



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

### **MULTI-COUNTRY**

EU support to improving vocational education and training (VET) mobility

#### **Action summary**

The area of education and training is crucial to support the required economic development in the IPA II beneficiaries. The EU has developed under its Erasmus+ programme effective approaches to vocational education and training (VET) as a means to boost competitiveness and growth. This action has the objective to continue to contribute to the improvement and modernisation of VET systems in the relevant IPA II beneficiaries, through reinforcing the links between VET and the labour market.

<b>Action Identification</b>			
<b>Action Programme Title</b>	IPA II Multi-country Action Programme 2019		
<b>Action Title</b>	EU support to improving vocational education and training (VET) mobility		
<b>Action ID</b>	IPA 2019/NEAR>EAC.08/MC/VET		
<b>Sector Information</b>			
<b>IPA II Sector</b>	9. Regional and territorial cooperation		
<b>DAC Sector</b>	11330 – vocational training		
<b>Budget</b>			
<b>Total cost</b>	EUR 4 million		
<b>EU contribution</b>	EUR 4 million		
<b>Budget line(s)</b>	22.020401- Multi-country programmes, regional integration and territorial cooperation		
<b>Management and Implementation</b>			
<b>Management mode</b>	Direct management		
<i>Direct management:</i> <b>European Commission</b>	Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture, Unit C3 (co-delegated by Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations)		
<b>Implementation responsibilities</b>	Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture, Unit C3		
<b>Location</b>			
<b>Zone benefiting from the action</b>	Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo*, Montenegro		
<b>Specific implementation area(s)</b>	N/A		
<b>Timeline</b>			
<b>Final date for contracting including the conclusion of delegation agreements</b>	At the latest by 31 December 2020		
<b>Indicative operational implementation period</b>	72 months from the adoption of the Financing Decision		
<b>Policy objectives / Markers (DAC form)</b>			
<b>General policy objective</b>	<b>Not targeted</b>	<b>Significant objective</b>	<b>Main objective</b>
Participation development/good governance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X
Aid to environment	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gender equality (including Women In Development)	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

Trade Development	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reproductive, Maternal, New born and child health	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>RIO Convention markers</b>	<b>Not targeted</b>	<b>Significant objective</b>	<b>Main objective</b>
Biological diversity	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Combat desertification	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Climate change mitigation	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Climate change adaptation	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

# 1. RATIONALE

## PROBLEM AND STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

The Western Balkans faces important challenges in progressing on the economic criteria of accession. As regards competitiveness and growth, significant challenges remain, in particular as regards job creation and youth employment which are key for tackling brain drain. Strengthening the economy and providing further opportunities especially for young people are highlighted as priorities for the region in the February 2018 Commission Communication on “*A credible enlargement perspective for and enhanced EU engagement with the Western Balkans*” (“Western Balkans Strategy”)<sup>1</sup> and the Sofia Declaration<sup>2</sup>.

An important aspect of unemployment is the quality and relevance of education and the improvement of the skills base to meet labour market needs. There is empirical evidence correlating the level of education and an overall economic state; improving education will increase GDP while maintaining poor levels of education will have an impact on the overall development perspective.

Labour force participation also has a gender dimension. In the Western Balkans, a gender gap persists in employment, linked also to the lack of adequate educational attainment.

The Economic Reform Programmes recognise the importance of vocational education and training (VET) in underpinning industry and propelling economic growth. Skills acquisition must be adopted and recognised in all types of training, be it formal, informal or non-formal. VET must be designed as a coherent system whose purpose is to meet the demand of socio-economic development in terms of quality-skilled human resources.

The Western Balkans have VET’s responsiveness to the economy high on their reform agenda in a context of sluggish employment and high youth unemployment<sup>3</sup>. Currently, in the Western Balkans the relevance of VET to employment is limited, training is costly and investments by governments challenging. Though enrolment levels have increased, the access of girls to VET also remains challenging. For example, only the 20.8% of VET learners in Albania are girls and 39.9% in Kosovo. Vocational colleges mostly offer technical courses, i.e. courses that are preferred by men. Women often hesitate to take technical courses because the courses themselves and the environment in which they are offered are not really geared to the needs of women. In an effort to promote the access of women to vocational education, it is important to support the development of training courses that meet the career choices of women and equally important to motivate and support women to be trained in areas that are considered initially for men. Breaking stereotypes is essential in the training programmes and the development of courses, in order to create a gender sensitive environment.

