



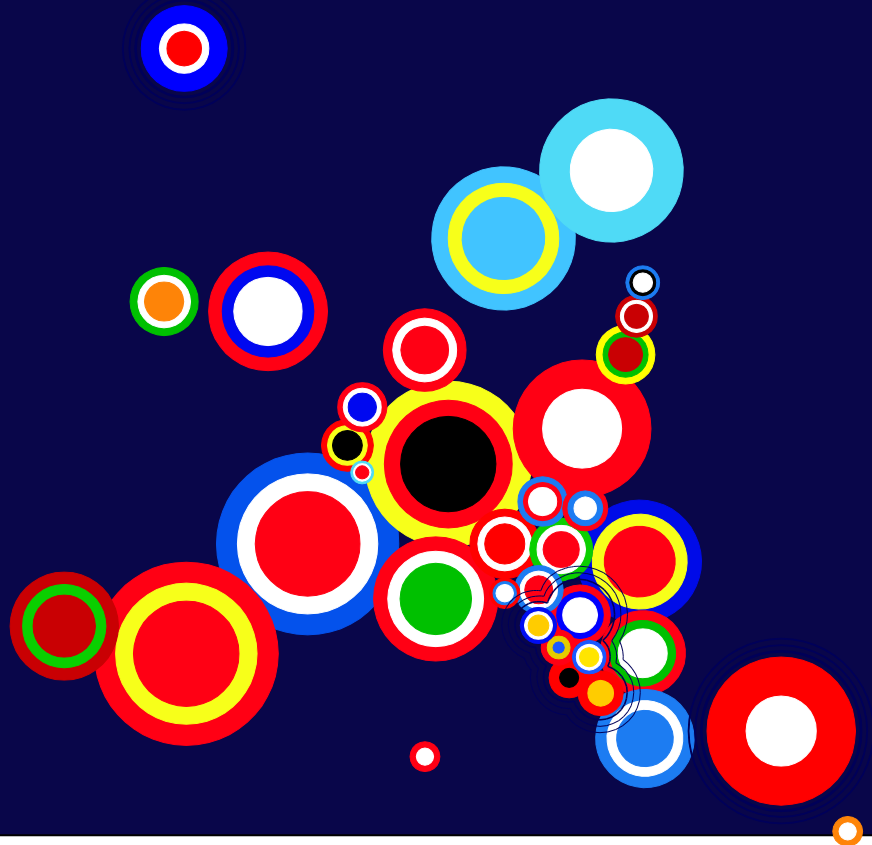
EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Directorate-General Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations DG NEAR

D – WESTERN BALKANS

D.5 – WESTERN BALKANS REGIONAL COOPERATION AND PROGRAMMES

MULTI-COUNTRY PROGRAMMES: ACTIVITY REPORT: JULY – DECEMBER 2015



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CONTACT

For any comments or suggestions on this Activity Report, notably on the length of the documents and details provided, please contact us by sending an e-mail to the following general inbox: NEAR-D5@ec.europa.eu.

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 DG NEAR unit D.5 – Western Balkans Regional Cooperation and Programmes.

LINK

http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/instruments/multi-beneficiary-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 2015, IPA 2014/031-603
Project title:	Support for Improvement in Governance and Management (SIGMA) in the Western Balkans and Turkey
EU contribution:	EUR 18 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans and Turkey
Type of contract:	Contribution agreement with OECD
Contract reference:	CN 2015/360-644
Duration of activities:	01/07/2015 – 30/06/2018
Links:	http://www.sigmaweb.org
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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) strategic framework of public administration reform, 2) policy development and co-ordination, 3) public service and human resource management, 4) accountability, 5) service delivery, 6) public financial management (PFM) including external audit and public procurement.

ACTIVITIES (JULY – DECEMBER 2015)

SIGMA provided analysis, advice and on-the-job assistance to strengthen the functioning of public administration in all the beneficiary countries. SIGMA has notably provided input on: a) the Code of Administrative Procedures and the training of internal auditors in Albania; b) the new draft laws amending the current civil service legislative framework in Bosnia and Herzegovina; c) the Law on Public Sector Salaries in Kosovo¹; d) improving sector policy

¹ 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.

planning in Montenegro; e) the draft Law on Administrative Procedures in Serbia; and f) the Public Private Partnerships and Concessions Strategy in Turkey.

SIGMA continued to assist the beneficiaries in improving a number of national strategies and action plans, including a) implementation and monitoring of the PAR Strategy and Action Plan in Albania; b) finalisation of the Public Administration Modernisation Strategy and the related Action Plan in Kosovo; c) preparation of the PAR Strategy 2016-2020 in Montenegro; and d) initial preparation of a new PAR strategy in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

SIGMA has also worked with the beneficiary administrations to prepare PFM reform programmes in Kosovo, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia.

In addition, SIGMA participated in and contributed to the PAR Special Groups in Albania and Kosovo, providing technical support to the policy discussions.

OUTPUTS (JULY – DECEMBER 2015)

- The updated SIGMA Public Procurement Training Manual was finalised and published in October.
- SIGMA Regional PAR Ministerial Conference took place in Paris in December.
- Detailed specifications for indicators (“indicator passports”) used in PAR Strategies of Albania and Kosovo were prepared and disseminated to the countries.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

The activities planned for next semester include the following:

- The 2016 Country Monitoring Assessment Reports will be drafted and submitted to the EC.
- An IPA Regional Public Procurement Conference for review bodies will take place in June 2016, in Ohrid, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.
- A SIGMA Paper on the relations between SAIs and parliamentary committees will be drafted.
- New Public Procurement Briefs (five) will be prepared to deal with new challenges of the EU public procurement legal framework and its implementation, following the revision of the Public Procurement Manual in 2015.

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 2015)

ReSPA continued providing support to the work of two umbrella networks: Public Administration Reform (PAR) and European Integration (EI). Both networks coordinate the work of six Expert Working Groups (Quality Management, Better Regulation, Human Resource Management and Development (HRMD), General Administrative Procedures Acts (GAPA), eGovernment, Ethics and Integrity, Public Procurement (PP) and Public Private Partnership (PPP)).

ReSPA strengthened the capacities of the civil servants through the organisation of workshops, training activities, seminars, conferences and Seasonal/Summer Schools.

ReSPA provided expertise to ReSPA members and Kosovo through the new Mechanism for Urgent Needs in the area of EI, HRMD, eGovernment, PP, PPP and PAR and GAPA. The regional comparative/baseline analyses were conducted and the exchange of experience among ReSPA member countries was continued through the mobility scheme programmes (eGovernment and EI thematic areas) and the study visits to EU countries in terms of possible replication of models of work.

ReSPA participated in the respective meetings of the PAR Special group organised in Albania, Montenegro and Kosovo.

OUTPUTS (JULY – DECEMBER 2015)

- Eight regional studies/baseline analysis produced: 1. Baseline Analysis Report on Better Regulation in Western Balkan countries; 2. From E- to Open Government – Regional Comparative Analysis; 3. Comparative Study on Conflict of Interest; 4. Comparative Study on Public Procurement in ReSPA Members and Kosovo; 5. Comparative Analysis of Lessons Learned from Recent Development in Implementation of Public Private Partnership Projects in the Western Balkan Region; 6. Comparative Study on Legal Remedies in Administrative Procedures; 7. Quality of HRM in the Western Balkans: An Analysis of Problems and Strategies to Improve the Implementation of Merit Recruitment Procedures; 8. Baseline Analysis on One Stop Shop solutions in Western Balkan countries.
- Four conferences organised: 1. 8th ReSPA Annual Conference: The Professionalization of the Civil Service between Politics and Administration; 2. Conference on Regional Cooperation among National Investment Commissions – Improved Cooperation for Development and Progress; 3. Regional Conference on Monitoring and Evaluation of Public Policies; 4. Conference on Quality Management in the Western Balkans Public Services.
- Three mobility scheme programmes and visits to the EU countries organised. The visit to the Finish Ministry of Finance aimed at exploring the ways on how the Governments in Western Balkans can become more open and user centric while respecting the personal data protection; the visit to the Centre for Public Administration Research (KDZ - Zentrum für Verwaltungsforschung) in Vienna resulted in recognising the need to conduct the baseline analysis on Quality Management; the visit to the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) explored the opportunity for accreditation of PPP training, as well as the opportunities for pilot projects and further support from the EBRD.
- Twelve projects implemented through the New Mechanism for Urgent Limited Needs, policy papers produced and peer reviews provided.
- ReSPA Programme of Work for 2016-2017 prepared, as well as a new project proposal for obtaining funds from the European Commission.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

-Signature of the new EC grant to organise trainings/workshops, comparative studies, mobility schemes programmes and networking events in line with ReSPA Work Programme for 2016-2017.

- ReSPA Governing Board meeting at the Senior Official level;

- ReSPA 15th Budget Committee meeting;

- Long-term impact assessment of ReSPA activities.

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary Programme under IPA Transition Assistance and Institution Building Component for the year 2013, IPA 2013/024-091
Project title:	Strengthening Democratic Governance and Trust in Public Services in the Western Balkans - Support to Regional School of Public Administration (ReSPA) component "Quality of Public Services" (QPS)
EU contribution:	EUR 1.5 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans and Turkey
Type of contract:	Service contract with consortium led by GDSI Ltd.
Contract reference:	CN 2013/333-221
Duration of activities:	1/11/2013 – 30/11/2015
Links:	http://www.respaweb.eu/gps
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PURPOSE

The key objectives of this project are to provide technical assistance and capacity development for the ReSPA by strengthening internal structures and working methods, further developing and deepening the work of regional networks managed by ReSPA, developing high level political dialogue amongst ReSPA members, assisting with stakeholder engagement and supporting the development of enhanced methodologies by ReSPA to achieve its mission.

ACTIVITIES (JULY – DECEMBER 2015)

The activities of the final period of the project focused on the supporting the institutional and technical sustainability of ReSPA.

At the institutional level, ReSPA's financial software was reviewed and recommendations for its upgrade delivered. Similarly, ReSPA's IT capability was assessed, particularly with a view to improving the use of new technologies in networking and training activities.

During the same period, the development of the organisation's branding, public relations, media and stakeholder communications was supported. All of this was done in the context of the reorientation of ReSPA's activity from a mainstream training organisation to a networking hub and knowledge centre.

A large international conference was held in Sarajevo to discuss quality management in the public services. It was attended by representatives of all Member Countries. A study of the feasibility of a regional awards system for Quality of Public Services was carried out.

A review of ReSPA's financial governance was completed and recommendations for its improvement were provided.

Support was provided to the Governing Board in the procedures for the recruitment of a new ReSPA Director.

The notion of a “Presidency” approach to the governance of ReSPA and the development of the RePAN concept (developed during the previous reporting period) was presented at the Governing Board meeting.

OUTPUTS (JULY – DECEMBER 2015)

The project completed a number of feasibility studies, technical reports, trainings/workshops and networking events over the period. More specifically:

- A high level conference on quality of public services
- A feasibility study for a regional Awards system
- A communications strategy for supporting ReSPA’s internal reform agenda
- A plan for the upgrade of ReSPA’s IT system (particularly with respect to its networking capabilities)

A revised Financial Regulation and Implementing Rules was prepared and adopted.

1.3 STATISTICAL COOPERATION

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
Link:	http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/about/our-partners/cooperation
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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 2015)

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 beneficiaries were on IPA traineeships in Eurostat and in statistical offices in selected EU Member States from September to November 2015.

OUTPUTS (JULY – DECEMBER 2015)

The draft third 6-monthly progress report for the service contract was discussed during the third progress meeting beginning of July 2015 and subsequently revised during the reporting period. After several revisions the final report was submitted beginning of December 2015.

The draft final report was discussed during the final meeting end of October 2015. A consolidated version is due in January 2016.

The interim report from the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia has been approved. The remaining two countries benefitting from a grant submitted interim reports and requests for further pre-financing (Turkey and Croatia; they had requested postponement in submitting interim reports earlier in 2015). These reports are not approved yet, they have been suspended.

Mission reports show that statisticians in the region continue to learn more about the EU standards in statistics. Around 359 participants from the 4 countries (AL, BA, XK, ME) under the service contract have participated in working group meetings at Eurostat, in pilot project workshops, training courses and study visits organised by the contractor. The participants from the countries (HR, MK, RS, TR) which are benefitting from a grant also took part in these activities.

A second round on workshops was organised for statisticians from the enlargement countries, such as a 2nd workshop on national accounts, short term statistics and agri-monetary statistics. A workshop on statistics on income and living conditions was also organised. Two training events on modernising the statistical business register have been organised for the statisticians from the beneficiaries. International experts have visited the statistical offices of some countries for the second time and discussed many issues of relevance for the finalisation of the pilot projects. They also helped the statistical offices to draft final reports and to compile data according to EU standards in the various statistical domains.

Documentation of statistical sources and methods continued.

Data delivery compatible with common standards has increased over the reporting period.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

Activities are closed but final reporting is pending.

Programme reference:	Multi-country Programme, IPA 2014/032-064
Project title:	Statistical cooperation for the Western Balkans and Turkey
EU contribution:	EUR 8 million (of which 7.8 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 5.3 m Grant to MONSTAT, Montenegro, EUR 0.54 m Grant to State Statistical Office of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, EUR 0.64 m Grant to Statistical Office of Serbia, EUR 0.75 m Grant to Turkish Statistical Institute, EUR 0.56 m
Duration of activities:	Service contract 01/11/2015 – 30/09/2017 Grants 01/10/2015 – 31/08/2017
Links:	http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/about/our-partners/cooperation
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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 2015)

Implementation of the service contract started 1st November 2015. The overall management kick-off meeting took place mid November 2015 and was followed by a series of pilot project kick-off meetings. A few more will be organised in mid January 2016.

The implementation of the grants started 1st October 2015. Statisticians have attended Eurostat working groups and training courses in a wide number of statistical fields. Beneficiaries receiving grants have started implementing the 19 different pilot projects.

OUTPUTS (JULY – DECEMBER 2015)

In some cases the objectives and expected results will need to be slightly adapted after discussions in kick-off meetings because of changes occurring after drafting of the terms of reference. The changes will be reflected in the inception report due in January 2016. Some work plans have been drafted for project implementation.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

The draft inception report for the service contract will be discussed during the inception meeting in February 2016.

A start-up workshop with the participation of all beneficiarie will be organised mid February 2016.

Many types of activities will be financed: participation in Eurostat working groups and PP workshops, training events, expert missions to the national statistical offices, study visits, beneficiaries' work in different areas of statistics under 24 different pilot projects.

A number of young statisticians from beneficiaries will be on traineeships in Eurostat and in statistical offices in selected EU Member States from January to June 2016.

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, 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 2015)

Two training sessions for the operational use of the SEED organised for Customs Officers from the Common Customs Points between Serbia and Kosovo:

- Merdare, Mutivode, Konculj and Depce, in Regional Customs House Nis, and
- Rudnica and Brnjacki most, in the Regional Customs House Kraljevo.

Two SEED training sessions (Podgorica, Montenegro and Tirana, Albania) on usage of new SEED functionalities;

Eight on-site trainings for the legal representatives of the Right Holders in Serbia, on the new e-IPR module (10 layers from 4 Law Offices were trained);

The Third Regional Workshop of the SEED Maintenance II Project organised in Belgrade, Serbia on 12-13 November, 2015;

The Steering Committee Meeting of the SEED Maintenance II Project, organized in Belgrade, Serbia on 11th December, 2015;

With support of EULEX, joint SEED meeting of Customs officials from Serbia and Kosovo at the Common Crossing Point Merdare, held on 17th December 2015, with overall objective of improvement of the percentage of SEED data matching by alignment of operational procedures from both sides of the (administrative/border) line.

OUTPUTS (JULY – DECEMBER 2015)

Scope of data of SEED data exchange between Serbia and Kosovo was extended to all types of Customs procedures (as of 21st September 2015);

The new SEED software release (V 5.6.0) with a number of newly developed functionalities was deployed at all 6 SEED servers in the Region (September – October 2015);

The new version of the module for electronic submission of IPR Applications for Actions by legal representatives of the Rights Holders (e-IPR module), along with new version of the INES+ software was put in production in Serbia, as of 1st September 2015, when the latest IPR legislation entered into the force (*fully aligned with the EU regulation 608/2013*);

Action plan (for activities/Components from the Customs area) for possible future “SEED Maintenance and Development” Project defined and agreed by the Beneficiary Customs Administrations, during the Steering Committee Meeting.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

The new Version (V6.0.0) of the SEED2 software will be deployed to all 7 SEED servers (6 in the region and one in Rome) at the second half of March or beginning of April, 2016;

Pilot Action on trade facilitation in the port of Bar, Montenegro will be organized in March, 2016;

The final event of the SEED Maintenance II project should be organised at the end of June or beginning of July 2016.

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 (extended until November 2016)
Links :	www.worldbank.org/
Contact :	Rodolfo Lazarich – Gener, rodolfo.lazarich-gener@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 2015)

Serbia PEFA. The Bank has already received the review from the PEFA Secretariat on the adjusted report. Once agreement is reached with the Government, the final PEFA Report will be issued. During this semester the final draft was delivered for Peer Reviewers' comments including the Serbian Government, EU, SECO, WB and PEFA Secretariat. An extra period was agreed to receive additional information from the Government on a number of issues.

ECA COUNTRIES: Enhancing Public Spending Transparency and Performance. International E-Procurement Forum “Enhancing Public Spending using E-Procurement Data” took place in Vienna, Austria, December 1-3, 2015. It provided an excellent platform to engage 80 procurement professionals from 30 countries, including 23 ECA client countries, and 8 international partner organizations in expert presentations and discussions with focus on how to use electronic procurement data to measure and improve public procurement transparency and performance.

OUTPUTS (JULY – DECEMBER 2015)

- PEFA Serbia. Final draft shared with Government and peer reviewers. Final output under preparation.
- Procurement Forum successfully delivered in Vienna, Dec. 1-3, 2015.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

- PEFA Serbia. Dissemination event to be agreed with Government after the formal final delivery. Expected to take place in 1st quarter of 2016. A separate report that pilots the compliance to the new PEFA framework is under review by PEFA Secretariat.
- A Procurement Measurement System (PMS) will be developed in early 2016 to benchmark public procurement in participating countries based on jointly agreed indicators.

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/spb
Contact:	Konstantina Maragkou, 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 2015)

The project came to an end on the 20th September of 2015. During this period, the e-learning course on *Budget Execution* was concluded, along with the delivery of the Seminar on *Enabling Fiscal Programming of Structural Reforms*. The project was closed with a High-level Policy Dialogue on *Economic Governance in South East Europe* that took place in September 2015 in Ljubljana. EC representatives participated in the event emphasizing the new enhanced approach on economic governance in the context of the enlargement strategy.

OUTPUTS (JULY – DECEMBER 2015)

Delivered activities strengthened beneficiary institutions' capacity to design and implement medium-term macro-fiscal frameworks, and facilitated the exchange of good practice and regional cooperation. An informal network was created among officials involved in the preparation of medium-term macro fiscal frameworks. Back-to-office interviews with several beneficiaries were conducted and illustrated the project's importance (available at <http://www.cef-see.org/news/>).

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

The project came to an end on the 20 of September, no further activities are planned.

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary Programme, IPA 2014 / 031-603
Project title:	Strengthening Economic Governance and Public Financial Management
EU contribution:	EUR 8,000,000
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	PAGODA with the International Monetary Fund (IMF)
Contract reference:	CN 2015/358-797
Duration of activities:	09/06/2015 – 08/06/2018
Contact :	Rodolfo Lazrich – Gener, rodolfo.Lazarich-gener@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The purpose of this IMF-led project is to support the implementation of the relevant parts of the partners' Economic Reform Programmes and the preparation and implementation of their national PFM reform programmes.

ACTIVITIES (JULY – DECEMBER 2015)

Public Financial Management

Regional: participation in CEF-run regional learning workshops on fiscal programming of structural reforms and migration to accrual accounting, as well as in high-level policy dialogue on structural reforms.

Albania: 3 regional expert visits and desk/VC work. Public investment management focus on March 2016 Fiscal Affairs Department (FAD) mission, discussed and agreed with Ministers of Finance and Economy. PFM reform strategy updated based on advice on prioritization and sequencing, as well as suggested changes to various reform actions.

Bosnia and Herzegovina: Republika Srpska GDP forecasting practices reviewed and strengthened, and data availability and timeliness identified as key issues.

Kosovo: Kosovo's work plan under the EC-funded project and the FAD mission in December discussed.

The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia: Special Issues Paper prepared and approved on implementing fiscal rules. Comments provided on EC-funded PEFA.

Montenegro: Agreed timing of March 2016 for STX/LTX visit on debt strategy related to breach of debt rule. A gap analysis against cash-basis International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) prepared. PFM Reform Program comments provided by long term expert and FAD, which focused on prioritization and sequencing, as well as recommended changes to some activities.

Serbia: PFM Reform Program comments provided by LTX and FAD resident advisor, which focused on prioritization and sequencing, activity input requirements and specific changes to some activities. Work program for the newly established Public Sector Accounting Standards Commission prepared. FAD report on Budget System Law changes completed and issued. Recommendation focus on both immediate requirements, including an expenditure rule aimed at reducing debt over the medium term, and longer term improvements to the legal framework. FAD mission on PPPs and public investment management agreed with authorities for January 2016.

Revenue Administration

Regional: expert lectured at two CEF tax administration workshops on (1) modern approaches to tax compliance, and (2) management of reforms.

Albania: 1 IMF HQ mission was delivered to determine the causes for revenue underperformance in the customs and tax administrations. In addition, 1 LTX visit was delivered to support the above mentioned HQ mission and to provide TA on compliance management and VAT refund issues.

Bosnia and Herzegovina: 1 HQ staff visit took place to discuss the scoping of future FAD TA activities.

Kosovo: 1 HQ mission to provide requested guidance on the planned merger of the tax and customs administrations.

Montenegro: The Tax Administration Diagnostic Assessment Tool (TADAT) mission's assessment shows a tax administration that is extremely weak across almost all components. A follow-up visit by the LTX was planned to be delivered before end-2015 to discuss the priorities for TA under this project, including the TA input during the coming months.

OUTPUTS (JULY – DECEMBER 2015)

Public Financial Management

- Albania: advice provided on prioritization and sequencing of PFM reform strategy. Multi-year commitment control included in Organic Budget Law amendments.
- Bosnia and Herzegovina: RS GDP forecasting practices reviewed and strengthened.
- the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia: Special Issues Paper on implementing fiscal rules.
- Montenegro: Gap analysis against cash-basis IPSAS.
- Serbia: Work programme for the newly established Public Sector Accounting Standards Commission. FAD report on BSL changes.

Revenue Administration

- Albania: Report on the causes for revenue underperformance in the customs and tax administrations.
- Kosovo: Guidance on the planned merger of the tax and customs administrations.
- Montenegro: TADAT mission.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

Indicative Action Plan June 2015 – April 2016

Public Financial Management

Regional	Workshops on spending reviews and fiscal transparency and fiscal risk management.
Albania	To provide follow up guidance on the Organic Budget Law, the Medium Term Budgetary Framework (MTEF), and commitment control and the associated regulatory framework in support of the reform agenda.
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Development of the PFM reform plans linked to the Economic Reform Programme (ERP). To provide support on the development of PFM reform plans, to establish state-owned enterprises (SOE) monitoring units, and to establish commitment control and arrears containment. To review the implementation of medium-term budget frameworks, spending review process, implementation of fiscal rules.

Kosovo	Strengthening expenditure controls and preventing expenditure arrears. To review the MTBF and lay the groundwork for development of a fiscal risk management framework.
the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	To strengthen expenditure controls and arrears prevention. To provide support on introducing the medium-term budget framework.
Montenegro	To provide support on introducing the medium-term budget framework. Improving debt and cash management.
Serbia	To provide support on implementing the PFM reform program, operationalizing the Fiscal Risk Unit and SOE monitoring, and strengthening fiscal reporting, including arrears monitoring. Amending the Budget System Law.

Revenue Administration

Regional	Support on organization and governance of tax administration and on the phasing in of modern compliance approaches and associated business processes. Workshops on regional tax policy issues. Forum for chief executives of the six tax administrations.
Albania	To provide support on reorganization, governance, and compliance management. To assess the reform status across key components. To provide guidance on refund procedures, compliance risk analysis and audit selection, and compliance strategies for one to two risk clusters/taxpayer segments.
Bosnia and Herzegovina	To provide support on compliance management and core functions. To follow up on reform efforts. To provide guidance on the design and implementation of risk management and compliance improvement strategies, and help strengthen selected core tax administration functions.
Kosovo	To provide follow-up on large taxpayers, arrears management, and business process improvement. After an initial TADAT assessment to assess the reform status across key components. To follow up on reform efforts and provide guidance on core business processes.
the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	To provide follow-up on large taxpayers, arrears management and business process improvement. To follow up on reform efforts and provide guidance on core business processes.
Montenegro	To provide support on compliance efforts concerning large taxpayers. To assess the reform status across key components, establish a baseline and provide guidance on the way forward on the reform path.
Serbia	To provide advice on reorganization, governance, and compliance management. To follow up on reform efforts and discuss further needs for technical assistance. To provide guidance on: (i) tax administration and procedure law drafting and (ii) design and implement risk management and compliance improvement strategies.

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 2015)

In the reporting period, the project continued to support the beneficiaries in running cross-border cases. In a number of cases, this support was rendered with the IPA2013 police project. In three regional meetings, organized jointly by the IPA2013 and IPA2014 projects in July, September and December 2015, a number of regional cases were discussed. In one of the meetings, also representatives of EUROJUST, EUROPOL and INTERPOL participated and offered their assistance.

As a follow-up to the regional meeting to discuss the installation of a Mutual Legal Assistance - MLA request registration and case management system, delegations from Kosovo and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia visited Montenegro in September and December 2015 respectively, to see the system in operation in order to take a well-founded decision about the installation of the system in their institutions. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the work on the MLA handbook was completed. During the reporting period, trainings on asset recovery in Kosovo and financial aspects of smuggling of migrants (regionally in Belgrade) were organized. Finally, the work on the MLA organisational assessment reports commenced in November 2015.

OUTPUTS (JULY – DECEMBER 2015)

- Support to bilateral and regional cross-border investigations and prosecutions related to organized crime, including three regional coordination meetings;
- Short visits for delegations from Kosovo and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to Montenegro to acquaint themselves with the MLA registration and case management system were organized;
- Regional training in financial aspects of smuggling of migrants in Belgrade, training in asset recovery in Kosovo was organized;
- MLA Handbook in Bosnia and Herzegovina completed.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

Continuation of support to bilateral and regional cases. Launch of a regional website. Start of installation of MLA registration and case management system in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Completion of MLA organisational assessment reports and their presentation in national roundtables. Training on data protection issues in Albania.

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary Programme, IPA 2013/024-091
Project title:	Fight against organised crime and corruption: international cooperation in criminal justice in the Western Balkans
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 2015)

In the reporting period, the project continued to support the beneficiaries in running cross-border cases. In a number of cases, this support was rendered jointly with the IPA2014 prosecutors' project. In three regional meetings, organized jointly by the IPA2013 and IPA2014 projects in July, September and December 2015, a number of regional cases were discussed. In one of the meetings, also representatives of EUROJUST, EUROPOL and INTERPOL participated and offered their assistance.

- 26 trans national investigations identified (3 Albania, 7 Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2 Kosovo, 5 former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, 3 Montenegro, 6 Serbia);
- Interim and financial report drafted;
- ROM review received;
- 1 joint investigation team supported;
- Joint Regional meeting in Zagreb;
- Crossborder coordination meeting in Skopje;
- DNA and fingerprints experts' workshop in Rome;
- Budget reallocation drafted;
- RE in Albania proposed;
- Consortium agreements proposed to Croatia and France.

OUTPUTS (JULY– DECEMBER 2015)

- 25 investigative meetings between Beneficiaries LEAs and between Beneficiaries and MS LEAs;
- Interim and financial report approved;
- ROM review passed;
- 9 persons arrested as result of supporting the Joint investigation team.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

- Steering Committee;
- Workshops on scientific and forensic police;
- Follow-up on the selected investigations;
- Identification of regional criminal threats;
- Exercise on special investigative techniques;
- Continuation of support to bilateral and regional cases.

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 2015)

- Finalisation of guidelines on procedural protection measures for the judiciary and prosecution services in Montenegro, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Albania; relevant workshop held in Albania (September 2015);

- Co-ordination meeting with EUROPOL and the other regional projects and initiatives – The Hague, October 2015;
- Finalisation of the training programme for WPUs and stakeholders – October 2015;
- Finalisation of a Training Manual for WPUs, including outline of the courses and all relevant training materials – November 2015;
- Preparation and delivery of the Final cross-border exercise, involving all WPUs in the region as well as some stakeholder organisations (where relevant) - August/October 2015;
- Delivery of the IT equipment for 6 units in the region – Albania, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Montenegro, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Serbia (equipment for Kosovo WPU has been provided by the EU Office with technical assistance from WINPRO). There was a slight delay on delivery of IT equipment to Albania and Montenegro (finalised in December 2015) caused by prolonged procedures of VAT and customs exemption;
- Delivery of vehicles for 2 units in the region – Serbia (October 15) and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (December 15, the delay caused by a prolonged sign-off procedure on the BC side);
- Organisation of the Final Conference – Zagreb, November 2015;
- Final meeting of the Balkan Network– Skopje, November 2015. The Balkan Network meetings will continue beyond the project duration.

