



# INSTRUMENT FOR PRE-ACCESSION ASSISTANCE (IPA II) 2014-2020

## MULTI-COUNTRY

### EU support to regional security

#### **Action summary**

An efficient response to serious and organised crime is key to upholding the rule of law.

This action aims to strengthen the response of the Western Balkans to fight serious organised crime and terrorism, including the prevention and countering of violent extremism, by enhancing cooperation within the region and with the EU. The action will support an increased alignment with the EU's policy approach on security and ultimately, increase security in the Western Balkans and in the EU. By strengthening cooperation within the region, the action will also contribute to improve overall mutual trust and good neighbourly relations. Building upon an on-going action, a specific project component on cybercrime will include also cooperation with Turkey.

The action contributes to the implementation of the EU Western Balkans Strategy and the Sofia Priority agenda.

<b>Action Identification</b>	
<b>Action Programme Title</b>	IPA II Multi-country Action Programme 2019
<b>Action Title</b>	EU support to regional security
<b>Action ID</b>	IPA 2019/040-826.14/MC/RegionalSecurity
<b>Sector Information</b>	
<b>IPA II Sector</b>	9. Regional and territorial cooperation
<b>DAC Sector</b>	15210 - Security system management and reform
<b>Budget</b>	
<b>Total cost</b>	EUR 38 970 000
<b>EU contribution</b>	EUR 35 700 000
<b>Budget line(s)</b>	22.020401 – Multi-country programmes, regional integration and territorial cooperation
<b>Management and Implementation</b>	
<b>Management mode</b>	Direct and indirect management
<i>Direct management:</i> <b>European Commission</b>	Direct management - Unit D.5. - Western Balkans Regional Cooperation and Programmes
<i>Indirect management:</i> <b>Entrusted entity</b>	Indirect management: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH (GIZ) and the Ministry of Interior, Italy in co-delegation United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training (CEPOL) Council of Europe (CoE) International Organization for Migration (IOM)
<b>Implementation responsibilities</b>	N/A
<b>Location</b>	
<b>Zone benefiting from the action</b>	Western Balkans (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo*, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia) and Turkey (one programme component). Other parts of the programme may be extended to Turkey when such inclusion would serve the EU interest and add value to the overall programme.
<b>Specific implementation area(s)</b>	N/A
<b>Timeline</b>	
<b>Final date for contracting</b>	31 December 2020

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

<b>including the conclusion of delegation agreements</b>			
<b>Indicative operational implementation period</b>	72 months from the adoption of the Financing Decision		
<b>Policy objectives / Markers (DAC form)</b>			
<b>General policy objective</b>	<b>Not targeted</b>	<b>Significant objective</b>	<b>Main objective</b>
Participation development/good governance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X
Aid to environment	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gender equality (including Women In Development)	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Trade Development	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reproductive, Maternal, New born and child health	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>RIO Convention markers</b>	<b>Not targeted</b>	<b>Significant objective</b>	<b>Main objective</b>
Biological diversity	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Combat desertification	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Climate change mitigation	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Climate change adaptation	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

# 1. RATIONALE

## PROBLEM AND STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

The Western Balkans continue to face important challenges in the area of Rule of Law and are regularly requested to pursue their efforts in the strengthening of the functioning and independence of institutions guaranteeing democracy.<sup>1</sup> Reforming institutions remains a key benchmark against which the prospects of future EU membership will be assessed. This is particularly true for institutions tasked with fighting organised crime and terrorism which are at the forefront of upholding the rule of law and require dedicated support and attention.

Reinforcing the engagement of the EU on security and migration in the Western Balkans is one of the six flagship initiatives of the February 2018 Strategy<sup>2</sup> which will require a number of joint commitments and undertakings among the region and with the EU.

To bring value, a regional approach to security in the Western Balkans must focus on areas of collective action within the region and between the region with the EU in order to complement bilateral level action. An effective regional approach should take into account border security, fight against serious and organised crime (“SOC”) and terrorism, including also cyber-security and fight against cyber-crime. A key element of the regional response is increased cooperation and coordination among law enforcement and judicial actors so that the exchange of information and evidence during investigations and prosecutions can take place effectively across borders. The involvement of relevant EU agencies, EU Member States and international organisations will be crucial to implement regional cooperation that aligns with the EU policy approach on security and brings the region closer to EU frameworks of cooperation. This is also aligned to the spirit of the European Agenda on Security and the Security Union Communication which emphasise the need to better link up internal and external dimensions of security as well as the EU Global Strategy for the European Union’s Foreign and Security Policy which highlights the role of Western Balkans in EU security.

The joint willingness of the EU and Western Balkans to engage in deeper security cooperation was further articulated in the Sofia Declaration of the EU-Western Balkans summit (17 May 2018). The EU and the Western Balkans agreed to step up joint work on counter-terrorism, preventing radicalisation and violent extremism and to significantly enhance cooperation in the fight against international organised crime. A concrete articulation of this willingness is the Joint Action Plan on Counter-Terrorism for the Western Balkans, endorsed at the Justice and Home Affairs Ministerial in Tirana on 5 October 2018. It provides a common and concrete level of ambition for Western Balkan partners and signals the strong support of the EU to tackle terrorism and prevent radicalisation and violent extremism jointly with the region.

In order to achieve more effective and coordinated action, the Integrative Internal Security Governance (“IISG”) mechanism - set up by the Justice and Home Affairs Council and endorsed by the Western Balkans in 2016 – remains an important mechanism at the regional level to address the shared challenges of organised crime, terrorism and border security.

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<sup>1</sup> Revised Multi-Country Indicative Strategy Paper (2014-2020) as amended on 31 May 2018

<sup>2</sup> 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", 6 February 2018

## **Key needs**

On issues related to organised crime:

The foothold of organised crime in the Western Balkans continues strong. The recent Europol input to the Southeast Europe Police Chiefs Association (SEPCA)<sup>3</sup> Region Threat Assessment (June 2018) outlines the main threats to the region which impact also the EU. It highlights that the region plays a key role in the **production, trafficking and distribution of various types of illegal drugs** to the EU, in view of its strategic location at the crossroads of several trafficking routes. Drug seizures made in the Western Balkans prove the importance of the Balkan region as a transit route for different types of drugs. Cannabis is produced in the region as well as trafficked through ports while cocaine from South America arrives by sea or air and heroine from Afghanistan through the so-called Balkans Route which is one of the main entry routes to Europe according to the EU SOCTA 2017<sup>4</sup>. The Balkan Route has been the major illicit drug trafficking route for heroin into Europe for several decades, by land, sea and air. It serves as the southern corridor for transporting heroin from Afghanistan, the source of some 83% of the world's heroin, to European markets. Criminal intelligence indicates that Organised Crime Groups ("OCG") in the Western Balkans are involved in trafficking and dealing drugs in both domestic markets and in the EU. They are well-connected with other international OCGs, in particular those based within the EU and rely on land, air and maritime routes to conduct their criminal activities. It is known that criminal proceeds generated in the EU continue to be invested outside of the EU, which further reinforces the need for efforts in this area.