To strengthen VET systems, collaboration with key stakeholders including productive sectors, social partners, training institutions and professional associations is crucial. The Ministers in charge of VET in the IPA II beneficiaries together with the EU Member States and European Economic Area have committed themselves to implement the 2015 Riga Conclusions<sup>4</sup> to raise the overall quality and status of VET in order to meet the Education and Training 2020 strategic objectives. The European Training Foundation has been entrusted to accompany the IPA II beneficiaries in this process.

The IPA II beneficiaries have also joined the European Alliance for Apprenticeship and the Western Balkans are part of the European Qualifications Framework Advisory Group. IPA II beneficiaries are progressing with the implementation of Qualification Frameworks that also supports mobility.

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<sup>1</sup> COM (2018) 65, 6.2.2018.

<sup>2</sup> Sofia Declaration, 17.05.2018.

<sup>3</sup> Torino Process 2016 Regional Report: South Eastern Europe and Turkey: European Training Foundation.

<sup>4</sup> Riga conclusions 2015 on a new set of medium-term deliverables in the field of vet for the period 2015-2020, as a result of the review of short-term deliverables defined in the 2010 Bruges communiqué.

This action seeks to implement a specific avenue of cooperation on VET with EU Member States by putting in place a VET mobility scheme. The experience from the EU with VET mobility for learners and staff conducted under the European Union's programme for education, training, youth and sport, Erasmus+, shows that exchanges are an effective way to improve competences and skills and to foster the development of a common European identity. While North Macedonia, Serbia and Turkey as Programme Countries of the Erasmus+<sup>5</sup> already participate in the VET mobility scheme provided by the EU's Erasmus+ Programme, other IPA II beneficiaries have yet not been able to take part in these exchanges. With the launch of this action, VET apprentices, students, trainers, and staff from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo and Montenegro will be able to engage in VET exchanges with EU Member States.

The creation of a pool of VET mobility scheme participants will be a powerful resource in a wider process of reforming VET systems to deliver the skills and jobs necessary for a strong economy. It will act in complementary to the VET facility, which will provide high-level expertise to relevant stakeholders to support transition processes towards more demand-driven VET systems adapted to the need and opportunities of the labour market and which will pilot approaches to increase access to VET of women and disadvantaged groups.

The proposed action should also be seen as a preparatory measure to introduce VET mobility to relevant IPA II beneficiaries who currently cannot access this work stream of Erasmus+. This will however be possible under the EU's future Erasmus Programme (2021-2027). Overall, this action will contribute to prepare the Western Balkan Erasmus+ Partner to become Erasmus+ Programme Countries.

## **OUTLINE OF IPA II ASSISTANCE**

The overall objective of the proposed action is to contribute to modernising the VET systems in the relevant IPA II beneficiaries. This will be achieved through the implementation of an Erasmus-like VET mobility scheme between four beneficiaries and the EU Member States which will reinforce capacities of VET providers and participants. Mobility activities will focus on learners and staff, including managers and trainers of VET institutions incoming to the EU, as well as staff, including managers and trainers of VET institutions, outgoing from the EU.

These efforts will help the relevant IPA II beneficiaries to converge with the EU standards in three particular areas of concern for the region: (1) the training of VET teachers with key competences and transversal skills, (2) the modernisation of VET curricula for learning outcomes, and finally (3) the reinforced links with the labour market that will ultimately improve the employability of VET learners.

The specific objective of the proposed VET mobility scheme is to promote skills acquisition and capacity building through VET training focused on demands of the labour market by implementing the VET mobility scheme.