OUTPUTS (HIGHLIGHTS)

- A secure platform in a form of Witness Protection Balkan Network enhanced and focused on sharing challenges, experience and best practice from within the region;
- Country specific guidelines on procedural protection measures for the judiciary and prosecution services in Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Serbia produced, circulated and training provided (107 delegates trained across the region);
- Country specific guidelines (brochure) on general principles for the consideration and application of witness protection for Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Serbia produced, circulated and training provided (331 delegates trained across the region);
- Training Catalogue and Training Manual for Professional Development of Witness Protection staff in the Western Balkans produced and circulated;
- Model agreement on the relocation of collaborators of justice/ witnesses in the Witness Protection Programmes in detention or serving criminal sanction drafted and circulated in the region.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

- No other activities planned for next semester. The project has been completed. But it will be continued in the next semester under a new contract.

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 2015)

During the reporting period most of the activities were dedicated to the finalisation of the research in line with the National Integrity System Assessment (NIS) methodology. In order to validate the key findings of the report and increase the ownership of it, project partners, namely Transparency International (TI) Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Macedonia, Serbia and Turkey as well as MANS (Montenegro), organized stakeholder meetings with relevant institutions as well as experts and donor organizations. All received feedback and suggestions were taken into consideration.

- NIS reports have been launched in Kosovo and in Bosnia and Herzegovina on 8 November and 9 December 2015 respectively. Both events were well attended from public, private and third sectors, and received significant media presence;

- A regional workshop titled “Strengthening advocacy and tracking mechanism” was held on 24-26 November 2015 in Berlin. The main purpose of the meeting was to strategically plan the advocacy phase of the project.

OUTPUTS (JULY – DECEMBER 2015)

- Networking and cooperation established with relevant institutions and experts in the region through the set-up of Advisory Boards in all beneficiary countries;
- Two National Integrity System (NIS) assessment reports launched in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo respectively;
- Input for the EC progress reports provided by all partners;
- Methodology for tracking anti-corruption developments elaborated and agreed among project partners.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

- NIS reports to be finalized and launch events to be conducted in Serbia, Montenegro, former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and Turkey.
- Regional exchange of good practice workshops held on the following topics:
 - Inter-institutional cooperation in the fight against corruption to be led by TI-Kosovo, first week of February 2016;
 - Strengthening the justice sector, in particular, conflict of interest and property cards to be organised by TI-Bosnia and Herzegovina.
- Increasing transparency in political party financing to be led by TI- Serbia:
 - Targeted national advocacy activities in all partner countries in line with the NIS assessments conducted.
- Data collection for the anti-corruption tracking mechanism in all beneficiary countries.

Programme reference:	Multi-country Programme, IPA 2014/031-603
Project title:	Joint EU and ICTY Training project for National Prosecutors and Young Professionals from the Former Yugoslavia
EU contribution:	EUR 0.5 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans and Turkey
Type of contract:	Grant Agreement with United Nations International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY)
Contract reference:	CN 2015/ 357-561
Duration of activities:	01/04/2015 – 31/12/2016
Contact :	Henk Visser, henk.visser@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The objective is to strengthen the capacity of countries of the former Yugoslavia to effectively investigate and prosecute war crimes. Beneficiaries are the national prosecutors for domestic war crimes cases and young professionals with a legal or other relevant background participate in the Action.

ACTIVITIES (JULY – DECEMBER 2015)

- Extensive exchange of information between the European Commission and the ICTY regarding the addendum to the Agreement for the period 2015-2016.
- Addendum to the Agreement for the period 2015-2016 signed on 17 September 2015.

Visiting National Prosecutors component

- Visiting National Prosecutors from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia continue their work in the OTP.
- The OTP supported the Visiting National Prosecutors during searches for investigative material.

Visiting Young Professionals component

- The second group of 6 young legal professionals started their internship on 7 September 2015.
- The feedback on their work from the respective teams and supervisors continues to be positive.

OUTPUTS (JULY – DECEMBER/JUNE 2015)

Visiting National Prosecutors component

- 99 Requests for Assistance received.

Visiting Young Professionals component

- Visiting Young Professionals trained in the use of OTP databases and other available judicial tools.
- Visiting Young Professionals actively participated in the preparation of the ICTY trials and appeals.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

- The second group of Visiting Young Professionals will finish their internship in January 2016. This is the last group of Visiting Young Professionals which will participate in the Action.
- Either new or the current Liaison Prosecutors will continue their participation in the Action as of January 2016.
- Activities regarding the Action for 2015-2016 will continue.

Programme reference:	Multi-country Programme, IPA 2014/031-603.
Project title:	Project iPROCEEDS - Cooperation on Cybercrime under the Instrument of Pre-accession (IPA): Project on targeting crime proceeds on the Internet in South-eastern Europe and Turkey)
EU contribution:	EUR 5 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans and Turkey
Type of contract:	Grant agreement for a pillar assessed organisation with the Council of Europe
Contract reference:	CN 2015/367-971
Duration of activities:	01/01/2016 – 30/06/2019
Links:	ww.coe.int/cybercrime
Contact :	Henk Visser, henk.visser@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The Action aims to assure that the Enlargement countries will comply with relevant standards regarding cybercrime and crime proceeds including the Budapest Convention on Cybercrime (CETS 185)¹ and the Convention on Laundering, Search, Seizure and Confiscation of the Proceeds from Crime and on the Financing of Terrorism (CETS 198)² of the Council of Europe (CoE). Both treaties and the related assessment or monitoring mechanisms are most relevant for countries covered by this Action. In fact, the beneficiaries are expected to comply with the *EU acquis* and relevant Council of Europe conventions and standards.

ACTIVITIES

Contract was signed in December.

OUTPUTS

N/A

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

Implementation will start in 2016.

¹ Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia and The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia are Parties. Turkey has not yet ratified it. The Cybercrime Convention Committee (T-CY) assesses implementation of this treaty (www.coe.int/tcy).

² Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia and The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia are Parties. These States are monitored by MONEYVAL (www.coe.int/moneyval). Turkey has signed it.

Programme reference:	Multi-country Programme, IPA 2014/031-603.
Project title:	Measuring and assessing organised crime in the Western Balkans: supporting evidence-based policy making
EU contribution:	EUR 2 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	Grant agreement for a pillar assessed organisation United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Research and Trends Analysis Branch, Statistics and Surveys Section (UNODC/RAB/SASS)
Contract reference:	CN 2015/358-127
Duration of activities:	01/04/2016 – 31/03/2019
Contact :	Henk Visser, henk.visser@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The Action aims to develop and implement a statistical framework for quantifying and analysing organised crime in the Western Balkans, to establish mechanisms to monitor it and to produce an evidence-based analytical report on Organised Crime (OC) in the Western Balkans. The statistical framework on OC will include various components, such as criminal activities and criminal offences perpetrated by OC groups, the response by the criminal justice system and on ways of operating.

ACTIVITIES

Contract was signed in December.

OUTPUTS

N/A

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

The activities will start as of April 2016.

2.2 TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE

Programme reference:	Multi-country Programme, IPA 2014/031-603.
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 2015/355-097
Duration of activities:	01/02/2015 – 31/01/2016
Links:	www.sense-agency.com
Contact :	Henk Visser, henk.visser@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

To inform the public on the work and mission of the ICTY, and to raise public support for cooperation with the ICTY and the domestic prosecution of war crimes.

ACTIVITIES (JULY – DECEMBER 2015)

During the reporting period SENSE has continued coverage and audio-visual recordings of the presentation of defense evidence at the trial of Ratko Mladic, developments in Karadzic, Hadzic and Seselj cases, the Appeals Chamber judgement in J. Stanisic & Simatovic case, the appellate hearings in M. Stanisic & Zupljanin case, new contempt of court indictment, as well as all other judicial activities of the ICTY/MICT.

With its daily reports and weekly TV programmes, SENSE is the only news agency bringing to the region regular and reliable information on trials for war crimes committed in the former Yugoslavia and the work of the ICTY. SENSE website (<http://sense-agency.com>) is a reference for international justice and human rights “watchers”, journalists, lawyers, academics, diplomats and general public.

The aim of SENSE multimedia presentations, exhibitions and interactive narratives is to show how the crimes committed during the war in the former Yugoslavia 1991 - 1995 were investigated, reconstructed and prosecuted by the ICTY. Apart from being the source of information for general public and researchers, these audio-visual documents serve as a unique memorial to the victims of the atrocities committed in the Balkans.

SENSE [documentaries](#) 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.

Participation in educational and media events and regional and international conferences about war crimes trials, transitional justice and the role of media. SENSE editor Mirko Klarin was a speaker at a seminar in the Peace Palace on "Can Criminal Justice for Core International Crimes Contribute to Reconciliation?" and as an observer on International Decision Making and the Srebrenica Genocide, organized by The Hague Institute for Global Justice and the US Holocaust Memorial Museum.

OUTPUTS (JULY – DECEMBER 2015)

- Over 250 daily reports and analysis in Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian and English on four ongoing trials at the ICTY (Mladic, Hadzic, Karadzic, Seselj) and other Tribunal's proceedings (retrial, appeals and contempt proceedings);
- Production of 21 regular weekly TV update entitled "TV Tribunal" on trials and other developments at the ICTY (699 programs so far, since March 2000);
- Two exhibitions on Srebrenica presented in Zagreb in July 2015 and in Belgrade in September 2015. Exhibitions were prepared in cooperation with [Documenta](#) - Centre for Dealing with the Past (Croatia) and [The Humanitarian Law Center](#) (Serbia). Presentation on Srebrenica is part of the permanent display of the SENSE [Documentation Centre](#) in the Memorial Centre in Potočari. It contains the most important parts of the judicial record of the events in Srebrenica from July 1995;
- '[Storm in The Hague', an interactive narrative](#), presented in the Journalists' Centre in Zagreb in August 2015. The narrative lists the most important prosecution and defense arguments corroborated by key exhibits including footage from the Croatian generals' trial for crimes during and after Operation Storm in August 1995, authentic military orders, as well as contemporaneous government and political documents. This project was prepared in cooperation with [Documenta](#) - Centre for Dealing with the Past and [SNV - Serbian National Council](#);
- Production of documentary film *Srebrenica: Genocide in Eight Pictures*, to mark 20th anniversary of the fall of the enclave in July 1995. Film was broadcast in four 30minute parts by major TV networks and numerous local TV stations in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia;
- Continued digitalisation of SENSE audio-visual trial archive.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

Reporting on the remaining trials, re-trials, contempt cases, appellate proceedings and judgments at the ICTY; transfer of the archive, equipment and the activities to the SENSE Transitional Justice Centre in Pula, Croatia; further activities on the creation of network of local Documentation Centres all over the Western Balkans region.

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 – 31/03/2016
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 2015)

- Began full-scale implementation of the fourth cycle of the “Youth Outreach” project;
- Developed a section of the permanent exhibition dedicated to the genocide in Srebrenica, on display at the premises of the Memorial Centre Srebrenica-Potocari;
- Finalised the content of the publication on 15 years of the ICTY Outreach programme and began preparations for its publication;
- Partially revised the content of the two new documentaries - “Crimes before the ICTY: Visegrad” and “Crimes before the ICTY: Dubrovnik – Destruction of Cultural Heritage”, to include interviews with relevant actors who were previously unavailable. Continued post-production of the *Visegrad* feature and production of the *Dubrovnik* documentary;
- Organised further broadcasts of the Outreach Programme’s documentaries by a regional TV network covering BiH, Serbia and Croatia;
- Organised the English language premiere of the documentary “Crimes before the ICTY: Central Bosnia” in The Hague;
- Organised visits to the ICTY for students and professionals from around the world, including the countries of the former Yugoslavia.

OUTPUTS (JULY - DECEMBER 2015)

- Held 24 presentations in high schools in Croatia, BiH and Kosovo, which were attended by over 850 students;

- Delivered two lectures *in vivo* and three via video-link to more than 150 university students in Serbia, BiH, Croatia and Montenegro;
- Held two presentations of the “Youth Outreach” project for more than 50 high school teachers in Serbia;
- Held a training on delivery of high school presentations about ICTY to members of the NGO “Youth Initiative for Human Rights Croatia”;
- Thousands of visitors to the Memorial Centre Srebrenica-Potocari visited the exhibition which contains a section on ICTY trials, developed by the Outreach Programme;
- Tens of thousands of citizens viewed ICTY Outreach documentaries, broadcast by the regional TV network covering BiH, Croatia and Serbia;
- Over 100 diplomats, academics, students and journalists attended the English language premiere of the *Central Bosnia* documentary in The Hague;
- More than 4,000 individuals visited the Tribunal, received briefings on the work of the ICTY and attended trials.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

- Organisation of up to 30 high school presentations and university lectures about ICTY and transitional justice in BiH, Serbia, Croatia, Montenegro, Kosovo and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia;
- Training on delivery of high school presentations about ICTY to a group of high school teachers from BiH;
- Completion of the production of the documentary “Crimes before the ICTY: Visegrad” and the documentary “Crimes before the ICTY: Dubrovnik – Destruction of Cultural Heritage”. Publish DVDs for both documentaries and organise their launch in the countries of the former Yugoslavia;
- Launch of the publication on 15 years of the ICTY Outreach programme;
- Organisation of visits to the ICTY (including tailored briefings for visitors and attending a trial) for 3,000 - 4,000 students and professionals.

Programme reference:	Civil Society Facility and Media, IPA 2014 /031-605
Project title:	Strengthening and supporting the RECOM Process, Phase II
EU contribution:	EUR 0.700 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	Grant contract with Humanitarian Law Centre, Belgrade (HLCB),
Contract reference:	CN 2015/364-189 (continuation of CN 2012/292-650)
Duration of activities:	20/08/2015 – 19/02/2018
Links:	http://www.hlc-rdc.org ; http://www.recom.link/
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 2,050 civil society organizations from post-Yugoslav countries. The Coalition has won support from 580,000 citizens, drawn up a draft RECOM Statute and received strong political backing for the establishment of RECOM. The region's Presidents have affirmed their support for the establishment of a regional commission by appointing personal envoys to RECOM, who, in October of 2014, after a year's worth of collaboration and consultations with their respective Presidents and Presidency members, submitted the "Amendments to the RECOM Statute" to the Coalition for adoption. On November 14th, 2015, the Coalition Assembly voted to adopt the Amendments to the RECOM Statute without any objections, which marked the start of the transfer of the initiative to an inter-state level, where the decision to establish RECOM is to be made.

ACTIVITIES (JULY – DECEMBER 2015)

- Meetings with the President of Croatia, BiH Presidency Members and Serbian Prime Minister, with the aim of reaching an agreement on initiating the procedure to establish RECOM;
- Workshops in high-schools and lectures at Kosovo's universities on transitional justice within the contexts of discovering the facts about what happened during the war in Kosovo and the whole RECOM Process;
- The launch of a debate on RECOM's potential as an official instrument to determine the facts about war crimes and contribute to reconciliation;
- Presentation of data on human losses suffered during the wars in the former Yugoslavia and detention sites in BiH.

OUTPUTS (JULY – DECEMBER 2015)

By the end of 2015, the RECOM Initiative's public advocates had met only with Aleksandar Vučić, the Serbian Prime Minister. At the meeting, held on July 6th, 2015, Prime Minister Vučić informed the public advocates that the Government of Serbia fully supports the establishment of RECOM. Soon afterwards, the Serbian media published a statement by the Serbian Government, expressing its strong support for the establishment of a Regional Commission to name all the victims and determine the circumstances of their deaths.

The HLCK organized four workshops in four gymnasiums in Pristina (on October 10th, November 24th, December 2nd and 9th), with 160 students taking part.

In November and December, the RECOM Coalition organized six debates about reconciliation from the perspectives of politicians, EU representatives and the Coalition itself. The media then ran more than 40 reports on the debates, mostly about the interpretation of the term and process of reconciliation. On the occasion of the Human Rights Day, the HLC, HLC Kosovo, Documenta, TJAR and CDTJ gave public presentations of the results of the research into the human losses suffered in the armed conflicts fought in the former Yugoslavia from 1991 until 2001 and wartime detention sites in BiH. The events received wide coverage from national and local broadcasters.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

- The launch of the "Sign for RECOM" online campaign in the form of short internet ads: "So We Know the Names of the Victims. Sign for RECOM"; "580,000 People from the Former Yugoslavia for RECOM. You Should Sign Too!"; "So It Never Happens Again. So We Would Know. Sign for RECOM". The aim is to gather 50,000 signatures for RECOM;
- Meetings with Croatian President, BiH Presidency members and at least two the Heads of National Delegations to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly aimed at gathering support for the establishment of RECOM;
- At least five workshops in Pristina's high schools and two lectures at the University of Pristina on transitional justice based on war crimes research and development of the RECOM Process;
- The researchers in the different countries will publish at least 1000 interviews, to be conducted with witnesses and relatives of victims of the war in Croatia, Kosovo, Serbia and Montenegro and use it to confirm at least 1280 true war victims;
- The TJAR and CDTJ will document at least 200 prison camps and other wartime (1991-1995) detention sites in BiH.

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/jhp
Contact:	Karl Giacinti, 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 (JULY – DECEMBER 2015)

Activity Cluster 1: Inclusive multi-stakeholder process for producing teaching materials:

The 28 members of the Joint History Project's Source Committee from all the countries of Southeast Europe made serious progress on the new history workbooks. Final drafts were compiled and collected source materials were reviewed, to ensure balance in perspectives, topics, and types of sources, so that the books are interesting and enlightening for students as well as teachers. A total of 670 relevant sources were selected and keys were added that put the original source material in the relevant contexts for students to explore the history of the past 60 years. The final drafts were debated and presented to supervisors at a committee meeting that took place 28 Oct. - 01 Nov. 2015 in Skopje.

Activity Cluster 2: History teachers' training and participation in the evaluation phase of the teaching materials: Preparations began for a regional Teacher Training Conference to be held 26-28 February 2016 in Montenegro, where the final drafts of the two new history workbooks will be discussed with teachers. Fifty teachers from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Kosovo, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia,

Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia and Turkey will meet and offer input to the draft materials from a teachers' perspective. Teachers will be welcome to challenge the "teachability" of various topics and verify their relevance in relation to classroom curricula and student interests.

Activity Cluster 3: Outreach to the general public multiplying a multi-perspective state of mind: Preparations began for the launch of the new history workbooks in June 2016 in Brussels with a high profile public event. The project already is regularly covered in the media, and is presented at international conferences and widely known and supported by international organisations.

OUTPUTS (JULY – DECEMBER 2015)

- A final draft of the two new volumes of teaching materials presenting the history of Southeast Europe of the past 60 years in a multi-perspective way with more than 670 original historical sources from Southeast Europe compiled around key topics;
- Wide-ranging consultations with Southeast European academia, teachers and authorities through the source committee members and their peers;
- The Joint History Project appeared in the Vienna Western Balkan Summit in August 2015.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

- A regional teacher training workshop for 50 teachers will take place 26-28 February 2016 in Podgorica.
- The two new volumes of JHP multi-perspective History Teaching Materials, "Cold War" and "Transition in Southeast Europe", will be published in June 2016.
- A public launch will be prepared to take place in Brussels in September 2016, and another seven publicity events are planned in each of the capitals of the region. A promotional video will be produced, more media work will continue and TV appearances will be arranged. The Joint History Project will also be part of the Paris Western Balkans Summit in July 2016.

Programme reference:	2013 / 024-091 - Multi-beneficiary programme under the IPA-Transition Assistance and Institution Building Component for the year 2013- part DG NEAR
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, karl.giacinti@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The purpose of the project is to contribute to reconciliation processes in the Western Balkans through professional and objective journalistic reporting on transitional justice issues, as well as to advance the state of media in the Western Balkans by securing continued support to investigative media production on transitional justice issues.

ACTIVITIES (JULY – DECEMBER 2015)

- Online publishing of news articles, radio programme and cross-regional multi-media investigations on transitional justice issues and dissemination;
- Production of documentary film on human resettlement and promotion of the documentary film “The Unidentified”;
- War crimes verdicts assessment for creation of online war crimes’ verdicts map;
- Internship for students of journalism within BIRN offices;
- Awareness raising on transitional justice issues and the role of media in that process.

OUTPUTS (JULY – DECEMBER 2015)

- More than 450 news, analysis, interviews and opinions published on Balkan transitional Justice web site in English and local languages (Albanian, Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian and Macedonian) covering war crimes trials and other transitional justice issues;
- At least 500 republications of BTJ articles in media outlets across the region;
- Six radio episodes of radio programme “Roads to justice” produced in local languages and broadcast by more than 100 radio stations across the Balkan region;
- Documentary film on human resettlement in postproduction phase;
- Documentary film “The Unidentified” (which reveals who were the commanders responsible for some of the most brutal attacks of the Kosovo war) screened at the Sarajevo Film Festival, Bosnia and Herzegovina (August, 2015), at the DokuFest in

Prizren, Kosovo (August, 2015), at the Docudoc in Maribor, Slovenia (August,2015), at the International Human Rights Film Festival in Tirana, Albania (September,2015) and at the Human Rights Film Festival in Zagreb, Croatia (December,2015);

- BTJ journalist from Serbia guest speaker at the Cross-disciplinary workshop on Transitional Justice and Climate Change, organised by the Hague Institute for Global Justice and at the OSCE Human Dimension Implementation meeting in Warsaw, Poland;
- Four students at the internship programme at the BIRN local offices.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

- Continuous promotion of the documentary film “The Unidentified” at film festivals and TV stations across the region;
- Premiere of the new documentary film on human resettlement - an exchange of populations between Serbia and Croatia during the war;
- Organisation of regional conference;
- Publishing of an on-line war crimes verdicts map;
- Internships for journalism students at BIRN country offices;
- Lectures for students of journalism at the Universities.

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, 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 (JULY – DECEMBER 2015)

- Second expert meeting for the creation of Local history panels and Lesson plans about past 60 years of history in Western Balkans (July 02 – 06, 2015: Zagreb, Croatia);
- Regional Peer Guide Training of Trainers, training future trainers of peer guides (July 06 – 10, 2015: Zagreb, Croatia);
- Organizing Serbian Memory Walk seminar with youth from several Serbian towns (August 20-24, 2015: Belgrade, Serbia);
- Organizing Macedonian Memory Walk seminar with youth from several Macedonian towns (October 22-27, 2015: Skopje, Macedonia).

OUTPUTS (JULY – DECEMBER 2015)

- Finalization of local history panels in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Macedonia and Serbia; Planning Teacher Training Seminars, disseminating the call (300+ applicants); finalizing lesson plans on the last 60 years of history in the Western Balkans; establishing cooperation with various partners, building sustainability of the project;
- Twenty eight young people trained in becoming peer-guide trainers, who will teach high school students how to guide their peers through exhibitions in Macedonia, Serbia, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina;
- Three produced Memory Walk videos in Serbia, featuring a forgotten monument (Non-Aligned Movement); a controversial monument (RTS building), and Staro Sajmiste – the missing memorial center controversy + 15 youths educated in exploring memorialization/commemoration and gaining basic film making skills;
- Three produced Memory Walk videos in Macedonia, featuring a forgotten monument (of female World War II heroine); a controversial monument (Marshal Tito, in Skopje), and Skopje 2014 large-scale monuments project + 15 youths educated;
- Finalizing the creation and production of educational materials (lesson plans, Memory Walk manual and dvd, Short life dvd, Exhibition Instructions Catalogue, Peer Guide Manual, etc.).

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

- Finalizing, translating into 5 languages and printing of all the Teacher Educational Materials; launching the HIP website, with all the downloadable materials online;
- Exhibition launch (January 27, 2016 in Skopje, Macedonia); Teacher Training Seminar I (February 17 – 21, 2016 in Zagreb, Croatia);
- Memory Walk Training of Trainers (February 20 – 23, 2016 in Zagreb, Croatia);
- Exhibition launch and Teacher Training Seminar (March 16 – 20 in Mostar, Bosnia-Herzegovina);
- Exhibition launch and Teacher Training Seminar (April 20 – 24, 2016 in Belgrade, Serbia);

- Starting the Memory Walk discussion tour throughout Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Serbia.

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 2015)

During the reporting period, the implementation of activities begun at the local level.

OUTPUTS (JULY – DECEMBER 2015)

- The small grants projects are operational in the field. As of 30 December 2015, out of 36 small grants beneficiaries that signed the Grant agreements in February 2015, the Project secretariat has already identified possible elements of good practice in 18 small grant beneficiaries and another 15 small grants that perform in accordance with the action plans and will be considered as possible good practices in the end;
- Coaching and counselling was offered to all selected municipalities. On-site visits took place a minimum of 3 times during the implementation of the small grants;
- Next to providing support to the working group and financing a national expert, the project provided an international expert opinion on the draft Action plan for realisation of rights of national minorities in Serbia (Chapter 23). The Project also funded the report on the Status and Position of National Minorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This is the first document of this kind produced in the country;

- The Steering Committee of the Project met in Sarajevo on 4 November 2015 and approved methodology for selection of good practice coming out of the Small Grant Scheme;
- Quarterly e-newsletters were issued with short updates on the progress made and distributed to more than 400 stakeholders in the region;
- First sequences of a TV documentary in Bosnia and Herzegovina aiming to illustrate the impact of the small grant projects on the lives of the national minorities in the field have been recorded.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

- The Small Grant Scheme is due to end in February 2016. The Steering Committee will select seven best elements of good practice coming from the field. In April 2016, the selected municipalities will receive additional EUR 6,000 grant awards to further develop and promote their ideas;
- Under the programme, a minimum of seven “Open day events” will be organized where the local governments will present their success stories to peer municipalities on national and regional level;
- As a part of the promotion of good practices and raising awareness and visibility of minority inclusion regional documentary will be produced;
- Training on project management will be offered to the small grant coordinators in each of the 36 municipalities. The aim is to create a forum for the discussion of the project implementation, the obstacles faced, and how they were overcome;
- Drafting of the Publication with decontextualised elements case studies from pre-selected elements of good practice will start in March 2016;
- The Final Regional Conference of the Project is planned for November 2016.

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://pip-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 2015)

All planned activities were implemented during the project duration.

OUTPUTS (JANUARY – JUNE 2015)

- Pilot projects for 49 inclusive schools were successfully implemented in the region. A catalogue documenting results from the schools' activities was published and disseminated;
- 35 new schools were added to the existing regional network to benefit from the learning platform;
- Inclusive Day awareness-raising events were organized in the capital cities of all seven beneficiaries;
- A tool to upgrade teacher education practices for inclusive education was published and disseminated in English and beneficiary languages;
- PolicyNet endorsed the regional policy recommendations on inclusive education and beneficiaries drafted actions plans;
- Project results were presented to around 200 participants at the final conference held in Sarajevo.

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 121.250 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 2012/297-405; CN 2013/314-991; CN 2012/307-562; CN 2013/325-468; CN 2013/325-470; CN 2015/369-230
Duration of activities:	30/11/2017 and 31/12/2018 (end dates)
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 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.

Until December 2015, donors pledged in total EUR 268.3 million to the RHP, out of which 159.4 million have been committed to and 120 million paid into the RHP Fund. Out of these, the European Commission disbursed EUR 84 million. The latest EU contribution to the RHP Fund amounting to EUR 11.3 million was signed in December 2015.

Funds committed to the RHP Fund will be spent on reconstruction of destroyed and damaged houses, purchase of village houses, buying of flats or building of pre-fabricated

houses. The European Commission has in addition paid EUR 26.9 million to offer technical assistance and direct support to the Partner Countries.

One of RHP's cornerstones is its regional nature: from exchanging information so that the most vulnerable beneficiaries could be selected to sharing best practices to speed up implementation, the RHP has strengthened neighbourly relations and enticed the Partner Countries to cooperate and build trust with each other. This contributes to the political stability in the region.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS (JULY – DECEMBER 2015)

Until December 2015, the Assembly of Donors approved 18 sub-projects which aim to provide durable housing solutions for 6,631 beneficiary families. This equals 24% of the originally estimated overall figure of beneficiaries in need. The total approved fund requests amount to EUR 133.1 million. EUR 124.6 million have been contracted, EUR 22.2 million so far disbursed, and incurred costs amount to EUR 3 million. During the reporting period the implementation of the RHP picked-up speed with an increasing amount of tender dossiers launched and several new construction sites opened.

