



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

### **MULTI-COUNTRY**

### **EU Integration Facility for the Western Balkans and Turkey**

#### **Action summary**

The objective of the EU Integration Facility is to contribute to progress and ensure continuity in the European path of the Western Balkans and Turkey, by supporting actions that address priority needs that were either not known or mature for programming.

The action contains a number of smaller interventions such as provision of technical assistance, preparatory or follow-up actions. It may also cover relevant studies, networking, visibility, evaluation activities, as well as training.

<b>Action Identification</b>			
<b>Action Programme Title</b>	IPA II Multi-country Action Programme 2019		
<b>Action Title</b>	EU Integration Facility for the Western Balkans and Turkey		
<b>Action ID</b>	IPA 2019/040-826.18/MC/EU Integration Facility		
<b>Sector Information</b>			
<b>IPA II Sector</b>	9. Regional and territorial cooperation		
<b>DAC Sector</b>	43010 – Multisector aid		
<b>Budget</b>			
<b>Total cost</b>	EUR 3.5 million		
<b>EU contribution</b>	EUR 3.5 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 Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations– Unit D.5 Regional Cooperation and Programmes		
<b>Implementation responsibilities</b>	Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations– Unit D.5 Regional Cooperation and Programmes		
<b>Location</b>			
<b>Zone benefiting from the action</b>	Western Balkans (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo*, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia) and Turkey		
<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 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"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Aid to environment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gender equality (including Women In Development)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Trade Development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reproductive, Maternal, New born and child health	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<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.

<b>RIO Convention markers</b>	<b>Not targeted</b>	<b>Significant objective</b>	<b>Main objective</b>
Biological diversity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Combat desertification	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Climate change mitigation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Climate change adaptation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## **1. RATIONALE**

### **PROBLEM AND STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS**

The IPA II beneficiaries face a number of common challenges, which are reflected in the EU enlargement strategy and annual enlargement package. The challenges in the area of democracy/public administration reform concern the general functioning of public administration, including independent institutions; professionalization of the civil service; quality and accessibility of public services; and sound financial management of public funds. In the European path of the Western Balkans and Turkey, the key challenge is public administration's capacity for inclusive and evidence-based policy and law-making in different Chapters. A further key challenge is empowerment of civil society for participatory policy-making and monitoring of government performance.

In the area of rule of law the challenge concern fighting organised crime and corruption, ensuring independent, impartial, efficient and accountable judicial systems, as well as safeguarding fundamental rights such as freedom of expression and rights of persons belonging to minorities<sup>1</sup> as well as vulnerable groups, notably Roma.

The economic crisis has underlined the need for all the IPA II beneficiaries to strengthen their economic governance and improving competitiveness in order to meet economic accession criteria. None of the Western Balkans enjoys the status of a functioning market economy, structural reforms need to be prioritised and competitiveness enhanced, in order to support fiscal consolidation, to tackle high external imbalances as well as high unemployment.

Regional cooperation remains a catalyst for the enlargement process. The IPA II beneficiaries face a number of common problems which they could more efficiently address through peer review and sharing of good practices.

Regional cooperation is a key enabling factor for comprehensive reforms and the return to sustainable economic growth. All IPA II beneficiaries, in their European path need to align their legislation to the *acquis* and to gradually adapt to the Union standards and practices. This task is facilitated by regional organisations or bodies set up by the IPA II beneficiaries in many sectors.

### **OUTLINE OF IPA II ASSISTANCE**

In line with the above, the action will enable the implementation of a small number of actions in order to meet specific and urgent needs in the region, as well as relevant support to networking, visibility or evaluation activities or unforeseen needs. In that sense, the activities and the tasks will aim to enhance technical and administrative capacity needed for *acquis* chapters through creation of an EU Integration Facility for the unspecified institution building needs (training, technical assistance, grants, studies, etc.) and support for the relevant EU networks. By promoting regional cooperation and exchange, good practices can be shared and enhanced in the region.

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

The support to be provided under this action will be granted in line with the areas identified as priorities in the revised Multi-country Indicative Strategy Paper 2014-2020<sup>2</sup>, and in support of the enlargement strategy

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<sup>1</sup> According to the Turkish legal system the word minorities encompasses only group of people defined and recognized as such on the basis of multilateral and bilateral instruments to which Turkey is a party.

<sup>2</sup> C(2018) 3442, 31.05.2018.

for the Western Balkans and Turkey, as well as in the Western Balkan Strategy of 6 February 2018 “*A credible enlargement perspective for and enhanced EU engagement with the Western Balkans*”.<sup>3</sup>

The IPA II support will be shaped to be consistent with other EU policies in the same area, in particular with the Europe 2020 strategy and the applicable EU macro-regional strategies, with the flagship initiatives of the EU to boost growth and jobs and with the climate policy objectives of the EU. Furthermore, the objectives agreed under the South East Europe 2020 Strategy represent important benchmarks for the reform efforts of the IPA II beneficiaries and the financial assistance under IPA II will be used to support meeting these targets.