The main expected results of the action are:

- Increased VET mobility. The action aims to organise at least 800 mobilities in total over the course of three academic years. The mobility is envisaged to last from 2 weeks to 3 months for VET learners, while mobility of staff, including managers and trainers of VET institutions, will range from 2 to 60 days.
- Enhanced VET curricula and placement offers of VET providers. By linking up VET providers in the EU with providers in the relevant IPA II beneficiaries, the curricula and placement offers for VET learners will be broadened and improved also from the perspective of breaking gender role stereotypes VET mobility of staff, including managers and trainers of VET institutions, will aim to build up their capacities to review and modernize curricula.
- Strengthened skills and competences of participants in VET mobility scheme. The mobility scheme exposes its participants to other VET practices, thereby supporting their professional and personal

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<sup>5</sup> Erasmus+ Programme Countries: 28 EU Member States, Turkey, North Macedonia, Norway, Iceland Liechtenstein and Serbia.

development. For VET staff, mobility will support more effective teaching methods in their institutes of origin (contents and pedagogical methods).

- Increased international opening of VET providers.

## **RELEVANCE WITH THE IPA II MULTI-COUNTRY STRATEGY PAPER AND OTHER KEY REFERENCES**

Improvement of the quality of education in the Western Balkans is a high priority. As such, important strategic documents refer to education, either directly or indirectly. The revised Multi-country Indicative Strategy Paper 2014-2020<sup>6</sup> stresses that education has an impact on various facets of social and economic development and is a key driver of sustainable development.

One of the main pillars in the South East Europe (SEE) 2020 strategy is Smart Growth and quality education is at its foundation. Furthermore, the flagships of Skills and Mobility and Competitiveness under the SEE 2020 strategy are directly linked to improving the quality and relevance of education in the region as stated in the SEE 2020 Programming Document 2016-2018. The Flagship "Skills and Mobility" is developed on a premise that the development of education and the improvement of labour force skills are key factors that will underpin future economic recovery, growth of SEE economies and the restructuring towards knowledge driven economies. The Flagship for Competitiveness recognises the need to have appropriate policies in place to support human capital development through education and employment and that productivity growth is strongly related to the capacity to innovate. The development of this capacity starts with education.

Education, training, and skills development have also a clear importance within the EU Enlargement strategy which recognises better education and skills as the backbone for meeting the political and economic criteria of accession.

In September 2017 and then again in June 2018, the Ministers of Education of the Western Balkans meeting under the Western Balkans Platform on Education and Training welcomed VET mobility and the importance of quality education overall. Finally, bilateral IPA VET reform programmes in the Western Balkans together with the mutual benefit of bilateral and regional initiatives for mainstreaming reforms, have enhanced willingness of relevant IPA II beneficiaries to cooperate in the VET sector.

VET mobility has recently experienced a regained momentum. The Western Balkan Strategy provides Flagship Initiatives to significantly enhance EU engagement to better support the Western Balkans on their European path. The introduction of a VET mobility scheme is one of the actions foreseen under the Flagship Initiative "Supporting socio-economic development". Furthermore, the Sofia Priority Agenda of 17 May 2018 calls for enhanced support to education, in particular mobility in vocational education and training.

## **LESSONS LEARNED AND LINK TO PREVIOUS FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

Links to similar financial assistance can be made to the reimbursement of entry tickets for the participation of the Western Balkans in EU programmes.

This action will build up on the pilot scheme under the Multi-country programme 2018, which will kick off in February 2019. It also draws heavily upon the experiences gained in the EU Erasmus+ Programme, which offers training and learning opportunities for VET learners and staff, and sector skills alliances in the Erasmus+ Programme Countries, including North Macedonia, Serbia and Turkey. European VET systems have an excellent reputation abroad due to the integrated links between education and the labour market and the relatively low level of youth unemployment, particularly among VET graduates. The proposed action will use the existing good practice set up for VET learners and staff under Erasmus+.

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<sup>6</sup> C(2018) 3442, 31.05.2018.

