

## ANNEX

### to the Commission Implementing Decision adopting a Civil Society Facility and Media Action Programme for the year 2020 under the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA II)

#### 1 IDENTIFICATION

<b>Beneficiary</b>	Western Balkans (Republic of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo*, Montenegro, Republic of North Macedonia, and Republic of Serbia) and Republic of Turkey
<b>Basic act:</b> <b>CRIS/ABAC Commitment references and budget line:</b> <b>Total cost:</b> <b>EU Contribution:</b>	Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA-II) 2020/042-327/ EUR 69 100 000 22.020401– Multi-country programmes, regional integration and territorial cooperation EUR 71 187 690 EUR 69 100 000
<b>Method of implementation</b>	Direct management by the European Commission and Indirect management with United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC); World Health Organisation (WHO) and the entity(ies) to be selected in accordance with the criteria set out in section 2.2(3)(a) for part of Action 1.
<b>Final date for contracting, including the conclusion of delegation/contribution agreements</b>	at the latest by 31 December 2021
<b>Indicative operational implementation period</b>	72 months from the adoption of this Financing Decision.

---

\* 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.

## DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION PROGRAMME

### 1.1 SECTORS SELECTED UNDER THIS ACTION PROGRAMME

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

An active **civil society** is a critical component of democratic systems and an important player in reform processes taking place in Western Balkans and Turkey.

The 2020 Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions “*Enhancing the accession process - A credible EU perspective for the Western Balkans*” spells out that “*a core objective of the European Union’s engagement with the Western Balkans is to prepare them to meet all the requirements of membership. This includes supporting fundamental democratic, rule of law and economic reforms and alignment with core European values. This will in turn foster solid and accelerated economic growth and social convergence*”<sup>1</sup>.

Both the European Parliament and the European Economic and Social Committee strongly advocate the need to bolster and support civil society in the Western Balkans and Turkey.

In its 2019 Report on implementation of the Enlargement Strategy<sup>2</sup>, the European Commission notes that Fundamental rights are largely enshrined in the legislation in the Western Balkans but that serious efforts are needed to step up implementation. It also notes that Turkey has seen a continued strong deterioration in key human rights areas over the reporting period.

Additionally, the 2018 Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on “*A credible enlargement perspective for and enhanced EU engagement with the Western Balkans*”<sup>3</sup> (hereafter the Western Balkans Strategy) reconfirms the importance that civil society plays in the enlargement process in the Western Balkans. It underlines in particular the importance of the enabling environment, the need for inclusive structured dialogue between civil society and governments on reform priorities, the empowerment of the civil society, and the inclusion of citizens more broadly.

EU support to Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) aims to build stronger democracies, improve accountability systems and ultimately achieve better policy and economic and social development. It seeks to empower civil society to fulfil the following key roles:

- Creating stronger links to citizens by engaging in public policy processes, reaching out to society as a whole including marginalized groups and grass-root communities and encouraging civic activism across all areas and public participation in policy-making;

---

<sup>1</sup> COM(2020) 57, 5.2.2020 . Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions “Enhancing the accession process - A credible EU perspective for the Western Balkans”

<sup>2</sup> COM(2019) 260, 29.5.2019. 2019 Communication on EU Enlargement Policy

<sup>3</sup> COM(2018) 65, 6.2.2018 . Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: A credible enlargement perspective for and enhanced EU engagement with the Western Balkans

- Becoming professional and reliable partners in policy-making and reform processes through evidence-based advocacy across all sectors and monitoring of reforms;
- Contributing to enhancing responsible and inclusive leadership in the political, economic and social spheres and providing early warning in case of societal change;
- Strengthening economic development and create better links with business by promoting entrepreneurship, social innovation and job creation.

The Western Balkans Strategy points to extensive political interference in the **media**. It underlines the need to safeguard the freedom of expression and independence of media as a pillar of democracy. The 2019 EU Enlargement Communication underlines that “[...] *developments in the area of freedom of expression and the independence of the media across the region are of growing concern. There has been a serious backsliding in Turkey, where the exercise of the freedom of expression has been hampered considerably and where over 160 journalists remain in prison. Very limited efforts were noted across the Western Balkans. Overall, physical and verbal intimidation has continued and investigations and prosecutions remain slow. Efforts to influence the independence of public service broadcasters, non-transparent public and private funding of the media and distorted advertisement market are commonplace in all countries in the region. The media business environment is also characterised by frequent political interference and opaque media ownership that undermine the sustainability of independent media.*”

Challenges facing independent media outlets have multiplied in recent years. The continuing economic woes in the region, exacerbated in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, further contribute to the collapse of traditional, advertisement based, media business models.

The EU regularly monitors the situation and needs of CSOs in the region, against objectives set out in its *Guidelines for EU Support to civil society in the Western Balkans and Turkey*. The main regional findings in 2019 can be summarised as follows<sup>4</sup>:

- In all IPA Beneficiaries, **fundamental freedoms** (i.e. freedom of association, assembly and expression) are guaranteed by legislation. These guarantees are mostly in line with international standards but many bureaucratic obstacles persist, i.e. in the registration process. In practice, however, the ability to exercise these rights has been deteriorating.
- The **narrowing of civic space** has prompted the rise of grass-roots initiatives in most of the IPA Beneficiaries in the region. There is no legal definition of a “grass-roots initiative”. Typically, these are small, activist-based organisations, working at the community level. They are usually unregistered and therefore unable to access public funding.

---

<sup>4</sup> Assessment on the State of the Enabling Environment and Capacities of Civil Society against the Guidelines for EU Support to Civil Society in Enlargement countries, 2014-2020, realised by the EU-financed Technical Assistance for Civil Society Organisations (TACSO III)

- The **financial environment for CSOs** is best described as neither conducive nor hindering. CSOs can engage in economic activities in all IPA Beneficiaries, and the threshold and tax treatments of these activities vary. In most of the IPA Beneficiaries, financial rules and accounting standards do not take into account the distinctive nature of CSOs.
- **Public funding** for CSOs is available in all IPA Beneficiaries. Legislative changes and new regulations or rulebooks that aim to improve the transparency of government financial support provided to CSOs have been adopted in several Beneficiaries. However, public support still lacks a strategic dimension (i.e. a connection with public policies), responsiveness to the needs of CSOs, transparency and timeliness. CSOs tend to have a low level of trust in public funding.
- In all IPA Beneficiaries (with the exception of Turkey), legal frameworks for **public consultations** exist, stipulating that draft legislation should be available for comments by the public. However, in practice, minimum periods for consultation are often breached or draft legislation is not made available. Public institutions usually do not provide feedback on the comments received, making it difficult for CSOs to assess their influence on decision-making. Early involvement of stakeholders is rare and even when CSOs are included in the early stages of developing draft legislation, it is often not clear what criteria were used to select the organisations that were invited to participate.
- The legal framework that regulates the structures and mechanisms for **dialogue and cooperation between civil society and public institutions** has improved in several IPA Beneficiaries (i.e. new frameworks were adopted in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro and North Macedonia), leaving only Serbia and Turkey without these important strategic documents. Bodies responsible for overseeing this cooperation are active and productive Councils in place in Kosovo, Montenegro and North Macedonia.
- The biggest internal **CSOs capacity challenges** are low capacities with regard to transparency and accountability, communication, advocacy, strategic approaches towards operations, monitoring and evaluation, internal governance structures and fundraising and fund diversification.

## Health

The COVID-19 pandemic that broke out in Europe in 2020 is a worldwide, severe public health emergency affecting people and economies. As the rest of the world, the IPA beneficiaries face many challenges in responding to the outbreak. The pandemic adds important pressure on already stretched health and social service delivery systems, exacerbating vulnerabilities of the affected populations, and causes the economy to contract. The situation of women in particular has deteriorated.

The pandemic has highlighted weaknesses in the resilience of national health systems and their capacity to effectively prevent and control health emergencies. There are shortcomings in preparedness and response capacities, but also gaps in universal health coverage and health financing in the region.

The enlargement process has been a stimulus for health reform and cooperation between the Western Balkans and the EU notably in the area of cross-border health risks, which

is the health area subject to EU *acquis*. For several years, the EU has supported the participation of the IPA beneficiaries in the work of the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC). ECDC, within its mandate covering communicable diseases, supports the EU Member States in responding to the crisis, in particular through the revised ECDC 2020 COVID-19 Work Plan.

