

Project Fiche– IPA Multi-beneficiary programmes / Component I

1 IDENTIFICATION

Project Title	Strengthening European Integration (SEI)
CRIS Decision number	2012/022-966
Project no.	11
MIPD Sector Code	9. Support and other activities
ELARG Statistical code	04 – 40 Supporting Programmes
DAC Sector code	43010 – Multisector aid
Total cost (VAT excluded)¹	EUR 3 125 000
EU contribution	EUR 3 000 000
Management mode	Centralised/joint management
<i>Centralised management:</i>	Unit D3, Regional Programmes, DG Enlargement of the European Commission
Implementation management	Unit D3 –Coordination section
Implementation modality	Stand alone project
Project implementation type	Services, Grants, Contribution Agreements
Zone benefiting from the action(s)	Western Balkans: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, as well as Kosovo*, Iceland, Turkey

¹ 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

* 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

2 RATIONALE

2.1 PROJECT CONTEXT: ISSUES TO BE TACKLED AND NEEDS ADDRESSED

This project will address a number of demand-driven requests for specific expertise, short-term advisory assistance, studies, attendance to IPA-related conferences and meetings/workshops by the administrations of the beneficiaries. In addition, the assistance will allow better and timely project preparation and implementation to proceed in a quick and effective manner.

2.2 LINK WITH MIPD AND NATIONAL SECTOR STRATEGIES

This project supports all priority areas of the IPA Multi-beneficiary Multi-annual Indicative Planning Document (MIPD) and will facilitate the preparation and implementation of various types of projects to be financed under the IPA Multi-beneficiary Programme.

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

According to the latest Enlargement Strategy², regional cooperation and good neighbourly relations are essential elements of the Stabilisation and Association process and as such are closely monitored by the European Commission at all stages of the accession process.

Ensuring freedom of expression in the media is a key component of the Copenhagen political criteria for membership. However, as pointed out in the latest Enlargement Strategy, important challenges to freedom of expression in the media persist in a number of the enlargement countries and the European Commission will therefore closely monitor developments in this area. The Enlargement Strategy also underlines that Public Service Broadcasters need to improve their economic standing and autonomy in order to fulfil their role.

In addition, the Enlargement Strategy underlines that maintaining full cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and ensures that the integrity of domestic war crimes proceedings is one of the key conditions in the accession process.

2.4 PROBLEM ANALYSIS

Project Preparation Facility (PPF)

The main objective of the IPA is to help beneficiaries face the challenges of European integration, implement the reforms needed to fulfil EU requirements and make progress in the Stabilisation and Association Process. The Multi-beneficiary programme is designed to respond to Multi-beneficiary priority needs as indicated in the IPA Multi-beneficiary MIPD, taking into account activities implemented under the National Programmes, the guidance provided in EU strategic documents, the lessons learned from the programming and implementation of previous EU assistance and the findings from consultations with, inter alia,

² COM(2011) 666 final

the Beneficiaries, International Financial Institutions, the Regional Cooperation Council, EU Member States, civil society organisations and European Commission services.

The European Commission is responsible for the programming, contracting and implementation of the Multi-beneficiary Programme under IPA on behalf of the beneficiaries, but involves them and other stakeholders at an early stage in the programming to ensure ownership of and involvement in the projects.

In order to improve the quality and speed up the programming and implementation of the Multi-beneficiary Programme it has been decided to create a Project Preparation Facility.

The same facility will help to address horizontal challenges faced by the administrations of the beneficiaries on the path towards adopting a more sector based approach in programming their national IPA allocations.

Unallocated Institution Building Envelope

The fulfilment of EU requirements and progress in the Stabilisation and Association Process both require an increasing number of qualified experts, competent civil servants and necessitate expertise and EU knowledge in judicial, economic and political matters. Specific administrative structures and management systems should be established or strengthened to satisfy the requirements of the EU *acquis* in a number of areas.

The approximation of legislation to that of EU requires the development of current institutional and legal structures besides some investment. Implementing bodies may lack the necessary expertise, knowledge and experience to carry out these tasks.

It is essential to create an envelope for unspecified institution building needs (e.g. training, technical assistance etc) for priorities identified in the AP, NPAA or Regular Reports. This envelope will cover a series of demand-driven requests such as short-term advisory assistance, attendance to accession related conferences and meetings/workshops by the administrations of the beneficiaries.

