
- Drafting monitoring indicators related to the Integrated Growth of the SEE2020.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

CEFTA Secretariat will continue assisting the CEFTA Parties in drafting all the work programmes of CEFTA Structures and in the organisation of all the regular meetings of the CEFTA Subcommittees and Working Groups.

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary Programme, 2011/022-964
Project title:	Supporting the implementation of CEFTA 2006
EU contribution:	EUR 0.6 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans (and Moldova)
Type of contract:	Contribution Agreement with OECD
Contract reference:	CN 2012/288-783
Duration of activities :	01/07/2014 – 30/11/2014
Links:	http://www.oecd.org/trade ; http://www.cefta.int
Contact :	Alberto Costa , alberto.costa@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The overall objective is to assist the CEFTA Parties in implementing the Free Trade Agreement negotiated in 2006 by the beneficiary economies. It focuses on the reduction and elimination of Non-Tariff Barriers (NTBs), the progressive liberalisation of trade in services and the identification of policy measures leading to optimising the benefits of regional trade and investment liberalisation in the framework of increasing European integration.

ACTIVITIES (JULY – DECEMBER 2014)

In this time-period the OECD undertook two separate activities:

- Analysis of existing supply-chains in the agribusiness sector in CEFTA and identification of trade barriers

The OECD undertook an examination of existing supply chain linkages between CEFTA parties in the agri-business sector. The aim of the work was to discover to what extent supply chains existed between CEFTA economies in the agri-business sector and what are the potential restrictions for their formation (including the existence of non-tariff barriers).

Upon identification of the most traded agri-business goods, a firm-level survey was undertaken, to see if restrictions (both trade specific as well as general) existed that prevented the development of regional supply chains.

The firm-level survey was focused on the top exporters in the agro-business sector for three product groups (baked goods, processed meats, and beverages), in an effort to identify which countries these companies sourced inputs from and export final products to –as well it explored

the difficulties firms faced when importing and exporting. In parallel, the survey aimed to identify specific import/export Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) trade barriers and other general trade barriers.

- Statistical analysis of trade-elasticities in the wake of the 2008 recession

The OECD undertook a statistical analysis to understand how CEFTA trade flows were affected by the recent 2008 recession. In particular, the OECD analysed how trade elasticities of the CEFTA region, as well as each member CEFTA country, reacted to the recession in the European Union. The analysis, also, examined how trade elasticities reacted to GDP changes for each CEFTA countries main trading partners and of top traded export commodities.

OUTPUTS (JULY – DECEMBER 2014)

The OECD showcased survey results of the regional supply chain analysis, the trade barrier survey results, and the statistical work on trade elasticities, during the OECD NTBs Roundtable and at the 2014 CEFTA Week, both held in Skopje, Macedonia, on November 18-19th 2014.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

The time period covered in this report, is the final semester of activity for this contract. The OECD will finalise all content of the supply chain and trade-barrier survey results in concluding publications, as outlined by the grant agreement.

- Analysis of existing supply-chains in the agribusiness sector in CEFTA and identification of trade barriers

The OECD undertook an examination of existing supply chain linkages between CEFTA parties in the agri-business sector. The aim of the work was to discover to what extent supply chains existed between CEFTA economies in the agri-business sector and what are the potential restrictions for their formation (including the existence of non-tariff barriers).

Upon identification of the most traded agri-business goods, a firm-level survey was undertaken, to see if restrictions (both trade specific as well as general) existed that prevented the development of regional supply chains.

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary Programme, IPA 2011/022-964; IPA 2013/024-091
Project title:	CEFTA Project Facility (CPF I and II)
EU contribution:	EUR 0.2 million; EUR 0.46 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans and Moldova
Type of contract:	2 Contribution agreements with the CEFTA Secretariat
Contract reference:	CN 2013/319-423; CN 2013/335-161
Duration of activities:	01/05/2012 – 31/10/2014; 18/12/2013 – 17/12/2015
Links:	http://www.cefta.int/
Contact :	alberto.costa@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The overall objective is to enhance economic development through supporting liberalisation and facilitation of intra-regional trade in the context of the Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA). The specific objective of the CPF is to provide technical assistance for successful implementation of the Agreement where specific technical knowledge and experience is needed.

ACTIVITIES

An international expert was hired to assist the Republic of Macedonia, Chair of the Working Group on Trade in Services, in facilitating the negotiating on liberalisation of trade services as well as to assist the CEFTA Secretariat in steering the technical preparation for the negotiation.

A technical assistance was outsourced to contribute to update and to further develop the CEFTA SPS Database.

A study visit of CEFTA AEO Contact Points to Austria was organised to support the development of a regional strategy and a roadmap for the implementation of the CEFTA Authorised Economic Operators (AEO) Programme. Participants benefited from Austria's experience in this regard. The Austrian Customs Authority has also assisted the Secretariat and CEFTA Parties in drafting CEFTA AEO Strategy which was endorsed by the latest Deputy Ministers' Meeting of CEFTA Parties in July 2014.

Project facility resources were used to finance a meeting of the CEFTA Working Group on Customs Risk management (Skopje, September 2014), including five expert missions to the meeting.

Additionally, three Service Contractors were hired to provide logistics support for a number of technical workshops and conferences to be organised between December 2014 and 2015.

A project was launched to review the current level of CEFTA Parties' administrative capacities in trade policy formulation, coordination and implementation in responding to multilateral, regional and bilateral obligations stemming from the WTO, EU and CEFTA.

In December 2014 a technical assistance was contracted to facilitate negotiations of a framework agreement in customs and to support the CEFTA Secretariat in developing the CEFTA Management Information System.

OUTPUTS (JULY – DECEMBER 2014)

- Work Programme of the CEFTA Subcommittee on Customs and Rules of Origin.
- Two rounds of negotiations on trade in services (Skopje, 8 July and 6 November 2014)..
- Study visit in Austria on preparation and implementation of the EU AEO Programme.
- Draft CEFTA AEO Strategy and roadmap.
- Terms of Reference for tendering new contracts foreseen in the next period.
- Update and upgrade of the CEFTA SPS Database.
- Meeting of WG on Customs Risk Management (Skopje, 25 September 2014).
- Study visit to CEFTA Secretariat for preparation of 2015 Work Programmes.
- Workshop on Foreign Affiliates Statistics (Brussels, 9 and 10 December 2014).

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

TA are planned to support negotiations on trade in services, to organise regional conferences and workshops and to prepare a needs assessment for trade policy formulation and coordination capacity of Ministries of Trade in CEFTA Parties. In addition, IT experts are to be hired to assist the CEFTA Parties in their discussions for electronic exchange of data.

CHAPTER 4: TRANSPORT AND ENERGY INFRASTRUCTURE, NUCLEAR SAFETY

One of the priorities for IPA assistance is to help Beneficiaries to overcome the economic and financial crisis and to prepare for sound recovery by jointly working on increasing competitiveness and investments in infrastructure. Interventions in this sector have the ultimate goal of supporting the modernisation of their economies, also with a view to promote energy efficiency and renewable energy. Under the Municipal Window of the Infrastructure Projects Facility, grant co-financing is provided investment projects in the fields of environment (water supply, wastewater collection and treatment), energy (district heating) and transport (urban transport). Close coordination with International Financial Institutions (IFIs) is essential.

4.1 WESTERN BALKANS INVESTMENT FRAMEWORK (WBIF)

The Western Balkans Investment Framework (WBIF) was introduced in 2009 as a regional tool for EU enlargement. It supports socio-economic development and EU accession across the Western Balkans through the provision of financing and technical assistance for strategic investments. It pools resources from the European Commission's Instrument for Pre-Accession (IPA) with those of International Financial Institutions (IFIs), bilateral donors and the governments of the Western Balkans. The WBIF increases the region's capacity to finance crucial infrastructure and priority investments in line with accession priorities and enhances overall coordination of assistance. The WBIF seeks to maximise the impact of grant financing by using it to leverage lending by IFIs on priority strategic investments identified by the Western Balkan beneficiaries.

Since its launch five years ago, the WBIF has by far exceeded original expectations and, as of 31 December 2014, developed a pipeline of priority investments in the accession countries valued at approximately EUR 13.5 billion. To date, the WBIF Steering Committee has approved 186 grants with a total value of approximately EUR 310 million. These grants are used for project preparation, implementation and co-financing of investments in infrastructure for which financial support is provided by the partner IFIs - EIB, EBRD, CEB as well as KfW, with the World Bank as an associated IFI.

Either the IFIs or the European Commission implement the grant assignments. For the implementation of the EU grants, the Commission has awarded technical assistance contracts under the Infrastructure Project Facility (IPF) and has signed contribution agreements with the IFIs for implementation of the Municipal Window.

Altogether, the European Commission is the largest contributor to the WBIF and has channelled around EUR 260 million in grants to the WBIF. Of this, almost half – 48% – has gone to finance traditional Technical Assistance; IPF: EUR 82.5 million and the European Western Balkans Joint Fund (EWBJF): EUR 38.3 million. The last contribution by the EC to the EWBJF was made in November 2012. In addition to this, the EC has financed several blending and financial instruments such as REEP (EUR 20 million), Municipal Window (EUR 57.2 million) and EDIF (EUR 58.6 million)

At the last WBIF Steering Committee in Luxembourg on 9 December 2014, Germany and Italy made pledges of EUR 1 million and EUR 2.3 million respectively to the European Western Balkans joint Fund (EWBJF). Bilateral donors have in total contributed more than EUR 45 million to the EWBJF and the partner IFIs have set aside EUR 10 million each in grant contributions. Grants provided to the WBIF from bilateral donors and from the IFIs are implemented directly by the IFIs through various technical assistance assignments.

PURPOSE

The WBIF has three objectives:

- 1 - to create a one-stop-shop, where a request for project support can be presented, screened, assessed and eventually be provided with the required financing for its implementation,
- 2 - to pool different sources of funding (IFIs, the EC and bilateral donors) and work out an appropriate blend of grants and loans for various actions,
- 3 - to strengthen the strategic and policy coordination of actions by multiple donors and investors that addresses the socio economic priorities for the region. These socio-economic priorities are accession-driven and relate to the alignment of the candidate countries and potential candidates with the EU acquis. WBIF activities are supported by the EC-financed IFI Coordination Office – see below for a more detailed description of its activities.

The identification of priorities is a result of consultation with the other relevant DGs (Environment, Climate change, Move, Energy, Regional Policy, Economic and Financial Affairs) and ensures coordination with their activities in the region.

ACTIVITIES

Key issues under the WBIF work programme for the second part of 2014 included in particular the 12th call for proposals for WBIF support; the introduction of a PPP-window in the WBIF; the on-going discussions on the evolution of WBIF and the proposal from the European Commission on a new methodology to support infrastructure investments in the Western Balkans.

In June 2014, the call for project proposals – round 12 – was launched and overall 13 project applications were received. The Project Financiers' Group (PFG) met in November 2014 in Belgrade to assess the applications.

The 11th Steering Committee (SC) meeting of the WBIF was a special occasion, constituting its 5th anniversary. The meeting took place in Luxembourg on 9 December 2014 and was hosted by the European Investment Bank (EIB), co-chair of the PFG. Based on the recommendations from the PFG, the SC approved 7 WBIF grants for a total of approx. EUR 13.7 million. All of the applications approved are for technical assistance grants.

The SC reviewed the economic situation and outlook with a particular focus on connectivity in the region. Overall, the economic analysis showed that the "mild recovery" following the financial crisis has turned into a stagnant scenario. The importance of enacting structural reforms to improve overall competitiveness and to create additional fiscal space was once again stressed. The "EU Investment Package" is expected to stimulate growth by rejuvenating the WB economies and by attracting investments.

The SC agreed that the WBIF projects should be clearly linked to agreed sector strategies and that they should be part of one single project pipeline of priority investments, supported by all stakeholders and identified in the respective Country Strategy Papers for IPA II. Also, the meeting took note of the preparatory work in the areas of energy and transport that allows identifying projects for investments. The SC noted the potential for – but also limitations of – private sector participation (PPPs).

At the meeting a report from the special WBIF Task Force, composed by the beneficiaries, IFIs, bilateral donors and the Commission, was presented. Based on this, the SC took note of the new implementation structure and approved the new methodology. The new methodology and its various elements will be gradually implemented and should be applied as of 1 January 2016.

The new methodology implies the following changes:

1. More systematic identification and prioritisation of investment needs and projects through the NIC framework (to become a national requirement);
2. Stronger ownership by the beneficiaries;
3. Distinction between project preparation and mature projects;
4. Direction of IPA Multi-beneficiary funds towards co-financing of regional projects and with particular focus on connectivity (transport and energy).

The SC agreed that it should continue its work and consultations concerning the implementation of the new methodology to support infrastructure investments in the Western Balkans.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

The indicative work programme for the first half of 2015 includes the launch of the next round for TA project applications (round 13) with similar eligibility criteria as the previous two rounds - projects that 1) are strengthening or unblocking a concrete project of the pipeline and/or 2) have a clear regional impact. The deadline for applications is 20 February 2015.

The next PFG will be held in Brussels in May 2015, co-chaired by EBRD. The next SC meeting will take place on 16-17 June 2015 and will be held in Rome, Italy being the new co-chair of the WBIF SC.

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4.2 HORIZONTAL SUPPORT TO IFI COORDINATION

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary Programme, IPA 2013/024-091
Project title:	Horizontal Support to Coordination with International Financial Institutions (IFIs) – IFI Coordination Office
EU contribution:	EUR 3.88 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	Service contract with Mott MacDonald Limited
Contract reference:	CN 2014/340-622
Duration of activities:	01/04/2014 – 31/03/2016
Link:	www.wbif.eu/
Contact :	Olav Reinertsen: Olav.REINERTSEN@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The IFI Coordination Office refers to the consultancy service contract awarded by DG Enlargement aiming to ensure better coordination and cooperation between the beneficiaries, the EC, the IFIs and bilateral donors. The IFI Coordination Office provides a range of technical, management and communication services to support coordination among all WBIF stakeholders. It delivers analytical and operational services regarding EC, IFI and bilateral donors cooperation in the main WBIF sectors to facilitate better programming and planning of assistance including investments.

The Office supports WBIF structures, particularly the WBIF Secretariat and the WBIF SC and has developed a range of WBIF related communication activities including the WBIF website and MIS.

ACTIVITIES (JULY – DECEMBER 2014)

- Preparation and follow-up of the WBIF Project Financiers' Group and Steering Committee meetings.
- Internal discussions leading to the introduction of the WBIF new methodology.
- Participation in various working groups (Reduced Task Force on the WBIF New Methodology, EUBEC platform).
- Update of the WBIF Public Private Partnerships Strategy.

OUTPUTS (JULY – DECEMBER 2014)

- National Investment Committees (NICs) assessment carried out by IFICO; further NIC framework assistance proposed.
- Submission of the concepts and planning for a new WBIF MIS.
- Support to beneficiaries with their applications for call for project proposals Round 12.
- Drafting and submission of Terms of Reference for IPF4.
- Delivery of bi-monthly reports of active WBIF projects.
- Organisation of a regional NIPAC workshop in Belgrade in November 2014.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

- Support the preparation and organisation of WBIF related meetings, in particular the 12th WBIF Steering Committee in June 2015.
- Screening of applications from call for project proposals Round 13.
- Maintenance of the WBIF website, update of databases of investment and IPA flows, development of a new MIS.
- Organisation of sector-related round tables.

4.3 WBIF INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS FACILITIES (IPF)

Programme reference:	CARDS Regional Action Programmes for the years 2005 and 2006, CARDS 2005/017-628, CARDS 2005/017-886, CARDS 2006/018-474; Multi-beneficiary programme, IPA 2010/022-028
Project title:	Infrastructure Projects Facility 1 – Technical Assistance Window
EU contribution:	EUR 30.24 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	Service contracts with WYG International Limited
Contract reference:	CN 2008/157-799; CN 2008/157-807; CN 2008/158-121; CN 2010/241-182
Duration of activities:	18/06/2008 – 31/03/2015

Programme reference :	Multi-beneficiary programmes, IPA 2011/022-964, IPA 2012/022-966
Project title:	Infrastructure Projects Facility 3 – Technical Assistance Window
EU contribution:	EUR 22.42 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	Service contract with Mott MacDonald Limited
Contract reference:	CN 2012/293-208; CN 2013/331-494
Duration of activities:	20/06/2012 – 19/06/2018
Links:	www.wbif-ipf.eu
Contact:	Élodie LOPPE, Elodie.LOPPE@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The Infrastructure Projects Facilities (IPF) under the Western Balkans Infrastructure Framework (WBIF) refer to consultancy service contracts awarded by DG Enlargement to assist beneficiary institutions in the Western Balkans with project preparation for priority investments in transport, environment, energy and the social infrastructure.

The core task of the IPF teams is to carry out assignments for the projects approved by the WBIF Steering Committee and which are allocated as IPF projects (i.e. EU-funded). The IPF facilities provide technical assistance for project preparation (feasibility studies, designs and Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA), etc.) and implementation (tender dossiers, works supervision).

ACTIVITIES (JULY – DECEMBER 2014)

Originally IPF 1 was also providing support to the WBIF Secretariat, including the preparation of meetings of the Project Financiers Group and communication and visibility activities, such as the preparation of WBIF Annual Reports and the WBIF Monitoring Report, but over the reporting period, IPF 1 activities were dedicated strictly, like those of IPF 3, to the execution of sub-projects.

IPF 1 had already successfully completed 32 sub-projects assigned by the WBIF Steering Committee. IPF 1 contract was however extended further, until end of March 2015, to allow the completion of five last sub-projects in the sectors of energy, environment and social infrastructure.

IPF 3 portfolio reached 21 assignments by the WBIF Steering Committee. IPF 3 activities were in full swing with three sub-projects completed and 13 under implementation. The five sub-projects soon ready for implementation will maintain their rhythm of activities.

OUTPUTS(JULY – DECEMBER 2014)

Support to Beneficiaries with the preparation and implementation of priority investments in transport, environment, energy and the social infrastructure within the WBIF.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

- Continuation of IPF active sub-projects
- Expected completion of all ongoing IPF 1 projects by contractual deadline in March 2015.

4.4 MUNICIPAL WINDOW

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary programme, IPA 2008/020-300
Project title:	Municipal Window of the Infrastructure Project Facility
EU contribution:	EUR 13.2 million
Beneficiary region:	Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia
Type of contract:	Contribution Agreement to CEB-KfW
Contract reference:	CN 2009/216-156
Duration of activities:	11/08/2009 – 31/12/2015
Contact :	Elodie Loppé, elodie.loppe@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The project covers the following:

- Albania: Water supply and sewage Gjirokastra, Fier; Wastewater system Pogradec
- Bosnia and Herzegovina: Water supply and sewerage collection Banja Luka
- Serbia: Water supply and sewerage systems for 8 municipalities

ACTIVITIES (JULY – DECEMBER 2014)

The Loan and Financing Agreements for the sub-projects in Gjirokastra and Fier in Albania were signed in December 2010. Since September 2011, one consultant has been on-site to support the water utilities to improve their performance, develop tariff adjustment plans and draft business plans. Tendering construction services was delayed as the municipalities needed more time to meet the performance milestones, but construction contracts are now being awarded.

As regards the sub-project in Pogradec, the Loan and Financing Agreement was signed in December 2010 with the Government of Albania and the Project Executing Agency. The implementation consultant started in September 2011 and submitted the final inception phase report in March 2012 and the final design and tender documents in July 2012. The original project needed to be revised during the inception phase due to the bad state of existing infrastructure and local soil conditions. Contracts were awarded in Q2 2013. Completion of the project has been postponed to Q2 2015.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, concerning the sub-project in Banja Luka, the Loan and Financing Agreement was signed in 2009. Since then, all necessary support measures have been taken as scheduled with the assistance of a consultant. Following the signature of the work and supply contract in December 2011, the contractor started works. Several delays related to problems with land acquisition, weather conditions and contractual issues were reported, construction works were finalised at the end of 2014. The testing phase will be performed in the first semester of 2015.

In Serbia, the Loan and Financing Agreement for the project was signed in 2010. Considerable progress has been made, despite delays due to contractual issues and long tendering procedures in Serbia. Almost all of the final design works and the majority of the tender documents have been completed. In four towns (Kraljevo, Losnica, Sabac, and Smederevo) pipe rehabilitation works have started in July 2012 and in Losnica the rehabilitation of the pumping station started in May 2012. All construction works will be completed by the end of 2015.

OUTPUTS (JULY – DECEMBER 2014)

Improved quality of service, infrastructure management and financial performance

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

Continuation of construction works.

