



EN

THIS ACTION IS FUNDED BY THE EUROPEAN UNION

ANNEX IV

of the Commission Implementing Decision on the financing of the annual action plan in favour of Bosnia and Herzegovina for 2022

Action Document for EU Integration Facility

ANNUAL ACTION PLAN

This document constitutes the annual work programme in the sense of Article 110(2) of the Financial Regulation, and annual and multiannual action plans and measures in the sense of Article 9 of IPA III Regulation and Article 23 of NDICI - Global Europe Regulation.

1. SYNOPSIS

1.1. Action Summary Table

Title	Action Document – EU Integration Facility Annual Action Plan in Favour Bosnia and Herzegovina for 2022
OPSYS	ACT-61474; JAD.1045709
Basic Act	Financed under the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA III)
Team Europe Initiative	No
Zone benefiting from the action	Bosnia and Herzegovina
Programming document	IPA III Programming Framework
PRIORITY AREAS AND SECTOR INFORMATION	
Window and thematic priority	Window 2: Good Governance, Acquis Alignment, Good Neighbourly Relations and Strategic Communication Thematic Priority 2: Administrative Capacity and Acquis Alignment
Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	Main SDG (1 only): SDG 16. Peace, justice and strong institutions Other significant SDGs (up to 9) and where appropriate, targets: SDG 8. Decent work and economic growth; SDG 3. Good health and well-being; SDG 9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation
DAC code(s)	15110 – Public Sector policy and administrative management 43010- Multisector aid
Main Delivery Channel @	Bilateral

Markers (from DAC form)	General policy objective @	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective	
	Participation development/good governance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	Aid to environment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Gender equality and women's and girl's empowerment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Trade development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Reproductive, maternal, new-born and child health	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Disaster Risk Reduction	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Inclusion of persons with Disabilities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Nutrition	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	RIO Convention markers @	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective	
	Biological diversity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Combat desertification	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Climate change mitigation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Climate change adaptation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Internal markers	Policy objectives	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective
		Connectivity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Digitalisation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Migration	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	COVID-19	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
BUDGET INFORMATION					
Amounts concerned	Budget line: 15.020101.01 Total estimated cost: EUR 5 500 000 Total amount of EU budget contribution: EUR 5 500 000				
MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION					
Implementation modalities (type of financing and management mode)	Project Modality through Direct management and Indirect management with an entrusted entity				
Relevant priorities and flagships from Economic and Investment Plan for the Western Balkans	This Action contributes to: Priorities: "Green Agenda", "Digital Transition", "Innovation Agenda", "Private Sector Support", "Common Regional Market and Economic Integration", "Governance, Rule of Law, PAR"				

[only for the Western Balkans]	Flagships: “VIII Digital Infrastructure”, “IX Support Competitiveness”
Final Date for conclusion of Financing Agreement	At the latest by 31 December 2023
Final date for concluding contribution / delegation agreements, procurement and grant contracts	3 years following the date of conclusion of the Financing Agreement, except for cases listed under Article 114(2) of the Financial Regulation
Indicative operational implementation period	72 months following the conclusion of the Financing Agreement
Final date for implementing the Financing Agreement	12 years following the conclusion of the Financing Agreement

1.2. Summary of the Action

The Action is designed to provide support to institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) at all levels with respect to the needs stemming from the European integration process and in relation to utilisation of EU financial assistance. Further, the Action will support improvement of economic governance, as well as implementation of countrywide socio-economic reforms recognized by the Economic Reform Programme (ERP). Complementary to other IPA Actions, the Action will provide flexible support to address specific and unforeseeable needs of the authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina at various levels, identified in the course of the European integration process. This flexible support to institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina aims at enabling them to respond swiftly to challenges and requirements of the European Union integration process and to better prepare and implement IPA programmes/Actions funded by the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance. The facility shall assist in relation to the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) implementation, *acquis* alignment, Action plans preparation and implementation, the Economic Reform Programme (ERP) and socio-economic reforms implementation, as well as for reinforcing institutional capacity for SAA implementation and absorption and management of pre-accession funds. It will also contribute to addressing sustainable development goals, especially SDG 16 (Peace, justice and strong institutions). Various types of support are envisioned, such as technical assistance to and capacity building of institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina at various levels of governance, preparation of studies, assessments, strategic documents, manuals, trainings, action proposals, tender documentation, assistance to tender/call for proposals evaluations, communication activities, as well as for provision of potential supplies underpinning EU integration processes, including limited food safety, veterinary and phytosanitary inspection and laboratory related equipment, for enhancing a high level of animal and plant health.

2. RATIONALE

2.1. Context

The process of European integration is a complex, dynamic and evolving process. Complementary to other IPA Actions which are programmed with a lead time, there is a need for a flexible facility addressing short term emerging developments and providing necessary assistance and capacity building support to the authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina at various levels. This facility shall assist the authorities in Bosnia and

Herzegovina at all levels in relation to the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) implementation, *acquis* alignment, action programmes preparation and implementation, as well as for reinforcing their institutional capacity for SAA implementation and absorption and management of pre-accession funds.

In February 2016 Bosnia and Herzegovina applied for EU membership, and in May 2019 the Commission adopted an Opinion on its membership application, along with the accompanying Analytical Report¹, outlining 14 key priorities required for the country to become able to open EU accession negotiations. Furthermore, Bosnia and Herzegovina has started to utilise the new Pre-accession assistance instrument in the period 2021-2027 (IPA III) and needs to be able to fully benefit from it.