## 2. INTERVENTION LOGIC

### LOGICAL FRAMEWORK MATRIX

OVERALL OBJECTIVE	OBJECTIVELY VERIFIABLE INDICATORS (*)	SOURCES OF VERIFICATION	
To contribute to modernise the VET system, in particular through strengthening the relevance of VET to the labour market in the relevant IPA II beneficiaries	Number of VET learners that have found a job	<b>VET specific</b> level of recognition and interest in VET qualifications and institutions by employers and (future) students	
SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE	OBJECTIVELY VERIFIABLE INDICATORS (*)	SOURCES OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTIONS
To promote skills acquisition and capacity building through VET training focused on labour market needs by means of a VET mobility scheme in the relevant IPA II beneficiaries	Number of exchange programmes between the relevant IPA II beneficiaries and European VET providers implemented Number of individuals (sex disaggregated) in VET mobility	Feedback from apprentices, trainers, and employers who benefitted from the VET mobility scheme, e.g. questionnaires Progress and final report	Lack of institutional resistance / Appropriate support a various levels to participation in the VET mobility scheme Proper ownership of the processes Balanced interest – across EU and relevant IPA II beneficiaries - in participating in the VET mobility scheme
RESULTS	OBJECTIVELY VERIFIABLE INDICATORS (*)	SOURCES OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTIONS
Increased VET mobility Enhanced VET curriculum and placement offer of VET providers Strengthened skills and competences of participants in VET mobility scheme Increased international opening of VET providers	Number of mobilities Number of modernised VET curricula developed % of the students who are graduating with increased grades compared to those who have not taken part in mobility. % of the staff proposing new contents and methods as a result of participation. Number of international partners that a given VET institution has.	Documents on Regional policy dialogue Evidence of improvements in the skills, competences and knowledge of apprentices, students, trainers, and staff who participated in the VET mobility scheme, e.g. questionnaires to participants to the VET mobility scheme Progress and final report	Interest of capable VET providers in both regions in taking part in the scheme Manageable administrative burden including VISA procedures Support from EU Delegations, National Erasmus+ Offices and local stakeholders in communicating on major the VET mobility scheme

**DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES** The mobility scheme set up under this action will have the following key characteristics:

- At the level of VET learners, the VET mobility scheme will aim to support learners in the acquisition of knowledge, skills and competences in order to improve their employability, and their personal development. Mobility of VET learners will put in practice a programme, which will build up the sectorial knowledge and the entrepreneurial skills of students. It will form part of a "contract" that students will have with their teachers, with agreed upon follow-up training and support upon returning to home institutions.
- At the level of staff, including managers and trainers of VET institutions, the VET mobility scheme will aim to improve the quality of VET teaching and training across the relevant IPA II beneficiaries. VET staff from the EU can participate in the programme to strengthen partner capacities. VET mobility of staff will build up their capacities to review and modernise curricula and teaching methods in their institutes of origin (contents and pedagogical methods). Mobility is also foreseen for managers, with a view to opening them up to different practices.
- At the level of VET providers, including managers, the VET mobility scheme will aim to improve the training offer (curriculum and placement experience) in VET institutes. It will increase the capacities and international opening of VET providers in the relevant IPA II beneficiaries; reinforce synergies and transitions between formal and informal VET, employment and entrepreneurship and ensure better recognition of competences gained through learning periods abroad.
- At the level of relevant IPA II beneficiaries, the action will support higher quality and more relevant education and prepare Western Balkans Partners to become the Erasmus+ Programme Countries.

In addition, the action will raise participants' awareness and understanding of other cultures, offering them the opportunity to build networks of international contacts.

The mobility and capacity building will be organised by a consortium of VET providers from both regions: EU Member States on the one hand and the relevant IPA II beneficiaries in the Western Balkans on the other. The consortia of VET providers which will be selected will be in charge of implementing the mobility arrangements. The following main indicative activities will be implemented:

- Identification of target groups in consultation with stakeholders.
- Development of individual programmes and action plans for schools and teaching staff respectively.
- Implementation of mobility of learners in the EU, including selection of participants, organisation of logistics and support measures. The mobility will take place either in an educational organisation or in an enterprise and the specific sector within VET will be selected by the consortia of VET providers who will implement the project. The consortia will include this information in the application submitted to the Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture.
- Implementation of mobility of staff from the EU to the targeted IPA II beneficiaries and vice versa.
- Documenting and disseminating best practices at relevant IPA II beneficiary and regional level.
- Development of networks and partnerships for exchanges.