Programme reference :	Multi-beneficiary programme, IPA 2008/020-300
Project title:	Municipal Window of the Infrastructure Project Facility
EU contribution:	EUR 16.00 million
Beneficiary region:	Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia
Type of contract:	Contribution Agreement to EIB
Contract reference:	CN 2009/225-383
Duration of activities:	28/11/2009 – 28/12/2015
Contact :	Elodie Loppé, elodie.loppe@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The project covers the following:

- Bosnia and Herzegovina: rehabilitation and construction of water and wastewater infrastructure in 6 municipalities;
- Montenegro: Rehabilitation and construction of water and wastewater infrastructure in 5 municipalities;
- Serbia: Reconstruction of two roads in the city of Belgrade

ACTIVITIES (JULY – DECEMBER 2014)

As regards the Bosnia and Herzegovina sub-project, part of a larger WATSAN project, it originally covers the six municipalities of Bosanska Krupa, Bosanski Petrovac, Siroki Brijeg, Tomislavgrad, Orasje, Velika Kladusa. The inception report was finalised in March 2011 and construction contract was signed in Bosanski Petrovac end 2012. Contracts were being awarded during the reporting period for the municipalities of Tomislavgrad, Široki Brijeg and Orašje.

Regarding the Montenegro sub-project, the inception report was provided in September 2011 but the municipalities faced significant delays when preparing the design documents. Construction works have now started in Pljevlja and the Old Royal Capital of Cetinje. Tendering for construction works is ready to be launched for the municipality of Bijelo Polje and still under preparation for the municipality of Ulcinj. The municipality of Plav is still facing unresolved problems.

The Serbia sub-project is well advanced. Works on Boulevard Kralja Alexandra were completed in August 2010. Early results show that the traffic flow has improved and the travel time for tramway passengers has decreased, resulting in a significant increase of the number of

tramway users. Regarding the second road, Vojvode Stepet, after finalising all preparatory activities in 2012, construction works are ongoing and planned to be completed in 2015.

OUTPUTS (JULY – DECEMBER 2014)

Improved quality of service, infrastructure management and financial performance

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

Signature of work contracts, beginning or continuation of construction works.

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary programme, IPA 2008/020-300
Project title:	Municipal Window of the Infrastructure Project Facility
EU contribution:	EUR 3.00 million
Beneficiary region:	Bosnia and Herzegovina
Type of contract:	Contribution Agreement to EBRD
Contract reference:	CN 2009/225-824
Duration of activities:	30/11/2009 – 31/12/2015
Contact:	Élodie LOPPÉ, elodie.loppe@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The project is part of Bijeljina Wastewater System – Phase II and covers the construction of the wastewater treatment plant.

ACTIVITIES (JULY – DECEMBER 2014)

After a period of inactivity due to a change of contractor, the implementation of this project is now progressing well. The wastewater treatment plant is under construction and the works should be completed in April 2015.

OUTPUTS (JULY – DECEMBER 2014)

Improved quality of service, infrastructure management and financial performance

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

Continuation of construction works.

Programme reference:	Annual Programme 2008 II for Kosovo, IPA 2008/020-454
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Project title:	Municipal Window of the Infrastructure Project Facility – Kosovo Window
EU contribution:	EUR 25.00 million
Beneficiary region:	Kosovo
Type of contract:	Delegation Agreement to KfW
Contract reference:	CN 2009/221-084
Duration of activities:	11/12/2009 – 31/12/2015
Contact:	Élodie LOPPÉ, elodie.loppe@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The project covers the following:

- Water and sanitation Pristina: rehabilitation of the water distribution, rehabilitation of the water treatment plant Badovc, replacement of parts of the sewerage network and protection of the water resources
- Pristina district heating: rehabilitation and upgrade of the existing heating network, construction of a cogeneration facility in the thermal power plant Kosovo B and its connection to Pristina district heating system.
-

ACTIVITIES (JULY - DECEMBER 2014)

For the water and sanitation sub-project in Pristina, all works and supply contracts were signed in 2013 but are facing delays in implementation. Construction works are now expected to be concluded during 2015.

Concerning the Pristina district heating sub-project, detailed studies on the component cogeneration showed that investment costs for cogeneration were higher than originally expected. In order to cover them, the scope for the project has slightly changed as compared to the Contribution Agreement – the district heating system will only be rehabilitated and upgraded, but will not be extended. The consultant responsible for overseeing implementation started his assignment in April 2012. Though the tender bids evaluation was completed, no contract was signed until the Governments of Kosovo and Germany reached, in June 2013, an agreement guaranteeing sustainable heat supply after the decommissioning of Kosovo B. Contracts were eventually signed in June and December 2013. Completion of the sub-project is now expected for Q1 2016.

OUTPUTS (JULY - DECEMBER 2014)

Improved quality of service, infrastructure management and financial performance

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

Continuation of construction works.

4.5 ENERGY EFFICIENCY, GREEN FOR GROWTH

Programme reference:	IPA 2007/019-340
Project title:	Horizontal programme on the Energy Efficiency Finance Facility (EEFF)
EU contribution:	EUR 13.5 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans and Turkey
Type of contract:	Contribution Agreement with EIB
Contract reference:	CN 2008/163-442
Duration of activities:	28/11/2008 – 31/12/2016
Contact :	Davor Kunc, davor.kunc@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

This programme is to assist beneficiaries promote investments in energy efficiency (EE) and renewable energy (RE) generation to improve energy performance of the building and industry sectors, thereby contributing to energy savings and reduction of CO2 emissions. This is achieved through the provision of financing to commercial banks in the region to increase their portfolios in EE and RE projects for on-lending to final borrowers. The IFI credit lines under the programme are combined with IPA grants in the form of financial incentives both to partner banks (PB) and end-borrowers to facilitate investments.

ACTIVITIES

The Turkish component of the EIB credit line counts 15 sub-projects for a total grant amount of EUR 4.3 million. At the end of 2014, 13 sub-projects have been positively verified. Under the Croatian component, 7 sub-projects are allocated for a total grant amount of EUR 2.6 million and as at the end of 2014, 3 sub-projects have been positively verified. So far under both components most sub-projects concern RE investments.

As at 31 December 2014, EIB has disbursed EUR 3.9m of grants to verified sub-projects including EUR 3.4 million of investment incentives to the sub-project promoters.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

Under EIB's Turkish component the consultant will verify the remaining two sub-projects in the portfolio. With the support of the consultant, the participating banks have resumed pipeline development; the focus is expected to be on EE sub-projects. As the EIB loan is fully utilised, new project agreements with the participating banks are being amended to include the EEFF;

EIB's Croatian component is reaching full allocation. The participating bank has some additional EE sub-projects in its pipeline that it would like to allocate under the facility. In 2015 the consultant will assess the eligibility of these new EE sub-projects and proceed with the verifications of the completed sub-projects.

Programme reference:	Management of Participation in the Green for Growth Fund (GGF)
Project title:	Green for Growth Fund (GGF)
EU contribution:	EUR 56.6 million
Beneficiary region:	13 countries including Western Balkans
Type of contract:	Trusteeship Agreements with the European Investment Fund (EIF)
Contract reference:	CN 2009/228-008;2009/228-006/ 2011/267-146; 2010/257-202; 2010/257-202
Duration of activities:	17/12/2009-30/11/2015
Links:	http://www.ggf.lu
Contact:	Davor Kunc, Davor.kunc@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The mission of the Fund is to contribute in the form of a public-private partnership with a layered risk/return structure, to enhancing energy efficiency (EE) and fostering renewable energies (RE) in the Southeast Europe region including Turkey, and in the European Eastern Neighbourhood Region, predominantly through the provision of dedicated financing to businesses and households via partnering with financial institutions and direct financing.

GGF objectives are broadening the financing base of EE and RE investments in the target regions, increase awareness of EE and small RE products among companies and private households, contribute to broadening and deepening the financial sector servicing those development needs as well as to Harmonize and coordinate donor initiatives. GGF aims at achieving 20% energy savings and/or 20% CO2 savings across the energy efficiency portfolio and promote the use of renewable energy sources.

ACTIVITIES

During second half of 2014, the GGF signed 8 investments totaling EUR 75.7 million, of which EUR 45 million with 3 PIs were in the Western Balkans including Turkey. This brings the total number of Partner Institutions with active investments to 26. Significantly, this figure includes 2 direct investments in hydropower projects, one in Albania and one in Georgia.

The Fund was quite active in TA as well, with 23 projects with a total budget of nearly EUR 800,000 approved during the half-year. In addition to support to new and existing Partner Institutions, important steps were taken to increase awareness of EE/RE lending. A new SME brochure was finalized, detailing the ways in which small and medium enterprises can save energy, and be more profitable, through EE/RE. The brochure will be translated into multiple languages, and formally launched in the Fund's Target Partners in 2015.

The TA Facility attracted an additional EUR 1 million donation, bringing total funding to EUR 12.3 million. As the majority of this funding is already allocated to existing or planned projects, the TA Facility is actively seeking additional donations to secure its activities through 2015 and beyond.

Further increasing awareness of GGF, the Fund was the lead sponsor of the Balkan Energy Finance Forum in Tirana, Albania in October 2014, gathering financial institutions, project developers, and other stakeholders from throughout the region. Immediately following the conference, the GGF TA sponsored an RE investment workshop for project developers and lenders. The Fund is increasingly successful in placing project finance investments both directly and via its financial institutions partners. Also important for the Fund's visibility, the GGF was again awarded the LuxFLAG Environment label, for investment funds meeting high standards in green energy finance investing. Furthermore, the GGF presented at the Energy Community Energy Efficiency Working Group meeting in Vienna, and will join the group's meetings on a regular basis

OUTPUTS

GGF figures as at end Q3 or Q4 (are aggregate for both, the region of Southeast Europe and the European Eastern Neighbourhood Region)

1. Total Invested Portfolio (Q4) EUR 252.4 million
2. Number of active Partner Institutions (Q4) 26
3. Number of target countries (Q4) 13
4. Measures financed (Q3) 37% Improvement in processes, process related equipment, 37% Buildings, 10% Use of RE for commercial energy generation, 5% Agri-equipment, 7% Use of RE by households and businesses, 5% Others

5. Sectors financed since inception Households 37%; Manufacturing 34%; Services 15%; Commercial 6%; Agriculture 5%; Transportation 1%; Other 2%
6. CO2 Savings / CO2 Reduction 214,000 tCO2/yr / 44%
7. Energy Savings 831,000 / 43%

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

The Fund will enter 2015 with a strong pipeline, with investments in process in Macedonia, Serbia, and Turkey (in addition to several planned investments in the European Neighbourhood Region). The Fund will also issue a significant (EUR 20 million planned) amount of notes to private investors, further leveraging the investments of the donors and IFIs. At the same time, additional funding, particularly for C Shares and TA are being sought, given the GGF's growing portfolio and expanding activities.

The TA Facility will formally launch the SME brochure mentioned above, with awareness-raising activities in key markets of the GGF, as well as demand studies for energy efficient buildings in Serbia and Macedonia. The 2014 Annual Report, already in preparation, will further promote the GGF upon its publication in mid-2015.

The GGF will present its experiences in funding EE/RE in the Western Balkans and Turkey to the Energy Community Energy Efficiency Working Group in March, and also attend the Group's regular meeting. Active participation in this group will further raise the Fund's profile, particularly with regulators and government entities in the target region of the Fund.

Programme reference :	Multi-beneficiary Programme, IPA 2012/022-966
Project title:	Regional Energy Efficiency Programme for the Western Balkans
EU contribution:	EUR 20 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	Contribution agreement with EBRD
Contract reference:	CN2013/311-406
Duration of activities:	24/06/2013 – 31/12/2019
Links:	http://: www.wb-reep.org /
Contact :	Davor.kunc@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The overall aim is to establish a sustainable market for energy efficient financing of private and public sector. It will enable the public sector to take leadership in energy efficiency investments and facilitate access to medium and long-term credits for municipalities needed to implement infrastructure investments and improve the investment climate for business development.

ACTIVITIES (JULY - DECEMBER 2014)

Window 1 **Public Sector Energy Efficiency, Policy Dialogue, Institutional Capacity Building and Business Development Programme**

Theme 1 **ESCO Support**

ESCO legislative work (policy dialogue)

No new assignment was launched in the reporting period. Policy dialogue assignments are ongoing in Serbia, Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

ESCO project preparation work.

One new assignment has been launched in the reporting period in Bosnia and Herzegovina, (contracted in November 2014). The assignment has started to prepare the ESCO tender for a large cantonal hospital in Zenica and is identifying and supporting the preparation of additional projects. The assignment is still at an early stage of implementation.

The on-going 2 project preparation assignments in Serbia and Croatia are currently supporting 10 public authorities in the preparation of ESCO street lighting tenders. For the remaining countries project specific ad-hoc support will be provided.

Theme 2 **Energy Efficiency Policy Dialogue:**

All assignments under Theme 2 were launched in 2013, and reported on extensively in the last Activity Report. Following the prioritisation exercise conducted with the Energy Community Secretariat and Western Balkan governments (July 2013-December 2013), the consultants have continued working on support for development of public energy efficiency procurement policies, guidelines and codes in Montenegro and Serbia, as well as supporting NEEAP implementation through energy supply utility participation as well as energy tariff reform, energy metering and billing (the technical work is beginning in Q1 of 2015).

Window 2 (part of the WeBSEFF programme)– Sustainable Energy Credit Lines:

Two agreements with Participating Financial Institutions (PFIs) were signed under the Facility in the period – Komercijalna Banka Serbia for EUR 10 million and Privredna Banka Zagreb (PBZ) for EUR 15 million, of which EUR 10 million has been committed.

The Project Consultant (PC) assessed a total of 36 projects during the period.

- Six verification site visits were successfully conducted by the Verification Consultant (VC) in the period.
- The news story on the signing of the Loan Agreement between NLB Tutunska Banka and EBRD was published on the website.
- New Case Studies have been developed for uploading on the project's website. Three case studies (EZ Busovaca, Bio Energy and Brod-plin) were completed and the preparation of two further case studies (Tem Mandeks and VG Monting) has started.
- Western Balkans Sustainable Energy Finance Facility (WeBSEFF) website was upgraded and modified to enable easier presentation of more relevant and focused information for potential clients. The PC continued to market the Facility by regular updates and news announcements on the site.
- Croatia: workshop organized for ESCO pipeline development. Participants included five ESCOs, three street lighting companies interested in implementing ESCO projects, one Energy agency and two SEFF PFIs. Presentations were organised in the Country office of the Croatian Chamber of Commerce in Koprivnica and in the Central Office of the Croatian Chamber of Commerce in Zagreb and "Cities and Regions – Drivers of Development / Investment Projects, Potentials and Policies" business summit in Zagreb.
- Marketing activities continued throughout Q3-Q4 to enhance pipeline building and identify new clients. Contacts were established with the Croatian Employers Association (HUP), the Fund for Environmental Protection and Energy Efficiency (FZOEU) and the Ministry of Entrepreneurship, in order to organise cross-country presentations and workshops targeted to the companies that would like to enhance its energy efficiency.
- FYR Macedonia: meetings were organised with public and private sector companies to introduce WeBSEFF and discuss potential project opportunities. WeBSEFF was presented at the Makinova "Exhibition of Innovations in Energy Sector" in Skopje, where marketing materials were also disseminated. The Consultant also attended "Improving Competitiveness through Implementation of Energy Efficiency Measures" conference organised by the USAID Energy Management Project.
- Serbia: WeBSEFF was presented at the "Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Sources: Slash Our Energy Expenses" conference in Novi Sad. A number of speakers attended from the Serbian Ministry of Energy and Mining and the Serbian Energy Agency. The Regional Project Director also presented WeBSEFF II at the working meeting held by the EBRD Regional Energy Efficiency Programme "Financing Energy Performance Contracting projects in the public sector street lighting projects in Serbia", attended by over 30 participants.
- WeBSEFF was also presented in the Regional Chamber of Commerce Pozarevac and the Regional Chamber of Commerce Valjevo. These events were attended by around 80 participants from local SME's and media.

Window 3 – Sustainable Energy Direct Financing Facility:

In the reporting period, no funds were committed. This is due to the long lead time between extending a loan to a borrower and the completion of the underlying project (usually 1-2

years), which triggers the verification process and the payment of the incentive grant provided under the REEP.

OUTPUTS (JULY - DECEMBER 2014)

Window 1 - Public Sector Energy Efficiency, Policy Dialogue, Institutional Capacity Building and Business Development Programme

Theme 1 ESCO Support

ESCO legislative work (policy dialogue)

In Serbia an ESCO bylaw to the law on energy efficiency has been prepared in Q1/2014 and provided to the Ministry of Energy and Mining. It includes in particular an ESCO contract template and local public authorities insist on a high level political approval before publishing tenders of such new concept. Due to general elections and the largest flood in 120 years the process of adopting the bylaw was considerably delayed. In September at a public event in Belgrade (<http://wb-reep.org/news=5>) Ministry of Energy and Mining Assistant Minister Professor Banjac confirmed the strong support of the ESCO concept and adoption of the ESCO bylaw. The last comments from Ministry of Financing were received and discussed in January 2015 and the adoption is expected for Q1/2015. Interested international ESCO companies lobbied with their embassies which resulted in 24 embassies, IFIs and business association writing to Minister Antic in support of the ESCO bylaw (<http://wb-reep.org/news=7>).

In Bosnia and Herzegovina ESCO contract templates and legislative improvements have been discussed with inter-ministerial working groups in both entities. Both working groups support the tendering of ESCO pilot projects in order to establish the identified legislative improvements in order to enable ESCO projects.

In Montenegro ESCO contract templates were completed and provided to the Ministry of Economics in Q1/2014. However the legislature started a major revision of the law on public procurement and the law on public private partnership, which gives the legal basis for ESCO contracts. It was agreed that the work will be completed once the revision of both laws has been completed and the legal basis for the ESCO contracts is clear.

ESCO project preparation work

In total 21 public actors expressed interest in REEP support for EE Projects. 10 public authorities signed Letters of Interest for REEP supporting preparation of energy efficiency ESCO projects.

In Serbia, more than 10 municipalities have been contacted regarding potential street lighting energy efficiency ESCO projects. Seven municipalities have signed letters of interest to tender street lighting projects EBRD technical assistance is progressing. The delay in the ESCO bylaw being adopted has kept local authorities from moving faster.

In Croatia, three municipalities have signed Letters of Interest to launch street lighting projects and the first tender has been fully prepared in Q4/2014 and provided to the relevant local

public authority. After a thorough review by this local authority a publication of the tender is expected shortly. Further tenders are expected to be tendered from Q1/2015 onwards.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina a cantonal hospital has signed a Letter of Interest. Tender preparation has started and companies have indicated their interest in bidding. The aforementioned inter-ministerial ESCO working group is supporting this project.

Major street lighting companies and ESCOs, as well as local companies have indicated their interest. In addition commercial banks under REEP/WeBSEFF have indicated their interest in financing these projects and discussions between them and ESCOs for financing are on-going.

Theme 2 Energy Efficiency Policy Dialogue

All assignments under theme two are long-term multi-year assignments and are progressing well.

In the EPBD Domain, headline outputs in the reporting period include:

- The development of draft EPBD primary laws for Albania and Kosovo
- Comprehensive review of relevant legislation and rulebooks implementing EPBD in Former Republic of Macedonia
Macedonia and clarification of required amendments for ensuring EPBD compliance;
- Development of inspections regulations in Serbia that are close to finalisation;
- The delivery of pilot calculation software for Croatia and the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the detailed design of a central database for EPCs;
- Greater awareness among TWG members of the policy and practical implications of EPBD implementation and the important choices that must be made after having regard to specific country circumstances.

The Domain relating to NEEAP implementation through energy supply utility participation as well as energy tariff reform, energy metering and billing was initiated in the last quarter of 2014. The terms of reference for these assignments were agreed by Croatia (for implementation of Energy Efficiency Obligations) and Montenegro (for implementation of EEOs and Energy Efficiency in Network Tariffs).

A Kick-Off Meeting was held for Croatia on 11 December in Zagreb with the TWG members in attendance. The results of the meeting will be used to inform an Inception Report to be delivered in early 2015.

A similar Kick-Off Meeting is under planning for Montenegro, to be held on 10 February 2015.

Window 2 - Sustainable Energy Credit Lines

To date nine PFIs have signed to the credit line for a total of EUR 89 million of which EUR 75 million is committed and available for disbursement. 25 sub-projects have been approved and loans signed by PFIs for a cumulative total of EUR 12,573,066. Of those, 7 were signed in

Q3-Q4/2014 for EUR 2,456,377 - (1 in the Public sector (in BiH) and 6 in the Private sector (3 in BiH, 2 in former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and 1 in Serbia). 1 Esco project has been signed to date in Croatia.