Eligible applicants for this component are line ministries and public institutions/agencies and staff in the beneficiaries directly involved in the EU accession process.

2.5 LINKED ACTIVITIES AND DONOR COORDINATION

The SEI Project is linked to the Result Oriented Monitoring (ROM) Programme. This programme is designed to enhance the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of the assistance to the Western Balkans and Turkey and to provide the Commission with regular analytical assessments on implementation of projects and programmes, which are used during the implementation phase of projects as well as in the design of new projects.

The SEI Project is also linked to the IPA Audit and Evaluation Programme. Audits provide the Commission with assurance as to the legality and regularity of assistance and evaluations provide the Commission with judgement of interventions according to their results, impacts and needs they aim to satisfy. They also contribute to the design of interventions and improve the quality and report on the achievements of interventions, the results of which are used in future programming.

2.6 Lessons learned

Both under CARDS and IPA, all national programmes have included similar projects which have proven to be an excellent tool for supporting the programming process and the implementation of accession-related actions. Under previous Multi-beneficiary IPA programmes this type of assistance facilitated a participatory approach in programming and the timely preparation of project implementation.

3 DESCRIPTION

3.1 OVERALL OBJECTIVE OF THE PROJECT

To ensure effective programming and project development as well as implementation of the Multi-beneficiary Programme under the IPA thus contributing to the overall progress of the accession process and increasing the effectiveness and impact of accession-oriented projects financed through IPA.

3.2 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE(S) OF THE PROJECT

To strengthen the ability of the beneficiaries to effectively design and develop programmes and projects to be submitted for financing under IPA Multi-beneficiary Programmes as well as to enable the implementation of a number of accession-related actions and initiatives in regional cooperation of various public/private actors in order to meet specific and urgent needs in the beneficiaries. Furthermore, to support the beneficiaries' participation in activities for the exchange of information, networking, participation in workshops, conferences, study visits and similar activities and to assist in smaller-scale projects supporting European integration.

3.3 RESULTS

- Strategic plans designed in different sector areas;
- Stakeholder consultations organised, project fiches are drafted well;
- Tender documents, terms of reference and technical specifications drafted;
- Project preparatory and start-up actions implemented (Cooperation with the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD));
- Increased capacities of beneficiary institutions to prepare the ground for introducing a Sector Wide Approach (SWAP) for IPA assistance (Cooperation with World Bank);
- Urgent/bridging support provided to regional initiatives which lie at the kernel of the accession process (Cooperation with ICTY, support to the South East Europe Military Intelligence Chiefs Forum (SEEMIC), support to the European Broadcasting Union (EBU));
- Information and communication material on MB IPA assistance produced.

Measurable Indicators

- Quality and quantity of strategic plans;
- Quality of project fiches and quality and quantity of stakeholder consultations;
- Quality and quantity of tender documents, terms of reference and technical specifications;

- Number of preparatory and start-up actions implemented;
- SWAP approach phased in for IPA assistance at national level;
- Number of urgent/bridging actions implemented;
- Quantity and quality of information and communication material produced.

3.4 MAIN ACTIVITIES

- Support in designing effective strategic plans in different sector areas (by means of service contracts/specific contracts under framework contracts).
- Support in planning and programming the IPA-funded projects by for example assisting in stakeholder consultations, advice on drafting Project Fiches and their annexes (by means of service contracts/ specific contracts under framework contracts).
- Provide expert assistance in drafting the tender documents and/or terms of reference and technical specifications for the implementation of IPA funded projects (by means of service contracts/ specific contracts under framework contracts).
- Project preparatory and start-up actions. Provide short-term technical assistance (by means of service contracts/ specific contracts under framework contracts or Contribution Agreement with OECD under joint management) including training, study-visits, management, organisational and other expert advice - to support beneficiary institutions in developing/upgrading necessary technical know-how and management skills in project preparation and implementation as well as introducing a Sector Wide Approach (SWAP) in IPA assistance (by means of an Administrative Agreement with the World Bank under joint management). The activities of the OECD will be covered as of 1 January 2012.
- Support to regional networks and organisation of regional meetings, workshops, study visits in strategically important areas (by means of a grant contract with SEEMIC and a grant contract with EBU).
- Follow up on the support to the Joint European Commission - ICTY training to National Prosecutors and Young Professionals from the former Yugoslavia (by means of a Contribution Agreement with ICTY under centralised management).
- Develop and disseminate relevant information and communication material on IPA MB assistance in the region.

