



Brussels, 19.11.2019
C(2019) 8411 final

COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING DECISION

of 19.11.2019

**amending Commission Implementing Decision C(2019) 5515 of 19.7.2019 adopting a
Multi-country Action Programme for the year 2019**

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THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

Having regard to Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 July 2018 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union, amending Regulations (EU) No 1296/2013, (EU) No 1301/2013, (EU) No 1303/2013, (EU) No 1304/2013, (EU) No 1309/2013, (EU) No 1316/2013, (EU) No 223/2014, (EU) No 283/2014, and Decision No 541/2014/EU and repealing Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012¹, and in particular Article 110 thereof,

Having regard to Regulation (EU) No 236/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2014 laying down common rules and procedures of the implementation of the Union's instruments for financing external action², and in particular Article 2(3) thereof,

Whereas:

- (1) By its Decision C(2019)5515 of 19.7.2019, the Commission adopted the Multi-country Action Programme for the year 2019, including 18 actions.
- (2) It is now necessary to modify the Multi-country Action Programme for the year 2019, by introducing a new Action (19th action), entitled "Supporting a More Effective Administration of Justice in Corruption and Organised Crime Cases in the Western Balkans through Trial Monitoring", which increases the budget of the Annual Action programme by EUR 6 million (2019 appropriations). The action is necessary to advance in the fight against corruption and organised crime in the Western Balkans.
- (3) Therefore, Decision C(2019)5515 of 19.7.2019 should be amended accordingly.
- (4) The amendment provided for in this Decision does not fall within the categories of measures for which the prior opinion of the Committee is required. The amendment shall be communicated to the European Parliament and to the Member States through the IPA II Committee set up by Article 13 of Regulation (EU) No 231/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2014 establishing an Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA II)³ within one month of its adoption.

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

Sole Article

Commission Implementing Decision C(2019)5515 of 19.07.2019 adopting a Multi-country Action Programme for the year 2019 is amended as follows:

¹ OJ L 193, 30.7.2018, p.1.

² OJ L 77, 15.03.2014, p. 95.

³ OJ L 77, 15.03.2014, p. 11.

a) In Article 2, the words "EUR 194 100 000" are replaced by the following "EUR 200 100 000".

b) The Annex is replaced by the Annex to this Decision.

Done at Brussels, 19.11.2019

For the Commission
Johannes HAHN
Member of the Commission

ANNEX

to Commission Implementing Decision adopting a Multi-country Action Programme for the year 2019

1 IDENTIFICATION

Beneficiary	Beneficiaries listed in Annex I of the IPA II Regulation (IPA II beneficiaries)
Basic act: CRIS/ABAC Commitment references and budget line:	<p>Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA-II)</p> <p>2019/040-826; MCP 2019 - part Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations</p> <p>2019/NEAR>CLIMA; MCP 2019 - part Directorate-General for Climate Action</p> <p>2019/NEAR>MOVE; MCP 2019 - part Directorate-General for Mobility and Transport</p> <p>2019/NEAR>EMPL; MCP 2019 - part Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion</p> <p>2019/NEAR>EAC; MCP 2019 - part Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture</p> <p>2019/NEAR>ESTAT; MCP 2019 - part Directorate-General for Eurostat</p> <p>2019/NEAR>ECHO; MCP 2019 - part Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations</p> <p>2019/NEAR>EACEA; MCP 2019 - part Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA)</p> <p>22.020401 – Multi-country programmes, regional integration and territorial cooperation</p>
Total cost: EU Contribution:	<p>EUR 331 071 000</p> <p>EUR 200 100 000</p>
Method of implementation	<p>- Direct management by the European Commission and:</p> <p>- Indirect management with :</p> <p><i>European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)</i> for part of Action 1 - Regional Energy Efficiency Programme for the Western Balkans (“REEP Plus Replenishment”) <u>and</u> for part of Action 5 - EU support to SMEs through EBRD Advice for Small Businesses and EU-REPARIS under the Western Balkan Enterprise Development and Innovation Facility</p> <p><i>European Investment Bank (EIB)</i> for part of Action 1 - Regional Energy Efficiency Programme for the Western Balkans (“REEP Plus Replenishment”)</p>

	<p><i>World Bank Group (WBG)</i> for part of Action 5 - EU support to SMEs through EBRD Advice for Small Businesses and EU-REPARIS under the Western Balkan Enterprise Development and Innovation Facility; for part of Action 16 - EU support to strengthening regional cooperation and the development of a competitive Regional Economic Area (REA); and for part of Action 17 - EU support to fundamental rights of the Roma community, and reintegration of returnees</p> <p><i>International Labour Organisation (ILO)</i> for part of Action 6 - EU support to the Employment and Social Affairs Platform 2</p> <p><i>United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)</i> for Action 13 - Fighting illicit trafficking of cultural property in the Western Balkans</p> <p><i>Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH (GIZ) and the Ministry of Interior, Italy</i> for part of Action 14 - EU support to regional security</p> <p><i>United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)</i> for part of Action 14 - EU support to regional security</p> <p><i>European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training (CEPOL)</i> for part of Action 14 - EU support to regional security</p> <p><i>Council of Europe (CoE)</i> for part of Action 14 - EU support to regional security, and part of Action 17 - EU support to fundamental rights of the Roma community, and reintegration of returnees</p> <p><i>International Organization for Migration (IOM)</i> for part of Action 14 - EU support to regional security</p> <p><i>United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)</i> for part of Action 17 - EU support to fundamental rights of the Roma community, and reintegration of returnees</p> <p><i>Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)</i> for Action 19 - Supporting a More Effective Administration of Justice in Corruption and Organised Crime Cases in the Western Balkans through Trial Monitoring</p> <p><i>The entity(ies)</i> to be selected in accordance with the criteria set out in section 2.2(3)(a) for part of Action 7 - EU support to Youth in the Western Balkans</p>
<p>Final date for contracting, including the conclusion of delegation/contribution</p>	<p>at the latest by 31 December 2020</p>

agreements	
Indicative operational implementation period	72 months from the adoption of the original Financing Decision (until 19/07/2025)

2 DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION PROGRAMME

2.1 SECTORS SELECTED UNDER THIS ACTION PROGRAMME

- Rationale for the selection of the specific sectors under this programme:

This Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA II) Multi-country action programme is designed to respond to priority needs as identified in the Multi-country Indicative Strategy Paper 2014-2020 (hereinafter referred to as Strategy Paper) adopted on 30 June 2014¹, as last being revised to take account of the latest developments, and in particular, the Communication from the Commission on "*A credible enlargement perspective for and enhanced EU engagement with the Western Balkans*" adopted on 6 February 2018² (hereafter referred to as *Western Balkans strategy*). This strategy aims to generate renewed reform momentum in the Western Balkans and provide significantly enhanced EU engagement to better support their preparations on the European path. For the period 2018-2020, this Strategy Paper has been revised to ensure coherence with the new strategic orientations, in particular as regards the implementation of the six Flagship Initiatives presented in the Communication.

The Western Balkans and Turkey face important challenges to meet the political and economic membership criteria and to align with the Union *acquis*. These challenges are common to all IPA II beneficiaries, although to varying degrees. The IPA II Multi-country programme also contributes to meeting the targets and expected results identified in the Strategy Papers for each IPA II beneficiary.

As pointed out in the Strategy Paper, challenges persist in the area of democracy and rule of law, including the functioning of institutions guaranteeing democracy, empowerment of civil society, the fight against organised crime, safeguarding **fundamental rights**, such as freedom of expression and the rights of persons belonging to minorities.

While solutions supported by IPA II funds need to be adapted to the specific situation of each individual IPA II beneficiary and supported under a bilateral IPA programme, certain problems are best tackled at regional or horizontal level. This is the case where a beneficiary cannot achieve the desired results alone as they require close cooperation and support from other IPA II beneficiaries (for instance for fighting organised crime), or where joint efforts are more cost-effective since they create synergies or economies of scale. A particular focus on the support to the reconciliation process in the Western Balkans will be ensured.

The Strategy Paper sets out as well how IPA II assistance will support reforms and investments in line with the identified key challenges for **competitiveness and growth**, in complementarity with assistance provided under the bilateral programmes.

¹ C(2014) 4293, 30.06.2014

² C(2018) 65, 06.02.2018

In accordance with the Strategy Paper, assistance will be delivered under the following four headings, each one presenting one dimension of the added value of the horizontal and regional programming:

- i. Horizontal support to sector policies and reforms;
- ii. Regional structures and networks;
- iii. Regional investment support;
- iv. Territorial cooperation.

The new orientations of the *Western Balkans strategy*, in particular the implementation of the six Flagship Initiatives are also reflected. More focus will be put on the widening of the connectivity agenda to include:

- (a) connecting infrastructures in line with flagship initiatives 4 (increasing connectivity) and 5 (a Digital Agenda for the Western Balkans);
- (b) connecting economies and fostering economic governance (including the set-up of the Regional Economic Area), in line with flagship initiative 3 (supporting socio-economic development); and,
- (c) connecting people with a stronger focus on Education (towards doubling Erasmus+) and Youth, in line with flagship initiative 3 and extended support to reconciliation initiatives, in line with flagship 6 (supporting reconciliation and good neighbourly relations).

Additionally, renewed priority will also be put on security and migration issues, stepping up joint operational cooperation on organised crime (including counter-terrorism), border control and migration management, in line with flagship initiative 2 (reinforcing engagement on security and on migration). As per flagship initiative 1 (strengthened support to the rule of law), measures continue to be envisaged.

Some of these reinforced priorities are being embedded into this programme. The focus of the 2019 multi-country action programme rests to a large extent on tackling the **fundamentals first**, e.g. rule of law, fundamental rights, as well as on economic development and competitiveness including further support to the regional economic area with special focus on the digital aspects, while strongly supporting regional security actions, and reconciliation through culture; in addition to the **connectivity agenda**, including digital, inducing a stronger emphasis on digital areas in the multi-country action programme in order to prepare the region better for the digital transformation. It contains 19 regional and horizontal actions grouped under three of the four headings of the Strategy Paper. Where relevant actions under this multi-country action programme shall also respect and shall be implemented in line with the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other beneficiaries' international human rights obligations.

- Overview of past and on-going EU, other donors' and/or IPA II beneficiary's actions in the relevant sectors:

When designing this programme due account has been taken of activities implemented under the bilateral programmes, the guidance provided in EU strategic documents, the lessons learned from the programming and implementation of previous EU assistance and the findings from consultations with, inter alia, the beneficiaries, International Financial Institutions (IFIs), international organisations, the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC), EU Member States and civil society organisations.

The lessons learned from IPA I demonstrated that progress towards meeting EU membership criteria is best achieved by a mix of measures planned both at regional and

IPA II beneficiary level. The IPA interim evaluation and meta-evaluation recommended that the Multi-country programmes should develop more rigorous selection criteria for the supported actions and focus on areas with clear needs for a regional approach. It also concluded that further efforts are needed to involve regional stakeholders more in programming and that central administrations should be involved in project implementation as a way to improve ownership and coordination. The mid-term evaluation review of IPA II assistance has particularly emphasised the donor coordination and leverage elements of the support through the Western Balkans Investment Framework (WBIF). Complementarities and synergies of IPA II with the actions under the other thematic lines/programmes is good but needs to be pursued.

Other conclusions concern economies of scale in horizontal programmes versus efficiency risks, due to sometimes complex set-ups for their implementation under IPA I assistance.

Under IPA II, efficiency concerns will be addressed by more effective coordination, focusing on fewer priorities, comprehensive and longer-term planning and, where relevant, a sector approach.