To date the total (equivalent) primary energy savings is 12,055 (MWh/y), with CO2 emissions saving of 41,433 (tonnes/y).

6 sub-projects were successfully verified in H2-2014. To date EUR 212,684 has been paid in investment incentives to sub-borrowers, of which EUR 196,600 was paid in H2-2014.

The website structure was modified and the content placement was changed in the English segment of the site. One new Case study Brod-Plin was published.

There have been a number of press releases and articles relating to WeBSEFF II facility, results and achievements.

WeBSEFF received media coverage through Government webpages, newspapers, magazines and 5 national and local TV channels.

Window 3 - Sustainable Energy Direct Financing Facility

No new funds under the REEP were committed during the reporting period. However, the team continued working on supporting the implementation of the already financed projects and replenishing the pipeline with new projects to be financed. This would result in more funds being invested during 2015 and consequently the utilisation of the REEP resources will also increase.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

Window 1 – Public Sector Energy Efficiency, Policy Dialogue, Institutional Capacity Building and Business Development Programme

Theme 1 - ESCO Support

ESCO legislative work (policy dialogue)

Serbia – for Q1/2015 the adoption of the ESCO bylaw is anticipated.

Bosnia and Herzegovina – in conjunction with the pilot in the Federation BiH the implementation of ESCO enabling legislative elements is planned throughout 2015. In Republika Srpska this depends on the legislatures support for the same approach and support of a pilot project.

Montenegro – subject to completing the revision of the law on public procurement and the law on PPP, the completion and adoption of the ESCO contract templates are anticipated.

Croatia – while the ESCO relevant legislation is more advanced than in neighbouring countries, ESCOs have brought to EBRD's attention certain legislative barriers. It is intended to analyse these and recommend to the legislature legislative solutions in 1H/2015.

ESCO(project preparation work)

Croatia – publication of the first ESCO street lighting tender is expected shortly. The publication of additional street lighting projects is expected in Q1/2015. For the remainder of 2015 it is planned to scale up the number of ESCO street lighting tenders and to start piloting ESCO water supply projects and ESCO building projects.

Serbia – subject to the time of the adoption of ESCO bylaw, first street lighting tenders are to be published in Q1/2015. For the remainder of 2015 it is planned to scale up the number of ESCO street lighting tenders and to start piloting ESCO water supply projects and ESCO building projects.

Bosnia and Herzegovina – it is planned to publish in 1H/2015 the ESCO pilot with the support of the inter-ministerial working group. Depending on the progress, additional projects might be prepared for tendering in 2015.

Montenegro – subject to the clarification of the legal basis and the following adoption of ESCO contract templates, first ESCO projects might be prepared for tendering in 2015.

Theme 2 Energy Efficiency Policy Dialogue

The aim for the next 6 months for each Domain is as follows:

1. **EPBD Domain** – Complete all legislative streams for all relevant countries, with final reports (where relevant) submitted and first drafts (at least) of secondary legislation issued; complete the specification and design of the software and all input data received. Initiate the roll-out of the software, to complete the testing and de-bugging of the delivered software, and complete the refinement of the regulatory drafts.
2. **Procurement Domain** – all procurement related activities will be completed by 30 June 2015. This will include the completion of the official rulebooks, pilot applications and awareness raising and capacity building workshops.
3. Domain relating to **NEEAP implementation** through energy supply utility participation as well as energy tariff reform, energy metering and billing – by 30 June 2015, the aim is to have issued Policy Papers on energy efficiency obligations to both Croatia and Montenegro as well as a Policy Paper on Network Tariffs to Montenegro. The aim is to have the Rulebook on EEOs for Croatia issued before 30 June – subject to timely feedback from the Beneficiaries.

Window 2 – Sustainable Energy Credit Lines

- Continuation of project assessments and sub-loan signings by the PC and PFIs.
- The website is to be updated monthly with graphical presentation and statistics in all 5 languages (in English and in four local languages).
- Information about WeBSEFF results and achievements, including Case Studies, will be developed and published on the website.

- Follow up on meetings and marketing activities initiated in the previous period in both Public and Private sectors in Q1-15.
- Continue marketing and awareness raising activities at public events (conferences, fairs and other events) in all four countries in order to continue promotion of the Facility and help identify new clients and eligible projects to be signed.

Window 3 - Sustainable Energy Direct Financing Facility

It is not expected that during the next 6 months any EU funds under this Programme will be utilised/disbursed for reasons related to the long lead time between signing of a loan agreement and paying the investment grant. However, there are a number of projects in the EBRD pipeline for development and signing under the WeBSDEFF facility and hopefully some of them will materialise in the next 6-months.

4.6 RADIATION PROTECTION

Programme reference:	Horizontal programme on nuclear safety and radiation protection, IPA 2008/020-350
Project title:	Support to the Vinca Institute Nuclear Decommissioning programme (VIND part II)
EU contribution:	EUR 3.20 million
Beneficiary :	Serbia
Type of contract:	Contribution Agreement with the IAEA
Contract reference:	CN 2010/235-591
Duration of activities:	23/07/2010 – 22/09/2016
Contact :	eleni.vossou@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

This project includes 5 sub-projects/activities:

- Conditioning and secure storage of disused sealed radioactive sources in Serbia.
- Decommissioning of the degraded waste storage hangar No. 1.
- Radioactivity survey.

- Characterisation and conditioning of radioactive waste, and strengthening of radiation safety capabilities and infrastructure.

ACTIVITIES

Radioactive survey of the Vinca site conducted in order to determine the radiation and contamination levels; preparation of the survey plan.

Activities regarding the operation of the radioactive waste processing facility and the decommissioning of waste storage hangar No. 1 have not started yet, as some works are still needed before the waste processing facility can be operated.

Due to long delays this project has now been extended until the end of July 2016. The extension of the contract necessitated an extension of the deadline for implementation, which was granted through an amendment of the programme.

During the reporting period, the IAEA, tendered all waste management works that will be conducted in Vinca. The signature of the contract is expected in February 2015.

Programme reference:	Horizontal programme on nuclear safety and radiation protection IPA 2008/020-350
Project title:	Enhancement of the technical capacity of nuclear regulatory bodies in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Kosovo
EU contribution:	EUR 1.2 million
Beneficiary region:	Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia
Type of contract:	Contribution Agreement with the IAEA
Contract reference:	CN 2011/261-655
Duration of activities:	20/03/2011 – 19/02/2015
Contact :	eleni.vossou@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

This project is to enhance the technical capacity of the nuclear safety and radiation protection regulatory bodies to eventually transpose the Euratom Council Directives, as well as the international conventions to which the European Union is a signatory, into national legislation and regulations.

ACTIVITIES

Three out of five activities have been completed. The remaining two activities are expected to be completed before end of February 2015.

Programme reference:	Horizontal programme on nuclear safety and radiation protection, IPA 2010/022-503
Project title:	Further steps to approximate the Albanian legislation and regulations in accordance with the EU acquis in the field of radiation protection, nuclear safety and security
EU contribution:	EUR 0.2 million
Beneficiary:	Albania
Type of contract:	Framework contract with COWI AS
Contract reference:	CN 2013/328-365
Duration of activities:	21/10/2013 – 14/04/2015
Links:	http://www.atomforum.org.ua/eng/enconet
Contact :	eleni.vossou@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The project aims at performing further steps forward to the approximation of the Albanian legislation and regulations with the EU acquis through three specific activities:

- ❖ Completion of the activities concerning the full approximation of the Albanian legislation and regulations with the EU acquis that were implemented in a previous IPA funded project;
- ❖ Reviewing of procedures for the application of regulations in order to be in full compliance with the EU acquis;
- ❖ Establishment of quality control (QC) standards and procedures for X-ray machines in Albania.

ACTIVITIES

During the reporting period, the main activities performed consisted in revision of National Response Plan of Albania for Radiological Emergencies (NRP) The revised plan has been submitted to RPO for verification and endorsement.

Two training session, under task 3, organised in Tirana.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

Start of last project task "Quality Control of X-ray machines", including the establishment of regulations and procedures for QC tests and subsequent training courses.

The third training session was organised.

OUTPUTS

-draft regulations and amended regulations, aiming to improve the regulatory framework governing the radiation protection in Albania

-increased knowledge of RPO staff on the relevant EU acquis, regulatory techniques and QC testing of medical radiological equipment

Programme reference :	Horizontal Programme on Nuclear Safety and Radiation Protection (Montenegro centralised part), IPA 2011/023-388 Project title Strengthening Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety in Montenegro through capability upgrading of the technical support institution (CETI)
EU contribution:	EUR 0.3 million
Beneficiary region :	Montenegro
Type of contract :	Supply contract(s)
Contract reference:	Europe Aid/135712/DG/SUP/ME
Duration of activities :	not yet known
Contact :	eleni.vossou@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The purpose of the project is to upgrade CETI's performance and capabilities in the following five major areas of radiation protection: monitoring of the radioactivity in the environment, including response to radiological/nuclear emergency situations; management of low and medium radioactive waste, storage and transportation of radioactive materials; professional, patient and public exposure control.

The project entails providing adequate pieces of equipment, staff training and expert assistance.

ACTIVITIES

Only one lot of this tender was contracted (lot 10- supply of environmental gamma radiation monitors and real- time early warning network). The rest of the lots were not contracted, as

they failed to attract any bids. The contract for lot 1 is under preparation and the contracting date is foreseen in March 2015.

OUTPUTS

Supply of adequate pieces of equipment, staff trained and expert assistance delivered.

As a result it is expected that Montenegro complies with international (IAEA and EU) norms in the respective fields.

Reduction of the radiological risks in Montenegro.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

Contract signature March 2015.

CHAPTER 5: ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Assistance in this area focuses on strengthening regional cooperation, strategic planning and institutional capacities through the Environment and Climate Regional Accession Network (ECRAN). Assistance also targets the development of capacities in the area of disaster risk reduction and adaptation to climate change.

5.1 ECRAN

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary Programme, IPA 2013/024-094
Project title:	Environment and Climate Regional Accession Network (ECRAN)
EU contribution:	EUR 5 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans and Turkey
Type of contract:	Service contract to Hulla & Co. Human Dynamics KG
Duration of activities:	October 2013 – October 2016
Link:	http://www.ecranetwork.org/
Contact:	Madalina Ivanica, Madalina.IVANICA@ec.europa.eu ,

PURPOSE

The project aims at enhancing regional cooperation in the Western Balkans and Turkey in the field of environment and climate change. The project also provides the services of Secretariat to ECRAN.

ACTIVITIES (IN THE PERIOD JULY - DECEMBER 2014)

Over the reporting period an important number of activities have been implemented. In terms of general management activities, the 2nd Steering Committee Meeting took place on 10th October 2014 in Montenegro. The 1st Annual Meeting and Regional Training on Air Quality Assessment and Management took place on 29 September - 1 October in Podgorica, Montenegro and the 2nd Annual Meeting for the Environmental Assessments Working Group took place on 26th November in Vienna. The First Annual Meeting of the ECRAN Environment and Climate Forum took place on 24-25 November 2014 in Brussels, Belgium and a first workshop dedicated to strengthening the capacities of NGOs took place on 20-21 November

2014 in Podgorica, Montenegro on the subject of Technical Aspects of the EU Accession Process: Improving the Knowledge Base on Scope and Opportunities for Civil Society Involvement.

Under the environment working groups, the following activities took place: Capacity Building on compliance with legislation on trans frontier shipment of waste on 2– 3 July in Vukovar, Croatia with site visit to Bajakovo Border Crossing Point; Peer review missions to Serbia and preparation of peer review reports for selected parts of the environmental acquis between September 2015 – October 2015; a Multicountry workshop on Capacity building on compliance with environmental legislation, Module 2 on 10-12 September in Skopje, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; a Sub-Regional Workshop on Appropriate Assessment (AA) Part I: Theory of AA and the Screening Stage on 16-18 September in Kavadarci, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; a 2nd Screening Workshop at Pilot –Drina River Basin on 22-23 September in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina; a 1st Training of Trainers workshop on Environmental Assessments on 23-26 September in Podgorica, Montenegro; Capacity building on compliance with environmental legislation- Methodological development-application of IRAM/easy Tools on 15-16 October in Ankara, Turkey; Capacity building on compliance with environmental legislation - Nature Inspection on 21-23 October, Kopacki Rit, Croatia; Introductory Workshop on Economic Analysis in Accordance with Water Framework Directive on 21-22 October in Skopje, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; a Regional Training: Transposition and Implementation of Waste Framework Directive (Directive 2008/98/EC) on 21-22 October in Podgorica, Montenegro; a Regional Training Workshop on linkages between Appropriate Assessment and SEA/EIA on 30-31 October in Zagreb, Croatia; an Expert Missions to Albania for development of national chemicals legislation between November 2014 – February 2015; a Regional training on the process of designation of potential Natura 2000 sites on 04-05 November in Podgorica, Montenegro; Multi country Capacity Building on Compliance with Environmental Legislation on 18-20 November in Istanbul, Turkey; a Regional Workshop on Coordination of Strategic and Investment Planning in Waste Sector on 25-26 November in Skopje, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; Sub-Regional Workshop on Appropriate Assessments (AA) Part I: Theory of AA and the Screening Stage on 12-14 November in Ankara, Turkey; Capacity building on compliance with chemicals legislation, with emphasis on REACH/CLP linked to IED–Procedures on 02-04 December in Tirana, Albania.

Under the climate working groups, the following activities took place between July – December 2014: a Regional high level conference and seminar on climate change adaptation on 2-3 July in Skopje, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; a Regional training on uncertainty assessment of GHG inventories on 8-9 July in Podgorica, Montenegro; an EU ETS Regional Training on the MR and the A&V Regulations on 10-11 September in Zagreb, Croatia; a seminar on the Contribution to the 2015 Agreement and Planning Decarbonisation on 28-29 October in Brussels, Belgium; an Advanced Technical Training Programme on the EU Monitoring and Reporting Regulations on 18-19 November in Istanbul, Turkey; a Modelling Training: Module 1 -

Practical training on quantitative models and scenario development to be used to assess climate and energy policy options and to set emission targets on 04-07 November in Skopje, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; a Regional Training Seminar on Assessment of GHG Inventories in the Energy and Industrial Processes Sectors on 19-21 November in Zagreb, Croatia; a National Adaptation Teams Launch Workshop (Step A) on 24-25 November in Tirana, Albania.

OUTPUTS (IN THE PERIOD JULY - DECEMBER 2014)

Agenda, work plans and minutes of working group meetings available on the website.

For training needs assessments with training methodology, training programme and proposed training materials: www.ecranetwork.org.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

Several annual meetings will take place beginning of 2015: 2nd Annual Meeting of Climate Component on 15 January in Brussels, Belgium; the 2nd ECENA Annual Meeting and 2nd IED/Chemicals WG Annual Meeting on 10 February in Vienna, Austria; the 2nd Nature WG Annual Meeting on 11 February in Vienna, Austria; the 2nd Annual Meeting of Water Management Working Group on 10-12 March in Podgorica, Montenegro and the 2nd Annual Meeting of Waste Management and Strategic Planning and Investments Working Groups on 18-19 March in Tirana, Albania. The 3rd Steering Committee Meeting will take place on 23rd April in Zagreb, Croatia.

The 2nd round of Preparatory Meetings for the Environment and Climate NGOs Forum will take place between 14 April-22 May and the 2nd Training Module for NGOs on Climate Change and Policy –will take place between 23-24 April in Zagreb, Croatia.

The preparations of the Progress Monitoring Reports on the Transposition and Implementation of the EU Environmental and Climate Acquis will take place between January 2015 – September 2015.

For the environment working groups, the following activities are envisaged: 3rd Screening Workshop on 10-12 March in Podgorica, Montenegro; National workshop on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), 11-12 March, Tirana, Albania; Regional Workshop on Cost Recovery in Waste Sector on 18-19 March, Tirana, Albania; Implementation of Guidelines for Inspection of SEVESO Establishments on 20-21 April, Belgrade, Serbia; Multi country Capacity Building workshop on compliance with environmental legislation on 21-23 April, Kolasin, Pljevlja, Montenegro; SEA, procedure and bottlenecks, problems in implementation – national workshop on 11 – 12 May, Osijek, Croatia; National workshop on Human health and climate change in SEA and EIA Directives on 18 – 19 May, Split, Croatia; Regional Workshop on Marine Strategy Framework Directive on 18 – 20 May, Istanbul, Turkey; Multi Country Workshop on compliance with the legislation on Trans Frontier Shipment of Waste on 20 – 21 May, Tirana, Albania; Regional Training “Natura 2000 – from theory to practice” on 26 – 27 May, Czech Republic; Regional workshop on NEC Directive on 26 – 28 May, Tirana, Albania; Regional CITES

workshop on 02 – 04 June, Podgorica, Montenegro; Regional workshop on Strategic Planning in Water Sector 03 – 04 June, Podgorica, Montenegro.

For the climate working groups, the following activities are envisaged: Expert Training on Risk and Vulnerability Assessment and Adaptation Planning – Water Management Sector on 19-20 January in Ankara, Turkey; Expert Training on Risk and Vulnerability Assessment and Adaptation Planning – Urban Planning and Development Sectors on 23-24 February in Podgorica, Montenegro; ECRAN Modelling: Support Mission to Module 1 on 16-17 March, Tirana, Albania; Regional Training on INDCs - Contributions to the Global Climate Agreement II on 18 March, Tirana, Albania; Regional Seminar on ETS Implementation and ETS Strategy Development on 25-26 March, Zagreb, Croatia; Support Mission on Emission Scenario Modelling on 01-03 April, Belgrade, Serbia; Regional Training Seminar on assessment of GHG Inventories in the Forestry and Other Land Use on 15-16 April, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina; Expert Training on Risk and Vulnerability Assessment and Adaptation Planning – Energy Sector on 16-17 April, Tirana, Albania; Advanced Technical Training Programme on the EU Verification and Accreditation Regulation on 20-23 April, Zagreb, Sisak, Drnis, Croatia; Regional Dialogue of the EU, the Candidate Countries and the Potential Candidates On Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs) to the 2015 Climate Agreement on 28 April, Istanbul, Turkey; ETS Operators Serbia National Training on 19 – 20 May, Belgrade, Serbia; Climate and Energy Policy Modelling LEAP Training on 26 - 28 May, Istanbul, Turkey; Adaptation Step B Regional Workshop on 03 – 04 June, Zagreb, Croatia.

5.2 INTERNATIONAL SAVA RIVER BASIN COMMISSION

Programme reference :	Multi-beneficiary Programme, IPA 2013/024-094
Project title:	Support to the International Sava River Basin Commission in the development of the Sava Geographic Information System
EU contribution:	EUR 150,000
Beneficiary region:	Sava River Basin area (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia and Montenegro)
Type of contract:	Direct grant to the International Sava River Basin Commission (ISRBC)
Duration of activities:	October 2013 – October 2016
Contact:	Balazs HORVATH, Balazs.HORVATH2@ec.europa.eu , DG Environment

PURPOSE

The project's aim is to provide support and assistance to the International Sava River Basin Commission and the countries cooperating under the Framework Agreement on the Sava River

Basin (Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Slovenia) as well as to Montenegro in starting to implement the first Sava River Basin Management (RBM) Plan as well as in all joint activities targeted for subsequent RBM cycles by developing the necessary capacities and an information base – the Sava Geoportal.

ACTIVITIES (JULY – DECEMBER 2014)

In Q3 2014, the contract C1 – Engagement of associate GIS expert was signed and Ms Višnja Omerbegović engaged. An updated version of the terms of reference for C4 – Services for establishment of the Sava GIS was prepared. A project meeting was organised in September 2014 to review and approve these terms of reference and to discuss other issues of interest of the Sava GIS establishment.

In Q4 2014, an ISRBC session was held in October to verify the results of the project meeting and related conclusions. The tender procedure for C4 was launched in November 2014 and the contract awarded to the Consortium of IN2&IGEA (Croatia) for a total value of 88,000 euros.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

Implementation of contract C4 to start in January 2015

5.3 CIVIL PROTECTION COOPERATION

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary Programme, IPA 2012/ 023-626
Project title:	Civil Protection Cooperation with the candidate countries and potential candidates - phase II
EU contribution:	EUR 2 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans and Turkey
Type of contract:	Service contract
Contract reference:	ECHO/SER/2013/662411
Duration of activities:	05/11/2013 – 04/11/2015
Links:	http://www.ipacivilprotection.eu/
Contact:	Marieta.KOLEVA@ec.europa.eu , DG Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection

PURPOSE

- To increase Beneficiaries' capability to further develop effective national civil protection systems and collaborate regionally, including through drawing on the best European and regional practices.