3.5 ASSESSMENT OF PROJECT IMPACT, CATALYTIC EFFECT AND CROSS-BORDER IMPACT (WHERE APPLICABLE)

The impact of the SEI Project is significant. Effective delivery of the project results in:

- More effective implementation of the relevant programmes and projects – better designed projects produce better results that are also less likely to require subsequent addenda and contractual revision;
- Faster completion of tendering procedures – properly prepared documentation can be approved more quickly and will require fewer corrigenda once launched;

- Higher quality responses from organisations and companies submitting bids – tender documentation that is clear, logical and learns from experience elsewhere in the EU will ensure that submitted offers provide what the Contracting Authority requires;
- Increased disbursement of available funds;
- Improved effectiveness of projects;
- Facilitation of the accession process.

3.6 SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability is ensured through demonstrating how good project design leads to good project implementation. This will encourage all stakeholders to attach greater priority to the programming and project design phases and should improve ownership.

3.7 ASSUMPTIONS AND PRE-CONDITIONS³

It is assumed that the administrations of IPA beneficiaries are committed to an inclusive process of deepening regional cooperation.

4 IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES

This project will be implemented by means of service contracts/specific contracts under Framework Contracts respectively, Contribution Agreements with international organisations, Administration Agreements in the case of the World Bank or direct grant contracts.

³ Assumptions are external factors that have the potential to influence (or even determine) the success of a project but lie outside the control of the implementation managers. Such factors are sometimes referred to as risks or assumptions but the Commission requires that all risks shall be expressed as assumptions. Pre-conditions are requirements that must be met before the sector support can start.

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

PROJECT TITLE			SOURCES OF FUNDING									
			TOTAL EXPENDITURE	IPA CONTRIBUTION		NATIONAL CONTRIBUTION						PRIVATE CONTRIBUTION Grant beneficiaries' co-financing
	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)
PPF	X		1 500 000	1 500 000	100							
EIB	X		1 625 000	1 500 000	92.3						125 000 *	7.7
TOTAL IB			3 125 000	3 000 000	96						125 000	4
TOTAL INV												
TOTAL PROJECT			3 125 000	3 000 000	96						125 000	4

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))

* The figure includes co-funding in grant contract to EBU.

4.2 INDICATIVE IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE (PERIODS BROKEN DOWN BY QUARTER)

Contracts	Start of Tendering/ Call for proposals	Signature of contract	Project Completion
For activities 1 – 4 and 7: Up to 5 service contracts/specific contracts under Framework Contracts	Q3 2012 – Q3 2013	Q4 2012 – Q4 2013	Q4 2016
For activity 4: 1 Contribution Agreement with OECD under joint management (EUR 310 000)	N/A	Q3 2012	Q4 2016
For activity 4: 1 Administration Agreement with World Bank under joint management (EUR 1 000 000)	N/A	Q3 2012	Q4 2016
For activity 5: 1 direct grant to SEEMIC (EUR 100 000)	N/A	Q3 2012	Q4 2016
For activity 5: 1 direct grant to EBU (EUR 500 000)	N/A	Q3 2012	Q4 2016
1 Contribution Agreement with ICTY for Activity 6 (EUR 400 000)	N/A	Q3 2012	Q4 2016

4.3 CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

4.3.1 *Equal Opportunities and non discrimination*

Equal opportunities and non-discrimination principles will be respected at the programming and implementation stage as regards gender and minorities. Based on the fundamental principles of promoting equality and combating discrimination, participation in the project will be guaranteed on the basis of equal access regardless of sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation.

4.3.2 *Environment and climate change*

The activities in this project will allow to better mainstream environmental protection and climate change actions in the preparation and implementation of IPA projects.

4.3.3 *Civil Society/Stakeholders involvement*

Civil society and other stakeholders, in particular the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC), other donors and International Financial Institutions are regularly consulted in the programming and project preparation for IPA Multi-beneficiary programmes and benefit at the same time from better project implementation.

