## Identification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Title</th>
<th>Erasmus Mundus - Action 2: Partnerships Lot - Western Balkans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CRIS Decision number</td>
<td>SI2.615829</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project no.</td>
<td>09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MIPD Sector Code</td>
<td>7. Social Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELARG Statistical code</td>
<td>02.26 - Education and culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAC Sector code</td>
<td>11420</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total cost (VAT excluded)</td>
<td>EUR 12 000 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU contribution</td>
<td>EUR 12 000 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management mode</td>
<td>Centralised indirect</td>
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<tr>
<td>Implementation management</td>
<td>The programme will be implemented by the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Implementing modality</td>
<td>Stand alone project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Implementation Type</td>
<td>Grants</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zone benefiting from the action(s)</td>
<td>Western Balkans: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia, as well as Kosovo^</td>
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</tbody>
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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**

Contribute towards the development of human resources and the international cooperation capacity of higher education institutions in the Western Balkans.

Enable the exchange of staff and students at all levels thereby enhancing their knowledge and skills.

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

This programme has been designed on the basis of the IPA Multi-beneficiary Multi-annual Indicative Planning Document (MIPD) 2011-2013 in which education is a priority under Section 3.7. (Social Development). As noted in the MIPD, the objectives of aid in the area of education is to: Support the development and the quality of the higher education systems through balanced cooperation between local higher education institutions and those of the EU Member States; Enable mutual enrichment and better understanding between the EU Member States and the IPA beneficiaries through the exchange of staff and students at all levels and through the provision of postgraduate studies to highly qualified students in EU universities. The programme will also contribute to enhancing regional cooperation among the Beneficiaries.

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

Higher Education is an issue mentioned in all the European / Accession Partnerships (except Montenegro) as a medium priority. The Accession Partnerships for the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the European Partnerships for Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Kosovo also indicate higher education as a sector for promoting regional cooperation.

2.4 **PROBLEM ANALYSIS**

The European Union recognises the importance of higher education for economic and social development. Higher education plays a crucial role in producing high quality human resources, in disseminating scientific discovery and advanced knowledge through teaching and educating future generations of citizens, high level professionals and political leaders, who in turn can contribute to better governance and social cohesion.

The increasing speed at which existing knowledge becomes obsolete, and the rapid changes in the means by which it is delivered and renewed will require high adaptability of the educational sector to meet the needs of the economy and of society as a whole. In the context of globalisation, Beneficiaries that are only weakly connected to the global knowledge economy will find themselves increasingly at a disadvantage and will not be able to generate adequate socio-economic conditions for the population.
Against this background, the promotion of international cooperation between the European Union and Third-Country Higher Education Institutions (HEI) and, in particular, the facilitation of institution-based mobility is a win-win situation not only to improve the results of education, but also to create lasting links and generate mutual enrichment and understanding between peoples. Moreover the mobility scheme envisaged under this specific Lot translates a political choice for the region and is complementary to other actions developed in the area.

This programme offers a unique higher education institutional cooperation frame and training opportunities relevant to the skilled manpower needs of the Western Balkans, the students and staff benefit from the opportunity to study, teach and research in EU countries and participating universities raise their capacities, build pools of expertise and gain international visibility.

In the framework of strengthening the IPA HEIs capacity building and also when preparing their smooth entry in the Life Long Learning Programme, the coordination of the mobility scheme by IPA beneficiaries becomes an option.

More specifically, the reform efforts of the Candidate Countries and Potential Candidates for accession include improving the quality of their education systems. This programme aims to build ties at university level through partnerships activities and to set up programmes for student and staff mobility between the EU Member States and the Western Balkans.

In 2007, the European Commission proposed to increase the number of scholarships for graduate and undergraduate students in the Western Balkans. This follows both the recommendation of the Salzburg Communication and the Council Conclusions in December 2006 which emphasised the desirability of promoting people-to-people contacts by making more such scholarships available. In addition, according to the Communication of March 2008\(^2\) "Western Balkans: Enhancing the European Perspective" and following the recommendations of the Council Meeting of January 2008, the Commission has decided to double the 2007 budget for scholarships as from the academic year 2010-2011. Therefore, the budget and the number of scholarships under Action 2 have been doubled from IPA 2007 to IPA 2009 and will remain the same under IPA 2010 and under IPA 2011.

At the end of 2008, the former External Cooperation Window has been integrated as Action II "Partnerships" under the new Erasmus Mundus II programme\(^3\) which aims to promote institutional cooperation and mobility activities.

