

## Project Fiche – IPA National programmes / Component I

### 1 IDENTIFICATION

<b>Project Title</b>	Facility for strengthening the European integration process
<b>CRIS Decision number</b>	2013 / 024-190
<b>Project no.</b>	12
<b>MIPD Sector Code</b>	Support and other activities
<b>ELARG Statistical code</b>	01.40 - Project Preparation Facility/Technical Assistance Facility
<b>DAC Sector code</b>	43010 - Multisector aid
<b>Total cost</b> (VAT excluded) <sup>1</sup>	EUR 2 532 000
<b>EU contribution</b>	EUR 2 532 000
<b>Management mode</b>	Centralised
<b>EU Delegation in charge</b>	EU Delegation to the Albania
<b>Implementation management</b>	Ministry of European Integration (MEI) IPA Department / Head of programming sector Eglantina Gollaj ( <a href="mailto:Eglantina.Gollaj@mie.gov.al">Eglantina.Gollaj@mie.gov.al</a> )
<b>Implementing modality</b>	Stand-alone project
<b>Project implementation type</b>	Several twinning lights or service contracts or supply contracts or specific contracts under existing framework contracts
<b>Zone benefiting from the action(s)</b>	Albania

### 2 RATIONALE

#### 2.1 PROJECT CONTEXT: ISSUES TO BE TACKLED AND NEEDS ADDRESSED

The justification for this project comes from the need of the Albania administration to ensure: (i) support to the different line Ministries and state institutions for EU *acquis* related reforms, in particular with a view to the 2010 Commission Opinion key priorities fulfilment, and (ii) assistance in preparation of IPA project proposals, as well as in the move towards IPA support in the form of sector wide approach.

The pre-accession period, and particularly the fulfilment of the 2010 Commission Opinion key priorities, requires an increasing number of quality expertise and EU knowledge in judicial, economic and political matters. Furthermore, it is necessary to establish or strengthen administrative structures and management systems which satisfy the requirements of the EU *acquis* in a number of areas. Implementing bodies may lack the necessary expertise, knowledge and experience to carry out these tasks. Therefore, it is essential to create an envelope for unspecified institution building needs (e.g. training, technical assistance, etc.). This envelope will cover a series of demand-driven requests such as short term twinning and

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<sup>1</sup> The total project cost should be net of VAT and/or of other taxes. Should this not be the case, clearly indicate the amount of VAT and the reasons why it is considered eligible.

technical assistance, which could include as well study visits to EU Member States, attendance to accession related conferences and meetings/workshops by the Albanian administration. This support will allow project preparation and implementation in a quick and effective manner. Also, this support will be able to cover unforeseen emerging needs, which might stem from the development of the political situation in the country, in particular with view to the post-election period in 2013.

## **2.2 LINK WITH MIPD AND NATIONAL SECTOR STRATEGIES**

Chapter 3.2.3. of the MIPD 2011-2013 on Public Administration Reform outlines as specific objectives to support horizontally the sectors of the administration responsible for implementation of the Stabilization and Association Agreement provisions and those involved in implementation of the EU financial assistance, including preparation for the Decentralised Implementation System (DIS) and to improve (i) policy coordination/strategic planning, (ii) policy framework alignment with European Integration Agenda and (iii) medium term budget planning at the central and line ministries level.

Furthermore, the MIPD foresees a number of priority sectors in the area of transport, environment, as well as social development and agriculture. Therefore, one of the MIPD priorities is to support *acquis*-related issues, in particular, administrative capacity, adoption and enforcement of legislation, as well as preparation of projects pipeline for investments in the transport sector, social sector, as well as in the environment and agriculture sectors.

## **2.3 LINK WITH ACCESSION PARTNERSHIP (AP) / EUROPEAN PARTNERSHIP (EP) / STABILISATION AND ASSOCIATION AGREEMENT (SAA) / ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT**

The facility will enhance the authorities' ability to prepare projects that help Albania meet the full range of its priorities deriving from the European Partnership and Multi-annual Indicative Planning Document, as well as from the Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA). This project has been designed in a flexible manner to support also the initiatives contributing to such projects.

The Commission Opinion 2010 on Albania's application for membership of the EU included 12 Key Priorities, which require for their fulfilment an enhanced capacity amongst many departments in key line ministries.

The Progress Report of 2012 mentions several needs for further enhancing *acquis* compliance related to investments in the environment, transport, and energy sectors. The support to address these needs require feasibility, design, and other studies covered by the present project.