ANNEXES

1. Logical framework matrix in standard format
2. Amounts (in EUR) contracted and disbursed per quarter over the full duration of project
3. Details per EU funded contract

ANNEX 1: Logical framework matrix in standard format

LOGFRAME PLANNING MATRIX FOR Project Fiche		Project 11: Strengthening European Integration		
		Contracting period expires 30 November 2013		Execution period expires:30 November 2015
		Total budget	:3 125 000	
		IPA budget:	3 000 000	
Overall objective	Objectively verifiable indicators (OVI)	Sources of Verification		
To ensure effective programming and project development as well as implementation of the Multi-beneficiary Programme under the IPA, thus contributing to the overall progress of the accession process and increasing the effectiveness and impact of accession oriented projects.				
Specific objective	Objectively verifiable indicators (OVI)	Sources of Verification	Assumptions	
To strengthen the ability of the beneficiaries to effectively design and develop programmes and projects to be submitted for financing under IPA Multi-beneficiary Programmes as well as to enable the implementation of a number of accession-related actions of various public/private actors in order to meet specific and urgent needs in the beneficiaries. Furthermore, to support the beneficiaries' participation in activities for the exchange of information, networking, participation in workshops, conferences, study visits and similar activities and to assist in smaller-scale projects supporting European Integration				
Results	Objectively verifiable indicators (OVI)	Sources of Verification	Assumptions	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strategic plans are designed in different sector areas; 2. Stakeholder consultations organised, project fiches are drafted well; 3. Tender documents, terms of reference and technical specifications drafted; 4. Project preparatory and start-up actions implemented. 5. Increased capacities of beneficiaries' institutions to prepare the ground for introducing a Sector Wide Approach (SWAP) for IPA assistance. 6. Urgent/bridging support is provided to regional initiatives which lie at the kernel of the accession process. 7. Information and communication material on IPA MB assistance produced 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Quality and quantity of strategic plans; 2. Quality of project fiches and quality and quantity of stakeholder consultations; 3. Quality and quantity of tender documents, terms of reference and technical specifications; 4. Number of preparatory and start-up actions implemented. 5. Swap approach introduced for national IPA assistance. 6. Number of urgent /bridging actions implemented. 7. Quantity and quality of material. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strategic plans 2. Project fiches, minutes from stakeholder consultations 3. Tender documents, terms of reference and technical specifications; 4. Results from preparatory and start up actions 5. Sector programmes in IPA beneficiaries 6. Implementation reports from grant beneficiaries. 		
Activities to achieve results	Means / contracts	Costs	Assumptions	

ANNEX 2: Amounts (in EUR) contracted and disbursed per quarter over the full duration of project

Contracted	Q3 2012	Q4 2012	Q1 2013	Q2 2013	Q3 2013	Q4 2013	Q1 2014	Q2 2014	Q3 2014	Q4 2014	Q1 2015	Q2 2015	Q3 2015	Q4 2015	Q1 2016	Q2 2016	Q3 2016	Q4 2016
Service Contracts		200 000		200 000		290 000												
CA with OECD	310 000																	
Adm. Agreement with World Bank	1 000 000																	
Grant to SEEMIC	100 000																	
Grant to EBU	500 000																	
CA with ICTY	400 000																	
Cumulated	2 310 000	2 510 000		2 710 000		3 000 000												
Disbursed	Q3 2012	Q4 2012	Q1 2013	Q2 2013	Q3 2013	Q4 2013	Q1 2014	Q2 2014	Q3 2014	Q4 2014	Q1 2015	Q2 2015	Q3 2015	Q4 2015	Q1 2016	Q2 2016	Q3 2016	Q4 2016
Service Contract		180 000				420 000				90 000								
CA with OECD	240 000				70 000													
Adm. Agreement with World Bank		230 000				440 000			330 000									
Grant to SEEMIC	80 000				20 000													
Grant to EBU		200 000			300 000													
CA with ICTY	320 000						80 000											

Cumulated	640 000	1 250 000			1 640 000	2 500 000	2 580 000		2 910 000	3 000 000								
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ANNEX 3: Details per EU funded contract

For activities 1 to 4 and 7, it is expected that part of the project will be implemented through approximately 5 service contracts for a total indicative amount of EUR 690 000, procured through calls for tender or under framework contracts depending on the amount. All service contracts should be signed between Q4 2012 and Q4 2013.