The Action, with its areas of support, directly contributes to the overall objective under Window 2 of the IPA III Programming Framework of promoting good governance, increasing the compliance with Union's values and alignment with the Union's rules, standards and practices in the relevant areas. It further corresponds to the Thematic Priority 2 specific objective with respect to bringing policies and legislation developed in BiH in line with the EU policies and the EU *acquis*, building the administrative capacity to fully and effectively implement sector policies and the adopted legislation, and building the ability of Bosnia and Herzegovina to take on the obligations of membership as well as to follow through The European Green Deal², which represents a roadmap for making the EU's economy sustainable by turning climate and environmental challenges into opportunities across all policy areas and making the transition just and inclusive for all. Finally, it also correlates to Window 4, thematic priority 3 – Agriculture and Rural Development, recognising the Sanitary and Phytosanitary Standards (SPS) as an instrument for a gradual EU alignment of the Agriculture sector.

This is also reflected in the IPA III Strategic Response for Bosnia and Herzegovina. By supporting interventions in various areas, the Action will also be making contribution to other IPA III Windows and Thematic Priorities, in line with the content of the intervention.

The Action will specifically contribute to the Strategic Framework of Public Administration Reform with respect to ensuring public administration capable of undertaking tasks and reforms required in the context of the European integration process, including alignment with the Guidelines for the Implementation of the Green Agenda for Western Balkans³. The Action will as such provide support in relation to different sector strategies corresponding to the areas of the undertaken interventions.

IPA III Programming Framework underlines the importance of Public administration reform (PAR), which is, together with rule of law and economic development, a fundamental pillar of the enlargement process and a basis for effective implementation of EU policies and legislation. The Action aims to support fulfilment of obligations from the European integration process, and is as such in close relation with the Thematic Priority 2 under Window 2 of IPA III Programming Framework, where it is stated that the specific objective of IPA III in this area is to bring beneficiaries' policies and legislation in line with the EU policies and the EU *acquis*, as well as to build administrative capacity to fully and effectively implement sector policies and the adopted legislation, building the ability of beneficiaries to take on the obligations of membership. Given that support will further pertain to different sectors, the Action is of relevance to other IPA III Windows and Thematic Priorities too, in line with the content of the intervention.

¹ COM (2019) 261 and SWD (2019) 222

² COM(2019) 640 final

³ SWD(2020) 223 final

The Western Balkans Strategy (2018)⁴ confirms the paramount importance of public administration reform (PAR) to strengthening governance at all levels and commits to enhancing the Commission's technical assistance to Western Balkans to help them align with the EU legislation and ensure its effective implementation in practice. The **2021 Communication on EU enlargement policy**⁵ further stresses the need to focus on the reforms in the fundamental areas, including reforms aimed at modernizing and greening PA (such as digitalization/dematerialization, increasing public servants and decision-makers awareness and capacity, making a conducive legal/institutional framework and action, developing plans to increase energy efficiency in PA) and underlines that Bosnia and Herzegovina is at an early stage/has some level of preparation regarding its level of preparedness and ability to take on the obligations of EU membership.

The implementation of the Action will take into full account the Commission **Opinion on the EU membership application of Bosnia and Herzegovina** and contribute to the fulfilment of the key priorities therein. It will further support the implementation of the recommendations from the 2021 Commission report on **Bosnia and Herzegovina**. The Report highlights that the country is at an early stage of public administration reform, calls for adoption of the national programme for the adoption of the *acquis* (NPAA) / Programme for EU Integration (PI), and provides a number of recommendations across sectors for progressing in the context of the European integration process.

The Guidelines for the Implementation of the European Green Deal emphasise greener public administration capable to lead modernised reforms that will result in a cleaner environment, more affordable energy, smarter transport, new jobs and an overall better quality of life.

The Action will also contribute to the Economic Reform Programme (ERP) implementation and subsequently to different sector strategies in line with the specific interventions supported. The Economic Reform Programme of Bosnia and Herzegovina 2021-2023 (ERP BiH) emphasizes the need to increase the efficiency of tax collection. Furthermore, it identifies public enterprise reform as a way to improve the economic efficiency of public enterprises, among others reducing the fiscal burden, which many of those public enterprises currently represent. Digitalisation of public services and improving the business environment also features among the most important reform efforts for 2021-23.

The Western Balkan Strategy (2018) also states that implementing socio-economic reforms remains key for increasing investments and enhancing competitiveness in the Western Balkans. The Strategy mentions several areas for action, including establishing the Regional Economic Area to facilitate intra-regional trade and becoming member of the World Trade Organisation as a prerequisite for EU accession, also spurring economic growth and fostering investment in the region.

The Commission assessment of Economic Reform Programme of BiH (2021-2023), issued in April 2021⁶, identifies several structural challenges, including

- oversized, non-transparent and inefficient state-owned enterprises (SOEs) negatively affecting macroeconomic performance, fiscal sustainability, labour market outcomes and competitiveness;
- the insufficient functioning of a common, internal market within the country, which negatively affects the private sector's development.