### 2.5 LINKED ACTIVITIES AND DONOR COORDINATION

This project complements current and previous higher education schemes in the field, building on the positive results that other programmes like Tempus and the Erasmus Mundus Action 1 programmes have generated in the region:

- Tempus aims at up-grading higher education institutions and promoting regional and multilateral networking between higher education institutions in the EU and the

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\(^2\) COM (2008)27, 05.03.08  
\(^3\) Decision N° 1298/2008/EC of 16/12/2008
Western Balkans. Tempus projects relate to curriculum development and institutional development.

- Erasmus Mundus – Action 1, which aims at enabling highly qualified graduates and doctoral candidates from the Western Balkans and Turkey to engage in postgraduate study at European universities and to obtain qualifications and/or experience in the European Union and EFTA-EEA States.

- Erasmus (part of the Lifelong Learning Community Programme): among the Candidate Countries and Potential Candidates for Accession, only Turkey participates in this programme, on the same footing as the EU Member States, in the framework of the pre-accession strategy.

In addition and completing the proposed scholarships under this programme, the "European Integration Scholarship Programme" under IPA 2008 aims at strengthening the capacity of relevant public institutions in Serbia, through the provision of specialised academic and professional training programmes for qualified applicants of diverse backgrounds, in areas pertinent for the process of European integration.

The Agency for Mobility and EU Programmes in Croatia, the National Agency for EU Education Programmes and Mobility in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the designated national agencies for management of the Life-long Learning Programme, which are undertaking preparatory measures for their countries' full participation in the Life-Long Learning Programme, launched the Call for Proposals referring to pilot projects for Life-Long Learning Programme in 2009 funded by IPA 2007 and 2009 national funds. The pilot projects include application of HEIs for Erasmus Charter as well as students' mobility for studies and staff mobility under Erasmus.

The Programme shall support and supplement action taken by and in the Member States while fully respecting their responsibility for the content of education and the organisation of education and training systems, and their cultural and linguistic diversity.

The Czech Presidency has co-organised with the European Commission in May 2009 a Pledging Conference which aimed at taking stock of what has been undertaken both by the Commission and the Member States in the provision of scholarships for the students of the Western Balkans. It is now envisaged to create a mechanism of coordination and information between the Commission, the Member States and the Candidate Countries and Potential Candidates for accession.

2.6 Lessons learned

During the first four years of implementation of the previous Erasmus Mundus programme (2004-2009), students from the Western Balkans already had the opportunity to participate in the programme that was open to individuals worldwide.

Institutions from the Western Balkans were also eligible to establish partnerships or reinforce cooperation projects with Erasmus Mundus Masters courses and to participate in projects aiming to enhance the attractiveness of European Higher Education in the world.
3 DESCRIPTION

3.1 OVERALL OBJECTIVE OF THE PROJECT

Contribute towards the development of human resources and the international cooperation capacity of higher education institutions in the Western Balkans.

3.2 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE(S) OF THE PROJECT

Enable the exchange of staff and students at all levels thereby enhancing their knowledge and skills.

3.3 RESULTS

The expected results of this programme are:

- Greater multilateral exchange of students and staff between the European Union and the Western Balkans;

- Enhanced international cooperation capacities of higher education institutions in the Western Balkans through cooperation with high quality European institutions (Erasmus Charter) with extensive experience in European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) and in the implementation of the "Bologna process";

- Improved cultural understanding and respect for diversity;

The main performance indicators for this programme are the number of institutions, the number of students and staff participating in the programme per type of educational profile (undergraduate, master, PhD, post-Phd and staff) as well as the involvement of students belonging to a disadvantaged or vulnerable group in accordance with the provisions indicated in the annual Call for proposals. The results of the programme will be evaluated through an assessment and analytical study to be implemented by the Commission services.

3.4 MAIN ACTIVITIES

Mobility activities include:

(a) Student exchanges

The types of mobility to be funded in this first phase of the programme are: undergraduate students, master students, doctoral and post-doctoral fellowships.

(b) Staff exchanges

The programme will also fund mobility for academic and administrative staff with the purpose of teaching, practical training and research exchanges allowing better cooperation and institution building with Western Balkans HEIs.

(c) Partnership activities to organise mobility and the transfer of best practices.
The grant awarded also covers the costs of organising student and staff exchanges, work with partners on a credit transfer system, the application of principles such as the diploma supplement and work with partners on quality assurance issues. The exchange of students and staff within the programmes can take place between higher education institutions from the EU and higher education institutions from the Western Balkans.