List of Actions foreseen under the selected Priorities:

LIST OF ACTIONS	MCSP PRIORITY / FLAGSHIP	MANAGEMENT MODE	AMOUNT IN EUR
01 - EU support to Regional Efficiency Energy Programme +	Regional investment support / FGS 4	Indirect	30 000 000
02 - EU Support for Climate Action in IPA II beneficiaries – Transition towards the low emissions and climate-resilient economy	Regional structures and networks / FGS 4	Direct	2 000 000
03 - EU support to Western Balkans Investment Framework - WBIF (Infrastructure Project Facility and IFI Coordination Office)	Regional investment support / FGS 3, 4 and 5	Direct	30 000 000
04 - EU support to Transport community Secretariat Treaty	Regional structures and networks / FGS 4	Direct	2 400 000
05 - EU support to SMEs through EBRD Advice for Small Businesses and EU-REPARIS under the Western Balkan Enterprise Development and Innovation Facility (WB EDIF)	Regional investment support / FGS 3	Indirect	20 000 000
06 - EU support to the Employment and Social Affairs Platform II (ESAP II)	Regional structures and networks / FGS 3	Direct and Indirect	5 000 000
07 – EU support to youth in the Western Balkans	Horizontal support / FGS3	Direct and Indirect	4 700 000
08 - EU support to improving vocational education and training (VET) mobility	Horizontal support / FGS3	Direct	4 000 000

09 - Youth window in the Western Balkans	Horizontal support / FGS3	Direct	3 000 000
10 - EU support to statistics in the Western Balkans and Turkey	Horizontal support / FGS3/ Cross-cutting	Direct	10 000 000
11 - EU support to prevention, preparedness and response to floods and forests fires in the Western Balkans and Turkey	Regional structures and networks / FGS 2 and 4	Direct	5 000 000
12 - Creative Europe Window for the Western Balkans	Horizontal support / FGS 6	Direct	5 000 000
13 - Fighting illicit trafficking of cultural property in the Western Balkans	Horizontal support / FGS 6	Indirect	2 800 000
14 - EU support to regional security	Regional structures and networks / FGS 2	Direct and Indirect	35 700 000
15 - EU support to cybersecurity capacity building in the Western Balkans	Horizontal support / FGS 5	Direct	8 000 000
16 - EU support to strengthening regional cooperation and the development of a competitive Regional Economic Area (REA))	Regional structures and networks / FGS 3, 5	Direct and Indirect	15 000 000
17 - EU support to fundamental rights of Roma community in the Western Balkans and Turkey	Horizontal support / FGS 1	Indirect	8 000 000
18 - EU Integration Facility for the Western Balkans and Turkey	Horizontal support / Cross-cutting	Direct	3 500 000
19 - Supporting a More Effective Administration of Justice in Corruption and Organised Crime Cases in the Western Balkans through Trial Monitoring	Horizontal support / FGS 1	Indirect	6 000 000
TOTAL			200 100 000

2.2 DESCRIPTION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTIONS

The envisaged assistance is deemed to follow the conditions and procedures set out by the restrictive measures adopted pursuant to Article 215 TFEU³.

Action 1	Regional Energy Efficiency Programme for the Western Balkans (“REEP Plus Replenishment ”)	EUR 30 000 000
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(1) Description of the action, objective, expected results and key performance indicators

Description of the action: It supports the extension of the Regional Energy Efficiency Programme Plus (REEP Plus) – an integrated multi-country programme, which began implementation in 2017 as a successor to the original REEP, established in 2012, together referred to as REEP Programmes. It aims to deliver energy efficiency finance using technical assistance and grants in the form of investment incentives to address persisting market barriers, and thus stimulating the longer-term market development by assisting the Western Balkans in implementing energy efficiency investments in public buildings in line with EU standards thus laying the ground for the convergence with relevant EU policies. The programme sets out to create an enabling policy environment, support investment preparation and provide medium-term financing to encourage households, businesses and the public sector to prioritise investment in energy efficiency. The action focuses on enabling financing operations in the public sector and extending the existing programme to further benefit the residential sector.

Objective: to achieve sustainable energy savings and carbon emission reductions.

Expected results: (1) a significant share of public buildings in the area of education, health and public administration are retrofitted; (2) the user satisfaction of the retrofitted buildings has improved in terms of learning and working conditions; and (3) the creation of jobs and stimulation of local value chains.

Key performance indicators:

- Facility fully disbursed to finance eligible investments
- Number of public buildings projects
- Number of households reached
- Skills transfer and local capacity building

(2) Assumptions and conditions

There are no particular conditions that are required for the start of the implementation of the different components under the action. It will be implemented alongside intermediated or direct financing provided by the relevant International Financial Institutions (IFIs) through direct loans and technical assistance.

(3) Implementation modalities

Indirect management with international organisations:

This action may be implemented in indirect management with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) and the European Investment Bank (EIB) as

³ https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/8442/consolidated-list-sanctions_en

being the Western Balkan Investment Framework (WBIF) European Western Balkans Joint Fund Managers. This implementation entails, among others, channelling the IPA allocation to the lead IFIs (EBRD and Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau-KfW) through the Joint Fund and Managing IPA Funds through the Joint Fund, disbursing funds from the Joint Fund to the lead IFIs, channelling funds recovered from lead IFIs.

The envisaged entities (EBRD and EIB) have been selected using the following criteria: the institutions have been long standing partners in the inception, realisation and implementation of the WBIF. In particular, they have undertaken the role of the WBIF Joint Fund management and have proven to be reliable partners, managing EU funds according to sound financial management principles.

If negotiations with the above-mentioned entrusted entities fail, this action may be implemented in indirect management with EUR 15 000 000 allocated for EBRD and EUR 15 000 000 for KfW. The envisaged entities have been selected using the following criteria: experienced financial institutions which possess significant experience in developing and implementing EU finance facilities. The two institutions have been active in financing energy efficiency in the Western Balkans since mid-2000s.

In case the envisaged entities and the replacement entities mentioned above would need to be replaced, the Commission's services may select another replacement entity using the same criteria.

Action 2	EU Support for Climate Action in IPA II beneficiaries – Transition towards the low emissions and climate-resilient economy	EUR 2 000 000
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(1) Description of the action, objective, expected results and key performance indicators

Description of the action: It continues the support to the implementation of the 2015 Paris Agreement on Climate Change in the Western Balkans and Turkey and helps their transition towards the low emissions and climate-resilient economy. Almost all IPA II beneficiaries have ratified the Agreement and are planning for the implementation of their contributions to it. Subsequently, the action will support the IPA II beneficiaries' efforts, which have already started through a previous bridging IPA II Multi-country Programme 2016 action – Technical assistance towards implementation of the new Paris Climate Agreement and continuing climate actions carried out through the multi-annual Environment and Climate Regional Accession Network (ECRAN) project (2013-2016).

The technical assistance will be of paramount importance in supporting climate policy and legislative development across sectors, especially the work on the integrated climate and energy action plans as well as an increased climate mainstreaming that will allow IPA II beneficiaries to fulfil their international and the EU *acquis* requirements.

Objectives: (1) to support the IPA II beneficiaries to build their capacity for the implementation of the 2015 Paris Climate Agreement and for the development of low emissions and climate resilient economies; (2) to enhance the regional exchange of information, best practices, peer-to-peer reviews, experience and awareness-raising between the IPA II beneficiaries and between IPA II beneficiaries and the Member States towards the implementation of Beneficiaries' commitments under the Paris Climate Agreement.

Expected results: (1) regional awareness on the outcomes and provisions of Paris Agreement and the legislative packages under the 2030 Climate and Energy Framework and Energy Union Strategy increased, as well as development and implementation, also of regional policies and strategies to align with low emissions pathways supported; (2) upgrades of domestic Greenhouse gas (GHG) monitoring and reporting practices supported by the Regional GHG inventory web portal maintained; (3) strengthening the monitoring, reporting, accreditation and verification (MRAV) requirements targeted at operators, authorities and verifiers under the EU Emissions Trading System (ETS); (4) regional and domestic adaptation actions strengthened through a shift from knowledge transfer to implementing action through on-hands training and close cooperation with the European Environment Agency (EEA); cooperation with EEA continued and intensified and regional cooperation with Mayors Adapt promoted; and (5) compliance checks of selected legislative acts performed.

Key performance indicators:

- Number of workshops and/or high-level dialogues raising held between the IPA II beneficiaries and the EU;
- Number of civil servants in the workshops/high-level dialogues;
- GHG Inventory Reports for EEA /United Nations Framework Convention for Climate Change (UNFCCC) submitted;
- Number of guidelines for operators/authorities/verifiers on monitoring and reporting and accreditation and verification drafted and adopted.

(2) Assumptions and conditions

Almost all of the IPA II beneficiaries have ratified the 2015 Paris Agreement, but now need to prepare strategies/legislation/action plans for its implementation. The Agreement entered into force on 4 November 2016, in accordance with Article 21(1): The Agreement enters into force on the thirtieth day after the date on which at least 55 Parties to the Convention accounting in total for at least an estimated 55 % of the total global greenhouse gas emissions have deposited their instruments of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession. More information about the ratification and entry into force of the Agreement can be obtained on the [UNFCCC website](#).

(3) Implementation modalities

Direct management (project approach)

Procurement:

The procurement will contribute the achieving the objectives and related results specified above.

The **global** budgetary envelope reserved for procurement: EUR 2 000 000.

Action 3	EU support to Western Balkans Investment Framework - WBIF (Infrastructure Project Facility - IPF and International Financial Institutions Coordination Office - IFICO)	EUR 30 000 000
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(1) Description of the action, objective, expected results and key performance indicators

Description of the action: It will continue to provide technical assistance through the Infrastructure Project Facility (IPF), under the Western Balkans Investment Framework

(WBIF), for the successful preparation and implementation of major infrastructure investment projects. It will, in particular, support and bring to maturity projects with a regional dimension identified through the Single Project Pipelines (SPPs). It will also continue to fund the technical, administrative, visibility and communication support provided by the IFI Coordination Office (IFICO) to the WBIF Secretariat, governing bodies, beneficiaries and other WBIF stakeholders. The action will ensure efficient coordination and communication among all WBIF stakeholders and contribute to increase the visibility of the WBIF by better promoting the supported infrastructure projects, both in the Western Balkans and in the EU Member States.

Objectives: (1) to support the preparation and implementation of priority infrastructure projects at beneficiary level and at regional level in the following sectors: digital, energy, environment, social and transport; and (2) to support the WBIF stakeholders to achieve a coordinated approach towards infrastructure investment policies in the Western Balkans.

Expected results: (1) priority infrastructure projects at beneficiary level and regional level are ready for implementation (i.e. good quality and complete project documentation) in the above mentioned sectors; (2) improved skills and knowledge to prepare infrastructure projects among beneficiaries staff; (3) well-functioning National Investment Committees (NICs) responsible for establishing and regularly updating the SPPs of priority infrastructure projects; (4) strengthened cooperation, communication and coordination amongst all WBIF stakeholders with the aim to contribute to the development and implementation of priority infrastructure projects in the Western Balkans in the above mentioned sectors; (5) enhanced functioning of the WBIF throughout the entire infrastructure project cycle; and (6) improved WBIF visibility leading to a greater public awareness of the EU and IFI assistance provided for priority infrastructure projects at beneficiary level and regional level in the Western Balkans.

Key performance indicators:

- Number of Technical Assistance grants implemented.
- Number of formal trainings/seminars organised by IPFs and number of participants.
- Number of NIC meetings and number of updated SPPs.
- Number of WBIF publications and videos produced.
- Number of calls for proposals (Technical Assistance, Investments) launched and completed.
- Number of strategic and operational meetings/events organised.

(2) Assumptions and conditions

No particular conditions to be signalled at this stage, provided that the WBIF keeps functioning as foreseen in the governance and operational documents and that the relevant IPA II beneficiaries continue to submit quality project proposals for priority infrastructure projects at beneficiary level and regional level.

(3) Implementation modalities

Direct management (project approach)

Procurement

The procurement will contribute to support the WBIF stakeholders to achieve a coordinated approach towards infrastructure investment policies in the Western Balkans.

The **global** budgetary envelope reserved for procurement: EUR 4 500 000.

Grants

a) Purpose of the grant: The grant will contribute to support the preparation and implementation of priority infrastructure projects at beneficiary level and regional level in the sectors mentioned above.

b) Direct grant award: Under the responsibility of the Commission's authorising officer responsible, the grant may be awarded without a call for proposals to European Investment Bank (EIB). The recourse to an award of a grant without a call for proposals is justified because based on Article 195 (g) "Exceptions to calls for proposals" of the Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union (hereinafter referred to as the Financial Regulation), grants for technical assistance actions implemented by the EIB or the EIF may be awarded without calls for proposals. In such cases, points (a) to (d) of Article 196(1) shall not apply.

The related Specific Grant Agreements fall under the Framework Partnership Agreement (FPA) between the EU and the EIB relating to technical assistance provided by the EIB, signed on 09.11.2015 and ending on 31.12.2022. The FPA falls under the aegis of the Financial and Administrative Framework Agreement (FAFA) between the EU and the EIB.