In terms of the **trafficking of human beings**, the region is an important source, transit and destination of victims of trafficking, mainly for the purpose of sexual and labor exploitation but also for forced begging and forced criminality. Traffickers who often share nationality with their victims, increasingly use online services to access potential victims. **Migrant smuggling** activities in the region remain a key concern. Organized networks responsible for the smuggling of migrants have evolved alongside the migrant crisis and are very active on the Balkan route, including more recently in 2018. The OCGs facilitating irregular migration often also specialise in enabling other criminal activities, such as money laundering and documentary fraud. Considering the high number of irregular migrants smuggled and the high prices requested for such services, it is estimated that OCGs operating in the field of migrant smuggling have made large profits. Despite increased efforts at EU and Member States' level to tackle this phenomenon, effective and targeted EU response to counter organised migrant smuggling on this route should be improved..

The **trafficking of firearms** appears prominently, often as a legacy of the conflicts during the 1990s which left large numbers of undeclared weapons, both small arms and military-grade firearms primarily in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia. The SAFETY Research Programme on firearms acquisitions by terrorists in Europe<sup>5</sup> concluded that "today the main source countries for firearms smuggled into the EU are generally situated in the Western Balkans". This stresses the serious security threat firearms trafficking represents. When trafficked into the EU, the firearms are mostly destined to OCGs operating in the EU and only a in a very limited number of cases to terrorists. However, the fact that firearms are potentially accessible to terrorist actors represents a serious security threat. An effective response to the trafficking of

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<sup>3</sup> The SEPCA region covers Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Romania, and Serbia.

<sup>4</sup> EU Serious and Organised Crime Threat Assessment (SOCTA), Crime in the age of technology, 2017

<sup>5</sup> Triggering Terror: Illicit Gun Markets and Firearms Acquisition of Terrorist Networks in Europe, ed. Nils Duquet, Flemish Peace institute, 17 April 2018; p.105

people and illicit goods overall will require as a key element a scaled up border law enforcement within the Western Balkan region.

Illicit proceeds resulting from organised crime are regularly laundered within the region but also to some extent in the EU. The largely cash-based economies of the region and the underdeveloped regulation of the financial sector contribute to create conditions which can be exploited for **money laundering and terrorists financing**. In some IPA II beneficiaries, the criminalisation of money laundering is fairly recent as well as the implementation of such regulations. Financial investigation techniques that support anti-money laundering efforts will be mainstreamed into the operational support and capacity development given under this action.

**Cybercrime** is of increasing concern although it is not yet assessed as a major security threat to the EU. While acknowledging the enhanced capacity recently acquired by the Western Balkans to deal with cybercrime, there is a need to increase international cooperation, considering the transnational dimension of cybercrime, rapid developments in technology and the increasing number of cybercrime and parallel financial investigations to search, seize and confiscate proceeds from online crime. **Cybersecurity** represents a high priority for the governments in the region. Relevant IPA II beneficiaries have completed the establishment of Computer Security Incident Response Teams (CIRTs)/ Computer Emergency Response Teams (CERTs). Often CIRTs have data on incidents that may be valuable to criminal justice authorities to allow for investigation and prosecution of cyberattacks. At present, the sharing of such data remains limited which makes assessing the scale and trends of cybercrime and threats to cybersecurity and thus informing strategy challenging. Increased information sharing between CIRTs/CERTs and criminal justice authorities will be supported by this action. Furthermore, the entry into force of the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)<sup>6</sup>, EU Police Directive<sup>7</sup> and the modernisation of the Council of Europe Data Protection Convention<sup>8</sup> are reshaping the landscape with respect to collection and processing of personal data and transborder data flows. This directly impacts the way in which information is shared between criminal justice authorities, as well as public-private cooperation and access to data held by the private sector. Beneficiaries require assistance in bringing respective legislation and practices in line with EU and Council of Europe standards (current and future). In addition, the use of Passenger Name Record (PNR) data is becoming an increasingly important tool for law enforcement agencies in order to prevent, detect and investigate terrorism and other forms of serious crimes such as drugs, human trafficking, child exploitation and others. Expertise will be required in the Western Balkans to build the capacity of local authorities to collect, store and process data while at the same time providing for the necessary legal safeguards for the protection of data.<sup>9</sup>

Although progress has been made in addressing organised crime in the Western Balkans, continuous support from the EU to align assessments, approaches and tools in particular regionally is still needed.

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<sup>6</sup> Regulation (EU) 2016/679 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, OJEU of 23 May 2018.

<sup>7</sup> Directive (EU) 2016/680 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data by competent authorities for the purposes of the prevention, investigation, detection or prosecution of criminal offences or the execution of criminal penalties, and on the free movement of such data. The directive entered into force on 5 May 2016 and EU countries had to transpose it into their national law by 6 May 2018.

<sup>8</sup> Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia, North Macedonia and Turkey have signed the Convention for the Protection of Individuals with regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data (ETS No.108). The Protocol (CETS No. 223) amending the Convention for the Protection of Individuals with regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data (ETS No. 108) was adopted on 18 May 2018. The Protocol was opened for signature in Strasbourg on 10 October 2018.

<sup>9</sup> Directive (EU) 2016/681 on the use of passenger name record (PNR) data for the prevention, detection, investigation and prosecution of terrorist offences and serious crime.

Along with technical expertise, the establishment of mutual trust and a common understanding between the EU and the Western Balkans as well as between institutions within the region has to be established and supported. A clear need in this regard is the continuous support to enhanced strategic coordination and sharing of best practice to align approaches and build networks. On the operational level, many investigations in the region are still treated nationally without exhausting all international means available such as cross-border investigations, Mutual Legal Assistance and Joint Investigation Teams (JITs). For international cooperation in criminal matters to become a regularly utilised tool of criminal justice actors, it requires the scaling up of awareness, specific technical knowledge and changes in existing structures and processes to embed the new practices and keep up with developments. There is also a clear need to connect the work undertaken under the EU Policy Cycle on Serious and Organised Crime to the extent that it relates to common security challenges between the EU and the Western Balkan region. Support to the international cooperation in criminal matters in the Western Balkans will be more effective when it works in alignment with the work taken forward by Drivers of the Policy Cycle in all relevant crime areas (for instance illicit firearms trafficking, and drugs trafficking) both in terms of provision of training and exchange but also for the conduct of cooperation including through JITs. Five out of six Western Balkans in the region have concluded operational cooperation agreements with Europol; yet operational cooperation in particular with Europol also needs to be boosted through both quantitatively and qualitatively improved information sharing (including through SIENA).

On issues related the terrorism and violent extremism:

A lot of attention has been devoted over the past few years to the departure of individuals from the Western Balkans (in particular from several key locations in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Kosovo and North Macedonia) to Syria and Iraq and the potential consequences – criminal and security wise – their return (and that of their families) to their country of origin might trigger, considering that since the end of 2017 the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS or Daesh) has suffered several setbacks.<sup>10</sup> A number of prevention and countering of violent extremism (P/CVE) activities in the Western Balkans have sought to address the root causes of **radicalisation and violent extremism** by involving local communities, families, youth, local organisations and religious communities. In addition, a number of de-radicalisation or rehabilitation programmes have been set up to look at how returned Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTFs) and their families could be reintegrated in their community. However, the reintegration of convicted FTFs upon finalisation of their sentencing time will require specific tailor-made approaches and assistance which currently are lacking. At the same time, the EU is continuously working towards improving its approaches on P/CVE and an increased exchange with the Western Balkans could be mutually reinforcing. The access to and understanding of the Radicalisation Awareness Network which brings together practitioners from around Europe working on radicalisation will be key in that regard as it would enable the Western Balkans to liaise with counterparts in the EU and exchange best practices in preventing and countering radicalisation. Similarly, the linking with the expertise provided by the European Strategic Communications Network would be valuable to assist the Western Balkans in adopting improved strategic communication in the field of PVE. At a regional level, the existing Western Balkans network of P/CVE coordinators at Beneficiary level has started proving its value as a platform to exchange regularly on best practices including with the EU.