In order to create more links among the HEIs in the Western Balkans, a limited number of mobilities can be foreseen between the institutions in this region.

In this contest and in line with the principles inscribed in the Bologna process the universities involved in the mobility exchange are responsible for the recognition of the studying carried out by their own students abroad in particular for not-degree seeking students (short mobility). The process of recognition concerns also the recognition of academic degrees/diploma obtained in EU for degree seeking students (long term mobility)

The maximum duration should be up to 4 years in order to cover the whole duration of doctorate courses.

The total number of masters scholarships and doctoral candidates fellowship will rather be around 150 if the above proposed budget distribution is applied.

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

The programme will have a catalytic effect on the implementation of the Bologna recommendations and will strongly contribute to the promotion of mutual understanding in a multicultural environment and training.

Performance is monitored through desk, field monitoring and an annual partnerships' conference in Brussels. The Erasmus Mundus National Structures act as information offices in EU Member States as well as EU Delegations and NTOs do in the Third-Countries.

For all activities regarding the mobility of students and staff from both partner and non-partner institutions, applicants must explain in which way these mobility exchanges favour the creation of durable links with the Candidate Countries and Potential Candidates for accession, how they can respond to the social, economical and political needs of the Candidate Countries and Potential Candidates for accession concerned and how they will help to disseminate European social and democratic values.

3.6 SUSTAINABILITY

The Programme requires to the consortium, partnership to develop a sustainability plan in order to ensure the proper implementation and continuity of the joint programme, to ensure the appropriate dissemination and exploitation of the project results, as well as the impact and sustainability of these results in the long term (financially, institutionally, etc.) beyond the funding period. It is expected that as result of these projects long term stable bilateral cooperation among the European and Western Balkan institutions are set up as well as among the higher education institutions in the Western Balkans. The programme contributes to the capacity building of these institutions to manage mobility thus enhancing their preparation to entry the Life long Learning Programme.
3.7 **ASSUMPTIONS AND PRE-CONDITIONS**

This programme will be implemented on the assumption that performing partnerships will be selected on the basis of the quality of their proposals and that numerous students and staff are interested in exchange activities.

There are two further risks: that mobility is not ensured as foreseen due to practical difficulties in obtaining visas; and that the period of study or diploma obtained is not recognised. The programme also requires that the partnerships work with bodies (ministries, accreditation bodies, etc.) that are responsible for recognition of diplomas and of study periods. Activities at regional level are organised in order to share best practices and to identify the challenges of the recognition process.

4 **IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES**

The implementation of the programme involves different actors in different phases. The Agency implements the programme involving the EU delegations in the Western Balkans and EM national structures, which play an important role during the selection phase. The EU delegations provide information on the eligibility of the third country institutions and the relevance of the projects for the region /country. The EU delegations and EM national structures are invited to participate in the field monitoring and they are informed on the status of project implementation. They play an important role during the project implementation such as to facilitate the processes of obtaining visas, recognition issues etc. The Tempus National Offices are also strongly involved in promotion activities and in liaising with the Ministries of Education in the beneficiaries concerned in order to ensure a smoother implementation of the programme in the region.

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* 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 Budget

Indicative Project budget (amounts in EUR)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTIVITIES</th>
<th>IB (1)</th>
<th>INV (1)</th>
<th>EU TOTAL EXP.RE EUR</th>
<th>EU CONTRIBUTION EUR</th>
<th>% (2)</th>
<th>TOTAL EU EUR</th>
<th>% (2)</th>
<th>Central EUR EUR (x)</th>
<th>Regional/Local EUR EUR (y)</th>
<th>IFIs EUR EUR (z)</th>
<th>PRIVATE CONTRIBUTION EUR</th>
<th>% (2)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>TOTAL INV</td>
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### NOTE: DO NOT MIX IB AND INV IN THE SAME ROW. USE SEPARATE ROWS.

Amounts net of VAT

1. In the Activity row, use "X" to identify whether IB or INV
2. Expressed in % of the Public Expenditure (column (b))
3. Expressed in % of the Total Expenditure (column (a))
4.2 **Indicative Implementation Schedule (Periods Broken down by Quarter)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contracts</th>
<th>Launch of Call for Proposals</th>
<th>Signature of contracts</th>
<th>Project Completion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Call for Proposals</td>
<td>Q4 2012</td>
<td>Q3 2013</td>
<td>Q4 2019</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3 **Cross Cutting Issues**

It is necessary to increase Community efforts to promote dialogue and understanding between cultures world-wide. It is important to bear in mind the social dimension of higher education as well as the ideals of democracy and respect for human rights, including gender equality, especially as mobility fosters the discovery of new cultural and social environments and facilitates understanding thereof. In so doing, no group of citizens or Western Balkans nationals is excluded or put at a disadvantage.