2.2. Problem Analysis

For the EU integration process in Bosnia and Herzegovina it is of critical importance to have effective European integration capacities at all relevant levels of government, in line with their respective competencies, as well as to ensure their effective cooperation and coordination. This in particular relates to the SAA

⁴ COM(2018) 65 final

⁵ COM(2021) 644 final

⁶ SWD(2021) 91 final

implementation, the Programme of Integration (i.e. NPAA) development and implementation and alignment with the EU *acquis* in a consistent manner in Bosnia and Herzegovina that remain rather challenging tasks in the context of Bosnia and Herzegovina's multi-level administrative set up, as pointed out in the SIGMA 2017 assessment. In case of sector-specific issues, the need for consultation and coordination becomes particularly emphasised since the competences, in line with the Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina, are in most cases divided or shared between sectoral institutions of different administrative levels. As the authorities at all levels of government in Bosnia and Herzegovina face challenges in relation to alignment to the EU *acquis*, the institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina and concerned personnel need assistance in this respect in terms of securing necessary support, expertise and capacity building to deliver on tasks and fulfill the requirements of assuming EU membership.

The authorities at all levels of government in Bosnia and Herzegovina also face challenges in relation to IPA utilisation, including Action/programme preparation and implementation. Actions' readiness depends among other things also on the availability of quality tender documents (e.g. terms of reference, technical specifications, bill of quantities, etc.). The authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina do not have sufficient experience in developing such documents and sometimes the level of technicalities is so specific and complex that it requires specialised expertise. Therefore, institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina and personnel concerned need assistance in this respect from experts that would facilitate the process and also provide the authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina at all levels with transfer of know-how and hands-on training. Furthermore, authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina need to be able to fully benefit from the new Pre-accession assistance instrument under the multi-annual financial framework in the period 2021-2027 (IPA III).

In order to enable Bosnia and Herzegovina to fully utilise IPA III, the assistance to Bosnia and Herzegovina needs to be provided through support to activities and capacity building with respect to planning, programming, implementation and strengthening capacity for coordination of these processes. In the context of IPA III support provided under this Action is even more important given the increased emphasis on the technical maturity of the interventions.

Bosnia and Herzegovina also face challenges related to the implementation of socio-economic reforms in line with the Economic Reform Programme. Further, the action will support improvement of economic governance, as well as implementation of countrywide socio-economic reforms recognized by the Economic Reform Programme (ERP).

In view of the sector approach under IPA, Bosnia and Herzegovina still lacks country-wide strategies in important sectors that represent a precondition for the utilisation of the IPA II funds, and support in relation to analysing and preparing country-wide sector and multi-sector strategies in line with the sector approach remains critical. In addition, sector budget support/sector reform contract as a new modality for assistance utilisation under IPA is a novelty to Bosnia and Herzegovina and its institutions. Assistance is also required in relation to utilisation of multi-country IPA programmes, in particular Western Balkans Investment Framework and other regional instruments, as well as in relation to relevant EU macro regional strategies.

Identification of main stakeholders and corresponding institutional and/or organisational issues (mandates, potential roles, and capacities) to be covered by the action

Institutions from all sectors and all levels of governance in Bosnia and Herzegovina may benefit from the assistance foreseen under this Action. Furthermore, the following are the main stakeholders as far as European integration process and IPA utilisation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Directorate for European Integration (DEI) is the expert body of the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina responsible for coordination of activities concerning the requirements for the European integration process and coordination of EU assistance. The Director of the Directorate performs function of National IPA Coordinator (NIPAC) and provides all the necessary expert and administrative support for this function. In the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republika Srpska and the Brčko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina there are institutions that

coordinate European integration process at these levels of government. These include the EU Integration Office of the Government of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Republika Srpska Ministry of European Integration and International Cooperation and the Brčko District Department for European Integration and International Cooperation. In addition, the ten cantonal governments in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina have EU integration coordinators nominated and some also have established specific units in charge of European integration.

Regarding economic governance in Bosnia and Herzegovina and ERP preparation process, the stakeholders are represented by the ERP coordinators, namely the BiH Directorate for Economic Planning (DEP), and the entity coordinators from the Federal Institute for Development Planning (FIDP) and the Ministry of Finance of Republika Srpska (MoF RS). Furthermore, other stakeholders and various competent institutions from administration in Bosnia and Herzegovina will benefit from this Action, under activities that support socio-economic reforms.

The Action is to provide flexible and yet to be determined support, in various sectors/areas of interventions to support the authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina at various levels to adequately respond to their respective duties and tasks in the EU integration process. Further to addressing the issues under the Strategic Framework for Public Administration Reform in relation to public administration capacity to implement the reforms under the European integration process, including alignment with the Green Agenda for Western Balkans, the Action will as such provide support in relation to different sector strategies corresponding to the areas of the undertaken interventions. The Action will also provide flexible support in relation to Economic Reform Programme implementation and through targeted supported interventions to corresponding sector strategies.

3. DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

3.1. Intervention Logic

The Overall objective (Impact) is to contribute to Bosnia and Herzegovina's overall progress in complying with requirements for European Union accession.

The Specific objective (Outcome) is to identify and address specific and/or unforeseeable needs in the course of European integration process of BiH, including those for the implementation of Economic Reform Programme.

The underlying intervention logic for this action is that if the government authorities at all levels in Bosnia and Herzegovina are able to provide more effective and timely responses related to the EU integration processes (output 1) and are able to undertake countrywide socio-economic measures, supported through Socio-economic Reform Facility (output 2) and good cooperation between relevant stakeholders is established and maintained (assumption), adequate technical, financial and human resources is allocated by the beneficiaries (assumption), as well as if smooth inter-ministerial communication and coordination in the area of socio-economic reforms hold true (assumption), then the specific and/or unforeseeable needs identified in the course of European integration process of Bosnia and Herzegovina will be adequately addressed, including those for the implementation of Economic Reform Programme (outcome).