### **Key stakeholders**

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<sup>10</sup> According to TE-SAT 2018, about 1000 individuals left from the region to Syria and Iraq. A number of them have already returned (about 1/3) and others could attempt to return to their former home countries.

The proposed action aims to improve cooperation within the Western Balkan region and with the EU on countering organised crime and terrorism. The main emphasis is on the capacity of state and relevant actors in the state (including law enforcement, prosecutors, border authorities) to conduct international cooperation to fight cross-border crime including with the EU. Data protection authorities will also be supported in view of adoption of *acquis* and best practice on personal data protection. An important component of the action will work with authorities, practitioners and Civil Society Organisations to share experiences and best practices in view of increasing the understanding of the nature and causes of radicalisation and supporting responses that prevent and counter violent extremism including in strategic communication and relating to Foreign Terrorist Fighters.

Turkey will be associated to the Council of Europe implemented multi-country project focusing on criminal proceeds from online crime and work on securing electronic evidence which interacts with law cybercrime authorities, CIRTs/CERTs, Financial investigation units and private sector.

The Integrative Internal Security Governance (IISG) mechanism as a regional coordination platform will continue to be supported by the action. The IISG was formally endorsed by the Council of the EU in 2016 and received the support of the Western Balkans at the Justice and Home Affairs (JHA) Forum. It builds on the 2015 Western Balkan Counter-Terrorism initiative (WBCTi) which set up a joint and coordinated approach in the Western Balkans on activities and actions related to counter-terrorism in order to address gaps and avoid duplication. This initiative was extended to two other fields of security: the Western Balkans Counter Serious Crime Initiative (WBCSCi) and the Western Balkan Border Security Initiative (WBBSi) to form the IISG. The immediate goal of the IISG is to integrate EU and international assistance in these three areas, to reduce duplication of actions among the existing and planned efforts of various actors, and to maximise the efficiency of achieving jointly agreed priorities. The IISG will be recalibrated to focus on its coordinating role to allow for more effective output. Such coordination will also allow it to support EU policy in the Western Balkans region.

The main EU stakeholders involved in the action will be: Commission services, Justice and Home Affairs agencies (CEPOL, Europol, Eurojust, EBCGA), the Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN), the European Strategic Communication Network (ESCN) and EMPACT drivers.

Germany and Italy will co-fund parts of the action implemented in indirect management by GiZ and the Ministry of Interior (Italy).

Regional and international organisations associated to the work include: Council of Europe, UNODC and IOM

## **OUTLINE OF IPA II ASSISTANCE**

The assistance will aim at assisting the Western Balkans to strengthen their capacity to collectively and with the EU address security threats posed by organised crime and terrorism, including the prevention and countering of violent extremism. The concrete facilitation of regional security cooperation is expected to promote mutual trust and strengthen good neighbourly relations. This assistance will further indirectly contribute to strengthening the rule of law and citizens' trust in their institutions. The action is framed as contributing to a stronger policy engagement and in particular to the implementation of the EU Western Balkan Strategy and the Sofia Priority agenda.

The main expected results and key activities should ensure that cooperation among Western Balkans and between Western Balkans and EU Member States is strengthened and effective in the fight against organised crime and terrorism including the prevention and countering of violent extremism. Cooperation regionally and with competent authorities within the EU should be established to enhance regional responses to security threats. The action will - to the extent possible - use EU internal tools and approaches for improved regional cooperation and cooperation with the EU, especially the EU Policy Cycle for Serious and Organised Crime, and for the prevention and countering of violent extremism cooperation with the



RAN and the ESCN. The action will aim to increase the interaction between the Western Balkans with a number of EU agencies active in the area such as CEPOL, Europol and Eurojust and EU bodies such as the European Data Protection Board.

Apart from the competent authorities in the relevant IPA II beneficiaries, the EU Member States' experts and EU agencies should be involved in the implementation process.

This action will focus on areas of work with a regional added value in particular in view of the fact that the EU also supports at bilateral level programmes which contribute to security sector reform and the Rule of Law in general. This action will strive to avoid duplication with ongoing and/or future bilateral activities in coordination with EU Delegations. It will build strong, practice-oriented cooperation in the Western Balkan region and with the EU on issues such as:

- Strategic and operational cooperation, including support to joint analysis and hands-on expertise on cross-border cooperation. Increased information exchange will be an enabling factor and a consequence of such cooperation;
- Networking of CT and P/CVE coordinators, of police and prosecutors and exchange of best practice and joint capacity building targeting regional needs;
- Regional coordination including through IISG.

The action will also address border security in the prism of enhanced fight against organised crime and implement specific cooperation Passenger Name Records/Advance Passenger Information in line with the EU *acquis*. The action will put in place a pilot flexible technical assistance facility to support enhanced regional cooperation on organised crime, counter terrorism or other security threats. The facility will enable increased response capacity on especially emerging security threats not covered by a particular component of the action.

In tackling cybercrime and specifically the illicit proceeds from online crime and to secure electronic evidence, the action will partner with the Council of Europe, building upon an existing multi country cooperation which includes also Turkey.

## **RELEVANCE WITH THE IPA II MULTI-COUNTRY STRATEGY PAPER AND OTHER KEY REFERENCES**

Security cooperation falls under the Regional cooperation pillar of the Indicative Multi-Country Strategy Paper for IPA 2014-20. The overall objective of support under this heading is: to foster regional cooperation, networking and sharing of best practices to help the IPA II beneficiaries align their legislation with the EU *acquis* and to adapt gradually to the EU standards and practices.

The Multi-Country Strategy Paper for the year 2014-2020 stresses the need for a regional approach on security in South Eastern Europe taking into account border security, fight against serious and organised crime and terrorism, including cyber-security and fight against cyber-crime. The action will focus on some of the major gaps posed by the challenges of SOC and counter-terrorism and will enable the region to be better equipped to collectively address some of these common challenges.