The **global** budgetary envelope reserved for grants: EUR 25 500 000.

Action 4	EU contribution to the budget of the Transport Community	EUR 2 400 000
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(1) Description of the action, objective, expected results and key performance indicators

Description of the action: The Transport Community Treaty (TCT) intends to develop the transport networks in the Western Balkans and the integration of their transport markets into the European Union (EU) transport market, based on the relevant EU *acquis*. The Transport Community Permanent Secretariat will be the main tool to support the above referred to development and integration, as well as the implementation of the Transport Connectivity reforms measures aiming at improving the quality, safety and efficiency of the overall transport network in the Western Balkans.

Objectives: to meet the EU contribution to the 2020 budget of the Transport Community, thus supporting the achievement of the objectives set out in the TCT through the functioning of a Permanent Secretariat.

Expected results: (1) the transport legal frameworks in the South East European (SEE) parties are aligned with the relevant EU *acquis*; (2) the Transport priority projects of regional interest on the indicative Trans-European Transport Network-T (TEN-T) extension of the comprehensive and core networks to the Western Balkans are identified in line with best Union practice; and (3) the Transport Connectivity reforms measures are timely and effectively implemented in the SEE parties.

Key performance indicators:

- Number of relevant EU regulations, directives and decisions fully transposed in the SEE parties.
- % of Transport Connectivity reforms measures fully implemented
- Number of Transport priority projects of regional interest identified.

(2) Assumptions and conditions

The Transport Community's Permanent Secretariat must be officially established. This is the case, since the agreement on the headquarters of the Transport Community Permanent Secretariat in Belgrade was signed on 31.01.2019 and ratified by the Serbian Parliament on 14.02.2019.

(3) Implementation modalities

Direct management (project approach)

The European Union is one of the seven parties to the Treaty establishing the TCT. Article 34 of the Treaty states that each Contracting Party shall contribute to the budget of the Transport Community as set out in Annex V. Annex V defines that the contribution to the budget is divided into two parts: 80% for the European Union and 20% for the South East Europe (SEE) parties. According to Article 35, the Regional Steering Committee (RSC) shall adopt the budget of the Transport Community every year. Based on Article 36, the Director of the Permanent Secretariat shall then implement the budget and report annually to the RSC on the execution of the budget. In accordance with Article 239 of the Financial Regulation, the European Union may pay contributions as subscriptions to bodies of which it is a member or observer. Article 2 (62) of the Financial Regulation specifies that 'subscription' means sums paid to bodies of which the Union is member, in accordance with the budgetary decisions and the conditions of payment established by the body concerned. These do not constitute grants within the meaning of Article 180 of the Financial Regulation. Consequently, the European Commission will pay the sums due following the adoption of the 2020 annual budget by the RSC and in accordance with the conditions of payment established by the Transport Community.

Action 5	EU support to SMEs through EBRD Advice for Small Businesses and EU-REPARIS under the Western Balkan Enterprise Development and Innovation Facility (WB EDIF)	EUR 20 000 000
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(1) Description of the action, objective, expected results and key performance indicators

Description of the action: The Western Balkans Enterprise Development and Innovation Facility (WB EDIF) was launched in December 2012 in response to the demand for enhanced private sector financing in the region, in particular for the innovative and high-potential Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). The WB EDIF has equity, lending and guarantee instruments, as well as capacity building programmes to support their absorption. The current action aims to provide possibility for phase II of 2 main technical assistance programmes under the facility: the EBRD's Advise for Small Businesses and the World Bank Group (WBG)-EU REPARIS programme. The initiatives aim to enhance the entrepreneurial capacity of the companies in the region in order to help them to get out of the shadow economy, become competitive, align with the EU *acquis*, access finance and run business. The action supports the implementation of the *Western Balkans strategy - Flagship 3 – supporting socio-economic development*, as well as the regional economic integration.

Objectives: (1) to support the economic development and the private sector-led, integrated, sustainable and smart growth of the Western Balkans; and (2) to enhance the competitiveness of the SMEs in the Western Balkans and their integration to the regional, EU and global markets by complying with EU and international standards.

Expected results: (1) strengthened regional and local ownership and capacity (of institutions, professional accounting organizations, business support organizations, organisations, institutions) to provide business advisory services, including for accountancy, financial reporting and auditing; and (2) enhanced capacity of the Western Balkans SMEs to grow, expand and create jobs, by improving their financial and human resources management, innovation, access to finance, market development activities and networking.

Key performance indicators:

- Number of strengthened local institutions, enforcement mechanisms and processes of alignment with EU *acquis* improved, including the Accounting and Auditing directives.
- Increased quality, demand and supply of business advisory services provided by local experts and organisations.
- Number of SMEs accounting practices and SMEs equipped with new skills, advisory and business support.
- Number of entrepreneurs that became investment ready or improved their business skills, compliance with the EU and international standards, know-how and investment readiness.
- New employment in client enterprises after project completion.

(2) Assumptions and conditions

The main condition that has to be in place for an effective and timely implementation of the action is related to the need of building consensus among main stakeholders (e.g., governments officials, donors, entrepreneurs, investors, business services providers and multilateral organizations) that the proposed programmes are key priority in the region. Therefore, in order to maximise the impact of its intervention and leverage on synergies, the EBRD and the WBG will work closely with other relevant stakeholders in the SME sphere such as business organizations, donors, IFIs. It should also be added that in parallel with the action the WBG and EBRD interact locally with policy-makers and larger business community, participate in different consultative process as to share legal and economic expertise on laws, regulations, and strategies. This "beneficiary-based" engagement complements and strengthens the financing and advisory activities. There are significant opportunities to combine activities across the IPA II beneficiaries to deliver mutually reinforcing, integrated programmes that maximise value for money.

(3) Implementation modalities:

Indirect management with international organisations:

A part of this action may be implemented in indirect management with the World Bank Group (WBG). This implementation entails supporting the financial management and transparency of the local companies to build competitive and sustainable economies in the Western Balkans. In this way, the companies could become investment ready, attract external financing and grow. The programme aims to improve the financial literacy of the Western Balkan companies, as well as the capacity and cooperation among professional accounting organisations and bodies. The programme will provide important contribution in the efforts to tackle the shadow economy and provide the necessary capacity for the local businesses to attract investments. The envisaged entity has been selected using the following criteria: this is a phase II of the ongoing regional

EU REPARIS programme implemented under the WB EDIF. The WBG has developed specific technical experience in managing that programme and is the best placed to be entrusted with the management of phase II of the programme. The WBG possesses the operational, financial and expert capacity to implement the programme.

A part of this action may be implemented in indirect management with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD). This implementation entails drawing on the know-how of a network of international advisers and local consultants to help transform businesses, looking at their strategy, marketing, operations, quality management, energy efficiency, financial management and beyond. The EBRD is responsible for the procurement of consultancy services to SMEs. EBRD will use their procedures for both, the selection of beneficiary SMEs and business consultants. The envisaged entity has been selected using the following criteria: the EBRD has designed and implemented the Advice for Small Businesses (ASB) programme already under IPA I and implements with the EU support it in the Western Balkans, on bilateral basis and complemented with a regional programme under WB EDIF. The ongoing regional ASB programme is successfully running since 2015 with the aim to support the regional cooperation and integration and will end in December 2019. The current proposal is for phase II of the ongoing regional EBRD programme. In an effort to streamline and draw on established mechanisms, the programme will be again integrated under EDIF and the EBRD is the best placed to pursue with the related entrusted tasks.

Action 6	EU support to the Employment and Social Affairs Platform 2 (ESAP 2)	EUR 5 000 000
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(1) Description of the action, objective, expected results and key performance indicators

Description of the action: It aims to continue assisting the Western Balkans Western Balkans in labour market, employment and social policy reforms, building on and carrying forward the results of the ESAP first phase (ESAP 1, 2016-2019) and responding to key regional challenges. To this end, it entails the establishment of a Western Balkans Network on Undeclared Work for implementing innovative measures tackling undeclared work, a peer-review process aimed at improving labour inspections, enhancing the Economic and Social Councils' (ESCs) capacities for tripartite and bipartite social dialogue, cooperation of Western Balkans Ministries of Labour and Social Affairs and Public Employment Services (PES) in developing, monitoring and evaluating labour market policies and measures, and support to Western Balkans policy makers for increased dialogue with the EU institutions. The action is beneficial in supporting the European perspective of the Western Balkans, and in strengthening the social dimension as set out in the *Western Balkans strategy*. The implementation will be ensured by the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) and the International Labour Organisation (ILO).

Objectives: (1) to improve policies for tackling undeclared work through enhanced cooperation and operationalization at central level of a holistic/strategic compliance approach to undeclared work; (2) to increase outreach of Labour Inspectorates to prevent and combat undeclared work; (3) to increase effectiveness of tripartite and bipartite social dialogue in improving social equity and working and living standards of citizens; (4) to strengthen institutional capacities of Ministries of Labour and Social Affairs and PES in developing, monitoring and evaluating labour market policies and measures

including measures outlined in Economic Reform Programmes (ERP); and (5) to increase engagement of the Western Balkans in EU employment and social policies.

Expected results: (1) Western Balkans Network Tackling Undeclared Work established; (2) a holistic approach to innovative policy development on undeclared work implemented through 6 mutual assistance projects; (3) improved evidence through testing different interventions combatting informality; (4) improved availability and quality of data on informal employment in the Western Balkans; (5) peer review of labour inspectorates to improve knowledge of the different systems of the Western Balkans and practices implemented; (6) regional guidelines to tackle undeclared work produced; (7) performance monitoring tools made available to ESCs; (8) regional policy guidelines for promotion of collective bargaining in selected sectors drafted; (9) regional policy and performance tools developed or updated in the area of labour disputes resolution and industrial relations; (10) regional peer reviews on priority employment policies or measures to exchange experience and promote mutual learning implemented; (11) regional labour market policies database and labour market reform database in the Western Balkans developed and harmonized with the EU; (12) annual analytical reports on labour market trends in the Western Balkans produced; (13) technical assistance on priority employment policies or measures implemented; (14) second cycle of the PES bench-learning exercise among Western Balkan PES implemented; (15) policy engagement of the Western Balkans representatives in the EU PES Network meetings, as well as other EU networks, working and technical groups in the field of employment and social affairs enhanced; (16) EU – Western Balkans policy dialogue enhanced through technical support to the high level meetings in the field of employment and social affairs; (17) peer learning to enhance Western Balkan alignment with the EU *acquis*, implementation of the European Social Pillar and preparation for the European Social Fund.

Key performance indicators:

- Number of policies, standards, regulations, novel incentive and curative measures that contribute to increased compliance in the realm of informal employment based on a holistic approach.
- Number of cases of undeclared work reported by Labour Inspections.
- Number of quality recommendations issued by target ESCs and incorporated in economic, social and labour policies/laws.
- Number of policies or measures enhanced/implemented in the employment and social area as a result of the mutual learning activities.
- Number of events with joint EU-Western Balkans participation in the area of employment and labour markets.

(2) Assumptions and conditions

The main condition for the timely and successful implementation of the action is the full commitment by the involved stakeholders to implement the concrete activities and policy reforms agreed on the regional level, especially commitment and managerial will and capacities to participate in peer reviews, engage in bench learning and other regional activities. Furthermore, there should be political will and financial resources for implementing the identified intervention packages testing effective policy measures. With a view to ensuring regular updates and exchanges between the ESAP and the EU Delegations, the RCC and ILO will as a new measure under ESAP 2 initiate bi-annual briefing meetings with relevant staff from the EU Delegations in addition to the regular invitations to ESAP events. These meetings will facilitate coordination and synergies between the IPA Multi-country programme and the bilateral IPA programmes. The coordination approach of the ILO and the RCC will extend to bilateral IPA structures in

cases where the relevant projects of the bilateral IPA programmes are implemented by the authorities of the relevant IPA II beneficiaries.

Failure to comply with the requirements set above may lead to a recovery of funds under this programme and/or the re-allocation of future funding.

