

Project Fiche – IPA Multi-beneficiary programmes / Component I

1 IDENTIFICATION

Project Title	Erasmus Mundus Action 1: Western Balkans - Turkey Window
CRIS Decision number	SI2
Project no.	09
MIPD Sector Code	7. Social Development
ELARG Statistical code	02.26 - Education and culture
DAC Sector code	11420
Total cost (VAT excluded)¹	EUR 8 000 000
EU contribution	EUR 8 000 000
Management mode	Centralised indirect
Implementation management	The programme will be implemented by the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA)
Implementing modality	Stand alone project
Project Implementation Type	Grants
Zone benefiting from the action(s)	Western Balkans ² : Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo*, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, as well as Turkey

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

² Croatia is not mentioned in the list, as it is expected to be a Member State of the EU in the period covered by this action.

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence.

2 RATIONALE

2.1 PROJECT CONTEXT: ISSUES TO BE TACKLED AND NEEDS ADDRESSED

To achieve better understanding and mutual enrichment between the European Union and the Candidate Countries and Potential Candidates in the field of higher education through promoting the mobility of students and doctoral candidates at higher education level. Enable highly qualified graduates and doctoral candidates from the Western Balkans and Turkey to engage in postgraduate study at European universities and to obtain qualifications and/or experience in the European Union and EFTA-EEA States.

2.2 LINK WITH MIPD AND NATIONAL SECTOR STRATEGIES

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

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

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

2.4 PROBLEM ANALYSIS

The programme specifically addresses the recommendation of the European Commission's Communication of 27 January 2006 "The Western Balkans on the Road to the EU: Consolidation Stability and Raising Prosperity"³ which indicates that "a special window will be made available in 2006 in Erasmus Mundus to allow up to 100 students from the region to undertake postgraduate studies in EU high profile master's courses." Under CARDS 2006, EUR 4 million have been allocated for this purpose and a further EUR 4 million under IPA 2007. In 2008 Turkey expressed interest to participate in this Window. In addition, according to the Communication of March 2008⁴ "Western Balkans: Enhancing the European Perspective" and following the recommendations of the Council Meeting of January 2008, the Commission decided to increase the amount of the allocation to allow more students to benefit from this Programme. The budget and the number of scholarships under Action 1 have doubled from IPA 2007 to IPA 2011 (from 100 to more than 200 master and doctorate scholarships per year).

This initiative emphasises the European Commission's desire to encourage the opening up of European higher education to the Western Balkans and Turkey. It complements the EU

³ COM (2006)27, 27.01.06

⁴ COM (2008)127, 05.03.08

existing programmes in higher education, Tempus (for the Western Balkans) and Erasmus (in which Turkey participates), as well as the Erasmus Mundus Action 2 – Partnerships (former External Cooperation Window).

As compared to these funding schemes, Erasmus Mundus Action 1 will address the needs of the best graduate students from the region who will be offered the opportunity to follow high level joint master and doctoral programmes selected exclusively among the best proposals submitted by consortia of European and, where relevant, non European Universities. The absence of an equivalent high quality training offer in the countries concerned constitutes an essential element in the relevance and the justification of these Erasmus Mundus Action 1 scholarships.

This programme offers a unique cooperation frame via study opportunities relevant to the skilled manpower needs of the Western Balkans. The reform efforts of the Candidate Countries and Potential Candidates for accession include improving the quality of their education systems and enhancing the academic qualifications of the students is a core component in this process.

In order to reinforce the added value of an EU action, it is necessary to ensure coherence and complementarities between the actions implemented in the framework of the present initiative and other relevant EU policies, instruments and actions. Effective linkages in the area of higher education undertaken within the framework of the EU cooperation with the Western Balkans and Turkey and the competent international organisations will be ensured.

2.5 LINKED ACTIVITIES AND DONOR COORDINATION

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

- Tempus aims at up-grading higher education institutions and promoting regional and multilateral networking between higher education institutions in the EU and the Western Balkans. Tempus projects relate to curriculum development and institutional development.
- Erasmus Mundus – Action 2 (former External Cooperation Window). This Programme was extended to the Western Balkans in 2007 in order to enable academic cooperation as well as mobility of academic staff and students at all levels.
- Erasmus (part of the Lifelong Learning Community Programme): among the Candidate Countries and Potential Candidates for Accession, only Turkey participates in this programme, on the same footing as the EU Member States, in the framework of the pre-accession strategy. Pilot projects funded by IPA 2009 which include application of HEIs for Erasmus Charter as well as students' mobility for studies and staff mobility under Erasmus, are implemented in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to prepare the country to its participation in the successor programme "Erasmus for All".

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

The Czech Presidency has co-organised with the European Commission in May 2009 a Pledging Conference which aimed at taking stock of what has been undertaken both by the Commission and the Member States in the provision of scholarships for the students of the

Western Balkans. It is now envisaged to create a mechanism of coordination and information between the Commission, the Member States and the Candidate Countries and Potential Candidates for accession.