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

An EU Integration Facility was included in the previous programmes under IPA. It helped to strengthen the link between the policy agenda and financial assistance by allowing a faster response to a limited number of unforeseen priority needs and to carry out pilot projects which were not yet ready for implementation. The preparatory study on parliamentary cooperation is one example of a successful use of the EU Integration Facility as it allowed the European Commission to gather more solid information before deciding on the way forward.

Another lesson learned from previous assistance is the difficulty to prove the impact of our interventions, as appears from several evaluations. This difficulty is a consequence of the practice of not conducting project/programme evaluations to identify findings also by means of appropriate quantitative and qualitative methodologies. In this respect, and in line with the evaluation policy and the Guidelines on linking planning/programming, monitoring and evaluation of the Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations, it is considered necessary to dedicate an appropriate budget during the programming stage for carrying out sector/project evaluations.

A further lesson is that there has to be a better link between EU assistance to public administration reform (PAR) and assistance to different sectors and/or accession negotiation Chapters. While PAR actions support coordinating institutions such as Ministries of Public Administration, Ministries of Finance, General Secretariats and Ministries of European Integration with preparation of new legislation, methodological guidance and quality control functions, they do not generally support line institutions with actual implementation of the new requirements. The EU assistance for different sectors will therefore need to ensure that PAR legislation and guidance are systematically respected during preparation of strategies and laws, creation of new agencies, supporting human resources development and training activities, setting up IT systems, etc. Especially, any new policies/strategies and legislation need to be prepared in an inclusive and evidence-based process (on the basis of administrative data, impact assessments for laws, inter-ministerial and public consultations) and any new institutions need to be created in a rational manner, respecting accountability requirements between parent and sub-ordinated institutions.

An EU Integration Facility is also programmed at bilateral level. Though the scope differs from the one planned at regional level, complementary is also seek in order to look for opportunities to have synergies among the programmes, also in terms of ways of implementation.

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<sup>3</sup> COM (2018) 65, 6.2.2018

## 2. INTERVENTION LOGIC

### LOGICAL FRAMEWORK MATRIX

OVERALL OBJECTIVE	OBJECTIVELY VERIFIABLE INDICATORS (*)	SOURCES OF VERIFICATION	
To contribute to progress in the European path of the Western Balkans and Turkey.	Progress made on political and economic criteria as well as in the respective areas as indicated in the annual enlargement package	Commission Annual Reports and Enlargement strategy	
SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE	OBJECTIVELY VERIFIABLE INDICATORS (*)	SOURCES OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTIONS
To support flexible, pilot actions addressing urgent and/or unforeseen that merit to be addressed rapidly in order to assure continuity in the European path and herewith related issues	Degree of timely implementation of Multi-country action programmes – number of contracts under implementation	Financial assistance implementation reports Progress Reports and Enlargement strategy	The continuing commitment of IPA II beneficiaries to an inclusive process of deepening regional cooperation.
RESULTS	OBJECTIVELY VERIFIABLE INDICATORS (*)	SOURCES OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTIONS
Specific and urgent needs in the region supported; Implementation of a number of preparatory and start-up actions ensured; Urgent/bridging support for important regional initiatives and organisations ensured; Monitoring and evaluation missions/studies carried out; Increased visibility of EU support. TA provided, studies carried out; Training provided; Visibility material produced; Follow up to actions completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Number of preparatory and start-up actions implemented;</li> <li>▪ Quality (nature and scope) of communication materials produced</li> <li>▪ Number of outputs, such as Terms of Reference, technical specifications, feasibility studies and other documents</li> <li>▪ Number of monitoring/evaluation missions carried out</li> </ul>	Implementation reports Studies Activity reports , progress reports, monitoring mission reports; agenda and preparation for workshops	Timely identification of the needs, which need to be addressed by this facility Political commitment from the IPA II beneficiaries , including technical, financial and adequate human resources allocated to the implementation of the activities Active participation of the relevant stakeholders from the IPA II beneficiaries

## **DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES**

The EU Integration Facility will enhance technical and administrative capacity for *acquis* chapters through institution building (training, technical assistance, grants, etc.) and support for the relevant EU networks. Under this Facility a small number of actions will be implemented in order to meet specific and urgent needs in the region.

The support can be provided in cases where an initial proposal is considered to be a priority for IPA II financial assistance, (justified in terms of short or medium term priorities; and relevant strategic documents), but where further efforts are needed to design and appraise mature actions, ready for implementation under the upcoming IPA II financial assistance action programme.