(3) *Implementation modalities*

(3)(a) *Indirect management* with international organisations

A part of this action may be implemented in indirect management with the ILO for an indicative amount of EUR 2 500 000. This implementation entails the achievement of the objectives (1) (in cooperation with the RCC), (2) and (3) above and the related results specified above. The envisaged entity has been selected using the following criteria: mandate and operational capacity of the entity. The ILO is a tripartite agency under the United Nations. Since 1919, the ILO brings together governments, employers and workers representatives of 187 member countries to set labour standards, develop policies and devise programmes promoting decent work for all women and men. The ILO ESAP action is managed by the ILO Decent Work Team/Country Office in Budapest, which for the past 25 years has provided advisory services, capacity development and technical assistance to governments and to employers' and workers' organizations in the central and Eastern European countries. This expertise is provided in areas including rights at work, employment creation, social protection, social dialogue and gender equality in the framework of Decent Work Country Programmes. ILO provides in-house expertise in the implementation of the ILO ESAP 2 action and will engage its experienced technical specialists from both the Country Office in Budapest as well as from the ILO Head Quarter in Geneva.

In case the envisaged entity mentioned above would need to be replaced, the Commission's services may select a replacement entity using the same criteria.

(3)(b) *Direct management (project approach)*

Grants:

- a) Purpose of the grant: The grant entails the achievement of the objectives (1) (in cooperation with ILO), (4) and (5) above and the related results specified above.
- b) Direct grant award: Under the responsibility of the Commission's authorising officer responsible, the grant may be awarded without a call for proposals to the Regional Cooperation Council. The recourse to an award of a grant without a call for proposals is justified based on Article 195 (f) of the Financial Regulation for activities with specific characteristics that require a particular type of body on account of its technical competence, its high degree of specialisation and its administrative powers, on condition that the activities concerned do not fall within the scope of a call for proposals. The RCC is a regional body mandated by the governments of its member countries. Parts of the action under this grant that are targeting directly government administrations and agencies (Ministries in charge of employment and social policies, the different PES, labour inspectorates, other relevant ministries and bodies dealing for example with tax matters in the context of tackling undeclared work). The RCC has the administrative power to ensure the active commitment of the countries' institutions to the implementation of the ESAP activities. This commitment is essential for achieving the overall objective of the action, namely the assistance to carrying out labour market, employment and social policy reforms. Furthermore, the RCC has a high degree of specialisation and

technical competence in the policy areas of the action, as demonstrated for example by the RCC's steering role in the implementation of the South East Europe 2020 Strategy. The overall ownership of the implementation of the activities lies clearly with the RCC. The nature of the action involves that for some tasks of analytical/academic nature the RCC needs to make recourse to subcontracting, as well as engaging ad-hoc EU expertise.

The **global** budgetary envelope reserved for grants: EUR 2 500 000.

Action 7	EU support to youth in the Western Balkans	EUR 4 700 000
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(1) Description of the action, objective, expected results and key performance indicators

Description of the action: The overall objective is to contribute to reconciliation in the Western Balkans through improved regional cooperation of young people in the Western Balkans and with the EU. It will aim to boost people-to-people exchanges and provide opportunities for youth to be involved in decision making. It will also improve the knowledge of young civil servants of the EU enlargement process. Taken together, the coordinated approach proposed supports an enabling environment for an improved future for young people in the Western Balkan region. In line with the above, the action will foster existing and facilitate creation of sustainable opportunities for young people in the Western Balkans. The action comprises two components: 1) Scheme for Young Civil Servants, based on the current EU Scheme for Young Professionals in the Western Balkans, a regional exchange and executive programme for young civil servants, and 2) Western Balkans Youth Lab.

Objectives: (1) to strengthen exchanges among youth and administrations in the region and with the EU; (2) to provide opportunities for youth to participate in decision making and improve knowledge of EU enlargement process.

Expected results: (1) stronger professional network in place between young civil servants and between administrations; (2) improved knowledge and experience of young civil servants of the European perspective of the Western Balkans ; (3) increased mobilisation of youth in policy making; and (4) increased co-creation of relevant policies with youth.

Key performance indicators:

- Number of exchanges among youth (sex disaggregated) (study visit, training, etc.) supported.
- Existence of Western Balkans youth lab.
- Number of young people (male/female) and policy makers respectively participating in youth lab.
- Number of policies co-created or consulted with young people (male/female).
- % of young civil servants (male/female) participating in the programme who report an increase in knowledge of EU enlargement process.

(2) Assumptions and conditions

No particular conditions are required to start implementation of this action.

(3) Implementation modalities

(3)(a) Indirect management with a Member State organisation

A part of this action, for an amount of EUR 3 200 000, may be implemented in indirect management with an entity, which will be selected by the Commission services using the following criteria: pillar-assessed EU Member States' agency or a consortium thereof, demonstrating financial and operational capacity, proven experience in implementing similar regional actions and ability to mobilize partners in the Western Balkans. Such implementation is justified, as the scope of the scheme requires the involvement of a body, which can develop exchanges with public administrations in the EU and in the Western Balkans. The implementation by this entity entails managing and implementing all aspects of the Scheme for Young Civil Servants including providing technical assistance, managing the selection of participants/training institutions and visited institutions, implementing the exchange, visibility actions, audits and evaluations. A call for proposals may be implemented as integral part of this component.

(3)(b) Direct management (project approach)

Grant

- a) Purpose of the grant: The grant will contribute to putting in place a Western Balkans Youth Lab. The Lab will consist of a series of interactive workshops, webinars, conferences, field visits, etc. based on participatory leadership methods that stimulate open conversations and active engagement between young people and policy-makers in the region. The main results will be co-creation, testing and prototyping of ideas that address complex social issues.
- b) Direct grant award: Under the responsibility of the Commission's authorising officer responsible, the grant may be awarded without a call for proposals to the Regional Cooperation Council Secretariat (RCC). The recourse to an award of a grant without a call for proposals is justified based on Article 195 (f) of the EU Financial Regulation for activities with specific characteristics that require a particular type of body on account of its technical competence, and its administrative powers, on condition that the activities concerned do not fall within the scope of a call for proposals. Given its mandate to function as an all-inclusive, regionally owned and led cooperation framework, which engages governments from the Western Balkans IPA II beneficiaries, the RCC is uniquely placed to implement an action which requires access to regional policy-makers, youth and other relevant regional stakeholders. RCC has previous experience with similar actions and has the ability to convene civil society including the Regional Youth Cooperation Office in support of the action. RCC has a regional presence, which is necessary for the implementation of this action. Given its broad mandate to work on regional cooperation, RCC will be able to ensure the sustainability of this action and to add value to the overall approach of the Western Balkans Youth Lab.

The **global** budgetary envelope reserved for grants: EUR 1 500 000.

Action 8	EU support to improving vocational education and training (VET) mobility	EUR 4 000 000
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(1) Description of the action, objective, expected results and key performance indicators

Description of the action: The area of education and training is crucial to support the required economic development in the IPA II beneficiaries. The EU has developed under its Erasmus+ programme effective approaches to vocational education and training (VET) as a means to boost competitiveness and growth. This action has the objective to continue to contribute to the improvement and modernisation of VET systems in the relevant IPA II beneficiaries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo*, Montenegro) through reinforcing the links between VET and the labour market. This action seeks to implement a specific avenue of cooperation on VET with EU Member States by putting in place a VET mobility scheme, which builds upon an existing pilot project. This will be achieved through the implementation of an Erasmus-like VET mobility scheme between four beneficiaries and the EU Member States. Mobility activities will focus on learners and staff, including managers and trainers of VET institutions incoming to the EU, as well as staff, including managers and trainers of VET institutions outgoing from the EU.

Objective: to promote skills acquisition and capacity building through VET training focused on labour market needs by means of a VET mobility scheme in the relevant IPA II beneficiaries

Expected results: (1) increased VET mobility; (2) enhanced VET curriculum and placement offer of VET providers; (3) strengthened skills and competences of participants in VET mobility scheme; and (4) increased international opening of VET providers.

Key performance indicators:

- Number of mobilities.
- Number of modernised VET curricula developed.
- % of the students who are graduating with increased grades compared to those who have not taken part in mobility.
- % of the staff proposing new contents and methods as a result of participation.
- Number of international partners that a given VET institution has.

(2) Assumptions and conditions

There are no particular pre-conditions for implementation of the programme.

(3) Implementation modalities

Direct management (project approach)

Grants:

- a) Purpose of the grants: The grants will contribute to achieving the objective and related results mentioned above.

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

- b) Type of applicants targeted: The mobility and capacity building will be organised by a consortium of VET providers. The partnership of the consortium will have to be composed by at least seven organisations.

In order to be eligible for a grant, the applicant must be:

- a public or private VET organisation (or subsidiary/branch) active in the field of vocational education and training.

The **global** budgetary envelope reserved for grants: EUR 4 000 000.

Action 9	EU support to the Western Balkans Youth Window under Erasmus +	EUR 3 000 000
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(1) Description of the action, objective, expected results and key performance indicators

Description of the action: The European Union shares with the Western Balkans ambitious objectives for smart, inclusive and sustainable growth with a view to delivering high levels of employment, productivity and social cohesion. Investing in human and social capital is an essential condition to achieve those growth targets. The action reinforces the levels of participation of the relevant IPA II beneficiaries in the EU's Erasmus+ programme in two ways:

- By increasing the number of Erasmus+ non-formal learning projects involving the participation of organisations and participants – notably young people and youth workers – from the beneficiaries;
- By allowing organisations from the beneficiaries to be project coordinators and apply directly for an EU grant under the framework of Erasmus+.

This is a recurrent action in view of providing dedicated support to the relevant IPA II beneficiaries who as Erasmus + Partner countries do not benefit from the full extent of the Erasmus+ programme. The action is implemented by the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency of the EU (EACEA).

Objective: to foster international non-formal learning activities that support building mutual understanding and employability of young people (including young people with fewer opportunities) from the targeted IPA II beneficiaries.

Expected results: (1) degree of cooperation between youth organisations from targeted IPA II beneficiaries with organisations from the Erasmus+ Programme countries as well as the exchange of expertise and know-how between them in the field of youth and non-formal education strengthened; (2) degree of involvement of young people from targeted IPA II beneficiaries in international youth cooperation to acquire socio-economic skills, which could facilitate young people's employability and their integration in society increased; (3) the operational capacity of organisations established in the targeted countries, notably youth organisations, NGOs and National Youth Councils with regard to the management of international cooperation projects supported by European Union funds improved; and (4) degree of involvement of targeted IPA II beneficiaries youth workers in joint projects with youth organisations from Erasmus+ program countries increased.

Key performance indicators:

- Number of organisations (youth and other) from the targeted IPA II beneficiaries participating in joint activities under this Window with organisations from Erasmus+ Programme countries.

- Number of young people reached (sex disaggregated).
- Number of joint projects managed by youth organisations from the targeted IPA II beneficiaries.
- Number of youth workers from the targeted IPA II beneficiaries participating in joint projects with organisations from Erasmus+ programme countries.
- Number of meetings, seminars and events between youth organisations from the targeted IPA II beneficiaries and the Erasmus+ Programme countries.

(2) Assumptions and conditions

EACEA is responsible for the management of parts of the EU's funding programmes in the fields of education, culture, audio-visual, sport, citizenship, and volunteering, including the Erasmus+ Key Action 2. The mandate of EACEA is foreseen to be amended to include youth for IPA II.

Failure to comply with the requirements set above may lead to a recovery of funds under this programme and/or the re-allocation of future funding.

(3) Implementation modalities

Direct management (project approach)

Grants: Call for proposal (Western Balkans Youth Window under Erasmus+ Key Action 2 (KA2) Capacity Building in the field of Youth):

- Purpose of the grants:** The grants will contribute to achieving the objective and related results mentioned above.
- Type of applicants targeted:** Applicants must be:
 - non-profit organisations, associations, NGOs (including European Youth NGOs); or
 - National Youth Councils; or
 - public bodies at local, regional or central level.

The **global** budgetary envelope reserved for grants: EUR 3 000 000.

Action 10	EU support to statistics in the Western Balkans and Turkey	EUR 10 000 000
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(1) Description of the action, objective, expected results and key performance indicators

Description of the action: It aims to support the IPA II beneficiaries in the process of harmonisation with EU standards by aligning their present methodologies and output with the EU *acquis* in statistics and gradually integrating them into the European Statistical System (ESS). In addition, it aims to increasing the availability of good quality data from the IPA II beneficiaries. It supports the European perspective in the framework of the *Western Balkans strategy*. The development of the statistical system of Turkey is supported in a similar way.