## **2.4 PROBLEM ANALYSIS**

As mentioned in the last Progress Report, despite the overall progress done during the last years, the overall capacity of the Ministry of European Integration and Line Ministries still needs to be strengthened. This project aims to improve technical capacity in the preparation and implementation of activities defined in IPA programmes and in the National Action Plan for the 2010 Commission Opinion Key Priorities. Support is needed to build the necessary project pipeline as well as capacities of relevant Line Ministries in project management and monitoring.

The activities and tasks listed under this project serve the purpose of supporting EU *acquis* alignment and implementation through creation of an envelope for unspecified institution building needs.

The facility also foresees support for the annual programming of IPA financial assistance. Technical expertise will be mobilized in case where an initial project proposal is considered to correspond to a sector priority according to the MIPD, but where further efforts are needed to design mature projects ready for implementation under the ongoing or upcoming IPA financial assistance programmes.

The Ministry of European Integration and Line Ministries need to better plan national and IPA financial resources in the frame of a coherent and effective sector approach. In this respect, the project will mobilize expertise to define projects and sector programs, which can concretely support the implementation of national sector policies. This exercise needs to be fully coherent with the Government medium term budget perspective and with the external assistance provided by other donors.

Another area where additional short-term interventions in Albania are required is related to the preparation and implementation of the EU financed projects. In many cases thorough project implementation documentation in the form of tender dossiers, technical specifications or terms of reference need to be drafted in order to initiate the tender procedures for acquiring the services, works or supplies required.

## **2.5 LINKED ACTIVITIES AND DONOR COORDINATION**

Under IPA 2008 the Ministry of European Integration and Line Ministries have already benefited from the technical expertise mobilized in the frame of the Project Preparation Facility (PPF), implemented through indirect centralized management with Austrian Development Agency (ADA). This Project Preparation Facility has already been extended with funds under IPA 2009 and IPA 2010.

The Ministry of European Integration and Line Ministries can also currently benefit from a Project Preparation Facility, directly managed by the EU Delegation under IPA 2012. The aim of the facility is to produce a mature projects pipeline to be funded under IPA or in the frame of national sector strategies or in the frame of other donors assistance programmes.

## **2.6 Lessons learned**

In the previous programming exercises it appeared that the programming process is still partly suffering of weak technical capacity and specialised expertise of the beneficiary institutions of IPA support. The availability of specialised expertise will further improve the programming identification and implementation, in particular with the move towards more sector approach.

At the same time, a continuous challenge remains: some of institutions have been hampered by lack of appropriate capacities, including high turn over of staff. In this regard, the project will provide sufficient support in order to strengthen current capacities in the Ministry of European Integration, line ministries and other appropriate bodies both for coordination of legal approximation, drafting/implementation of legislation as well as project implementation.

## **3 DESCRIPTION**

### **3.1 OVERALL OBJECTIVE OF THE PROJECT**

The overall objective of this project is to strengthen the capacity and accountability of the Ministry of European Integration and Line Ministries and to ensure a sustainable role of GoA in the planning, programming and implementation of the IPA national programme.

### **3.2 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE(S) OF THE PROJECT**

The objective of the project is to increase the maturity of proposals for projects and sector programs to be proposed for future EU funding, as well as to provide ad hoc interventions for EU *acquis* reforms.

### **3.3 RESULTS**

Result 1: Preparation of well justified, mature and good-quality project or sector proposals, tender documentations or other feasibility studies and proper and timely implementation of IPA programmes supported.

### **3.4 MAIN ACTIVITIES**

- 1.1. Conduct *acquis* related studies (needs and gap analyses, action plan drafting, strategy development, legal assessments, training, etc.) through service contracts or twinning light projects with EU Member States
- 1.2. Within the twinning light or technical assistance projects organisation of training, study-visits, management, organizational and other expert advice - to support beneficiary institutions in developing / upgrading necessary *acquis* related technical know-how and management skills
- 1.3. Support in preparation of project documentation as well as any analysis, study, survey, review, assessment or monitoring that is in relation with Albania's EU accession process and/or pre-accession instruments.
- 1.4. Support measures related to urgent political needs that may arise from the fulfilment of the Key Priorities and/or the political development in the country.

Activities 1.1 to 1.4 will be implemented through several twinning lights or service contracts or supply contracts or specific contracts under existing framework contracts.

### **3.5 ASSESSMENT OF PROJECT IMPACT, CATALYTIC EFFECT AND CROSS BORDER IMPACT**

Projects that will be finance under this envelope will bring technical knowledge, best practices, recommendations, organisation plans, training plans which will be translated in appropriate changes in the legal framework and incorporated the daily work of the Albanian institutions.