OUTPUTS (JULY – DECEMBER 2015)

- The study on the needs for cross-border verification was completed in May 2015. Based on this study, EU funds were committed and partially disbursed to the four Partner Countries for beneficiary selection and cross-border verification activities;
- To reflect on the progress made thus far and on the operation capacity of the programme, two evaluations were launched in July 2015. The EC commissioned a Mid Term Evaluation (MTE) on the beneficiary selection and sustainability aspects of the RHP, while the CEB contracted a Mid Term Review (MTR) on the set up of the RHP and its technical aspects. The MTE and MTR were completed in November 2015, confirming RHP's relevance, design and implementation modality though mentioning delays and the need for quicker implementation. As a result, the donors agreed on a set of recommendations which were endorsed by all stakeholders and will aim to expedite implementation in the near future;
- By the end of 2015, the number of housing solutions delivered reached 237 (in Croatia, Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina). The Partner Countries' objective is to deliver some 1 400 housing solutions in 2016, 3 000 in 2017 and 1 900 in 2018;
- The construction works of 3 multi-apartment buildings (Knin and Glina, Croatia; Niksic, Montenegro) and 66 pre-fabricated houses (SRB) are on-going;
- First contracts ("grant schemes") were signed with 61 Serbian municipalities, which will provide 500 building material packages and over 300 village houses to the most vulnerable beneficiaries in their territories;

- A new building with 29 flats in Korenica, Croatia was inaugurated in September 2015. 58 flats were purchased throughout Croatia, allowing the eligible families to move into their new flats in 2015;
- To increase RHP's visibility, communication activities were intensified in 2015. Among other things, several documentary films and publications as well as two photo exhibitions were prepared. The promotional material is available at the RHP website (www.regionalhousingprogramme.org).

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

- Several work tenders have been prepared that will allow construction works to be launched in 2016: apartment buildings for 235 families in Belgrade, flats for 120 families in Konik, Montenegro, a building for 21 families in Benkovac, Croatia and a home for 68 elderly in Pljevlja, Croatia;
- Several visibility events are scheduled to take place in the first semester, for example to mark the start of works of two apartment buildings for 120 families in Konik Camp and for 235 families in Ovča, Belgrade; handing over of keys to 66 beneficiaries of pre-fabricated houses in Serbia; and start of construction works of a building for 21 families in Benkovac (HR).
- Meetings in the first semester of 2016:
Regional Coordination Forum: 3 February 2016; 11 May 2016
Technical Committee: 15-16 March 2016; 12 May 2016
Assembly of Donors and Steering Committee: 28-29 June 2016.

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 :	Eleni, Vossou, eleni.vossou@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 2015)

Platform level

EIF ensured coordination and facilitated the EDIF governance, including organisation of the Platform Advisory Group (PAG) meeting on 17 December in Paris (hosted by the OECD), 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.

In terms of Communication efforts the EIF continued to work on the website improvements in collaboration with the EIB (as Support Services coordinator) in order to:

- a. finalise a WB EDIF interactive map,
- b. finalise a PAG members log-in area,
- c. finalise a form to be used for PAG registrations as well as for events registrations.

The final layout of these communication developments was presented to the PAG members at the meeting in December.

EIF also continued to update the WB EDIF presentation – available on the www.wbedif.eu website and distributed the WBEDIF leaflet to various PAG partners for various events. Furthermore, the EIF participated at various conferences, often together with the EC, for the general promotion of WBEDIF including the Annual SEE Private Equity and M&A Forum in Belgrade in September and the EC's EU Access to Finance days held in Skopje in November.

During the December PAG meeting, the subject of governance was re-addressed and it was decided to maintain the voting structure as such, albeit consciously keeping an eye on the evolution in order to maintain a good balance within the PAG between the WB beneficiary members and IFIs.

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 have been extensive negotiations to secure investments from the various entities.

On 2 September 2015 ENIF held its first closing, whereby investments from EC, EBRD, Croatia, former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, as well as private investors were secured and the fund was able to reach just over EUR 25m in size, the breakdown of the investors is as follows:

Investor	Amount in EUR
EC (via EIF*)	12.5m
EBRD	5m
Beneficiaries:	
• Croatia	2.065m
• Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	0.309m
Private Investors	5.25m
Total	25.124m

* EIF itself is fully committed already at this 1st step (EUR 5m), with a condition for EIF and EC not to exceed 50% of aggregate commitments. EIF commitment will therefore automatically kick-in when the fund size exceeds EUR 25m, and will be complete when fund size reaches EUR 40.

This first closing was an important step not only for ENIF but for WBEDIF as a whole since it brought the final pillar to full operation. Negotiations continued through the following months in order to continue to secure investments, notably from KfW but also the remaining WB beneficiaries, expected for early 2016.

In addition, and in order to mark the important investments from Croatia and former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the EIF co-hosted press conferences in both Zagreb and in Skopje, together with the local PAG members and investing entities; whereby a good level of interest from the press was generated.

ENEF

Following the launch of the proprietary client relationship management tool, steps were taken in order to migrate this system online in order to ensure a consistent approach to marketing across all countries.

During the autumn months, the ENEF Investment Committee and the Board of Directors focussed on finding solutions to enhance the pace of operations in order to tackle the issues identified by EBRD within the scope of implementation and a challenging macroeconomic environment in the Western Balkans. As at December 2015, more than 360 companies have been screened, with higher potential industries in food processing, retail and niche segments

in IT & Telecom, export-oriented manufacturing. A summary of the IC and BoD considerations was presented to the PAG in December.

ENEF held one Annual General Shareholders meeting on 18 November in order to address various items such as the approval of the annual accounts, approval of an additional BoD member from DEG-Deutsche Investitions- und Entwicklungsgesellschaft, and some minor amendments to the subscription document. The ENEF Board of Directors meeting took place on 16 December to evaluate the status of prospective investments, approve a risk manager controller and approval to pass the abovementioned changes to the subscription document.

ENEF signed its second operation on 28 December for EUR 2m investment in Krajina Klas; a leading bakery and confectionery company in the Republika Srpska (RS), entity of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH).

Guarantee Facility

With the 6 agreements under the current budgetary allocation of EUR 20m showing very good levels of absorption, as presented to the PAG members at the meeting in December, work carried out during H2 2015 focussed on the drafting and finalisation of the replenishment of the Guarantee Facility.

The EIF and EC services met on several occasions and worked on the various iterations of the contract for EUR 17.5m, which required extensive attention being the first of its kind under the FAFA framework. The final version was signed by all parties on 23 December 2015.

Support Services

The EIB continued to provide the agreed triple services of management and coordination – refinement of needs and gap assessment – delivery of short term actions on the Western Balkan EDIF programme.

A consultant has been selected and deployed to conduct an SME financing gap analysis in the Western Balkan countries. The first country visits (Kosovo, Bosnia and Herzegovia and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) were conducted towards the year end. The EIB continues to monitor this activity closely, as it could provide valuable input for planned activities like the ex-ante study on Financial instruments requested by the Serbian government and capacity building on EU-type financial instruments in the region.

A selection process has been launched for a consultant to conduct the Service Programme on Intangible Assets/Intellectual Property (IP) which will compare local specifics in the area of IP protection and commercialisation, leading to an evaluation of monetisation potential for IP in the region. A further expected outcome would be to promote IP-driven business transactions and provide mentoring and guidelines to selected SMEs leading to commercialisation of innovations.

OECD: SME Policy Index & Triple Helix

OECD supports two projects on the WBEDIF value chain; the first being Triple Helix aimed predominantly at the pre seed and seed stages of SME growth, and the second working on monitoring of policy reforms across the regions.

The Triple Helix project, focusing on early stage SMEs, was launched in Kosovo, Croatia and Albania. After the country launch in January 2015, desk reviews and local expert interviews were conducted, followed by in-country interviews and questionnaires to identify what works. Just in Croatia, applications for Triple Helix project proposals were received from over 50 entities, of which 28 consortia (public R&D organisations and SME partners) with concrete projects for financing. The programme will help develop their business models and provide coaching to applicants with the objective of making the projects investment-ready.

EU Small Business Act (SBA) monitoring: a review of the methodology was carried out and dedicated monitoring dimensions have been added in order to monitor and assess the achievements on the identified EDIF policy reform priorities. The 4 main areas of priority have been integrated within the methodology and data analysis process. Following the second phase of data collection from local governments and other stakeholders, evaluating data and holding final regional meetings with stakeholders, the draft report is under preparation to be published in early 2016.

EBRD: Small Business Support (SBS)

This programme aims at improving the bankability of client SMEs. Progress in the region is already above expectation, with some very positive financial results for the period 2013-2015, including: 77% of clients increasing their turnover, 53% of clients increasing their number of employees (3000 jobs net), 63% of clients improving their productivity and 22% of clients securing external financing. This is due to a large team of over 30 working in the 6 countries.

The SBS creates synergies with other components of the WB EDIF, cooperating in joint company visits and marketing events with the ENIF and ENEF pillars, bank meetings facilitated through the Guarantee facility, cooperation with the OECD Triple Helix and EU REPARIS programmes. The SBS programme also participated in OECD's SBA assessment.

World Bank: Venture Capital and Investment Readiness update on activities

The project has two major activities; the first component is to provide an assessment of the ecosystem of the venture capital market in the beneficiary countries as well as to provide advice on institutional and policy reforms. Secondly to provide support to increase investment readiness of entrepreneurs in the region by means of providing a pilot mentorship assistance programme with hands-on training.

The VC ecosystem assessment (1st component) was tailored to the needs of each beneficiary. In Serbia, it is working with the government on a draft of the VC Law and the

roadmap Serbia should follow to harmonise with EU standards. In Croatia, where the VC Law has been in place for a number of years, WB efforts have focused to other areas. In Albania and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the analytical frameworks are still under discussion to conduct the VC assessment.

With regards to the second component - the Investment Readiness programme – and following extensive discussion on its scope within the Steering Committee, it has been scaled up to reach 300 companies throughout the region, all receiving assistance through a University of Texas Austin online programme, and participating in a business pitch competition entitled “Pioneers of the Balkans”. The SMEs were given opportunity to present their business cases to an audience of peers, private and institutional investors through a series of events held in Belgrade (211 pitches presented to 66 sector-specialised jury members) and the finals in Zagreb (at the Balkan Venture Forum).

World Bank : EU REPARIS: update on activities

The EU-REPARIS is aimed primarily at strengthening financial reporting capacity within the region. It will be implemented over 3 years with a budget of 3,6 Meur, and operates in 5 units:

- Institutional Frameworks and Regulatory Environment incl. Accounting and Auditing Standards,
- Education and Capacity Development at the Profession and University Level,
- Access To Finance and Financial Sector,
- Regional Cooperation and Knowledge Sharing,
- In-country Implementation Support.

During the year 2015, the World Bank developed relevant methodology, established a website and produced a number of publications. In May a Senior Officials workshop was held in Vienna to mark the launch of the EU-REPARIS programme, whereby workshops were also held to identify the short, medium and long term objectives for the countries concerned. A joint event was held in Belgrade with EBRD.

OUTPUTS

Platform level

With the seven 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 EDIF; furthermore EIF has delivered measures for the improvement in EDIF communications with items such as the quarterly newsletter, presentations, website improvements etc.

ENIF

ENIF first closing at EUR 25m was held on 2 September 2015.

ENEF

The second operation under ENEF was signed on 28 December 2015, with further operations at advanced stages of assessment and expected to be signed in early 2016.

Guarantee Facility

Implementation continues with six banks reporting 1,515 loans for an aggregate loan volume of EUR 98.3 million as at 30 October 2015¹. Many operations have reached, or are approaching full absorption.

Support Services

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. The Specific Grant Agreement for Technical Assistance entitled “Management services of the EDIF Support Services Pillar for 2015-17” was signed in November 2015.

The OECD supported innovative companies through its Triple Helix programme in Croatia, Albania and Kosovo. The SME Policy Index has been drafted and shall be presented in early 2016.

The EBRD continues its well-established SBS programme providing services to SMEs in the region through its network of local agents. The programme has received funding in the amount of €9 million from the European Commission.

The 2015 work programme for WB’s REPARIS was finalised, officially launched and the programme is fully operational. The WB’s VC Ecosystem assessment is underway and in different phases of implementation according to the specifics of each country. The Investment Readiness programme screened, evaluated and mentored 300 SMEs from the region, and provided a chance to present their business models to an audience of private and institutional investors, leading to a number of the companies receiving further rounds of investment.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

Platform level

The next PAG meeting is indicatively scheduled for 15 June 2016, venue still to be decided. The WB EDIF and WBIF secretariats will be coordinating on logistics. A PAG Working Group meeting is expected to take place approximately 5 weeks prior in conjunction with the

¹ NB this is unofficial data as presented at the PAG meeting of December 2015

Support Services Working Party (SUPWP). The Platform Coordinator PAG annual report Q2 2015 will also be prepared.

EIF's work as Platform Coordinator during the 1st half of 2016 will focus on the extension of the Platform Contribution Agreement (coming to expiry in December 2016) notably in order to allow for the inclusion of a travel budget for the WB beneficiaries.

ENIF

The second stage of closing, thus bringing the fund to approximately EUR 40m is expected within the first months of 2016, depending also on the available investments EIF will continue to assist and support the Fund manager in marketing and visibility efforts.

ENEF

Further signatures are expected within the first months of 2016.

Guarantee Facility

The signature of the new FAFA-compliant Delegation Agreement will allow EIF to publish a Call for Expression of interest asap on its website in order to deploy the available funds in the market.

Support Services

As Support Services coordinator, the EIB expects to present results of the ongoing Assessment of SME financing needs at the next PAG. The Intangible Assets/Intellectual Property service is expected to be launched and research on this topic in the Western Balkan countries underway by mid-2016. Additional Technical Assistance projects are under consideration and will be proposed with the criteria for selection focused on impact, visibility and implementation risk.

OECD is planning a high-level event to launch the SME Policy Index Western Balkans and Turkey in April 2016, followed by in-country dissemination events throughout the region.

The REPARIS programme will continue implementation through a series of regional workshops and conferences in Vienna. The VC Ecosystem programme shall continue in close cooperation with the participating countries.

The SBS programme under fresh financing plans a series of presentations promoting access to finance and know-how in various towns, visibility events and training for export promotion targeting consultants in Bosnia, trainings for entrepreneurs in Croatia, Kosovo, Montenegro, Serbia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Some of the events are specifically promoting Women in Business.

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 :	Eleni Vossou, eleni.vossou@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 2015)

By 30 June 2015, the outstanding investment portfolio in the EFSE amounted to EUR 949.2 million, thereof EUR 569.5 million in the Western Balkans and Turkey¹. During H2 2015, EFSE signed 25 investments totalling EUR 151.2 million, of which EUR 90.0 million with 9 Partner Lending Institutions (PLIs) were in the Western Balkans and Turkey. This brings the total number of PLIs with active investments to 76 and an outstanding investment portfolio by 31 December 2015 of EUR 944.1 million – EUR 591.0 million in the Western Balkans and Turkey.

In terms of the sub-loan portfolio, by 30 September 2015, the outstanding sub-loan portfolio amounted to EUR 876.8 million, including EUR 561.7 million in the Western Balkans and Turkey. This translates into an on-lending rate of 98% for the total Fund and 104% for the Western Balkans and Turkey by 30 September 2015.

¹ Includes Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey.

On the TA side, EFSE had 52 ongoing projects in the Western Balkan region and Turkey with a total volume of EUR 2.6 million. For example, in Turkey, the EFSE Development Facility is currently supporting a bank in increasing the capacity of the bank’s employees in agricultural finance. Moreover, the bank also considers it highly relevant to build up the capacity of their existing or potential clients to strengthen small agricultural businesses and reduce portfolio risk. In Bosnia and Herzegovina for example, the EFSE DF supports an MFI in improving the overall level of operational efficiency by making visible long-term improvements in the organizational structure and the internal work flows which will reduce costs and improve the institution’s financial sustainability.

During H2 2015, EFSE successfully raised additional funding subscriptions of EUR 70 million from private investors. This was enabled by the Fund’s strong performance also in the Western Balkan region and Turkey. Moreover, during H2 2015, the Fund was able to finalize new share commitments with all IFI shareholders with shares maturing end 2015. Overall, the Fund's performance remains very solid with continuously low impairment levels, very good financial performance, and continued further moderate growth leveraging the Fund's C Shares.

OUTPUTS

EFSE investment portfolio figures as at end Q4 2015*	
1. Total Invested Portfolio (Q4 2015 figures)	EUR 944.1 million
2. Number of current Partner Lending Institutions (Q4 2015 figures)	76
4. Type of Partner Lending Institution (Q4 2015 figures)	71% Commercial Banks, 16% Micro-finance Institutions, 13% Non-Bank Financial Institutions
EFSE sub-loan figures as at end Q3 2015*	
5. Active End Borrowers (Q3 2015 figures)	153, 666
6. Reached End Borrowers since inception (Q3 2015 figures)	688,871
7. Average sub-loan outstanding (Q3 2015 figures)	EUR 5,706
8. Disbursed sub-loans since inception (Q3 2015 figures)	EUR 4.8 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 2016, EFSE is facing a solid investment pipeline, for example, in Turkey and also in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Moreover, the EFSE DF will further increase its activities covering a broad variety of topics to support sustainable financial sector development. One of the planned activities in Q1 2016 includes, for instance, the development of a detailed business plan for the establishment of a national Financial Literacy Center which through targeted initiatives will equip Kosovar citizens with the knowledge and understanding of financial terms and concepts, and encourage greater trust in the financial sector, thus contributing to the sector's overall stability.

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 2015)

MSME Finance Window - The agri-scoring tool (CAP, now named TARDES) was transferred to the Turkish Credit Bureau (KKB). TARDES is being used extensively in agricultural loan evaluation process by seven user banks: Isbank, Akbank, Fibabanka, Bank Asya, ABank, Garanti Bank and Kuveyt Turk Participation Bank. As of end 2015, the number of agricultural

loan applications processed through TARDES exceeded 80,000. Three partner banks – Yapi Kredi Bank, Isbank and Vakifbank – established their dedicated agri-lending teams and sound agricultural lending processes.

Energy Efficiency Window - The first phase of TurSEFF was successfully finalised in early 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, four new projects were requested in the second half of 2015: one biomass, one wind power and two solar plants.

Small Business Support (SBS) - Since the inception of the Programme, 18 EGP projects were started under EU PSSF for Turkey. Out of these 13 projects were completed, 1 project is ongoing and 4 projects were cancelled (due to lack of management commitment or financial difficulties). The total number of BAS projects implemented is 165 (1 cancelled), of which all have been completed and 162 have undergone one year after 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, in total fourteen market development activities and one sector development activity were undertaken.

OUTPUTS(JULY – DECEMBER 2015)

MSME Finance Window - TARDES tool is increasing its penetration in the sector. Between October 2014 and December 2015 - 84,277 agricultural loan applications of seven user banks amounting TRY 4.8 billion have been evaluated through TARDES. As of end 2015, a total of 2,602 bank staff received trainings in study tour and classroom trainings with 183 bank staff receiving on-the-job trainings on top of classroom training sessions. On average, 93.8% of training participants evaluated the training programmes as “good” or “excellent” proving the high quality and relevance of training programmes. A new agricultural value chain finance scheme (VCF) has been established with the participation of a partner bank in Karaman.

Energy Efficiency Window - Two repeat transactions were signed with existing MidSEFF banks in 2015: Garanti (USD 100 million / EUR 89.37 million equivalent) and Yapi Kredi (USD 80 million / EUR 71.5 million equivalent). These funds were made available from reallocated direct risk participation funds.

SBS - Out of the 162 BAS projects that have already been evaluated, 93% have been rated as successful or highly successful. In addition, 86% of enterprises increased their turnover with a median increase of 25%, 64% of enterprises increased their productivity, with a median increase of 23%. 66% of BAS assisted enterprises report an increase in labour force, and BAS interventions contributed to the creation of over 1284 (net) new jobs. Furthermore, 17% of BAS-assisted enterprises received external investments within one year after completion of

activities, for a total of Euro 17.5 million. Lastly, BAS interventions further contributed to raising demand for external advice. 97% would consider using a local consultant again, whereas 38% of beneficiary enterprises have in fact already engaged another consultant within one year after completion of the BAS project. Since the beginning of the action, 5 EGP Projects have been evaluated under the Enterprise Growth Programme. Based on their year after total score, 100% of the projects have been rated successful or highly successful. All of the projects evaluated operate in Manufacturing Industry. 60% of the projects reported to receive external financing in their year-after evaluation. 40 % of the evaluated projects reported to introduce new business tools. 40 % of evaluated enterprises reported to receive on-site training workshops organised over the course of the projects.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

MSME Finance Window – In December 2015 EBRD requested approval for an extension of TA to support KKB. Subject to approval the TA will mainly focus on assisting KKB in marketing and promotion activities of TARDES as well as on ensuring financial stability. EBRD will also seek an official approval for use of a portion of available funding for “pre-implementation phase” for the planned SME Innovation Financing Facility.

Energy Efficiency Window - will continue to encourage the development of MidSEFF sub-projects from non-mainstream renewable technologies. The MidSEFF Project Consultant will work on developing projects with the aim of allocating all MidSEFF funds. It will also continue to monitor the implementation of active MidSEFF projects. The final verifications of the TurSEFF sub-loan portfolio are expected to be completed in 2016. The next phases of TurSEFF and MidSEFF - with expanded eligibility criteria compared to earlier phases - are expected to start implementation early in 2016. EBRD intends to submit an official request for budget reallocation from MSME Window to EE to provide additional TA to the extension of TurSEFF.

SBS - No EGP and BAS projects, are planned under the Facility in the first half of the year. A Sector Development Activity is planned to take place during the first quarter of 2016 and a training on Marketing and Selling Consulting Services (Grow Your Consultancy Business Trainings) will be delivered to local consultants.

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 :	Eleni Vossou, eleni.vossou@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 2015)

The activities of this project ended on 30 November 2015. During the reporting period activities are winding down and are focused on final disbursements and verifications of eligible sub-projects. No new project started during the reporting period. However, the SBS Window will continue completing and evaluating projects that have been submitted to WB PSSF during the implementation period.

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary programme, IPA 2009/021-373
Project title:	SME Recovery Support Loan for Turkey – Crisis Response Package
EU contribution:	EUR 30.0 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 2015)

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.

Main activities in the period June-December 2015:

- As foreseen in Article 6 (4) of the Contribution Agreement: *“The remuneration on the positive balance of the SME SUPPORT 2009 Special Account in Turkish lira will be determined and agreed by the Parties.”*, the EIB and DG NEAR agreed on the remuneration on the TRY trust account by way of an exchange of letter signed in October 2015;
- As planned, the first TRY loan repayments from the financial intermediaries were received in October 2015.

OUTPUTS (JULY – DECEMBER 2015)

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.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

The 2015 monitoring mission initially planned in October/November 2015 has been postponed to beginning of 2016 during the last Steering Committee (SC) on 10 September 2015. Based on an outline presented by the EIB, the same SC approved in principle the EIB investigating in detail the option for a second round of utilization of the EU funds following the successful implementation of the first round as recognised by the Independent Review carried out on behalf of the EC at the end of 2013. Prior to the SC, the EIB had announced both the EC in Brussels and Ankara, and the Turkish Treasury as the beneficiary of the funds once these will be re-paid. The EU funds are expected to be fully repaid by the end of April 2016. The outline presented during the SC included the inputs collected during the consultation EIB conducted with the key stakeholders during the second semester of 2015: *inter alia*, the introduction in the second round of some geographical concentration in favour of the Central and Eastern Turkish regions was highly welcome. Furthermore, the outline presented at the SC was prepared by the EIB in consultation with the EIF (European Investment Fund) which in the recent years have managed EU funds to deliver products targeting a similar geographical impact: this exercise was done as part of the scoping exercise to avoid overlapping between existing products and the second round of the SME Recovery Loan. It was also recommended, among others by the legal services, to be as consistent as possible with the original nature of the facility, hence maintaining the original structure of the facility also for the second option: interest free loan component matched with EIB interest rate loan component. Next steps in Q1 2016 include i) defining more in detail a term sheet, ii) testing it with the potential Financial Intermediaries to be involved in the second option, iii) reporting back the findings to the EC. EIB internal approval process of the EIB facility associated to the second round could be envisaged in Q2 2016.

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 Next Generation Competitiveness Initiative (NGCI) is aiming to improve the competitiveness of the Western Balkan economies by addressing structural economic challenges. The programme has three main components: the Competitiveness Outlook (CO) which monitors policies that affect competitiveness across 15 different areas and provides recommendations going forward, the Sector Component seeking to foster the competitiveness in two key economic sectors for the SEE region: food and beverage processing as well as tourism and the assistance with the preparation of the Economic Reform Programmes (ERPs).

The OECD South East Europe Division assists each of the potential candidates and candidate's country in the region by providing expertise in assessing whether each country ERPs reflects the most relevant, competitiveness enhancing policy priorities.

ACTIVITIES (JULY –DECEMBER 2015)

Activities in the second half of 2015 aimed at finalising the consultation process on the draft manuscript of the CO, preparing the manuscript for publication, printing the publication and sharing it with the key partners. To this end, the CO manuscript underwent a final, detailed review with 15 regional expert organisations and networks, as well as 13 OECD Directorates during August and September. During October and November, the manuscript underwent a review by a professional editor and his edits were subsequently integrated. The manuscript also underwent a mise-en-page by a designer.

Sector Component:

Activities in the second half of 2015 aimed at identifying and reviewing good policy practices and developing policy recommendations in the three project work streams: addressing key

skills gaps as the main barrier to sector competitiveness, increasing value-added and fostering regional integration. Furthermore, two pilot projects were pursued: the creation of online training modules for priority skills in the food and beverage processing sector and the development of a regional tourism brochure targeting the high-value cultural and historic tourism segment.

ERP assistance

During the one year circle of the ERPs, OECD provided:

- analytical support to governments in identifying obstacles for economic growth and competitiveness;
- assistance to governments in prioritising policy options addressing major growth constraints and enhancing competitiveness;
- reviews of the draft ERP prepared by the governments before submission to the Commission;
- support to the ERP co-ordination and consultation mechanisms of public officials involved in the ERP preparation and implementation.

OUTPUTS (JULY – DECEMBER 2015)

- The manuscript of the CO was finalised in December and preliminary copies were printed and sent to the European Commission, DG NEAR and the 15 regional expert organisations and networks;
- Sector Component, for both sectors, Expert Group Meetings with representatives from the public and private sector from across the region were organised to validate the recommendations and the pilot project progress as well as to provide direction for future work;
- The kick-off meeting of the ERPs 2016 cycle was held on 21 September 2015 in Paris, bringing together all the ERPs coordinators, government representatives, the OECD and the European Commission;
- Starting in October 2015, the OECD organised round tables in all the six economies with the exception of Turkey to support the ERP coordinators with the process;
- In-between assessments of the draft ERPs provided to all the countries.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

- On February 25 and 26 of 2016, the Competitiveness Outlook will be officially launched at a high-level conference in Paris. Subsequently, the publication will be presented at in-country meetings across the Western Balkans;
- Sector Component. The completion of the pilot projects as defined in collaboration with the Expert Groups;

- Advice on final drafts of ERPs. Share conclusions on the ERP 2016 process with the Commission and start preparing the 2017 ERP exercise.

3.5 HUMAN CAPITAL

Programme reference:	Program for World Bank knowledge and advisory services in pursuit of the objectives of Europe 2020 Agenda, IPA MBP 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 – 30/11/2015
Links:	https://collaboration.worldbank.org/groups/jobs-challenges-western-balkans (registration obligatory)
Contact :	Johannes Koettl, JKoettl@worldbank.org Bo Caperman, 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 (JULY – DECEMBER 2015)

The website to host a regional learning network on employment and social inclusion (**South East Europe Jobs Gateway**) was successfully continued with three additional events: First, the platform broadcasted a presentation on the impact of the Syrian refugees on the Turkish labour market on September 23, 2015. The topic is of great relevance for the Western Balkan countries at the moment and was met with great interest from counterparts from the region. Second, on October 13, 2015, the Serbian Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran, and Social Affairs presented the current reform program of the Serbian National Employment Service. The event was attended by government representatives from all six Western Balkan countries (linked via VC), and an intense debate about the merits of the Serbian reform program as well as other reform programs in the region examined. The event

was a great example of knowledge exchange from within the region and was much appreciated by all participants. Third, on November 30, 2015, an event on how to provide health insurance for the unemployed was hosted. This is a legacy issue of the former Yugoslavia that all countries in the region are or have been facing and have addressed to various degrees.

A meeting with RCC took place in Sarajevo to explore how strengthen coordination and the prospects of a joint employment observatory. For this latter activity, a proposal by the Vienna Institute for Comparative Economic Studies to establish a regional employment observatory has been reviewed and revisions requested.

In **former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia**, the analysis of the STEP employer survey on skills demand, jointly with the skills household survey, was continued as well as the drafting of three background papers on: labour demand (analysing the firm registry); informality; and an assessment of past employment strategies and action plans.

In **Montenegro**, with the adoption of the Human Development and Employment Strategy 2016-2020 by the government, all activities were completed. However, a follow-up mission was held in November regarding a potential support to the government for designing and implementing a novel occupational and wage structure survey.