The programme promotes equality between men and women and focuses on offering opportunities to individuals in disadvantaged or vulnerable situations. It includes provisions for students with special needs, and in particular by helping to promote their integration into higher education, and promoting equal opportunities for all.

In this context a transparent selection process that respects minimum objective criteria (academic merit, gender balance and favourable treatment of disadvantaged students) will remain in place in order to guarantee a fair selection of candidates.

4.3.1 **Equal Opportunities and non discrimination**

Over the past few decades increasing attention has been paid to the gender dimension of poverty and development in transition economies, particularly in relation to the role of women in education and the impact of higher education on equal opportunity policies.

Projects should integrate gender mainstreaming in their aims and activities, specifically in subject matters and areas of study where the presence of women in the economy has traditionally been very low (science and technology). Projects should promote gender balance and identify factors influencing gender discrimination.

Projects in the sphere of education and sciences should promote the change of gender roles and societal stereotypes, avoiding in any sort of cultural prejudice educational materials.

The principle of equal opportunities should be taken into account when evaluating the quality of all projects proposed under the three components. Specific attention will be paid to this dimension when determining the benefit of mobility activities.

While implementing the project activities and, to the extent applicable, the beneficiary will try to assure that gender disaggregated data is made available to carry out an analysis of the social and economic impact of the actions undertaken.
4.3.2 Environment and climate change

The project beneficiaries shall ensure that during implementation of their actions due cognizance is given to the Government’s development policy relating to environmental management and that such policy is embodied, as appropriate, within all strategic policy documents they may draft, all training activities they may carry out and new study programmes and curricula that they may design.

4.3.3 Minorities and vulnerable groups

Specific attention will be paid to this dimension when evaluating the quality of all projects proposed under the programme.

4.3.4 Civil Society/Stakeholders involvement

The projects will be implemented by universities from the partner countries in close cooperation with civil society and other stakeholders at local and regional level. These associated actors will be closely involved in the promotion of the scholarship scheme and in the identification of eligible scholarship candidates among the target group(s) concerned. In addition, these stakeholders will directly benefit from the European education and training received by the scholarship holders after these have returned to their home countries.

ANNEXES

1. Log frame
2. Amounts (EUR) contracted and disbursed per quarter over the full duration of project
3. Description of the institutional framework
4. Reference list of relevant laws and regulations only where relevant
5. Details per EU funded contract
6. Project visibility activities
ANNEX 1: Logical framework matrix in standard format

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LOGFRAME PLANNING MATRIX FOR PROJECT FICHE</th>
<th>Erasmus Mundus – Action 2: Partnerships, Lot - Western Balkans</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contracting period expires: 30 November 2013</td>
<td>Execution period expires: 30 November 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total budget: EUR 12 000 000</td>
<td>IPA budget: EUR 12 000 000</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overall objective</th>
<th>Objectively verifiable indicators</th>
<th>Sources of Verification</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To contribute towards the development of human resources and the international cooperation capacity of higher education institutions in the Western Balkans.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project purpose</th>
<th>Objectively verifiable indicators</th>
<th>Sources of Verification</th>
<th>Assumptions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To enable the exchange of staff and students at all levels thereby enhancing their knowledge and skills.</td>
<td>Number of delivered scholarships</td>
<td>European Commission and EACEA services.</td>
<td>After selection the assumption is that students and academics from Western Balkans and EU are permitted to leave their country and enter the European host country or third country. European Commission Delegations are involved in the promotion of the programme. If necessary they should cooperate with local EU embassies in the Western Balkans in order to ease the visa application process. In addition, selected partnership should also involve the EU Delegations for cooperation on specific regional initiatives.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Results</th>
<th>Objectively verifiable indicators</th>
<th>Sources of Verification</th>
<th>Assumptions</th>
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</table>
| - Greater multilateral exchange of students between the European Union and the Western Balkans; also within Western Balkans  
- Enhanced international cooperation capacities of higher education institutions in the Western | Number of students participating in the Programme per type of educational profile (undergr., master, PhD, post-PhD and staff)  
- Number of universities / partnerships | Universities and Partnerships | |
Balkans through cooperation with high quality European institutions (Erasmus Charter) with extensive experience in European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) and in the implementation of the "Bologna process";
- The spreading of the experiences of EU universities in the framework of Erasmus exchanges and in the implementation of the "Bologna process";
- Improved cultural understanding and respect for diversity;