The project is likely to result in better performance of the Government and Governmental institutions in the fulfilment of its functions, and in better inter-institutional cooperation.

The project is expected to improve the quality of managing EU pre-accession assistance, both in terms of effectiveness and efficiency. The expected outcomes will result in reduced levels of rejection of procurement documentation/transaction submitted to the EU Delegation (with

view to expected conferral of management powers in 2013 for Component I). As far as the long term effects are concerned, it is expected that the project will contribute to an increase in the overall absorption rate of EU pre-accession assistance.

### **3.6 SUSTAINABILITY**

The foreseen impact of the project is better programming and enhanced ownership and sustainability of IPA projects. The present support could also be used for follow up, monitoring and evaluations (technical and financial) of projects in order to ensure efficiency, effectiveness and impact in line with the identified objectives and in line with EU financial regulations.

### **3.7 ASSUMPTIONS AND PRE-CONDITIONS**

One main condition required for this project is that Albanian Line Ministries are sufficiently staffed and IPA contact points, including Senior Programme Officers, remain committed to the process. Relevant human and financial resources will be allocated by the Albanian Authorities.

## **4 IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES**

Activities 1.1. to 1.4. will be implemented in centralised management through several twinning lights or service contracts or supply contracts or specific contracts under existing framework contracts.

A Steering Committee (SC) will assist the selection of individual projects to be potentially financed under IPA programmes. The Steering Committee will be co-chaired by the MEI and EUD. Potential applicants will be obliged to submit project proposals for agreement and approval to the SC. The potential project proposals should be submitted based on the priorities defined in Needs Assessment Documents, MIPD, Key Priorities Action Plan or annual EC Progress Reports. Projects will be submitted first in the form of concepts and will be assessed by the EUD and MEI. After EUD/MEI initial approval of a project concept, the project will be developed in the full format and submitted to the Steering Committee for approval. EUD and MEI will prepare the rules of procedures for the functioning of the Steering Committee. These rules of procedures will regulate relevant procedure and applicable templates.

#### 4.1 INDICATIVE BUDGET

##### Indicative Project budget (amounts in EUR) (for centralised management)

PROJECT TITLE			TOTAL EXPENDITURE	SOURCES OF FUNDING								
				IPA CONTRIBUTION		NATIONAL CONTRIBUTION					PRIVATE CONTRIBUTION	
	IB (1)	INV (1)	EUR (a)=(b)+(c)+(d)	EUR (b)	% (2)	Total EUR (c)=(x)+(y)+(z)	% (2)	Central EUR (x)	Regional/Local EUR (y)	IFIs EUR (z)	EUR (d)	% (2)
Activities 1.1 – 1.4	x	-	2.532.000	2.532.000	100							
Multiple type of contracts	x	-	2.532.000	2.532.000								-
TOTAL IB			2.532.000	2.532.000								
TOTAL INV												
<b>TOTAL PROJECT</b>			<b>2.532.000</b>	<b>2.532.000</b>	<b>100</b>							

NOTE: DO NOT MIX IB AND INV IN THE SAME ACTIVITY ROW. USE SEPARATE ROW

Amounts net of VAT

(1) In the Activity row, use "X" to identify whether IB or INV

(2) Expressed in % of the **Total** Expenditure column (a)

## 4.2 INDICATIVE IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE (PERIODS BROKEN DOWN BY QUARTER)

Contracts	Start of Tendering/ Call for proposals	Signature of contract	Project Completion
Contracts for activities 1.1, 1.2, 1.3 and 1.4 - multiple contracts over the lifetime of the project (specific contracts under existing framework contracts, twinning lights, supply contracts and service contracts).	1st Q after signing of Financing Agreement and ongoing thereafter	Ongoing from 1st Q after signing of Financing Agreement	Q4 2016

ToRs and twinning light fiches will be prepared by beneficiary institutions in close cooperation with the EU Delegation.

## 4.3 CROSS CUTTING ISSUES

### 4.3.1 *Equal Opportunities and non discrimination*

Equal participation of women and men will be secured through appropriate information and publicity material, in the design of projects and access to the opportunities they offer. An appropriate men/women balance will be sought on all the managing bodies and activities of the programme and its projects.

### 4.3.2 *Environment and climate change*

Envisaged project activities do not require any environmental considerations. However, one part of the project will be used for the preparation of Environmental Impact Assessments for potential future investments in the transport, social, environment and agriculture sectors.

### 4.3.3 *Minorities and vulnerable groups*

The project will in no way harm the rights of any individuals, including minorities and vulnerable groups. There is the possibility to support preparation documents for projects that will directly deal with minorities and vulnerable groups.