2.6 LESSONS LEARNED

During the first four years of implementation of the previous Erasmus Mundus programme (2004-2008), students from the Western Balkans already had the opportunity to participate in the programme that was open to individuals worldwide.

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

The proposed Western Balkans – Turkey Windows are foreseen to start in the academic year 2014-2015 and will benefit from the lessons learnt from previous years. In particular, the opening of a Western Balkans – Turkey Window has contributed to radically increasing the interest of Western Balkans and Turkey students to study in Europe (from 2009 to 2012, the number of masters scholarship applications submitted by students from the countries concerned keeps raising and is far beyond the number of available scholarships, reflected in rather low success rate - referring to the applications selected for funding - of 8% in 2012).

Depending on the actual demand introduced by eligible students and doctoral candidates, the allocation of scholarships/fellowships will aim at ensuring an appropriate balance and representation of the different countries covered by the window.

The gender profile of selected students under the Western Balkans and Turkey window shows more female than male students as a traditional pattern. With respect to academic year 2012-2013 this tendency remains the same as in the past years, reflected by a proportion of 52.5% female candidates and 47.5% male candidates. It is interesting to note that as opposed to this, in the general Category A type of scholarship dedicated to all non EU/EEA nationals and residents, the majority of the selected students are usually men.

3 DESCRIPTION

3.1 OVERALL OBJECTIVE OF THE PROJECT

To achieve better understanding and mutual enrichment between the European Union and the Candidate Countries and Potential Candidates in the field of higher education through promoting the mobility of students and doctoral candidates at higher education level.

3.2 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE(S) OF THE PROJECT

To enable highly qualified graduates and doctoral candidates from the Western Balkans and Turkey to engage in postgraduate study at European universities and to obtain qualifications and/or experience in the European Union and EFTA-EEA States.

3.3 RESULTS

The key results of this project are:

- Students from the Western Balkans and Turkey obtain a Masters degree (joint, double or multiple) from an Erasmus Mundus Masters Course;
- Doctoral candidates from the Western Balkans and Turkey obtain a Doctoral degree (joint, double or multiple) from an Erasmus Mundus Masters Course as part of an Erasmus Mundus Joint Doctorate;

- Improved cultural understanding and respect for diversity.

The main performance indicators for Erasmus Mundus are the number of institutions and students participating in the programme. The impact of the Western Balkans - Turkey Window within Erasmus Mundus will be measured against performance indicators such as the number of students participating in the scheme as well as the impact of their study in the EU on employability and career opportunities. The results of the project will be evaluated through an assessment and to be carried out by the Commission services.

3.4 MAIN ACTIVITIES

The Erasmus Mundus Masters or Doctorates Consortia will provide up to 97 masters scholarships and up to 30 doctoral candidates fellowships to graduate students from the Western Balkans and Turkey to attend an Erasmus Mundus Masters or Doctorate Course for a minimum duration of one and a maximum duration of four years. The scholarships are awarded exclusively to graduate students who have been registered to an Erasmus Mundus Masters or Doctorate Course.

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

The Erasmus Mundus programme has provided valuable support to the achievement of important results in the field of higher education at European level including the elaboration of masters programmes compatible with the Bologna principles, increasing international student mobility, support to the quality assurance, fostering academic cooperation between EU and non-member institutions, enhancing the image of European higher education in non member Beneficiaries.

Furthermore the programme has had a catalytic effect on the implementation of the Bologna recommendations and has strongly contributed to the promotion of mutual understanding in a multicultural environment and training.

Performance is monitored through desk and field monitoring. The Erasmus Mundus National Structures act as information offices in EU Member States.

3.6 SUSTAINABILITY

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

3.7 ASSUMPTIONS AND PRE-CONDITIONS⁵

This programme will be implemented on the assumption that numerous students will be interested in mobility activities.

⁵ Assumptions are external factors that have the potential to influence (or even determine) the success of a project but lie outside the control of the implementation managers. Such factors are sometimes referred to as risks or assumptions but the Commission requires that all risks shall be expressed as assumptions. Pre-conditions are requirements that must be met before the sector support can start.

4 IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES

The programme will be implemented by indirect centralised management. Implementation tasks are delegated by the European Commission to the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). The EACEA will sign grant contracts with the universities after the selection of the students. It is expected that these contracts will be concluded in quarter 2, 2014.

Following a selection of Erasmus Mundus joint programmes, EACEA then enters into a 5 year Framework Agreement with the selected Master course and Joint Doctorate programmes. Consequently and on an annual basis the Erasmus Mundus consortia select their students/doctoral candidates according to a set of minimum requirements⁶ which must be incorporated into the specific selection requirements of each Erasmus Mundus Master course or Joint Doctorate and published on the respective course website. The Erasmus Mundus consortia then submit scholarship and fellowship grant applications to EACEA for distribution and management of the individual grants.