The action will further fit into fulfilling the objectives set out in the Flagship 2 on Migration and Security as adopted in the 2018 Western Balkans Strategy, namely its actions *2.1 stepping up joint work on counter-terrorism and preventing violent extremism, enhancing significantly the operational cooperation including with EU agencies in the fight against international organised crime. National coordinators and offices for combatting violent extremism should be created or strengthened, and a regional network of national coordinators put in place, with the support of the EU Radicalisation Awareness Network and the EU regional counter-terrorism expert. Joint action plans on counter-terrorism to be elaborated. 2.2. Enhance significantly operational cooperation including with EU agencies in the fight against international organised crime in particular firearms, drugs trafficking migrant smuggling and trafficking in human beings. 2.4. Encourage finalisation of cooperation agreements with Eurojust 2.5. Further promoting Joint Investigation Teams involving the Western Balkans and EU Member States. This should*

*entail an active involvement of Eurojust and Europol, in line with their respective mandates. 2.6. Expand the EU Policy Cycle on organised crime to the extent possible to include the Western Balkans in its operational activities. Western Balkans to be invited to take part in specific European Multidisciplinary Platform against Criminal Threats projects and to meetings of the Standing Committee on Operational Cooperation on Internal Security, including those held jointly with the Political Security Committee on an ad-hoc basis when the projects are discussed. 2.7. Increase support to capacity-building in the area of cyber-security and fight against cyber-crime, including cooperation with the European Cybercrime Training and Education Group, with a view to participation in the European Network and Information Security Agency. Some of these actions have already started to be implemented, such as the regional network of P/CVE coordinators at Beneficiary level.*

The Joint Action Plan on Counter-Terrorism for the Western Balkans was endorsed at the Justice and Home Affairs Ministerial in Tirana on 5 October 2018. It provides a common and concrete level of ambition for Western Balkan partners and signals the strong support of the EU to tackle counter-terrorism jointly with the region around 5 objectives namely 1) the adaptation of a robust institutional and legal framework for countering terrorism and Preventing/Countering Violent Extremism, as well as an implementation and enforcement capacity, 2) the effective prevention and countering of violent extremism, 3) the effective information exchange and operational cooperation, 4) the building of capacity to combat money laundering and terrorist financing and 5) the strengthening of the protection of citizens and infrastructures.

The importance given to regional EU-Western Balkans security cooperation has recently been highlighted also in the Berlin Process. The London Summit in July 2018 welcomed the Joint Declaration on the Principles of Information-Exchange in the Field of Law Enforcement and endorsed Roadmap for a sustainable solution to the illegal possession, misuse and trafficking of Small Arms and Light Weapons and their ammunition in the Western Balkans.<sup>11</sup>

#### **LESSONS LEARNED AND LINK TO PREVIOUS FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

The proposed action builds upon on-going IPA Multi-Country Programmes (MCPs) including in particular:

- Project iPROCEEDS - Cooperation on Cybercrime under the Instrument of Pre-accession: Project on targeting crime proceeds on the Internet in South-eastern Europe and Turkey implemented by the Council of Europe
- Countering Serious Crime in the Western Balkans project implemented by GIZ, Italian Ministry of Interior and the Center for International Legal Cooperation (CILC Netherlands)
- Building regional anti-money laundering and counter-financing of terrorism capacity in South Eastern Europe project implemented by UNODC
- Financial investigations in-service training implemented by CEPOL
- Support to the deployment of Europol Liaison officers to the Western Balkans implemented by Europol
- Support to P/CVE coordinated by DCAF Ljubljana, RCC, UNDP and IOM

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<sup>11</sup> On 19 November 2018, the Council adopted a Decision (Council Decision (CFSP) 2018/1788 of 19 November 2018 in support of the South-Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SEESAC) for the implementation of the Regional Roadmap on combating illicit arms trafficking in the Western Balkans, OJ L 293, 20.11.2018, p. 11–23) endorsing the Roadmap and entrusting SEESAC to support its implementation until December 2019.

The proposed action will build on the achievements of previous actions. Early indications from an ongoing programme evaluation of IPA MCP 2017 security support point to the relevance particularly of concrete operational support for cross-border cooperation in the Western Balkans. In the context of a reinforced political impetus for security cooperation EU-Western Balkans, these types of activities will therefore be continued with established partners and expanded under the current action. The role of EU agencies will also continue to be important both as implementers of assistance but also as interlocutors for partners in the region.

Specific support to financial investigations will not be continued in view of high number of actors active in this field especially at bilateral level. Financial investigation techniques will however be mainstreamed as one of the law enforcement investigative techniques used to support cross-border cooperation.

Support to continued coordination of regional support will be necessary in view of the continued high fragmentation of activities and multiple actors. The IISG mechanism will need to be recalibrated to provide effective mapping and gap analysis exercises to the region and donors in view of better synergies.

Two issues emerging from current programmes will need particular attention. First, there is a high volume of training offered on security related matters in the Western Balkans which can contribute to fragmented approaches and overburdening the response capacity of public administrations. This action will support the conduct of a Training Needs assessment exercise led by CEPOL in collaboration with the Western Balkans partners. The Training Needs Assessment exercise will, on one hand, build analytical capacities of the partners to self-identify gaps and needs in law enforcement. On the other hand, the assessment itself will provide a clearer picture of needs. Training offered under this action will also be directly linked to concrete cooperation. Second, all actions need to effectively underpin the EU's engagement with the Western Balkans. Steering mechanisms need to be put in place for all strategic projects.

## 2. INTERVENTION LOGIC

OVERALL OBJECTIVE	OBJECTIVELY VERIFIABLE INDICATORS	SOURCES OF VERIFICATION	
To contribute to the strengthening of the rule of law in the Western Balkans through the fight against organised crime (OC) and terrorism, including the Prevention and Countering of Violent Extremism (P/CVE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of arrests, prosecutions and convictions for organised crime and/or terrorist related offenses in the WB and Turkey</li> </ul>	SOCTA (EU, WB) & Europol's TE-SAT report INTCEN analysis Reporting by EU regional CT/Security expert Crime data from projects	
SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE	OBJECTIVELY VERIFIABLE INDICATORS	SOURCES OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTIONS
SO 1 To enhance the capacities of authorities in the Western Balkans to fight organised crime and terrorism including preventing and countering of violent extremism by enhancing cooperation within the region and with the EU  SO 2 To strengthen the response of Western Balkans civil society in preventing and countering violent extremism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased strategic and operational cooperation measured in number of opened cases, quantification of participation in JITs and investigations</li> <li>Number of local partners who report an increase in their P/CVE capacity</li> </ul>	Western Balkans Beneficiary, regional and EU reports Data from Europol and Eurojust Fact-finding missions, surveys, interviews. Crime data	No further deterioration of the security situation Necessary political will to cooperate and adopt EU tools and practices. Access to relevant information and tools granted
RESULTS	OBJECTIVELY VERIFIABLE INDICATORS	SOURCES OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTIONS
<b>ORGANIZED CRIME COMPONENT 1</b>  R 1 – Strategic coordination and sharing of best practice on a common threat basis within the Western Balkans and with the EU improved  R 2 –Western Balkan institutional knowledge and capacity on EU Policy Cycle priorities	1.1% of stakeholders who acknowledge that their OC actions are better coordinated as a result of participation in the IISG 1.2a Level of development of a regional SOCTA 1.2.b Inputs provided to EU SOCTA 2.1 Training Needs Assessment (TNA) led by CEPOL in collaboration with the	Surveys/Stakeholder feedback IISG reports Project reports MTR of programme Crime data Reports by Europol, Interpol, Eurojust, EUMS, EU	Sufficient specific funding for law enforcement and prosecutors in place Relevant contact points for international criminal cooperation well-resourced and supported Official crime data follows UNODC standards and is available