In parallel, the World Health Organisation (WHO) is a key player in supporting the region tackling its health challenges. Most recently, with immediate COVID-19 response measures; at other times with capacity building in the context of the International Health Regulation (IHR); and with wider measures to support the effectiveness and inclusiveness of the regions' health systems.

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

The Civil Society Facility and Media Programme (CSF) offers a single window of support to civil society and media freedom, bringing together EU support at bilateral and multi-country level and ensuring synergies between the two. A Mid-term evaluation of the Facility<sup>5</sup> was conducted in 2017. It found that the CSF effectively contributes to addressing the needs and priorities of civil society in the region. However, it also indicated that real cooperation between the central level and civil society remains weak and that the enabling environment needs to be improved.

One key recommendation of the 2019 edition of the annual EU-Western Balkans Media Days was to provide more targeted direct support to independent media outlets. The *Study on the sustainability of professional journalism in the media business environment of the Western Balkans* (2019) found that the assistance to independent media should help develop the capacities of media outlets to efficiently manage the organisation in terms of human resources, business development and new production formats and tools.

ECDC has been developing its cooperation with the Western Balkan and Turkey since 2008. A total of five ECDC-IPA projects have been implemented for this purpose. Currently two contribution agreements are being implemented for beneficiaries from Western Balkans<sup>6</sup>.

Financing has enabled a gradual involvement of representatives from Western Balkan and Turkey in the work of ECDC. When the COVID-19 crisis broke out, IPA beneficiaries were able to benefit from the guidance and advice of the Centre. It is clear that ECDC has more to offer to the IPA beneficiaries.

In line with the WHO European Region Resolution EUR/RC68/R7 and its Action Plan to Improve Public Health Preparedness and Response ([Action Plan](#)), WHO/Europe led work in the development of health security capacity in the region across three pillars. These are to build, strengthen and maintain core capacities in line with the core requirement set in the International Health Regulation (IHR) (2005); strengthen event

---

<sup>5</sup> Mid-term Evaluation of the Civil Society Facility for the Western Balkans and Turkey, Contract N°2016/380154/1. FWC BENEFICIARIES 2013 – LOT 7: GOVERNANCE AND HOME AFFAIRS EuropeAid/132633/C/SER/multi

<sup>6</sup> ECDC-IPA6/2019/409-781 “Preparatory measures for the participation of the Western Balkans and Turkey in the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control with special focus on One-Health against AMR, 2020 — 2022” and ENI-2020-415-420 EU Initiative on Health Security starting 1 April 2020 until 2024

management and compliance with the IHR requirements; and measure progress and promote accountability. The new programme will develop these elements.

*List of Actions foreseen under the selected Sectors/Priorities:*

Action	Direct management	Indirect management	
		With entrusted entity	With IPA II beneficiary
Sector: Regional and territorial cooperation			
Action 1. CSF and media multi-country 2020 (including health response to COVID-19)	EUR 12 150 000	EUR 26 350 000	EUR 0
Action 2. CSF and media Albania 2020	EUR 2 000 000	EUR 0	EUR 0
Action 3. CSF and media Kosovo 2020	EUR 1 300 000	EUR 0	EUR 0
Action 4. CSF and media Montenegro 2020	EUR 800 000	EUR 0	EUR 0
Action 5. CSF and media North Macedonia 2020	EUR 2 000 000	EUR 0	EUR 0
Action 6. CSF and media Serbia 2020	EUR 2 500 000	EUR 0	EUR 0
Action 7. CSF and media Turkey 2020	EUR 22 000 000	EUR 0	EUR 0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>EUR 42 750 000</b>	<b>EUR 26 350 000</b>	<b>EUR 0</b>

## 1.2 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 TFEU<sup>7</sup>.

<b>Action 1</b>	<b>CSF and media multi-country 2020 (including health response to COVID-19)</b>	<b>EUR 38 500 000</b>
-----------------	---	-----------------------

### *(1) Description of the Action, objectives, expected results and key performance indicators*

- Description of the action and objectives

The action is composed of multi-country activities focused on increasing capacities of civil society, journalists and media in the Western Balkans and Turkey to participate effectively and accountably in the public debate, policy-making processes and innovation for the sustainable development of their societies, including for gender equality. The action will encompass the following activities:

- 1) Support to strengthen the diversity, effectiveness, and sustainability of civic actors, via the European Endowment for Democracy.
- 2) Support for local democracy, with a specific focus on youth solidarity and inclusion.
- 3) Support for socio-economic development of Roma, via support to Roma entrepreneurs; and a new edition of the Roma Inclusion Award.
- 4) Support for good neighbourly relations and reconciliation via small-scale regional cooperation projects implemented via the Western Balkan Fund.
- 5) Support to the economic sustainability of independent media platforms.
- 6) In addition, following the COVID-19 pandemic, a special regional action supporting the IPA beneficiaries in the area of health is included. Implemented by the European Communicable Disease Centre (ECDC) and the World Health Organisation (WHO), this activity will build the partners' capacities to prevent, prepare for, detect and respond to health crisis; and build broader capacity in ensuring an equitable access to health for the people of the region.

The specific objectives of the action are:

- 1) To enhance the capacities of civil society and media professional organisations to be effective and accountable independent actors, including on issues relevant to participatory democracy, gender equality, disability inclusiveness, youth engagement, good neighbourly relations and Roma empowerment

---

<sup>7</sup> [https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/8442/consolidated-list-sanctions\\_en](https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/8442/consolidated-list-sanctions_en)

2) To enhance the all-hazard preparedness and response capacities of IPA beneficiaries (communicable diseases as well as man-made and natural disasters, climate change and other emergencies); and to enhance their capacity for rendering the health systems more resilient, in particular through the strengthening of health systems financing.

- Expected results and key performance indicators

The expected results are:

- Local pro-democracy civic actors emerge, operate and/or adapt their action to the changing local context, including where the space for civic action is shrinking
- Innovative/independent media actors emerge, operate and/or adapt their action to the changing local context, including where the space for media freedom is shrinking
- Media outlets have i) improved economic performance and audience reach; ii) improved capacity to counter disinformation and "fake news"; and iii) improved conditions for quality investigative journalism
- The capacity of local governments to implement/institutionalise transparent municipal grant schemes is strengthened
- The capacity of civil society organisations and local governments to implement municipal grant schemes and deliver good quality and gender responsive projects servicing the local community is strengthened
- Capacity of local authorities and civil society organisations to generate greater civic and youth engagement in local affairs is enhanced
- Regional networking and dialogue among civil society and local governments across the IPA II beneficiaries is enhanced
- Small CSOs in the Western Balkans participate in regional cooperation projects on social, cultural, scientific, and economic topics, including with a gender and disability dimension
- IPA beneficiaries stay engaged in the promotion of regional cooperation
- The barriers faced by Roma female and male entrepreneurs and job seekers in accessing funding, jobs and active market labour market measures are better understood
- The business capacities of male and female Roma entrepreneurs is enhanced
- The capacities of financial institutions and governments agencies to serve Roma entrepreneurs is increased
- The Fourth Edition of the EU Roma Integration Award is implemented, drawing attention to activities that contribute to Roma employment

Health component:

- IPA beneficiaries' capacity to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic is increased
- All-hazard preparedness and response capacity of the IPA beneficiaries is strengthened
- Public health, primary care, and hospitals readiness against health emergencies is improved across the IPA beneficiaries

- The resilience of the IPA beneficiaries' health systems is strengthened, in particular through improved clarity on health financing arrangements and policy dialogue supporting progress towards universal health coverage (UHC)

The key performance indicators are:

- Number of supported pro-democracy actors with sustained and/or improved capacity to operate and survive
- Number of innovative media actors supported through sub-granting scheme
- Number of local governments with institutionalised model of transparent and project-based funding of CSOs in the Western Balkan partners
- Number of projects supported enhancing youth, youth activism and participation in a gender balanced way
- Number of Roma, sex-disaggregated, entrepreneurs having received coaching and training
- Number of persons with disabilities benefiting from the action
- Number of financial intermediaries/institutions trained and supported to become more skilled and active in lending to Roma businesses

Health component:

- Number of surveillance systems strengthened
- Number of all hazard preparedness and response plans tested through sub regional Simulation Exercise
- Number of hospitals/health facilities, which have developed/revised emergency response plans
- Development of a UHC Roadmap

***(2) Assumptions and conditions***

The most significant main conditions for implementation of the action are in place. All IPA II beneficiaries have a legal framework ensuring that the exercise of the freedom of association and expression is formally guaranteed, although there are issues of different degrees of seriousness in the implementation of that legal framework.