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Means</th>
<th>Costs</th>
<th>Assumptions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(a) Student Exchanges</td>
<td>The types of mobility to be funded in this phase of the programme are: undergraduate students, master students, doctoral and post-doctoral fellowships. For staff: teaching, practical training and research exchanges;</td>
<td>EUR 12 000 000</td>
<td>The selected partnerships will receive a grant agreement covering the mobility activities of the call for activities starting in the academic year 2013/2014</td>
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<td>(b) partnership activities to organise mobility and transfer of best practice:</td>
<td>The grant awarded covers also the costs of organising student and staff exchanges, work with partners on a credit transfer system, the application of principles such as the diploma supplement and work with partners on quality assurance issues. The exchange of students and staff within the programmes can take place between higher education institutions from the EU and higher education institutions from the Western Balkans.</td>
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ANNEX 2. Amounts (in EUR) contracted and disbursed per quarter over the full duration of project

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<td>Erasmus Mundus - Action 2: Partnerships Lot - Western Balkans</td>
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ANNEX 3: Description of Institutional Framework

The National Tempus Offices have been asked to ensure the promotion of the Erasmus Mundus Programme. Every Candidate Country and Potential Candidate for accession has established a Tempus Office.

These are the authorities in charge of the Higher education Sector in the Beneficiaries:

- Albania: Ministry of Education and Sciences
- Bosnia and Herzegovina: Ministry of Civil Affairs - Sector for Education.
- The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia: Ministry of Education and Science
- Kosovo: Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
- Montenegro: Ministry of Education and Science
- Serbia: Ministry of Education and Science

ANNEX 4: Reference list of relevant laws and regulations only where relevant

- Council Decision of 18 February 2008 (2008/210/EC) on the principles, priorities and conditions contained in the European Partnership with Albania and repealing Decision 2006/54/EC
- Council Decision of 18 February 2008 (2008/211/EC) on the principles, priorities and conditions contained in the European Partnership with Bosnia and Herzegovina and repealing Decision 2006/55/EC
- Council Decision of 18 February 2008 (2008/212/EC) on the principles, priorities and conditions contained in the Accession Partnership with the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and repealing Decision 2006/57/EC
- Multi-beneficiary Multi-annual Indicative Planning Document 2011-2013
ANNEX 5: Details per EU funded contract(*) where applicable:

The programme will be implemented on an indirect centralised basis by the European Commission following Article 53a of the Financial Regulation and corresponding provisions of the Implementing Rules.


According to Article 12 (3) of the Council Regulation No (EC) 58/2003 of 19 December 2002 laying down the statute for executive agencies to be entrusted with certain tasks in the management of Community programmes, any programme delegated to an executive agency has to contribute to the financing of the administrative budget of the agency.

This programme is to be implemented through a Call for Proposals. The Call requests proposals from partnerships of higher education (HE) institutions from the EU and from the Western Balkans to draw up a mobility scheme for students at all levels and staff. Higher education institutions from the EU must all have been awarded an Erasmus Charter. Leading applicants may only be HE institutions from the EU. Partnerships must comprise at least five European HE institutions from at least three EU countries, plus universities from a minimum number of the Western Balkans to be determined in the Call for Proposals.

Proposals will state the number of mobility activities planned. In their proposal, partnerships will demonstrate the mechanisms for the selection of students and of staff for the scheme. They must guarantee a transparent and objective selection that takes into account academic merit, socio-economic situation, gender balance, support for disabled students and compliance with regional priorities. Partnerships must prove their capacity and experience in hosting students.

The best partnership or partnerships will be retained. An evaluation of the quality of the proposals, including the financial and operational capacity and expertise of the applicant and its partners, will be carried out based on a number of award criteria relating to (a) the relevance of the proposal, (b) the quality of the proposal (cooperation mechanism, implementation of the mobility and services provided to the grantees) and (c) the sustainability of the proposal.

The EACEA will conclude a grant agreement with the coordinating institution of each partnership covering the mobility activities of the call for activities starting in the academic year 2013/2014.
ANNEX 6: Project visibility activities

Awareness raising activities towards universities in the partner countries will be organised with the support of the National Tempus Offices in the beneficiaries concerned. The promotion of the individual scholarship offered to nationals from the partner countries will be organised by the local universities and by the associated partners from civil society. Dissemination of project results will be organised by the beneficiaries.