<p>strengthened and cooperation with EMPACT drivers increased</p> <p>R3 – Western Balkans law enforcement and judiciary share more operational information, provide effectively mutual legal assistance, and deliver cross-border investigations and JITs on organised crime</p> <p>R4- Western Balkans border law enforcement by means of enhanced container control improved</p> <p><b>COUNTER TERRORISM (including P/CVE) COMPONENT 2</b></p> <p>R 5 – Strategic coordination and sharing of best practice on a common threat basis within the Western Balkans and with the EU improved</p> <p>R6 –Western Balkans authorities, front line workers and civil society are better equipped and supported to implement P/CVE and broader counter-terrorism strategies, including through cooperation with EU RAN and ESCN</p> <p><b>HORIZONTAL – COMPONENT 3</b></p> <p>R7- Western Balkans cooperation with relevant EU JHA agencies strengthened</p> <p>R8 -Capacities of authorities in Western Balkans and Turkey to search, seize and confiscate proceeds from online crime and to secure electronic evidence strengthened</p> <p>R9 – Western Balkans capability to collect and</p>	<p>Western Balkans partners</p> <p>2.2Number of instances of WB involvement in EU Policy Cycle</p> <p>3.1Number of messages exchanged in SIENA</p> <p>3.2 Number of responded mutual legal assistance requests and reduction of the average time for handling of requests</p> <p>3.3 Number of supported cross-border investigations using JITs leading to prosecution</p> <p>3.4 Number of legal frameworks developed for intelligence-led policing</p> <p>4.1 Number of new Port Control Units and Air Cargo Control Units established</p> <p>4.2 Number of existing Control Units maintained</p> <p>5.1a Level of development of a regional CT assessment</p> <p>5.1.b Inputs provided to EU exercise (TE-SAT)</p> <p>5.2 Number of meetings of Regional Network of Coordinators for P/CVE</p> <p>6.1 Existence of collaboration between different parts of Government and civil society on P/CVE</p> <p>6.2 Existence of local P/CVE actions for the reintegration, resocialisation and rehabilitation of convicted former terrorist fighters and their families (where such was not previously present)</p> <p>R3</p> <p>7.1 Cooperation agreements of all WB partners supported with Eurojust</p> <p>7.2 Number of JHA agency meetings with WB participation</p> <p>8.1Extent of financial investigations and prosecutions related to cybercrime and proceeds from online crime</p>	<p>delegations, etc.</p> <p>Interviews of the stakeholders</p> <p>Training evaluation reports.</p> <p>Body of national law</p>	<p>Stakeholders cooperation with project staff</p> <p>Europol willingness to cooperate on a Western Balkans SOCTA</p> <p>EU Agencies support involvement of Western Balkans in their activities</p>
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<p>process Advance Passenger Information (API) and Passenger Name Records (PNR) strengthened</p> <p>R 10- On-demand flexible expertise on OC, CT, including on protection of citizens and infrastructure, enhanced through the establishment of a pilot technical assistance facility</p>	<p>8.2 Level of compliance with relevant international standards on cybercrime, money laundering and the search, seizure and confiscation of proceeds from crime</p> <p>9.1 Number of EU, EBCGA and Europol meetings on API/ PNR with Western Balkans involvement</p> <p>9.2 Number of strategic/ policy/ legislative documents adopted by Western Balkans on API/ PNR</p> <p>10.1 Number of joint activities implemented following support provided by the project.</p>		
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## DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES

The activities foreseen are articulated within three components: Organised Crime, Counter-Terrorism and Horizontal issues.

### COMPONENT 1: ORGANIZED CRIME

#### **RESULT R.1: Strategic coordination and sharing of best practices on a common threat basis within the Western Balkans and with the EU improved**

This result aims at establishing strategic level alignment within the region and with the EU by supporting threat analysis capacity, networking and coordination. Activities will indicatively involve:

In terms of analysis capacity, the action foresees provision of technical expertise and capacity building through the GIZ consortium to enable a Western Balkan contribution to be made to the EUROPOL-developed SOCTA (Serious Organised Crime Threat Assessment) as well as the production of a regional SOCTA<sup>12</sup>. Analysts will receive specific capacity support and as well as tailored support to strengthen the quality of the data provided.

In terms of networking, the action will aim to increase the opportunities for the Western Balkans to gather, exchange and share best practices in a number of forum on Organised Crime strategies. The main mechanism for coordination of regional security needs and actions will continue to be the Integrative Internal Security Governance (IISG) mechanism. The IISG will be supported to become an effective platform for producing up-to-date mapping of assistance and needs, and facilitate synergies and building of knowledge. The main activities will include provision of technical expertise to run a IISG secretariat, and the conduct of studies, mapping workshops, and knowledge capitalisation with an increased participation of Western Balkans and relevant EU MS and institutions.

#### **RESULT R.2 –Western Balkan institutional knowledge and capacity on EU Policy Cycle priorities strengthened and cooperation with EMPACT drivers increased**

A key element of enhanced security cooperation between the EU and the Western Balkans is the increased linking of cross-border cooperation with the work conducted under the EMPACT Operational Action Plans (OAP). The action will support increased institutional knowledge and capacity on EU Policy Cycle<sup>13</sup> priorities, and cooperation with EMPACT drivers on their OAP. The main activities will include the conduct of a Training Needs Analysis (TNA) by CEPOL in collaboration with the Western Balkans on the EU Policy Cycle priorities and the subsequent tailor-made capacity building for WB law enforcement officials at regional level on specific thematic areas of serious and organised crime linking up with EMPACT drivers. CEPOL will share its scientifically based TNA methodology with partners prior to the exercise. Partners will self-diagnose their gaps and related training needs which reinforces analytical capacities. The TNA will provide an evidence-based map of needs at the regional level. Based on the needs, the capacity building will encompass joint EU/WB trainings, implementation of exercises and simulations, Erasmus-inspired exchange programs and roundtables/workshops on promoting modern law enforcement training methodologies. The action will fund a selected number of concrete cooperation actions in which the Western Balkan join in

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<sup>12</sup> SOCTA is a detailed analysis on the threat of serious and organised crime facing the EU and is based upon the contributions by Member States and Europol's operational and strategic partners outside the EU

<sup>13</sup> The EU Policy Cycle is the main mechanism that facilitates the prioritisation of activities at EU level in the field of serious and organised crime affecting the EU member states and has a specific methodology and decision mechanisms to ensure alignment of the priority setting and the targeting of action to achieve the objectives of combating the crimes concerned.

EMPACT activities. The action will also – when relevant – connect EMPACT drivers with cross-border cooperation actions in the Western Balkans (i.e. on-going investigations).

EU Justice and Home Affairs agencies, especially Europol, FRONTEX and EUROJUST will be associated as necessary to this result.

### **R3 – Western Balkans law enforcement and judiciary share more operational information, provide effectively mutual legal assistance, and deliver cross-border investigations and JITs on organised crime**

The result will aim to increase the operational cooperation within the Western Balkans on on-going cases by fostering coordination on sharing information on cases, providing effective Mutual Legal Assistance and successfully delivering cross-border investigations including through Joint Investigation Teams (JITs) with EU Member States on Organised Crime.

The involvement of Embedded Country Team (“ECT”) through seconded prosecutors and police officers from EU Member States will continue to be pursued as the backbone of effective operational support through mentoring and on-the-job training of criminal justice actors involved in international cooperation. ECTs will be particularly key in linking up with crime areas tackled under the EU Policy Cycle and involving Europol and EUROJUST in cross-border cooperation. Financial investigations related to each of the cases will be stimulated as a cross-cutting issue. When required, work with other international jurisdictions for strengthening cooperation on organised crime will also be supported. International cooperation mechanisms for asset recovery will be supported, including the cooperation with the Europol/Carin and the EU ARO Network. Specific support at Beneficiary level can be envisaged if need be and upon consultation with relevant stakeholders, also under Result 10.