- To increase Beneficiaries' ability to effectively interact with the EU Civil Protection Mechanism, its participating states and relevant institutions in the EU dealing with civil protection and emergency response.

ACTIVITIES (JULY–DECEMBER 2014)

- Seminar on risk management capability followed by a civil protection Director-General meeting devoted on the same topic
- 4 Exchange of experts events
- 2 Table-top exercise on Host Nation Support
- 1 training course on management of staff of emergency response teams
- Final planning conference for the field exercise and field exercise, 19-24 October, in Montenegro
- Steering group meeting

OUTPUTS (JULY–DECEMBER 2014)

Newsletters 3 and 4; Second Progress report.

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5.4 DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

Programme reference :	Multi-beneficiary Programme under IPA 2011
Project title:	Building Resilience to Disasters in Western Balkans and Turkey
EU contribution:	EUR 2.2 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans and Turkey
Type of contract:	Contribution Agreement with United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR)
Contract reference:	CN 2012/290-552
Duration of activities:	21/05/2012 – 20/10/2014
Links:	http://www.preventionweb.net/ipadrr/
Contact:	Elodie Loppé, Elodie.Loppe@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The overall objective of the project is to build the resilience of IPA beneficiaries to disasters caused by the impact of natural hazards, in line with the priorities set by the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) 2005-2015.

ACTIVITIES (JULY-DECEMBER 2014)

- Six exchange visits from experts from Beneficiaries to EU member states were performed, resulting in a total of eight visits during the Project timeframe;
- Representatives of the Beneficiaries participated to the European Forum for Disaster Risk Reduction in October 2014, in Madrid, Spain and contributed to the “Madrid Outcome” as well as to the overall discussion about the Zero draft of the post 2015 Framework for Action (later on resulting in the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk reduction 2015-2030);
- Representatives of the Beneficiaries participated to the European Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Risk Reduction in June 2014 in Milan, Italy and contributed to the Outcome of the European ministerial meeting on disaster risk reduction: towards a post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction - building the resilience of nations and communities to disasters
- The Disaster Risk Knowledge Management System guidelines were finalized, translated in Beneficiaries languages and delivered to the Beneficiaries;
- Divulgative multilanguage materials were produced and events on the use of KMS were organized;
- KMS maintenance and management was handed over to Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Initiative for South Eastern Europe (DPPI-SEE) for its sustainability in the long term (even after closure of the Project);
- The Policy on the Exchange of Hydrological and Meteorological Data and Information in the Sava River Basin was agreed and signed in July 2014 by the National Meteorological and Hydrological Services (NMHSs) and Water Agencies of the Sava River basin countries;
- Inspection and upgrade of EUMETCast stations was performed by EUMETSAT expert who visited Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Kosovo*;
- Experts from Montenegro, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina were seconded to the Drought Management Centre for South-East Europe for on-the-job training on specialized drought-management tools.
- Expertise of the Barcelona Supercomputing Centre was utilized to carry out optimization of the Non-hydrostatic Multi-scale Model on B-grid (NMMB) embedded in the Earth System Modelling Framework (ESMF) architecture of the National Centre for Environmental Prediction (NCEP) of the Republic Hydrometeorological Institute of Serbia (RHMSS).
- The regional training on the role of NMHSs in support of activities in the field of insurance was organized in October 2014.;
- Technical design document for regional Multi-Hazard Early Warning System (MHEWS) with focus on regional priority hazards was finalized.
- Additional three disaster insurance training workshops were organized for a total of five training workshops organized in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Albania and Serbia, during the Project timeframe;

- Organization of the 'Europa Re' disaster insurance regional conference and production of multilanguage videos, brochures and flyers for promotion of disaster insurance in the region;
- Completion, publication and distribution in Beneficiaries' languages of the “Compendium of good practices in disaster risk reduction at local level in the IPA region”;
- Completion and delivery of the Final Independent Evaluation Report, produced by the independent consultant and presented to the Project Beneficiaries, Project partners and other relevant stakeholders in the Region. Final Project Meeting was organized in Ankara, Turkey in October 2014. The Regional Forum on DRR and Multi-Hazard Early Warning System was organized. The Beneficiary reports on the current status and recommendations for further improvement related to the DRR strategies and implementation measures as well as to national EWS and the concept of the regional MHEWS including the identified requirements for EWS and common needs in the region were presented and discussed. Outputs (in the period January –June 2014)
- Enhanced DRR capacities through exchange of experts between IPA Beneficiaries and EU member states as well as through the participation to relevant event on DRR at regional level, such as the European Forum for Disaster Risk Reduction in 2014 Madrid, Spain and to the European Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Risk Reduction 2014 in Milan, Italy
- Increased capacity in knowledge management and information sharing in the region through the delivery of Multilanguage Guidelines and flyers on the use of the Knowledge Management System as well as with its presentation in relevant events on DRR in the Region.
- Sustainability of KMS in the long term thanks to the Handover to DPPI-SEE, which took over the responsibility for maintenance and running of the system.
- Increased capacities for data exchange and sharing through the signature of the Policy on the Exchange of Data and Information for the Management of the Sava River Basin; The policy provides the technical and conceptual principles required to promote data exchange and interoperability within the Sava River Basin and ensuring freedom to access and disseminate data and information for the purposes of sustainable trans-boundary water management in the basin;
- Continuation of operational access to EUMETSAT satellite data and products was ensured through inspection and upgrade of EUMETcast stations;
- Enhanced capacities in drought monitoring including the preparation of local and regional drought early warning indicator using SPI index, GIS techniques and satellite images. capacities were strengthened through the secondments of experts from Beneficiaries to the Drought Management Centre for South-East Europe for on-the-job training on specialized drought-management tools;
- The capacities of the RHMSS in operational weather computing and modelling were evaluated, gaps identified and recommendations to address these issues provided;

- Enhanced capacity of NHMS to deliver relevant tailored information and services to insurance companies in relation to extreme hydrological and meteorological events and increased awareness on the role of NHMS in provision of information and services for the insurance sector;
- The capacities related to the Early Warning Systems were enhanced through development of the analysis of the current status in the Beneficiaries and recommendations for further improvement of the national EWS and the concept of the regional MHEWS including the identified requirements for MHEWS and common needs in the region.
- Enhanced awareness of the General Public about insurance and reinsurance services to mitigate the disaster risk.
- Enhanced capacity of 'Europa Re' countries (Albania, Serbia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) to mitigate disaster risk through insurance and reinsurance;
- Enhanced local awareness in DRR through the distribution in Beneficiaries' languages of the "Compendium of good practices in disaster risk reduction at local level in the IPA Region";
- Delivery of the Independent Evaluation Report produced by the Independent evaluation expert.
- Presentation to relevant stakeholders in the Region of Project outcomes and identified priorities to be further addressed.
-

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

All Project activities were completed by the end of the Project, in October 2014

CHAPTER 6: CIVIL SOCIETY

The overall objective of this support is to strengthen civil society organisations and their role in the political as well as the European integration process of the IPA beneficiaries. This should result in an improved dialogue on legislation and policies between governments and civil society as well as the strengthening of social partnerships underpinning reforms.

This support is mainly being delivered through the Civil Society Facility (CSF) and will ultimately result in a more civil society-friendly environment, a consolidation of the democratic process and good governance.

Media freedom and freedom of expression are also seen as important in this context. In 2013 DG Enlargement has developed two sets of guidelines aiming to support the civil society and media sectors in the region through an inclusive and participative approach with contributions from all relevant stakeholders, CSOs, journalists' and media professional organisations of the region.

"The Guidelines for EU support to civil society in enlargement countries, 2014-2020" complemented by a result framework with clear objectives and indicators to be monitored in the years to come have been finalised and constituted a reference document for the MCSP 2014-2020.

The "Guidelines for EU support to media freedom and media integrity in enlargement countries, 2014-2020" that are built on the policy vision as set out in the Conclusions of the Speak-up! 2 conference (June 2013) were finalised in March 2014.

Link to the guidelines:

http://www.tacso.org/documents/otherdoc/?id=9887&template_id=73&langTag=en-US

Civil society facility

The CSF is a single facility for the benefit of the whole of the Western Balkan region and Turkey. It is a single programme but financed and implemented separately by the multi-beneficiary IPA programme and the various national IPA programmes.

The CSF consists of three strands of activities which aim to strengthen Western Balkan and Turkish civil society's commitment and involvement in the transformative process in view of their eventual integration into the EU:

- Support/technical assistance (TACSO) for local civic initiatives and capacity building, thereby enforcing the role of civil society at national level;

- Actions to build partnerships and develop networks between CSOs, businesses, trade unions and other beneficiary social partners and their counterparts in the EU to promote transfers of knowledge and experience.
- A "People 2 People" (P2P) programme to bring a variety of organisations in the ELARG region into contact with EU institutions and European-level counterparts. These include CSO representatives, human rights and minority defence activists, NGOs dealing with *acquis*-related subjects, journalists, young politicians and trade union leaders.

However, recently TACSO has also taken over the management of the third strand, the P2P programme.

6.1 TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS (TACSO)

Programme reference:	Civil Society Facility Programme 2011 - 2013, IPA 2012/023-324; IPA 2013/024-081
Project title:	Technical Assistance to the Civil Society Organisations (TACSO)
EU contribution:	EUR 10.6 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans and Turkey
Type of contract:	Service contract with SIPU International AB,
Contract reference:	2013/325-596, 2013/325-603
Duration of activities:	01/09/2013 – 30/08/2017
Links:	
<i>Web site:</i>	http://tacso.org/
<i>Database:</i>	http://tacso.org/cso-db-res/reg/
<i>Forum:</i>	http://forum.tacso.org/
<i>Facebook:</i>	http://www.facebook.com/TACSO2
<i>LinkedIn:</i>	http://www.linkedin.com/company/tacso?trk=fc_badge
<i>YouTube:</i>	http://www.youtube.com/user/tascotube#p/u
<i>Twitter:</i>	https://twitter.com/#!/TACSO1
Contact:	Karl Giacinti, Karl.GIACINTI@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

TACSO gives support to beneficiary Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) by increasing their capacity, improving their democratic role and by promoting networks of CSOs across regional borders.

ACTIVITIES (JULY – DECEMBER 2014)

The TACSO offices assisted Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) on numerous occasions and on a variety of issues, while guiding them in the management of their projects.

From July to December, TACSO took part in the selection of the successors of TACSO services, the so called Resource Centres (RC), in the countries of the WBT. In parallel, TACSO designed

and launched the assessment process of the selected RCs that should result in a strategic plan for further enhancing their capacities.

As follow up to the major regional event in May 2014 in Tirana: 'Promotion of the EU Guidelines for support of the CSOs in the period 2014-2020', TACSO was actively involved in identifying, designing and setting the national targets and reference points related to the indicators of the EU Guidelines, and to the future monitoring system. Participatory work in this regard included identifying ways of cooperation and creating synergies with CSOs active in the needed scope of work, as well as including key national decision makers in the process.

Also as a follow up to the EU Guidelines event, TACSO organised fact finding meetings with the key CSO regional actors for the regional event on corporate and individual philanthropy to be delivered in 2015..This theme derived from the EU Guidelines, and was identified as one of the major areas that was not sufficiently promoted so far, but had an enormous potential in promoting mission driven CSOs, their better organisational development, stronger cooperation between CSOs and private sector, and high potential for direct impact at the level of immediate CSOs' communities.

A major event on the topic of communication was organised in November 2014 in Skopje, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The Regional Conference "CSOs and Good Practices in the Use of Communication Channels" focused on improving CSOs' communication and PR capacity and strengthening mutual literacy between media & CSOs and was attended by 47 participants.

The major events that TACSO through P2P organised / contributed to organise are:

- Fundamental rights, Non-Discrimination and the Protection of Vulnerable Groups, Including LGBTI, organised in Tirana, Albania, from 20 - 21 November, 2014
- "Unlocking the Potential of the Social Economy for EU Growth" Conference, organised in Rome, Italy from 17-18 November, 2014
- Award for Roma Integration - Study Trip, organised in Brussels, Belgium, from September 29 to October 1, 2014
- IFOAM Organic World Congress 2014, held in Istanbul, Turkey from 13 -15 October, 2014
- Framework Partnership Agreements (FPA) closing event, Phase 1, Brussels, Belgium 23 - 25 September

During the reporting period 11 P2P events were organised with over 350 attendees, the full list of events is available on [TACSO Web site](#).

During November and December 2014 the P2P annual consultation was held addressing 14 thousand recipients and published on [TACSO web site](#). 915 persons from the WBT region responded to the survey. The final selection of topics for 2015 – 2016 will be the outcome of this online consultation, consultations with LAGs and EUDs and with European Commission's CSF team.

The following provides an overview of other actions implemented by the local offices:

TACSO Turkey

TACSO Turkey was the first to integrate with the **Resource Centre** (Civil Society Development Centre - STGM), and in December they organised two consultation events on TACSO-STGM partnership, bringing together 100 participants. TACSO Turkey also carried out extensive works in the context of the **EU Guidelines in three** (3) working group meetings and provided new data related to CSOs in Turkey to improve the Turkish baseline report. TACSO Turkey also carried out **Country Targets Workshop** for Civil Society Development with 50 representatives from 35 CSOs. During the reporting period, TACSO Turkey and TACSO Macedonia organized a **P2P** event in cooperation with **FPA ESSEDRA**, aiming at examining opportunities and challenges during the EU accession period from the perspective of 35 CSOs working on local food production. TACSO Turkey also organized a **thematic meeting** on the Anti-Discrimination and Equality Framework with 30 representatives from key CSOs as a follow up to the regional event in Tirana on the subject.

TACSO Montenegro

TACSO MNE has also merged with the **Resource Centre**: Centre for Development of Non-Governmental Organisation (CRNVO). TACSO MNE organised three regional round tables related to institutional mechanisms of cooperation between **local self-governments and CSOs** on the topics of the decision on the establishment of the Council for cooperation of local government and NGOs, the Rules of Procedure of the municipal Assembly and the Decree of citizen's involvement in the functioning of local self-governments. The total number of participants was **114**. **Trainings** on the following topics were organised: PR training for better PR and media relations (26 participants); Strategic planning (24 participants) and development and management of EU funded projects (24 participants).

TACSO the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

TACSO MK organized two informative seminars where **114** CSOs' representatives were informed on **changes of the laws** which are relevant for financial operations of CSOs. TACSO Macedonian office moved to the premises of the Macedonian Centre for International Cooperation (MCIC) which was selected as TACSO **Resource Centre**. A workshop for defining national targets on **EU Guidelines** for Supporting Civil Society was held in December and consequently a matrix containing proposals for national targets for each indicator was prepared

TACSO Albania

Within the framework of the capacity building component, TACSO Albania conducted a series of trainings on application procedures for **IPA/CSF 2013**: "Civic Initiatives and Capacity Building" Call for Proposal. This activity was attended by **138 CSOs operating mainly in the field of environment protection**. Within the frame of strengthening the cooperation between media and CSOs, TACSO Albania Office organized in October in Gjirokastra the round table: "Strengthening the collaboration between Media and the Civil Society-important contribution of Albania's Integration towards European Union". This activity was attended by **18** media and CSO representatives from the Southern region of Albania. TACSO in collaboration with

Gjirokastra Foundation and Independent Cultural Scene organized in Gjirokastra in October 30-31, 2014 the Single Beneficiary Event **P2P** entitled: “The Role of Culture in Citizen Participation and community development”.

TACSO Serbia

TACSO Serbia focused on the area of **CSOs visibility and development** of CSOs’ skills for better media and public relations, as well as promoting a strategic approach in CSOs communication practice. **45** CSOs were included in the activities of technical assistance and mentoring support provided by TACSO. The result of the two workshops and individual follow-up sessions was **137 media appearances** of supported CSOs. In addition to that, one communication training for assisting CSOs to develop their own communication strategies was organized for **26** participants representing **13** CSOs. In order to promote CSO activism and make it visible to the wider public, TACSO Serbia has introduced an activity called **CSO Fairs**. The recent one was held for on the **Day of volunteers 2014** in Sombor. A total of **30** CSOs from that region presented their activities and results. The event gathered around **500** participants. A consortium led by the **Civic Initiatives** was selected as TACSO Resource Center in Serbia.

TACSO Kosovo

TACSO Kosovo is working with Kosovar Civil Society Foundation (KCSF) which is selected as the Resource Center. TACSO Kosovo office in collaboration with RC published the first **Annual Civil Society Magazine** containing articles about the work and impact of CSO work in making changes in society during the year 2014. TACSO Kosovo Office provided training sessions on financial management, VAT Reimbursement procedures for CSO beneficiaries of grants under the CSF –Kosovo grant scheme and EIDHR Kosovo grant scheme, attended by 26 CSOs. Training sessions on “**Principles of Monitoring, Reporting and Advocacy and Lobbying**” were organised for grass root organisations working in the Mitrovica region, attended by 27 CSOs.

TACSO Bosnia and Herzegovina

In support to the Initiatives of CSO networks, coalitions, platforms, TACSO BiH organized four workshops: three in the framework of support to the **Citizens for Europe Initiative** that resulted in action plans made for the sectors of rural development and agriculture, labor and employment and energy and environment. A training workshop on Monitoring and Evaluation and Elements of Sustainability held for 27 CSOs (10 CSO-main applicants and 17CSOs-partner implementing the IPA 2012 projects) resulted in the improved understanding of the importance of the internal monitoring and identification of the necessary changes to be introduced into their practice of work by the end of the projects. TACSO Bosnia and Herzegovina is working with **VESTA association**, which is selected as the Resource Center.

OUTPUTS (JULY – DECEMBER 2014)

The process of selection of the RC is completed in all countries covered by TACSO, except for Albania. It is expected that the selection of the RC in Albania is completed during 2015. The

capacity building plans deriving from the assessment process will contribute to further enhancement of the RCs, thus ensuring organisational sustainability and provision of TACSO services after the project lifetime.

As a result of the TACSO participatory approach in the processes related to the **EU Guidelines**, TACSO is about to close the agreements on using a standardised approach across the countries in relation to the collection of inputs related to the monitoring of the EU Guidelines; it has also developed a guiding template for all countries for setting the national targets and reference points, thus ensuring effectiveness, compatibility and comparativeness of the whole process and accompanying efforts.

TACSO Regional Office produced a series of **video tutorials** on how to use social media for CSO communication in order strengthen CSOs' capacities in using the social media.

18th Organic World Congress in Istanbul in October closed with a Declaration that was signed by all participants. TACSO participants kept in touch after the Congress, translated the Declaration to local languages and distributed it via their web sites and social media. Slow Food Convivium Potkozarje Podgrmec prepared a paper on participatory quality assurance systems for organic food production. This was shared with OWC participants and raised a lot of interest, which led to the decision by Slow Food Convivium Potkozarje Podgrmec to crowd-source development of a comparative report on the issue with other participants in the Congress from TACSO countries. TACSO Montenegro office has **developed communication strategies** for the 12 CSOs, and **Strategic plans** were developed for 11 CSOs.

TACSO Albania finalised the **Road Map for Government Policy on Civil Society Development** in Albania. This represents a blue-print for actions and focuses on nine priority areas that were identified as a result of open consultative meetings with CSOs and discussions with the Albanian government and donor representatives held during July 2014, as well as based on the analysis of available reports, studies and assessments of the civil society sector in Albania. The document is in the process of official approval by the Government of Albania.

TACSO Serbia and the TRAG foundation have published a brochure entitled '**Introducing SECO - Cooperation between the civil society and the public sector** with the aim of successful utilization of international development assistance'.

TACSO Kosovo office supported the established **National Council for Implementation of the Strategy** to prepare its 2015 annual work plan focusing on priority issues.

ACTIVITIES PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

The TACSO Regional Office will focus on preparing the regional conference on monitoring progress of the EU Guidelines, which is planned for end of April in Belgrade. TACSO National Offices will be completing mid-scale workshops on defining the targets and benchmarks per indicator/result of the Results Framework of the EU Guidelines. In addition to this TACSO will launch the capacity building program for the RCs as well as for the FPAs, in accordance to diligent identification of the needs. The capacity building program for the FPAs encompasses a series of regional trainings and information/experience sharing events in relation to advocacy and logging, networks management, monitoring and evaluation, non-profit law, common indicators for monitoring success of the FPAs, etc. Finally, the major objective of the capacity

building program for the selected RCs will be to respond to the needs of the RCs, to bring new knowledge and practices in the region, and to ensure retention and multiplication effect of the gained knowledge.