This will be possible knowing the nature of this instrument/facility that provides flexible support to address specific and unforeseeable needs of the authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina at various levels, identified in the course of the European integration process. This flexible support to institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina aims at enabling them to respond swiftly to challenges and requirements of the European Union integration process and to better prepare and implement IPA programmes/actions funded by the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance.

This flexible support will also provide assistance to various countrywide measures and segments of the socio-economic reforms deriving from/in line with the ERP, through technical assistance and other interventions (including provision of software and other supplies) to the administrations in BiH.

If specific and/or unforeseeable needs are identified and addressed in the course of European integration process of BiH, including those for the implementation of Economic Reform Programme (outcome), as well

as the assumptions regarding political support to institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina to participate in the EU integration processes and global insignificant recession hold true, then it will contribute to Bosnia and Herzegovina's overall progress in complying with requirements for European Union accession (*impact*).

3.2. Indicative Activities

The following list is indicative but not exhaustive of the types of activities that may be implemented at all levels of government in Bosnia and Herzegovina under the **output 1**: The governmental authorities at all levels in BiH were enabled to provide more effective and timely responses to emerging EU integration priorities:

- Provision of technical assistance to the administrations at all levels of government in BiH and preparation of required documents and analyses, respecting gender mainstreaming aspect as well, to support SAA implementation, EU *acquis* alignment and implementation, including Programme of Integration of Bosnia and Herzegovina into the EU (PI / NPAA), and compliance with requirements for the EU accession .
- Supporting urgent and/or unforeseen emerging priority tasks related to EU integration and SAA implementation priorities, through technical assistance and other interventions (including software and Information Communication Technology equipment, and, for example, provision of required translation of documents within the process of alignment of EU *acquis* to the administrations at all levels of government in BiH.
- Provision of technical assistance to the administrations at all levels of government in Bosnia and Herzegovina in acquiring knowledge and hands-on training on Sector wide approach, its implementation, and in preparation of sector programmes for IPA multi-annual programming purposes.
- Provision of technical assistance to the administrations at all levels of government in BiH in acquiring knowledge, introducing and utilising sector budget support/sector reform contract, including preparation of respective programming documents for sector budget support/sector reform contract utilisation.
- Supporting urgent and unforeseen priority tasks to the administrations at all levels of government in BiH (e.g. studies, damages and recovery needs assessments, action preparation, prevention measures against flooding and landslides and other disasters, as well as implementation of interventions to mitigate the consequences and prevent disasters in the future) in case of natural disasters, paying attention to specific needs of women and men.
- Provision of technical assistance for relevant institutions in BiH in drafting manuals, working procedures, job descriptions, rulebooks and other procedural documentation for the implementation of SAA priorities, utilisation of pre-accession instruments, meeting requirements for indirect management of EU assistance.
- Provision of technical assistance for relevant institutions at all levels of government in BiH in analysis, assessment and evidence-based preparation of country-wide sector strategies, multi-sector strategies, strategic programming documents, for the alignment of legislation in BiH with the EU *acquis*, SAA implementation, implementation of Joint Policy Guidance of the Economic and Financial Dialogue based on the ERP as well as support to implementation of envisaged socio-economic reforms and the current and future use of EU pre-accession funds, ensuring paying attention to specific needs of women and men.
- Provision of technical assistance to relevant institutions at all levels of government in BiH for capacity building on the new 2021-2027 pre-accession instrument and acquisition of knowledge for raising absorption capacities.
- Provision of technical assistance to relevant institutions at all levels of government in BiH in drafting of (pre-)feasibility and impact studies in relation to Bosnia and Herzegovina's compliance with the SAA and carrying out (pre-)investment studies, regulatory impact assessment studies, environmental impact assessment studies, business plans, market studies, economic and cost-benefit analyses, investment appraisals, project pipelines, etc., for the upcoming investments, ensuring that these include a gender component.

- Provision of technical assistance in setting up and developing methodology and single (sector) project pipelines for investment projects and utilisation of respective instruments of support for investment projects for relevant institutions at all levels of government in BiH.
- Support to relevant institutions in BiH at all levels of government in preparing Actions for upcoming IPA funding, in particular those requiring specialised expertise, including support to the Action preparation process and all necessary Action documentation and annexes to programming documents, ensuring a gender component as well.
- Preparing of tender and procurement documentation to relevant institutions in BiH (terms of reference, technical specifications, market research, bills of quantities, guidelines for grant schemes and other supporting documents for tender dossiers) as well as support to tender/call for proposals evaluations, with due consideration of a gender component.
- Supporting awareness raising of EU programmes (current and future) and building capacity of end beneficiaries to access the funds available under EU Programmes and of relevant institutions at all levels of government in BiH.
- Provision of technical assistance to relevant institutions in BiH to enhance monitoring, reporting and evaluation processes and capacities.
- Provision of institution building activities and training of institutions at all levels of government in BiH relevant to any of the above-mentioned activities and the European integration process, taking into consideration specific needs of both men and women.
- Participation in European integration related meetings, workshops, study visits.
- Provision of information, communication and training activities and material regarding EU integration to administrations at all levels of government in BiH.
- Carrying out evaluations of IPA actions/programmes.
- Additional COVID-19 related specific response activities and/or other unforeseeable pandemic-related response activities.
- Investments (works and supplies) might also be supported through this Action, such as limited supplies for food safety, veterinary and phytosanitary services, like inspectorates and referenced/official laboratories.