Objectives: (1) to improve availability, versatility and usability of statistics for policy purposes and to support the *Western Balkans strategy* as well as Turkey; and (2) to contribute to the implementation of the European Statistics Code of Practice (CoP), to

further integrate the National Statistical Institutes (NSIs) or agencies into the ESS and to strengthen the management capacity of NSIs.

Expected results: (1) improved availability, quality and comparability of statistical data in statistical areas of relevance for the *Western Balkans strategy* and for Turkey; (2) the professional independence of the NSI is ensured, a strengthened role of NSIs as coordinators of the official statistical system and increased trust and confidence in statistics expressed by policy makers and to support of the *Western Balkans strategy*.

Key performance indicators:

- Progress in the development of the statistical systems as witnessed by peer reviews and assessments in SMIS+ (Statistical Management Information System) as well as availability of data in Eurostat's
- Compliance level indicator in terms of data points available in Eurostat's public dissemination database

(2) Assumptions and conditions

There are certain pre-conditions that need to be met for the success of the action, such as: 1) to establish a system for knowledge transfer within the offices and an appropriate human resource policy to ensure more attractive career options for statisticians to slow down the rate of turnover; the latter shall be done in line with the rules governing career path of civil servants and public employees; 2) in terms of financing, it is essential that the governments of the IPA II beneficiaries ensure sufficient budget for NSIs for their activities; and 3) a system of efficient coordination among different donors is in place to avoid inefficiencies in action implementation. Eurostat is constantly monitoring the various donor activities in the region through the annual donor coordination survey, and keeps close contact with other donors through coordination meetings.

Failure to comply with the requirements set above may lead to a recovery of funds under this programme and/or the re-allocation of future funding.

(3) Implementation modalities

Direct management (project approach)

Procurement:

The procurement will contribute the achieving the objectives and related results above mentioned, in particular providing technical assistance, mainly for those IPA II beneficiaries of the action not benefitting from the grants below.

The **global** budgetary envelope reserved for procurement: EUR 5 000 000

Grants:

- a) Purpose of the grants: The grants will contribute to achieving the objectives and related results mentioned above.
- b) Direct grant award: Under the responsibility of the Commission's authorising officer responsible, the grants may be awarded without a call for proposals to the Institute of Statistics of the Republic of Albania, the Statistical Office of Montenegro, the State Statistical Office of the Republic of North Macedonia, the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia and the Turkish Statistical Institute. The recourse to an award of a grant without a call for proposals is justified based on Article 195 (c) of the Financial Regulation. These are bodies with a *de jure* monopoly situation within each beneficiary as responsible for collecting, producing and disseminating official

statistics and as coordinator of the national official statistical system, according to Beneficiaries' statistical laws. The NSIs may be supported in this undertaking by other services of the public administration but the final responsibility for disseminating official statistics lies with the NSIs. The indicative EU contribution will be granted to each beneficiary in accordance with its individual needs. The final distribution between the five grant beneficiaries will be decided during the evaluation of the applications, based on the relevant IPA II beneficiaries' needs. These needs depend on the specific circumstances in the beneficiaries, in particular as regards the costs and workload involved in implementing the statistical projects. The grants will cover technical assistance, statistical projects, and provision of tailor made expertise.

The **global** budgetary envelope reserved for grants: EUR 5 000 000.

Action 11	EU support to flood prevention and forest fires risk management in the Western Balkans and Turkey	EUR 5 000 000
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(1) Description of the action, objective, expected results and key performance indicators

Description of the action: It aims to foster regional cooperation and sharing best practices to help the IPA II beneficiaries align their legislation with the EU *acquis* and to adapt gradually to the EU standards and practices in civil protection. It will improve legal and institutional frameworks in the Western Balkans and Turkey related to flood prevention and forest fires risk management, supporting institutional coordination among all actors. It will improve capacities of relevant institutions to develop flood risk management plans (FRMPs) based on the good practices of the EU Member States and in line with the EU Floods directive, and strengthen existing Early Warning Systems (EWS) for floods, including cross border aspects. It will increase capacity of the beneficiaries to develop regionally harmonised methodology for forest fire risk assessments, improve risk assessments and risk management plans for forest fires, including cross border aspects. The action will also improve operational capacities of the beneficiaries for preparedness and response to forest fires. In this context, the action will support improving disaster risk management at central, regional and EU levels, and further developing capacities within the context of the Union Civil Protection Mechanism.

Objectives: (1) to improve legal and institutional framework related to the EU Floods Directive and institutional coordination among the IPA II beneficiaries involved in the EU Floods Directive implementation; and (2) to improve prevention, preparedness and IPA II beneficiaries capacities to respond to forest fires at central, regional and EU levels.

Expected results: (1) improved IPA II beneficiaries' capacity to develop FRMPs, strengthen existing EWS for floods; and (2) increased capacity of the IPA II beneficiaries to develop regionally harmonised methodology for forest fire risk assessment, develop/update risk assessments and risk management plans for forest fires, including cross border component, and improved operational capacity for preparedness and response to forest fires.

Key performance indicators:

- Number of beneficiaries that developed new arrangements, protocols or improved FRMPs and EWSs.
- Number of beneficiaries that improved prevention, preparedness and response to forest fires and can cooperate with the Union Civil Protection Mechanism

(2) Assumptions and conditions

It is assumed that the IPA II beneficiaries: have political stability and absence of major tensions between them; have strong political commitment to join the Union Civil Protection Mechanism and the EU; understand that prevention is the preferred way to deal with disasters; will build on the progress achieved in the previous regional IPA Programmes (IPA Floods and IPA Disaster Risk Assessment and Mapping-DRAM); will be willing to cooperate and coordinate with other stakeholders, including civil society and scientific community; will take more and more ownership of the action. The IPA II beneficiaries are expected to take on board recommendations of the previous IPA programmes, unless the changing context makes those recommendations obsolete.

Additionally, it is assumed that sufficient funding shall be allocated at central level to allow functioning of the Civil Protection authorities without external assistance, and National Programme Coordinators and Thematic Focal Points shall be appointed, active and responsive. In order to ensure involvement of all relevant sectors, implementation of results and sharing of information, multi-stakeholder mechanism(s) shall be established at beneficiary level; and adequate political support for reforms should exist.

(3) Implementation modalities

Direct management (project approach)

Grants:

- a) Purpose of the grant: The grant will contribute to achieving the objectives and related results mentioned above.
- b) Type of applicants targeted: national or sub-national civil protection authorities (or relevant competent authorities or entities) of the Participating States⁴ on account of their technical competence, their high degree of specialisation or their administrative powers required for activities with specific characteristics⁵.

The action shall be implemented by a consortium of at least two of the above-mentioned authorities, from different Participating States. In the lead of the consortium should be a Member State.

The **global** budgetary envelope reserved for grants: EUR 5 000 000.

⁴ Participating States of the Union Civil Protection Mechanism: Member States + Iceland, Norway, North Macedonia, Serbia, Montenegro and Turkey

⁵ Article 195 (f) of the Financial Regulation

Action 12	Creative Europe Window for the Western Balkans	EUR 5 000 000
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(1) Description of the action, objective, expected results and key performance indicators

Description of the action: The action will consist of increasing the financial support to cultural and creative industries in the Western Balkans region through the opening of a dedicated Western Balkan window into the EU Programme Creative Europe, under its scheme cultural cooperation (within the sub-programme culture). The action contributes to reconciliation and good neighbourly relations in the Western Balkans, through culture, in line with the *Western Balkans strategy* and the Sofia Priority Agenda⁶.

Objectives: (1) to increase cultural cooperation within the region and with EU Members States; and (2) to strengthen the competitiveness of the cultural and creative industries in the region.

Expected results: (1) increased capacity of the cultural and creative sectors to operate transnationally and internationally; (2) increased transnational circulation of cultural and creative works and transnational mobility of cultural and creative players; and (3) enhanced inter-cultural dialogue between artists, cultural operators as well as the general public.

Key performance indicators:

- Number of applications involving Western Balkans organizations
- Number of supported project participants who report new or enhanced market or professional opportunities (including sex-disaggregated data)
- Number of artists and cultural and creative professionals as well as general public, directly and indirectly, reached through projects supported by call

(2) Assumptions and conditions

EACEA is responsible for the management of parts of the EU's funding programmes in the fields of education, culture, audio-visual, sport, citizenship, and volunteering, including the EU Programme Creative Europe. The mandate of EACEA is foreseen to be amended to include culture for IPA II.

Failure to comply with the requirements set above may lead to a recovery of funds under this programme and/or the re-allocation of future funding.

(3) Implementation modalities

Direct management (project approach)

Grants:

- a) Purpose of the grants: the grants will contribute to achieving the objectives and related results mentioned above.
- b) Type of applicants targeted: The call for proposal will address cultural cooperation projects involving different partners, with at least two cultural organizations from two different Western Balkans. Applicants must be:

⁶ Sofia Declaration-Sofia Priority Agenda, 17 May 2018: https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/34776/sofia-declaration_en.pdf

- Organisations, associations, working in the culture and creative sectors (excluding audio-visual) or
- National Councils dealing with culture and creative sectors (excluding audio-visual) or
- Public bodies at local, regional or central level involved in culture and creative sectors (excluding audio-visual)

The proposal should include a minimum of five organisations from four different countries participating in the EU Programme Creative Europe.

The **global** budgetary envelope reserved for grants: EUR 5 000 000.

Action 13	Fighting illicit trafficking of cultural property in the Western Balkans	EUR 2 800 000
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(1) Description of the action, objective, expected results and key performance indicators

Description of the action: It will focus on protecting cultural heritage in the Western Balkans, by reinforcing the fight against illicit trafficking of cultural property. It will (1) enhance the legal, technical and institutional capacities and frameworks of key stakeholders in the fight against illicit traffic of cultural property; and (2) raise awareness on the need and importance of protecting cultural heritage. It will target the authorities involved in fighting illicit trafficking of cultural property, as well as private operators, civil society actors and the general public, in particular youth and women. It contributes to the implementation of the Western Balkan Strategy and the Sofia Priority agenda.

Objective: to foster reconciliation and good neighbourly relations in the Western Balkans region through cultural heritage and culture.

Expected results: (1) enhanced capacities of stakeholders in protecting cultural heritage and fighting illicit trafficking of cultural property (2) enhanced coordination within targeted IPA beneficiaries and at regional and international levels; and (3) awareness raised on the need and importance of protecting cultural heritage and fighting illicit trafficking of cultural property.

Key performance indicators:

- Number and quality of proposed amendments to legal, institutional, policy and operational frameworks.
- Number of and categories of participants and of institutions participating to capacity development activities (including sex- and age disaggregated data).
- Number of sites with increased security and quantity and quality of interventions to reinforce site-security.
- Number and categories of participants and organizations participating in meetings/exchanges promoting domestic/cooperation at all levels.
- Number of instances where awareness-raising tools are used.

(2) Assumptions and conditions

There are no particular conditions that are required for the start of the implementation of this action. However, in order to ensure the sustainability and effectiveness of the action, the following conditions are to be met: a) the institutional sustainability should be ensured by the direct involvement – and thus full ownership - of all relevant institutions

in the design and implementation of the activities; and b) the work at policy level is one of the basic elements of this action’s methodology and of its comprehensive approach. In particular, the action shall aim at increasing the sustainability of current policies in the concerned fields of action, especially by assessing and implementing cultural heritage related policies, as well as by supporting the improvement of legal and institutional frameworks on the protection of cultural heritage.

(3) Implementation modalities

Indirect management with an international organisation.

This action may be implemented in indirect management with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). This implementation entails the protection of cultural heritage by reinforcing the fight against illicit trafficking of cultural property in the Western Balkans region. The envisaged entity has been selected using the following criteria: core mandate; sound expertise and strong practical experience in protecting cultural heritage and supporting fight against illicit trafficking of cultural property; presence in the Western Balkans; financial and operational capacity.

In case the envisaged entity would need to be replaced, the Commission’s services may select a replacement entity using the same criteria.