Capacity building programmes by national offices in the next period will consist of trainings and workshops that will be in some cases followed by mentorship and coaching support. One of the focus areas will be communication and public relation with particular focus on the use of social media for advocacy and lobbying purposes.

The TACSO Regional Office will also focus on finalizing the country and regional reports on the results of the P2P Annual Consultation that will be used as a basis for discussions in focus groups, LAG meetings and in communication with EUDs from the WBT region. The purpose of this process will be to define priorities for the P2P activities to be held during 2015 and 2016.

6.2 FRAMEWORK PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS

	First phase:
Programme reference:	Civil Society Facility Programme and Multi-beneficiary Programme, IPA 2011/022-965, IPA 2011/022-964
Project title:	CSF, Framework Partnership Agreements (FPAs)
EU contribution:	EUR 11.2 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans and Turkey
Type of contract:	18 Grants
Duration of activities:	01/12/2012 – 30/11/2014
	Second phase:
Programme reference:	Civil Society Facility Programme IPA 2013/024-081
Project title:	CSF, Framework Partnership Agreements (FPAs)
EU contribution:	EUR 8.9 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans and Turkey
Type of contract:	18 Grants
Duration of activities:	01/12/2014 – 30/11/2016
Links:	http://www.tacso.org/news/awarded/fpa/Default.aspx?id=9533
Contacts	Liane Adler, Liane.ADLER@ec.europa.eu Bo Caperman, Bo.CAPERMAN@ec.europa.eu Karl Giacinti, Karl.GIACINTI@ec.europa.eu Henk Visser, Henk.VISSER@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The Framework Partnership Agreements come under the second strand of the CSF mentioned above. They provide long-term support to 18 thematic networks of CSOs organised at regional level. The FPAs were concluded following a call for proposals for up to 48 months but subject to review after 24 months.

The global objective of the FPAs is to bring together Western Balkans, Turkey and EU based CSOs into operational partnerships to deliver their own specific objectives and at the same time the collective aim to support 'a dynamic civil society actively participating in public debate on democracy, human rights, social inclusion and the rule of law and with capacity to influence policy and decision making processes.

The specific objective of the Programme is for: 'Greater commitment and capacity of civil society organisation (CSO) networks to give citizens a voice and to influence public sector reform processes through analysis, monitoring and advocacy, etc.

ACTIVITIES IN THE PAST SEMESTER AND PLANNED FOR THE NEXT

A through mid-term review of the 18 FPAs was finalized in autumn 2014 and the results were presented in Brussels during an international conference on 23-25 September 2014. The main criteria to assess the projects have been Relevance, Efficiency, Effectiveness, Networking/ Linkages and Sustainability. The lessons learned and recommendations were discussed at the conference and incorporated in the new proposals submitted for the second phase of the FPAs. As a follow up to the event and based on the demands expressed, TACSO has launched the consultation process with FPAs in December with the objective of defining the needs for further capacity building of the organisation gathered around the FPA.

Below, a short presentation of the main results achieved and new activities planned for each of the project. The 18 projects are divided in 3 thematic areas:

1. Governance
2. Social Development, Human Rights and Reconciliation
3. Environment, Natural Resources, Energy

1. Governance

Civil society coalitions built up within the project, **Advocacy for Open Government (2014/351-527 continuation of 2012/306-656)**, have successfully shaped the government Action Plans setting out country commitments within the Open Government Partnership (OGP), an international initiative to secure concrete commitments to promote transparency, empower citizens, fight corruption, and harness new technologies to strengthen governance.

In July 2014 the Albanian Government included in the Action Plan for 2014-16 a "commitment to promote and engage local authorities in the OGP values. This commitment was proposed by civil society organisations." Serbia's Ministry of Justice and Public Administration promised to incorporate civil society calls on OG. In Macedonia, the percentage of CSOs who participated in the drafting of Macedonia's OGP Action Plan rose from 26.6 percent in 2013 to 51.1 percent in 2014. In September 2014, Bosnia and Herzegovina joined the OGP initiative, as a direct result of a policy memo and intensive advocacy efforts of the project.

In the first half of 2015, the Advocacy for Open Government project will prepare with wide international involvement of governments and CSOs an OGP regional summit to be held in the Western Balkans. In June 2014, the government of Kosovo made a commitment to join OGP,

and it is hoped that their membership will be finalised by the time of the summit, scheduled for autumn 2015, so that all six countries will then be OGP members.

Towards Efficient Public Procurement Mechanisms in the EU (potential) Candidate Countries (2014/351-493 continuation of 2012/306/161). During the last six months, the key outcomes of the BalkanTenderWatch Coalition were the completion of “The comparative analysis of legal and institutional framework for public procurements in four Western Balkan countries” accompanied by the Recommendations for improvement of public procurement systems in the respective countries (Serbia, Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro). The second major achievement is the analysis of concrete public procurement cases within 14 different fields, common for respective WB countries on both national and regional level in the form of case studies. The results of major outcomes are presented at 4 national conferences in these countries as well as at one regional conference in Sarajevo. Both analyses are available on the web site www.balkantenderwatch.eu

In the next semester we are preparing Training of Trainers (TOT) for the Coalition members on the topic of the very new aspect in the field of public procurement – purposefulness. This is the missing element in all PP cases in the WB countries. Training for CSOs, journalists and other stakeholders will be organized immediately upon completion of ToT.

During the second half of 2014, **SELDI project (2014/351-414 continuation of 2012/307-476)** concluded its anti-corruption diagnostics and started its policy advocacy efforts to foster anti-corruption and good governance reforms in Southeast Europe. In November 2014 SELDI published its seminal report Anticorruption Reloaded: Assessment of Southeast Europe. The report provided a unique indigenous civil society assessment of the dynamics of corruption and anti-corruption in SEE in the period 2001 - 2014, based on a state of the art Corruption Monitoring System. The Regional Anti-Corruption Report was presented at a policy forum in Tirana, Albania on November 13-14, 2014 in the presence of Albania’s Minister of State on Local Issues and National Coordinator on Anti-corruption Bledar Çuçi and the EU Ambassador to Albania Romana Vlahutin. The report has been/or will be presented at national events in each of the countries in SEE and in Brussels on February 24-25, 2015.

For the 2015-2016 period, SELDI plans to officially formulate and act on clear anti-corruption advocacy messages through stronger SELDI coalition expanded to 30 members. It will implement a second round of good governance monitoring and deepen the analysis to include the issues of energy governance and hidden economy.

In the final quarter of the first phase of the **“SIGN for Sustainability” project (2014/351-410 continuation of 2012/306-172)**, the partners conducted several types of activities. After submitting policy recommendations to relevant institutions in their country they started advocating for a more favourable framework for philanthropy and managed to become part of working groups/Councils set to draft amendments and inserted their recommendations into relevant Strategies and proposals. The partners also implemented the first cycle of the “Sustainability Academy”, program designed to build capacities of CSOs across the region to mobilize resources on the local level. Selected CSOs managed to raise more than 92.000 EUR in the process, receiving 77.420 EUR in matching grants from SIGN partners. In order to promote the success of the Sustainability Academy, partners launched a video “A Good SIGN” that was well received across the region. After extensive consultations, the partners also adopted regional Standards for fundraising that were, thus far, signed by 130 CSOs in 6 countries of the

region. Lastly, in October 2014, the partners organized a regional conference, “SIGNs for Philanthropy Development: a regional perspective.

In the following period, the partners will continue to advocate for a more enabling environment, conduct a Regional Sustainability Academy gathering most successful participants from the first cycle and produce a Manual for Implementation of Standards for Fundraising that will provide signatories and other CSOs with a list of indicators, forms, links and good practice examples related to each standard.

The last six months of the first phase of the **Triple A for Citizens project (2014/351-417 continuation of 2012/306-166)** have been characterized by the implementation of the Mentoring visits in Serbia (July), Bosnia and Herzegovina (July), Kosovo (August) and Turkey (September). During the visits in the region the EU partners, together with two legal experts, monitored the progress made by the ten pilot projects, evaluating the organisations’ internal structures and procedures and organising training sessions in jointly-identified areas of activity. On 27 and 28 November 2014 the Regional Conference “Citizens' access to information, advice and active assistance in Western Balkans and Turkey” took place in Sarajevo. During the Conference the results of the first phase of the project were presented. Using knowledge gained from the 10 pilot projects in Croatia, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo and Turkey, conference participants exchanged best practices for providing advice and legal assistance.

In the next semester the following activities will take place: Roundtable on Quality Standards in Provision of Information, Advice and Legal Aid to Citizens in order to explore the models of quality control which will be promoted by the TripleA network in the second phase (23 February); Mapping of Triple A providers in Montenegro, Macedonia and Albania (April-May); Call for Proposal and selection of six pilot project from Montenegro, Macedonia and Albania.

The project **South East European Media Observatory: Building Capacities and Coalitions for Monitoring Media Integrity and Advancing Media Reforms (2014/351-607 continuation of 2012/306-658)** organized the following activities: findings and recommendations of the research reports on media integrity in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia and Serbia have been translated, published and presented to policy makers and media professionals in each of these 5 WB countries, contributing to the discussion on media reform targets. With the support of the MEP Tanja Fajon, the research was presented and discussed also in the European Parliament. Important synergies were developed with the CoE work in addressing the Media Regulators of the region. Anti-corruption bodies, civil society activists and investigative journalists from the region met in Ljubljana to explore possibilities for media integrity coalitions to combat corrupt relations and practices in the media systems.

In the next semester concrete steps will be made towards building national coalitions for media integrity between independent state bodies, civil society and journalists, including a regional workshop aimed at mapping, mobilizing and improving capacities for policy influences and digital activism. Six new investigative journalism projects will be selected for sub-granting; selected journalists will be brought to The Guardian for capacity building seminar.

Balkan Civil Society Acquis – Strengthening the Advocacy and Monitoring Potential and Capacities of CSOs (2014/351-412 continuation of 2012/306-577). In the past semester the 8 country project partners continued the process of monitoring the enabling environment for civil

society development (CSDev) which included more than 400 individuals being engaged in providing feedback via surveys, interviews, focus groups etc. In parallel, advocacy activities intensified at country and regional level. For the 6th consecutive year, BCSDN analyzed how the EC Progress Reports reflects on civil society development in Enlargement countries ([Less Words, More Work - BCSDN Analysis of the Progress Reports and EC Enlargement Strategy 2014-2015](#)). In Albania especially, the project's advocacy made a key contribution to improvements in the legal framework. Finally, the "[Donor Strategies and Practices in Supporting Civil Society in the Western Balkans](#)" research report was published and presented in BiH and Macedonia stakeholders to identify key actions with regards to donors models of support to civil society. [Slovak Balkan Public Policy Fund \(SBPPF\) Policy Papers Joint Publication](#) – a joint work of 21 organizations and individuals on key policy issues was presented to EP and other EU relevant institutions via a Brussels study visit for selected young researchers.

New round of enabling environment reports depicting the situation for 2014 to be presented in Q1 of 2015 will allow the continuous advocacy for CSDev in the Enlargement countries. One regional report will be published. A kick-off workshop on Economic value of the civil society in the Balkans took place in Belgrade on 3rd and 4th.

(www.balkancsd.net www.monitoringmatrix.net)

[2. Social Development, Human Rights and Reconciliation](#)

The Balkans ACT (Against Crime of Trafficking) Now! (2014/351-406 continuation of 2012/306-193) has developed a tool for monitoring national anti-trafficking policies, which contains around 200 detailed and clearly defined rights-based indicators enabling all anti-trafficking actors to make a true and reliable assessment of how things work in their respective countries and to take appropriate measures. During national and regional advocacy campaigns on access to compensation for trafficked persons, policy papers, proposals for legislative changes and guidelines for judicial authorities were produced and advocacy aimed simultaneously at making better usage of the existing legislation and introducing new mechanisms that would enable victims to gain compensation in a quick and non traumatic manner, all with support from state institutions and local CSOs that were included in the consultation process.

In the following phase, a refined monitoring tool, adjusted to the local needs, will be put in use. Law students will be trained to monitor court trials and court practices. They will be trained in applying the monitoring tool, questionnaires and methodology and will conduct the monitoring in this field in 4 IPA States.

Improving the provision of Social Service Delivery in South Eastern Europe through the empowerment of national and regional Civil Society networks (2014/351-393 continuation of 2012/ 306-530). During the second half of 2014, the project organized a regional training program „Efficient management – better services“ through which more than 130 representatives of CSOs, providers of social services, from 7 countries of the SEE region were trained in the areas of: improving provision of social services, management of CSOs, financial management, strategic planning, methods of financing, advocacy, project development etc. Moreover, the ASB and IRIS network funded 23 projects of CSO member organizations through the Small Grant Facility program which dealt with improvement of provision of social services

and advocacy for more effective services provided by CSOs. This way, around 10 000 people from the region, with the help of the IRIS grants, received the necessary care, support or education, or started changing local legislation on social service delivery.

The future work of the IRIS network will focus on the following activities: (i) providing the members with the **possibility for ISO 9001:2008 certifications**, (ii) implementing the **mentoring and traineeship** program for CSOs providers of social services from Western Balkans **in the EU countries**, (iii) **supporting 12 projects** of the members focused on policy change through the Grant Scheme of ASB and IRIS.

Coordinated efforts - toward new European standards in protection of women from gender based violence (2014/351-409 continuation of 2012/306-568). *Advocacy activities*, followed by a large number of communication and informative activities, were carried out in 5 countries. *Baseline studies on harmonization* of legislative and strategic framework with standards of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (51 articles) were finalized in all 5 countries and distributed to more than 700 addresses. Studies were presented at 5 international conferences (435 participants). Total of **62 legal amendments and policy proposals** (national and local level) were developed. *Reports* (5) about policies on protection of women victims of GBV at local level were published and distributed to more than 500 addresses. Slovenia *has ratified* the Council of Europe Convention on VAW (fourth of 6 countries in the region). Program against GBV in the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina (Serbia) for the period of 2015-2020 *was adopted*, as the first operationalization of the provisions of the Convention. Total of **34** policy proposals and legislative amendments submitted by women's organizations in 5 countries *were adopted*.

In the near future, the project will focus on: creating a *joint interactive* (online) *database* for monitoring implementation of the Council of Europe Convention; continuing to *make policy proposals and legislative amendments* in 4 WB and 2 EU countries, and organizing *public advocacy campaigns* for their adoption; continuing to constantly *inform and represent rights* of women victims of GBV by 29 women's organizations.

Partnership to Ensure Reform of Supports in Other Nations - PERSON (2014/351-686 continuation of 2012/306-649). The first major achievement of the PERSON partnership, working in collaboration with the Croatian organisation SHINE, was to convince law reformers to abolish plenary guardianship under Croatian civil law. While plenary guardianship was designed to protect people with disabilities, the result was that they are stripped of any legal rights to make decisions in any area of their life — in other words, they become a legal 'non-person'. This was changed by the abolition of plenary guardianship. The second major achievement of the project was in Serbia, where the MDRI-S partner organisation conducted training for judges on how Article 12 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities could be applied under Serbian law. The event was attended by 35 Serbian judges, human rights lawyers and representatives of the Commissioner for Protection of Equality. It was approved as an ongoing training programme for Serbian judges in 2015, and the materials developed for the training can be used in different jurisdictions.

In the future, the PERSON partnership will hold a training session for pools of experts that have been drawn from the various partner countries. Representatives from participating countries will come together to receive expert training on the implications of the UN Convention on the

Rights of Persons with Disabilities for their home countries. Secondly, Albania, will host a kick-off meeting that will introduce Albanian stakeholders to the aims of the partnership.

Corporate Social Responsibility for All - CSR for ALL Project (2012/306-569 and 2014/351-680). During the second half of 2014 *CSR for ALL Project* concluded its CSR Awards Activity which was piloted at each partner country through National Conferences and CSR Awards Book that covers 5 Project partner countries. The aim was to increase the capacity of employment organizations (EO) to guide their enterprises to integrate CSR into their core strategy. CSR Awards Book on the other hand includes all CSR Project winners in 5 partner countries and provides an opportunity to widen their message to the World. Second big achievement of the Project during the second half of 2014 was the translation of “EOs’ Handbook on CSR” to the Latin American and Azeri Languages following an initiative of EO’s from the respective countries.

For the 2015-2016 period CSR for ALL plans to create awareness and build capacity in the area of Sustainability Reporting by organizing trainings at partner EO’s and conduct sustainability reporting survey at national level. More generally the Project will continue to contribute to playing an active role in the decision making process, by influencing governments towards developing CSR favorable policies both at national and international levels and enforcing them.

From July to December 2014, **Partnership for Reconciliation through Early Childhood Education and Development in Europe – PRECEDE (2014/351-609 continuation of 2012/306-585)** worked on summarising the effects of the two year development of the regional network and the five national networks, developed the strategy for research, monitoring and advocacy related strengthening of the network in the second phase and developed the regional toolkit outline for piloting in the Balkan region in the next two years. PRECEDE members organised an International Conference “Power of ECD in Peace Building” for more than 200 participants from 11 countries in September in Belgrade. During this period, in addition to Pomoc deci and First Children’s Embassy in the World Medjashi, three more partners managed to get 9001/2008 ISO Certificate (IQNet) for Organisational Management Quality. Partners presented the results of the study on the attitudes towards diversity, inclusion, respect for differences among children, parents and teachers at the International Conference in Budapest in October and in November the abstract for presentation at the International congress “New Directions in Child Protection and Well-being” to be held in Scotland in April 2015 was accepted. In December, PRECEDE partners attended the annual meeting of the International network for Peace-building with Young Children in Belfast.

From July through December 2014, **Citizens' Network for Peace, Reconciliation and Human Security [2012/307-468, 2014/351-549]** proceeded with strengthening the network, completing research and compiling results, and pursuing advocacy in our respective countries and in the region. A capacity building seminar was held in Kavala/Greece, during 26-29 August, where preliminary outputs of the HS regional index work were also presented. From September on, partners organized stakeholders' dialogue and publicity activities on human security, in particular violence concerning youth, workplace and displacement. In November, we/SeCons took part in the organization of the 20 Years of HS Conference, together with the Faculty of Security Studies of the University of Belgrade. The partners also organized a visibility event on violence at the workplace held in December in Paris.

The 2nd Regional/International Conference on Citizenship & Human Security, and the issuing of the Regional Baseline Report and the Thematic Research/Advocacy Report are scheduled for the month of January 2015. The next semester (from February 2015 on) includes visibility events in Turkey & in Montenegro, capacity-building/training and/or stakeholder dialogue activities in countries of operation.

3. Environment, natural resources, energy

Advocacy NGOs networks for sustainable use of energy and natural resources in the Western Balkans and Turkey – ETNAR (2014/ 351-683 continuation of 2012/306-573)The main aim of the ETNAR project is to strengthen the capacity of NGOs to provide analysis, advocacy and monitoring of key environmental reforms at regional and national levels with a special focus on energy, transport and natural resources.

From June 30th to July 4th, Zelena akcija/FoE Croatia organized a seminar at the Solar Academy on the island of Solta, Croatia, that brought together around 30 participants from all Western Balkans countries. The program of the seminar included lectures on climate change and energy cooperatives, a workshop on main threats to natural resources in the region, and presentations of national campaigns that the ETNAR project partners and sub-grantees are working on. From September 11th to 12th, the Centre for Environment organized a regional conference in Banja Luka, Bosnia and Herzegovina, which brought together leading civil society organizations from the region that deal with energy and natural resources. The aim of the conference was to find common solutions for the management of natural resources, especially water, currently facing significant pressure from climate change. Also, emphasis was placed on unsustainable energy systems in the region and the necessity of shifting from fossil to renewable energy sources.

The most important activities in the next period will be the publication of two regional position papers on energy sector and river management, detailing civil society's views on these topics, as well as continuation and intensification of national campaigns on energy and natural resources (for example a campaign to stop the construction of a hydropower plant in National park Sutjeska in Bosnia and Herzegovina).

In the fourth semester of the first phase of the **ESSEDRA project (2014/351-624 continuation of 2012/307-143)**, the partnership focused on strengthening its network with small-scale food producers and producers' associations, communicating to the wider public, and advocating to national and EU-level institutions. This was done primarily through the participation to the 2014 edition of Terra Madre – Salone Internazionale del Gusto, organised by Slow Food from the 23rd to the 27th of October. During the event, the partnership set up a 48 sqm exhibition area, where representatives of producers from the targeted countries were able to display and sell their endangered food products. Over 200,000 visitors attended the event and had the opportunity to learn about ESSEDRA's goals and activities. The partnership organised an *ad hoc* conference with over 80 participants to give visibility to the action. Furthermore, Dessislava Dimitrova from Slow Food Bulgaria moderated the conference on small-scale producers and EU food safety regulation, attended also by DG SANCO. The partnership also concluded the field research, and now 227 endangered food products are registered in the Ark of Taste catalogue. Additional communication and advocacy instruments have been jointly designed and developed.