***(3) Implementation modalities:***

***(3)(a) Indirect management***

***• Indirect management with an EU Member State Organisation***

This action, Component 2 - Support to media freedom and pluralism - may be implemented in indirect management with an EU Member State Organisation. The entity will be selected by the Commission services using the following criteria: presence of specific technical sector/thematic expertise in the field of media and/or economic development support, and logistical, financial and management capacities to implement a programme of the foreseen size.

The implementation by this entity entails management and implementation of all aspects of component 2 of the action, including budget implementation tasks (procurement and grant award procedures as relevant), to achieve objectives of this multi-sector action – in

particular, to assist the IPA beneficiaries in achieving media freedom and pluralism through support for the economic sustainability of independent media. Specifically, the activities will help reach the following results:

- Media outlets have an improved economic performance and audience reach.
- Media outlets have improved capacities to counter disinformation and "fake news".
- Media outlets have improved conditions for quality investigative journalism.

If negotiations with the above-mentioned entrusted entity(ies) fail, that part of this action may be implemented in direct management in accordance with the implementation modalities identified in section (3)(b).

- ***Indirect management with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)***

This action, Component 3 - Support to local democracy, civic activism and youth engagement – may be implemented through indirect management with UNDP.

The implementation by this entity entails implementation and management of all aspects of component 3 of the action, including budget implementation tasks (procurement and grant award procedures as relevant), to achieve objectives of this multi-sector action. In particular this entails assistance to the IPA beneficiaries in strengthening local authorities' capacities, reinvigorating the partnership between local authorities and civil society organisations and improving the decision making process at local level. The activities will help reach the following results:

- The capacity of local governments to implement/institutionalise transparent municipal project-based grant schemes is strengthened
- The capacity of civil society organisations and local governments to implement municipal grant schemes and deliver good quality projects servicing the local community is strengthened
- The capacity of local authorities and civil society organisations to generate greater civic and youth engagement in local affairs is enhanced
- Regional networking and dialogue among civil society and local governments across the IPA II beneficiaries is enhanced.

The envisaged entity has been selected using the following criteria: UNDP has relevant extensive technical experience in working with local authorities and local civil society organisations (it implemented the first phases of the activity in the region); and it has demonstrated operational capacity to manage a project of this size, and to ensure a large component of financial support to third parties.

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

- ***Indirect management with the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC)***

A part of Component 6 of this action - Strengthening resilience against health emergencies, in particular COVID-19 - in particular the activity "Participation of the IPA beneficiaries in the ECDC Work programme on COVID-19", may be implemented in indirect management with the ECDC.

This implementation entails management and implementation of all aspects of the action, including budget implementation tasks (procurement and grant award procedures as relevant). The activities will help reach the result:

- IPA beneficiaries' capacity to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic is increased.

The foreseen result includes providing support to strengthening of surveillance systems, preparedness and response capacity, laboratory support and training. The proposed intervention will introduce a third specific work strand into the already ongoing cooperation with the ECDC.

The envisaged entity has been selected using the following criteria: the ECDC is an EU Agency, demonstrating financial and operational capacity, technical expertise, and proven experience in implementing similar actions. ECDC is the EU Agency with a unique function to increase health security in the EU, and through this action in the Western Balkans and Turkey, by strengthening public health systems in terms of enhancing early detection, assessment, and response capacities to health threats. Such implementation is justified, given ECDC's mandate and unique institutional background, strong technical and sector expertise and the specific purpose of this action.

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

- ***Indirect management with the World Health Organisation (WHO)***

Part of Component 6 of this action - Strengthening resilience against health emergencies, in particular COVID-19 - may be implemented in indirect management with the WHO.

This implementation entails management and implementation of all aspects of the action, including budget implementation tasks (procurement and grant award procedures as relevant). The activities will help reach the following results:

- All-hazard preparedness and response capacity of the IPA beneficiaries is strengthened.
- Public health, primary care, and hospitals readiness against health emergencies is improved across the IPA beneficiaries.
- The resilience of IPA beneficiaries' health systems is strengthened, in particular through improved clarity on health financing arrangements and policy dialogue supporting progress towards universal health coverage (UHC).

Activities will include a) technical assistance at the regional and central levels to develop and strengthen the preparedness and response capacities of the Western Balkans against all-hazard health emergencies, and; b) generation of evidence and analysis to inform national action plans, policy dialogues and policy development on health financing, as a key component for ensuring universal health coverage.

The envisaged entity has been selected using the following criteria: key international organisation with a mandate to direct, coordinate and support health systems across the world, which is necessary for supporting the region to tackle its health challenges. The organisation further demonstrates financial and operational capacities.

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

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

#### ***Grants***

- ***Direct award to the European Endowment for Democracy (EED) for “Financial support to grass-roots and community based organisations, activists and emerging actors, as well as to independent mission media actors in the Western Balkans and Turkey”***

a) Purpose of the grant: the grants awarded to EED will aim to achieve the following results:

- Local pro-democracy civic actors emerge, operate and/or adapt their action to the changing local context, including where the space for civic action is shrinking.
- Innovative/independent media actors emerge, operate and/or adapt their action to the changing local context, including where the space for media freedom is shrinking

b) Direct grant award:

Under the responsibility of the Commission’s Authorizing office responsible, the grant may be awarded without a call for proposals to the EED, aiming to build on its respective mandate, strengths and expertise in the area of financial support to grass-root, community based organisations, small scale media outlets, bloggers, independent media, activists and emerging actors. The direct grant is in accordance with Article 195 (1) (f) of the 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, i.e. *“for activities with specific characteristics that require a particular type of body on account of its technical competence, its high degree of specialisation or its administrative powers, on condition that the activities concerned do not fall within the scope of a call for proposals”*.

The recourse to the award of a grant without a call for proposals is justified because EED is a body uniquely positioned to respond to the highly specific characteristics of this activity. EED was set up specifically to provide financial support to pro-democratic movements and other pro-democratic actors in favour of a pluralistic multiparty system on democratic ground; social movements and actors; civil society organisations; young leaders; independent media and journalists (including bloggers, social media activists, etc), non-governmental institutions, including foundations and educational institutions functioning also in exile; provided that all the beneficiaries adhere to core democratic values, and human rights as well as subscribe to principles of non-violence. EED is specialised in supporting those among the above stakeholders that have difficulties benefitting from assistance through traditional funding channels due to their size, legal status (e.g. non-registered entities or individuals), geopolitical context (e.g. civil war situation), and particular needs etc. Furthermore, EED offers a unique credibility when carrying out these activities, due to the formal backing it enjoys from a broad European constituency. Launched through a Council Declaration, EED has a distinctive institutional set-up, being steered and

monitored by representatives of the European Parliament, the EU Member States, the European External Action Service and the civil society of the region.

This, along with its experience and already established network in the region, allows EED to deliver the needed support to the target beneficiaries, including in sensitive situations, and justifies the direct award. This unique position was recognised by the European Commission in its Action Plan in Support of the Transformation of the Western Balkans<sup>8</sup> and in the Joint Communication of the Commission and High Representative on tackling disinformation<sup>9</sup>. EED's good track-record, also confirmed during a 2019 ROM report, with efficient award procedures (that are compliant with the general principles applicable to the use of public funds) and with a standing good reputation, makes it an adequate vehicle for providing financial support to local beneficiaries at a micro- or mini-scale, allowing beneficiaries such as non-registered associations, political movements, individual activists, bloggers etc. to benefit from the donors community funding where this would not be possible through more traditional funding channels.