Action 14	EU support to regional security	EUR 35 700 000
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(1) Description of the action, objective, expected results and key performance indicators

Description of the action: An efficient response to serious and organised crime is key to upholding the rule of law. This action aims to strengthen the response of the Western Balkans to fight serious organised crime (OC) and terrorism, including the prevention and countering of violent extremism (P/CVE), by enhancing cooperation within the region and with the EU. The action will support an increased alignment with the EU’s policy approach on security and ultimately, increase security in the Western Balkans and in the EU. By strengthening cooperation within the region, the action will also contribute to improve overall mutual trust and good neighbourly relations. Building upon an on-going action, a specific project component on cybercrime will include also cooperation with Turkey. The action contributes to the implementation of the Western Balkan Strategy and the Sofia Priority agenda.

Objectives: (1) to enhance the capacities of authorities in the Western Balkans to fight OC and terrorism, including the P/CVE by enhancing cooperation within the region and with the EU; and (2) to strengthen the response of Western Balkans civil society in the P/CVE).

Expected results: *Organised crime:* (1) Strategic coordination and sharing of best practice on a common threat basis within the Western Balkans and with the EU improved; (2) Western Balkan institutional knowledge and capacity on EU Policy Cycle priorities strengthened and cooperation with the European multidisciplinary platform against criminal threats (EMPACT) drivers increased; (3) Western Balkans law enforcement and judiciary share more operational information, provide effectively mutual legal assistance, and deliver cross-border investigations and Joint Investigations Teams (JITs) on organised crime; (4) Western Balkans border law enforcement by means of enhanced container control improved. *Counter terrorism (including P/CVE):*

(5) Strategic coordination and sharing of best practice on a common threat basis within the Western Balkans and with the EU improved; (6) Western Balkans authorities, front line workers and civil society are better equipped and supported to implement P/CVE and broader counter-terrorism strategies, including through cooperation with the EU Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN) and the European Strategic Communications Network (ESCN). *Horizontal:* (7) Western Balkans cooperation with relevant EU Justice and Home Affairs (JHA) agencies strengthened; (8) Capacities of authorities in Western Balkans and Turkey to search, seize and confiscate proceeds from online crime and to secure electronic evidence strengthened; (9) Western Balkans capability to collect and process Advance Passenger Information (API) and Passenger Name Records (PNR) strengthened, (10) On-demand flexible expertise on OC, counter terrorism, including on protection of citizens and infrastructure, enhanced through the establishment of a pilot technical assistance facility.

Key performance indicators:

- % of stakeholders who acknowledge that their OC actions are better coordinated as a result of participation in the Integrative Internal Security Governance (IISG).
- Level of development of a regional Serious and Organised Crime Threat Assessment (SOCTA).
- Inputs provided to EU SOCTA.
- Training Needs Assessment (TNA) led by CEPOL in collaboration with the Western Balkans partners.
- Number of instances of Western Balkans' involvement in EU Policy Cycle.
- Number of messages exchanged in the Secure Information Exchange Network Application (SIENA).
- Number of responded mutual legal assistance requests and reduction of the average time for handling of requests.
- Number of supported cross-border investigations using JITs leading to prosecution.
- Number of legal frameworks developed for intelligence-led policing.
- Number of new Port Control Units and Air Cargo Control Units established.
- Number of existing Control Units maintained.
- Level of development of a regional counter terrorism assessment.
- Inputs provided to EU exercise (TE-SAT).
- Number of meetings of Regional Network of Coordinators for P/CVE.
- Existence of collaboration between different parts of Government and civil society on P/CVE.
- Existence of local P/CVE actions for the reintegration, resocialisation and rehabilitation of convicted former terrorist fighters and their families.
- Cooperation agreements of all WB partners supported with Eurojust.
- Number of JHA agency meetings with Western Balkan participation.
- Extent of financial investigations and prosecutions related to cybercrime and proceeds from online crime.
- Level of compliance with relevant international standards on cybercrime, money laundering and the search, seizure and confiscation of proceeds from crime.
- Number of EU, the European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union (Frontex) and Europol meetings on API/PNR with Western Balkans involvement.
- Number of strategic/ policy/ legislative documents adopted by Western Balkans on API/ PNR.

- Number of joint activities implemented following support provided by the action.

(2) Assumptions and conditions

It will become crucial to reach an agreement with the IISG partners on the revised governance, tasks and hosting arrangement for the mechanism. Failure to reach such an agreement would impact coordination activities foreseen under results (1) and (5). Given that the action proposes to step-up security cooperation among the Western Balkans and with the EU, the successful implementation of the action will require that the Western Balkans provide high-level support to the action and commit themselves to prioritize within their own organisations the objectives mentioned in the action. The Western Balkans should also increasingly allocate specific budget to ensure that the cooperation initiated under this action continues beyond its duration. The financing of Liaison magistrates at EUROJUST can be considered only in complement to co-funding of such positions at beneficiary level. It is also expected that Embedded Country Teams are placed in the appropriate offices at the Western Balkans' administrations (the OC/Special Prosecution Offices and the respective police units) and that they have clear counterparts on the Beneficiary administration. Essential for the success of the action is that the Western Balkans guarantee access to files, access to information, all respecting the legal framework and constraints. It often remains a challenge getting the right statistical data (crime related, related to international judicial cooperation, etc.). It is assessed that all implementing agencies have the necessary legal and administrative capacities to carry out the action. However, all of them need to provide the necessary internal resources for the management and administrative back up of the projects and commit to effectively coordinate the implementation of their projects with actions which are undertaken centrally as well as other regional actions.

Failure to comply with the requirements set above may lead to a recovery of funds under this programme and/or the re-allocation of future funding

(3) Implementation modalities

(3)(a) Indirect management with a Member State organisation, EU specialised (traditional/regulatory) agency, international organisation.

A part of this action may be implemented in indirect management with:

- Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH – GIZ and the Ministry of Interior (Italy) in co-delegation
- The European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training (CEPOL)
- The Council of Europe (CoE)
- The International Organization for Migration (IOM)
- The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)

This implementation entails:

For GIZ and the Ministry of Interior (Italy): undertaking all necessary actions, including through direct implementation of activities and conducting budget implementation tasks (procurement and grants award procedures as relevant), to achieve the expected results (3), (9) and (10) and to contribute to achieve the expected results (1),(2), (5) and (7). Tasks may include inter alia: the provision of technical assistance, capacity building, seminars/conferences/events/visits/joint operational activities, carrying out studies and analysis, provision of software and supplies and supporting travel and subsistence of beneficiary participation in relevant EU agencies and entities. The envisaged entities have been selected using the following criteria: operational and financial capacity, and

experience and presence in the region. GIZ and the Ministry of Interior have the required specific technical competence, presence in the Western Balkan region, network including the main stakeholders, and the particular longstanding policy engagement and practical experience with the relevant authorities needed to implement and add value to the proposed action among targeted IPA II beneficiaries. GIZ and the Ministry of Interior will cooperate with implementing partners, in particular through a sub-grant with the Center for International Legal Cooperation, EU Justice and Home Affairs agencies and other EU Member States' agencies.

For CEPOL: undertaking all necessary actions, including through direct implementation of activities and conducting budget implementation tasks (procurement and grants award procedures as relevant), to achieve the expected result (2) and (6) and to contribute to achieve the expected results (1), (5) and (7). Tasks may include inter alia: the provision of technical assistance, carrying out analysis and capacity building/training including through seminars/conferences/events/study visits/exchanges/e-learning and development of tools. The envisaged entity has been selected using the following criteria: core mandate, operational and financial capacity, and experience in the region. As an EU agency, CEPOL has the specific mandate to develop and conduct training for law enforcement in the EU which makes it uniquely placed to conduct similar activities for the targeted IPA II beneficiaries in view of ensuring the necessary alignment of approaches. CEPOL has valuable previous expertise in the Western Balkans region both in terms of the provision of training and engaging with authorities. CEPOL possesses a high degree of competence and degree of specialisation necessary to implement and add value to the proposed action. CEPOL will cooperate with EUROPOL.

For the CoE: undertaking all necessary actions, including through direct implementation of activities and conducting budget implementation tasks (procurement and grants award procedures as relevant), to achieve the expected result (8). Tasks may include inter alia: technical assistance, capacity building, carrying out analysis and assessments, workshops/training/events and development of tools. The envisaged entity has been selected using the following criteria: unique mandate, operational and financial capacity, and experience and presence in the region. The CoE has the required technical competence and high degree of specialisation on cybercrime legislation and cybercrime capacity building needed to implement the proposed action. The CoE has put in place two legal instruments - the Budapest Convention on Cybercrime and the Convention on Laundering, Search, Seizure and Confiscation of the Proceeds from Crime and on the Financing of Terrorism – which are the most relevant for IPA II beneficiaries in the cybercrime area. The action would be backed up by the monitoring mechanisms of the CoE with respect to these instruments. The CoE has also a well-developed expertise on implementing cybercrime related capacity-building and has practical experience of implementing support with IPA II beneficiaries in this field.

For IOM: undertaking all necessary actions, including through direct implementation of activities and conducting budget implementation tasks (procurement and grants award procedures as relevant), to contribute to achieve the expected result (6). Tasks may include inter alia: technical assistance, capacity building, carrying out analysis and assessments, award of grants, communication activities and workshops/training/events. The envisaged entity has been selected using the following criteria: core mandate, operational and financial capacity, and experience and presence in the region. IOM is the leading inter-governmental organization in the field of migration and works closely with governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental partners globally and in the Western Balkans. IOM has been engaged in the prevention of violent extremism in the Western Balkans since 2015. With its mandate and specific technical expertise on migration management and integration, and its practical experience of reintegration and

family assistance activities focusing on Foreign Terrorist Fighters and Violent Extremist offenders and their families in the Western Balkans, IOM is uniquely placed to implement and add value to the proposed action.

For UNODC: undertaking all necessary actions, including through direct implementation of activities and conducting budget implementation tasks (procurement and grants award procedures as relevant), to achieve the expected result (4). Tasks may include inter alia: technical assistance, capacity building, carrying out analysis and assessments, training/mentoring/events development of tools/guides/operating procedures and procurement of supplies. The envisaged entity has been selected using the following criteria: core mandate, operational and financial experience, and presence and experience in the region. UNODC is the UN Office responsible for supporting Member States to prevent and combat drugs, crime and terrorism. UNODC is the lead agency in the response to various forms of illicit trafficking and related forms of criminal activity. With its mandate and specific technical expertise on organised crime and illicit flows and with its practical experience of implementing similar actions among targeted IPA II beneficiaries, UNODC is uniquely placed to implement and add value to the proposed action.

The international organisation identified above UNODC, is currently undergoing an ex-ante assessment of its systems and procedures. Based on its compliance with the conditions in force at the time previously other indirect management actions were awarded to the organisation and based on a long-lasting problem-free cooperation, the international organisation can also now implement this action under indirect management, pending the finalisation of the ex-ante assessment and, where necessary, subject to appropriate supervisory measures in accordance with Article 154(5) of the Financial Regulation.

In case the envisaged entities would need to be replaced, the Commission's services may select a replacement entity using the same criteria.

(3)(b) Direct management (project approach)

Procurement:

Procurement shall be undertaken to contribute to achieve result (6). Specifically, the procurement shall implement cooperation with the EU RAN and the ESCN.

The **global** budgetary envelope reserved for procurement: EUR 2 550 000.

Grants:

- a) **Purpose of the grant:** The grant will contribute to achieve results (1) and (5) by strengthening strategic coordination and sharing of best practice on OC and counter terrorism, including P/CVE, through implementing the secretariat of the IISG mechanism.
- b) **Direct grant award:** Under the responsibility of the Commission's authorising officer responsible, the grant may be awarded without a call for proposals to the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC). The recourse to an award of a grant without a call for proposals is justified based on Article 195 (f) of the Financial Regulation for activities with specific characteristics that require a particular type of body on account of its technical competence, its high degree of specialisation and its administrative powers, on condition that the activities concerned do not fall within the scope of a call for proposals. Given its mandate to function as an all-inclusive, regionally owned and led cooperation framework which engages RCC participants from the South East Europe (SEE), members of the international community and

donors, the RCC is uniquely placed to implement the secretariat of the IISG mechanism which involves regional level coordination of Western Balkans and the regional donor community. In addition, RCC demonstrates strong experience and expertise on security, having implemented security programmes particularly in the field of P/CVE. RCC has also developed and implemented specific coordination on security initiatives at the regional level, establishing the necessary cooperation and networks with all relevant stakeholders. The presence of the RCC in the region and in the EU adds particular value to the action as it ensures smooth cooperation between the Board of the IISG (the EU) while the local presence of the secretariat enhances legitimacy and access to regional donors.