⁶ published on EACEA website: http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus_mundus/beneficiaries/documents/action1/emmcselectreq_2012.pdf and http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus_mundus/beneficiaries/documents/action1/emjdselectreq_2012.pdf

4.1 INDICATIVE BUDGET

Indicative Project budget (amounts in EUR)

			SOURCES OF FUNDING									
			TOTAL EXP.RE	EU CONTRIBUTION		NATIONAL CONTRIBUTION					PRIVATE CONTRIBUTION	
ACTIVITIES	IB (1)	INV (1)	EUR (a)=(b)+(c)+(d)	EUR (b)	%(2)	Total EUR (c)=(x)+(y)+(z)	% (2)	Central EUR (x)	Regional/ Local EUR (y)	IFIs EUR (z)	EUR (d)	% (2)
Activity 1	x		8 000 000	8 000 000	100	-					-	
TOTAL IB			8 000 000	8 000 000	100							
TOTAL INV												
TOTAL PROJECT			8 000 000	8 000 000	100							

Amounts net of VAT

- (1) In the Activity row, use "X" to identify whether IB or INV
- (2) Expressed in % of the **Public** Expenditure (column (b))
- (3) Expressed in % of the **Total** Expenditure (column (a))

4.2 INDICATIVE IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE (PERIODS BROKEN DOWN BY QUARTER)

Contracts	Start of Tendering/ Call for proposals	Signature of contract	Project Completion
Selected Consortia	N/A	Q2 2014	Q4 2018

4.3 CROSS CUTTING ISSUES

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

4.3.1 *Equal Opportunities and non discrimination*

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

In this context, Erasmus Mundus Action 1 consortia have been requested to introduce a gender balance element in their selection of scholarship / fellowship candidates.

Conditioned by the gender profile of the scholarship demand introduced by Erasmus Mundus consortia, this equal opportunity element will be taken into account for the actual allocation of the individual grants.

4.3.2 *Civil Society/Stakeholders involvement*

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

ANNEXES

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

ANNEX 1: Logical framework matrix in standard format

LOGFRAME PLANNING MATRIX FOR PROJECT FICHE		Project 08: ERASMUS MUNDUS Action 1 WESTERN BALKANS- TURKEY WINDOWS	
		Contracting period expires: 30 November 2014	Execution period expires: 30 November 2018
		Total budget: EUR 8 000 000	IPA budget: EUR 8 000 000
Overall objective	Objectively verifiable indicators	Sources of Verification	
To achieve better understanding and mutual enrichment between the European Union and the Candidate Countries and Potential Candidates in the field of higher education through promoting the mobility of students at higher education level.	Main performance indicators for Erasmus Mundus are the number of institutions, students and scholars participating in the programme.	Commission and EACEA services. Universities and Consortia	
Project purpose	Objectively verifiable indicators	Sources of Verification	Assumptions
To enable highly qualified graduates from the Western Balkans and Turkey to engage in postgraduate study at European universities and to obtain qualifications and/or experience in the European Union and EFTA-EEA States.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of students applying to the scheme; Impact of their study in the EU on employability and career opportunities. 	Universities and Consortia Commission and EACEA services.	<p>After selection the assumption is that students and academics from WB are permitted to leave their country and enter the European host country.</p> <p>European Commission Delegations should cooperate if necessary with local EU embassies in the Beneficiaries in order to ease the visa application process.</p>
Results	Objectively verifiable indicators	Sources of Verification	Assumptions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased mobility of students from Western Balkans and Turkey to the European Union universities; Increased qualified and experienced students from the Western Balkans and Turkey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of students participating in the Programme Impact of the mobility of students in the EU on employability and career opportunities 	Universities and Consortia	
Activities	Means	Costs	Assumptions
Award of scholarships	Grants	EUR 8 000 000	

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

Contracted	Q1 2013	Q2 2013	Q3 2013	Q4 2013	Q1 2014	Q2 2014	Q3 2014	Q4 2014	Q1 2015	Q2 2015	Q3 2015	Q4 2015	Q1 2016	Q2 2016	Q3 2016	Q4 2016	Q1 2017	Q2 2017	Q3 2017	Q4 2017	Q1 2018	Q2 2018	Q3 2018	Q4 2018
Erasmus Mundus – Action 1						8 000 000																		
Cumulated						8 000 000																		
Disbursed	Q1 2013	Q2 2013	Q3 2013	Q4 2013	Q1 2014	Q2 2014	Q3 2014	Q4 2014	Q1 2015	Q2 2015	Q3 2015	Q4 2015	Q1 2016	Q2 2016	Q3 2016	Q4 2016	Q1 2017	Q2 2017	Q3 2017	Q4 2017	Q1 2018	Q2 2018	Q3 2018	Q4 2018
Erasmus Mundus – Action 1						5 600 000					1 200 000					1 200 000								
Cumulated						5 600 000					6 800 000					8 000 000								

ANNEX 3: Description of Institutional Framework

The Tempus Offices have been asked to ensure the promotion of the Erasmus Mundus Programme⁷. Every candidate country (except Turkey) and potential candidate for accession has established a Tempus Office.