Capacity building missions will also be undertaken by EU staff in the region. Former VET learners themselves can also act as "ambassadors" for improving and promoting the VET Mobility Scheme by, for example, joining the Western Balkans Alumni Association (WBAA) which is also open to former VET learners who benefited from a mobility period abroad.

## **RISKS**

Although there are potential risks to be monitored, and where appropriate, mitigated for the duration of the programme, there are no pre-conditions for implementation of the programme. The action will be a follow-up action to a current EUR 2 million pilot action under the IPA II Multi-country Programme 2018. The pilot



action will be assessed thoroughly to better define potential risks of the current action and to set out mitigating measures.

The following main risks have been identified at this stage:

- Limited implementation capacity of selected VET consortium of VET providers. This risk is mitigated through a rigorous selection process which emphasises the implementation track record of applicants.
- The age of VET learners (minors) require particular attention to be paid to the mobility arrangements. This risk is mitigated through drawing upon the experience gained under the VET Mobility scheme of the Erasmus + programme.
- The need to request specific VISA permissions in certain IPA II beneficiaries can be an obstacle for the smooth running of the scheme. This risk needs to be tackled by careful advance planning of future mobilities.
- The lack of applicants to the scheme. A major information campaign should be carried out by the EU Delegations, the National Erasmus+ Offices, and other local stakeholders in order to ensure optimal budget absorption. If learner mobilities are arranged at individual level, there is also a greater risk of smaller number of potential participants and greater hesitation. Group flows would be much easier to be organised and more attractive to participants since they imply more support and feeling of security.
- The language barrier of VET learners could be a potential additional risk, as they tend to show a slightly lower performance of foreign languages compared to those enrolled into Higher Education Institutions. The more traditional mentality of VET schools in general, with the lack of initiative, experience or confidence needed for internationalization might request further support mechanisms such as permanent contacts persons, language courses or free of charge insurances.

## **CONDITIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

There are no particular pre-conditions for implementation of the programme.

## **3. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS**

### **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The action will be co-delegated to the Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture for contracting and implementation.

A Steering Group comprised of relevant European Commission services and EU agencies will be set up to guide and oversee the action comprising colleagues from the Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations, the Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture, the Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) and the European Training Foundation (ETF).

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

The Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture will be responsible for the implementation of the action through a Call for proposals to select a consortium of VET providers from EU Member States with their counterparts in the relevant IPA II beneficiaries. All activities will be implemented by the consortium of VET providers, including the selection and management of the mobilities. The VET providers will offer mobilities for staff and students of VET institutions, either in an educational organisation or in an enterprise.

The indicative duration of the grant contracts will be 42 months.

## **4. PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT**

### **METHODOLOGY FOR MONITORING (AND EVALUATION)**

The European Commission may carry out a mid-term, a final or an ex-post evaluation for this action or its components via independent consultants, through a joint mission or via an implementing partner. In case a mid-term or final evaluation is not foreseen, the European Commission may, during implementation, decide to undertake such an evaluation for duly justified reasons either on its own decision or on the initiative of the partner. The evaluations will be carried out as prescribed by the Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations guidelines on linking planning/programming, monitoring and evaluation. In addition, the action might be subject to external monitoring in line with the European Commission rules and procedures.

The Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture, as well as the ETF and the concerned EU Delegations on the ground will contribute to the monitoring of the action.

## INDICATOR MEASUREMENT

This table is to present the indicators listed in the logframe – so to enable the measurement of progress, starting from a baseline value (pre-intervention) to achieving targets, and specifying which sources of information exist to score them

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Baseline (2019)</b>	<b>Target (2021)</b>	<b>Final Target (2026)</b>	<b>Source of information</b>
Individuals in VET mobility (including learners and staff) covering IPA II beneficiaries concerned	More than 200	More than 400	More than 900	VET mobility project annual monitoring report
Number of girls benefiting from the learner's mobility	More than 100	More than 200	More than 450	VET mobility project annual monitoring report
Number of modernised VET curricula developed	0	5	10	VET mobility project annual monitoring report
% of the students who are graduating with increased grades compared to those who have not taken part in mobility.	0	25%	50%	VET mobility project annual monitoring report School exam statistics Certification
% of the staff proposing new contents and methods as a result of participation.	0	25%	50%	VET mobility project annual monitoring report School programme contents
Number of international partners that a given VET institution has.	0	5	10	Directly reporting from VET schools