In the coming semester, the partnership will refine and implement its strategy for fundraising and advocacy (both EU-level and IPARD). In addition, ESSEDRA will identify each of the 8 grassroots projects, including their goals, deliverables, and action plan including the joint field visits.

In the months July-December 2014, **the ENV.net project - Development of the ENV.net in Western Balkans and Turkey: giving citizens a voice to influence the environmental process reforms for closer EU integration (2014/351-610 continuation of 2012/306-642)** identified possibilities of collaboration with different actors active in the environmental sector. This was done through the organisation of round tables, conferences, workshops, training sessions involving CSOs, media, national authorities, academicians and other interested actors on several subjects concerning the EU and national environmental policy (e.g. nature protection, air quality, waste management, industrial pollution, climate change etc.). Moreover, some social events were organised to raise awareness on environmental issues among citizens in the partners' countries and in Montenegro and Bosnia&Herzegovina, thanks to the contribution of ENV.net sub-grantees (e.g. Car Free Day in Turkey; environmental education workshops in Serbian schools; guerrilla gardening events and photos competitions in Macedonia; energy savings day in Albania). See [ENV.net blog](#) for additional information.

In the new phase of the project, the partners will focus on building a more structured monitoring system to identify findings and formulate recommendations on the approximation process to the EU environmental *acquis*. In addition, the ENV.net bi-monthly bulletin will be launched to strengthen the project communication and advocacy action.

South East Europe Sustainable Energy Policy (SEE SEP) Program (2014/351-623 continuation of 2012 / 307 – 460). In the past six months, the main achievement of the SEE SEP programme was the outreach and impact made after the successful promotion of the report [Winners and Losers](#), featuring case studies of corruption in the energy sector of SEE countries (Albania, BiH, Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia). The report was promoted in June 2014 on [EU Sustainable Energy Week 2014](#), with a panel discussion featuring prominent speakers and received an impressive amount of media attention both in Brussels and in regional media. From July to September 2014 the report was presented in the region through advocacy campaigns and distributed to important decision-makers and officials, both in the EU and in the region. In November 2014 we organized a Past/Future workshop in Sarajevo, BiH, with our CSO partners, to determine the best strategies for the presentation of the [2050 Energy Model for South East Europe](#), that will be launched during 2015. The launch is planned through three main events: call for evidence (March 2015), presentation of scenarios (June 2015) and presentation of video interface (September 2015). In the next six months, all of our efforts will be focused on presenting the energy model to the public and decision-makers, as a public tool that will allow us to make sensible choices about our energy future in line with EU goals.

6.3 MEDIA

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary Programme, IPA 2012/022-966
Project title:	Enabling the democratic role of public service media in the EU Enlargement region 'Start-up action plan: making a difference 2013-2014
EU contribution:	EUR 0.5 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	Grant Contract with European Broadcasting Union (EBU),
Contract reference:	CN 2013/312-411
Duration of activities:	07/03/2013 – 06/03/2015
Links:	http://www3.ebu.ch/cms/en/services/member-relations/partnership
Contact:	Karl Giacinti, Karl.GIACINTI@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The purpose is to improve public accountability and credibility of public service media in the Western Balkans and Turkey. The EBU works with its members in the region on strategies to improve editorial independence, financial independence and sustainability, assistance in the shift from analogue to digital broadcasting, strategic and legal assistance, training, networking, mentoring and advocacy as methods to address these specific objectives.

ACTIVITIES

Public service news training scheme – Delivery of certificates to trained trainers in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro (July).

Investigative journalism scheme – continuation of mentoring.

Roma Task Force developed a Curriculum for training of Roma journalists (September).

Fact Finding Mission to Skopje conducted (October).

Seminar on Archiving in Geneva (October).

Regional Conference on Public Service Media and Programming for Minorities (November).

Regional Workshop on Public service media and Building Trust with Audience (November).

OUTPUTS

The knowledge about the core public service media values (universality, independence, excellence, diversity, accountability, innovation) has been multiplied and transferred to relevant colleagues of the trained trainers.

Investigative story in Kosovo was broadcast and measures were taken by Government about quality of petrol

A basis for a long term programme for enabling staff to work on minority programmes was built. Situation of PSM was assessed and served as a basis for tailor made approach in implementing activities in MKRTV.

Regional chief archivists updated their knowledge about new trends in digitalization of archiving with colleagues from all over Europe.

Common challenges for programming on minorities have been identified, conclusions adopted and a coordination group for fostering exchange and co-production of minorities programmes has been established.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

Meeting with mentors on investigative journalism – Belgrade, February

In house training on elections coverage for RTSH – 21-24 April

Regional meeting on archiving – end of April

International conference on Independence of PSM in the EU enlargement countries – 1 April, Brussels

Programme reference:	Civil Society Facility Programme 2011, IPA 2011/022-965
Project title:	Alignment to International Standards in the Media Sector for SEE Countries
EU contribution:	EUR 0.5 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans and Turkey
Type of contract:	Contribution Agreement under joint management with UNESCO
Contract reference:	CN 2012/305-617
Duration of activities:	30/11/2012 – 29/11/2015
Contact:	Karl.GIACINTI@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The project 'Media Accountability in South East Europe' aims to support the promotion of freedom of expression, press freedom and freedom of information, through awareness-raising and capacity building as well as to strengthen media accountability and transparency in the Western Balkan and Turkey.

ACTIVITIES

Organisation of 2-days training seminars for professional journalists in cooperation with existing press councils in the region on the topic of access to information, media accountability and journalistic ethics in 5 target countries of the project.

<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/resources/news-and-in-focus-articles/in-focus-articles/2014/legal-leaks>.

The Legal Toolkit developed by Access Info Europe has been adapted, translated and printed for media professionals in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro and Kosovo. Activities and campaigns to raise-awareness among the civil-society about the role and importance of media self-regulation mechanisms have been designed in 5 target countries of the project.

OUTPUTS

250 participants took part in regional conference in Skopje in October 2015 contributing to further connecting media professionals in South East Europe.

5 representatives of press councils in South East Europe participating and contributing to the Annual meeting of the Alliance of Independent Press Councils in Europe which took place in Brussels in October 2014.

Reinforcement of the newly created press council in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia through training and through the funding of its website and of some printed and audiovisual promotion materials.

Public knowledge on media accountability has been supported and increased in 6 target countries thanks to national-tailored awareness-raising campaigns, which took various forms, such as public hearing of press councils to the production of radio and video spots to encourage citizens to submit complaints to self-regulatory bodies.

1500 copies of the research about hate speech in online media in South East Europe printed and distributed.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

Drafting of a report assessing the needs of the five existing South East European press councils to enhance forward-looking approaches and strategies to promote their sustainability.

Sponsoring the participation of media professionals in South East Europe, in particular representatives of media self-regulatory bodies to World Press Freedom Day in Latvia on 3 May 2015.

Organisation of a training seminar on access to information in Ankara, Turkey on 10 and 11 April 2015.

Reinforcement of the existing press councils in South East Europe through national awareness-raising campaigns

Programme reference:	Civil Society Facility Programme, IPA 2012/023-324
Project title:	Civic Response to Clientelism in Media – MEDIA CIRCLE
EU contribution:	EUR 0.55 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	Grant Agreement
Contract reference:	CN 2013/332-758
Duration of activities:	30/11/2013 – 29/11/2017
Links:	http://www.fairpress.eu/
Contacts:	Karl Giacinti, Karl.GIACINTI@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

To establish independent, sustainable, multi-layered, cross-country mechanisms for active media policy monitoring, advocacy and emergency response in South East Europe. This will be done through establishing mechanism for monitoring Media Clientelism and Politicisation Index and implementation of activities directed to enhancing cross-sector cooperation between journalists, public institutions and NGOs, as well as protection of journalists.

ACTIVITIES (JULY – DECEMBER 2014)

1 partners' meetings and 1 capacity building training were held in Podgorica 01-03 October 2015; 1 press conference was held in Podgorica on 03 October 2015.

Methodology for a unique tool for monitoring Media Clientelism and Politicisation Index developed.

By 30 December 2014 Fairpress.eu recorded the following results: 61 analytical articles published; 68 media related articles were republished from other media outlets; 1 uncut video published; over 7000 people liked the Fairpress FB page.

Fairpress portal had more than 30 000 visits, while its FB page by the end of 2014 had a total reach of near 600 000; 1 project newsletter shared on more than 2500 e-mails

OUTPUTS (JULY – DECEMBER 2014)

Web page of the project (Fairpress.eu) designed and developed; presented to journalists and the general public on a conference in Zagreb

Flash Situation Assessment was published in 150 copies and distributed to relevant stakeholders in 6 countries.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

Implement a 2-day partners' meeting in Belgrade

Implement a country-specific research using the tool for monitoring Media Clientelism and Politicisation Index

Programme reference:	Civil Society Facility Programme, IPA 2012/023-324
Project title:	South-East European Partnership for Media Development
EU contribution:	EUR 0.6 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	Grant Agreement
Contract reference:	CN 2013/332-771
Duration of activities:	30/11/2013 – 29/11/2017
Links:	http://www.seenpm.org/south-east-european-partnership-for-media-development/ http://www.cji.ro/?p=5268
Contact:	Karl Giacinti, Karl.GIACINTI@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE:

To support the development of independent and accountable media in the Western Balkans. The focus is on creating the capacity of media organisations in Western Balkans to influence the policies regarding employment conditions and education needs of the journalists.

ACTIVITIES (JULY– DECEMBER 2014):

Research on employment conditions for journalists. Conducted the research. Research reports produced and edited. To be launch in Feb-March 2015. Regional report drafted.

Freedom of Expression and media monitoring. County by country monitoring.

Communication of the program in the participant countries and to possible partners or donors. Posts on SEENPM website.

OUTPUTS (JULY – DECEMBER 2014).

The network of researches and research methodology have been tested.

Five country reports on labour conditions of journalists are produced and edited, ready to be launched in national workshops.

A regional report on labour conditions of journalists is prepared (it has to be completed in the months to come with actual advocacy moves in the five countries). Due in June 2015.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER:

- National research on employment conditions of journalists – to be officially launched in Feb-March 2015.
- Five national working groups to discuss the national reports.
- Five policy papers on labour conditions for journalists.
- Five courses on advocacy skills Feb-March 2015.
- Five advocacy campaigns to be started and run in the five countries (on a topic deriving from the policy papers).
- Completion of the regional report on labour conditions of journalists (due in June).
- Release of the first FoE regional report: "The Charlie Hebdo Effect on the Balkans"
Preparation of the second regional FoE report - topic to be decided.

CHAPTER 7: SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

The strategic documents identify the support of reforms and regional cooperation in education as one of the priorities for IPA assistance. Support is mainly provided through established programmes such as “Erasmus Mundus” and “Tempus”, as well as the new “Erasmus+” programme (2014-2020). Good education accessible by all is key in developing a stable, peaceful and democratic society. Together with MB assistance in the area of cultural heritage they can promote regional cooperation, thus fostering reconciliation and mutual understanding.

7.1 TEMPUS

Programme reference:	IPA 2011/SI2. 596555, IPA 2012/SI2. 615827, 2013/SI2. 645034
Project title:	Tempus: Trans-European Mobility Scheme for University Studies
EU contribution:	IPA 2011/SI2.596555, EUR 15.3 million IPA 2012/SI2.615827, EUR 14.9 million IPA 2013/SI2.645034, EUR 11.7 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans (except Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia)
Type of contract:	The programme is implemented by the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA)
Contract reference:	n/a
Duration of activities:	n/a
Links:	http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/tempus/
Contact :	Bo Caperman, bo.caperman@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The Tempus programme facilitates the reform of higher education institutions by upgrading the quality and management of academic institutions, in line with changing political, social and

economic needs and through voluntary convergence with higher education reform developments in the EU Member States.

ACTIVITIES (JULY- DECEMBER 2014)

This reporting semester must be considered as a transition period between Tempus and the launch of the new Action 'Capacity Building in Higher Education' of the Erasmus+ programme, intended to replace Tempus for the period 2014-2020. Tempus activities during this period consisted mainly of monitoring on-going Tempus projects and closing a certain number of them (11 projects were closed during this semester). As of 1 January 2015, 85 Tempus projects are still operating in the Western Balkans.

The first Call for proposals for the newly established Erasmus+ Capacity Building action was launched at the beginning of October, with a deadline on 10 February 2015. The period from July to December 2014 has also been actively used to promote this action (organisation of info-days in all Western Balkans countries).

During this reporting period, a total of 46 field monitoring visits corresponding to 35 on-going Tempus projects in the Western Balkans were carried out by the National Erasmus+ Offices (NEOs) and EACEA staff.

OUTPUTS (JULY - DECEMBER 2014)

The field monitoring visits showed that the Tempus projects in the Western Balkans are progressing well and achieving good results.

During the autumn, the procedure to provide financial support to the National Erasmus+ Offices – NEOs (formerly Tempus National Offices - NTOs) has been launched and completed in most cases. The mandate of the NEOs has been enlarged to cover all E+ international activities related to Higher Education and additional resources (notably human resources) provided within the framework of 3-year long contracts (2015-2017). These contracts also include support to the network of Higher Education Reform Experts (HEREs). A coordination meeting of all NEOs and ICPs (newly established International Contact Points in the EU) was organised between 29 September and 2 October 2014 in Brussels and focused on the implementation of Tempus and Erasmus+.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

During the first semester of 2015, the main activity will be related to the selection process of the applications submitted under the Erasmus+ Capacity Building action (selection procedure to be completed by summer 2015).

An event will be organised for the benefit of the HEREs on 10-11 March 2015 in Istanbul to discuss how higher education could support the development and modernisation of Vocational Education and Training (VET) in the former Tempus partner countries.

7.2 ERASMUS MUNDUS

Programme reference:	IPA 2013/935
Project title:	Erasmus Mundus Action 1 and Action 2
EU contribution:	Action 1: EUR 8.0 million Action 2: EUR 12.0 million
Beneficiary region:	Erasmus Mundus Action 1: Western Balkans (except Croatia) and Turkey Erasmus Mundus Action 2: Western Balkans
Type of contract:	The programme is implemented by the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA)
Links:	http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus_mundus/ https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/funding/key-action-1-
Contact:	Bo Caperman, bo.caperman@ec.europa.eu Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency EACEA-EPLUS-JMD@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The Erasmus Mundus programme's objective is to promote European higher education, to help improve and enhance the career prospects of students and to promote intercultural understanding through cooperation with third countries, in accordance with EU external policy objectives, in order to contribute to the sustainable development of third countries in the field of higher education.

ACTIVITIES (JULY – DECEMBER 2014)

[Erasmus Mundus Action 1](#)

Erasmus Mundus Joint Programmes are operated by consortia of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) from the EU and (since 2009) other countries in the world. They provide an integrated course and joint or multiple diplomas following study or research at two or more HEIs. There are currently 138 Erasmus Mundus Master Courses and 42 Joint Doctorates.

The 2014 scholarship selection of students and staff has been done within the budget and framework of the new Erasmus+: Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees (2014-2020) programme. Under this 2014 scholarships selection, the "Western Balkans" window currently funds Erasmus Mundus Master students from the following countries with a monthly allowance of 1.000,-€: Albania (11), Bosnia and Herzegovina (7), Kosovo (3), Montenegro(8) and Serbia (55). Under the "former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey window" students receive a monthly allowance of 500,- €: Turkey (71), former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (19).

Erasmus Mundus doctoral fellowships are currently granted to candidates from former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (3), Turkey (6) and Serbia (4).

[Erasmus Mundus Action 2](#)

Under Action 2, Erasmus Mundus Partnerships bring together HEIs from Europe on the one hand and those from a particular region in the world on the other. Together, the partnerships manage mobility flows between the two regions for a range of academic levels – undergraduate, master, doctorate, post-doctorate – and for academic staff.

The selection under the last Erasmus Mundus call for proposals EACEA/18/13 was finalised in July 2014. Four partnerships were selected under the Western Balkans regional lot covering Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro and Serbia (EU budget available: EUR 12 million).

The coordinators and joint coordinators of the four selected partnerships attended the Erasmus Mundus Action 2 Coordinators' Meeting held in Brussels on 2-3 October 2014. During the first day, a specific workshop was organised for the projects working in the Western Balkan countries aiming at exchanging experience and good practices. Representatives of DG ELARG, the EU Delegation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the National Erasmus+ Offices in Kosovo and Serbia contributed to the workshop.

In September 2014, the three partnerships selected in 2013 submitted the first progress report focusing on the selection of students under the 1st Cohort (the latest deadline for starting the mobility under this cohort is 31 December 2014). In total 510 mobilities have been reported (423 Non-EU and 87 EU mobility flows). These partnerships can organise students' selections under two more cohorts until the end of the eligibility period (mid-July 2017) in order to reach the initially planned mobility numbers.

OUTPUTS (JULY –DECEMBER 2014)

The Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees, under Key Action 1 of the Erasmus+ call for proposals 2015, was presented at the regional Erasmus+ Infodays organised by the Erasmus+ National Agencies in Turkey (Konya) and Bosnia and Herzegovina (Banja Luka) in November 2014 as well as in the national Infodays organised by the National Erasmus+ Offices.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

The University of Ghent, coordinating an Erasmus Mundus Action 2 project in the Western Balkans, has taken the initiative to organise, together with other Action 2 partnerships active in the region, a workshop on "Internationalisation and Erasmus+". The event is planned to take place on 25-27 March 2015 at the University of Zagreb.

By February 2015 all the Erasmus Mundus Action 2 project selected in 2010 under the Western Balkans lot are expected to submit their final reports and the projects selected in 2012 – their third progress report.

Action 2 of Erasmus Mundus is discontinued and replaced with credit mobility under Key Action 1 of Erasmus+. This mobility is managed by the Erasmus+ National Agencies.

Erasmus Mundus Joint Masters Courses (ex- Action 1 of Erasmus Mundus) continue under Key Action 1 of Erasmus+ and the deadline for proposals is 4 March 2015 to the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency.

7.3 YOUTH IN ACTION

Programme reference:	IPA 2013/024-091
Project title:	Erasmus+ Youth in Action – Western Balkans Youth Window
EU contribution:	EUR 3.0 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	The programme is implemented by the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA)
Contact:	Bo Caperman, bo.caperman@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The Western Balkans Youth Window promotes non-formal education and the youth sector in the Western Balkans by supporting youth projects with partner beneficiaries, in particular exchanges of young people and those active in youth work and youth organisations as well as initiatives that reinforce young people's sense of initiative and mutual understanding.

ACTIVITIES (JULY –DECEMBER 2014)

Due to the change between Programme generations, there was no funding for the Western Balkans Youth Window in 2014 under the Erasmus+ programme. Therefore, no new projects were selected. In the period under review, some of the activities funded and already launched under the Youth in Action Programme's Western Balkans Youth Window in 2013 continued being implemented and some of these till mid-2015.

The following types of activities were supported:

Action 2 European Voluntary Service

The European Voluntary Service: enables young people to carry out voluntary service for up to 12 months in a country other than their country of residence.

Action 3.1 Youth Exchange

A Youth Exchange with Neighbouring Partner Countries is a project which brings together groups of young people from two or more countries, providing them with an opportunity to discuss and confront various themes, while learning about each other's countries and cultures.

Action 3.1 Training and Networking

Two types of Training and Networking projects:

- Projects promoting exchanges, cooperation and training in the field of youth work. Developed with a view to implementing an activity which supports capacity-building and innovation among promoters, as well as the exchange of experience, expertise and good practice among those who are involved in youth work.
- Projects leading to the development of more youth projects, notably by ensuring support and know-how; support for partner-finding; tools and means to improve the quality of the projects.

OUTPUTS (JULY –DECEMBER 2014)

For the period under review, the implementation of projects and activities outlined under point 2 above and selected in 2013 continued as did the monitoring of projects selected in 2012 and 2013. This includes communication with project beneficiaries, dealing with project amendments and the receipt and payment of final report cost claims.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

In the second semester of 2014, the European Commission prepared the launch of the Western Balkans Youth Window under Erasmus+, the EU Programme for education, training, youth and sport, which succeeds the Youth in Action Programme and other programmes related to training and youth.

All youth projects are funded under the Erasmus+ Key Action 2 "Capacity building in the field of youth". They foster cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practice and contribute to capacity building in the field of youth.