The indicative type of activities that may be implemented under the **output 2** “Countrywide socio-economic measures supported through Socio-economic Reform Facility” as integral part of this Action are: Provision of support to various country wide measures and segments of the socio-economic reforms deriving from/in line with the Economic Reform Programme, through technical assistance (including e.g. analyses, studies, policy related documents, etc.) and other interventions (including provision of software and other supplies) to the administrations at all levels in BiH. Potential areas of intervention include areas such as taxation, banking and monetary stability, business environment, public enterprises, trade, etc. contributing to improving economic governance and competitiveness of BiH.

3.3. Mainstreaming

Environmental Protection, Climate Change and Biodiversity

The Action will contribute to the protection of the environment in line with the needs identified by authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the respective Action activities. The Action and the activities deriving from the Action will not have any negative impact on the environment nor jeopardise environment, health and security in the future. The activities deriving from this Action will be delivered in the most environmentally friendly possible way.

Gender equality and empowerment of women and girls

As per OECD Gender DAC codes identified in section 1.1, this action is labelled as G1. This implies that significant attention will be given to gender aspect within Action activities, including ensuring participation of both women and men, recognising different needs of women and men, ensuring benefits for both men and

women, ensuring gender sensitive data and gender analyses. In general, a gender perspective will be maintained ensuring that the results of the Action impact positively on gender equality as well. By this, the Action will make contribution in line with the EU Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025⁷ which aims at enhancing gender mainstreaming by systematically including a gender perspective in all stages of policy design in all EU policy areas, ensuring that women and men, girls and boys, in all their diversity, are equal. The Action will also contribute to Gender Action Plan of BiH 2018-2022, as a framework strategic document for inclusion of the gender equality standards in key areas of reform.

Human Rights

Due attention will also be given to the respect of human rights and integration of human rights principles within the undertaken interventions. Participation in the Action will be guaranteed on the bases of equal access regardless of sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation.

Democracy

The involvement and participation of civil society and non-state stakeholders in the European integration process is very important and cooperation between governmental and non-governmental sectors crucial. As an integral part of the European Union accession process, opportunities for dialogue and cooperation among civil society and non-state actors and public sector actors will be further developed through various initiatives under the proposed Action.

Disaster Risk Reduction

Due attention will be given to respond, if need be, to natural disaster and other disasters, should they occur during the implementation period of the Action.

Other considerations

Improvement in the public service and strengthened good governance to be gained from the Action will be beneficial for minorities and vulnerable groups. Publicity and dissemination of information will help to empower minorities and vulnerable groups to participate in the proposed activities and calls for proposals. Based on the fundamental principles of promoting equality and combating discrimination, participation in the Action will be guaranteed on the basis of equal access regardless of racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation.

3.4. Risks and Lessons Learned

Category	Risks	Likelihood (High/ Medium/ Low)	Impact (High/ Medium / Low)	Mitigating measures
Planning, processes and systems	The lack of cooperation among institutions at	M	H	Different mitigating measures, including the Commission's political support and enhanced policy dialogue,

⁷ COM(2020) 152 final

	different levels of government in BiH.			will be undertaken to eliminate risks to successful implementation of interventions undertaken under the Action.
People and the organisation	Full commitment and support of the decision-makers of the involved institutions	M	M	Commission's political support and enhanced inter-ministerial policy dialogue

Lessons Learned:

As it has been demonstrated during the work of SAA Committee and Sub-Committees, EU *acquis* alignment, and other European integration processes, there is a need to strengthen capacities of all institutions required to undertake European integration related work at various levels of the government in their respective sectors. In addition, it is required to maintain effective coordination among different levels of the government for European integration purposes.

The need for strengthening capacities has been in particular recognised as far as EU policies, legal approximation, EU affairs coordination as well as EU funds are concerned. Previous technical assistance (TA) showed that development of capacity, models and mechanisms requires work with a wider range of recipient institutions and public servants from different level of government given that, in comparison to other pre-accession beneficiaries, Bosnia and Herzegovina has specific administrative set-up. Due to the higher number of players, more time for development of models and capacities is needed. Given the administrative structure in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the corresponding division of competencies, support is required to institutions at all levels of the government, also in light of ensuring overall and harmonised progress in aligning BiH's legislation to the EU *acquis*.

The experience with previous Project Preparation Facility (PPF) / General Technical Assistance Facility (GTAF) / EU integration Facility (EUIF) has shown that the demand for this type of assistance has always been very high and diverse and that this type of assistance has been particularly useful to respond quickly to urgent and evolving needs. The challenges detected in the usage of this type of Facility have been delays or even cancellation of the contracting and implementation of a few small-size project interventions (e.g. preparation of terms of reference for a larger scale assistance project) due to a lack of agreement among all the stakeholders involved in the design of the interventions. Also, the shortage of the funds in the end of the implementation of a few big-sized projects has been overcome by using this Facility for these projects' finalisation. Based on the lessons learned, an endorsement of the intended intervention by all stakeholders concerned by that action should be a precondition fulfilled before the funds from this EUIF Action are earmarked.

These conclusions are reiterated in the Second Country Interim Programme evaluation of IPA assistance in Bosnia and Herzegovina. With regard to the performance, IPA projects have been effective and efficient, although there have been challenges in implementation due to contractor performance, slow procurement procedures, meeting conditionality or delay in reaching consensus between all stakeholders. Therefore, ownership and commitment of all relevant stakeholders of any intervention and its formalisation is an imperative before support under the Action starts. Moreover, a general lesson learned which applies to all sectors is that policy and legislative development needs to be evidence-based, costed and subject to appropriate internal and external stakeholder consultations at the right time of the legislative and policy-making process. This is a key in ensuring implementation and enforcement of adopted policies and legislation. Therefore, the action shall ensure consistency with the horizontal public administration reform efforts.