These are the authorities in charge of the higher education sector in the Beneficiaries:

- Albania: Ministry of Education and Sciences
- Bosnia and Herzegovina: BiH Ministry of Civil Affairs - Sector for Education.
- Croatia: Ministry of Science, Education and Sports
- The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia: Ministry of Education and Science
- Kosovo: Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
- Montenegro: Ministry of Education and Science
- Serbia: Ministry of Education and Science
- Turkey: Centre for European Union Education and Youth Programmes (the National Agency).

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

- Council Decision of 18 February 2008 (2008/210/EC) on the principles, priorities and conditions contained in the European Partnership with Albania and repealing Decision 2006/54/EC
- Council Decision of 18 February 2008 (2008/211/EC) on the principles, priorities and conditions contained in the European Partnership with Bosnia and Herzegovina and repealing Decision 2006/55/EC
- Council Decision of 12 February 2008 (2008/119/EC) on the principles, priorities and conditions contained in the Accession Partnership with Croatia and repealing Decision 2006/145/EC
- Council Decision of 18 February 2008 (2008/212/EC) on the principles, priorities and conditions contained in the Accession Partnership with the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and repealing Decision 2006/57/EC
- Council Decision of 22 January 2007 (2007/49/EC) on the principles, priorities and conditions contained in the European Partnership with Montenegro.
- Council Decision of 18 February 2008 (2008/213/EC) on the principles, priorities and conditions contained in the European Partnership with Serbia including Kosovo as defined by United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 of 10 June 1999 and repealing Decision 2006/56/EC
- Council Decision of 18 February 2008 (2008/157/EC) on the principles, priorities and conditions contained in the Accession Partnership with the Republic of Turkey and repealing Decision 2005/35/EC
- Multi-beneficiary Multi-annual Indicative Planning Document 2011-2013

⁷ In Croatia the Agency for Mobility and EU Programmes is responsible for promotion of Erasmus Mundus Programme.

ANNEX 5: Details per EU funded contract where applicable:

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

Implementation tasks are delegated under Article 54(2) (a) of the Financial Regulation to the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency, which was created by Commission Decision 2005/56/EC of 14 January 2005. The mandate of the agency was extended by Commission Decision 2007/114/EC of 8 February 2007.

According to Article 12 (3) of the Council Regulation No (EC) 58/2003 of 19 December 2002 laying down the statute for executive agencies to be entrusted with certain tasks in the management of Community programmes⁸, any programme delegated to an executive agency has to contribute to the financing of the administrative budget of the agency.

After the selection of the awarded students, the EACEA will proceed with the preparation of contracts (grants) with the universities. Afterwards, it is the role of the university consortia to deliver and finance the scholarships of the selected students. Each individual master scholarship costs approximately EUR 45.000 and each doctoral fellowship EUR 127.000.

The different steps of the action are as follows:

- 1) The Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency publishes the selected Masters Courses and Joint Doctorate Programs on the Europa website. If students start their courses in year "N" the publication of this information normally takes place at the end of summer of year "N-1";
- 2) Erasmus Mundus consortia publish their selected Masters Courses and Joint Doctorate Programs worldwide especially in the targeted Beneficiaries (and the Commission publishes the Erasmus Mundus programme as a whole). The period of maximum publicity is normally between autumn of year N-1 and January of year "N";
- 3) Students apply directly to consortia. Deadlines for applications may vary according to the Masters Courses or Joint Doctorate Programs but they normally fall between mid-January and mid-February of year "N";
- 4) The consortia select students and propose a list of grantees, including a reserve list, to the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency by the established deadline of 28 February of year "N".
- 5) The list of students is then validated by the Agency / Commission internal inter-service evaluation committee. The Grant award decision taken by EACEA is communicated to the EM Programme committee and the EP in accordance with the information procedure. The whole procedure takes two to three months.
- 6) The Commission normally takes the selection decision at the end of April of year "N".
- 7) Grantees are informed that they have been selected in May of year "N". At this point they can start procedures to obtain visas to come study in an Erasmus Mundus Masters Course or Joint Doctorate Programs in August-October of year "N".

⁸ OJ L11, 16.1.2003, p. 1.

- Ownership of assets (current and after project completion)
- Maintenance plans
- Describe any co-financing arrangement how this will be implemented and by when

ANNEX 6: Project visibility activities

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