- ***Direct award to the European Endowment for Democracy (EED) for “Operating support to accompany the financial support to grass-roots and community based organisations, activists and emerging actors, as well as to independent mission media actors in the Western Balkans and Turkey”***

a) Purpose of the grant: the grant awarded to EED will contribute to reaching the following results:

- Local pro-democracy civic actors emerge, operate and/or adapt their action to the changing local context, including where the space for civic action is shrinking.
- Innovative/independent media actors emerge, operate and/or adapt their action to the changing local context, including where the space for media freedom is shrinking
- The grant will cover the EED's operating costs in 2023. The operating grants will be combined with resources drawn from the European Neighbourhood Instrument. The operating costs correspond to the functioning of the foundation and to the implementation of the other activities that the EED performs as part of its mandate: seminars, studies, conferences, publications, networking events, workshops, training and visibility activities, capacity building for beneficiaries etc.

b) Direct grant award:

Under the responsibility of the Commission's Authorizing office responsible, the grant may be awarded without a call for proposals to the EED, aiming to build on its respective mandate, strengths and expertise in the area of financial support to grass-root, community based organisations, small scale media outlets, bloggers,

---

<sup>8</sup> Annex to the Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions - A credible enlargement perspective for and enhanced eu engagement with the western Balkans, Strasbourg, 6.2.2018 COM(2018) 65 final

<sup>9</sup> Joint Communication to the European Parliament, the European Council, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions - Tackling COVID-19 disinformation - Getting the facts right, Brussels, 10.6.2020, JOIN(2020) 8 final

independent media, activists and emerging actors. The direct grant is in accordance with Article 195 (1) (f) of the 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, i.e. *“for activities with specific characteristics that require a particular type of body on account of its technical competence, its high degree of specialisation or its administrative powers, on condition that the activities concerned do not fall within the scope of a call for proposals”*.

The recourse to the award of a grant without a call for proposals is justified because EED is a body uniquely positioned to respond to the highly specific characteristics of this activity. EED was set up specifically to provide financial support to pro-democratic movements and other pro-democratic actors in favour of a pluralistic multiparty system on democratic ground; social movements and actors; civil society organisations; young leaders; independent media and journalists (including bloggers, social media activists, etc), non-governmental institutions, including foundations and educational institutions functioning also in exile; provided that all the beneficiaries adhere to core democratic values, and human rights as well as subscribe to principles of non-violence. EED is specialised in supporting those among the above stakeholders that have difficulties benefitting from assistance through traditional funding channels due to their size, legal status (e.g. non-registered entities or individuals), geopolitical context (e.g. civil war situation), and particular needs etc. Furthermore, EED offers a unique credibility when carrying out these activities, due to the formal backing it enjoys from a broad European constituency. Launched through a Council Declaration, EED has a distinctive institutional set-up, being steered and monitored by representatives of the European Parliament, the EU Member States, the European External Action Service and the civil society of the region.

This, along with its experience and already established network in the region, allows EED to deliver the needed support to the target beneficiaries, including in sensitive situations, and justifies the direct award. This unique position was recognised by the European Commission in its Action Plan in Support of the Transformation of the Western Balkans<sup>10</sup> and in the Joint Communication of the Commission and High Representative on tackling disinformation<sup>11</sup>. EED’s good track-record, also confirmed during a 2019 ROM report, with efficient award procedures (that are compliant with the general principles applicable to the use of public funds) and with a standing good reputation, makes it an adequate vehicle for providing financial support to local beneficiaries at a micro- or mini-scale, allowing beneficiaries such as non-registered associations, political movements, individual activists, bloggers etc. to benefit from the donors community funding where this would not be possible through more traditional funding channels.

---

<sup>10</sup> Annex to the Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions - A credible enlargement perspective for and enhanced eu engagement with the western Balkans, Strasbourg, 6.2.2018 COM(2018) 65 final

<sup>11</sup> Joint Communication to the European Parliament, the European Council, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions - Tackling COVID-19 disinformation - Getting the facts right, Brussels, 10.6.2020, JOIN(2020) 8 final

- ***Direct award to the Western Balkans Fund (WBF)***

a) Purpose of the grant:

The grant will contribute to the following results:

- Small CSOs in the Western Balkans participate in regional cooperation projects on social, cultural, scientific, and economic topics, including with a gender dimension.
- IPA beneficiaries stay engaged in the promotion of regional cooperation.

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 WBF.

The recourse to an award of a grant without a call for proposals is justified in accordance with Article 195 (1) (f) of the Financial Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046. The direct award of grant to the WBF is justified by its unique combination of ownership by all the Western Balkans IPA beneficiaries; its mandate to promote regional cooperation; and its focus on providing financial support to grass-roots CSOs and local public authorities.

The establishment of the WBF is considered as a clear sign of a new cooperation spirit taking roots in the Western Balkans at the highest institutional level. The Agreement for the creation of WBF was indeed signed by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of all the Western Balkans IPA beneficiaries in November 2015 and the WBF became operational in October 2017, after the conclusion of the ratification procedures by the Parliaments of all its constitutive members.

The WBF aims to promote cooperation and common values between local authorities, citizens, and civil society organisations and people to people contacts, by providing funding for small-sized regional projects among local authorities and civil society organisations, in the following key areas: 1) sustainable economic development; 2) education exchange and cooperation and 3) cultural cooperation.

Youth, cross-border cooperation, European integration and gender, are overarching issues, covering all WBF areas of cooperation.

The regional and small-size nature of projects funded by the WBF make its activities complementary to the bigger-sized regional projects normally financed by the EU in the Western Balkans for civil society organisations and local authorities. Thus, it would make grass-roots organisations and local authorities directly benefitting from EU support and the IPA beneficiaries stay further engaged in the conducive environment for civil society and regional cooperation.

The WBF possesses the necessary technical competence and the capacity to conduct the proposed calls for proposals due to its previous documented activities.

- ***Direct award to Roma entrepreneurship in the Western Balkans and Turkey (REDI)***

- a) Purpose of the grant:

The activities will help reach the following results:

- The barriers faced by Roma female and male entrepreneurs and job seekers in accessing funding, jobs and active market labour market measures are better understood.
- The business capacities of male and female Roma entrepreneurs is enhanced
- The capacities of financial institutions and governments agencies to serve Roma entrepreneurs is increased

- 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 Roma Entrepreneurship Development Initiative - REDI.

The recourse to an award of a grant without a call for proposals is justified because of the organisation's experience and specialisation; its capacity to reach both Roma entrepreneurs and financial intermediaries; as well as its ownership of a specific financing instrument (i.e. REDI Fund), for which it has mobilised resources from key social financing institution such as the Council of Europe Development Bank. For these reasons the beneficiary will be awarded a direct grant in accordance with Article 195 (1) f) of the Financial Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046.

- ***Direct grant award to Roma Active Albania for implementation of the 4<sup>th</sup> Roma Inclusion Award in the Western Balkans and Turkey***

- a) Purpose of the grant:

The grant will be achieving the result: *“The Fourth Edition of the EU Roma Integration Award is implemented, drawing attention to activities that contribute to Roma employment”*.

- 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 Roma Active Albania.

The recourse to an award of a grant without a call for proposals is justified because of the organisation's experience and in particular its demonstrated capacity to liaise with the local settlement level, ensuring meaningful and representative nominations, as well as to efficiently organise such an award scheme (as exemplified for example by 2018 and 2019 successful friendly Roma major awards as well as the 2019 EU Roma Integration Award). This network has a special position to reach the wide range of stakeholders targeted by the 4<sup>th</sup>

award, i.e. entrepreneurs, public authorities and Roma citizens and CSOs, and is able to cover all the enlargement region at local and central level. The effective nominations of candidates at local level will require an implementing body that understands the context and sensitivities, and that has regional overview of the theme of the award. This is the case for the Roma CSO network represented by Roma Active Albania. For these reasons the beneficiary will be awarded a direct grant in accordance with Article 195 (1) f) of the Financial Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046.

c) Exception to the non-retroactivity of costs:

The Commission authorises that the costs incurred may be recognised as eligible as of 10 July 2020. This is necessary in order to ensure that the prizes can be awarded in time for the Roma Week planned to take place in Brussels in March/April 2021.

**Fall back option to the indirect management with an EU Member State Organisation above: Call for proposals: Support for the economic sustainability of independent media**

a) Purpose of the grant:

This activity will assist the IPA beneficiaries in achieving media freedom and pluralism through support for the economic sustainability of independent media. Specifically, the activities will help reach the following results:

- Media outlets have an improved economic performance and audience reach
- Media outlets have improved capacities to counter disinformation and "fake news"
- Media outlets have improved conditions for quality investigative journalism

b) Type of applicants targeted:

In order to be eligible the main applicants must:

- be a legal person;
- be non-profit-making;
- be a civil society organisation, or a consortium of civil society organisations;
- be legally established in one of the IPA II beneficiaries or one of the EU member states; and
- be active in, or group CSOs or media organisations from at least five of the seven IPA II beneficiaries.