3.5. Indicative Logical Framework Matrix

Results	Results chain: Main expected results [maximum 10 @]	Indicators [at least one indicator per expected result @]	Baselines 2021	Target [values and years]	Sources of data	Assumptions
Impact	To contribute to Bosnia and Herzegovina's overall progress complying with the requirements for European Union accession.	Progress made towards meeting accession criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 3 chapters/areas at Early stage/Some level of preparation - 16 chapters/areas at Some level of preparation - 1 chapters/areas at Some level of preparation / Moderately prepared - 2 chapters/areas Moderately prepared 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - at least 8 chapters/areas at Early stage/Some level of preparation - at least 14 chapters/areas at Some level of preparation - at least 3 chapters/areas at Some level of preparation / Moderately prepared - at least 4 chapters/areas Moderately prepared 	Commission Reports on Bosnia and Herzegovina	<i>Not applicable</i>
Outcome	Specific and/or unforeseeable needs identified and addressed in the course of European integration process of BiH, including those for the implementation of Economic Reform Programme.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Frequency of requests received by the EUD for EUIF assistance from BiH authorities to address specific EU integration requirements -Level of descriptive grade in ERP Assessment by EC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Up to 5 requests received by the EUD for EUIF assistance from authorities in BiH annually; -Limited implementation of policy guidance jointly adopted by BiH and EC in the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -At least 15 requests received by the EUD for EUIF assistance from authorities in BiH annually; -Increased implementation of policy guidance jointly adopted by BiH and EC in the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Commission Reports on Bosnia and Herzegovina - IPA Monitoring Committee meetings' conclusions -The European Commission's Overview & ERP Country Assessments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Political support to institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina to participate in the EU integration processes No significant global recession

			Economic and Financial Dialogue	Economic and Financial Dialogue		
Output 1 related to Outcome	The governmental authorities at all levels in BiH were enabled to provide more effective and timely responses to emerged EU integration priorities	- Number of outputs, such as Terms of Reference, technical specifications, studies and other documents, such as control plans and laboratory analyses implemented in food safety, veterinary and phytosanitary sectors	0	8	Project monitoring /implementation reports; IPA Monitoring Committee meetings' conclusions; Monitoring reports within the DEI; Submitted and approved programming documents/Action documents; Tender documentation; Action reports; EC Annual Country Reports; The EC's Overview & ERP Country Assessments	Identification of priority areas for assistance in a timely manner; Good cooperation with all relevant stakeholders established and maintained during Action implementation; Adequate technical, financial and human resources allocated by the beneficiaries to the implementation of the activities. Smooth inter-ministerial communication and coordination in the area of socio-economic reforms
		- % of tender procedures launched and finalised	70% of the tender procedures launched and finalised against the anticipated tendering plan	85% of the tender procedures launched and finalised against the anticipated tendering plan		
		- % of IPA funds contracted	70% of IPA funds contracted against the anticipated contracting plan	85% of IPA funds contracted against the anticipated contracting plan		
		- % of IPA funds disbursed	60% of IPA funds disbursed against the anticipated	70% of IPA funds disbursed against the anticipated disbursement plan		
Output 2 Related to Outcome	Countrywide socio-economic measures supported through Socio-economic Reform Facility	Number of outputs/interventions relevant for socio economic measures ensured through Socio-economic Reform Facility	0	At least 6		

4. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

4.1 Financing Agreement

In order to implement this action, it is foreseen to conclude a financing agreement with Bosnia and Herzegovina.

4.2 Indicative Implementation Period

The indicative implementation period of this action, during which the activities described in section 3.1 will be carried out and the corresponding contracts and agreements implemented, is 72 months from the date of entry into force of the Financing Agreement. Extensions of the implementation period may be agreed by the Commission's responsible authorising officer by amending this Financing Decision and the relevant contracts and agreements.

4.3 Methods of implementation applicable for Project modality

The Commission will ensure that the EU appropriate rules and procedures for providing financing to third parties are respected, including review procedures, where appropriate, and compliance of the action with EU restrictive measures⁸.

4.3.1 Direct Management (Procurement)

The activities related to **the Output 1**: The governmental authorities at all levels in BiH are enabled to provide more effective and timely responses to emerged EU integration priorities, will be delivered by procurement through the implementation of several services, supplies and work contracts **under direct management** of the Delegation of EU in BiH, taking into account the specificity of EU Integration Facility to provide multisector aid and specific response (unforeseeable activities).

4.3.2 Indirect Management with a Member State Organisation and/ or international organisation

The activities related to the **Output 1** may be **partially** implemented in indirect management with an entity entrusted that has been pillar-assessed or is currently undergoing an ex-ante assessment including the complementary pillar assessment.

An entrusted entity will be selected by the Commission's services using the following criteria:

- financial and operational capacity of the applicant; and
- technical capacity, such as experience in the preparation and implementation of joint capacity building and similar projects;
- extensive experience in managing large and complex programmes or projects related to the results,
- extensive experience in the implementation of similar projects,
- expertise in the field of EU negotiations and documented capacity to mobilise relevant networks in the EU Member States, BiH and the region, etc.

⁸ www.sanctionsmap.eu Please note that the sanctions map is an IT tool for identifying the sanctions regimes. The source of the sanctions stems from legal acts published in the Official Journal (OJ). In case of discrepancy between the published legal acts and the updates on the website it is the OJ version that prevails.

In case the envisaged entity would need to be replaced, the Commission's services may select another replacement entity using the same selection criteria given above. If the entity is replaced the decision to replace it needs to be justified.