In **Serbia**, finally, the STEP household skills survey is now in the field and data collection is well under way. The cleaned data set of the STEP employer survey is expected to be delivered in February. Regarding the poverty map, the World Bank team held a two-week mission in November where the Bank team was allowed access to a small sample of the census onsite at the National Statistical Office. The team started work on compiling a poverty maps, using two different approaches based on census data and SILC data. In addition, a series of workshops were held with the inter-ministerial working group to draft a new national employment strategy. The World Bank provides technical assistance to this process jointly with the ILO. A draft document is currently being drafted by the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs.

OUTPUTS (JULY – DECEMBER 2015)

The SEE Jobs Gateway Community of Practice (CoP) is now a well-established platform with many active members. The activities between July and November 2015 were less of a global nature and have focused more on knowledge exchange between policy makers from the region.

The background paper on the experience of employment observatories has been completed and will be shared before the next steering committee meetings for comments. A proposal from the Vienna Institute for Comparative Economic Studies to establish a regional

employment observatory has been received and revisions were requested from the Bank team, including financial information.

In Serbia the government is now drafting a new National Employment Strategy after a series of workshops supported by the World Bank and the ILO. Negotiations for a World Bank loan to reform the National Employment Service have been completed and the loan was approved by the World Bank board. Implementation will start in February 2016.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

Agreement came to an end 30 November 2015.

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 (SEECEL)
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 2015)

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):

- Finalising of piloting activities at all ISCED levels and TTA institutions: 97 pilot schools (ISCED 1,2,3), 7 TTAs, and 15 pilot universities (ISCED 5/6),
- Peer learning activities have started,

- Monitoring and evaluation of the teacher and school management training influence – data collected and analysis have started,
- Two newsletters of the Entrepreneurial Learning Student Club (ELSC) published in October and December 2015,
- Experience and good practices sharing through SEECEL's CoP platform with aim of increasing entrepreneurship level in pilot institutions.

Training Needs Analysis (TNA):

- Analysis of final reports of working group members and pilot institutions carried out,
- Research results published in the publication *Training Needs Analysis and Quality Assurance for SMEs – Western Balkans and Turkey's Small Business Community Experience*,
- Dissemination of publication online and in hard copy.

Small Business Act Assessment Methodology:

- Cooperation with ETF and OECD on drafting the human capital dimension chapters for the publication *SME Policy Index 2016: Western Balkans and Turkey*,
- Drafting separate SEECEL publication on success of SBA human capital dimensions assessment methodology.

Other activities:

- Contribution to EU developments in entrepreneurial learning as member of ET2020 Working Group on Transversal Skills, Expert Group on Entrepreneurship Key Competence Framework (DG JRC) and EU Danube Region Strategy,
- Leading international expert group in project *Entrepreneurship Education Experts Network* (EE HUB) to identify European good practices in entrepreneurship education).

OUTPUTS (JULY – DECEMBER 2015)

- 97 pilot schools (ISCED 1: 32; ISCED 2: 33; ISCED 3: 32), 7 TTAs and 15 higher education institutions implemented entrepreneurship as a key competence instrument;
- A total of 30 student articles published so far in ELSC newsletters;
- 69 peer learning visit plan developed and 39 peer learning visits realised (ISCED 1, 2, 3 levels);
- 852 EL lesson plans uploaded onto SEECEL's Teacher Knowledge Base;
- 1825 teachers and school managers pre questionnaire and 1735 teachers and school managers post questionnaire collected;
- 914 active members of the CoP regularly participate in information dissemination and sharing knowledge.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

- Continuation of peer learning activities and finalisation of piloting activities;
- Collection and analysis of report of all pilot institutions; drafting of final publications;
- Publications to issue: publication on SBA assessment process; fourth and final ELSC newsletter;
- Dissemination of publications.

3.6 TRADE

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary Programme, IPA 2014/031-603
Project title:	Support to CEFTA Secretariat 2015-16
EU contribution:	EUR 282,623.00
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans and Moldova
Type of contract:	1 operating grant with the CEFTA Secretariat
Contract reference:	CN 2015/356-713
Duration of activities:	01/04/2015 – 31/03/2016
Links:	http://www.cefta.int/
Contact:	Alberto Costa, 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 provides technical and administrative support to the CEFTA Structures (Chair in Office – CiO, the CEFTA Joint Committee – JC, the CEFTA Subcommittees, CEFTA Working Groups and CEFTA Committee for Trade Facilitation).

ACTIVITIES (JULY - DECEMBERE 2015)

The CEFTA Secretariat assisted the CEFTA Parties in the implementation of priorities outlined in the 2015 Work Programme and facilitated the organisation of all planned meetings of the CEFTA Structures, namely a) the 1st and 2nd meeting of the CEFTA Committee on Trade Facilitation where the CEFTA Parties discussed the CEFTA Trade Facilitation Agenda and the reporting procedures between CEFTA Subcommittees and Committee on Trade Facilitation, and decided to develop an action plan on Trade Facilitation; b) the 1st meeting of the CEFTA Subcommittee on Trade in Services where the CEFTA parties adopted the one-year Work Programme and recognised the need to have consistent, predictable and transparent rules for investment across the region; c) 2 negotiating rounds on liberalisation of trade in services which resulted in multilateral agreements across several subsectors including

communication, construction, health, distribution and education; d) the 10th meeting of the CEFTA Subcommittee on Customs and Rules of Origin where the CEFTA Parties discussed the Draft Ministerial Decision on Full Cumulation and Drawback, the revision of PEM Convention; e) the 11th meeting of Subcommittee on NTBs and TBT where the CEFTA Parties discussed the outputs of the GIZ Project on trade distortive measure in selected supply chains and agreed to explore administrative procedures regarding the electronic data transfer of trade statistics between national statistical offices and the CEFTA Secretariat so as to upload automatically trade statistics to the CEFTA MIS; f) the 2nd meeting of the Subcommittee on Agriculture and SPS addressing market access barriers in the beverages sector stemming from SPS related measures and the progress in the adjustment of CEFTA Structures; g) the 1st meeting of the Working Group on Trade in Services Statistics addressing common data reporting system and dissemination platform; h) the 4th meeting of the Joint Working Group on Investment Policy and Promotion focusing on SEE 2020 monitoring instruments related to the Integrated Growth, potentials for concluding multilateral investment agreements and further advancement in the area of coordination of investment policy and promotion activities; i) 2 meetings of the newly established Joint Working Group on Mutual Recognition of Professional Qualifications where agreed on a regional data base on Mutual Recognition Agreements (MRAs) to support evidence-based policy making; l) the CEFTA Deputy Ministers meeting to discuss and approve proposed priorities of the next Chair in Office and made preparations for the Joint Committee; m) the 9th Joint Committee meeting where the CEFTA Parties reiterated the strong interaction between the CEFTA 2006 and the SEE 2020 Strategy, emphasised the success recorded in the negotiations in trade facilitation, liberalisation of trade in services and in enhancing transparency.

Finally, the CEFTA Secretariat, in coordination with the UNCTAD, organised a Workshop on FDI Statistics with the objective of raising awareness on the importance of standards and guidelines regarding the compilation of data on FDI and to discuss a two-year work plan of the region on harmonization of data on FDI and activities of foreign affiliates.

OUTPUTS (JULY - DECEMBER 2015)

- 3 new CEFTA Bodies created (i.e. Committee of CEFTA Contact Points, and Subcommittee on NTMs, and Working Group on Technical Measures);
- Ministerial Decision to apply full cumulation of origin and duty drawback in the regional trade in CEFTA;
- Schedules of Specific Commitments in various services subsectors negotiated according to the previously agreed timetable;
- One-year Work Programme on Trade in Services;
- Two-year Work Plan on MRAs adopted;
- Bi annual and annual Reports on the CEFTA Structures' activities;
- 1 Technical workshop in cooperation with TAIEX, IFC, WTO and GIZ.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

In line with its mandate, the CEFTA Secretariat will provide the necessary technical and administrative support to the Chair in Office for the implementation of the Chairmanship Programme 2016 and will continue assisting the CEFTA Parties in the organisation of all the regular meetings of the CEFTA structures and in conducting negotiations.

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary Programme, IPA 2014/031-603
Project title:	Strengthening the CEFTA Structures and their implementation capacities (2015 – 2017)
EU contribution:	EUR 2,579,700.00
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans and Moldova
Type of contract:	1 action grant with the CEFTA Secretariat
Contract reference:	CN 2014/356-738
Duration of activities:	01/05/2015 – 31/04/2018
Links:	http://www.cefta.int/
Contact :	Fulvio Capurso, fulvio.capurso@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The Action aims to strengthen the capacities of CEFTA structures and supporting their efforts in implementing provisions of the Central European Free Trade Agreement in a way to enhance relevant capacities of the private sector and public administrations.

ACTIVITIES (JULY - DECEMBER 2015)

The CEFTA Secretariat undertook all necessary measures to implement the National Seconded Experts Programme, including the involvement of the CEFTA Ambassadors in Brussels to regulate the Seconded Experts' status in Belgium. Two seconded national experts (from Montenegro and Serbia) joined the Secretariat already in the first semester. The other two seconded national experts from Moldova joined the CEFTA Secretariat in July. They took active part in the activities of the CEFTA Secretariat, being involved notably in the preparation, conduct and follow-up of the Subcommittees meetings. Their contracts ended in December 2015. A new group of four seconded national experts (2 from Montenegro, 1 from Serbia and 1 from Kosovo) are expected to join the CEFTA Secretariat in January 2016.

To support CEFTA Chairs, a project map was prepared for all technical assistance in the areas related to the implementation of CEFTA. The map was distributed during the CEFTA Week.

To administer the CEFTA Project Facility, the Secretariat had launched a tender for contracting a procurement officer. The contract with the awarded consultant who will act as

the procurement officer was signed in December 2015. Also a direct contract was signed with the financial administrator of the Secretariat who will act as the payment officer for the Action.

OUTPUTS (JULY - DECEMBER 2015)

2 national experts seconded to the CEFTA Secretariat and directly involved in the work of the Subcommittees and in the organisation of workshops;
CEFTA Week Publication (mapping on-going and planned trade related technical assistance);
CEFTA Week Report outlining the highlights of the event.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

The CEFTA Secretariat will continue to implement the Seconded National Experts Programme and will ensure the involvement of all Seconded National Experts in the work of the CEFTA Structures.

A number of service contracts will be signed to provide the CEFTA structures with the necessary assistance to facilitate the on-going negotiations on trade facilitation and liberalisation of trade in services and to support CEFTA Structures contribution to the development of the economic corridors. In addition, it is expected that the tender for the creation of the CEFTA Management Information System will be launched and contracted by the end of February 2016.

Furthermore, the CEFTA Secretariat will mobilise technical assistance to strengthen coordination between regional and national projects in the field of trade policy falling under the areas of trade facilitation and liberalisation of trade in services, and visibility and outreach of CEFTA. Visibility of CEFTA will also be enhanced.

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary Programme IPA 2013/024-091
Project title:	CEFTA Project Facility II
EU contribution:	EUR 0.44 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans and Moldova
Type of contract:	Contribution agreement with the CEFTA Secretariat
Contract reference:	CN 2013/335-161
Duration of activities:	18/12/2013 – 17/12/2015 (extended to 17/07/2016)
Links:	http://www.cefta.int/
Contact :	Alberto Costa, alberto.costa@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The specific objective of the Action is to provide the CEFTA Parties with technical assistance related to the priorities identified in the Integrated Growth Pillar of the SEE Strategy 2020, where specific technical preparations is needed.

ACTIVITIES (JULY - DECEMBER 2015)

The tendering and contracting stage under CPF II was completed in 2014. 2015 was entirely dedicated to implementing the contracted tenders.

The part-time project assistant (PA) to the CEFTA Project Facility assisted in the implementation of eight events and performed monitoring missions in Besci and Belgrade. Additionally, the PA contributed to tendering and contracting five projects in the framework of the Action.

In order to assist the CEFTA Parties in the implementation of the commitments set up in Terms of Reference of the WG on Trade in Services Statistics, the CEFTA Secretariat in coordination with UNCTAD organised a Workshop on FDI Statistics with the objective of raising awareness of the importance of standards and guidelines regarding the compilation of data on FDI and discuss a two-year work plan of the region on harmonization of data on FDI and activities of foreign affiliates. The participants (representatives of ministries of trade/economy responsible for trade and investment issues, central banks and statistical offices from CEFTA Parties) agreed preparing a regional report on investment trends and flows following the UNCTAD methodology (CEFTA Investment Report), which is expected to be published in mid-2017.

In the area of services, an independent consultant was engaged by the CEFTA Secretariat to assist in the process of negotiating liberalisation of trade in services. The objective of this project is to support the activities of the CEFTA Negotiating Group on Trade in Service. In addition to technical expertise on trade in services, the consultant provided capacity building support for both the members of the Negotiating Group and the CEFTA Secretariat.

OUTPUTS (JULY - DECEMBER 2015)

- MIS workshop, 22 September 2015 (Belgrade);
- Coordination meeting of Chief Negotiators to Framework Agreement, 1 October 2015 (Brussels);
- First meeting of Working Group on Trade in Services Statistics, 6 October 2015 (Besci);
- Workshop on Introduction of Full Cumulation and Duty Draw Back into CEFTA, 20-21 October 2015 (Belgrade);
- Strategic meeting to prepare the Joint committee meeting, 5 November 2015 (Belgrade);
- CEFTA Week 2015, 23-26 November 2015 (Chisinau).

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

There will be no new contracting and tendering by July 2016, as all the contracts currently under implementation will be concluded by that date. The CEFTA Secretariat will monitor the implementation of the ongoing contracts.

During this semester, the action will provide technical assistance to the CEFTA Parties to support the preparation of their national positions in the negotiations on electronic exchange of data (Additional Protocol 5) and will finance negotiations rounds on this matter. In addition, the action will finance the organisation of several thematic workshops.

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 developed a pipeline of priority investments in the accession countries valued at approximately EUR 13.5 billion. To date, a total of 200 grants have been awarded to 160 projects for a cumulative value of EUR 332.5 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.

The European Commission is the largest contributor to the WBIF and has channelled a total of 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 under the WBIF several blending and financial instruments such as REEP (EUR 20 million), Municipal Window (EUR 57.2 million) and EDIF (EUR 58.6 million)

Between 2008 and 2015 bilateral donors have in total contributed more than EUR 49 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 half of 2015 included in particular the 14th call for proposals for WBIF TA support, the identification and approval of 8 mature projects for co-financing under the connectivity agenda, the revision of the WBIF founding documents, the transposition of the NIC framework by the beneficiary countries and the launch of a "new MIS".

In June 2015, the call for project proposals – round 14 – was launched and overall 13 project applications were received. The Project Financiers' Group (PFG) met in November 2015 in Podgorica to assess the grant applications.

The 13th Steering Committee (SC) meeting of the WBIF took place in Paris on 16 December 2015 and was hosted by the Council of Europe Development Bank. Based on the recommendations from the PFG, the SC approved 10 WBIF grants for a total of approx. EUR 15.1 million. All of the applications approved were for technical assistance grants.

The 13th WBIF SC took place at a time where the WBIF is progressively implementing the "new methodology" launched in December 2014. The objective was to prepare WBIF for new challenges under IPA II and the EC's new Financial Regulation. A parallel development to the "new methodology" is the "Connectivity Agenda" embedded in the so-called Berlin process, for which the WBIF is seen as one of the main delivering tools – via IPA II financing together with IFI loans.

2015 was largely considered to be "a transition year", with gradually firmer and more transparent and systematic structures from 2016 and onwards. The foreseen IPA II funding is about EUR 100-150 million per annum for both TA and grant co-financing. The programming for 2015 and the identification of potential projects for co-financing required from the beneficiaries to submit to the COM, via the NIC, a list of prioritised projects for co-financing by the end of July. At the SC in Paris in December eight connectivity projects were approved for a grant allocation of EUR 145 million.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

The indicative work programme for the first part of 2016 includes the launch of the 15th round for TA project applications without any restrictive eligibility criteria, thus opening the round for both new national and new regional projects in all four WBIF sectors. The deadline for applications is 19 February 2016. The SC in Paris launched the first call for proposals for investments grants. All four sectors are eligible for co-financing, the approval of environment and social sector projects being subject to availability of funds from bilateral donors since IPA funds should be allocated to connectivity projects only. The deadline for submission of applications is 31 March 2016.

The next PFG will be held in Brussels in May 2016. The next SC meeting will take place in June 2016 in Norway being the WBIF SC new co-chair.

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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 :	Wolfgang Schlaeger, wolfgang.schlaeger@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The IFI Coordination Office refers to the consultancy service contract awarded by DG NEAR 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 2015)

- Preparation and follow-up of the WBIF Project Financiers' Group and Steering Committee meetings.
- Support in the identification of mature connectivity infrastructure projects to be financed from IPA 2015 Multi-Country envelope.
- Assistance to the beneficiary countries with the implementation of the new WBIF methodology, the setting-up of National Investment Committees (NICs) and the preparation of Single Project Pipelines.

- Participation in various working groups (8th Energy Efficiency Coordination Group, TEN-T Days 2015, 5th WB EDIF Project Advisory Group Meeting, etc).
- Support in updating of the Grant Application Form for blending facilities (GAF).
- Preparation and production of an information package for the Vienna Western Balkans Summit.

OUTPUTS (JULY – DECEMBER 2015)

- Draft WBIF Project Fiches for connectivity projects to be financed under IPA 2015.
- Development and implementation of action plans for the establishment of National Investment Committees and operationalization of the Single Project Pipeline; delivery of a NIC Assessment Report.
- Review of the existing pipeline and identification of a list of projects potentially eligible for co-financing in 2015 and 2016.
- Launch of the new MIS and unified website.
- Support to beneficiaries with their applications for call for project proposals Round 14.
- Drafting and submission of Terms of Reference for IPF4.
- Delivery of the bi-annual Monitoring Report November 2015, bi-monthly reports of active WBIF projects.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

- Support the preparation and organisation of WBIF related meetings, in particular the the WB Summit in Paris and the 14th WBIF Steering Committee in June 2016.
- Support the Road Map implementation, in particular with view to finalise the revision of the legal and contractual arrangements as well as revision of the founding documents of the WBIF.
- Screening of applications from call for TA project proposals Round 15; support in screening of applications from call for co-investment grants Round 1.
- Maintenance of the WBIF website, update of databases of investment and IPA flows, development of additional modules and operationalization of the new MIS.

4.3 WBIF INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS FACILITIES (IPF)

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.eu
Contact:	Élodie LOPPÉ, elodie.loppe@ec.europa.eu

Programme reference :	Multi-country programme IPA II 2014/031-603
Project title:	Support to the Western Balkans Investment Framework projects - Infrastructure Project Facility
EU contribution:	EUR 22.42 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	Specific Grant Agreement with the European Investment Bank
Contract reference:	CN 2015/368-253
Duration of activities:	17/12/2015 – 31/12/2020
Links:	www.wbif.eu
Contact:	Élodie LOPPÉ, elodie.loppe@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The Infrastructure Projects Facilities (IPFs) are consultancy services implementing Western Balkans Infrastructure Framework (WBIF) technical assistance grants for priority investments in the transport, environment, energy and social sectors.

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). IPFs provide technical assistance for project preparation (feasibility studies, designs and Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA), etc.) and implementation (tender dossiers, works supervision).

IPFs are managed directly by DG Enlargement, in the case of IPF 3, or indirectly by the European Investment Bank (EIB), in the case of IPF 4 and IPF 5.

ACTIVITIES (JULY – DECEMBER 2015)

IPF 3 was launched in June 2012 under DG NEAR's direct management. With a total budget of 22.5 million, it has been assigned 25 projects. IPF 3 activities are in full swing with seven projects completed, 17 on-going and one under mobilisation. The end date of activities is mid-2018. IPF 3 is also carrying out, at the request of DG NEAR, a gap analysis on connectivity major infrastructure projects in the Western Balkans.

To ensure the implementation of WBIF technical assistance grants in the most efficient manner while minimising the administrative weight on the European Commission, it was decided that the next IPFs (from IPF 4 onwards) would be managed by the EIB.

IPF 4 was launched in June 2014. With a total budget of EUR 23 million, IPF 4 has been assigned the implementation of 17 technical assistance grants. One has been completed, eight are on-going and another eight are under mobilisation. The current end date of activities is 2018. In parallel, IPF 4 completed in September 2015 a gap analysis on flood prevention and management in the Western Balkans, analysis requested by DG NEAR.

DG NEAR signed in December 2015 a Specific Grant Agreement with the EIB to extend IPF 4 activities and contract a new IPF, IPF 5.

OUTPUTS (JULY – DECEMBER 2015)

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 the implementation of IPF 3 and IPF 4 active sub-projects.
- Signature of IPF 5 contract in June 2016.

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 2015)

The sub-projects in Gjirokastra and Fier in Albania suffered major delays as the municipalities needed time to meet the performance milestones set by KfW, pre-requisite to proceed with the procurement of the construction services. Despite the delays, the municipalities proved successful in building their capacities. Works contracts were finally awarded and the purchase of construction material and equipment with EU funds was completed before the end of 2015.

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 submitted 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 and completed end 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 and the technical acceptance procedure end 2015.

All investments and consultancy services for the water supply and sewerage system programme in the municipalities of Kraljevo, Losnica, Sabac, Pancevo, Smederevo and Sombor in Serbia were already previously completed.

OUTPUTS (JULY – DECEMBER 2015)

- Finalisation of construction works or purchase of material and equipment.
- Strengthening of the management and financial performance of the water utilities.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

Project closure

Programme reference :	Multi-beneficiary programme, IPA 2008/020-300
Project title:	Municipal Window of the Infrastructure Project Facility
EU contribution:	EUR 16.0 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 2015)

The Bosnia and Herzegovina sub-project, part of a larger WATSAN project, originally covered seven municipalities. Due to considerable delays to complete project preparation documentation and the decision not to extend the implementation period of the Action, the Action was reduced to work contracts in five municipalities: Tomislavgrad, Široki Brijeg,

Orašje, Bosanski Petrovac and Bosanska Krupa. Works in all municipalities were completed before the end of 2015.

In Montenegro, the inception report was provided in September 2011 but the municipalities faced severe delays when preparing the design documents. Resulting from these delays and the decision mentioned above not to extend the implementation period of the Action, the project was reduced to the municipalities of Pljevlja and the Old Royal Capital of Cetinje. Construction works in both municipalities were completed end 2015.

As for the Serbia sub-project, works on Boulevard Kralja Alexandra were completed in August 2010, early results showing that the traffic flow had improved and the travel time for tramway passengers had decreased, resulting in a significant increase of the number of tramway users. The second road, Vojvode Stepet, was completed end 2015.

OUTPUTS (JULY – DECEMBER 2015)

- Finalisation of construction works.
- Improved quality of service.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

Project closure.

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary programme, IPA 2008/020-300
Project title:	Municipal Window of the Infrastructure Project Facility
EU contribution:	EUR 3.0 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 2015)

The project was completed in November and is now undergoing the testing phase.

The project experienced serious delays in the course of its implementation. First, due to the political context, the Loan and Grant Agreements only became effective in November 2011. Later, following the failure to the contractor to start activities, a termination notice was issued and a new contract was signed with the secondly ranked tenderer. The severe floods that hit the region in May 2014 further delayed the construction. The plant itself was not damaged, as it was built above flood level, but the access to the site was disrupted. A final delay was caused in 2015 by VAT return issues resulting in the suspension of works. The latter were eventually resumed and completed early November. The testing phase started immediately afterwards and should be completed in February 2016.

Despite these difficulties, the project was successfully completed and will achieve fully its objectives.

OUTPUTS (JULY – DECEMBER 2015)

- Finalisation of construction works and beginning of testing phase.
- Strengthening of the management and financial performance of the water utility.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

Project closure.

Programme reference:	Annual Programme 2008 II for Kosovo, IPA 2008/020-454
Project title:	Municipal Window of the Infrastructure Project Facility – Kosovo Window
EU contribution:	EUR 25.0 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 2015)

The water and sanitation sub-project suffered substantial delays starting with the signature and ratification of the Loan and Financing Agreements and continuing during implementation in particular due to poor construction site management by the contractors; unforeseeable findings on site implying additional drilling or changes to the pipes route in the course of the project. Activities should be finalised during the first semester 2016.

The Pristina district heating sub-project also experienced major delays and difficulties. Partly due to Termokos cash flow problems, following lengthy negotiations regarding the guarantee of a secured heat supply to Termokos and partly due to a substantial cost increase following a change in technology, resulting in the need to secure additional funding. Works on the first turbine were completed in November 2014 with the immediate result that the winter 2014-2015 was the first time a 24-hour service was provided. Works on the second turbine were completed during spring 2015 and testing was performed end of 2015. The system is now fully operational and fuel oil is not needed anymore, resulting in substantial savings allowing Termokos to reach financial sustainability and improving considerably the quality of the air.

OUTPUTS (JULY - DECEMBER 2015)

- Improved quality of service, especially with the first winter season with the district heating system fully relying on cogeneration;
- Progress of construction works;
- Strengthening of the management and financial performance and the water utility and district heating company .

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

- Amendment to the contract to review the final payments arrangements.
- Completion of construction works; Initiation of project closure.

Programme reference:	IPA 2007/019-340
Project title:	Horizontal programme on the Energy Efficiency Finance Facility (EEFF)
EU contribution:	EUR 34.7 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans and Turkey
Type of contract:	Contribution Agreements with EIB, EBRD, CEB/KfW
Contract reference:	CN 2008/163-442 (EIB); 163-440 (EBRD); 163-444 (CEB/KfW)
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 AND OUTPUTS (JULY – DECEMBER 2015)

EIB: The Turkish component of the EIB credit line counts 15 sub-projects for a total grant amount of EUR 4.6 million. At the end of December 2015, 14 sub-projects were positively verified and grants disbursed to 13 of them. The Croatian component is fully allocated to 9 sub-projects for a total grant amount of EUR 3.3 million. As at the end of December 2015, five sub-projects were positively verified and grants disbursed to four of them. So far, under both components, most sub-projects concern RE investments.

As at 31 December 2015, EIB had disbursed EUR 5.5 million of grants to verified sub-projects including EUR 4.7 million of investment incentives to the sub-project promoters.

CEB/KfW: The KfW credit lines (partly refinanced by CEB) continued to advance in Serbia. UniCredit Serbia and ProCredit Serbia showed great commitment to placing the credit lines. KfW closely monitored the progress of the Programme and is in frequent exchange with the partner banks to promote disbursements and pipeline development.

During the reporting period, the partner banks signed twelve new loans to end borrowers. Ten IPA grant payments were disbursed to end clients. Since the start of the programme, a

total of 42 sub-projects loans have been signed by the two partner banks and a total of 19 IPA grant payments have been disbursed to end clients. The overall grant amount disbursed to end borrowers and partner banks was EUR 5.03 million.

EBRD: The EBRD credit line of EUR 60 million is fully allocated through 8 Participating Banks – three banks in Serbia for EUR 33 million, two in Bosnia and Herzegovina for EUR 15 million and three in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia for EUR 12 million. The EUR 60 million credit line has been fully disbursed to Participating Banks (PBs).

By 31 December 2015, the PBs have on lent more EUR 59.9 million (or 99.9% of the credit line) in energy efficiency and renewable energy loans. The number of signed sub-projects has reached 135 (supported by 137 sub-loans) for a cumulative sub-loan portfolio of over EUR 59.9 million. Corresponding incentive payments to sub-borrowers amounting to EUR 9,248,818 have been committed by 31 December 2015. The portfolio of signed sub-projects will achieve combined expected annual energy savings of 482,866 MWh per annum and abatement of 161,759 metric tons of CO2 equivalent per annum.

In order to facilitate successful verification of the sub-projects under the facility it is anticipated that further time extensions will be issued to both consultants in H1-16 due to project completion delays experienced on the Sub-borrowers side, linked to issuance of operating permits for two sub-projects in Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as the phased implementation of the final project signed under Halkbank Macedonia. Two of three remaining sub-projects are expected to be completed and verified by early mid-2016.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

EIB: Under the Turkish component, the consultant will verify the remaining sub-project in the portfolio. As the EIB loan is fully utilised, new project agreements with the participating banks have to be amended to include the EEFF. The EIB loan with TKB was amended in October 2015; the finalisation of the negotiations for the amendment of the EIB loan with TSKB is expected during the first quarter of 2016. There are currently no new sub-projects in the pipeline; the consultant and the EIB are following up on pipeline development with the participating banks.

As the Croatian component is fully allocated, 2016 will be dedicated to the verification of the four remaining sub-projects, to achieve full disbursement in October 2016.

CEB/KfW: ProCredit Bank has fully placed the credit line with the end borrowers. For UniCredit Bank, the consultants will continue to verify the remaining projects in the portfolio and will assist the partner banks in further pipeline development. The full loan amount is expected to be disbursed within the next semester.

EBRD: Continue sub-project implementation, completion and verification of three remaining active sub-projects. Project Consultant to provide clarification as necessary on the Final report, submitted to EBRD for review and approval.