Activities aiming to enhance the expertise and tools for a more efficient international judicial cooperation in the field of criminal and criminal procedure law at regional Western Balkans level and with the EU will be enhanced through an on-the-job coaching approach on Mutual Legal Assistance (MLA). The use of tools to better register and follow incoming and outgoing MLA requests and also to reduce the average processing time will be enhanced using an inter-agency approach. Activities will also include assistance in adopting and transposing relevant international judicial cooperation instruments, including on the protection of personal data.

A strengthened information-exchange as a prerequisite for better regional cooperation will be supported. Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs) need to be able to interact in a rapid, secure and efficient way among themselves, also in a “user-friendly” tailor-made environment. The action will support an identification of gaps in information sharing considering the different databases active in the region and used by different LEAs. Follow-up activities can focus on the modernisation of data systems' architecture and interoperability, also considering the possible development of an interface which could have different data containers and the improvement of the framework conditions for intelligence-led policing. This could take the form of the establishment of an operational coordination platform in the region, if relevant, in order to allow the respective LEAs to provide real time information, also using the existing communication channels, such as SIENA which could be extended and upgraded. The action will undertake activities to stimulate use of SIENA and exchange of messages as well as the interoperability between existing and possible new systems.

Through a mix of tailor-made assistance (ECTs) and increased interoperability of systems as well as access to tools and expertise from EU JHA agencies, the action will aim to increase the number of cross-border investigations on organised crime leading to prosecutions as well as JITs with the involvement of the Western Balkans.

Activities will seek – to the extent possible and feasible – leverage multilateral international treaties for police cooperation to increase the coordination of police activities such as the Police Cooperation Convention of South-East Europe and partners such as INTERPOL.



#### **R4- Western Balkans border law enforcement by means of enhanced container control improved**

Activities under this result will aim to counter illicit trafficking of goods and persons entering through the Western Balkans ports and airports by providing a specific assistance to strengthen the capacities of the border law enforcement officials in improving their cargo and container control as well as air passenger control. Activities will take into account, as relevant, on-going EU work in this field.

The action will support the UNODC Container Control Programme (CCP) already present in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro by mentoring and assisting the sustainability of the already established Port Control Units. It will expand the Container Control Programme to Kosovo and broaden the scope to include CCP-Air (focusing on cargo), thus supporting the comprehensive control measures through different transportation means. Main activities include: mentorship evaluations, training evaluations and independent ad-hoc assessments

As a complement to CCP-Air, AIRCOP – another UNODC tool – will be deployed and focus on passengers at selected international airports. AIRCOP supports inter-agency cooperation through Joint Airport Interdiction Task Forces (JAITFs), or similar existing structures, and bringing together LEAs operating at airports. AIRCOP will also facilitate and secure real-time transmission and sharing of information between law enforcement services at central, regional and international levels. The action will provide JAITFs with basic and specialized training and mentoring. JAITFs will also be invited to participate in exchange programmes and study visits and to engage on a regular basis in international joint operations during which controls will be heightened at selected airports.

### **COMPONENT 2 - COUNTER TERRORISM (including P/CVE)**

#### **R 5 – Strategic coordination and sharing of best practice on a common threat basis within the Western Balkans and with the EU improved**

This result aims at establishing strategic level alignment within the region and with the EU by supporting threat analysis capacity, networking and coordination on counter-terrorism and violent extremism. Support will be provided to assist the Western Balkans in the drafting and providing input to the Europol-led TeSAT<sup>14</sup>.

The main mechanism for coordination of regional security needs and actions remains the IISG as stated under Result 1. The IISG will also play a coordinating role on Counter-Terrorism actions.

#### **R6 –Western Balkans authorities, practitioners and civil society are better equipped and supported to implement P/CVE and broader counter-terrorism strategies, including through cooperation with RAN and ESCN**

This result will aim to strengthen the interaction between the Western Balkans and the Radicalisation Awareness Network<sup>15</sup> (RAN) with a particular focusing on enhancing the capability of front-line practitioners working in the area of PVE (such as prison staff, healthcare workers, social workers, community police officers etc) and their ability to work in a multi-agency environment to ensure the necessary and appropriate intervention. This activity will aim to not only bring the RAN expertise to the Western Balkans region through workshops, missions/deployments- a process which has already started - but

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<sup>14</sup> EU Terrorism situation and trend report

<sup>15</sup> The Radicalisation Awareness Network is a network of frontline or grassroots practitioners from around Europe working on the prevention of radicalisation. It is funded under the Internal Security Fund Police

also to increase the cooperation within the region and assist in the building up of the appropriate state structures for the potential establishment *in fine* of a Western Balkans RAN.

Main tentative activities will also include strengthening the cooperation with the European Strategic Communication Network (ESCN) to assist the Western Balkans in adopting improved strategic communication in the field of PVE. The ESCN is already assisting EU Member States in this area and similar support is expected to be offered to the Western Balkans. With regards to tackling online terrorist propaganda, synergies will be sought with Europol's Internet Referral Unit.

To support Western Balkans in one of the priority areas of P/CVE, the action will seek to deploy a specific project addressing the reintegration, resocialisation and rehabilitation needs of convicted and other returning FTFs and their families. The proposed IOM intervention in the Western Balkans – including for the purpose of the action, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo and North Macedonia, would focus around three main pillars: 1) development of key strategic documents in relevant institutions, 2) Establishment of a platform to allow practitioners working directly on reintegration to exchange ideas and practices and to foster mutual learning amongst them. The platform would focus on operational challenges and solutions as they are encountered and developed in the context of concrete reintegration cases and 3) Exchange of best practices between EU Member States and officials in the Western Balkans working on reintegration in their respective countries.

The result includes also broader counter-terrorism capacity development, building from the Training Needs Analysis (TNA) to be conducted by CEPOL in collaboration with the Western Balkans.

## **HORIZONTAL – COMPONENT 3**

### **R7- Western Balkans cooperation with relevant EU JHA agencies strengthened**

In complement to the involvement of JHA agencies in concrete operational support under result 3, this result will aim to enhance the overall cooperation with relevant EU JHA agencies. Activities will tentatively include technical assistance to support the conclusion of cooperation agreements with Eurojust and the linked work on personal data protection legislation and implementation, as well as financing of participation in JHA agency meetings when relevant. The latter could also include financing of participation in meetings of other relevant EU bodies such as the European Data Protection Board. Activities will also include Europol cooperation with Western Balkans on counter-terrorism and the prevention and countering of violent extremism.

### **R8 -Capacities of authorities in Western Balkans and Turkey to search, seize and confiscate proceeds from online crime and to secure electronic evidence strengthened (iPROCEEDS2)**

i-PROCEEDS2 will aim to strengthen the capacity of authorities to search, seize and confiscate cybercrime proceeds and prevent money laundering on the Internet and to secure electronic evidence with particular emphasis on data protection and rule of law requirements. This will be achieved particularly through strengthening of cybercrime legislation, alignment with EU and Council of Europe personal data protection policies and strategies, inter-agency and public/private cooperation for investigation of cybercrime and proceeds from crime online, public reporting systems on online fraud and other cybercrime offences, law enforcement/service provider cooperation, judicial training and international cooperation.