The **global** budgetary envelope reserved for grants is: EUR 12 150 000

***(4) Scope of geographical eligibility for procurement and grants***

The geographical eligibility in terms of place of establishment for participating in procurement and grant award procedures and in terms of origin of supplies purchased as

established in the basic act and set out in the relevant contractual documents shall apply, subject to the following provisions.

The Commission's authorising officer responsible may extend the geographical eligibility on the basis of urgency or of unavailability of 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.

<b>Action 2</b>	<b>CSF and media Albania 2020</b>	<b>EUR 2 000 000</b>
-----------------	-----------------------------------	----------------------

*(1) Description of the Action, objective, expected results and key performance indicators*

- Description of the action and objectives

The **CSF and media Programme 2020 for Albania** is composed of two main components:

1. Support to the existence of a National Resource Centre for civil society in Albania (NRC), as a platform for civil society at the local, national and regional level.
2. Support to already existing and developing new models of social entrepreneurship, as well as increasing and strengthening the use of social enterprises and models as an effective tool to provide opportunities, skills and support to victims of organised crime, domestic violence, substance abuse and delinquency.

The specific objective is to enhance CSOs capacities to effectively engage in the decision-making process and to support the development of innovative social entrepreneurship models integrate victims of organised crime, domestic violence, people with disabilities, substance abuse and youth delinquency.

- Expected results and key performance indicators

The expected results are:

- A National Resource Centre for the civil society enabled to assist civil society to develop capacities and become more effective, transparent, accountable and independent actors as well as to participate to the creation of an enabling environment for the civil society.
- Developed existing and new models of social entrepreneurship and increased use of confiscated assets to develop social enterprises or projects that foster social inclusion.

The key performance indicators are:

- Percentage of laws/ bylaws/ policies/ budgets/ programmes at local and national level consulted with CSOs in terms of - adequate access to information, - sufficient time to comment, acknowledgement of input,

Degree to which input is taken into account, Feedback on consultation process.

- Number of new social enterprises and projects established.
- Number of victims of gender based violence, and disadvantaged people, sex disaggregated, in need reached by trainings, employment opportunities in social enterprises and exchanges of opportunities.

## ***(2) Assumptions and conditions***

An important condition for the proper advancement of the action is the presence of political commitment from the government of Albania, as well as dedicated resources, towards an enabling environment for civil society. This includes an effective implementation of the recently revised roadmap for CSOs environment through adequate funding, improvement of legal and fiscal framework, but also proper coordination, communication and monitoring of the implementation. In this respect, the role of the National Council for Civil Society (NCCS) is crucial and its effective functioning should be ensured through the necessary legal and structural changes.

The National Council for European Integration will also play an important role in advising the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs on EU integration matters.

Another condition for the successful implementation of the action is the creation of a satisfactory fiscal framework and a favourable tax regime for CSOs. Some developments took place in the legal and regulatory framework of the relevant tax regime for CSOs, which aim to improve the VAT reimbursement situation for CSO beneficiaries of IPA grants.

With regards to the regulatory framework for the re-use of confiscated assets, there is a need for enhancing the efficacy and legal certainty within the asset management legislation and regulation of Albania. As such, all courts and prosecutors should benefit from the services that the Agency for the Administration of Seized and Confiscated Assets (AAPSK) can provide, with a view to ensuring the best possible management of seized and confiscated assets. For this reason alone, consideration should be given to establish specific legislation on AAPSK. Such legislative act would strengthen the mission of AAPSK and precise its mandate in management of assets in Albania. Due to recent changes to the legislation the AAPSK falls now under responsibility of the Ministry of Interior and no longer the Ministry of Finance and Economy. A clear involvement of the latter however has to be ensured.

Failure to comply with the requirements set out 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:**

- ***Financial support to social entrepreneurship***

#### a) **Purpose of the grants:**

The overall purpose of the grant is to support the achievement of the following result: developed existing and new models of social entrepreneurship and increased use of confiscated assets to develop social enterprises or projects that foster social inclusion.

b) Type of applicants targeted:

- be legal persons
- be non-profit-making
- be a civil society organisation, or a consortium of civil society organisations<sup>12</sup>.
- be legally established in Albania, or in a Member State of the European Union, or in another IPA beneficiary or in one of the members of the European Economic Area.

• ***Support to a National Resource Centre for CSOs in Albania***

a) Purpose of the grants:

This overall purpose of the grant is to achieve the following result: support to the existence of a National Resource Centre for civil society in Albania (NRC), as a platform for civil society at the local, national and regional level

b) Type of applicants targeted:

- be legal persons
- be non-profit-making
- be a civil society organisation, or a consortium of civil society organisations<sup>13</sup>.
- be legally established in Albania, or in a Member State of the European Union, or in another IPA II beneficiary or in one of the members of the European Economic Area.

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

***(4) Scope of geographical eligibility for procurement and grants***

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

The Commission's authorising officer responsible may extend the geographical eligibility on the basis of urgency or of unavailability of products and services in the

---

12 In case a consortium is formed one organizationorganisation shall be appointed as lead organizationorganisation and assume all rights and responsibilities on behalf of the consortium. A consortium should have a maximum of five members, including the lead organizationorganisation, and must be based in the beneficiary concerned.

13 In case a consortium is formed one organizationorganisation shall be appointed as lead organizationorganisation and assume all rights and responsibilities on behalf of the consortium. A consortium should have a maximum of five members, including the lead organizationorganisation, and must be based in the beneficiary concerned.

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.

<b>Action 3</b>	<b>CSF and media Kosovo 2020</b>	<b>EUR 1 300 000</b>
-----------------	----------------------------------	----------------------

*(1) Description of the Action, objective, expected results and key performance indicators*

- Description of the Action and objective

The **CSF and media Programme for Kosovo 2020** is composed by two main components:

1. Continued support to strategic plans of civil society partners previously identified through the call for proposals, within the Framework Partnerships under the Civil Society Facility and Media Programme 2018- 2019. The assistance will support organisations' annual work plans contributing to advance key sector reforms. The partners selected in 2019 need to demonstrate that they continue to possess adequate experience, internal quality standards and clear relations with their constituencies.
2. Boosting the enabling environment for civil activism, volunteering and dialogue between the authorities and civil society at local (municipal) level. This component will be pursued through:
  - a. support to local Non-Governmental Organisations- NGOs for programs promoting volunteering, youth civic activism and democratic participation especially of young citizens and persons with disabilities particularly at local/municipal level;
  - b. support to local democracy via the regional project RELOAD phase II, involving at least 10 municipalities (in addition to the 5 municipalities supported during the first phase).

The specific objective is strengthening an enabling (legal, policy and financial) environment which supports the sustainability of CSOs as capable, transparent and independent actors who are accountable to citizens and, their members/constituencies/beneficiaries.

- Expected results and key performance indicators

The expected results are:

- Government institutions and civil society cooperating for the effective implementation of the 'enabling environment' for CSOs, and partnerships and cooperation between civil society and public institutions, especially at the grass-roots/local level, for development and execution of public policies.
- Strengthened capacities of civil society, promoting the role of competent, transparent, effective and accountable actors.