The activities related to **the Output 2: Countrywide socio-economic measures supported through Socio-economic Reform Facility**, will be implemented under **indirect management** with the entrusted entity – World Bank.

The World Bank (WB) is an international organisation working in every major area of development, providing a wide array of financial products and technical assistance.

The WB has a long and extensive experience in supporting socio-economic reform in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the broader Western Balkans region. Among others the WB has implemented projects in the following fields relevant to the intervention (the list is not exclusive): socio-economic reforms in the areas of economic governance; establishing single economic space; improving the business environment; trade facilitation; public sector efficiency, effectiveness, and transparency; financial sector and monetary policy reforms; education, research and development, and innovation; energy and green transition; environment and climate change; transport; social policy and employment; digitalisation;

The proposed implementing partner has operational capacities for managing large scale technical assistance interventions, necessary knowledge and technical capacities to fulfil the activities, respecting EU demands and applicable standards.

The WB has also built strong relationship with local authorities in BiH, relevant for implementing socio-economic reforms. It will support BiH to exercise effective leadership and ownership over the Action and will contribute to its capacity development by intense cooperation with the state-, entity- and lower level institutions, responsible for socio-economic reforms.

It possesses all necessary capacities, i.e. human resources, proven logistical and management capacities, as well as experience, to collect data, analyse it and report on results. It can also rely on expertise from other organisations in the World Bank Group, including IFC, that has been also engaged in implementing certain socio-economic reforms. In the previous period of work in BiH, the WB proved its neutrality and impartiality in general.

4.3.3 Changes from indirect to direct management (and vice versa) mode due to exceptional circumstances (one alternative second option)

Implementation under indirect management may partially be used as an alternative modality for the Action's **Output 1** in case that emergency circumstances outside of the Commission's control arise and the preferred procurement modality cannot be implemented.

Part of the Output 1 implemented in Indirect management, if negotiations with the entity entrusted fail, that part of this action may be implemented in direct management in accordance with the implementation modalities identified in section 4.3.3.

As well if the preferred implementation modality under indirect management (**Output 2**) cannot be implemented due to circumstances outside of the Commission's control, then direct management may be used as alternative modality: technical assistance/service contract.

4.4 Scope of geographical eligibility for procurement and grants

The geographical eligibility in terms of place of establishment for participating in procurement and grant award procedures and in terms of origin of supplies purchased as established in the basic act and set out in the relevant contractual documents shall apply, subject to the following provisions.

The Commission's authorising officer responsible may extend the geographical eligibility on the basis of urgency or of unavailability of services in the markets of the countries or territories concerned, or in other duly substantiated cases where application of the eligibility rules would make the realisation of this action impossible or exceedingly difficult (Article 28(10) NDICI-Global Europe Regulation).

4.5 Indicative Budget

Indicative Budget components	EU contribution (amount in EUR)	Indicative third-party contribution, in currency identified
Methods of implementation – cf. section 4.3		
Outcome: Specific and/or unforeseeable needs identified and addressed in the course of European integration process of BiH, including those for the implementation of Economic Reform Programme* composed of	5 500 000	N.A.
Procurement (direct management) – cf. section 4.3.1	N.A.	
Output 1 Direct management (procurement) – cf section 4.3.1 – total envelope	3 500 000	N.A.
Output 2 Indirect management with an entrusted entity – World Bank, cf section 4.3.2	2 000 000	N.A.
Evaluation – cf. section 5.2 Audit – cf. section 5.3	will be covered by another decision	N.A.
Communication and visibility	will be covered by another decision	N.A.
Contingencies	0	N.A.
Total	5 500 000	

- * Due to the nature of the EU Integration Facility it is not possible to specify/make an estimation of the number of each type of procurement (works, supplies, services) and other implementation modalities, nor of their nature.

4.6 Organisational Set-up and Responsibilities

The main institutional stakeholders that will be involved in the implementation of the Action, Outcome 1 are:
- Directorate for European Integration - DEI

- Line ministries of the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina
 - Republika Srpska Ministry for European Integration and International Cooperation
 - Line ministries of Republika Srpska Government
 - Brčko District Department for European Integration and International Cooperation
 - Brčko District government line departments
 - EU Integration Office of the Government of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and cantonal Coordinators and bodies for European Integration
 - Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina's and cantonal line ministries,
- as well as direct beneficiary institutions that benefit from the activities financed from the Outcome 1 of the Action.

NIPAC will communicate the requests for EUIF assistance to the EU Delegation to Bosnia and Herzegovina in order to be considered and finally approved, as the management of EU funds operates in a direct management mode in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In the majority of the contracts a steering committee is expected to be established whose members will be the Beneficiary/ies representatives from all concerned levels of government and EU Delegation staff members.

As part of its prerogative of budget implementation and to safeguard the financial interests of the Union, the Commission will participate in the above governance structures set up for governing the implementation of the action.

The main institutional stakeholders that will be involved in the implementation of Output 2 related to the socio-economic governance are: DEP, the entity ERP coordinators from the Federal Institute for Development Planning (FIDP), the Ministry of Finance of Republika Srpska (RS) as well as all other direct beneficiary institutions that benefit from the activities financed under the Output 2 of the Action.