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, 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 (JULY – DECEMBER 2015)

During second half of 2015, the GGF signed 7 investments totaling EUR 73,53 million in Albania, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey and Georgia, bringing the total number of Partner Institutions with active investments to 32. Significantly, this Partner Institutions figure includes 2 direct investments in hydropower projects, one in Albania and one in Georgia.

During 2H|2015, the Fund made significant progress on the planned expansion to six countries in the MENA region, namely Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan, and the Palestinian Territories. Full Board approval of the expansion was obtained, and consultations with all the Fund's stakeholders was positive. The Fund's governing

documents, the Issue Document and the Articles of Association, have been revised, and will go to the Shareholders for approval in 2016.

GGF continued to build upon the strong momentum of the previous year, increasing the environmental impact of the Fund through considerable on-lending and outreach. GGF's cumulative sub-loan portfolio reached EUR 268.9 million by the end of September (December, 2015 figures not yet available).

On the funding side, no new commitments or investments were obtained during the period. However, groundwork was laid to increase private sector investments by up to an additional EUR 32 million in early 2016, which would make private sector investors as a group the largest shareholder in the eFund.

The Fund was active in TA as well, with 19 projects for a total budget of EUR 618,431 approved during the second half of 2015. The current funding of the GGF TAF amounts to EUR 12.4 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 2016 and beyond.

The Fund continues to actively attend industry events, and to participate in the Energy Communities Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy coordination group meetings.

OUTPUTS (JULY – DECEMBER 2015)

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 307.1 million.
2. Number of active Partner Institutions (Q4): 32.
3. Number of target countries (Q4): 13.
4. No asset impairments have been accorded.
5. Measures financed (Q3): 35% improvement in processes, process related equipment, 31% buildings, 19% use of RE for commercial energy generation, 4% agri-equipment, 3% use of RE by households and businesses, 8% Others.
6. Sectors financed since inception: Households 31%; Manufacturing 32%; Services 24%; Commercial 8%; Agriculture 3%; Transportation 1%; Other 1%.
7. CO2 Savings / CO2 Reduction: 317,089 tCO₂/yr / 51%.
8. Energy Savings: 1,231,218 / 48%.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

The Fund will enter 2016 with a strong pipeline, with investments under consideration in Montenegro and Turkey (in addition to several planned investments in the European Neighbourhood Regions East and, subject to final Shareholder approval, South). The Fund is

seeking additional private capital to further leverage the investments of the donors and IFIs. At the same time, additional funding, particularly for C Shares and TA is being sought, given the GGF’s growing portfolio and expanding activities.

During the first half of 2016, the GGF TAF facility will continue to support the GGF investments particularly in Montenegro and Turkey (as well as the ENR East and South) with several projects supporting the EE and RE lending activities of the partner institutions. The TA Facility is also supporting a number of initiatives to facilitate the planned expansion of the Fund into the ENR South.

Programme reference :	Multi-beneficiary Programme, IPA 2012/022-966
Project title:	Regional Energy Efficiency Programme for the Western Balkans
EU contribution:	EUR 20.0 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, 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 2015)

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

Theme 1 ESCO Support

ESCO legislative work (policy dialogue)

Policy dialogue assignments were concluded in Serbia, Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina. In Serbia the Ministry of Mining and Energy adopted a bylaw to the law on rationale use of energy. The bylaw covers public sector energy efficiency (ESCO) projects and includes contract templates for street lighting and public buildings.

ESCO project preparation work

REEP supported the preparation of 9 street lighting tenders in Croatia and Serbia, with 2 projects being tendered. In Bosnia and Herzegovina the tender preparation of an ESCO energy efficiency project in a large cantonal hospital and a biomass ESCO project in district heating are being prepared. Two new assignments have been launched in the reporting period for street lighting, one feasibility study for a project in Pristina, Kosovo, and a scoping study in Montenegro.

Theme 2 Energy Efficiency Policy Dialogue

Several deliverables were completed in the period including completing the legislative drafting for all workstreams, developing the EPBD-compliant energy performance calculation software. Four new assignments commenced: NEEAP preparation in Albania, EPBD transposition support in BiH (Republika Srpska), software training in Kosovo, Bosnia and Herzegovina and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

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

The last two tranches signed for EUR 1.5 million each with Ohridska Banka and NLB Tutunska Banka, Macedonia in Q4-2015.

- The Project Consultant (PC) assessed a total of 76 projects during the period
- 66 verification site visits were successfully conducted
- WeBSEFF II Sustainable Energy Excellence Awards 2015 was held in October in Zagreb, 9 sub-projects were awarded and 9 PFIs received certificates of acknowledgement of their commitment
- 9 New Case Studies have been developed/uploaded on the website
- 9 Award films have been produced and published on the website
- 3 Public events were held (workshops/seminars/forums) in Croatia, Macedonia and Serbia.

Window 3 Sustainable Energy Direct Financing Facility:

In the reporting period, there were two new projects approved under WeBSEFF for a total of up to EUR 10.2 million. One of them envisages the development of a Small Hydropower plant (SHPP) in Montenegro with installed capacity of 3.5 MW, while the other one consists of developing 3 SHPPs in BiH with a total installed capacity of 4.6 MW. These are the first SHPP projects in these two countries and thus contribute to the geographical diversification of the WeBSEFF. When completed, they would qualify for up to EUR 1.02 million of incentive payments under the REEP.

The pipeline of potential projects, includes two biogas projects in BiH and Serbia, and another SHPP project in Montenegro. These are still in an early stage and may be approved in H2 2016.

OUTPUTS (JULY - DECEMBER 2015)

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 the ESCO bylaw was adopted which effectively transposes the ESCO related aspects of EU2006/32/EC and parts of EUR 2012/27/EU. Finalised contract templates for street lighting and for buildings were delivered to the legislatures in Montenegro and in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

ESCO project preparation work

Street lighting tenders were completed and delivered to 5 municipalities in Croatia and 4 in Serbia. 2 of these tenders were published during the reporting period. These street lighting projects are now in different stages of procurement and implementation. Expected electricity savings are up to 70%, depending on the installed technology prior to technical upgrades. In Bosnia and Herzegovina detailed energy audits and technical analysis' were completed and delivered to a cantonal hospital and to a municipal district heating company.

Theme 2 Energy Efficiency Policy Dialogue

All assignments under this theme are nearing completion.

In the EPBD Domain, headline outputs delivered to relevant countries cover final regulations and policy recommendations covering implementing minimum energy performance standards, national calculation methodologies, energy performance certification, the regular inspection of heating and air-conditioning systems, finalisation of software specification and design.

In the Procurement domain, all planned outputs have been completed: finalisation of procurement rulebook and guidelines for Montenegro and delivery of associated training and capacity building; development of procurement rulebook for Serbia (but still pending final approval).

All activities under the NEEAP support are delivering on schedule.

Window 2 Sustainable Energy Credit Lines

All PFIs have signed to the credit line for a total of EUR 92 million; EUR 89 million is committed and available for disbursement.

By the end of H2-15 185 sub-projects have been approved and loans signed for a cumulative total of EUR 49,620,414. Of those, 32 were signed in H2/2015 for EUR 5,057,752.

62 sub-projects were successfully verified by the Verification Consultant in H2-2015. To date EUR 951,620 has been paid in investment incentives to sub-borrowers, of which EUR 313,362.99 was paid in H2-2015. To date the total (equivalent) primary energy savings is 326,731 (MWh/y), with CO₂ emissions saving of 92,798 (tonnes/y).

Window 3 Sustainable Energy Direct Financing Facility

As of the end of 2015, the EBRD had approved six projects under the second phase of the WeBSEDF: four small hydropower plant projects in Albania, BiH, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Montenegro, a biomass project in BiH, and a biogas project in Serbia. The amount of finance provided is EUR 28.1 mln. Their implementation will add 24.3 MW of electricity generation capacity, with annual production of 241.7 GWh and will lead to estimated CO₂e emission reductions of 331,427 tonnes a year. Of these six projects, one has been completed and three are expected to be verified as completed in early 2016. In total, they will qualify for up to EUR 1.79 million worth of incentive payments.

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)

In Serbia it is planned to complete a draft Energy Supply Contracting (ESC) contract template.

Additional policy/legislative support might be provided on an ad-hoc basis, as several countries have indicated interest and need for support.

ESCO (project preparation work)

In Croatia and Serbia it is planned to continue preparing street lighting tenders, support tendering, contracting and implementation. In addition it is planned to initiate water supply and building ESCO energy efficiency projects. In Bosnia and Herzegovina it is planned to complete and publish the tender for ESCO project in the cantonal hospital.

Both in Montenegro and Pristina, Kosovo, the results of the scoping / feasibility studies will be discussed with stakeholders and subject to positive indicators the preparation of street lighting tenders would be started. Also, depending on additional interest, more street lighting tenders might be prepared.

Theme 2 Energy Efficiency Policy Dialogue

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

1. **EPBD Domain** – assist/support countries to adopt delivered laws and regulations; deliver EPBD software training; complete the final four call-offs;
2. **Procurement Domain** – assist/support countries to adopt delivered laws and regulations;
3. Domain relating to **NEEAP implementation** – complete Albania NEEAP development; complete delivery of final EEO support to Croatia and Montenegro.

Window 2 Sustainable Energy Credit Lines

- Continuation of project assessments and sub-loan signings by PC/PFIs.
- Continuous update of the website with monthly graphical presentations, statistics, achievements and case studies.
- Bank relationship managers to continue marketing activities and continue with marketing / awareness raising activities in all four countries.
- More focused efforts on facilitating understanding of ESCO financing to PFIs.

Window 3 Sustainable Energy Direct Financing Facility

During the first half of 2016, efforts will be made to progress with the approval of the early stage projects in the pipeline, as well as on verifying the completion of three projects. Most likely this will result in actual disbursement of the incentive payments.

On a related note, the available headroom under WeBSEDF is about EUR 21 million, of which EUR 15 million is earmarked for ESCO projects. Despite best efforts to identify such projects, significant barriers remain. Hence, it is essential to determine whether part of the allocation may be used for other types of renewable and energy efficiency projects.

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 3.2 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, 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 (JULY – DECEMBER 2015)

This project is currently under implementation after the successful tendering and contracting of all remaining activities by the IAEA. The successful contractor is working on the ground and a very smooth cooperation is reported by both the IAEA and the relevant national authorities involved in this project.

However, the main challenge is the following: this contribution agreement is foreseen to run until September 2016. This deadline was agreed upon by the Commission after the relevant request by the IAEA. In the summer 2014, the Commission amended the Financing Decision to allow for an extension in the implementation by 2 years. This extension, now appears, is not sufficient for the completion of all the works. The Commission has announced that a further extension will not be possible. The national authorities and the IAEA have been

informed accordingly. Discussions between all stakeholders are ongoing in order to find a workable solution.

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:	2015/356-441
Duration of activities :	25/05/2015 - 17/09/2015 (possible extension needed)
Contact :	Eleni Vossou, 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 (JULY – DECEMBER 2015)

This project is under implementation and is foreseen to be delayed. In order for the supplier to deliver and install the monitoring equipment, the Republic of Montenegro will have to take all necessary steps (including expropriations, licencing etc) in order to provide for the sites where the equipment will be replaced. The relevant authorities have requested 6 - 8 months period to complete this procedure. Currently, the end of this contact is foreseen for May 2016.

OUTPUTS (JULY – DECEMBER 2015)

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

Delivery is put on hold until the national authorities give clearance on the sites where the monitoring equipment will be installed.

Programme reference:	Horizontal programme on nuclear safety and radiation protection, IPA 2011/023-384
Project title :	Further enhancement of the technical capacity of nuclear regulatory bodies in the Western Balkans (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Kosovo*, Montenegro and Serbia)
EU contribution:	EUR 2.7 million
Beneficiary region :	Western Balkans
Type of contract :	Service contract
Contract reference:	2015/362-673
Duration of activities :	25/06/2015 - 24/06/2018
Contact :	Eleni Vossou, eleni.vossou@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

This regional project will aim at enhancing the technical capacity of the regulatory bodies of the beneficiary countries in the field of nuclear safety and radiation protection is fully compliant with the MIPD's objectives.

ACTIVITIES

This project started in June 2015. A first technical meeting was held in Vienna in July, where consultants and representatives of the beneficiary countries discussed the details of the various project tasks and made several clarifications on their implementation. A bigger kick-off meeting was held in Ljubljana, Slovenia on 21 and 22 September, 2015. During this meeting, detailed descriptions of the individual project tasks were presented by the task leaders and important issues concerning specificities and the individual needs of the beneficiaries were identified. An inception report outlining objectives, outputs and timelines was produced and submitted to the Commission. The activities of the project are now in progress.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

Commencement of activities, mainly transposition of the EU acquis and development of regulatory procedures, will start in January 2016.

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 5.0 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 (JULY - DECEMBER 2015)

Over the reporting period an important number of activities have been implemented.

In terms of general management activities: 2nd Annual Meeting of Air Working Group (Ankara, Turkey); 3rd Annual Meeting of the Working Group on Environmental Assessments (Vienna, Austria); ECRAN Steering Committee Meeting (27 November 2015, Brussels, Belgium).

Nature Working Group: Sub-regional Workshops on Appropriate Assessments (Serbia, Turkey, former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia); Sub-regional Workshop on Pilot Participatory Management Plan for the National Park Alps (Tirana, Albania); Regional seminar on protected area management and development of tourism infrastructure (Istanbul, Turkey).

Water Working Group: Screening Workshops on Water Framework Directive Program of Measures in Drina River Basin (Albania, Montenegro, BiH); Regional Workshop on Marine

Strategy Framework Directive (Skopje, former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia); Regional Workshop on WFD Program of Measures (Sarajevo, BiH).

Waste Working Group: Regional Workshop on remediation of the landfills (Podgorica, Montenegro).

ECENA Working Group: Workshops on compliance with environmental legislation (Tirana, Croatia, former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia); Workshop on application of IRAM/easy Tools (Croatia, Kosovo); Workshop on shipment of waste, management and landfilling of waste (Podgorica, Montenegro); Regional Common Inspection Training with IPPC industry – metal processing (Sarajevo, BiH).

Industrial emissions/Chemicals Working Group: Capacity building on compliance with chemicals legislation, with emphasis on REACH/CLP linked to IED – Technical Aspects (Skopje, former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia).

Environmental Assessments Working Group: Workshop on linkages between the Water Framework Directive (WFD) and SEA and EIA Directives (Prague, Czech Republic); 2nd Training of Trainers on SEA (Istanbul, Turkey); National Workshops on linkages and differences SEA/EIA/IPPC (Albania).

Air quality Working Group: 3rd Regional Workshop on Air Quality modelling (Ankara, Turkey).

Strategic Planning and Investments Working Group: National Workshops on Cost recovery and tariff setting (former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia);

Climate component: Development of INDC document for Albania and Montenegro (July 2015 – September 2015); Practical training on quantitative models and scenario development (Zagreb, Croatia); Seminar on assessment of GHG Inventories (Zagreb, Croatia); Regional Training “Operating a Competent Authority” (Vilnius, Lithuania); Regional Adaptation Workshop (Zagreb, Croatia); Preparatory meeting for Paris COP 21 (Brussels, Belgium); Side event COP 21 (05 December 2015, Paris, France).

OUTPUTS (JULY - DECEMBER 2015)

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

General management meetings: 3rd Annual Meeting Climate Component (Istanbul, Turkey); 3rd Annual Meeting ECENA (Vienna, Austria); 3rd Annual Meeting Nature Working Group (former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia)

Some of the activities planned under different working groups are: Participatory Management Plan on nature protection (Tirana, Albania); Tools and guidance for assessing resource and environmental cost in the WFD (former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia); The economics of climate change adaptation measures under WFD, MSFD and ICZM (Istanbul, Turkey); Eutrophication reduction measures under MSFD, WFD, UWWTD and Nitrates Directive (May 2016); IRAM Easy tools national training (Serbia); TFS study tour Antwerp Harbour Belgium and Rotterdam Harbour (Belgium); National trainings on EIA and SEA in industry, energy, construction of HPPs and wind parks (Kosovo); National training on SEA/EIA infringement procedures and court cases (Podgorica, Montenegro); Regional training with focus on hydropower and wind energy development (April 2016).

Under Climate component, the following activities will be implemented: Climate acquis training- Cars vans training, CCS (Serbia); ETS road map mission (Serbia); National systems workshop 2 (Albania); Operators training on ETS road map mission (Sarajevo, BiH); Workshop on modelling and INDCs (April 2016); Regional CRF sectors (2 - 6) Training (April 2016); Operators training/ on ETS road map mission (May 2016).

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:	Marija Simunovic, marija.simunovic@ec.europa.eu

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 2015)

Following the purchase and installation of operating, database and GIS software, necessary for functioning of the Sava GIS, as well as a successful design and upload of the RBM and FD database models in the previous reporting period, further efforts have been undertaken in order to establish fully functional Sava Geoportal.

The whole system has been migrated from the Contractor's infrastructure to the infrastructure of ISRBC and tested, with participation of the experts from all beneficiary countries. The testing was performed based on the agreed test scenarios, including those for final user acceptance testing. In addition, the Sava Geoportal was localized in all official languages of the participating countries. Further efforts were invested in upgrading the functionalities of the Sava Geoportal as well as in enhancing of its interface. Numerous documents were prepared (training plan, system and user documentation etc.). The training for users was also conducted.

In order to enable efficient implementation of this project, important for the whole ISRBC community, various meetings and events were organized in the reporting period, including the final project workshop held in September in order to present the capabilities of the Sava GIS to wide audience from different organizations. The project status was also presented to the relevant ISRBC expert groups (RBM, FP and GIS) and finally to the ISRBC members on its session in October 2015.

OUTPUTS (JULY – DECEMBER 2015)

The main outputs of the project in the reporting period can be summarized as follows:

- SavaGIS database, with the RBMP&FDR modules compliant with the reporting guidance of the related EU directives, established, tested and localized in all official languages in the Sava countries;
- SavaGIS web-based application for data and metadata management established and tested;
- SavaGIS Geoportal migrated to the ISRBC infrastructure, its capabilities tested and user interface improved;
- SavaGIS Administrative module established;
- Transfer of the knowledge: Users responsible for data management in the responsible institutions in the Sava countries capable for data exchange through the SavaGIS.

- System and user documentation finalized;
- A numerous technical documentation prepared.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

Delivery of the final project report to EC.

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 2.0 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, marieta.koleva@ec.europa.eu

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 - NOVEMBER 2015)

- Host nation support table top exercises:
 - 8-10 September, in Sarajevo, Bosnia&Herzegovina;
 - 15-17 September in Samsun, Turkey.
- Policy Workshop – Host nation lessons learned from table top and field exercises, 22-14 September, Budva, Montenegro.
- 2 exchanges of experts:
 - Focus on fire fighters, 28 September - 2 October, Rome, Italy;

- Focus on volunteers, 29 September - 4 October, Croatia and Slovenia.
- 3rd steering group meeting, 21-23 October, Bled, Slovenia.

OUTPUTS (JULY – NOVEMBER 2015)

Final Newsletter and 4th progress report.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

The programme has finished on 4 November 2015. Within the programme 68 events were organised for achieving specific purposes:

- to increase the ability of the Beneficiaries to effectively interact with the EU Civil Protection Mechanism and relevant EU institutions;
- to increase the capability of the Beneficiaries to further develop effective national civil protection / disaster response systems and collaborate regionally.

The broad IPA CP Cooperation Programme II provided good learning opportunities for all involved civil protection actors from Partner countries and from Consortium implementing the Programme and resulted in an enhanced common understanding of the civil protection interventions and operational cooperation within the UCPM. Moreover, all activities fostered a sense of solidarity and team spirit among experts from Western Balkans and Turkey and Consortium partners. Not only the working relations were strengthened, but also the ability to effectively communicate and cooperate during real emergencies was enhanced and already demonstrated during the floods in 2014 in the region. Programme activities contributed also to the signature of the agreements on participation in the Union Civil Protection Mechanism by Montenegro, Serbia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey. The EU has already been supporting the region through financing several disaster management programmes. The IPA CP Cooperation programme II took that already existing activities into account and provided also the bridge to new EU programmes in the region. The successful implementation of the Programme enhanced the visibility of EU CP activities and raised the recognition of the EU's contribution to the region.

5.4 FLOOD RESPONSE

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary Programme, IPA 2013/024-093
Project title:	Prevention, preparedness and response to floods in the Western Balkans and Turkey - Lot 1
EU contribution:	EUR 2.0 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans and Turkey
Type of contract:	Grant
Contract reference:	ECHO SUB/2014/692292
Duration of activities:	01/01/2015 – 31/12/2016
Links:	http://ipafloods.ipacivilprotection.eu/
Contact:	Biljana Zuber, biljana.zuber@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

To increase Beneficiaries' capacity to ensure proper flood risk management at national, regional and EU levels. Specific objectives:

- to increase Beneficiaries' capability to develop effective national civil protection systems and collaborate in a coherent manner in dealing with floods at regional/European level (prevention, preparedness and response). Developing multinational civil protection modules - flood rescue using boats (FRB);
- to support Beneficiaries in becoming better prepared to cope with the challenges posed by approximation to/implementation of the EU Floods Directive.

ACTIVITIES (JULY – DECEMBER 2015)

12th-14th October in Slovenia the workshop for development of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for national teams of the type "Flood Rescue using Boats" was organized. More advisory group meetings were organized in beneficiary countries in October and November 2015 in order to develop specific recommendations focusing on the gap analysis based on their respective needs; to be addressed in future actions in flood risk management.

OUTPUTS (JULY – DECEMBER 2015)

Two newsletters and first draft of the Standard Operating Procedures for national teams "Flood Rescue using Boats" and the gaps analysis on EU flood directive component were developed. Tendering procedure for the equipment was closed.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

- 19-21 January 2016 Regional Host nation support (HNS) Workshop in Budva, Montenegro (Lot 1 + Lot 2);
- 9-11 February 2016, 2nd workshop for developing SOP for Flood rescue using boats module (FRB);
- On 23 February 2016 the Initial Planning Conference (IPC) for the regional field-exercise which will take place in October 2016 in Croatia;
- On 9 March 2016 the second IPA FLOODS Steering Group meeting (Lot 1 and Lot 2) will be in BIH with back-to-back workshop on the EU Floods Directive;
- Training for operational staff for the modules.

Programme reference:	Multi-country Programme, IPA II 2014/037-853
Project title:	Prevention, preparedness and response to floods in the Western Balkans and Turkey - Lot 2
EU contribution:	EUR 4.0 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans and Turkey
Type of contract:	Grant
Contract reference:	ECHO SUB/2014/ 707177
Duration of activities:	22/07/2015 – 21/01/2018
Links:	http://ipafloods.ipacivilprotection.eu/
Contact:	Biljana Zuber, biljana.zuber@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

To increase Beneficiaries' capability to develop effective national civil protection systems and collaborate in a coherent manner in dealing with floods at regional/European level (prevention, preparedness and response). Capacity building for flood preparedness and response through establishment of multinational Civil Protection Modules for flood response – High Capacity Pumping (HCP) and Flood Containment (FC).

ACTIVITIES (JULY – DECEMBER 2015)

Lot 1 and Lot 2 are closely related, therefore, the first phase of the Lot 2 activities is the same as in Lot1. 1st steering committee meeting was organised in June in Rome, together with (Lot1+Lot2) where the work plan was discussed. From February to April the Consortium representatives conducted visits in all programme beneficiaries and met with national Disaster Management and Water Management Authorities and presented programme purpose as well as EU Delegations and Offices to the Beneficiaries.

OUTPUTS (JULY – DECEMBER 2015)

Each beneficiary has nominated focal points for the programme, two within national Disaster Management Authorities and one within the national Water Management Authorities. Needs assessments & gap analysis have been carried out.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

- 19-21 January 2016 Regional Host nation support (HNS) Workshop in Budva, Montenegro (Lot 1 + Lot 2).
- 26-28 January 2016 in Bonn, Germany, 1st Workshop for developing concept for national modules for HCP-FC.
- 9 March 2016 the second IPA FLOODS Steering Group meeting (Lot 1 and Lot 2) in BIH with back-to-back workshop on the EU Floods Directive.
- 3rd workshop for developing standard operating procedures (SOPs).
- 2 trainings for management staff of the multinational modules, HCP and FC.

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 2014 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 constitutes 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! Conferences 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 at strengthening 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. The main instruments (implementation modalities) of the action at regional level are the Framework Partnerships Agreements (FPAs), functional to create long-term CSOs coalition building and re-granting schemes for smaller organization;

- 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 defense activists, NGOs dealing with *acquis*-related subjects, journalists, young politicians and trade union leaders. TACSO has taken over the management of the third strand, the P2P programme applying a demand driven approach.

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:	
Web site:	http://tacso.org/
Database:	http://tacso.org/cso-db-res/reg/
Forum:	http://forum.tacso.org/
Facebook:	http://www.facebook.com/TACSO2
LinkedIn:	http://www.linkedin.com/company/tacso?trk=fc_badge
YouTube:	http://www.youtube.com/user/tascotube#p/u
Twitter:	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, thus contributing to the changes at the level of organisational and institutional/enabling environment development of the CSOs, improvement of the CSO visibility, better quality of CSO project funded by the EU, ensuring sustainability of provision of TACSO service.

ACTIVITIES (JULY – DECEMBER 2015)

During the reporting period TACSO focused on extensive cooperation, strengthening internal communication and overall work with the TACSO selected Resource Centres in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey.

Major events with the regional dimension encompassed:

- Regional Local Advisory Group with over 40 stakeholders representing national Local Advisory Groups (LAGs), Resource Centres and EU met in Bečići, Montenegro for two-days meeting with a focus on future TACSO planning and expectations;
- Events that TACSO through P2P organised contributing to the development of the enabling environment of the CSO participation were:
 - Open Government Partnership Regional Summit from the Western Balkans, organised in Tirana, Albania (10 – 11 Sep 2015)
 - CSOs and Community Building, organised in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina (18-19 November)
 - Philanthropy for strengthened CSO Capacity and Sustainability, organised in Belgrade, Serbia (24-26 November)
 - Volunteering and Legislative Framework - EU standards and good practices (16-17 December).

During the reporting period total of 11 P2P events were organised with over 730 attendees, the full list of events is available on [TACSO Web site](#).

TACSO Albania

TACSO Albania focused on CSO organizational capacity building and Support to the CSF. National training program on **Organizational Development and Management of CSOs** for 27 CSO representatives from various regions of Albania, concentrated on increasing the capacities of their staff in the areas of strategic planning, and management of CSOs. 87 CSO representatives participated in the trainings on **Application Procedures for IPA Grants-Writing Successful Project Proposals** for small and newly established environmental CSOs applying for small grants under IPA/CSF 2013 national grant scheme. Consultative meeting in collaboration of EUD to Albania on Programming on New Funding under IPA/CSF 2016-2017 was organised to introduce areas of support for CSOs, in Tirana (111 CSOs representatives). 120 CSOs from Albania participated in information session on Call for Proposals IPA/CSF 2014-2015 and EIDHR 2014-2015 national grant schemes.

TACSO Bosnia and Herzegovina

TACSO BIH and network NGO Council organized a conference on the topic of ***“Volunteerism in BiH – laws and practices”*** (July 1, Sarajevo) with participation of 47 CSO, government and media representatives. 43 participants benefited from ***Organization Development*** training workshops. In October, 30 CSO representatives participated in the consultative meeting ***“Input of BiH Civil Society Organizations for Planning Civil Society Facility 2016-2017”***.

Conference „**EU Guidelines for civil society 2014-2020, Introduction to monitoring in Bosnia and Herzegovina**“, (October 28) was attended by 67 participants from government, CSOs, donor organizations and media.

P2P Conference “*Partnership Forum: Partnership between civil society and business sector in BiH – challenges and opportunities*” was organized on 17-18 October in Sarajevo. 54 participants were from the civil society sector, social enterprises, government institutions, companies and media in BiH.

TACSO the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

National consultations on public funding of CSOs were held with 82 participants. 66 CSOs’ representatives participated in seminar “**News in the Law on Archiving Material and Archiving Practices**”. Training on basic project management – resource allocation and budgeting, was held in October 2015, with 27 CSOs’ representatives. Information event on “**Actual Migration Routes and the Response to the Refugee Crisis**” was organised in Skopje with 48 participants (Skopje). P2P training “**Constitutional Court and European Court for Human Rights as Mechanisms for Protection of Fundamental Rights**” in November 2015, it included 22 CSOs’ representatives.

TACSO Serbia

TACSO Serbia and Resource centre led by Civic Initiatives focused on providing technical assistance through Help desk services. Total of 77 single CSOs were assisted via field sessions on various issues.

In December conference „**PRacka**” gathered 93 CSOs from Serbia with the aim to build their capacities for communication with external stake holders and to increase visibility of CSOs’ work.