The key performance indicators are:

- Percentage of laws/bylaws, strategies and policy reforms effectively consulted with CSOs.
- Increase of individual and corporate donations to CSOs on annual basis
- Share of CSOs which have developed code of conduct, strategic plans and evaluate the results and impact of their work
- Percentage of CSOs making their (audited) financial accounts and annual reports publicly available

(2) *Assumptions and conditions*

Conditions for implementation include that the political and policy environment continues to enable civil society engagement in policymaking and further development of the civil society sector, including at municipal level. This will be monitored by the European Union, in close collaboration with civil society. Failure to comply with the requirements set out 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

- *Operating grants to support the annual work programmes of Framework Partnership Agreements (FPAs) concluded in 2019*

a) Purpose of the grants: operating grants to support the annual work programmes of Framework Partnership Agreements (FPAs) concluded in 2019 following a call for proposals (publication reference: EuropeAid/162866/DD/FPA/XK). This call will contribute to achieving the results 1 and 2: “*Government institutions and civil society cooperating for the effective implementation of the ‘enabling environment’ for CSOs*”, and “*Strengthened capacities of civil society, promoting the role of competent, transparent, effective actors that are accountable*”.

b) Type of applicants targeted:

- be a legal person; and
- be non-profit-making; and
- be a civil society organisation selected under the Call for Proposals for Framework Partnership Agreements and associated annual operating grants concluded in 2019 with publication reference: EuropeAid/162866/DD/FPA/XK

- Action grants

a) Purpose of the grants: the action grants will contribute to achieving result 1 “*Government institutions and civil society cooperating for the effective*

*implementation of the ‘enabling environment’ for CSOs” and result 2 “Strengthened capacities of civil society, promoting the role of competent, transparent, effective actors that are accountable”.*

b) Type of applicants targeted:

- be a legal person; and
- be non-profit-making; and
- be a civil society organisations established in a Member State of the European Union or in an IPA II beneficiary and registered in Kosovo.
- Lead applicants that have signed grant contract/s with the European Commission awarded under the below listed Calls for Proposals will not be eligible to apply:

○ Under Civil Society Facility (CSF)

EuropeAid/136-997/DD/ACT/XK; EuropeAid/136998/DD/ACT/XK;  
EuropeAid/137409/DD/OPR/XK; EuropeAid/153677/DD/ACT/XK;  
EuropeAid/154262/DD/ACT/XK; EuropeAid/155452/DD/ACT/XK;  
EuropeAid/159883/DH/ACT/XK; EuropeAid/163207/DD/ACT/XK;  
EuropeAid/163207/DD/ACT/XK

○ Under the European Instrument for Human Rights (EIDHR)

EuropeAid/135846/DD/ACT/XK;  
EuropeAid/151426/DD/ACT/XK;  
EuropeAid/163064/DD/ACT/XK

In addition, any other CSF or EIDHR call launched in 2020.

The **global** budgetary envelope reserved for grants: EUR 1,300,000

**(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.

<b>Action 4</b>	<b>CSF and media Montenegro 2020</b>	<b>EUR 800 000</b>
-----------------	--------------------------------------	--------------------

*(1) Description of the Action, objectives, expected results and key performance indicators*

- Description of the action and objectives

The **CSF and media Programme 2020 for Montenegro** will focus on building the capacity of CSOs to be professional, credible, effective and accountable independent actors that can contribute to the establishment of innovative approaches to the recovery of the post-COVID-19 pandemics in Montenegro. In particular, the Programme is structured along the following components:

1. Enhancing civil society participation at the public decision making process and in providing social services, by promoting innovative targeting to the most disadvantageous groups particularly affected in the post COVID-19 situation.
2. Supporting independent media and journalists.
3. Enhancing local democracy in at least 10 municipalities in Montenegro and transparency of the use of public funds in accordance with the Regulation on public funds to NGOs<sup>14</sup> adopted in 2017, via the regional project RELOAD Phase II.

The specific objective is to build the capacity of CSOs to be professional, credible and accountable to citizens operating in an enabling (legal, policy and financial) environment which supports sustainability of CSOs.

- Expected results and key performance indicators

The expected result of the Programme is strengthened capacities and promoted role of competent, transparent, effective and accountable civil society actors in providing social services and promoting innovative approaches to the most disadvantageous groups, including youth and persons with disabilities.

The key performance indicators are:

- Number of CSO involved in provision of social services, social entrepreneurship and actions targeting the most vulnerable (including youth).
- 1% increase of individual and corporate donations to CSOs on annual basis.

---

<sup>14</sup> Government Regulation Number 04/2017

## ***(2) Assumptions and conditions***

Conditions for implementation include that the political and policy environment continues to enable civil society engagement in policymaking and further development of the civil society sector, including at municipal level. This will be monitored by the European Union, in close collaboration with civil society.

Failure to comply with the requirements set out 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 achieving the specific objective of the Programme: *“to build the capacity of CSOs to be professional, credible and accountable to citizens operating in an enabling (legal, policy and financial) environment which supports sustainability of CSOs”* .

b) Type of applicants targeted:

- be a legal person; and
- be non-profit-making; and
- be a civil society organisations established in a Member State of the European Union or in an IPA II beneficiary and registered in Montenegro.

The **global** budgetary envelope reserved for grants: EUR 800,000

## ***(4) Scope of geographical eligibility for procurement and grants***

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

The Commission’s authorising officer responsible may extend the geographical eligibility on the basis of urgency or of unavailability of 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.

<b>Action 5</b>	<b>CSF and media North Macedonia 2020</b>	<b>EUR 2 000 000</b>
-----------------	---	----------------------

**(1) Description of the Action, objectives, expected results and key performance indicators**

- Description of the action and objectives

The **Civil Society Facility and Media Programme 2020 for North Macedonia** builds on and complements the achievements of the previous programmes. It is composed by the following components:

1. Signing Framework Partnership Agreements and supporting strategic plans of civil society partners already identified through the call for proposal for operating grants Europe Aid/164650/DD/OPR/MK, under the Civil Society Facility and Media Programme 2018-2019.
2. Contributing to the advancement of an enabling environment for youth civic activism and volunteering and state-civil society dialogue at local (municipal) level. This component will be pursued through:
  - a) Supporting youth civic activism and democratic participation at local level, by promoting innovations and prosperity in the local community; resilience and greening; and ensuring citizens and social inclusiveness with a special emphasis on job creation.
  - b) Enhancing local democracy via the regional project RELOAD phase II and improving transparency in the use of public funds.

The specific objectives are: i) to enhance civil society capacity and contribution to address the community based needs and challenges involving women and young people as well as persons with disabilities; ii) efficient CSOs are able to define specific objectives and reach them out through an active participation and contribution to the policy/decision making process, and iii) to strengthen capable, transparent and accountable CSOs.

- Expected results and key performance indicators

The expected results are:

- Improved operational and financial capacity of CSOs to deliver services to citizens.
- Strengthened capacities of civil society to engage young people and use volunteerism in addressing the needs of the local communities.
- CSOs activities are guided by strategic long term organisational planning.

- CSOs assess their programme activities and financial management and on a regular basis communicate the results of their activities to their local communities and public in general.

The main key performance indicators are:

- Share of CSOs which have developed strategic plans and gender equality plans including human resources development activities in order to attract and retain talent.
- Share of CSOs that monitor and evaluate the implementation of their strategies and make this information publicly available/accessible
- Percentage of CSOs making their (audited) financial accounts and annual reports publicly available

## **(2) *Assumptions and conditions***

Conditions for implementation include that the political and policy environment continues to enable civil society engagement in policymaking and further development of the civil society sector, including at municipal level. This will be monitored by the European Union, in close collaboration with civil society.

Failure to comply with the requirements set out 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**

- ***Framework Partnership Agreement for further operating support for CSOs***
  - a) **Purpose of the grants:** Launching a call for proposals for civil society organisations to establish a framework partnership with the EU through a Framework Partnership Agreement (FPA). The successful beneficiaries of FPAs, will be invited to submit grant applications in the second stage of the call and, after the evaluation, may be awarded with an annual operating grant. Signature of an FPA does not guarantee that the beneficiary will be awarded a grant.

The confirmed annual operating grants (1<sup>st</sup> year) will support the functioning of the selected civil society organisations to implement their core activities against an agreed work-plan for 2021 year, with a main objective of having a positive impact on the lives of citizens and ensuring their active involvement in the sector reforms. This activity will equally support Output 1 ' *Improved operational and financial capacity of CSOs to deliver services to citizens*', Output 3 ' *CSOs activities are guided by the strategic long term organisational planning* and Output 4 *CSOs assess their programme activities and financial management and on a regular basis communicate the results of their activities to their local communities and public in general* ' stated in the Action Document for the 2020 programme for the country.

b) Type of applicants targeted:

- Civil society organisations established in North Macedonia, registered at least two years before the date of publication of the call for FPA and associate annual operating grants.

- ***Support to civic youth initiatives***

a) Purpose of the grants:

Action grants to support civic youth initiatives in the local communities for: 1) supporting youth innovations and prosperity; 2) improving resilience and greening; and 3) ensuring social inclusiveness and job creation. Such support to CSOs would enable young people to actively contribute to good governance, and to propose and implement forms of innovative civic activism and volunteering for addressing specific needs and problems of the citizens in their local communities.