### **R9 – Western Balkans capability to collect and process Advance Passenger Information (API) and Passenger Name Records (PNR) strengthened**

The activities will aim to strengthen the Western Balkans capabilities in building and aligning their systems to the EU *acquis* in API and PNR. In particular, technical assistance will be provided for the implementation of Council Directive 2004/82/EC 'on the obligation of carriers to communicate passenger data' and Directive

(EU) 2016/681 of 27 April 2016 ‘on the use of passenger name record (PNR) data for the prevention, detection, investigation and prosecution of terrorist offences and serious crime’. The activities will aim to ensure that the Western Balkans’ structures, such as border police and law enforcement authorities, will be able to efficiently and legally process passenger data and respond adequately. This will include the drafting of relevant legislation, the definition of roles and responsibilities of the relevant competent authorities, training of staff (including on data privacy issues), and the installation of relevant units within the border police. Cooperation between the Western Balkans’ border police units, law enforcement authorities and other relevant domestic and international structures will also be enhanced. Synergies will be sought with the UNOCT programme on PNR/API when relevant.

### **R 10- On-demand flexible expertise on OC, CT, including on protection of citizens and infrastructure, enhanced through the establishment of a pilot technical assistance facility**

The action will support joint cooperation initiatives among security stakeholders, including LEAs, involving at least two Western Balkans upon request based on a competitive application process. In particular, small-scale practice-oriented seminars and workshops on specific topics, in particular arising from concrete case work (such as operationalisation of JITs, the use of SIENA) can be provided as well as internships and study trips fostering the spirit of international cooperation. To this end, the action will establish a pilot technical assistance facility including an EU expert pool with stand-by experts responsible for the different aspects of organized crime and counter-terrorism relevant for law enforcement and the judiciary. The pool can also be broadened to include specific emerging security themes. The pool will provide Beneficiaries with high quality and timely external technical assistance

### **RISKS**

The political situation in the Western Balkan region can impact upon the general willingness to enhance regional cooperation on security threats such as organised crime and terrorism including with the EU.

There is also a risk of limited interest, trust, and/or stakeholders’ buy-in into the foreseen activities. However, this risk is assessed as low.. Lack of interest, trust and/or buy-in will be addressed through the demonstration of concrete results that can be derived from the cooperation. While specific activities will be planned and consulted with the Western Balkans, including at the technical and strategic level, specific work plans can be adjusted should there be limited interest. Awareness-raising and regional capacity-building activities are also expected to contribute to strengthened networking and trust-building, creating favorable conditions at the technical/operational level to counterbalance possible negative developments at the political level.

Economic circumstances can also negatively impact the political will to counter organised crime and terrorism effectively by making the necessary resources available. This can also result in frequent staff changes which makes medium-term capacity building challenging.

Furthermore, effective combatting of entrenched organised crime requires investments in integrity-building. This will also require that media understands its responsibility when reporting on crime and corruption. Administrations have to take the necessary precautions to protect whistle blowers, witnesses, collaborators with justice, and even law enforcement officers. It is also necessary to ensure sufficient authority for relevant contact points responsible for interagency coordination as well as international cooperation for this to be effective.

### **CONDITIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

It will become crucial to reach an agreement with the Integrative Internal Security Governance (IISG) partners on the revised governance, tasks and hosting arrangement for the mechanism. Failure to reach such an agreement would impact coordination activities foreseen under results 1 and 5.

Given that the action proposes to step-up security cooperation among the Western Balkans and with the EU, the successful implementation of the action will require that the Western Balkans provide high-level support to the action and commit themselves to prioritize within their own organisations the objectives mentioned in the action. The Western Balkans should also increasingly allocate specific budget to ensure that the cooperation initiated under this action continues beyond its duration. The financing of Liaison magistrates at EUROJUST can be considered only in complement to co-funding of such positions at beneficiary level.

It is also expected that Embedded Country Teams are placed in the appropriate offices at the Western Balkans' administrations (the Organised Crime/Special Prosecution Offices and the respective police units) and that they have clear counterparts on the Beneficiary administration. Essential for the success of the action is that the Western Balkans guarantee access to files, access to information, all respecting the legal framework and constraints. It often remains a challenge getting the right statistical data (crime related, related to international judicial cooperation, etc.).

It is assessed that all implementing agencies have the necessary legal and administrative capacities to carry out the action. However, all of them need to provide the necessary internal resources for the management and administrative back up of the projects and commit to effectively coordinate the implementation of their projects with actions which are undertaken centrally as well as other regional actions.

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

### **3. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS**

#### **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The implementation of the action will require the cooperation and involvement of the relevant authorities (including Ministries of Justice, Ministries of Interior), criminal justice actors (notably police, prosecutors), border authorities and P/CVE practitioners and civil society in each of the Western Balkans. The project relating to online crime (Result 8), will also include cooperation with authorities charged with tackling cybercrime, CIRTs/CERTs, Financial Intelligence Units and private sector in each IPA II beneficiary.

The action will be implemented through up to 8 (eight) projects. Several of the projects will contribute to a number of action results, reflecting the interlinked nature of the results. Indicatively, the main implementation responsibilities will be distributed as follows:

The IISG will deliver on the coordination function provided for in results 1 and 5. The EU will continue to be part of the IISG Board and to encourage the mechanism to broaden the scope of the actors its reaches. Moreover, the IISG should actively support and promote EU policy in the Western Balkans.

Result 2 relating to the EU Policy Cycle on Serious and Organised Crime will be implemented by CEPOL and a consortium composed on GiZ, Ministry of Interior (Italy) and the Centre for International Legal Cooperation. Europol will be closely associated to activities to ensure optimal cooperation with the Policy Cycle process and EMPACT priorities. EMPACT drivers will be involved in agreeing on concrete cooperation between the action and EMPACT operational action plans.

The consortium composed on GiZ, Ministry of Interior (Italy) and the Centre for International Legal Cooperation will take the lead on delivering on the operational cooperation envisaged under results 3, 7, 9 and 10. For results 3 and 7, Embedded Country Teams will form the backbone of this effort which will also link up with EU Justice and Home Affairs Agencies and their liaison officers posted to the region. For result 10, the pilot facility will aim to incorporate technical expertise from various EU Member States.

The project on container control (result 4) will be implemented by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

For result 6, the Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs and the Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations will steer inputs provided by service provider(s) implementing the Radicalisation Awareness Network and European Strategic Communication Network. The Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs will manage the procurement of (a) framework contract(s) under which specific contract(s) for these services will be concluded by the Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations. The International Organization for Migration will specifically focus on supporting civil society responses to the resocialisation of Foreign Terrorist Fighters and their families.

The Council of Europe will carry out activities in support of result 8 (online crime and electronic evidence) in line with their long-standing expertise on this subject.

Project Steering Committees (PSCs) will be set up for the majority of the individual projects. The PSCs will review progress and give guidance on the projects. The PSC will comprise representatives of the relevant IPA II beneficiary, the Contracting Authority and the service provider.

The action will to the extent possible interact and leverage the value added of relevant regional instruments and cooperation mechanisms, including EU missions relevant for JHA cooperation.