Activities could include:

- Provision of short term technical expert assistance, such as drafting the tender documents and/or terms of reference and technical specifications for the implementation of IPA II funded actions;
- Feasibility studies, assessments, and other preparatory and start-up actions;
- Visibility for multi-country activities;
- Provision of training to relevant authorities;
- Monitoring and if applicable evaluation of multi-country actions during or following the implementation;
- Support to regional networks by and, amongst others, organisation of regional meetings, workshops, study visits in strategically important areas;
- Support to translation of existing tools for the benefit of the IPA II beneficiaries;
- Support to the "technical explanations of the *acquis*" process of the relevant IPA II beneficiaries.

## **RISKS**

The lack of or reduced commitment of IPA II beneficiaries to an inclusive process of deepening regional cooperation, as well as insufficient timely identification of the needs to be addressed by this facility could jeopardise the implementation of the action.

The underlying assumption on which the success of the programme depends is also the continuous commitment of the administrations in the IPA II beneficiaries to the establishment of harmonised international or regional processes in the supported sectors.

## **CONDITIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

In order to ensure an effective and timely implementation of the action, it is necessary a continuous commitment and cooperation of decision-makers in IPA II beneficiaries to provide sufficient resources, to ensure adoption of the required legislation and to support full operation of the established networks, systems and institutional frameworks in the relevant areas of interventions.

### **3. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS**

#### **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The European Commission will be the contracting authority. This action will be implemented in direct management, with Unit D.5 being responsible for the contracts' implementation and monitoring.

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

Activities will be implemented through a number of service contracts in direct management. The global budgetary envelope for procurement amounts to EUR 3.5 million.

The indicative duration of the individual contracts will be up to 36 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.

IPA II monitoring process is to be organised and led by Unit D.5. The monitoring process is aimed to improve programming, implementation and sustainability as well as timely identification, remedying and alleviation of potential issues in the process of programming and implementation of the interventions.



**INDICATOR MEASUREMENT**

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Baseline (value + year)</b>	<b>Target 2020</b>	<b>Final Target (2021)</b>	<b>Source of information</b>
<b>EU Integration Facility</b>				
Number of preparatory and start-up actions implemented	0 (2019)	2-3	3-4	Implementation reports
Number of good quality communication materials produced	0 (2019)	1-2	2-3	Publications
Number of outputs, such as Terms of Reference, technical specifications, feasibility studies and other documents produced	0 (2019)	2-3	3-4	Studies
▪ Number of monitoring/evaluation missions carried out	0 (2019)	1-2	1-2	Evaluations

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

### **GENDER MAINSTREAMING**

This action will strive to promote gender equality as well to take measures to achieve equal opportunities for male and female in all aspects regarding the implementation of the action. Gender equality is not targeted as a significant objective; however when activities further defined, and when relevant, incentives will be incorporated particularly in the activities concerning capacity building.

### **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 men/women balance will be sought on all the managing bodies and activities of the action. All contractors shall be requested to provide monitoring data recording the participation of men and women in terms of expert inputs, as a proof of equal participation of men and women in the different phase. Enforcement of those principles is likewise ensured through specific administrative procedures applied in accordance with the legislation on anti-discrimination. In the implementation of activities under this action, the same principles shall apply, so that participation in the envisaged activities will be guaranteed on the basis of equal access regardless of sex, ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age, etc.

### **MINORITIES AND VULNERABLE GROUPS**

The action will positively promote equality of opportunities and combat discrimination. The EU Integration Facility provides for room to support actions that directly deal with minorities and vulnerable groups.

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

In complementarity with this facility, the Civil Society Facility helps to ensure an inclusive and transparent dialogue, consultation and communication with all relevant stakeholders in the respective sectors. This serves as a platform that enables exchange of information and contribution of CSOs in relation to planning development assistance, particularly programming and monitoring of the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA).

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

By their nature, the majority of activities envisaged under this action do not imply direct and major impact to environmental issues, but will however be implemented in a manner which is environmentally friendly.

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

The action will produce sustainable results in the short run since the entire beneficiary institutions/structures need to be already in place, and the action does not envisage establishment or financing of the new organisational units and their running costs. The integration of the key principles of public administration and the 'Better Regulation' approach into envisaged assistance will also contribute to sustainability of results. In particular, any support on *acquis* alignment will be done in an inclusive and evidence-based manner; any training, capacity-building and human resources development activities will be coordinated with the institution that is centrally responsible for human resources management and professional development of civil servants; and finally, any activity supporting the development of IT tools will ensure consistency with the interoperability standards in each beneficiary and, where these don't exist, they will promote consultations with the Ministries in charge of information society related matters.

## **7. COMMUNICATION AND VISIBILITY**

Communication and visibility will be given high importance during the implementation of the action. The implementation of the communication activities shall be 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 shall be fully informed of the planning and implementation of the specific visibility and communication activities.

When relevant for a specific intervention envisaged under the action, the communication and visibility plan will be based on an agreed communication narrative and master messages customised for the different target audiences (stakeholders, business community, civil society, general public, etc.).