This activity contributes to increase the inclusiveness and impact of young citizens' and their impact to the democratic life of the society on local level. The activity includes raise awareness for the opportunities and values of using volunteering in addressing the needs in the local communities. This activity will equally support Output 1 ' Improved operational and financial capacity of CSOs to deliver services to citizens' and Output 2 ' Strengthened capacities of civil society to engage young people and use volunteerism in addressing the needs of the local communities' listed in the Action Document for the 2020 programme for the country.

b) Type of applicants targeted:

For the Lead applicant

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

- be a legal person and
- be non-profit-making and
- be a non-governmental organisation and
- be established in North Macedonia at least two (2) years before this call is launched and
- be directly responsible for the preparation and management of the action with the co-applicant(s) and affiliated entity(ies), not acting as an intermediary, and

For the Co-applicant(s)

In order to be eligible for a grant, the co- applicant(s) must:

- satisfy the eligibility criteria as applicable to the lead applicant.
- In addition to the criteria applicable to the lead applicant, co-applicants/affiliated entity (ies) may be also established in Member State of the European Union or IPA II beneficiary countries, registered at least two years before the date of publication of the call.

The **global** budgetary envelope reserved for these grants is: EUR 2,000,000

**(4) *Scope of geographical eligibility for grants***

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

The Commission's authorising officer responsible may extend the geographical eligibility based on 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.

<b>Action 6</b>	<b>CSF and media Serbia 2020</b>	<b>EUR 2 500 000</b>
-----------------	----------------------------------	----------------------

**(1) Description of the Action, objectives, expected results and key performance indicators**

- Description of the action and objectives

The **CSF and Media Programme 2020 for Serbia** will continue focusing on building the capacities and effectiveness of Serbian CSOs to address reform processes in areas relevant to i) environmental protection, ii) socio-economic development and iii) foreign, security and defence policies including related rule of law matters by:

- supporting capacity of civil society to contribute to policy-making including analysis, research and dialogue through long term grants,
- Providing financial support to third parties in order to reach the local grassroots level and small to medium size civil society organisations in the field of environment.

In the area of support to independent media, the Programme will provide grants aimed at strengthening capacities for the further development of quality journalism in Serbia including to strengthen operational viability and modernisation capacity in innovative digital formats on issues of public interest such as (but not limited to) rule of law, social inclusion, the EU integration process.

The specific objectives are:

- supporting Serbian CSOs to contribute and to monitor reform processes and EU integration process in the field of environment, socio-economic development and foreign, security and defence policies, as well as cooperation between local governments and CSOs;
  - strengthening business development and operational viability of independent media and increase media plurality in Serbia to reach wider audiences via quality productions.
- Expected results and key performance indicators

The expected results are:

- Public institutions recognise the importance of CSOs in improving good governance through CSO inclusion in decision-making processes (public consultation, etc.)
- Increased capacities and advocacy role of the Serbian CSOs to address reform processes and EU integration process in the field of environment, climate change, energy transition socio-economic development.
- Quality of water, air, reduction of GHG emissions, improvement in biodiversity, better circularity of the economy, climate actions is effective.
- Increased awareness and dialogue in the field of foreign, security and defence policies of Serbia in the context of EU accession.
- Cooperation between local governments and CSOs improved with further transparency achieved.
- Increased capacities for media operational viability and high quality journalism on issues of public interest in Serbia.

The key performance indicators are:

- Quality of structures and mechanisms in place for dialogue and cooperation between CSOs and public institutions.
- Increased capacities of the Serbian CSOs to address reform processes and EU integration process.
- Capacity of media increased in terms of operational viability and modernisation as well as enhanced capacities for quality productions.

## ***(2) Assumptions and conditions***

Conditions for implementation include that the political and policy environment continues to enable civil society engagement in policymaking and further development of the civil society sector, including at municipal level. This will be monitored by the European Union, in close collaboration with civil society.

## ***(3) Implementation modalities***

### **Direct management (project approach):**

#### **Grants**

- ***Support to Civil Society capacities***

- a) Purpose of the grants: this activity will contribute to achieving the specific objective 1 of this Action: “support Serbian CSOs to contribute and to monitor reform processes and EU integration process in the field of environment , socio-

economic development and foreign, security and defence policies, as well as cooperation between local governments and CSOs”.

The Call for Proposals will include two lots:

Lot 1: The programme aims at supporting Serbian CSOs to contribute to and monitor reform processes in areas relevant to environment, socio-economic development and foreign, security and defence policies with the possibility of providing financial support if deemed necessary at the time of launching the Call.

Lot 2: The programme aims at supporting grassroots organisations in Serbia mainly through providing financial support to third parties in areas relevant to environment and socio-economic development.

b) Type of applicants targeted:

- be legal persons; and
- non-profit making; and
- a) For LOT 1 - be a civil society organisation established in Serbia
- b) For LOT 2 – be a civil society organisation established in Serbia or a Member State of the European Union or in an IPA II beneficiary.

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

***(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 be subject to the following provision.

In accordance with Article 10(2) of Regulation (EU) No 236/2014 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.

<b>Action 7</b>	<b>CSF and media Turkey 2020</b>	<b>EUR 22 000 000</b>
-----------------	----------------------------------	-----------------------

**(1) Description of the Action, objectives, expected results and key performance indicators**

- Description of the action and objectives

The **CSF and Media Programme 2020 for Turkey** is in line with the Enlargement Strategy "*A credible enlargement perspective for and enhanced EU engagement with the Western Balkans*"<sup>15</sup> and addresses the objectives of the **IPA II Indicative Strategy Paper for Turkey** (IPA II Strategy Paper) under the Civil Society Sub-sector which are to (i) support the development of civil society through more active democratic participation in policy and decision making processes; (ii) promote a culture of fundamental rights and dialogue; (iii) enhance civil society dialogue and inter-cultural exchanges between civil societies in Turkey and Europe.

The action also covers several of the actions pre-defined for financing under the IPA II Strategy Paper:

1. Strengthening the capacity of and networking between organised active citizens / CSOs, to improve outreach, governance, and institutional capacities, such as advocacy, administrative skills, and fundraising skills.
2. Protecting and promoting fundamental rights and fighting against all forms of discrimination in society (e.g. protecting the rights of women, children, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI), people with disabilities and vulnerable groups in the country), as well as supporting key areas of EU integration and other areas of particular relevance for the inclusive development of Turkish democracy.
3. Connecting people to improve mutual understanding between citizens in Turkey and the EU, including encouraging exchanges at local level.

The specific objectives are: i) empowering active citizenship and strengthening civil society for the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms; ii) enhancing the awareness of CSOs and other stakeholders on the principles of Business and Human Rights (BHR) and potential activities in this area.

- Expected results and key performance indicators

The main expected results are:

- Citizens and CSOs have increased capacity to carry out rights-based actions, to demand more accountability and responsiveness from public authorities
- CSOs and other stakeholders increased their knowledge of BHR
- Improved independent media watchdog capacities

The key performance indicators are:

---

<sup>15</sup> COM(2018) 65 final. Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: A credible enlargement perspective for and enhanced EU engagement with the Western Balkans

- Number of active citizens supported, sex disaggregated data, in their right-based activities
- Number of rights based projects and gender mainstreamed project supported
- Number of CSOs and other stakeholders trained on BHR related activities
- Number of capacity-building supports provided of improve media pluralism

## ***(2) Assumptions and conditions***

Support for the objectives of the action from Turkish authorities is essential. This should be reflected by the fact that (i) the bulk of the target groups of the action should be able to operate independently and (ii) the overall social and political context at the time of implementation of activities should not further deteriorate.

## ***(3) Implementation modalities:***

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

#### **Procurement:**

1. *Activity 1, Sivil Düşün V Support mechanism for civil society organisations and activists:* this activity will contribute to achieving Result 1 (Citizens and CSOs increased their capacity to carry out rights-based actions, demanded more accountability and responsiveness from public authorities) and 2 (CSOs and other stakeholders increased their knowledge of Business HR) of this Action as it will increase the capacity of citizens and civil society organisations to carry out rights-based actions.
2. *Activity 3, ETKINIZ II Support to Monitoring the Human Rights situation in Turkey:* this activity will contribute to achieving Result 1 of this Action as it will increase the capacity of civil society organisations and networks to carry out rights-based actions and to monitor the human rights situation in Turkey.
3. *Activity 7, Technical assistance:* this activity will contribute to achieving the Specific Objectives of this Action as it will be used to support the assessment of calls for proposals, monitoring of on-going grants (including financial support to third parties), evaluation of activities, organisation of training and information days and production of communication materials.