4.7. Pre-conditions

N/A

5 PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

5.1 Monitoring and Reporting

The day-to-day technical and financial monitoring of the implementation of this action will be a continuous process, and part of the implementing partner's responsibilities. To this aim, the implementing partner shall establish a permanent internal, technical and financial monitoring system for the action and elaborate regular progress reports (not less than annual) and final reports. Every report shall provide an accurate account of implementation of the action, difficulties encountered, changes introduced, as well as the degree of achievement of its results (Outputs and direct Outcomes) as measured by corresponding indicators, using as reference the logframe matrix (for project modality) and the partner's strategy, policy or reform action plan list (for budget support). The Commission may undertake additional project monitoring visits both through its own staff and through independent consultants recruited directly by the Commission for independent monitoring reviews (or recruited by the responsible agent contracted by the Commission for implementing such reviews).

The performance and result monitoring arrangements will be finalised as per the IPA III Implementing Regulation and once the Framework Agreement between Bosnia and Herzegovina and the European Commission on the arrangements for implementation of Union financial assistance to Bosnia and Herzegovina under the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA III) is signed. This action will be regularly monitored by EU Delegation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Internal monitoring will be implemented through the Steering Committee's meetings, regular EU Delegation Implementation reviews, on-the-spot checks, meetings with beneficiaries and consultant companies/contractors. Additionally, the Action might be subject to external monitoring in line with the European Commission rules and procedures set in the Financing Agreement.

External monitoring will be implemented through Result-oriented Monitoring (ROM). This will provide, as necessary and required, an independent assessment of the on-going or ex-post performance of the Action.

5.2 Evaluation

Having regard to the nature of the action, a final evaluation will be carried out for this action or areas of support via independent consultants contracted by the Commission or via an implementing partner.

A final evaluation will be carried out for accountability and learning purposes, including for policy revision.

The Commission shall inform the implementing partner at least 3 months in advance of the dates envisaged for the evaluation missions. The European Commission shall form a Reference Group composed by representatives from the main stakeholders at both EU and national levels (representatives from the government, from civil society organisations, etc.). If deemed necessary, other donors will be invited to join. The implementing partner shall collaborate efficiently and effectively with the evaluation experts, and inter alia provide them with all necessary information and documentation, as well as access to the project premises and activities. The evaluation reports shall be shared with the partner country and other key stakeholders following the best practice of evaluation dissemination. The implementing partner and the Commission shall analyse the conclusions and recommendations of the evaluations and, where appropriate, in agreement with the partner country, jointly decide on the follow-up actions to be taken and any adjustments necessary, including, if indicated, the reorientation of the project. Evaluation services will be contracted under another decision.

The evaluation reports shall be shared with the partner country and other key stakeholders following the best practice of evaluation dissemination⁹. The implementing partner and the Commission shall analyse the conclusions and recommendations of the evaluations and, where appropriate, in agreement with the partner country, jointly decide on the follow-up actions to be taken and any adjustments necessary, including, if indicated, the reorientation of the project.

5.3 Audit and Verifications

Without prejudice to the obligations applicable to contracts concluded for the implementation of this action, the Commission may, on the basis of a risk assessment, contract independent audits or expenditure verification assignments for one or several contracts or agreements. It is foreseen that audit services may be financed under another decision.

6 COMMUNICATION AND VISIBILITY

Visibility of EU funding and communication about objectives and impact of Action are a legal obligation for all Actions funded by the EU, as set out in the EU communication and visibility requirements in force. In particular, the recipients of EU funding shall acknowledge the origin of the EU funding and ensure its proper visibility by:

- providing a statement highlighting the support received from the EU in a visible manner on all documents and communication material relating to the implementation of the funds, including on an official website and social media accounts, where these exist; and

⁹ See best [practice of evaluation dissemination](#)

- promoting the actions and their results by providing coherent, effective and proportionate targeted information to multiple audiences, including the media.

Visibility and communication measures shall be implemented, as relevant, by entrusted entities and contractors. Appropriate contractual obligations shall be included, respectively, in financing agreements, and procurement contracts.

The measures shall be based on a specific Communication and Visibility Plan, established and implemented in line with the EU communication and visibility requirements in force. The plan shall include, inter alia, a communication narrative and master messages for the Action, customised for the various target audiences (stakeholders, civil society, general public, etc.)

Visibility and communication measures specific to this Action shall be complementary to the broader communication activities implemented directly by the European Commission services and/or the EU Delegations and Offices. The European Commission and the EU Delegations and Offices should be fully informed of the planning and implementation of the specific visibility and communication activities, notably with respect to the communication narrative and master messages.

7 SUSTAINABILITY

The sustainability of results of this Action will be achieved through the increased effectiveness of authorities at all levels of administration to better cope with the EU integration process, by pursuing the necessary reforms, transposing and implementing EU acquis as well as to effectively programme and implement the IPA funds that would prepare the country to join the EU.

In addition, the high level of continuous commitment of authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina to pursue EU integration processes is of the paramount importance to sustain the results of IPA assistance in view of Bosnia and Herzegovina joining the EU.

Elaboration of strategic documents or new legislation/amendments shall be carried out respecting the legislation in BiH, especially that which regulates fiscal/regulatory impact assessments, public consultations, inter-ministerial coordination. As a rule, projects should start by providing support to the beneficiaries with options analysis, regulatory impact assessment, concept papers etc. prior to supporting them with drafting legislation/amendments.

Any written procedural manuals or guidelines developed with the support of this Action shall be simple enough to be regularly updated and changed by the staff of the respective organisations without additional external support. Any guidelines or procedures developed shall not contradict with any legal provision of the country.

ICT development shall respect the standards for interoperability in BiH. In cases when such standards are missing, relevant consultations with the competent institutions for ICT at all levels of authority should be a prerequisite to launch any tender.