CSO’s role in promoting, monitoring and advocating for changes of local practice of transparent financing from local Self-government budgets has been constant TACSO focus in Serbia, series of trainings for CSOs was conducted and 66 CSOs/ 104 mechanism for EU assistance planning participants were trained. TACSO has been provided assistance to 34 national networks in order to enhance their capacities, while seven CSOs consortiums were engaged into capacity development activities for SECO.

TACSO Turkey

Due to the two consecutive Parliamentary elections in reporting period; Local Advisory Group meeting with participation of 27 representatives of 19 institutions & CSOs in July 2015. CSO Help Desk services provided jointly with Resource Centre, in the reporting period; **78** CSOs and stakeholders benefited from **online support, 10 face-to-face**. On 21 November, **workshop on fundraising** provided by TACSO to LGBTQI Local CSOs & Activists in Ankara, to 26 participants. Resource Centre had a **capacity building session** with Roma CSOs in Ankara on 28 November in Ankara with 15 participants. Design and launch of two capacity building support programs: **CSO Matchmaking support Program** and **Face to Face Capacity Workshops Program**; total of 30 applications received and supports started to be programmed. Design and launch of two Capacity Programmes for CSO networks: **Strategic planning and networking programme for networks and communication capacity building programme for networks**.

TACSO Montenegro

The **first NGO Fair** in Montenegro was organized by TACSO Montenegro in cooperation with the Centre for Development of Non-Governmental Organizations (CRNVO) - Resource Centre for NGOs in Montenegro. The fair hosted 53 NGOs from all parts of the country.

A conference “**Development of Social Entrepreneurship in Montenegro**”, aiming to improve knowledge of civil and public sector regarding social entrepreneurship was organised with 62 participants. Two public round tables on draft version of amendments **on Law on NGO** with total of 77 participants were organised aiming to contribute to improvement of legal framework for NGO performance in Montenegro.

TACSO Kosovo

Second workshop on exploring the **best model for public funding of CSOs** in Kosovo took place in December 2015. TACSO project supported Kosovo institutions in addressing policy issues of inclusion of the **Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities** in education system through organising a P2P SB event and bringing best experiences from the region and EU on access to education of marginalised groups. The event brought together perspectives from academia, parliament, government and civil society in addressing this issue and highlighted the need for better coordination and cooperation among sectors.

OUTPUTS (JULY – DECEMBER 2015)

TACSO PADOR video was translated into all languages used in the region and posted on TACSO social media. TACSO Turkey with RC updated “Funder Guide for CSOs” for 2015 providing over 100 resources for CSOs, also integrated the information to RC’s online database in July. TACSO Turkey and RC CSO Matchmaker Program activities scheduled to support capacity building workshops for over 40 CSO representatives via 10 local CSO applications. 17 tailored capacity building workshops in scope of Face-to-Face Workshops for Local CSO selected and started to be programed.

TACSO Turkey had 23 e-bulletins published: 112 CSO news, 20 Campaigns, 26 funding announcements on 14 CSO support programs, 17 EU news and calls were shared. Two e-bulletin special issues: one to promote CSOs working on refugees from Syria, one is CSOs campaigns for elections.

Macedonian TACSO worked on comparative analysis of the legislation regulating the treatment of CSOs with regard to the personal income tax and profit tax laws prepared and consulted with a group of CSOs and relevant Government representatives. “**Freedom of expression through the practice of the European Court for Human Rights**”- publication was prepared by Macedonian TACSO and Five relevant Decisions on cases from ECHR translated, used at training and made available for CSOs. Eight project ideas with logical frames prepared by CSOs within Macedonian TACSO training.

In Albania, 27 CSOs representatives from small and increased their capacities on the areas of organizational and management for CSOs and have embarked on drafting strategic plans for

their organizations, 87 CSO representatives got acquainted with newly applied sub-granting mechanism applied under IPA/CSF 2013. 3 out of 5 successful beneficiaries applying for small grants were CSOs benefiting from TACSO Albania training and help des services. 62 CSO representatives from newly established and rural CSOs are trained on how to develop a communication strategy and how to enhance their communications. The Draft Law on the Establishment of the National for Supporting Civil Society was approved by national Assembly of Albania in light of the recommendations of the Road Map for Albanian Government Policy towards more enabling environment for civil society prepared with TACSO support.

TACSO by Civic Initiatives in Serbia work resulted in five Network advocacy plans delivered and started implementation. Output of five trainings for Improving CSOs actions related to local practices of financing CSOs from public budget resulted in initiative of 44 Serbian CSOs to create a network/coalition for improving transparency in CSOs financing from local public budget. Information relevant for CSOs actions has been shared among more than 5.000 CSOs weekly via TACSO Serbia resource centre Newsletter.

Conference ***“Volunteerism in BiH – laws and practices”*** resulted in recommendations for harmonization of the legal framework of both entities and standards of the civil society sector needed in the field of volunteerism. Three Newsletters were produced and distributed.

TACSO Montenegro published the Report on Civil society achievements in 2013/2014; Annual Financial Reports of Civil Society Organizations in Montenegro (2013-2014); report: "The legal and institutional aspects of social entrepreneurship: comparative review of the situation in Montenegro"; report: "Legal regime for volunteering: a comparative overview of critical issues in the European Union in Montenegro”.

National Council members, members of the working group on public funding, representatives of the legal office and of relevant line ministries together with CSOs discussed and **agreed to adopt the mixed model** as more appropriate to regulate the issue of public funding for CSOs in Kosovo.

ACTIVITIES PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

All TACSO offices will be engaged in updating TACSO Needs Assessments and prepare new monitoring reports ‘traffic lights’ for the EU Guidelines, in the forthcoming period. TACSO Regional office will focus on preparing number of events in the forthcoming period: FPA Conference (January, Brussels); **Conference Civil Society and Beyond: A Joint Dialogue on the European Path** (February, Belgrade); and **Monitoring of the EU Guidelines for the Support to Civil Society in the Enlargement Countries, 2014-2020 – Year 2** (April, Istanbul). TACSO RO is planning training on Advocacy and Lobbying for representatives of the regional Framework Partnership Agreements supported by the EU under the IPA, in February. TACSO RO is also planning to conduct assessment of capacities of the regional CSO networks, and to develop regional donor directory. Finally, TACO RO will deliver capacity building program for institutionalization of TACSO services in the selected Resource Centres. TACSO BIH will

conduct the survey on Public Funds Allocation to Civil Society Organizations in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2014, the primary findings will be presented at the event **"Transparent allocation of public funds-EU best practices and models"** (29-31 March, Sarajevo).

Large-scale information event on IPA II in Ankara scheduled for February/March 2016, in cooperation with EU Delegation and Ministry of EU Affairs. **Intra-Sectorial Conference on Civil Monitoring of Public Policies and Implementation** scheduled for March 2016, and **Conference on Self-Regulation Models of Civil Society By Civil Society** is scheduled for April 2016 in Turkey. Follow up conferences on Speak Up! Conferences are planned in Serbia, Montenegro and former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in February.

TACSO Montenegro will organize three regional information meetings on the models and methods for Quality assurance systems in CSO. Development of Guidelines for the accreditation of CSO educational programs and licensing of social services on the basis of laws and the legal regulations will be worked on in the following period in Montenegro.

Conference **"Role of Civil Society in Public Administration Reform – EU standards and Practice"** will be organised in Pristina in April 2016. With the aim to examine the standards and good practices of CSO participation in public administration reform in the EU, share experiences from the region, share results of research on current state of play in region, develop proposals for improvement.

Capacity building programme 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. Focus areas will be transparency and communication with particular focus on use of social media for advocacy and lobbying purposes.

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	Maria Esposito, maria.esposito@ec.europa.eu Bo Caperman, bo.caperman@ec.europa.eu Olga-Elena Fimin, olga-elena.fimin@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 thorough mid-term review of the 18 FPAs was finalized in autumn 2014 and new contracts were subsequently signed with all the FPAs for the second phase of activity.

A short presentation of the main results achieved and new activities planned for each of the project is provided in the following section. 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)** continued to work with officials tasked with implementing Action Plans within the Open Government Partnership (OGP). Project partners published policy studies, briefs, conducted opinion polls, maintaining presence and visibility

of OGP issues in national policy debates. Resource materials were translated and made available in local languages. Methodology was developed for scorecards that will measure and compare levels of governmental transparency in the six project countries in the coming year. In September 2015, over 250 participants from civil society, government, media and other stakeholders gathered in Tirana for the first "Western Balkans OGP Dialogue". This successful event showcased bright spots of governmental transparency, created networking opportunities among activists from across the region, and concluded with a regional commitment by governments and civil society to moving forward on OGP goals.

The project "**Towards Efficient Public Procurement Mechanisms in the EU (potential Candidate Countries (2014/351-493 continuation of 2012/306/161))**" is managed by the Balkantenderwatch coalition (BTW) which consists of six organizations from five countries. The main objective of the project is the strengthening of civil society pressure on the authorities of the countries of the Western Balkans, in order to establish an efficient system of public procurement as well as accountability in the expenditure of public funds. A joint workshop took place in Belgrade in the period July-December 2015, giving the opportunity for 85 CSO and media representatives from 4 WB to become familiar with EU best practices in curbing corruption, main findings of the latest EU Anti-Corruption Report, as well as with different challenges in the area of public procurement system in WB countries. Another major achievement in this period was the regional conference held in Belgrade where the results of comparative research of legal and institutional public procurement frameworks were presented by BTW representatives, as well as effectiveness of existing systems, corruption risks and recommendations for advancing public procurement systems. In the forthcoming period, special attention will be paid to the preparation of shadow reports, but also to the analysis of particular public procurement cases at the regional level, especially in terms of their purposefulness. BTW coalition will by the end of the project implementation, analyze around 100 specific cases of public procurement in Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Macedonia (25 per country), in relation to both regularity, and purposefulness. The results of the case studies analysis, the comparative analysis of legal and institutional framework for public procurement, as well as shadow reports will be presented at the round tables which are to be organised in all 4 WB countries, as well as at the national conferences.

During the second half of 2015, **SELDI project (2014/351-414 continuation of 2012/307-476)** continued to monitor the anti-corruption developments in the region, and research the topics of energy sector governance deficiencies and state capture risks. The SELDI initiative held a [conference: Enhancing CSOs Advocacy Efforts for Countering Corruption in Critical Sectors in SEE: Leveraging the EU Accession Process and State of the Art Research](#) on 29-30 October 2015 in Podgorica. The participants noted the importance of free access to data, such as public procurement databases, asset declarations, financial audits of state-owned enterprises, the reports and recommendations by the European Commission. SELDI and the Business Advisory Council for Southeast Europe signed a Memorandum of Understanding during the event. The [SELDI workshop: State Capture: Drivers, Outcomes and Measurement](#)

was held on 3-4 December 2015 in Istanbul. The workshop gathered leading anti-corruption and good governance experts to refine the definition of state capture and identify potential ways to measure the phenomenon. In September 2015, the SELDI partners provided anticorruption policy recommendations to the 2015 EC Progress reports, based on the findings of the SELDI national Corruption Assessment Reports and the Regional Anti-corruption Report. Main expected results or activities planned for the next semester are: SELDI Final conference in Skopje (tentative date 4 October 2016); Expansion of the SELDI network and further strengthening the cooperation with national CSO networks and grass-roots initiatives, including joint anti-corruption activities and preparation of a Civil Society Strategy and Joint Strategic Programme for Good Governance and Anti-Corruption until 2020.

In the first quarter of the second phase of the **“SIGN for Sustainability” project (2014/351-410 continuation of 2012/306-172)** partners successfully advocated for a more enabling environment for philanthropy development. Amendment of Trag foundation succeeded to ensure equal treatment of social care service providers through adoption of Law on Amendments to Corporate Profit Tax Law, adopted by the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia in December 2015. In Montenegro, fAKT’s proposals to change the Corporate Income Tax Law have been accepted and their adoption is expected in 2016. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, recommendations made by Mozaik were adopted in the Income Law and Tax Law of Republika Srpska whereas the laws in Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina are still being drafted and prepared for adoption in 2016. In Kosovo, some of the recommendations have been incorporated in the latest amendments to Corporate and Personal Income Tax Laws that will be adopted in 2016. In order to further promote philanthropy and giving for public good, partners in four countries conducted an open Call for Nominations for their individual and corporate philanthropy. Awards received significant media attention, gathering more than 500 media reports across the region. Partners have also developed Manual for Implementation of Standards for Fundraising which is currently being translated into 6 languages and prepared for publishing. In the following period, SIGN partners will continue to advocate for legislative changes and adoption of sub-legal acts facilitating the implementation of existing legal mechanisms, continue with the implementation of the Regional Sustainability Academy and promote the Manual for Implementation of Standards for Fundraising, aiming to raise the number of signatory organizations and the level of Standards’ implementation.

In the period from July to December the **Triple A for Citizens project (2014/351-417 continuation of 2012/306-166)** launched a revamped website (<http://tripleacitizens.eu>) to give it a more modern look and to include an updated [Regional Service Providers Map](#) which includes organizations from the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, and Albania who provide access to information, advice, and active help services. A call for proposals was also put out and two pilot projects each from the former Yugoslav Republic of

Macedonia, Montenegro, and Albania were selected. The recipients will carry out advocacy-based projects in their respective countries and will also benefit from a mentoring program and study visits to Romania, the UK, and Ireland. The recipients are: The Tirana Legal Aid Society and Res Publica in Albania, NGO LIL and the Coalition All for Fair Trials in Macedonia, and the Association of Youth with Disabilities of Montenegro and the Centre for Civic Education in Montenegro. Lastly, from November 25-27 a Regional Conference was organized by the [European Citizen Action Service](#) and [Civil Rights Project Kosovo](#) in Pristina. Upcoming advocacy campaigns targeting the improvement of free legal aid, advice, and information services were brainstormed, while the work being done by Triple A partners on the current refugee/migration crisis on the region was also discussed.

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)** in the reporting period awarded seven investigative journalists with grants to work on investigations related to corrupt relations and practices in the media in the SEE countries. Their professional capacities were strengthened through the September seminar at the Guardian in London, and individual mentorship provided to them by renowned investigative journalists of the Guardian. Research reports on media ownership and finances in Kosovo, Montenegro and Turkey (new countries in the SEE Media Observatory), and on state-media financial relations in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Serbia have been released and distributed, contributing to public debate and elaborating the recommendations for concrete policy changes. In the next semester, a new series of media integrity research will be conducted to explore further main obstacles for media integrity in the SEE. Additional advocacy actions and campaigns by partner organisations and their “national coalitions for media integrity” will contribute to public debate and policy changes, focusing in each country on a concrete media integrity issue, elaborated in the findings and recommendations of the latest media integrity research reports and investigative journalism stories. Final conference will be organised to gather key actors and deliver final messages regarding prospects for media integrity in the region.

Balkan Civil Society Acquis – Strengthening the Advocacy and Monitoring Potential and Capacities of CSOs (2014/351-412 continuation of 2012/306-577). After the extensive monitoring of the operating environment for CSOs in Enlargement countries through the jointly developed Monitoring Matrix, the new Regional [Report for 2014](#) was published. Presentations of national reports took place in 8 Enlargement countries by BCSDN members throughout spring complementing the first cycle of EC Progress Report consultations. The Regional Report was presented at the [17th April workshop in Tirana](#) and at the European Parliament to MEPs and other key EU stakeholders, at the [4th June Brussels debate](#) “Norms over Forms: Empowering Civil Society in the Western Balkans and Turkey” hosted by Ms. Ulrike Lunacek - Vice-President of the EP. Advocacy on specific issues identified also commenced. In Albania, meetings with relevant ministries took place for presentation of the

social procurement policy paper. In the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, presentation of the state of affairs on [the Implementation of the Government Strategy for Cooperation between the Government and Civil Society \(2012-2017\) in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia](#) for the period June 2012 to December 2014 was organized to prompt its slow implementation. In parallel, the project has focused on building a new sustainable platform for monitoring and communicating findings with an internal group of experts that will introduce easy-to-use back and platform as of 2015 monitoring process. BCSDN has been monitoring EU's support to civil society in Western Balkans through the IPA CSF instrument. This year, a policy brief outlines how the EU assistance was used, the trends in implementation, the use of the IPA Cross-Border Instrument by CSOs, and provides a comparison of state funding in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia. The brief is available in English, Macedonian, Albanian and Serbian (www.balkancsd.net). Through an open call of the Balkan Public Policy Fund (SBPPF) 12 organizations received grants from BCSDN members on developing targeted policy and advocacy papers on key enabling environment issues in their countries, thus building a collaborative tools and civil society advocacy platforms. By end of 2015, the focused research of the study on economic value of the civil society will be published alongside the regular monitoring process and development of Government self-assessment tool on the state of enabling environment will be launched. (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) project in the period in the period July-December 2015 finalized the monitoring tool developed in the first phase of the Action and all IPA co-applicants involved started the monitoring of their national anti-trafficking policies against the standards set in relevant EU document, with participation of other national CSOs who have been trained to take part in the process. The work on creating a regional curriculum for judicial academies/centres for education of judges and prosecutors in the area of compensation for victims of human trafficking and other violent crimes has started. The whole set of proposals for the improvement of the situation in the area of compensation through legislative and institutional changes and changes in the mind-sets of judiciary is prepared in close and intensive consultations with all relevant stakeholders and this advocacy campaign will continue until the end of the Action. Strategic litigations are ongoing in three IPA states; in one case, the court partially decided in the first instance to the benefit of the victim as a plaintiff claiming compensation against two defendants, ordering them to pay around EUR 12,000. In the next six months the work on the model laws on the compensation fund and feasibility studies shall be finished and created documents presented to professional audiences, as well as the regional curriculum for judicial academies/centres for education of judges and prosecutors, alongside continuous advocacy campaign, with support of other

human rights CSOs in the country, for putting all these solutions in practice. The monitoring process shall end with national and regional monitoring reports on anti-trafficking policies in IPA states that will be presented at a regional conference in May 2016.

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 2nd half of 2015 the project team focussed its activities on Three major aspects: 1) Organisation of Round Table on Migration in Brussels; 2) Implementation of the Sub-granting project component; 3) Development of National Policy papers; 1. The IRIS Network together with Solidar on 10th November 2015, organised a roundtable debate at the European Economic and Social Committee titled “Migration and Fundamental Rights: Will the EU live up to its values?”. The event was attended by representatives from the Iris network and other SEE-based NGOs dealing with migration on the one side and representatives from EU-based organisations, the EC and EU parliament on the other. It was of high importance to present the work of these organisations in Brussels in order to obtain a better insight in the refugee crisis in the Balkans. 2. The sub-granting Call for proposals was launched and finalised. A total of 34 project proposals were received, out of which 15 were preselected and 13 granted and contracted after the completion of the selection process. These 13 advocacy initiatives are disbursed over 6 SEE countries: Bosnia, Serbia, Montenegro, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Albania and Kosovo. 3. Based on the national congresses of the IRIS networks in the region, each national IRIS network has been preparing a Policy paper with the aim to focus on several specific issues within SSD in SEE which they want to raise as being the most important ones. Based on these Policy Papers the National Iris Networks will conduct Advocacy Campaigns in 2016.

Coordinated efforts - toward new European standards in protection of women from gender based violence (2014/351-409 continuation of 2012/306-568). During the period of July-December 2015, the most important activities included the implementation of the joint campaign in 6 countries ([BiH](#), [Croatia](#), [Montenegro](#), the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, [Slovenia](#) and [Serbia](#)), organization of 4 international advocacy conferences (BiH, Montenegro, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Serbia), monitoring the implementation of the [Council of Europe Convention on Violence against Women](#), as well as development of the joint interactive database on the situation in the field of VAW in the region. Involving more than 150 women’s organizations, the campaign drew great media attention: there were almost 400 media appearances and TV and radio spots were broadcasted more than 200.000 times. Citizens actively participated in the street actions: more than 15.000 of them sent postcards to decision-makers with the campaign requirements and almost 6.000 people send a message or comment via the joint website [Potpisujem.org](#). The [Podgorica Declaration against VAW](#) was adopted at the international conference (Montenegro), which was organized in cooperation with the Parliamentarian Committee on Gender Equality and the TACSO People2People. More than 50 proposals for amendments to laws and policies were submitted to decision-makers, of which over 20% were adopted. The project activities were presented at the annual WAVE Conference in The Hague, where participated more than 40 organizations from the whole Europe. A

[methodology](#) for the baseline analysis in the field of VAW and [indicators](#) for monitoring implementation of the CoE Convention were widely distributed to the various stakeholders, including the Expert working group GREVIO. Key activities for the coming period will include finalizing online database, distribution of studies with an analysis of situation in the field of VAW for 2015, preparation of policy proposals, advocacy for positive changes and continuation of making connections with women's organisations out of the partner coalition.

Partnership to Ensure Reform of Supports in Other Nations - PERSON (2014/351-686 continuation of 2012/306-649). In the second half of 2015 the PERSON partnership completed its 2nd Face to face meeting of the partners in Istanbul and a joint training of the Turkish ombudsman on the right to legal capacity. Our Serbian partner, MDRIS presented its work on the right to legal capacity as part of a shadow reporting process to the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The Bosnian partner, SUMERO, hosted a successful roundtable workshop with national stakeholders discussing options for legal capacity law reform. In the next 6 months the Partnership will have its third face-to-face meeting of the PERSON partners. This will now take place to coincide with the rescheduled European Commission event in January 2016. Our Kosovo partner will hold its national seminar during this period. Another core activity will be the revision and publication of the final partner country reports on the existing law and current practice regarding legal capacity and guardianship in each country. As a whole, the partnership will prepare the project's final dissemination report highlighting the major activities, outcomes and successes of the partners over the 4 years of the project.

Corporate Social Responsibility for All - CSR for ALL Project (2012/306-569 and 2014/351-680). For the 2015-2016 period CSR for ALL Project is working to create awareness and build capacity in the area of Sustainability Reporting by organizing trainings at partner employment organizations (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. During 2015 CSR for ALL Project concluded its activities as it was foreseen in the TOR. These activities are: (i) National Review Study (NRS) which was piloted at each partner country. The aim with this study was to estimate and evaluate the Reporting and CSR awareness within in the partner countries. (ii) Round Table Discussion where the results of the NRS was discussed with the participants of national and international experts on CSR / Reporting. Speakers from UN SHIFT, Business Europe, Global Compact, Project Partners and Associates, Company Representatives participated to the RT and their inputs were included in the Supporting Package. (iii) Supporting Package which includes the training modules and agendas have been prepared.

Partnership for Reconciliation through Early Childhood Education and Development in Europe – PRECEDE (2014/351-609 continuation of 2012/306-585). In the period July –

December 2015, the main activities included a Regional training for over 90 early years practitioners and their mentors from six countries, held in Skopje (Macedonia), a regional training for the partners in sub-granting methodology, techniques and procedures held in Zagreb in November and local capacity building for the representatives of local CSOs and preschool settings in each of the partner countries in the field of action research, monitoring and advocacy. The sub-granting procedure was completed for opening the calls in all partner countries. The main results include: Croatian member of the PRECEDE network participated in the development of a new National Curriculum for early years education; the achievements of the work within PRECEDE in Serbia were included into the national analysis of the preschool education prepared for the World Bank; Ministries of Education in Kosovo and Montenegro approved the implementation of the Respect for Diversity programme in the public kindergartens. In the next six-month period, the planned activities include implementation and monitoring of the sub-granting activities, analysis of the implementation of regional programme Respect for Diversity at both regional and country levels, preparation for the International Conference and preparation of the tutorials about action research, monitoring, advocacy and quality of NGO organisations.

Citizens' Network for Peace, Reconciliation and Human Security (2014/351-549 continuation of 2012/307-468). Summer school on "Civic Resistance & Human Security" was held in Prishtina-Prizren, during August 5-12, 2015, with 35 participants from across Western Balkans & Turkey. Regional HS index development for Turkey, Bulgaria, Serbia & Montenegro are underway. Attendance to and presentations during Sabir Maydan, a workshop gathering of activists from across the Mediterranean in October 2015, in Messina, and, to the OSCE Parallel Civil Society Conference, in December 2015, in Belgrade, aimed to serve purposes of outreach, networking and expanding base of interest & advocacy. Planned for the next six months are: an Advocacy Mission to Brussels (January 2016); outputs of HS index work, and of regional/country research/studies with associated policy briefs & green paper; launch/implementation of e-learning & re-granting programmes; the NGO Forum in Sofia (in April); regional stakeholders event on refugees (Istanbul, May 2015).

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). Starting from September 2015 focus was on national seminars, campaigns, implementing sub-grants and monitoring and mentoring of the implementation of advocacy campaigns in different countries. The results achieved are the following. In Kakanj, BIH, a local community was helped to legalize its community owned water supply. In Albania, the creation of a coalition of environmental organisations and individuals for the river protection and setting up Vjosa river National Park was induced. Contribution to the campaign to protect Mavrovo National Park in Macedonia whereby the World Bank withdrew its funding for one of the

two big hydropower projects. Photo exhibition „Expressions of disapproval “was held in Brussels about air pollution in Pljevlja, Montenegro. European environmental groups call for protection of Sutjeska National park and supported BIH CSOs in stopping HE power-plants construction in the park.

In the second semester of the second phase of the **ESSEDRA project (2014/351continuation of 2012/307-143)**, the partnership realised a series of capacity building and training activities in order to implement the advocacy and fundraising strategy previously shared. On the advocacy side, new IPARD programs have been analysed to verify if the specific measures they advocated for were included. Based on the results, they developed an advocacy strategy plan for IPA countries for the forthcoming months. With regards to the grassroots level projects, all 7 targeted projects have been launched and rely today on a sound and detailed plan of action so to constantly monitor the state of play of the implementation. Albania selected the Mishavin cheese from Kelmend region, Bulgaria the Kurtovo Konare pink tomato, Croatia the Varenik, a concentrated grape juice, Macedonia the stanushina grape variety, Romania the bazna pig breed, Serbia the shopsko sir cheese from Dimitrovgrad and Turkey the gravyer cheese from Bogatepe. As for Okusi Hercegovinu's Slow Food Planet mobile application, the association started uploading the several recommended places they have gathered in the first semester, including a description of the restaurants, and producers, as well as pictures of them. Regarding the awareness raising component, in line with the communication plan, the partnership organized a number of national events, namely: Terra Madre Serbia in Novisad, Terra Madre Bulgaria in Sofia, and the participation of Fundatia Adept at the Rural Fest in Bucharest, and that of Okusi Hercegovinu in the Christmas Market in Sarajevo. The three events gathered producers from throughout the country and entailed ad hoc conferences, which attracted relevant speakers and stakeholders who could further contribute to the long-term strengthening of the partnership.

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) in the new phase, started in February 2015, organised joint initiatives of ENV.net partners especially aimed at informing citizens about the benefits of being compliant with EU environmental legislation and enable their active participation in the process. In the past 6 months, it focused on establishing proper communication strategy to keep key stakeholders informed about the monitoring exercise and have a solid ground of discussion with the national authorities, local media, CSOs and EU institutions. This was done especially through the elaboration of a bi-monthly bulletins, a special means of communication created to report on key issues or events, which is deemed relevant to alert key actors and also to stimulate a rich debate with the Commission. In the past months, the ENV.net partners also worked on a monitoring matrix web platform that aims at giving an overview on the approximation process to the EU environmental acquis in the countries

covered by the ENV.net network. In the next months, the ENV.net, through the financial support to third parties, will work to involve in the network CSOs from Bosnia&Herzegovina and Montenegro. To know more, visit the [ENV.net blog](#).

South East Europe Sustainable Energy Policy (SEE SEP) Program (2014/351-623 continuation of 2012 / 307 – 460). From July to December 2015, the SEE SEP project continued with the publishing of two new reports, as well as the launch of the 2050 South East Europe Energy Model. The Red Flag Report on Energy Efficiency, titled [Energy Efficiency... Just Do It! Act now for warmer homes, local jobs and cleaner air](#), was published in September 2015. The report [EIA/SEA of hydropower projects in Southeast Europe – Meeting the EU standards](#) was published in November 2015. Two energy model web tools were launched on November 30 2015, and are since then available online in English and local languages. [The South East Europe 2050 Carbon Calculator](#) is a technical interface aimed at experts and stakeholders that enables a more detailed analysis of physical and technical potentials in 10 different supply and demand sectors and 45 different parameters for 7 South East Europe countries. The [South East Europe 2050 Energy Model](#) is an animated online interface created with a purpose to introduce and simplify the topic of sustainable energy to the general public, to enable dialogue and give people the opportunity to choose the best energy pathway for the future, with the EU goal to reach the GHG emission reduction target of 80% compared to 1990 levels. In the last project year, we will be launching another Red Flag Report on energy poverty, energy model roadmaps for the region as well as one more Watch Dog report.