## **5. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES**

### **GENDER MAINSTREAMING**

This action will strive to promote gender equality, as well take measures to achieve equal opportunities for males and females in all aspects regarding the implementation of the action. Special attention in this regard will be given to VET learners and staff, since the gender gap is still very high in this type of formal education. The award criteria will mention gender sensitive aspects in order to balance the share of men and women taking advantage of this action.

### **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

Equal participation of women and men will be secured through appropriate information and publicity material, in the design of actions and accessibility to the opportunities they offer. An appropriate male/female balance will be sought on all the managing bodies and activities of the action.

### **MINORITIES AND VULNERABLE GROUPS**

Despite a growth of VET enrolment rates in most of the targeted IPA II beneficiaries, the lack of prestige and lower quality associated with this sector means few students opt voluntarily for VET as an alternative to general education. For many young people VET is a “second” option after they fail to enrol in general education or university in case of higher vocational schools students. Furthermore, once they join the vocational and technical streams, very few are able to change programme or continue their studies in higher education. This is especially needed for students coming from vulnerable groups where education, mobility and skills development has been recognised as crucial in combating hate crime, hate speech, intolerance and discrimination. Improving and modernising the VET systems in the Western Balkans will include the component of teaching inter-cultural values and tolerance.

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

This action helps to ensure an inclusive and transparent dialogue, consultation and communication with all relevant stakeholders in the respective sectors. Civil Society Organisations and enterprises are welcome to join the consortia as partners and active participate in the implementation and employability of the learner's mobilities by using their respective networks and capacities.

### **ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE (AND IF RELEVANT DISASTER RESILIENCE)**

Participation of students, staff, and learners will contribute to their knowledge of other fields of study according to international standards and comparisons. Therefore, the action has an indirect link to issues on environment and climate change, as its objective is to improve what is taught and how in order to improve educational provision also in these areas.

Climate action relevant budget allocation: EUR 0 million
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## **6. SUSTAINABILITY**

The goal is to include an international dimension of the VET mobility scheme within the new Erasmus Programme (post 2020). The legal basis proposed for the future Erasmus Programme (2021-2027) includes Erasmus-type mobility action for VET staff and learners between Erasmus+ Programme Countries and Partner Countries.

## **7. COMMUNICATION AND VISIBILITY**

Communication and visibility will be given high importance during the implementation of the action. The implementation of communication activities will be the joint responsibility of the beneficiaries, and shall be funded from the amounts allocated to the action.

All necessary measures will be taken to publicise the fact that the action has received funding from the EU in line with the EU communication and visibility requirements in force. All stakeholders and implementing partners shall ensure the visibility of EU financial assistance provided through IPA II throughout all phases of the programme cycle.

Visibility and communication actions shall demonstrate how the intervention contributes to the agreed programme objectives and the accession process, as well as the benefits of the action for the general public. Actions shall be aimed at strengthening general public awareness and support of interventions financed and the objectives pursued. The actions shall aim at highlighting to the relevant target audiences the added value and impact of the EU's interventions and will promote transparency and accountability on the use of funds.

Visibility and communication aspects shall be complementary to the activities implemented by the Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations and the EU Delegations in the field. The European Commission and the EU Delegations should be fully informed of the planning and implementation of the specific visibility and communication activities.

The Erasmus+ VET channels (Erasmus+ projects, EQAVET Network, National teams of ECVET experts, agencies etc.) together with the National Erasmus+ Offices in the relevant IPA II beneficiaries will be used to disseminate a call across the EU Member States and in the region inviting applications for the initiative.

Effectiveness of communication activities will be measured inter alia through public surveys, if relevant, in the relevant IPA II beneficiaries on awareness about the action and its objectives, as well as the fact that it is funded by the EU.