The **global** budgetary envelope reserved for grants: EUR 1 450 000.

Action 15	EU support to cybersecurity capacity building in the Western Balkans	EUR 8 000 000
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(1) Description of the action, objective, expected results and key performance indicators

Description of the action: Information and Communications Technologies (ICTs) and the internet have changed the way we live and work drastically over the past 20 years. This has had many positive impacts, such as economic growth or increased transparency. However, it can also enable risks and vulnerabilities. The Digital Single Market is the Commission’s second political priority. The 2017 Joint Communication on ‘*Resilience, deterrence and defence: Building strong cybersecurity for the EU*’ recognised the significance of capacity building in third countries to increase the global level of cybersecurity. Additionally, the *Western Balkans strategy* and its *Digital Agenda flagship* note the Commission’s intention to support cybersecurity capacity building. This action will aim to build up functioning and accountable institutions in the Western Balkans to strengthen the region’s cyber resilience in order to respond effectively to challenges and risks such as cyber-attacks. Enhanced cyber resilience will help developing a safe and secure digital environment, which is necessary to enable digital growth in the Western Balkans region. In addition, stronger capacity to deal with cyber attacks in the Western Balkans and better cooperation will be of benefit to both the region and the EU, as cyberspace knows no borders.

Objectives: (1) to create and/or strengthen the cybersecurity system at beneficiary level (including through the development and implementation of national cybersecurity strategies and the development and implementation of legislation and action plans, in line with the Directive on security of network and information systems (NIS directive)); (2) to increase the operational capabilities of competent authorities in the relevant IPA II beneficiaries to deal with cyber threats and incidents and to mitigate risks; and (3) to identify and strengthen the protection of critical information infrastructure as provisioned by operators of essential services in the Western Balkan region.

Expected results: (1) cybersecurity strategies and legislation in line with NIS directive are adopted and (being) implemented after the start of this action; (2) cooperation established between the competent authorities in the relevant IPA II beneficiaries as well as with experts from EU Member States has been established and/or improved; (3) increased cyber awareness and hygiene across all layers of society through awareness raising campaigns and civil society engagement; (4) increased involvement and participation of the private sector and civil society in the development

and implementation of cybersecurity policies and measures, for example through public private partnerships; (5) clearly established competent authorities in cybersecurity with clear mandates; (6) increased capacity of personnel to deal with cyber attacks and mitigate risks and a clear mandate of the Computer Security Incident Response Teams (CSIRT); (7) CSIRTs designated and operational capacities for incident management created and further strengthened, taking into account the respective levels of readiness; (8) cooperation between designated CSIRTs in the Western Balkan region increased; (9) increased international recognition and trust of CSIRTs in the Western Balkan region; (10) mapping of operators of essential services in line with the NIS directive; (11) strengthened management and mitigation of the cybersecurity risks posed to the operators of essential services; (12) framework developed on managing and responding to major cybersecurity incidents relating to operators of essential services; and (13) cooperation between designated CSIRTs within and between relevant IPA II beneficiaries and operators of essential services on managing cybersecurity incidents improved.

Key performance indicators:

- Number of laws, strategies, and competent authorities established and/or improved.
- Number of mandates of competent authorities established/improved.
- Number of operators of essential services/critical infrastructures identified/strengthened.

(2) Assumptions and conditions

The relevant ministries agree to put their legislation as soon as possible in line with the EU’s NIS directive and cybersecurity strategy. In addition, governments are committed to ensure the adequate level of human resources for the competent authorities ensuring cybersecurity, such as the CSIRTs.

(3) Implementation modalities

Direct management (project approach)

Procurement:

The procurement will contribute to achieving the objectives and related results specified above.

The **global** budgetary envelope reserved for procurement: EUR 8 000 000.

Action 16	EU support to strengthening regional cooperation and the development of a competitive Regional Economic Area (REA)	EUR 15 000 000
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(1) Description of the action, objective, expected results and key performance indicators

Description of the action: It will support the socio-economic transformation and competitiveness of the Western Balkans and assist in unlocking the sources for sustainable long-term growth and convergence with the EU. Building on the results of the South East Europe (SEE) 2020 strategy, it will enable the implementation of the measures under the investment, mobility and digital integration components of the Regional Economic Area Multi-Annual Action Plan (REA MAP) and its horizontal

processes. In particular, the action will contribute to several pillars: *Investment*: creation of a regional dynamic investment space and support to the region's financial markets' diversification (supported with technical expertise provided by the World Bank Group) and industrial policy agendas. *Mobility*: ensuring mobility of professionals and highly skilled persons; enabling further integration of the Western Balkans into the European Higher Education Area and European Research Area. *Digital*: enhancement of digital connectivity and access; strengthening of digital skills and competences; improving data protection and e-privacy; support the development of a framework for cross-border recognition of the certificates with e-signature; capacity building on EU *acquis* alignment and enforcement; high level policy dialogue on digital transformation in the Western Balkans; regional coordination to boost the overall level of cybersecurity in the Western Balkans. *Sustainable, green growth and climate change resilience*: fostered maintained regional policy dialogue and strengthened regional cooperation on environment and climate change; integrating environmental requirements in other policy areas and supporting digitalization – sustainability convergence; analytics for evidence-based environmental and climate change policies. *Good governance*: enhanced cross-border cooperation and mutual trust among the Western Balkans judiciaries; improved awareness and promoted use of alternative dispute resolution tools, as a contribution to more efficient and accountable judiciaries.

Objective: to strengthen regional cooperation and further develop a competitive Regional Economic Area (REA).

Expected results: (1) improved investment environment in the Western Balkans; (2) increased integration of the Western Balkans into the European Higher Education Area and the European Research Area; (3) advanced level of implementation of the *Digital Agenda for the Western Balkans* and increased integration of Western Balkans in EU digital programs and frameworks; (4) maintained permanent high-level regional policy dialogue and regional cooperation towards achieving Paris Climate commitments and 2030 energy and climate targets; (5) cross-border cooperation among judiciaries in the region supported and improved; and (6) strengthened coordination and monitoring on MAP implementation and enhanced regional dialogue within MAP structures.

Key performance indicators:

- Share of Annual Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflow per capita (EUR).
- Ranking of Digital Economy Society index (DESI).
- Ranking of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) implementation index.

(2) Assumptions and conditions

The implementation of the action will depend on several key factors, including political commitments, strengthening the necessary structures for implementation and developing the capacity of involved stakeholders at the beneficiary and regional level. In terms of ensuring political will, the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) will work with its participants during 2019 to ensure that all the necessary commitments are made within the upcoming RCC's Strategy and Work Programme 2020-2022 that should be adopted by mid-2019.

(3) Implementation modalities

(3)(a) Indirect management with an international organisation

A part of this action (activities related to Investment policies and Financial Markets), for an amount of EUR 2 500 000, may be implemented in indirect management with the World Bank Group. This implementation entails coordinating and providing expertise to contribute to achieve an improved investment environment in the Western Balkans in

the areas of investment policies and financial markets. Close partnership and cooperation with the RCC and its relevant regional platform will be ensured and are an integral part of the action, given RCC's important role of a conveying power in the Western Balkans, for the monitoring and implementation of the REA MAP, which enables the commitment, feedback and validation from both public and private stakeholders across all economies and development partners.

The envisaged entity has been selected using the following criteria: its specific expertise in the financial market field, and building on the grounds set by the previous EU-funded World Bank Group project on investments in the region, as well as its partnership in the region and in the context of REA MAP.

(3)(b) Direct management (project approach)

Grant:

- a) Purpose of the grant: The grant will contribute to achieve results: 2 (Mobility), 3 (Digital Integration and implementation of Digital Agenda for the Western Balkans), 4 (Sustainable, green growth and climate change resilience), 5 (Good governance) and 6 MAP REA horizontal activities) of the action; and contribute to result 1 (Investment).
- b) Direct grant award: Under the responsibility of the Commission's authorising officer responsible, the grant may be awarded without a call for proposals to the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC). The recourse to an award of a grant without a call for proposals is justified based on Article 195 (f) of the Financial Regulation for activities with specific characteristics that require a particular type of body on account of its technical competence, its high degree of specialisation and its administrative powers, on condition that the activities concerned do not fall within the scope of a call for proposals. Given its mandate to function as an all-inclusive, regionally owned and led cooperation framework which engages RCC participants from the SEE, as well as its resulting role in monitoring and support the implementation of the REA MAP and the wider SEE2020 strategy, the RCC is uniquely placed to implement the actions foreseen above. Indeed the RCC has been entrusted by the IPA II beneficiaries, to oversee, coordinate and support the implementation of the REA MAP and the SEE2020 strategy. In this context, the RCC has a unique mandate to convene the governments from the region as well as developed the necessary expertise to carry out the actions foreseen.

The **global** budgetary envelope reserved for grant: EUR 12 500 000.

Action 17	EU support to fundamental rights of the Roma community, and reintegration of returnees	EUR 8 000 000
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(1) Description of the action, objective, expected results and key performance indicators

Description of the action: It will contribute to reducing the socio-economic gap between the Roma and the non-Roma population in the Western Balkans and Turkey; and to ensuring the quality of life of the most vulnerable persons returning to the Western Balkans from the EU in particular, with special attention to Roma. The action consists of two components. The first component is a second phase of the regional ROMACTED Roma project implemented by the Council of Europe, which will consolidate and expand efforts to improve the integration of Roma populations in local communities

through enhanced participation in local policymaking and implementation of local actions. The topic of returnees will also be addressed in this second phase. The second component will enhance the ability of Western Balkan's authorities at central and local level to implement effective reintegration policies and respond effectively to the needs of vulnerable returnees with special attention to Roma.

Objectives: (1) to enhance effective participation of local Roma communities in the design and implementation of local policies; and (2) to enhance the capacity of Western Balkan authorities at central and local level to implement successful returnee reintegration policies and respond effectively to the needs of vulnerable returnees.

Expected results: Component 1: (1) local authorities have increased their institutional commitment for inclusion of Roma concerns in local plans and budgets; (2) Roma populations in local municipalities covered by the programme have enhanced their participation in local policy and decision making; and (3) successful local development actions have contributed to improve the quality of life for Roma and to reduce the gap between Roma and non-Roma. Component 2: (4) central level reintegration strategies and other relevant policy documents are reviewed, and fine-tuned and concrete follow up action plans are developed and agreed; (5) information regarding returnees is better managed and shared, in particular through the roll out of a Management Information Systems (MIS) relating to returnees, in particular to users/feeders at municipal level; (6) local returnee integration strategies are developed with selected municipalities; (7) elements of local returnee integration strategies are implemented in selected municipalities, including innovative activities on livelihoods, skills building, etc.; and (8) significant number of urgent administrative issues faced by returnees are addressed.

Key performance indicators:

- Number and quality of local development plans integrating Roma concerns.
- Increase in the number and size of budgets available to municipalities that target social inclusion and job creation for Roma.
- Number of local actions implemented with the presence, contribution and support of Roma.
- Number of innovative measures adopted/practices established for Roma integration and their impact on closing the gap in quality of life and access to the jobs and livelihoods between Roma and non-Roma communities.
- Quality of central reintegration strategies in place.
- Number relevant institutions using MIS covering returnees.
- Amount of data encoded into the MISs.
- Number of registered returnees having access to social services.
- Number of local reintegration strategies in place in proportion to selected municipalities.
- Number and quality of local returnee strategies components/activities implemented (including number of returnees involved in activities aimed at improving their livelihoods).
- Number and relevance of urgent administrative issues cases addressed.

(2) Assumptions and conditions

There are no specific legal or policy considerations required for the implementation of the action.

(3) Implementation modalities

(3)(a) Indirect management with international organisations:

A part of this action (component 1 – ROMACTED phase II) may be implemented in indirect management with Council of Europe. This implementation entails achievement of objective 1 and the results specified above under component 1. The envisaged entity has been selected using the following criteria: (1) previous experience and knowledge gained through the implementation of the ROMACTED phase I, ROMACT and ROMED, as well overall experience and knowledge of the Council of Europe relevant for the objectives and results of the action; (2) development of methodology that will be used in the action within the ROMACTED phase I; (3) implementation of the action that will be followed up within this component; (4) administrative capacities and presence in the region; and (5) absence of conflict of interest.