### 4.3.4 *Civil Society/Stakeholders involvement*

Civil Society Organisations shall be consulted in particular with regard to the preparation of design and tender documents, including EIA, for potential future investments in the transport, social, environment and agriculture sectors.

## ANNEXES

### Documents to be annexed to the Project fiche

1. Log frame
2. Description of Institutional Framework
3. Reference list of relevant laws and regulations
4. Details per EU funded contract
5. Project visibility activities

**ANNEX 1: Logical framework matrix in standard format**

LOGFRAME PLANNING MATRIX FOR Project Fiche		Project title and number IPA National program 2013 Project Preparation Facility	
		Contracting period expires three after the signature of the financing agreement	Execution period expires
		Total budget	EUR 2.532.000
		IPA budget:	EUR 2.532.000
<b>Overall objective</b>	<b>Objectively verifiable indicators (OVI)</b>	<b>Sources of Verification</b>	
Strengthen the capacity and accountability of the Ministry of European Integration and Line Ministries and to guarantee quality of services and a sustainable role of GoA in the planning, programming and implementation of the IPA national programme, in order to prepare better for EU membership.		EC Annual Progress Report	
<b>Specific objective</b>	<b>Objectively verifiable indicators (OVI)</b>	<b>Sources of Verification</b>	<b>Assumptions</b>
The objective of the project is to increase the maturity of proposals for projects and sector programs to be proposed for future EU funding.	Better compliance of the national legislation with EU <i>acquis</i> and better preparation as well as implementation of IPA projects.	EC Annual Progress Report, IPA Monitoring Committees	Continuous support of the MEI and line Ministries to European Integration process
<b>Results</b>	<b>Objectively verifiable indicators (OVI)</b>	<b>Sources of Verification</b>	<b>Assumptions</b>
<b>Result 1:</b> Preparation of well justified, mature and good-quality project or sector proposals, tender documentations or other preparational studies and proper and timely implementation of IPA programmes supported.	100% of all proposals are mature for funding at the time of programming subsequent IPA programs	EC Annual Progress Report, IPA Monitoring Committees, monthly meetings between EU/MEI	There is inter-institutional agreement between relevant line Ministries and MEI about priority projects that should be supported under this project.



Activities to achieve results	Means / contracts	Costs	Assumptions
<p>1.1. Conduct <i>acquis</i> related studies (needs and gap analyses, action plan drafting, strategy development, legal assessments, training, etc.). through service or twinning light contracts</p> <p>1.2. Within the twinning light or technical assistance projects organisation of training, study-visits, management, organizational and other expert advice - to support beneficiary institutions in developing / upgrading necessary <i>acquis</i> related technical know-how and management skills</p> <p>1.3. Support in preparation of project documentation as well as any analysis, study, survey, review, assessment or monitoring that is in relation with Albania's EU accession process and/or pre-accession instruments.</p> <p>1.4. Support measures related to urgent political needs that may arise from the fulfilment of the Key Priorities and/or the political development in the country.</p>	<p>several twinning lights or service contracts or supply contracts or specific contracts under existing framework contracts</p>	<p><b>EUR 2.532.000</b></p>	<p>One main condition required for this project is that Albanian Line Ministries are sufficiently staffed and IPA contact points, including SPOs, remain committed to the process. Relevant human and financial resources will be allocated by the Albanian Authorities.</p>

**Preconditions:**

- Before implementation of unallocated envelope starts, priority projects that will be implemented under this envelope must be identified and agreed between relevant stakeholders.

## **ANNEX 2: Description of Institutional Framework**

The EU Delegation will be the responsible body for contracting of the individual Technical Assistance contracts which will operate within the Ministry of European Integration. Reporting will be to both the Ministry of European Integration and the EU Delegation. This project will benefit the Ministry of European Integration and all other Ministries or institutions closely aligned to the EU integration process.

In order to ensure smooth implementation of this project a Steering Committee will be established. This will be chaired by the EUD and MEI and it is expected that other line ministries will participate in the Steering Committee.

## **ANNEX 3: Reference list of relevant laws and regulations**

N.A.

## **ANNEX 4: Details per EU funded contract (\*) where applicable:**

Activities 1.1 to 1.4. will be implemented through several specific contracts under existing framework contracts, twinning lights, supply contracts and service contracts.

## **ANNEX 5: Project visibility activities**

Beneficiary and Contractor shall respect the EC's visibility guidelines in all communication activities undertaken by the project (briefings, presentations, press conferences, trainings and other events) and in the production of all visual communication tools (publications, fax headers, business cards, advertising material etc.).