6.3 OPERATING GRANTS

Programme reference:	Civil Society Facility Programme and Multi-beneficiary Programme, IPA 2013/024-081
Project title:	CSF, Operating grants
EU contribution:	EUR 1.67 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans and Turkey
Type of contract:	Grants
Duration of activities:	01/12/2014 – 31/12/2015
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PURPOSE AND LATEST ACTIVITIES

Operating grants contribute to the general expenses of operating an organization whose overall mission and objectives correspond to the policy priorities of the European Commission. The current operating grants provide structural support to 10 regional partnerships of CSOs working on topics such as youth policies, social dialogue, rule of law, promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities and LGBTI persons. Following a call for proposals opened in 2014, the operating grants were concluded for a period of 12 months with the possibility of extension for up to 48 months. In the second half of 2015 an evaluation took place that resulted in the renewal of the operating grants for one more year.

Regional CSO platform advocating social innovation under employment policies that guarantees security for youth at risks - YOU SEE! Platform (2015/368-862 continuation of 2014/351-917). The project is designed to create a CSO platform enabling regional response to challenges stemming from the implementation of socio-economic policy reforms affecting youth. During the second half of 2015, the implementing CSOs prepared a Regional Policy Brief summarizing the results and recommendations from the National Baseline Reports, elaborated thematic chronicles on social innovation by collecting examples of good EU practices in the field, organized a three - day regional conference on youth marginalization risks and employment policies and carried out a national and regional advocacy campaign to promote the setting up of the Policy Agenda on social innovations in youth employment. Future activities that will be implemented in the second year of the project are: publication and dissemination of seven national Monitoring reports dealing with the effects that activation measures have on the employability of young people, elaboration of a Regional Policy Brief on mechanisms and tools for youth employment, organization of a regional workshop analysing the applicability of various social innovations, promotion of the on-line platform in view of enhancing cooperation among CSOs at regional and international level, organisation of advocacy campaigns that will strengthen political dialog and cooperation among key stakeholders.

Regional Youth Exchange Association (2015/371-378 continuation of 2014/351-845). The Regional Network of the Youth Initiative for Human Rights (YIHR) with offices in Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo and Croatia focuses on developing preconditions for the establishment of governmentally supported youth exchange programmes in the region of former Yugoslavia and Albania. More than 150 representatives of civil society organizations which advocate for the institutionalization of youth exchange programmes were gathered at the YIHR Regional Conference in Sarajevo in the period of 14-16 October 2015. This conference was organized as a follow up to the signature of the Joint Declaration on the Establishment of the Regional Youth Cooperation Office (RYCO) by the prime ministers of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia at the Summit on Western Balkans (Vienna, 27

August 2015). The participating CSOs discussed ways of including the Croatian and Slovenian governments into this process, as well as steps for operationalizing the Declaration signed in Vienna. Through its two members, the YIHR developed close cooperation with the RYCO Working Group formed out of the representatives of ministries in charge of youth policies, civil society organizations from the Western Balkans and the Franco-German Youth Office. The Working Group is currently elaborating the mission, vision, structure and mandate of the future regional office and will seek to finalize them by March 2016.

Young With A Voice (2015/371-191 continuation of 2014/351-938). Within the second project semester the newly created Youth Wellbeing Index consisting of 40 indicators in 5 areas (Education, Health/Drugs/STDs, Employment/Wellbeing, Political/Civic participation, Juvenile justice) was piloted in Serbia. In the same period, national simplicity campaign was launched and implemented in each project country, encouraging professionals, final beneficiaries and wider public to contribute to the simplification of child protection systems by giving their views on crucial questions that took into account the complexity of social exclusion. Furthermore, national story telling contests were organized in each project country as well, enabling advocates to collect and tell stories of youngsters at risk of social and economic marginalization. The best stories from the contest, simplification ideas and recommendations, as well as the Youth Wellbeing and Child Protection Index were presented at the final conference organized in each country, gathering together both local and national decision makers, relevant national and international institutions' representatives and CSO members. In the following project semester refining of the Child Protection Index methodology and indicators' framework will be initiated at the regional technical and stakeholder workshop, followed by the national trainings where the Index will be closely presented to the network members in each project country.

Balkan regional platform for youth participation and dialogue (2015/371-185 continuation of 2014/351-922). The project seeks to contribute to structuring regional cooperation between civil society and public authorities in the Western Balkans in view of improving the environment for youth activism and participation, in particular of young people with fewer opportunities. The main activities focus on creating a Balkan Network for Local Democracy comprising CSOs and local/regional authorities that can provide a framework for strengthening the capacities of CSOs and youth groups for creating a regional co-operation platform promoting active citizenship and participation in the reform process towards EU integration. The project partners adopted a Regional Co-operation Platform engaging Local Democracy Agencies and their host cities in the Western Balkans; conducted a capacity building programme for eight local Youth Task groups, a training seminar in Knjazevac, Serbia and a study visit and meetings with MPs of the Parliament of Montenegro; launched the Youth Art workshops and photo exhibitions organised in eight host cities; and conducted a comparative analysis of the legislative and institutional framework related to youth public policy making in the Balkan countries.

Towards a Western Balkans and Turkey LGBTI Human Rights Regional Association (2015/371-462 continuation of 2014/351-960). A Regional LGBTI Strategic Planning Meeting took place in Belgrade in July, gathering more than 30 LGBTI activists from the region, from 27 LGBTI organizations. During the meeting, and based on the results of the Regional Feasibility Study, a four-year Strategic Plan and 2016 Annual Work Program of the Regional LGBTI Association for Western Balkans and Turkey was discussed and formulated, along with the Regional Advocacy Plan for 2016 and Fundraising Plan for 2016. Moreover, the Statute of the Regional Association was developed, structure of the Regional Association was defined, internal documents and procedures of the Association have been developed. Following these processes, the Founding General Assembly of the Regional LGBTI Association was held in the National Parliament of Serbia, in Belgrade, in September, with 25 LGBTI organizations present as founders of the Association. During the Founding Assembly, the Association was established, the four-year Strategic Plan and 2016 Work Programme were adopted and the website was launched. In addition, the coming period will also be used for finalizing internal procedures and documents of the Association, and for recruitment of executive staff members.

Project “Strengthening NGO capacity and promoting public health and human rights oriented drug policy in South Eastern Europe” (2015/371-158 continuation of 2014/351-836). In the second semester a regional conference on “The UNGASS and its significance for SEE” was organised in Belgrade at the beginning of October. Participants from NGOs, experts in the field of drugs, researchers and policy makers from several countries in the region have been informed about the United Nations General Assembly Special Session (UNGASS) on drugs and discussed the topics that are on the agenda of the Assembly. The meeting adopted a statement where expectations of NGOs were expressed regarding the outcomes of the Assembly. The statement was disseminated as broadly as possible and was published in the UNODC UNGASS website. Two seminars on “Drug policy and drug legislation” took place in Belgrade, Serbia and Tirana, Albania similar to the one in Sarajevo in May 2015. DPNSEE has been registered as a legal entity at the Serbian Business Registers Agency (SBRA). The website has been developed and will be operational in the first half of 2016. In the framework of the project four issues of the quarterly Newsletter of the Drug Policy network SEE were published. Dissemination of the newsletter took place via the subscribers list and the websites of Diogenis, IDPC and TACSO. Main activities/achievements for the next period will be the organisation of the office and the recruitment of personnel for DPNSEE and the organisation of a conference in May 2016 about the outcomes of the UNGASS (April 2016).

Balkans Independent Disability Framework (2015/371-187 continuation of 2014/351-920). With this project, ACED and its partners - CIL in Serbia, UPCG in Montenegro and Polio Plus in Macedonia - will assist organizations dedicated to the fulfilment of the rights and needs of persons with disabilities (PWDs) to develop the organizational capacities of the Balkans

Independent Disability Framework (BIDF), as well as to undertake policy and legislative advocacy, public education campaigns and other related activities at national and regional level. Based on the results of a Baseline survey, a training curricula and training methodology were defined, with special attention to the capacities and level of understanding of the potential trainees. A total of 8 Basic and 4 Advanced Capacity building trainings in 4 project countries for BIDF network members were organized as well as 2 Internal Capacity building trainings for BIDF national representatives to foster networking structure development. The BIDF Regional conference was an opportunity to present the official registration of the BIDF Network as well as to bring to the public's attention the regional advocacy document "Guidelines and Recommendations on Harmonization of Legislation in accordance to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities".

Stronger Social Dialog in the Western Balkans Countries - SSD WBC (371-444 continuation of 2014/351-846). The project aims at strengthening the capacity of social partners in participating countries to contribute to national and regional development of social dialogue and harmonization with EU regulations (Serbia, Montenegro, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Albania). It is implemented by the Montenegrin Employers Federation (main applicant) and its partners: the Association of Employers of FBiH, BusinessAlbania, the Business Confederation of Macedonia, the Serbian Association of Employers, the Union of Employers' Associations of Republika Srpska. During the second half of 2015, the project partners prepared a publication on the state of social dialog in each country as well as at EU level, drafted a manual on social dialogue at local level and provided policy recommendations for addressing identified lacks in the work of the social and economic councils. The next year of the project will focus on strengthening the human capacities of social partners, by increasing their knowledge of collective bargaining techniques in the neighbouring countries, as well as on raising awareness on the benefits of social dialog on the economic situation in the partners countries.

European Integration and the social dimension: strengthening regional cooperation of trade unions in the Balkans (2015/371-495 continuation of 2014/351-847). The programme deals with institutional capacity building, expertise & knowledge building within trade union organisations in former Yugoslavia. It aims at promoting experience exchange in the main areas of trade union activities, policies and of their internal reform process, in order to empower them as strong actors in society and as recognized partners in the social dialogue. Due also to the efforts of the network, in Serbia and Macedonia, trade union reform starts to be on the agenda, more particularly within the CATUS Confederation in Serbia and the SSM Confederation in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. In Montenegro, the "old" union seems to be aware of the urgent need for reform and has announced changes. The regional Trade Union network "Solidarnost" is working on its political visibility in the Western Balkans regional process. Solidarnost addressed a message, on the occasion of the Vienna summit, to EU Commissioner Hahn. In the coming period the project will focus on

involving young trade unionists in the and on ensuring workers representation at company level and the need to find a common approach with regard to EU standards.

Western Balkans Pulse for Police Integrity and Trust - POINTPULSE (2015/371-144 continuation of 2014/ 351-850). The project seeks to contribute to increased trust and confidence in the law enforcement agencies in the Western Balkans by fighting police corruption and promoting police integrity, through activities of the regional civilian oversight network POINTPULSE. The network, launched in January 2015, comprises five civil society organizations (CSOs): the Belgrade Centre for Security Policy (BCSP), Balkan Investigative Reporting Network (BIRN), Centre for Security Studies (CSS), Institute Alternative (IA), and Kosovo Centre for Security Studies (KCSS). In the past six months the POINTPULSE network published reports on police integrity in the Western Balkans, which are available on the www.pointpulse.net. The website of the Network was launched in October 2015 and consists of more than 20 policy analysis on different issues of police integrity in the Western Balkans, as well as an overview of POINTPULSE activities. Research findings are presented by the Network on four different panel discussions in Belgrade, Sarajevo, Podgorica and Pristina. Four media feature stories on police integrity in the Western Balkans are broadcasted at the special TV show “Who is police guarding, the Government or the citizens?” on regional television N1 which is a CNN broadcast partner. The POINTPULSE has, in cooperation with the OSCE Mission to Serbia, organized a conference “Promoting police integrity in Western Balkans”. The conference consisted of three panels, and each covered topics which are, according to POINTPULSE network’s opinion, currently the most relevant for regional police agencies: (1) police reform in the context of European integration and regional cooperation, (2) the role of police internal control in supporting police integrity, (iii) community policing development in the Western Balkans. The speakers at the conference were the representatives of the law enforcement agencies from the region, as well as representatives of the EU Delegation in Serbia, OSCE, as well as independent police experts. The POINTPULSE network is active on social networks such as YouTube, Facebook and Twitter (hashtags: #BalkanCops #POINTPULSE).

Programme reference:	The Civil Society Facility Programme 2011-2013 (Amend 1 - allocation for 2013), IPA 2013/024-081
Project title:	Regional EU award scheme for investigative journalism in Western Balkans and Turkey
EU contribution:	EUR 0.45 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans and Turkey
Type of contract:	Grant Agreement
Contract reference:	CN 2014/350-133
Duration of activities:	11/10/2014 – 10/10/2017
Contact:	Karl Giacinti, karl.giacinti@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The Investigative Journalism Award scheme, announced in the EU Enlargement Strategy 2014-15, aims at celebrating and promoting outstanding achievements of investigative journalists as well as improving the visibility of quality investigative journalism in the Western Balkans and Turkey. National contests and award ceremonies are planned in 2015, 2016 and 2017 in all IPA countries. Investigative stories contributing to transparency and reporting on societal issues related to abuse of power and fundamental rights, corruption and organized crime that otherwise would not have been brought to the public's attention will qualify for the award.

ACTIVITIES (JULY – DECEMBER 2015)

The EU award ceremonies in Serbia (8 July) and Albania (16 July). Publication of reports from the award ceremonies and video statements of the EU award winners on the web page devoted to the EU award scheme for investigative journalism in Western Balkans and Turkey within the SEE Media Observatory web site. Selection of a “regional winner” to be awarded with a study visit to the Guardian. Compilation of a regional video clip presenting all EU award winners in seven countries. Post-award promotion of the winners of national contests: public event (screening of the winning documentary and discussion with the awarded authors/journalists) in Novi Sad (October); round table with the winners on follow-up developments in their story in Tirana (November), lecture of the awarded journalists to students in Sarajevo (December). Internal evaluation of the implementation of the EU award in 2015. Participation in Result-Oriented-Monitoring. Consultations in preparation for the EU award contests in 2016.

OUTPUTS (JULY – DECEMBER 2015):

In the reporting period, additional four investigative stories contributing to transparency and reporting on societal issues related to abuse of power and fundamental rights, corruption and organised crime, were awarded in two countries – one in Serbia and three in Albania. The achievements of six journalists, authors of the awarded stories, were celebrated at two award ceremonies in Belgrade and Tirana, and promoted through dozens of media reports. The awards were delivered by high representative of EU Delegation in each country. The project partners have been empowered for coordination of the new series of EU award contests in 2016, and for improvements in rules and procedures through internal evaluation and Result-Oriented-Monitoring.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

Launch and promotion of the 2016 contests for the EU award in the countries of Western Balkans and Turkey for investigative stories published in 2015. Administration of the national contests and administrative support to independent juries in the selection procedures. Announcement of the winners and organisation of award ceremonies in seven countries. Promotion of the winners through post-award activities.

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 – 06/11/2015
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 (JULY – DECEMBER 2015)

- Strategic assistance to BHRT (Bosnia and Herzegovina) – meeting with the new management (20 July).
- Strategic meeting with new Director General of RTS (Serbia, 28 July).
- Conference on Public Service Media and Parliaments, organised in cooperation with the European Parliament (Pre-Accession Unit), CoE, the Inter-Parliamentary Union, Croatian Parliament and HRT – 24 & 25 September.

OUTPUTS (JULY – DECEMBER 2015)

- In Bosnia-Herzegovina - development of a roadmap for changes and reforms in BHRT.
- Advice provided to RTS (Serbia) on financing.
- Debate between Members of Parliaments and PSM top managers in the region conducted. Attention drawn about the need and role of two important public institutions. Conclusions and recommendations drafted at the end of the conference on PSM and Parliaments, underlining the importance and the need for dialogue and appropriate co-existence of national parliaments and the Public Service Media.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

The project finished in December 2015.

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, 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 (JULY – DECEMBER 2015)

- A workshop in September 2015 together with the Kosovo Press Council to discuss the shortcomings of the Press Code of Kosovo regarding online media self-regulation and some potential amendments to the Code. Held in Pristina, the workshop gathered 25 participants, including journalists from online and print media and TV, representatives of civil society and journalism students;
- The participation of representatives of South East European press councils to the Annual Meeting of the Alliance of Independent Press Councils in Europe has been sponsored in Vienna on 9 and 10 October 2015;
- On 10 November 2015 at a conference entitled “Journalistic Ethics and media values in a challenging environment and in times of elections” was organized together with the Macedonian Institute for Media and the Council of Media Ethics, in cooperation with the Delegation of the European Union in Skopje;
- Public knowledge on media accountability was supported and increased in 5 target countries thanks to national-tailored awareness-raising campaigns, which took various forms such as the printing and distribution of journalistic codes of ethics, the creation of new website for press councils or the organization of public debates on media ethics, among others.
 - A final evaluation of the Project has been conducted by an external evaluator.

OUTPUTS (JULY – DECEMBER 2015)

- Press councils strengthened in 4 countries and Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244) through awareness-raising activities and events featuring their role and importance among the media community and the civil society;
- At least 100 media professionals in South East Europe with increased capacities through networking and participating in local or international events about media ethics and media freedom;
- Public knowledge of media accountability increased in the target countries of the project thanks to the awareness-raising campaigns;
- An overall evaluation of the project by an independent expert completed. The report will be added as an annex to the final report to the EC.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

- The Project ended on 30 November 2015. A follow-up project named “Building Trust in Media in South East Europe and Turkey” will start on 1st January 2016.

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

Aim of the project is 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 2015)

- Peer Evaluation and Advocacy Action Plan was implemented during a 3-day partners' meeting in Novi Sad in the period 14 – 16 October 2015;
- Press conferences titled Presentation of Media Clientelism Index (MCI) were held on 15 December 2015 simultaneously in five countries (Republic of Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Republic of Serbia) and in Romania the press conference was held on 14 December 2015;
- Country specific reporting on the state of media clientelism and politicisation through Fairpress portal (continuously).

OUTPUTS (JULY – DECEMBER 2015)

- Advocacy Action Plans for 6 countries participating in the project designed;
- Media Clientelism Index designed and presented in 6 SEE countries;
- 212 analytical articles written and published on national languages of the countries participating in the project;
- 90 analytical articles written and published on central portal in English;
- 217 media related articles were republished from other media outlets;
- 1 uncut video published;

- 184.994 Fairpress.eu sessions; 286.808 Fairpress.eu pageviews; 132.810 Fairpress.eu users;
- 16.202 Fairpress.eu Facebook Page likes; 687.985 people reached on Facebook.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

- International presentation of the Media Clientelism Index, Brussels;
- Advocacy activities;
- Repeating the country-specific research using the tool for monitoring Media Clientelism 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 in 5 IPA countries: in the project Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia.

ACTIVITIES (JULY – DECEMBER 2015):

- Conference to launch regional research on employment conditions for journalists. The conference was held Tirana, 28-29 October, 2015;
- Freedom of expression and of media monitoring. Participation in the global advocacy networks. Participation in the general meeting of IFEX. Project coordinator elected member in IFEX Council;

- Preparation of reports on "Time Zero of the Digital Switchover in SEE" (5 national reports + Romania and Bulgaria) + a regional overview. The reports have been prepared and edited. To be launched in January 2016;
- Preparation of the third wave of FoE reports on "Non-media gatekeepers of freedom of expression);
- Advocacy campaigns at national level (employment of journalists, creating trade unions, etc);
- Preparations for the launching of the second wave of research – Media Literacy and Education. Research will begin January 2016.

OUTPUTS (JULY – DECEMBER 2015).

- 1 regional conference (media coverage in Albania), 1 regional policy paper discussed;
- 7 country reports on digitization + 1 regional report (to be launched end of January 2016).

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER:

- Launching of the second wave of research – Media Literacy and Education. (5 national reports);
- Release of the second FoE reports (5 national reports + Romania and Bulgaria) + a regional overview on "Time Zero of the Digital Switchover in the Balkans";
- Preparation of the third wave of FoE reports on Non-media gatekeepers of freedom of expression;
- Preparation of the fourth wave of FoE reports - topic to be decided;
- Freedom of expression and of media monitoring. Participation in the global advocacy networks (IFEX, Global Forum for Media Development).

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 2015)

Year 2015 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, which succeeded the Tempus programme, for the period 2014-2020. Tempus activities during the July-December period consisted mainly of monitoring on-going Tempus projects and closing a certain number of them (21 projects were closed during this semester). As of end December, approximately 40 Tempus projects are still operating in the Western Balkans.

The first Call for proposals for the newly established Erasmus+ Capacity Building in Higher Education (CBHE) action was launched at the beginning of October 2014, with a deadline on 10 February 2015. The overall number of applications were 515 out of which a 140 were recommended for funding including 65 applications covering the Western Balkan Regions out of which 15 were eventually funded. During the reporting period contracts have been issued and the projects have started their activities.

During this reporting period 25 on-going Tempus projects in the Western Balkans were visited by the National Erasmus+ Offices (NEOs) and EACEA staff.

OUTPUTS (JULY - DECEMBER 2015)

The field monitoring visits showed that the Tempus projects in the Western Balkans are progressing well and achieving good results. A study on the achievements of the Tempus IV programme in the development of student support services at universities has been launched with the support of an external expert. The results are expected during the first half of 2016.

The network of Higher Education Reform Experts (HEREs) in the former Tempus regions continues to be supported under the Erasmus+ programme. A HERE seminar on ICT based learning will take place on 26-27 October 2015 in Petra/Jordan and the annual HERE conference on innovating learning and teaching in Tbilissi/Georgia on 3-4 December 2015. Both meetings were highly successful and provided an excellent opportunity for discussion and exchange of practice.

A coordination meeting of all NEOs and ICPs (International Contact Points in the EU) was organised between 7th and 9th October 2015 in Brussels and focused on the implementation of the international dimension of Erasmus+.

An intensive Information Campaign took place during the autumn in the Western Balkan countries to promote the new Erasmus+ Call (deadline on 10 February 2016). This included a regional conference presenting all actions of Erasmus+ held in Vienna on 17-18 December gathering over 250 stakeholders from the region and EU MS.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

The CBHE action first grantees' meeting will take place in Brussels on 27-28 January 2016. The meeting will gather representatives from all projects to discuss the implementation modalities of their projects (notably the financial rules). Back to back to this event, a NEO coordination meeting will take place on 29 January.

Concerning the HEREs, three main activities are foreseen early 2016: a seminar in Novi Sad (Serbia) on 17-18 March, about "Joint degrees and programmes" and two study visits in Tallin (Estonia – 18-19 April) and Malmö (Sweden – June) respectively on "Learning outcomes and student-centred-learning" and "Capacity building in Doctoral education".

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 – 2015 (n/a) Action 2: EUR 12.0 million
Beneficiary region:	Erasmus Mundus Action 1: (2014) 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 2015)

Erasmus Mundus Action 1

In accordance with [DG EAC's Erasmus+ Annual Work Programme 2015](#) and the related [call for proposals EAC/A04/2014](#), EACEA.A.3 has selected **15** Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees (EMJMD) projects for funding (Grant Award Decision on 31.07.2015).

In addition, and following the publication of a restricted call for proposals (specifically open to 19 consortia who were all previous EM beneficiaries), **17** EMJMD projects were selected for funding under the "Quality Review".

An invitation to apply for scholarships was sent to the 60 on-going Erasmus Mundus Master Courses (EMMC) and 18 Erasmus Mundus Joint Doctorates (EMJD), selected under the former Action 1 of Erasmus Mundus. These projects continue implementing their intakes under Key Action 1 of Erasmus+. The 2015 intake of EMMC and EMJD as well as the EMJMDs selected in 2014 started in the second semester of 2015.

Finally, the 2016 Erasmus+ EMJMD call for proposals was published on 20 October 2015 (deadline for submission of proposals to the Education, Audio-visual and Culture Executive Agency is 18 February 2016). It is expected to select 27 new EMJMD projects for a total amount of 57.160.000 EUR (Heading 1 budgetary envelope).

For the above mentioned activities, there is no specific window for Western Balkans under the Heading 4 funds. Student scholarship applicants from this region will compete with others from all over the world for scholarships awarded under Heading 1.

Erasmus Mundus Action 2

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

The Western Balkans region was included in all selections from 2008 to 2014 and a total of 19 partnerships were selected under the Western Balkans lot. As of 2014, Erasmus Mundus Action 2 was discontinued as such and no new projects/partnerships have been selected in 2015.

EM Action 2 Partnerships in Western Balkans cooperate actively in different areas such as promotion of scholarship opportunities, organisation of trainings on management of international mobility. This approach allows partnerships to assure visibility of the Programme in the region, to share best practices and to explore further opportunities for cooperation. More concretely, most of the partner HEIs involved in the partnerships are

concluding bi-lateral agreements in order to continue cooperation between European and Western Balkan HEIs.

OUTPUTS (JULY – DECEMBER 2015)

Erasmus Mundus Action 1

For the 15 EMJMD projects selected in 2015, the grant amount committed from the Heading 1 budgetary envelope from which Western Balkans students can benefit amounts to 27.716.800 EUR corresponding to 632 scholarships.

The 17 EMJMD projects selected under the "Quality Review" scheme have been awarded 304 Heading 1 scholarships for a total amount of 15.855.000 EUR.

The Erasmus+ 2016 EMJMD call for proposals was presented by EACEA and EAC in the framework of national Info days organised by the National Erasmus+ Offices and Erasmus+ National Agencies during the second semester of 2015.

An extensive promotion campaign for the E+ international dimension was put in place. This included also the preparation of an e-tutorial targeted at external stakeholders in partner countries and the organisation of a set of 5 webinars on the international dimension of Erasmus+ targeting the EUDs worldwide.

A regional conference presenting all centralised actions of Erasmus+ was held in Bratislava on 26-27 November gathering over 80 stakeholders from the region, including university representatives from Slovakia, Austria, Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic, as well as representatives from the National Erasmus+ Offices in Israel, Kazakhstan, Palestine and Serbia who presented the priorities of their respective countries related to future project proposals. During this event, practical support was provided to potential applicants through in-depth practical presentations including Question/Answer sessions, as well as through exchange of experiences and good practices on topics such as sustainability, employability, etc.

Erasmus Mundus Action 2

In September 2015, two out of the three partnerships selected in 2011 submitted their final reports. The assessment exercise of the reports received is ongoing. The total mobility achieved by this generation of projects is 753 (636 Non-EU and 117 EU mobility flows).

September 2015 was also the deadline for the four projects selected in 2014 to submit their first progress report. These partnerships have carried out only the selection of the first cohort of students; two more selection rounds are foreseen until the end of the projects.

The assessment exercise of the progress and final reports shows that projects' activities resulted in strong links, better relations and cooperation between the HEIs of the

partnerships. They raised the visibility and contributed to the internationalisation, capacity building and mobility management of the participating universities.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

The 60 on-going Erasmus Mundus Masters Courses and 18 on-going Joint Doctorates (former Action 1 of Erasmus Mundus) will submit their applications for scholarships/fellowships on 29.02.2016 and a Grant Award Decision is expected by May 2016.

The 11 EMJMDs selected in 2014, as well as the 17 EMJMDs selected under the "Quality Review" will implement their student selection exercises for the 2nd intake, whereas the 15 EMJMDs selected in 2015 will select their students for their 1st intake (Autumn 2016).

The selection of new EMJMDs in 2016 under open call for proposals will be completed by July 2016.

In February 2016, three Erasmus Mundus Action 2 projects selected in 2013 under the Western Balkans lot are expected to submit their third progress report and the four projects selected in 2014 – their second progress reports.

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 European Union shares with the Western Balkans ambitious objectives for smart, inclusive and sustainable growth with a view to delivering high levels of employment, productivity and social cohesion. Investing in human and social capital is an essential condition to achieve those growth targets.

The Western Balkans Youth Window reinforces the levels of participation of the Western Balkans in Erasmus+ by:

- Increasing the number of Erasmus+ non-formal learning projects involving the participation of organisations and participants – especially young people and youth workers – from the Western Balkans;
- Allowing organisations from the Western Balkans to be project coordinators and apply directly for an EU grant within the framework of Erasmus+.

Projects aim at capacity building in the field of youth at international level. More specifically, they have the aim to:

- Promote strategic cooperation between youth organisations and public authorities;
- Foster cooperation between youth organisations and organisations in the education and training fields as well as with representatives of the business and labour market;
- Raise the capacities of youth councils, youth platforms and local, regional and national authorities dealing with youth in Western Balkan countries.

ACTIVITIES (JULY – DECEMBER 2015)

Representatives of the European Commission and the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) participated in the "Erasmus+ Youth in Action Forum for the Western Balkans Region" on youth cooperation between Erasmus+ Programme Countries and Western Balkan countries, organised by the SALTO-Youth South East Europe Resource Centre and ADP-Zid (the Montenegrin Contact Point) from 17 – 18 November in Podgorica/Montenegro.

The Forum involved about 60 participants, representatives from the ministries and other public bodies of the Western Balkan region, the Contact Points who are in charge of disseminating information and assisting the applicant organisations who wish to apply for funding, youth organisations, and young people. Web-streaming was organised to allow a wider audience to assist in the event.

Youth cooperation with Partner Countries and specifically the Western Balkan Youth Window and its quality and funding specificities were presented and discussed. Participants came forward with a package of detailed recommendations on how to further strengthen youth cooperation between Erasmus+ Programme and Western Balkan countries at all levels.

The intervention has been published at this link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YXxAEL45-z4>.

OUTPUTS (JULY – DECEMBER 2015)

The 2nd deadline for the Western Balkan Youth Window managed at centralised level under the Erasmus+ Programme – Key-Action 2 - Capacity Building in the field of youth was 2 September 2015.