Project applications under the Western Balkans Youth Window need to be submitted by applicant organisations established in the Western Balkans. Western Balkans Youth Window projects need to include at least one mobility activity. Projects are selected and managed by the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) in Brussels.

7.4 CULTURAL HERITAGE – LJUBLJANA PROCESS, HISTORY

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary Programme under IPA Transition Assistance and Institution Building Component for the year 2010, IPA 2010/022-057
Project title:	RCC "Regional Task Force for Culture and Society" (TFCS)
EU contribution:	EUR 1.1 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	Grant contract with RCC, responsible for Task Force for Culture and Society (TFCS)
Contract reference:	CN 2011/261-565
Duration of activities:	01/01/2011 – 30/11/2014
Links:	http://www.tfcs.rcc.int/en/
Contact:	Petra.Schlüter, Petra.Schlueter@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

Contribution to strengthening of regional capacities in rehabilitation of cultural heritage, promotion of regional cooperation in the sphere of culture and implementation of a common heritage rehabilitation management tool. The cultural heritage rehabilitation approach enables not only conservation and protection of heritage values, but also its enhancement and adaptation for suitable contemporary use, regeneration of its surroundings and revitalization of local communities.

ACTIVITIES (JULY –NOVEMBER 2014)

High level regional Conference “Cultural heritage rehabilitation as a key to sustainable development” in Dubrovnik, focusing on promoting culture and cultural heritage as a key driver for reconciliation, human development and sustainable economic growth. The first day of the conference focused on the transformation of Ljubljana Process II, which is now entering a new phase through the Dubrovnik Declaration;

Tenth Meeting of the RCC TFCS Members, Dubrovnik, Croatia, 28-29 October 2014;

Implementation of in-country activities by National Task Forces (4 workshops, production of integrated rehabilitation methodology documentation, publication of a Business Planning manual as a regional activity involving LP Regional Experts Pool,

Publishing of Comprehensive Report on Ljubljana Process;

Preparation of promotional materials (such as video for Ljubljana Process, a joint PIL 2012 brochure, posters, bookmarks);

Coordination of inputs for the Cultural and Creative Sectors Dimension of the SEE 2020 Strategy, where cultural heritage rehabilitation plays an important role.

OUTPUTS (JULY –NOVEMBER 2014)

Increased visibility of the achievements of Ljubljana Process; enhanced opportunities for regional cooperation and new partnerships in the field of culture especially of cultural heritage; improved visibility of the Ljubljana Process cultural heritage sites; Increased contribution to regional capacity building in cultural heritage management.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

Operational activities finished on 30 November 2014. Final narrative, audit and financial reporting.

Programme reference:	Preparatory Actions for preserving and restoring cultural heritage in conflict areas in the Western Balkans for the year 2010, PHARE 2010/22-659
EU contribution:	EUR 2.25 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	8 grant contracts
Duration of the activities :	up to 3 years
Contact:	Petra.Schlüter, Petra.Schlueter@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

Under the Call for Proposal EuropeAid/131266/C/ACT/Multi entitled “Preserving and restoring cultural heritage in the Western Balkans” (€ 2.25 million), 8 contracts were awarded. This call formed part of the Preparatory Actions for preserving and restoring cultural heritage in conflict areas in the Western Balkans supported through a special budget line from the European Parliament. It aims to contribute to the preservation and restoration of valuable cultural and/or religious objects damaged or destroyed by war or other political conflicts in the Western Balkans. The actions raise awareness of cultural diversity in the Western Balkans, build confidence and support local development of restoration skills:

- At institutional level: improvement of legal and regulatory environment, capacity development at local and regional level, development of indicators and benchmarks.
- At educational level: development of curricula, mobility schemes of cultural professional students and educators.
- At socio-economic level: holistic protection of cultural heritage and its territorial implication, development of tourist activities, network activities, awards and contests, crafts and skill preservation, cultural heritage-related economic activities, development and application of economic models.

At cross-cultural level: culturally based social inclusion examples, cross-cultural tolerance and understanding and strategic approaches to tackle them, cooperation for restoration, cross-cultural media campaigns.

ACTIVITIES

Continued implementation and monitoring of the actions. All contracts started in November 2011, two out of the 8 contracts came to an end in October/November 2013. The remaining 6 came to an end in November 2014.

OUTPUTS

Final reports

Programme reference:	Preparatory Actions for preserving and restoring cultural heritage in conflict areas in the Western Balkans for the year 2011 (PHARE 2011/023-372)
Project title:	Sustaining the Rehabilitation of Cultural Heritage in the s
EU contribution:	EUR 0.5 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	Grant contract with RCC (for TFCS)
Contract reference:	CN 2012/295-647
Duration of activities :	01/01/2011 – 30/11/2014
Links:	http://www.tfcs.rcc.int/en/
Contact:	Petra Schlueter, petra.schlueter@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

Contribution to rehabilitation of monuments/sites within Ljubljana Process by assisting at specific points (Activity 1- urgent interventions, Act.2 - preliminary investigations, Act.3 - master plans, project design, Act. 4 - management plans). It aims to ensure the successful completion of consolidated projects and increase visibility of both donors, managers, implementers and sites themselves.

ACTIVITIES (JULY –NOVEMBER 2014)

Preparation of 7 site management plans with relevant training in seven countries to sustain the rehabilitation projects with increased capacities and ensure the sites' management after funds are secured, with 21 workshop with on-site training held in the process of their development with more than 160 stakeholders consulted; Organisation of a regional workshop on management of cultural heritage sites with 30 participants; 1 monitoring mission involving the Ljubljana Process Regional Expert Pool; Publishing of the Study on Architectural Research on Former French Embassy in Cetinje (produced within Activity 2); presentation of achievements as a visibility activity during the High level regional Conference "Cultural heritage rehabilitation as a key to sustainable development" in Dubrovnik.

OUTPUTS (JULY –NOVEMBER 2014)

Strengthened regional capacities in the field of cultural heritage management through trainings provided; Increased contribution to management of cultural heritage sites; Enhanced support to successful implementation of Ljubljana Process II methodology and actions; Increased opportunities to finding viable solutions to sustain rehabilitation projects and good examples provided; Increased professional collaboration of national and local authorities, companies, heritage professionals and especially GOs in the field of heritage management.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

Operational activities finished on 30 November 2014. Final narrative, audit and financial reporting.

Programme reference:	Preparatory actions for preserving and restoring cultural heritage in conflict areas in the Western Balkans for 2012, CARDS 2012/023-867
EU contribution:	EUR 3.0 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	Single works contracts; Evaluation: Service Framework contract
Contract reference:	n/a
Duration of activities:	up to 24 months
Contact:	Petra Schlueter, petra.schlueter@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

Rehabilitation of cultural heritage sites affected by war-related actions, contribution to a sustainable development of sites of valuable cultural objects, fostering inter-cultural dialogue, reconciliation, raising the awareness of cultural diversity in the Western Balkans among the population and eventually support to economic development.

The following three projects were selected:

- Rehabilitation of the Franciscan Monastery in Bač, Serbia
- Reconstruction of the Kastel Fortress, "Cultural centre with auxiliary services", Bosnia and Herzegovina

- Rehabilitation of the monastery of St. Mary for museum use and landscaping of the archaeological site of Apollonia, Fier, Albania

ACTIVITIES

The Beneficiaries of the selected projects prepare preliminary designs for the projects, so that the tenders for the complete design and works can be launched.

OUTPUTS

Rehabilitation of 3 cultural heritage sites in Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Albania

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

Implementation of the works contracts by the respective EU Delegations.

The evaluation component (EUR 0.2 million) will be implemented through a Service Framework contract foreseen in 2016.

CHAPTER 8: OTHER HORIZONTAL ACTIONS

8.1 EU AGENCIES

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary Programme, IPA 2011/022-964; I{A 2013/024-091
Project title:	Preparatory measures for the participation of candidates and potential candidates in EU Agencies
EU contribution	EUR 8.0 million IPA 2011/022-964; I{A
EU contribution	EUR 0.5 million 2013/024-091
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans and Turkey
Beneficiary institutions:	Counterpart government institutins of an Eu Agency
Type of contracts:	Grant agreements with EU agencies
Contract reference:	CN 304-223, 279-348, 291-934, 276-973, 270-378
Contact :	Agnieska Iwanowska-Biel, agnieska.iwanowska-biel@ec.europa.eu

List of Agencies, duration of activities and total amounts :

CRIS	Agency	Duration	Amount
270-378	European Food Safety Authority	16/09/2011 – 30/11/2014	EUR 1.0 million
272-515	European Maritime Safety Agency	26/10/2011-26/09/2014	EUR 0.3 million
273-995	European Agency for Safety and Health at Work	24/10/2011 – 30/11/2014	EUR 0.9 million
274-058	European Medicines Agency	20/10/2011 – 15/09/2014	EUR 0.9 million
276-973	Community Plant Variety Office	31/10/2011 – 30/11/2014	EUR 0.4 million
277-045	European Environment Agency (EEA)	13/12/2011 – 30/11/2014	EUR 1.0 million
338-534	idem	30/04/2014 - 31/10/2015	EUR 0.5 million
279-326	European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions,	01/01/2012 - 31/12/2014	EUR 0.7 million
280-057	European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction	01/01/2012 – 30/11/2014	EUR 0.9 million
282-291	European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control	01/01/2012-30/11/2014	EUR 0.4 million
291-934	European Chemicals Agency	01/04/2012-30/11/2014	EUR 0.3 million
304-223	European Institute for Gender Equality	01/01/2013-31/05/2014	EUR 0.1 million

PURPOSE

The programme supports EU Agencies carry out preparatory measures with Beneficiaries and stakeholders to ensure that Beneficiaries are able to participate effectively in the activities of EU Agencies as they implement important parts of the *acquis communautaire*.

Activities are designed to help Beneficiaries understand the function and operations of EU Agencies, and more importantly their role within them. EC support also permits Beneficiaries to involve other relevant national stakeholders in their activities in ways similar to those of EU Member States. This support mainly consists of advice on organisational matters, staff training and participation in stakeholder meetings.

ACTIVITIES

Each Agency carried out preparatory measures such as training activities, study visits, workshops and conferences. Activities also cover the preparation and translation of documents and the implementation of surveys. Given the large number of contracts, a comprehensive presentation of each project would go beyond the scope of this report. Therefore only some examples are presented which do not indicate an order of priority.

European Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction in Lisbon

The EMCDDA conducted first ever General Population Survey (GPS) on Drugs in Albania, Kosovo* and in Serbia, as well as a pilot GPS in Montenegro. They results in national reports and country overviews for all IPA beneficiary countries, and which are available on the EMCDDA website (www.emcdda.europa./countries).

The project results were presented at the margins of the Reitox Extended Week (24-25 November 2014) in the presence of the EMCDDA-IPA national correspondents and some representatives of the Enlargement Countries EU Permanent Missions in Brussels. The meeting included a full-day session on the topical issue of cannabis legislation and policy.

European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) in Helsinki:

On 24 September, seventeen people representing Albania, Croatia, FYROM, Kosovo , Serbia and Turkey took part in ECHA's second Biocides Stakeholders' Day that was held at ECHA premises. The event provided the participants with up-to-date information on the implementation of the Biocidal Products Regulation during the first 12 months incl. information on the forthcoming revision of the Fee Regulation and national fees; opportunities and challenges for biocidal product formulators in 2014;

On 24 October, three participants from Albanian authorities involved in the management of biocides visited Belgian authorities on the Biocidal Products Regulation. The objective of the visit was to assist Albania in the approximation of their Biocidal Product legislation to the EU rules. The programme included introduction to Belgian legislation on biocides; the Belgian authorisation scheme for biocidal products and sustainable use of biocides; as well as the implementation of Biocidal Products Regulation in Belgium including the procedures, infrastructure, helpdesk and enforcement.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

The majority of the Agencies will receive a new round of contracts under IPA 2014 and continue their co-operation with the Enlargement countries.

8.2 SUPPORT TO PARLIAMENTARY COOPERATION

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary Programme under IPA Transition Assistance and Institution Building Component for the year 2012, IPA 2012/022-966
Project title:	Study on parliamentary cooperation
EU contribution:	EUR 0.108 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	Specific Contract under Framework Contract to COWI AS
Contract reference:	CN 2013/330-681
Duration of activities:	2/12/2013 – 30/11/2014 (before extension 28/09/2014)
Contact :	Agnieszka.IWANOWSKA-BIEL@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The global objective is to analyse the most efficient and effective manner to promote parliamentary cooperation in the Western Balkans.

It will include preparation of a study mapping the current situation regarding parliamentary cooperation, and a proposal for how to streamline the regional institutions as a pre-condition for further support to parliamentary cooperation. The study should also make a

recommendation for the most efficient way to support parliamentary cooperation in a sustainable manner.

ACTIVITIES (IN THE PERIOD JULY – DECEMBER 2014)

- data collection and analytical review (e.g. documents from the SEE parliamentary cooperation institutions, national parliaments, EU enlargement related documents, etc); identification of relevant persons to interview
- continuation of field missions and interviews in the region and Brussels-based interlocutors, review and comprehensive analysis of findings;

OUTPUTS (IN THE PERIOD JULY – DECEMBER 2014)

Draft final report prepared and delivered.

- A) Mapping and analysis of international parliamentary institutions and parliamentary networks in the Western Balkans and South East Europe
- B) Overview of parliamentary capacity building in EU candidate countries and potential candidates.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

Delivery of the revised final report.

8.3 REGIONAL COOPERATION COUNCIL

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary Programme under IPA Transition Assistance and Institution Building Component for the year 2013, IPA 2013/024-091
Project title :	Support to the Operating Expenditures of the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC)
EU contribution:	EUR 3.575 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans and Turkey
Type of contract:	Grant contract with RCC
Contract reference:	CN 2013/335-168
Duration of activities:	01/01/2014 – 31/12/2014
Links:	http://www.rcc.int/
Contact :	Agnieszka.IWANOWSKA-BIEL@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The purpose of this project is to provide financial assistance to the functioning of the RCC Secretariat and contribution to the activities of the RCC in 2014, as foreseen in its 2014 -2016 Strategy and Work Programme, in particular implementing the SEE 2020 strategy.

ACTIVITIES (JULY - DECEMBER 2014)

The main activity of the project is to assist the RCC in implementing its strategic work programme (SWP) for 2014-2016. The RCC will continue to work towards increasing the value and substance of regional cooperation, thus promoting issues of importance to the entire region and further mainstreaming regional cooperation in the countries' political agenda. All RCC's actions will fit broadly into two main categories of activities: implementation of SEE 2020 Strategy, with a majority of resources being dedicated to this category and the Justice and Home Affairs and Security dimension.

The Strategic cooperation with the SEECP and the SEECP C-i-O will be further strengthened.

Key meetings: RCC Board (October 2014); Coordination Meeting between the RCC Secretariat – SEECP Troika and the EU (October 2014); SEECP Meeting of the Political Directors (November 2014)

Launch of the complementary RCC pillar assessment..

OUTPUTS (JULY - DECEMBER 2014)

The SEE 2020 Programming Guidelines have been finalised. Further steps were made in strengthening coordination, programming and monitoring functions of the SEE 2020 Strategy.

The regional cooperation mechanisms in Justice and Home Affairs and Security dimensions have been further improved.

8.4 CROSS-BORDER INSTITUTION BUILDING CBIB+

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary Programme, IPA 2011/022-964
Project title:	Cross-border Institution Building – CBIB+
EU contribution:	EUR 2.4 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	Service contract with GIZ International Services (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH)
Contract reference:	CN 2012/309-846
Duration of activities :	21/12/2012 – 30/11/2015
Links:	www.cbibplus.eu
Contact:	Dario Di Benedetto, dario.di-benedetto@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE.

This project is focused on the harmonisation but as well on the exchange and transfer of good practice in the implementation of the IPA component II 'Cross-border cooperation'. The goal is to generate and share knowledge among stakeholders contributing to the improvement of procedures and tools that would achieve high quality of programme implementation.

ACTIVITIES.

- A non-cost time extension of the contract was discussed, agreed and signed by means of an addendum, entailing the cancellation of the former project component five "Pilot grant scheme for small community projects" and the prolongation of the project's activities for an additional calendar year;
- recruitment of a non-key expert to act as an advisor on the Bilateral Arrangement for IPA II CBC under indirect management;
- organisation of the 2nd Regional CBC Consultative Forum in Sarajevo (September), which was articulated around three discussion groups and stressed the differences in approach between the implementation provisions of IPA I and IPA II for CBC;
- establishment, supervision and moderation of three technical working groups (TWG), whose discussions are using an on-line platform at the website of the project, on monitoring templates, a draft text of the Bilateral Arrangement and a model set of ToR for contracting the IPA II programmes' thematic priority 'technical assistance';
- preparation of a methodology (several working versions) for workload analysis of the Joint Technical Secretariats (JTS) under IPA I & II;
- design of an innovative model application package (first draft for discussion) for IPA II CBC calls for proposals based on PRAG 2014 templates;
- delivery of 6 training events on 'effective communication' for Operating Structures (OS) and JTS staff (105 people); ad-hoc capacity building for the OS in Albania on EU-funded grant contracts (20 people); ad-hoc training on implementation of CBC programmes for recently recruited staff at the OS and CFCU in MNE (16 people); on the job mentoring for the staff of the JTS MNE-KS & MK-KS (9 people); ad-hoc training events on EU-funded grant reporting for beneficiaries of the programmes AL-MNE, MK-AL & GR-MK (143 people);
- support for the finalisation of the CBC programme documents for IPA II;
- assistance with the concept and moderation of a Project Fair under the programme MK-AL (September), in the frame of the European Cooperation Day 2014;

- further update of the project website www.cbibplus.eu and social media accounts (Facebook page), distribution of project visibility items, including the design of a new project newsletter and the circulation of monthly flash-news.

OUTPUTS (JULY – DECEMBER 2014)

- All aspects of CBC programme/project implementation regionally discussed under an agreed institutional framework and experiences and lessons learnt shared amongst stakeholders;
- based on the proceedings of a TWG, regional agreement on the form of monitoring reports for results and compliance assessment of CBC grant contracts;
- two more TWGs under course for the elaboration of standard texts for a Bilateral Arrangement and a set of ToR for TA under CBC IPA II;
- the OSs will have a rigorous methodology to manage workload analysis;
- staff from the OSs and JTSs have enhanced their communication skills;
- beneficiaries from different CBC programmes are more confident in meeting the management requirements of EU-funded grant contracts;
- the indicators in some of the new 8 IPA II CBC programme documents (2014-2020) have been further improved (baseline data, target groups) in line with comments received by DG ELARG Geographical Units;
- the basis for a highly successful transfer of know-how on the transition from a direct to an indirect management system between Serbia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia has been laid;
- continuous attention to information and publicity of the EU-funded CBC intra-WB programmes.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

- organisation of the third meeting of the CBC Regional Consultative Forum as well as several meetings or e-forums of its technical working groups;
- finalisation of a model text of the Bilateral Arrangement and the set of ToR for TA under IPA II;
- finalisation of a model application package for IPA II CBC calls for proposals;

- several new training events on different subjects, such as grant contract management (MK-KS & AL-KS), assessment of applications, especially in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Albania as well as for the capacity building of the newly recruited staff in OSs in the two countries;
- provision of support for the preparation of the programming document for the new border Serbia-former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (if the two governments agree to proceed with the opening of this programming border under IPA II);
- respond to any other ad-hoc requests posed by the Beneficiaries;
- organisation of another staff exchange between Beneficiaries;
- the publication of the third issue of the yellow & blue magazine;
- continuity and upgrading of the information and communication means available to the project team.

8.5 MONITORING

Programme reference:	Monitoring Programme 2012, IPA 2012/23-718
Project title:	Results-Oriented Monitoring (ROM) in the Western Balkans and Turkey
EU contribution:	EUR 3.48 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans and Turkey
Type of contract:	Service Contract with Particip GmbH
Contract reference:	CN2012/304-644
Duration of activities:	01/12/2012 – 30/11/2014
Contact :	Petra Schlueter, petra.schlueter@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The contract provides an external independent Results-Oriented Monitoring (ROM) service for the national IPA programmes in the Western Balkans and for the multi-beneficiary programmes. Each ROM mission reports on the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of an IPA project. A mix of on-going and ex post ROM assessments is made in accordance with the ROM Handbook.

ACTIVITIES (JULY – NOVEMBER 2014)

The contractor issued 108 ROM reports covering IPA expenditure of EUR 316.15 million.