A part of this action (component 2 – Reintegration of Returnees) may be implemented in indirect management with the World Bank and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). This implementation entails achievement of objective 2 and the results specified above under component 2. The envisaged entities have been selected using the following criteria: (1) experience with previous actions in Western Balkans related to objectives of this component; (2) experience in Western Balkans in general; (3) capacities of the institutions; (4) presence in the region; and (5) absence of conflict of interest.

For component 2, in case the envisaged entities would need to be replaced, the Commission's services may select a replacement entity using the same criteria.

Action 18	EU Integration Facility for the Western Balkans and Turkey	EUR 3 500 000
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(1) Description of the action, objective, expected results and key performance indicators

Description of the action: The aim of the EU Integration Facility is to contribute to progress and ensure continuity in the European path of the Western Balkans and Turkey. The action will enable the implementation of a small number of actions in order to meet specific and urgent needs in the region, as well as relevant support to networking, visibility or evaluation activities or unforeseen needs. In that sense, the activities and the tasks will aim to enhance technical and administrative capacity needed for *acquis* chapters through creation of an EU Integration Facility for the unspecified institution building needs (training, technical assistance, grants, studies, etc.) and support for the relevant EU networks. By promoting regional cooperation and exchange, good practices can be shared and enhanced in the region.

Objectives: to support flexible, pilot actions addressing urgent and/or unforeseen that merit to be addressed rapidly in order to assure continuity in the European path and herewith related issues.

Expected results: (1) specific and urgent needs in the region supported; (2) implementation of a number of preparatory and start-up actions ensured; (3) urgent/bridging support for important regional initiatives and organisations ensured; (4) monitoring and evaluation missions/studies carried out; and (5) increased visibility of EU support.

Key performance indicators:

- Number of preparatory and start-up actions implemented.
- Quality (nature and scope) of communication materials produced.
- Number of outputs, such as Terms of Reference, technical specifications, feasibility studies and other documents.
- Number of monitoring/evaluation missions carried out.

(2) Assumptions and conditions

In order to ensure an effective and timely implementation of the action, it is necessary a continuous commitment and cooperation of decision-makers in IPA II beneficiaries to provide sufficient resources, to ensure adoption of the required legislation and to support full operation of the established networks, systems and institutional frameworks in the relevant areas of interventions.

(3) Implementation modalities

Direct management (project approach)

Procurement:

The activities will contribute to progress in the European path, by supporting flexible, pilot actions addressing urgent and/or unforeseen needs that merit to be addressed rapidly. They will be implemented through a number of service contracts in direct management.

The global budgetary envelope reserved for procurement: EUR 3 500 000.

Action 19	Supporting a More Effective Administration of Justice in Corruption and Organised Crime Cases in the Western Balkans through Trial Monitoring	EUR 6 000 000
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(1) Description of the action, objective, expected results and key performance indicators

Description of the action: It aims to advance in the fight against corruption and organised crime in the Western Balkans, as a means to reduce impunity in the societies of the beneficiaries. It will focus on supporting a more effective administration of justice in organised crime and corruption cases in the Western Balkans through trial monitoring. Specifically it will review practices in this field, identify systemic issues in the judicial response, provide recommendations and disseminate findings. The action is in line with the Sofia Declaration, the Sofia Priority Agenda, and the Western Balkans Strategy, that refer to the introduction of trial monitoring in the field of serious corruption and organised crime as a means to create a track record and ultimately make progress in strengthening the rule of law in the region.

Objective: to support a more effective judicial response by the authorities on corruption and organised crime in the Western Balkans

Expected results: (1) trial monitoring for cases on corruption and organised crime is implemented; (2) systemic issues regarding the judicial response to corruption and organised crime are identified; (3) recommendations for an effective judicial response to corruption and organised crime are provided to the domestic authorities of the Western

Balkans and lessons learnt are identified regionally; and (4) awareness of recommendations by key stakeholders is enhanced.

Key performance indicators:

- Number of cases monitored according to the established methodology;
- Number of cases where shortcomings were identified;
- An analysis of the nature and scope of legal and practice issues is conducted and reported in all thematic and geographic areas predetermined by the methodology;
- Number of meetings at the regional level to discuss the findings and recommendations;
- Number of recommendations per beneficiary according to established methodology;
- Extent to which the beneficiaries enter into a meaningful discussion on and action upon the recommendations;
- Number of publications for disseminating the recommendations by media outlets, civil society organisations, etc.

(2) Assumptions and conditions

The relevant IPA II beneficiaries should commit to facilitate the effective implementation of this action by facilitating access to public hearings and public documents such as indictments, verdicts, and appeal decisions for the implementing partner. In co-ordination with the OSCE, the EU will, as necessary, engage with host authorities to secure this cooperation.

(3) Implementation modalities

Indirect management with international organisations:

This action may be implemented in indirect management with the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). This implementation entails undertaking all necessary actions, including through direct implementation of activities and conducting budget implementation tasks (procurement award procedures as relevant), to achieve the expected objectives and results of this action. The envisaged entity has been selected using the following criteria: technical and financial capacity, and experience and presence in the region. OSCE has the required specific technical mandate, presence and knowledge of the Western Balkans region, and a strong track record of implementing trial monitoring in the region.

In case the envisaged entity would need to be replaced, the Commission's services may select a replacement entity using the same criteria.

For all the actions under the programme the following applies:

(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.

The Commission's authorising officer responsible may extend the geographical eligibility on the basis of urgency or of unavailability of products and services in the markets of the countries concerned, or in other duly substantiated cases where the

eligibility rules would make the realisation of this action impossible or exceedingly difficult.

3 BUDGET

3.1 INDICATIVE BUDGET TABLE – MULTI COUNTRY ACTION PROGRAMME

	Method of implementation		Total EU contribution (EUR)	Entrusted entity (if known)	Entrusted entity contribution (EUR)	Other third party contribution (EUR)	TOTALS (EUR)	Commission implementing Directorate general
	Direct management	Indirect management with entrusted entity						
	EU contribution (EUR)	EU contribution (EUR)						
01.Horizontal support	35 000 000	20 000 000	55 000 000		1 050 000	0	56 050 000	
Action 07 – EU support to youth in the Western Balkans	1 500 000	3 200 000	4 700 000	Member State Agency	-	-	4 700 000	Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations
Action 08 - EU support to improving vocational education and training (VET) mobility	4 000 000	-	4 000 000	-	-	-	4 000 000	Co-delegation to Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture
Action 09 - Youth window in the Western Balkans	3 000 000	-	3 000 000	-	-	-	3 000 000	Co-delegation to EACEA
Action 10 - EU support to statistics in the Western Balkans and Turkey	10 000 000	-	10 000 000	-	-	-	10 000 000	Directorate-General for Eurostat
Action 12 - Creative Europe Window for the Western Balkans	5 000 000	-	5 000 000	-	-	-	5 000 000	Co-delegation to EACEA
Action 13 - Fighting illicit trafficking of cultural property in the Western Balkans	-	2 800 000	2 800 000	UNESCO	250 000	-	3 050 000	Co-delegation to Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture
Action 15 - EU support to cybersecurity capacity building in the Western Balkans	8 000 000	-	8 000 000	-	-	-	8 000 000	Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations

Action 17 - EU support to fundamental rights of Roma community in the Western Balkans and Turkey	-	8 000 000	8 000 000	CoE / WBG /UNDP	800 000	-	8 800 000	Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations
Action 18 - EU Integration Facility for the Western Balkans and Turkey	3 500 000	-	3 500 000	-	-	-	3 500 000	Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations
Action 19 - Supporting a More Effective Administration of Justice in Corruption and Organised Crime Cases in the Western Balkans through Trial Monitoring		6 000 000	6 000 000	OSCE	-	-	6 000 000	Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations
02.Regional structures and networks	28 400 000	36 700 000	65 100 000		3 321 000	600 000	69 021 000	
Action 02 - EU Support for Climate Action in IPA II beneficiaries – Transition towards the low emissions and climate-resilient economy	2 000 000	-	2 000 000	-	-	-	2 000 000	Co-delegation to Directorate-General for Climate Action
Action 04 - EU support to Transport community Secretariat Treaty	2 400 000	-	2 400 000	-	-	600 000	3 000 000	Co-delegation to Directorate-General for Mobility and Transport
Action 06 - EU support to the Employment and Social Affairs Platform II (ESAP II)	2 500 000	2 500 000	5 000 000	ILO	51 000	-	5 051 000	Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion
Action 11 - EU support to prevention, preparedness and response to floods and forests fires in the Western Balkans and Turkey	5 000 000	-	5 000 000	-	-	-	5 000 000	Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations

Action 14 - EU support to regional security	4 000 000	31 700 000	35 700 000	GIZ and the Ministry of Interior, Italy/ UNODC/ CEPOL/CoE/IOM	3 270 000	-	38 970 000	Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations
Action 16 - EU support to strengthening regional cooperation and the development of a competitive Regional Economic Area (REA)	12 500 000	2 500 000	15 000 000	WBG	-	-	15 000 000	Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations
03.Regional investment support	30 000 000	50 000 000	80 000 000		0	126 000 000	206 000 000	
Action 01 - EU support to Regional Efficiency Energy Programme +	-	30 000 000	30 000 000	EIB/EBRD	-	126 000 000	156 000 000	Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations
Action 03 - EU support to Western Balkans Investment Framework - WBIF (Infrastructure Project Facility and IFI Coordination Office)	30 000 000	-	30 000 000	-	-	-	30 000 000	Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations
Action 05 - EU support to SMEs through EBRD Advice for Small Businesses and EU-REPARIS under the Western Balkan Enterprise Development and Innovation Facility (WB EDIF)	-	20 000 000	20 000 000	EBRD/WBG	-	-	20 000 000	Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations
TOTALS	93 400 000	106 700 000	200 100 000		4 371 000	126 600 000	331 071 000	

CRIS Decision / Co-delegation	Max. EU Contribution	Indicative Co-financing	Total
040-826-NEAR	160 900 000	130 070 000	290 970 000
NEAR>CLIMA	2 000 000	0	2 000 000
NEAR>MOVE	2 400 000	600 000	3 000 000

NEAR>EMPL	5 000 000	51 000	5 051 000
NEAR>EAC	6 800 000	250 000	7 050 000
NEAR>ESTAT	10 000 000	0	10 000 000
NEAR>ECHO	5 000 000	0	5 000 000
NEAR>EACEA	8 000 000	0	8 000 000
Total programme	200 100 000	130 971 000	331 071 000

4 PERFORMANCE MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS

As part of its performance measurement framework, the Commission shall monitor and assess progress towards achievement of the specific objectives set out in the IPA II Regulation on the basis of pre-defined, clear, transparent measurable indicators. The progress reports referred to in Article 4 of the IPA II Regulation shall be taken as a point of reference in the assessment of the results of IPA II assistance.

The Commission will collect performance data (process, output and outcome indicators) from all sources, which will be aggregated and analysed in terms of tracking the progress versus the targets and milestones established for each of the actions of this programme, as well as the Multi-country Indicative Strategy Paper.

In the specific context of indirect management by IPA II beneficiaries, National IPA Coordinators (NIPACs) will collect information on the performance of the actions and programmes (process, output and outcome indicators) and coordinate the collection and production of indicators coming from IPA II beneficiary's sources.

The overall progress will be monitored through the following means: a) Result Orientated Monitoring (ROM) system; b) IPA II beneficiaries' own monitoring; c) self-monitoring performed by the EU Delegations; d) joint monitoring by the European Commission (Directorate General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations) and the IPA II beneficiaries, whereby the compliance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency and coordination in implementation of financial assistance will be regularly monitored by an IPA II Monitoring committee, supported by Sectoral Monitoring committees, which will ensure a monitoring process at sector level.

5 EVALUATION

The financing of the evaluations shall be covered by another financing decision.

Having regard to the importance and nature of the actions, mid-term, final or ex-post evaluation(s) might be carried out for any of the actions or its components via independent consultants, through a joint mission, contracted by the Commission, via an implementing partner.

The European Commission shall inform the implementing partner at least 1 month in advance of the dates foreseen for the evaluation missions. 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 IPA II beneficiary and other key stakeholders. The implementing partner and the European Commission shall analyse the conclusions and recommendations of the evaluations and, where appropriate, in agreement with the IPA II beneficiary, jointly decide on the follow-up actions to be taken and any adjustments necessary, including, if indicated, the reorientation of the action.