Part of the project will be implemented in cooperation with international organisations. To this end it is foreseen to sign Contribution Agreements/Administration Agreements and, if appropriate, to enter into joint management with international organisations following Article 53d of the Financial Regulation and the corresponding provisions of the Implementing Rules.

For activity 4, one Contribution Agreement will be signed with OECD to enter into joint management to support the policy reform that will accompany the "Western Balkans SME Platform" to improve the operational environment for innovative and high-growth Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SME) in the Western Balkans through a coordinated approach between the beneficiaries and the international organisations active in the region. The aim is to target country reforms that complement and/or strengthen existing national government plans to reform the business climate and consistent with policy dialogue attached to loans from International Financial Institutions (IFIs) such as the World Bank, the IMF or the EBRD. An indicative amount of EUR 310 000 is foreseen and contract signature in Q3 2012. The activities of the OECD will be covered as of 1 January 2012

In addition, one Administration Agreement will be signed with the World Bank to enter into joint management to support the introduction of a SWAP approach in the programming of national IPA assistance in the beneficiaries by developing sector strategies and action plans. An indicative amount of EUR 1 million is foreseen and contract signature in Q3 2012.

For activity 6, one Contribution Agreement will be signed with ICTY, based on Article 168(1)(f) of the Implementing Rules of the Financial Regulation on account of its technical competence and high degree of specialisation. Only the ICTY, responsible for the war crime judgements, has the technical capacity and knowledge to conduct this assignment. An indicative amount of EUR 400 000 is foreseen, the agreement should be signed in Q3 2012.

Furthermore, depending on the nature and scope of the demands and whenever the requirements and conditions for such implementation modalities are fulfilled, part of the project can also be implemented through grant contracts awarded in accordance with the provisions in the Financial Regulation and Implementing Rules (Title VI).

For activity 5, one grant contract will be signed in Q 3 of 2012 with the SEEMIC forum for an indicative amount of EUR 100 000. The direct award is based on Article 168(1)(f) of the Implementing Rules of the Financial Regulation, since a particular type of body on account of its technical competence is required.

Cooperation with SEEMIC, which began in 2009 with a meeting in Bucharest, has been realised at the initiative of the RCC and with the support of the Intelligence Directorate of the European Union Military Staff (EU MS INT) – European External Action Service (EEAS). SEEMIC is a forum of high-level military intelligence officers from the region that allows for networking, building relationships and strengthening trust as a basis for furthering cooperation in the security area between the candidate countries and potential candidates themselves and between them and South East European EU members of the RCC, as well as with the EU MS INT.

It has been underlined several times that SEEMIC is one of the most successful initiatives launched under the RCC's auspices. Exchange of high quality intelligence through regional fora, such as SEEMIC, is important not only for fostering cooperation among intelligence agencies but also for its broader impact on confidence-building, security, rule of law, and overall economic and social development of the countries of South East Europe.

Also for activity 5, one grant contract will be signed in Q3, 2012 with the EBU for an indicative amount of EUR 500 000. The direct award is based on Article 168(1)(c) of the Implementing Rules of the Financial Regulation, to bodies with a de jure or de facto monopoly.

The EBU is a professional association of broadcasting organisations, which includes all the IPA beneficiary public service broadcasters. The association has legal personality and no profit-making purpose. An important part of EBU's mission is to act as professional interlocutor with European institutions and organisations and, where appropriate, to contribute to the drafting of legal instruments and the establishment of standards and norms relating to broadcasting with a view to safeguarding and furthering the interests of its members. The critical role of EBU has been endorsed by the RCC and the recently founded association of Public Service Media in South East Europe, which groups EBU Members in the region.

The 2012 direct award to EBU is based on 20% co-financing and will amount to an EU contribution of EUR 500,000 to a project aimed at improving the financial and editorial independence of Public Service Media. Special attention will be given to improving the standards of investigative journalism and reporting on political, economic and social affairs. The exact scope and specific objectives of the project will be determined following a base line and fact-finding study that will be implemented during the first half of 2012.