Outputs (in the period July – November 2014)

The ROM performance ratings (categories I to IV) in the 108 reports were as follows:

	Reports	IPA funds					
		MEUR	I	II	III	IV	Numerical
National on-going	74	152.83	11%	69%	16%	4%	2.91
National ex post	17	21.35 -		76%	24%	-	2.92
Regional on-going	15	140.02 -		60%	33%	7%	2.60
Regional ex post	2	1.95	50%	50%			3.22

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

The contract ended satisfactorily in November 2014 with the issuance of 215 ROM reports for the full year covering IPA allocations of EUR 683.6 million. A tender for ROM monitoring for the Western Balkans and Turkey for the next 2 years has been launched.

8.6 UNION FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary Programme, ENPI 2009/020-566
Project title:	Programme to support the participation of eligible candidate and potential candidate countries in the Union for the Mediterranean Measure 1 "Institutional Dialogue – Euromed Events"
EU contribution:	EUR 0.75 million
Beneficiary region:	Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Turkey
Type of contract:	Service contract to GIZ
Contract reference:	CN 2009/226-503
Duration of activities :	addendum 2: 31/12/2013 – 30/09/2014
Links:	http://eeas.europa.eu/euromed/
Contact:	Roxana Toran-Villarroya, Roxana.TORAN-VILLARROYA@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The purpose is to help Beneficiaries contribute to and benefit from inter-regional cooperation and dialogue whilst taking part in a pro-active and constructive relationship with their Mediterranean neighbours. Moreover, the project increases the presence of IPA beneficiaries in the Partnership and also supports capacity building thus contributing to improved governance and public administration.

ACTIVITIES

The representatives of the Western Balkans and Turkey participated in the following meetings:

- Security of gas supply - The role of gas developments in the Mediterranean region conference, (10-11 July 2014, Valetta, Malta. Participation of Turkey)
- Union for the Mediterranean Trade Senior Officials meeting. (4 September 2014 Brussels).
- Meeting on Foreign fighters with Euromed countries. (16 September 2014, Rabat, Morocco. Participation of Turkey)
- Union for the Mediterranean Ministerial meeting on the Digital Economy. (30 September 2014, Brussels).

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

Participants from IPA countries members of the Union for the Mediterranean namely: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Turkey continue to be systematically invited to conferences, seminars and meetings in the framework of the European Neighbourhood Policy (Southern cooperation), the Euro Mediterranean Partnership and the Union for the Mediterranean, financed through the European Neighbourhood Instrument since October 2014.

8.7 AREA BASED DEVELOPMENT

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary Programme, IPA 2013/024-091
Project title:	Preparation for the implementation of the Area Based Development (ABD) Approach in the Western Balkans – 2nd phase
EU contribution:	EUR 0.9 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	Grant Contract with the Regional Rural Development Standing Working Group (SWG) in South-East Europe
Contract reference:	CN 2013/336-472
Duration of activities :	01/02/2014 – 30/04/2015
Links:	http://www.seerural.org/
Contact :	Dario Di Benedetto, Dario.di-Benedetto@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The overall objective of the second phase of the project is to further work on building capacities and structures within the SWG and “Drina-Tara”, “Drina-Sava”, “Prespa” and “Sharra” cross-

border regions in order to be able to implement the forthcoming programmes related to regional and territorial cooperation.

The project objective is also to test the ABD in practice with the implementation of an integrated economic development approach in “Drina-Tara” and “Drina-Sava” cross-border regions.

ACTIVITIES (JULY – DECEMBER 2014)

The project component referring to the integrated economic development approach aims at improvement of competitiveness of products and services in the “Drina-Tara” and “Drina-Sava” regions and as a pilot includes small grants for supporting investments for enhancing production processes and improving the quality of products and services.

The main objective of the grant scheme is to strengthen integrated economic development of the region “Drina - Tara” and “Drina - Sava”, focusing on strengthening touristic offers of the region and improving production chains of agricultural and food products, improvement of tourism services through integrated projects and fostering cooperation among operators in the value chain.

Second Call for applications was opened in the period July 7th, 2014 - August 15th, 2014.

The evaluation process of applications received during the Second Call for proposals include the following milestones:

- In total nine project proposals were received, three from “Drina-Sava” and six from “Drina-Tara” cross-border regions;
- Project Evaluation and preliminary selection procedure of applications (Analysis 1, 2 and 3) performed in the period August 20th – September 30th, 2014;
- On spot ex-ante control of the potential grant beneficiaries performed in the period September 15th - September 26th, 2014;
- Seven project proposals approved for financing;

Stakeholder activities have been ongoing, with organization of one Stakeholder Group meeting in each of the four cross-border areas in the reporting period.

Project Steering Group meeting has been organized in October 2014, including a working group session on Area Based Development during the Agriculture Policy Forum 2014.

People-to-people actions were implemented as a toll for strengthening networking, cooperation, promotion of the regions and their cultural, traditional, natural heritage and economic potential.

OUTPUTS (JULY – DECEMBER 2014)

- Grant contracts are signed with 20 beneficiaries with a total value of up to 114.148,00 EUR. Implementation of the second group of projects, as per the contracts is in the period October 2014 – March 2015;
- The total amount for financing of small grants within the action (First and Second Call for proposals) is estimated on up to 147.128,00 EUR.

- Agriculture Policy Forum 2014 Agenda as result of Agriculture Policy Forum 2014 including section on ABDA;
- Organization of twenty six people to people actions in the reporting period with participation of more than 7.000 international participants and more than 60.000 visitors were supported.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

- Finalization of the implementation of the grant projects;
- Continuation of implementation of people-to-people actions;
- Finalization of the preparatory process for pillar assessment;
- Preparation of fund-raising strategy for ABDA;
- Organization of capacity building activities for grant beneficiaries and stakeholders.

8.8 VISIBILITY AND COMMUNICATION

Programme reference :	Multi-beneficiary Programme, IPA 2012/022-966
Project title:	Improving the visibility and communication strategy of the IPA Multi-beneficiary projects
EU contribution:	EUR 50,000 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans and Turkey
Type of contract:	Specific Contract under Framework Contract with Danish Management A/S
Contract reference:	CN 2013/325-880
Duration of activities:	02/12/2013 – 18/07/2014
Contact:	Agnieszka.IWANOWSKA-BIEL@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The global objective is to increase the visibility of the IPA MB Programme in the framework of overall IPA visibility, specifically of the communication campaigns ran by the Information, Communication unit of DG Enlargement for the visibility of EU pre-accession funds.

It will include support and advice to ELARG D.3 staff on visibility policy and events, production of success stories, identification of synergies with the national and within the regional programmes and projects.

ACTIVITIES (JULY - DECEMBER 2014)

Finalisation of the project with a focus on developing and encouraging links with the national IPA projects and between different IPA MB projects in view of harmonised visibility.

OUTPUTS (JULY - DECEMBER 2014)

Final report and all the outputs delivered.

Increased visibility of multi-beneficiary projects – more success stories published on DG Enlargement website and news items prepared and published on Directorate's Intranet.

Awareness of the communication/visibility needs and the readiness to share the results of the implemented projects raised among the project managers of the Regional Cooperation and Programmes Unit of DG Enlargement.

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary Programme under IPA Transition Assistance and Institution Building Component for the year 2013, IPA 2013/024-091
Project title:	Enhancing the regional dimension of the pre-accession assistance by the improved visibility of IPA Multi-country projects
EU contribution:	EUR 357,000 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans and Turkey
Type of contract:	Specific Contract under Framework Contract with JCP Srl
Contract reference:	CN 2014/350-489
Duration of activities:	01/12/2013 – 20/11/2016
Contact:	Agnieszka.IWANOWSKA-BIEL@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The global objective is to increase the visibility of the IPA MB Programme in the framework of overall IPA visibility, specifically of the communication campaigns ran by the Information and Communication unit of DG Enlargement for the visibility of EU pre-accession funds.

It will in particular focus on production of success stories, identification of synergies between programmes and projects, drafting communication guidelines and providing training seminars on its application, providing support and advice to staff on communication policy and events.

ACTIVITIES (JULY - DECEMBER 2014)

Kick of meeting.

OUTPUTS (JULY - DECEMBER 2014)

Revision of the methodology, preparation of the inception report.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

Delivery of the inception report.

Regular missions to Brussels aimed at elaboration of stories, drafting communication guidelines and preparation of training seminars.

8.9 SUPPORT TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SEEMIC FORUM

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary Programme, IPA 2012/022-966
Project title:	Support to the development of the SEEMIC forum
EU contribution:	EUR 0.1 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	Grant Contract with RCC
Contract reference:	CN 2012/299-621
Duration of activities:	18/12/2012 – 17/12/2014
Links:	http://www.rcc.int/
Contact:	Agnieszka.IWANOWSKA-BIEL@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

Strengthen the exchange of high quality intelligence through SEEMIC for fostering regional cooperation among the military intelligence (MI) members of the RCC's SEEMIC Forum, thus contributing to the overall progress of the accession process;

Support the implementation of the RCC Strategy and Work programme in security cooperation related to the development of the SEEMIC. This will have a broader impact on confidence building, security, rule of law, and overall economic and social development of the SEE countries.

ACTIVITIES (JULY – DECEMBER 2014)

Consultations with MI from SEE Countries, NATO and EU.

Organisation of the 6th SEEMIC conference in Skopje (23rd Sept).

Implementation of the secure communication line in SEE MI's.

OUTPUTS (JULY – DECEMBER 2014)

New, higher level of synergy in the cooperation mechanism among MI from SEE, direct and even deeper involvement of EU Military Staff Intelligence Division / European External Action Service and the NATO IMS Intelligence Division and USA EUCOM Intelligence. Albania joint SEEMIC. Operational links among different Regional Initiates were built.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

Delivery of the final report

8.10 IT INTERCONNECTIVITY

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary Programme under IPA Transition Assistance and Institution Building Component for the year 2013 (IPA 2013/24-091)
Project title:	Provision of Technical Assistance on IT Interconnectivity Issues to candidates and potential candidates (extension)
EU contribution:	EUR 0.5 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	service contract to Lambard Management Consultants Ltd
Contract reference:	CN 2014/338-933
Duration of activities :	21/02/2014 – 20/08/2015
Contact :	Petra Schlüter, Petra.SCHLUETER@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The project provides specialised IT and management assistance to the customs and taxation administrations, in the framework of IT interconnectivity and interoperability. Under the supervision of Directorate-General for Taxation and Customs Union of the European Commission, the contractor provides coaching and training, as well as monitoring of the progress related to interconnectivity and interoperability on their road towards EU accession

ACTIVITIES (JULY – DECEMBER 2014)

The Consultants have completed two monitoring missions and prepared one other. Five working sessions/workshops have been completed as well. Three strategic documents from

two administrations have been reviewed and two impact analyses have been prepared for the attention of the EU Delegation in Serbia at its request. The Consultant continued to draft the new IIS strategy of DG TAXUD, to be applied in the future by all candidate countries.

OUTPUTS (JULY – DECEMBER 2014)

As an outcome of the workshop, the Tax administration in Albania requested a broader support in its implementation of the IIS strategy. The Customs administration in Montenegro requested support for the introduction of TEMPO methodology. In Serbia Customs administration following a workshop, the beneficiary requested further assistance in drafting and implementing the road-map towards EU accession. The first step of this assistance has been realised by preparing a strategic approach for the deputy DG, who accepted the proposal.

In Kosovo, Tax and Customs administrations requested jointly the organisation of assistance in strategic support, support for the implementation of a management methodology (TEMPO), and of an IT methodology (ITIL). The first step of this assistance has been realised by preparing a workshop plan, which has been endorsed by beneficiaries. All these projects have been discussed with and approved by DG TAXUD

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

During the period January – June 2015, 3 monitoring missions will be organised. A Regional seminar will be organised in Q1-Q2/2015 as well, on subjects linked to IIS. The IIS new strategy will be completed and submitted for consultation within DG TAXUD. At least six workshops will be organised on the subjects reported in the previous clause.

8.11 ATA AND TAC

Programme reference:	Administrative and Technical Assistance Facility (ATA), IPA 2014/037-391
EU contribution:	EUR 3.822 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans and Turkey: DG Enlargement and EU Delegations in the Western Balkans and Turkey
Programme reference:	Travel, Accomodation and Conference Facility (TAC), IPA 2014
EU contribution:	EUR 0.18 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans and Turkey
Beneficiary Institutions:	European Commission services
Duration of activities :	1 year
Contact :	Nadejda Mecheva, Nadejda.mecheva@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The ATA provides short-term technical assistance and studies to support the preparation and implementation of activities such as programming, monitoring, visibility, assessment, tender evaluations and general project supervision.

The Travel, Accommodation and Conference (TAC) Facility is used to finance the logistical and venue costs of conferences in connection with enlargement and the pre-accession strategy organised by the Commission both in the EU and in beneficiary countries.

TAC funds cover the travel and accommodation costs of beneficiary participants at these conferences as well as the relevant costs for organisation of the meetings apart from interpreting services.

DG NEAR ORGANISATION CHART - APRIL 2015

For an overview of who does what in DG NEAR please view this link:

http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/who_does_what/20150501-organigramme-near.pdf

For an overview on multi-country financial assistance:

http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/instruments/multi-beneficiary-programme/index_en.htm

LIST OF ACRONYMS

AEI	Agency for European Integration
ATA	Administrative and Technical Assistance Facility
BAS	Business Advisory Services
BIRN	Balkan Investigative Reporting Network
BKA	Bundeskriminalamt/Federal Criminal Police Office Germany
CAB	Conformity Assessment Bodies
CAN	Capacity Needs Assessment
CBC	Cross-Border Cooperation
CBIB	Cross-border Institution Building
CC	Climate Change
CCW	Climate Change Window
CEB	Council of Europe Development Bank
CEECIS	Central and Eastern Europe and Commonwealth of Independent states
CEFTA	Central European Free Trade Agreement
CEN	Comité Européen de Normalisation
CFR	Country Feasibility Report
CHP	Country Housing Projects
CHU	Central Harmonisation Unit
CIRCA	Communication & Information Resource Centre Administrator
CN	Contract
CO	Coordination Office
CoE	Council of Europe
CoP	Community of Practice
CSF	Civil Society Facility
CSF	Classical Swine Fever
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CSP	Country strategy paper
CSR	Country Strategy Report
CVO	Chief Veterinary Officers

DG	Directorate General
DRR	Disaster risk reduction
EACEA	Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency
EAMLA	European Accreditation multilateral agreement
EBRD	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
EBU	European Broadcasting Union
EC	European Commission
ECAS	European Citizen Action Service
ECENA	Environmental Compliance and Enforcement Network for Accession
ECS	Energy Community Secretariat
ECT(S)	European credit transfer (System)
EDIF	Enterprise Development and Innovation Facility
EE(FF)	Energy Efficiency Finance Facility
EEA	European Economic Area
EESC	European Economic and Social Committee
EETF	Energy Efficiency Task Force
EFSE	European Fund for Southeast Europe
EGP	Enterprise Growth Programme
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EIB	European Investment Bank
EIDHR	European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights
EIF	European Investment Fund
EJN	European Judicial Network
ELARG	Directorate General Enlargement
EMMA	European Multi-services Meteorological Awareness
ENEF	Enterprise Expansion Fund
ENER	Energy
ENIF	Enterprise Innovation Fund
ENIF	Enterprise Innovation Fund
ETF	European training Foundation
EU	European Union
EUBEC	EU Platform for Blending in External Cooperation

EUD	European Union Delegation
EUI	European University Institute
EUMETNET	European National Meteorological network
EURAMET	European Association of National Metrology Institutes
FPA	Framework Partnership Agreement
GB	Governing board
GF	Guarantee Facility
GGF	Green for Growth Fund
GHG	Green House Gases
GIS	Geo Information System
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HEREs	Higher Education Reform Experts
HFA	Hyogo Framework for Action
HLC	Humanitarian Law Centre
HOT	Hands-on training
HRM	Human resource Management
IACS	Integrated Administration and Control System
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
IBM	Integrated Border Management
IC	Investment Committee
ICJ	International Court of Justice
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
ICTY	International Criminal Tribunal of the former Yugoslavia
IFC	International Finance Cooperation
IFI	International Financial Institution
IFICO	International Financial Institution Coordination Office
ILECU	International Law Enforcement Coordination Units
IMO	International Maritime Organisation
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
IPA	Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance
IPF	Infrastructure Projects Facility
ISCED	International standard classification of education
IT	Information technology

ITC-ILO	International Training Centre of the International Labour Organization
JCM	Joint committee meetings
JIT	Joint Investigation Teams
KfW	Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau – banking group
KLA	Kosovo Liberation Army
LLEL	Life Long Entrepreneurial Learning
LLL	Life Long Learning
LPIS	Land Parcel Identification System
LSEE	Research unit established within the London School of Economics and Political Science's European Institute
MB	Multi-beneficiary
MCSP	Multi-country strategy paper
MDAS	Market development activities
MFF	Multi-annual financial framework
MIDWEB	Migration for Development in the Western Balkans
MIPD	Multi-Annual Indicative Planning Document
MMF	Multilateral monitoring framework
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MSC	Migrant Service Centres
MSME	Micro and small enterprise
MWh	Megawatt hours
NATURA EU	Nature & biodiversity policy
NCTS	National computerized transit system
NEEAP	National Energy Efficiency Action Plan
NICO	Northern Ireland Cooperation Overseas
NIPAC	National IPA Coordinator
NSI	National Statistics Institute
NTB	Non-Tariff Barriers
NTOs	National Tempus Offices
ODIHR	Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

OTP	Office of the Prosecutor
P2P	People to People
PADOR	Potential Applicant Data Online Registration
PAG	Platform Advisory Group
PAR	Public Administration Reform
PB	Partner bank
PC	Partner country
PCA	Post clearance audit
PEFA	Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability
PEM	Pan-Euro-Mediterranean
PEMPAL	Public Expenditure Management Peer Assisted Learning
PFG	Project Financiers Group
PFI	Participating Financial Institution
PFM	Public Financial Management
PGSC	Policy Group for Statistical Cooperation
PIFC	Public Internal Financial Control
PIU	Project Implementation Unit
PMU	Project Management Unit
PoW	Programme of Work
PP	Public Procurement
PPA	Public Procurement Authority
PPF	Project Preparation Facility
PPP	Public-private partnership
PSSF	Private Sector Support Facility
PV	Photovoltaic
QA	Qualitative Assurance
R&D	Research and Development
RCC	Regional Cooperation Council
RCI	Regional Competitiveness Initiative
RE	Renewable energy
RECOM	Regional Committee for Truth and Reconciliation
REEP	Regional Energy Efficiency Programme
REG	Regional

RENA	Regional Environmental Network for Accession
ReSPA	Regional school of public administration
RHP	Regional Housing Programme
RIPA	Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act
SAA	Stabilisation and Association Agreement
SAI	Supreme Audit Institution
SBA	Small Business Act
SBS	Small Business Support Programme
SC	Steering Committee
SEE	South East Europe
SEECCEL	South East European Centre for Entrepreneurial Learning
SEED	Systematic Electronic Exchange of Data
SEEIC	Southeast Europe Investment Committee
SEETO	South East Europe Transport Observatory
SEI	Strengthening European Integration
SELEC	Southeast European Law Enforcement Centre
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SIGMA	Support for Improvement in Governance and Management
SME	Small and medium-sized enterprise
SMECSF SME	Competitiveness Support Window
SPS	Sanitary and phyto-sanitary issues
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats
SWP	Strategic work programme
TA	Technical Assistance
TAC	Travel, accommodation and conference facility
TACSO	Technical Assistance to Civil Society Organisations
TAXUD	Directorate General Taxation and Customs Union
TBC	To be confirmed
TBT	Technical Barriers to Trade
T-CY	Cybercrime Convention Committee
TFCS	Task Force for Culture and Society
TGNA	Turkish Grand National Assembly
TNA	Training needs assessment

TOR	Terms of Reference
ToT	Training of trainers
TVR	Temporary and Virtual Return
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNISDR	United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction
UNMIK	United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
UNPROFOR	United Nations Protection Force
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
USKOK	Office for the Prevention of Corruption and Organized Crime
VAC	Violence against Children
VAT	Value Added Tax
VIND	Vinca Institute Nuclear Decommissioning
WB	Western Balkan
WBG	World Bank Group
WBIF	Western Balkans Investment Framework
WeBSEDF	Western Balkans Sustainable Energy Direct Financing Facility
WeBSEFF	Western Balkans Sustainable Energy Financing Facility
WELMEC	European cooperation in the field of legal metrology
WG	Working group
WINPRO	Witness Protection in the Fight against Serious Crime and Terrorism
WMO	World Meteorological Organization