The global budgetary envelope reserved for procurement is: EUR 10 300 000.

#### **Grants:**

- ***Supporting core functions of CSOs***

##### **a) Purpose of the grants:**

This activity will contribute to achieving Output 1 of this Action as it will support the core functions of right-based grassroots/local CSOs based in Turkey through financial support to third parties. This support will allow beneficiary organisations

to operate independently and to sustain their operations while being organisationally and institutionally strengthened. It will also allow beneficiary organisations to implement their own strategic plans and to carry out a wide range of activities in thematic areas such as human rights, women's rights, refugee rights, LGBTI rights, rights of children, rights of disabled persons, rights of youth, environment, nature protection and animal rights, right to the city, digital and cultural rights. Finally, this support will strengthen the CSO's internal governance and accountability towards citizens. The call will have 2 to 4 lots, all including financial support to third parties.

b) Type of applicants targeted:

- be legal persons and
- be non-profit-making and
- be CSOs established in one of the following eligible countries/territories/beneficiaries: EU Member States, Beneficiaries of the IPA II, European Economic Area.

• ***Business and Human Rights***

a) Purpose of the grant:

The grant will promote the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGP) and sustainable business conduct in Turkey by building the capacity of CSOs on the topic. It will include analysis of existing situation, awareness raising activities, capacity building for relevant stakeholders and pilot activities such as monitoring companies' human rights diligence. This activity will contribute to achieving Output 2: CSOs and other stakeholders increased their knowledge of Business and Human Rights (BHR).

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 Business and Human Rights Resource Centre (BHRRC).

The area of BHR is relatively new in general and unknown in Turkey. Therefore, this action will be a pilot action to research and promote BHR and UNGP in Turkey. It is the first time that such an activity is being implemented in Turkey.

The recourse to an award of a grant without a call for proposals is justified because of the area of highly specialised technical competence of the implementing partner (Article 195 f of the Financial Regulation):

Business and Human Rights Resource Centre (BHRRC) is the most prominent international non-profit organisation dedicated to advancing human rights in business and eradicating abuse in the private sector. BHRRC is the only NGO focussing on the civil society side of BHR by empowering human rights advocates in civil society, business, and governments to act to prevent and remedy human rights abuse by companies, and promoting bold leadership for human rights in business. BHRRC has published several BHR related surveys for Turkey and maintains expert knowledge of local contexts through its team of researchers and consultants made up of human rights, development and environmental advocates, academics, and former business people.

The type of activities to be implemented under this action can only be carried out by a highly specialised organisation, already experienced in similar interventions.

- ***Monitoring of Freedom of Association***

- a) Purpose of the grant:

It will contribute to achieving Result 1 of this Action as it strengthens the capacity of the organised civil society (CSOs, informal initiatives, and active citizens) in Turkey to exercise the freedom of association and to defend more inclusive political decision-making processes.

- 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 a consortium consisting of two CSOs, namely STGM and TÜSEV.

The recourse to an award of a grant without a call for proposals is justified because of the highly specialised technical competence of the two CSOs in the area of civil society development and civil society-public relations (Article 195f of the Financial Regulation):

**Third Sector Foundation of Turkey (TÜSEV):** TÜSEV is one of the most prominent organisations in the field of research on civil society, legal environment and philanthropy. TÜSEV has greatly contributed to generating research and policies for the civil society environment, and to encouraging dialogue and cooperation among private, public and civil society actors. TÜSEV will implement the legal framework analysis component and the monitoring studies of the legislation's implementation.

**Civil Society Development Centre (STGM):** STGM is the leading organisation in terms of capacity-building for CSOs and promotion of participatory democracy since its establishment in 2004. STGM is highly experienced in providing capacity-building services and technical assistance to national and local CSOs in Turkey.

STGM will implement the capacity-building component.

In the context of Turkey where civil society is under continued pressure and freedom of association is being further restricted by recent amendments of the legislation, it is paramount to have this activity implemented by trusted and experienced entities that can effectively work in full cooperation and complementarity. In line with FR Article 195 (f), the consortium formed by TÜSEV and STGM is the only combination that would allow the implementation of all foreseen project activities with the requested level of expertise.

- ***Support to freedom of expression through enabling media pluralism***

This Activity has two components: a) "Media for Democracy/Democracy for Media" and b) "Organised Journalists and Strong Solidarity for Press Freedom", concurring in the purpose of supporting freedom of expression through enabling media pluralism. This activity will be a follow-up of a previous action funded under the CSF 2016-17 with the same implementation modality. Activity 6 will contribute to achieving Output 3: Improved independent media watchdog

- a) Purpose of the grant:

Component a): “Media for Democracy/Democracy for Media” will contribute to supporting freedom of expression through enabling media pluralism.

b) Direct grant award

Under the responsibility of the Commission’s authorising officer responsible and upon positive assessment of the ongoing contracts with the Journalists’ Association-Gazeteciler Cemiyeti (GC) a direct grant will be awarded to GC.

GC is specialised in monitoring and reporting on the enabling environment for media in Turkey; international and national advocacy and lobby; management of the Press House in Ankara and delivering financial support to third parties. In line with FR Article 195 (f), GC has been identified as the only organisation that has specialised technical capacities to carry out the foreseen activities in particular as regards the management of the Press House and financial support to journalists.

Risks associated with media-related professions range from imprisonment to intimidation and physical attacks, with unemployment in the sector reaching the highest level. Considering the risks involved, the activity can only be implemented by means of direct award.

a) Purpose of the grant:

Component b) “Organised Journalists and Strong Solidarity for Press Freedom” will contribute to supporting freedom of expression through enabling media pluralism.

b) Direct award:

Under the responsibility of the Commission’s authorising officer responsible and upon positive assessment of the ongoing contract with the Turkish Journalists Union – Türkiye Gazeteciler Sendikası (TGS) a direct grant will be awarded to TGS.

TGS provides support in legal aid, support for strategic litigation, trial monitoring for journalists' cases, visits to journalists in prisons, occupational rights trainings. In line with FR Article 195 (f), TGS, being a trade union, is the only organisation that can provide the type of support foreseen by the activity in Turkey, in particular as regards awareness raising and legal support on occupational rights of journalists.

Risks associated with media-related professions range from imprisonment to intimidation and physical attacks, with unemployment in the sector reaching the highest level. Considering the risks involved, the activity can only be implemented by means of direct award.

The **global** budgetary envelope reserved for grants: EUR 11 700 000.

**(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 be subject to the following provisions.

In accordance with Article 10(2) of Regulation (EU) No 236/2014 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.

## 2 BUDGET

### 1.3 INDICATIVE BUDGET TABLE – MULTI COUNTRY ACTION PROGRAMME

	Method of implementation		Entrusted entity (if known)	Total EU contribution (EUR)	Other third party contribution (EUR)	TOTALS (EUR)
	Direct management	Indirect management with entrusted entity				
	EU contribution (EUR)	EU contribution (EUR)				
Action 1 CSF and media multi-country 2020	12 150 000	26 350 000	UNDP; ECDC;WHO	38 500 000	1 591 111	40 091 111
Action 2 CSF and media Albania 2020	2 000 000			2 000 000	125 000	2 125 000
Action 3 CSF and media Kosovo 2020	1 300 000			1 300 000		1 300 000
Action 4 CSF and media Montenegro 2020	800 000			800 000	40 000	840 000
Action 5 CSF and media North Macedonia 2020	2 000 000			2 000 000	200 000	2 200 000
Action 6 CSF and media Serbia 2020	2 500 000			2 500 000	131 579	2 631 579
Action 7 CSF and media Turkey 2020	22 000 000			22 000 000		22 000 000
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>42 750 000</b>	<b>26 350 000</b>		<b>69 100 000</b>	<b>2 087 690</b>	<b>71 187 690</b>

## **2 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 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 national 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 (DG NEAR) 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.

## **3 EVALUATION**

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

Having regard to the importance of the action, a final or ex-post evaluation will be carried out for this action or its components via independent consultants through a joint mission contracted by the Commission via an implementing partner.

It will be carried out for accountability and learning purposes at various levels (including for policy revision), taking into account in particular the fact that the European Commission is planning to continue the support to the Civil Society and Media in the programming phase 2021-2027

The Commission shall inform the implementing partner 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 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 project.