Organisations from Western Balkan countries submitted 176 applications with a total grant request of EUR 8,643,599.65 (average grant request EUR 49,111.36). Serbian organisations submitted almost 54% (95) of the applications. 29 applications were submitted by organisations based in Albania, 16 by Bosnia and Herzegovina, 26 by Montenegrin organisations and 10 by Kosovo. The Evaluation Committee proposed to fund a total number of 23 projects representing a total grant request of EUR 1,179,098.60.

Among the organisations funded there are: 9 beneficiaries from Serbia, 2 from Montenegro, 6 from Albania, 4 from Bosnia and Herzegovina and 2 from Kosovo.

Selection results were published in December, grant agreements sent out in December. The pre-financings will be launched in January 2016.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

The 1st 2016 deadline for the Western Balkan Youth Window managed at centralised level (Erasmus+ Programme – Key-Action 2 - Capacity Building in the field of youth) will be 2nd February 2016.

In January 2016, a plan of monitoring visits for funded Western Balkan Youth Window projects will be established by EACEA.

7.4 CULTURAL HERITAGE

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:	till 08/11/2018
Contact:	Olga-Elena Fimin, olga-elena.fimin@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

For Franciscan Monastery in Bač tenders for works and supervision of the works have been completed.

As regards the rehabilitation of the Monastery of St. Mary and landscaping in Apollonia Park, two contracts were signed under this project:

- Supervision contract signed with Consortium AEMA shpk and SEED shpk (Albania) on 28 August 2015. Contract Value €54,650.00.
- Works Contract signed with Ad-Star Shpk (Albania) on 03 December 2015. Contract Value € 619,414.67

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

Contract for the works at the Franciscan Monastery in Bač will be signed by the end of January 2016.

Implementation of the works will start for the rehabilitation of the Monastery of St. Mary and landscaping in Apollonia Park.

CHAPTER 8: OTHER HORIZONTAL ACTIONS

8.1 EU AGENCIES

Programme reference:	Multi-country Programme, IPA 2014/031-603
Project title:	Preparatory measures for the participation of candidates and potential candidates in EU Agencies
EU contribution:	EUR 4.46 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans and Turkey
Type of contract:	Grant contracts
Contract reference:	11 contracts signed in 2015
Duration of activities:	Q32015 – Q1 2018
Contact:	Agnieszka Iwanowska-Biel, agnieszka.iwanowska-biel@ec.europa.eu

List of Agencies, duration of activities and total amounts:

CRIS	Agency	Duration	Amount (EUR million)
360-343	European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions	30/06/2015 – 29/09/2016	0.3
361-042	European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control	30/06/2015- 29/06/2017	0.35
362-071	European Institute for Gender Equality	30/06/2015 – 31/12/2017	0.2
361-490	European Aviation Safety Agency	01/07/2015 – 30/06/2017	0.5
361-979	European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction	01/07/2015 – 30/06/2017	0.6
361-049	European Chemicals Agency	01/09/2015 – 28/02/2018	0.3
361-733	European Food Safety Authority	02/10/2015 - 30/11/2017	0.6
364-928	European Maritime Safety Agency	24/10/2015 - 23/04/2018	0.3

367-495	European Agency for Safety and Health at Work	01/12/2015 – 30/11/2017	0.41
368-133	European Railway Agency	01/01/2016-31/12/2017	0.3
367-323	European Environment Agency (EEA)	01/02/2016-31/01/2018	0.6

PURPOSE

The programme supports EU Agencies to 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 EU *acquis*.

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 IPA II 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 (JULY - DECEMBER 2015)

The Agencies carry out preparatory measures comprising interactive working sessions, trainings and workshops, aiming at capacity building, transfer of knowledge and development of skills that should lead to the creation of the necessary administrative structures, compliance of the national legislation with the EU *acquis*, application of the standardised methodologies in the field of expertise of respective agencies, or establishment of effective networks. Activities also cover preparation and translation of documents and 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.

ECDC

Seven ECDC meetings were organised with involvement of 68 experts from IPA II beneficiaries. It covered capacity building events on Legionnaires' disease surveillance for EPIS ELDSNet users and healthcare associated infections surveillance, as well as the regional event with EU MS and ENP partner countries on West Nile Fever real-time surveillance and best practices on other vector-borne diseases of a common interest. In addition, four webinars were conducted as an introductory training to enable surveillance data reporting to the European surveillance system.

ECHA

Three EU level scientific and regulatory ECHA events were organised, with the involvement of 23 experts from IPA II beneficiaries. The events constitute one of the four main categories of the capacity building activities under ECHA project and covered ECHA's Topical Scientific Workshop on Soil Risk Assessment, ECHA's Forum for Exchange of Information on Enforcement (Forum) and HelpNet REACH Workshop.

EIGE

EIGE assisted Serbian authorities in producing a national Gender Equality Index through a technical assistance mission and remote assistance; EIGE's experts also participated in (1) regional conference "Monitoring implementation the Istanbul Convention: new synergies" in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and (2) TAIEX Workshop on Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence in Montenegro, sharing the Institute's expertise.

The Institute also kept regional stakeholders informed about significant developments at EIGE, e.g., the Beijing Platform for Action monitoring report for the Luxembourg EU Council Presidency and EIGE's Strategic framework on violence against women 2015-2018.

EFSA

Setting up of the national coordinators and agreements for the Assistant coordinators funded by the Programme. National coordinators and contact persons from 7 IPA II beneficiaries were identified and appointed; the network facilitates implementation of the Programme activities and day to day cooperation on the different topics under EFSA remit; National coordinators from the Candidate countries attended the EFSA's Advisory Forum meeting in December, where joint actions on the food safety issues of common concern were discussed and agreed between the Member States and the beneficiary countries.

OUTPUTS (JULY – DECEMBER 2015)

ECDC

The key milestone of the project was the nomination of experts from beneficiary countries for new roles for interactions with ECDC in pre-defined areas of activities and as per terms of reference. Observer roles to the two ECDC National Focal Point forums (Threat Detection, and Preparedness and Response) were established and experts for these roles were nominated. In addition, to start pilot reporting of national surveillance data using TESSy, TESSy users from beneficiary countries were nominated for the agreed diseases.

ECHA

The activities provided the participants with up-to-date information on soil ecotoxicology and its relevance to the Agency's regulatory work; helpdesk officers support companies on questions related to substance identity and the latest developments in the REACH Roadmap for 2018 (Serbia's participation in the HelpNet directly contributes to their national helpdesk's capacity to provide quality advice to their industry and stakeholders).

EIGE

As a result of the project activities, Serbia produced its national Gender Equality Index in December 2015 and started preparations for a launch event on 2 February 2016. EIGE assists in making the launch a regional event and impetus for other countries to follow the example of Serbia and Kosovo.

EFSA

Agreements on the participation of the Assistant Coordinator in the framework of the Programme have been concluded with Albania, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Turkey. The draft plan for the Programme implementation, including specifications for the risk assessment training, has been prepared.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

ECDC

Five senior experts will be invited to the Regional Seminar on Communicable Disease Surveillance and Strategic Meeting of National ECDC Correspondents in EU enlargement countries on 27-28 April 2016 to discuss their progress in strengthening surveillance and control capacities to meet technical EU/ECDC standards for timely and accurate information on threats from communicable diseases. National ECDC Correspondents will also review the progress and achievements of ECDC cooperation, as well as discuss future cooperation with ECDC as a support to EU enlargement process.

ECHA

(1) finalising together with the beneficiaries a detailed activity plan for 2016 and initiating the preparations for the main project specific activities and (2) continuing the participation of the beneficiary representatives in relevant EU level events, i.a.: IPA II beneficiaries will be invited to participate in the Topical Scientific workshop on New Approach Methodologies in Regulatory Science, a study visit of two IPA II beneficiaries to an EU Member State and/or to ECHA on helpdesk operation; ECHA will also assess the needs in the beneficiaries for publishing selected ECHA publications in local language.

EIGE

EIGE will: support the launch of the Serbian Gender Equality Index in a regional conference in Belgrade; co-organize (with Statistics Sweden Balkan Projects Office) a regional workshop on the Gender Equality Index to facilitate production of the Index for other IPA II beneficiaries and sharing the experience of Serbia and Kosovo*; launch its Gender Statistics Database that will contain data not only on EU-28, but also IPA countries (where data are available), and start to engage in bilateral data collection efforts; take steps to identify a regional partner for the Resource and Documentation Centre.

EFSA

In January 2016 EFSA will host the delegation from Kosovo* to discuss the Programme activities and possible future involvement in joint projects with the Member States. The next phase will focus on the implementation of instruments and tools for data collection and sharing; national representatives will be invited to attend corresponding scientific networks and training sessions; assistant coordinators will be invited to attend their first Focal Point meeting in February; the first risk assessment training sessions is expected to start in March.

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary Programme under IPA Transition Assistance and Institution Building Component for the year 2013, IPA 2013/024-091
Project title :	Preparatory measures for the participation of candidates and potential candidates in Community Agencies: Specific project for the participation of Western Balkan Countries in the work of the European Environment Agency 2014-2015
EU contribution:	EUR 0.5 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	Contribution Agreement
Contract reference:	CN 2014/338-534
Duration of activities:	01/05/2014 – 31/01/2016
Links:	http://eea.europa.eu/
Contact :	Agnieszka Iwanowska-Biel, agnieszka.iwanowska-biel@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The purpose of the project is to further develop capacities in the West Balkans with a view to improve and increase data deliveries to the so-called priority data flows (see: <http://www.eionet.europa.eu/dataflows/pdf2014>) and to develop a strategy

to prepare the countries for “technical readiness” for EEA membership. In order to guarantee continuity it was decided to extend the project duration to the 31st of January 2016, when funding for a new project is in place.

ACTIVITIES (JULY - DECEMBER 2015)

The focus was towards capacity building. The West Balkans National Focal Points (NFPs) attended the NFP/Eionet meeting in October while a large number of National Reference Centres attended expert meetings in Copenhagen as well as the region. Furthermore, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia represented the WBs in the Eionet working group that evaluates the so-called priority data flow in order to guarantee that WB interests are taken into account.

An EEA delegation visited Albania in order to take stock of the monitoring and data handling situation. It was noted that there is space for improvement on this area, especially in the field of cooperation and coordination between the relevant institutions. The results were shared with relevant officials as well as the EU Delegation in Tirana.

OUTPUTS (JULY - DECEMBER 2015)

The countries have been delivering data on a regular basis with quality and quantity remaining stable, with a slight decline for Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia traditionally scoring highest and comparable with EEA Member countries.

The “Synthesis Report” of the SOER 2015 has been translated into WB languages, the NFPs were instrumental in the quality checking of the translations and the translated versions have been published electronically.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

While the project is running to an end, the focus maintains on the process towards “technical readiness” for EEA Membership. One of the last activities will be to emphasize the continuity, both in terms of staffing as well as financial resources towards high level officials in the countries.

8.2 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 :	Contribution to the activities of the RCC Secretariat with a focus on South East European 2020 Strategy
EU contribution:	EUR 7.15 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans and Turkey
Type of contract:	Contribution Agreement with RCC
Contract reference:	CN 2014/352-550
Duration of activities:	01/01/2015 – 31/12/2016
Links:	http://www.rcc.int/
Contact :	Agnieszka Iwanowska-Biel, 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 2015, as foreseen in its 2014 - 2016 Strategy and Work Programme, in particular implementing the SEE 2020 strategy.

ACTIVITIES (JULY - DECEMBER 2015)

The focus of RCC's activities in the second half of 2015 was on completing a programming cycle for the SEE 2020 Strategy and producing a programming document prioritizing actions for the next three years together with the Western Balkans governments. In addition to this, a number of activities were implemented in the areas of integrated growth (preparing an action proposal on investment with the World Bank and a Ministerial meeting of the SEEIC on investment and industrial policy coordination), smart growth (setting up of the joint working group for recognition of professional qualifications to kick-start the mobility agenda), sustainable growth (Ministerial meeting to mandate RCC to engage with the issue of roaming in the WB), inclusive growth (preparing the proposal for an Employment and Social Affairs Platform, an EU-funded action to promote employment generation), and governance for growth (setting up of the network of judicial training institutions).

Moreover, RCC finalized a study on developing closer trade, investment and commercial links between SEE and Turkey that was presented at the B20 Summit in Ankara as part of the Turkish Chairmanship of G20. Further work in this area will be undertaken to develop a fully-fledged concept on economic corridors to support the connectivity agenda under the Berlin process.

OUTPUTS (JULY - DECEMBER 2015)

The main output from RCC's work during the semester is the SEE 2020 Programming Document and the shift to a more focused approach in the implementation of SEE 2020 in four broad areas covering mobility, connectivity, competitiveness and rule of law/governance.

Outputs for the period also include four studies completed to guide the work of RCC and its partners in the areas of mobility (Joint action on removing obstacles to recognition of qualifications), connectivity (Western Balkans Intermodal study; Strengthening Economic Cooperation between South East Europe and Turkey), and governance (Report on training institutions in judiciary in SEE). RCC held 32 events during the period with a total of 420 participants taking part.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

Over the next six months, RCC intends to identify sectors and professions of mutual interest for mutual recognition agreements of professional qualifications, prepare and submit to the governments a concept on economic corridors to upgrade the existing transport corridors, develop and disseminate a market assessment and impact study in the context of the 'roaming-free Balkans' and initiate a regional investment policy review to prepare for a potential multilateral agreement on investment in the Western Balkans. During the next semester, RCC will prepare and submit to its participants the next Strategy and Work Programme 2017-19 to govern the work of the Secretariat during the next three years.

Regular meetings of the RCC structures will be held during the period, including the RCC Board, RCC Annual Meeting, SEE 2020 Governing Board, programming and monitoring committees and others, to support the implementation of both the SEE 2020 and the RCC's Strategy and Work Programme.

In addition to the regular activities, RCC plans to launch two new Actions during the next semester, both partially EU-funded: Employment and Social Affairs Platform and the Roma Integration 2020 supporting public employment services and Roma inclusion efforts, respectively.

8.3 CROSS-BORDER INSTITUTION BUILDING CBIB+

Programme reference:	Multi-beneficiary Programme under IPA Transition Assistance and Institution Building Component 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:	Pascal Herry, pascal.herry@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE.

This project is focused on the harmonisation of IPA and IPA II cross-border cooperation (CBC) programme management but as well on the exchange and transfer of good practices. The goal is to generate and share knowledge among stakeholders contributing to the improvement of common procedures and tools that could improve the quality of programme implementation.

ACTIVITIES (JULY – NOVEMBER 2015)

- following the organisation of the 3rd Regional CBC Consultative Forum in Durrës (25 and 26 June), comprehensive minutes with numerous annexes were drafted, approved by DG NEAR and circulated to all participants;
- supervision and moderation of one technical working group (TWG), whose discussions took place through an on-line platform at the website of the project, on a model application package for IPA II CBC programmes. This TWG successfully finalised a written proposal on the application package in July making use of the last PRAG version published some days before;
- delivery of a long series of capacity building events: 12 training events, followed by hands-on assistance and additional follow-up missions in the preparation and management of TA service contracts under IPA II (September and October, AL, BIH, XK, MK, MNE & RS); 2 training events on practical management of CBC grant contracts in Skopje (September, MK-XK and GR-MK); 1 training event on procurement procedures under grants in Bitola (October, GR-MK); 1 training event on the evaluation of calls for

proposals for the programmes HR-RS, RS-BIH and RS-MNE (October, Belgrade); 2 training events on reporting under grant contracts (November, MK-XK and GR-MK);

- planning for drafting a CBC programme document between Serbia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia;
- continuing help desk assistance, including the design of templates, for the preparation of service bids by the Operating Structures in order to contract the TA 2014-2016 allocations under the CBC programmes;
- survey amongst beneficiaries of the 2007-2013 programme RS-MNE with assistance from the JTS as a method for ex-post monitoring of projects;
- 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- (the fourth) and the circulation of regular monthly flash-news;
- preparation and submission of the draft final report according to schedule.

OUTPUTS (JULY – NOVEMBER 2015)

- upon approval by DG NEAR, minutes with annexes of the 3rd Regional CBC Consultative Forum;
- based on the proceedings of TWGs, regional agreement successfully reached on the standard text for a model application package under the IPA II CBC programmes;
- a draft version of a handbook on practical management of CBC contracts developed and presented and tested during two training events held in Skopje in September, under the CBC programmes MK-XK and GR-MK;
- a presentation of the EU-funded service contracts drafted and delivered in six countries so that the Operating Structures (CBC Bodies and where applicable national Contracting Authorities) were familiarised with the submission of a service tender;
- templates for inception, quarterly, progress, draft final and final reports under service contracts provided;
- helpdesk revision of service tender bids prepared by the Operating Structures (particularly organisation and methodology/timetable of activities/logframe, budget and workload analysis for the staff of the JTS) for quality control and timely submission of bids resulting in the signature of service contracts between the Delegations of the European Union and the Operating Structures in six countries;

- beneficiaries from different CBC programmes are more confident in meeting the management requirements of EU-funded grant contracts;
- enhanced technical capacity of the Operating Structures to participate as voting members in evaluation committees for CBC calls for proposals;
- following the collection of answers to a questionnaire circulated amongst the grantees under the RS-MNE programme, a report stressing recommendations and lessons learned from the implementation of 2 calls under the programme drafted;
- the 4th issue of the ‘Yellow&Blue’ magazine (project’s newsletter) compiled, printed and distributed;
- continuous attention to information and publicity of the EU-funded CBC intra-WB programmes.

Programme reference:	Multi-Country Action Programme 2014/031-603
Project title:	Cross-border Institution Building – CBIB+ Phase II
EU contribution:	EUR 2 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans
Type of contract:	Service contract with GIZ International Services (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH)
Contract reference:	CN 2015/368-298
Duration of activities :	01/12/2015 – 30/11/2018
Links:	www.cbibplus.eu
Contact:	Pascal Herry, pascal.herry@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

This project aims at enhancing regional coordination and harmonisation of approaches and mechanisms, as well as promoting a culture of best practice and sharing of experience in the field of cross-border cooperation (CBC) at intra-Western Balkans borders in line with EU frameworks and guidelines in the area of territorial cooperation. It also supports a smooth transition from the IPA to the IPA II programme in CBC, particularly in those countries operating under indirect management, and the launch of two new CBC programmes between Serbia and Kosovo and between Serbia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

ACTIVITIES PLANNED

- mobilisation of key experts and set up of the project office;

- kick-off meeting with relevant staff at DG NEAR;
- recruitment of the long-term non-key experts to be part of the project core team, as well as the national contact points in Albania, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Kosovo;
- recruitment of the short-term non-key experts for impact assessment and monitoring, for assessment of the structures under direct management as well as for the programming exercise between Serbia - the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia;
- organisation of a Regional CBC Consultative Forum as well as a TWG to discuss technical aspects in the launch of the first calls for proposals under IPA II;
- provision of technical assistance for the preparation of the programming document under the new CBC programme Serbia – the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia with the objective to have a mature programme draft by the end of June 2016;
- support to national authorities in the transition from programme management modes (direct to indirect);
- preparation of a strategy for exploiting IPA CBC lessons learnt and synergies;
- provision of demand-driven technical expertise, responding to any ad-hoc request posed by the Beneficiaries;
- delivery of a series of capacity building events, followed by hands-on assistance and additional follow-up missions in the management of TA service contracts under IPA II targeting the reporting (Inception and progress reports) (January to May 2016, AL, BIH, XK, MK, MNE & RS);
- elaboration of a visibility and communication plan;
- elaboration of a template for the assessment of the structures under the direct management;
- producing and distributing information materials and other sector specific publications;
- upgrade and maintenance of the project website inherited from CBIB+;
- technical support to national authorities when organising visibility events and for developing their relations with media;
- preparation of a contest application package to support research activities in the area of CBC in the Western Balkans;
- promotion of a CBC community of best practice with other EU or regional initiatives;
- submission of the inception report by 29 February.

8.4 FOSTERING REGIONAL COOPERATION

Programme reference:	Multi-country Action Programme for 2014 - part ELARG
Project title:	Fostering regional cooperation and balanced territorial development of Western Balkan (WB) countries in the process towards EU integration – Support to the Regional Rural Development Standing Working Group (SWG) in South-East Europe
EU contribution:	EUR 1.0 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 2015/359-331
Duration of activities:	02/06/2015 – 31/05/2017
Links:	http://www.seerural.org/
Contact :	Pascal Herry, pascal.herry@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The project aims at fostering regional cooperation among institutions and stakeholders in the agriculture and food sector, as well as to facilitation of the process of balanced territorial development of the Western Balkan countries in the progression towards EU integration.

The objective of the project is to strengthen the networking and cooperation among the public institutions and stakeholders, as well as with other relevant regional bodies in order to accelerate the EU accession process of the WB candidate and potential candidate countries in the field of agriculture and rural development.

ACTIVITIES (JULY – DECEMBER 2015)

- organisation of the Agriculture Policy Forum 2015 from the 13th to the 16th October, 2015 in Pravets, Bulgaria, which involved Western Balkan countries and relevant institutions and stakeholders;
- organisation of the 9th Ministerial Meeting from South-East European countries in the period 11th – 13th November 2015 in Tirana, Albania;
- organisation of the 10th and 11th Stakeholder Group Meetings in “Drina-Tara”, “Prespa” and “Sharra” and 11th and 12th Stakeholder Group Meetings in “Drina-Sava” cross-border regions in June 2015 and October 2015;
- promotional activities related to open calls for project proposals relevant for each cross-border region;

- organisation of 6 people-to-people actions in all four cross-border regions: Wine and Cheese Festival, 21st and 22nd of August 2015 in Ohrid, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; Raspberry Day, 12th of August 2015 in Prizren, Kosovo; Pljevlja Cheese Day, 23rd of October 2015 in Pljevlja, Montenegro; Grape Festival, from the 29th of September to the 6th of October 2015 in Ilok, Croatia; III Regional Honey Fair, from the 25th to 27th of September 2015 in Loznica, Serbia; Drina Fish Pot, 20th of September 2015 in Visegrad, Bosnia and Herzegovina;
- support to stakeholders for the preparation of quality project proposals for economic development of rural cross-border areas and further submission to open calls for proposals under IPA CBC programmes and calls of proposals of different donors active in the four cross-border regions;
- set up and maintenance of the websites dedicated to the cross-border regions “Prespa” - prespa.seerural.org and “Drina - Sava” - drina-sava.seerural.org;
- realisation of the Project Steering Committee to present the project in the framework of the 33rd SWG Assembly session, in Milocer (Montenegro) in September 2015;
- preparation of a baseline analysis, strategic planning and programming for the economic development of three additional cross-border regions: “Pcinja”, “Neretva” and “Prokletije”.

EXPECTED OUTPUTS

- conclusions and minutes of the following meetings/events disseminated: Agriculture Policy Forum 2015, 9th Ministerial Meeting from South-East European Countries, Stakeholder Group Meetings;
- strengthened regional cooperation in the field of agriculture and rural development;
- improvement of the political dialogue in the field of agriculture and rural development on ministerial level among WB countries;
- facilitation of the cooperation and enhancing partnerships among the relevant stakeholders in the “Drina-Tara”, “Drina-Sava”, “Prespa” and “Sharra” cross-border regions;
- People-to-People actions in all four cross-border regions contributed to strengthening cooperation among relevant stakeholders, and to promotion of the cultural, traditional, natural heritage and economic potential of the regions;
- 14 project proposals prepared with the support of the Project Management Units (PMU) under the following calls for proposals: 3rd IPA CBC Call for Serbia - Bosnia and Herzegovina; 3rd IPA CBC Call Serbia – Montenegro; Call launched by the Investment Development Bank of Republic of Srpska, BiH; INTERREG Danube Transnational Programme; NAAR call “Improvement of the institutional infrastructure in order to prepare projects on the territory of Podrinje”; USAID AGRO project in Kosovo;

- increased information sharing with the Stakeholders on open calls and other important activities in the cross border regions through SWG web-page and web-pages of the cross-border regions;
- methodology and work plan for the assessment of the situation and development potentials of “Neretva”, “Prokletije” and “Pcinja” cross-border regions are prepared.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

- 12th Stakeholder Group Meetings in “Drina-Tara”, “Prespa” and “Sharra” and 13th in “Drina-Sava” cross-border regions are planned to be organised in March 2016;
- support to stakeholders in the process of preparation of project proposals for different calls for proposals with special emphasis on calls within IPA II:
 - Expected calls under CBC IPA II: Serbia – Bosnia and Herzegovina; Serbia – Montenegro; the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia – Greece; Albania – the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia;
- support to the organisation of people-to-people actions in all four cross-border regions:
 - *Drina – Tara*: International Tourism Fair, Belgrade; Majski susret, Bijelo Polje, Environmental action during Most Fest, Bajina Bashta,
 - *Drina- Sava*: Roses of Lipolist; Fair on traditional products,
 - *Prespa*: Prespa Business Forum; Galicica Cycling Tour,
 - *Sharra*: Kukes Handcraft Fair; Regional Youth Entrepreneurship Fair, etc.;
- continuation of the situation assessment and potentials development of “Neretva”, “Prokletije” and “Pcinja” cross-border regions. Organisation of stakeholder meetings and preparation of the Strategic Framework and Action Plan for each cross-border region;
- publicity activities related to open calls and dissemination of information: Creation of web pages for the cross-border regions “Drina - Tara” and “Sharra” and launch of social media tools for each cross-border region;
- capacity building measures for PMU’s staff and stakeholders for preparation of quality project proposals.

8.5 MONITORING

Programme reference:	Support Measure – Monitoring Programme 2014 - 2014/031-607
Project title:	Multi-country Results Oriented Monitoring (ROM) - Western Balkans & Turkey
EU contribution:	EUR 3.48 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans and Turkey
Type of contract:	Service Contract with Particip GmbH
Contract reference:	2015/361-031
Duration of activities:	03/6/2015 – 02/06/2017
Contact :	Petra Schlueter, petra.schlueter@ec.europa.eu

PURPOSE

The contract provides an external independent Results-Oriented Monitoring (ROM) service for national IPA programmes and the multi-beneficiary programmes in the Western Balkans region. The purpose of ROM is to support the results monitoring activities of programmes (including budget support) and projects by the Operational Managers in the EU Delegations and at EC Headquarters. The scope of ROM covers on-going and ex post ROM reviews and end-of-project results reviews, all performed in accordance with the ROM Handbook.

ACTIVITIES (JULY – DECEMBER 2015)

The project inception report and initial 2015-16 work plan were submitted on 31 August 2015. The ROM missions started in September. A total of 31 National ROM missions and 5 Multi-beneficiary ROM reports were finalised in the period. The Team Leader visited all six EU Delegations/Offices and made presentations on the new ROM system to the Operational Managers. In-house improvements to the ROM operating and quality processes were made.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

The on-going ROM mission programme is expected to deliver 44 National ROM missions and 15 Multi-beneficiary ROM review missions in the period to 30 June 2016. A separate pool of experts will be mobilised and the first round of End of Project Results Reporting support missions will also be delivered.

8.6 VISIBILITY AND COMMUNICATION

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 0.357 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, 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 2015)

- missions of the Communication Experts to Brussels and to the region (Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Serbia) aimed at collecting material for success stories, getting an overview of the implemented projects and its contractual arrangements for drafting the communication guidelines; needs assessment among project managers for training on the use of guidelines and additional coaching on the communication aspects;
- assistance in the preparation of the communication material for the Vienna Summit.

OUTPUTS (JULY – DECEMBER 2015)

Establishing cooperation with the EU Delegations and other stakeholders:

- selection of the first batch of success stories, preparation of the first drafts;

- raising awareness among project managers on the need to closely follow and share the visibility requirements with the project partners as well as on the readiness to share the results of the implemented projects;
- contribution to the overall shape of the Vienna Summit Information Package.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PLANNED FOR NEXT SEMESTER

- continuation of the field missions aimed at writing success stories, drafting communication guidelines and preparation of training seminars;
- Drafting success stories and supporting communication material for social media, translation and distribution of the success stories;
- submission of the guidelines for approval By DH NEAR, preparation of training material
- training on the use of guidelines for task managers in GD NEAR and EU Delegations.

8.7 ATA AND TAC

Programme reference:	Administrative and Technical Assistance Facility (ATA), IPA 2015/038-148
EU contribution:	EUR 4.442 million
Beneficiary region:	Western Balkans and Turkey: DG Enlargement and EU Delegations in the Western Balkans and Turkey
Programme reference:	Travel, Accommodation and Conference Facility (TAC), IPA 2015
EU contribution:	EUR 0.25 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. ATA is primarily used by Delegations and to some extent by HQ.

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.

For an overview of who does what in DG NEAR please view this link:

<https://myintracomm.ec.europa.eu/dg/near/howeare/Documents/NEAR-org-chart.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
FAD	Fiscal Affairs Department
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
IPSAS	International Public Sector Accounting Standards

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
TADAT	Tax Administration Diagnostic Assessment Tool
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