#### **IMPLEMENTATION METHOD(S) AND TYPE(S) OF FINANCING**

The overall budget of the action is EUR 38.97 million and it will be mainly implemented in indirect management (EUR 31.7 million). Five (5) Contribution agreements will be concluded as follows:

A first contribution agreement with the German Gesellschaft for Internationaler Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) and the Ministry of Interior (Italy) in co-delegation to an indicative total amount of EUR 18.2 million with an EU contribution of EUR 15.8 million, a contribution by Germany of EUR 1.5 million and a contribution by Italy of EUR 0.9 million. GIZ and the Ministry of Interior (Italy) will carry out budget implementation tasks and directly implement activities. In the performance of the activities, GIZ and the Ministry of Interior (Italy) will cooperate with implementing partners, in particular through a sub-grant with the Center for International Legal Cooperation (NL), EU Justice and Home Affairs agencies and other EU Member States' agencies. GIZ will be responsible for reporting and monitoring on the project.

A second contribution agreement with the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training (CEPOL) to an indicative amount of EUR 5.5 million. CEPOL will closely work with Europol in implementing the project.

A third contribution agreement with the Council of Europe to an indicative amount of EUR 4.895 million with an EU contribution of EUR 4.45 million.

A fourth contribution agreement with the International Organization for Migration to an indicative amount of EUR 1.65 million with an EU contribution of EUR 1.5 million.

A fifth contribution agreement with the United Nations Office for Drugs and Crime to an indicative amount of EUR 4.725 million with an EU contribution of EUR 4.45 million.

In addition, other parts of this action will be implemented through direct management with the signature of up to two specific contracts under a “Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs” managed Framework Contract to a total indicative amount of EUR 2.55 million, and one grant agreement with the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) for IISG related tasks to an indicative EU contribution of EUR 1.45 million.

The indicative duration of all the contracts under the action will be from 36 to 42 months.

#### **4. PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT**

##### **METHODOLOGY FOR MONITORING (AND EVALUATION)**

The European Commission may carry out a mid-term, a final or an ex-post evaluation for this action or its components via independent consultants, through a joint mission or via an implementing partner. In case a mid-term or final evaluation is not foreseen, the European Commission may, during implementation, decide to undertake such an evaluation for duly justified reasons either on its own decision or on the initiative of the partner. The evaluations will be carried out as prescribed by the Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations Guidelines on linking planning/programming, monitoring and evaluations. In addition, the action might be subject to external monitoring in line with the European Commission rules and procedures.

All implementing partners of this action will be asked to prepare regular reports to inform all relevant stakeholders. For all training activities, implementing partners will collect participants’ feedback on the usefulness and impact of delivered activities.

Regular updates on the pilot technical assistance facility will also be provided to the Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations.

**INDICATOR MEASUREMENT –**

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Baseline (value + year) (2)</b>	<b>Target 2021 (3)</b>	<b>Final Target (2023) (4)</b>	<b>Source of information</b>
MCSP indicator (impact/outcome)....(1)				
1.1 Stakeholders who acknowledge that their OC actions are better coordinated as a result of participation in the IISG	2019 = 0	2021= 3	2023 = 6	Surveys/Stakeholder feedback IISG reports Project reports MTR of programme Crime data Reports by Europol, Interpol, Eurojust, EUMS, EU delegations, etc. Interviews of the stakeholders Training evaluation reports. Body of national law
1.2a Level of development of the regional SOCTA	2019 = 0	2021 = 1	2023 = 1	
1.2.b. Inputs provided to EU SOCTA	2019 = 0	2021 = 6	2023 = 6	
2.1 Training Needs Assessment conducted by CEPOL and the WB partners (STNA delivered)	2019 = 0	2021= 0	2023 = 1	Western Balkans training needs assessment report
2.2 Number of instances of WB involvement in EU Policy Cycle (law enforcement officials trained)	2018 = 186 <sup>16</sup>	2021 = 350	2023 = 1050	Progress and final reports of the CEPOL project

<sup>16</sup> Number of participants of residential training and exchange in 2018; source: CEPOL FI project, IPA/2017/393-268, progress report

3.1 Number of messages exchanged in SIENA	2019 = 0	2021 = 5% increase	2023 = 20% increase	SIENA Project reports
3.2 Number of responded mutual legal assistance requests supported by the action	2019= 0	2021= 120	2023= 360	Project reports
3.3a Number of supported cross-border investigations leading to prosecution	2019= 0	2021= 20	2023= 50	Project reports
3.3b Number of supported cross-border investigations leading to JITs	2019= 0	2021= 3	2023=10	
3.4 Number of legal frameworks developed for intelligence-led policing	2019 = 0	2021 = 2	2023 = 6	Project reports
4.1 Number of new Port Control Units and Air Cargo Control Units established	2019= 0	2020 = 4  (2 new Port Control Units and 2 new Air Cargo Control Units)	2023= 4  (2 new Port Control Units and 2 new Air Cargo Control Units)	Project reports
4.2 Number of existing Control Units maintained	2019 = 3	2021=3	2023 = 3	Revised MOUs with the Governments, development of SOPs, assessments of the professional level of the trained officials.
5.1a level of development of a regional CT assessment	2019= 0	2021 = 1	2023= 1	Project reports
5.1.b Inputs provided to EU exercise (TE-SAT)	2019= 0	2021= 2	2023 = 4	
5.2 Number of meetings of Regional Network of Coordinators for P/CVE	2019 = 2	2021= 6	2023 = 10	IISG EU CT coordinator
6.1 Number of targeted IPA II beneficiaries for which there exists a collaboration between different parts of Government and civil society on P/CVE	2019 = 0	2021= 4	2023 = 6	Project report



6.2 Number of targeted IPA II beneficiaries for which there exists a local P/CVE action for the reintegration of convicted former terrorist fighters and their families (where such was not previously present)	2019 = 0	2021 = 4	2023 = 6	IOM project report
7.1 Cooperation agreements of all WB partners concluded with Eurojust	2019 = 3	2021= 4	2023= 5	EUROJUST reports
7.2 Number of JHA agency and network meetings with WB participation	2019 =0	2021 = 4 <sup>17</sup>	2023= 12 <sup>18</sup>	Project reports
8.1 Extent of financial investigations and prosecutions related to cybercrime and proceeds from online crime (percentage of increase)	2019 = 0	2021= 30% increase	2023= 70% increase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Performance review workshops carried out under the action.</li> <li>- Activity reports.</li> <li>- Reports by cybercrime units, financial investigation/economic crime units, FIUs.</li> <li>- Assessment report towards the end of the action to determine progress made</li> </ul>
8.2 Number of targeted IPA II beneficiaries for which there is a certain level of compliance with relevant international standards on cybercrime, money laundering and the search, seizure and confiscation of proceeds from crime. ( )	2019 = 0	2021= 4	2023= 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Performance review workshops carried out under the action.</li> <li>- Legislative profiles of the Council of Europe on cybercrime and electronic evidence and assessments of the Cybercrime Convention Committee.</li> </ul>

<sup>17</sup> If “meetings” includes operational meetings in the framework of supported investigations the indicator can be increased to 20

<sup>18</sup> If “meetings” includes operational meetings in the framework of supported investigations the indicator can be increased to 60

				- Assessment of relevant data protection rules to be carried out in beginning and in the end of the project.
9.1 Number of EU, EBCGA and Europol meetings on API/ PNR with Western Balkans involvement	2019= 0	2021= 4	2023= 12	Project reports
9.2 Number of strategic/ policy/ legislative documents adopted by Western Balkans on API/ PNR	2019 = 0	2021= 4	2023= 12	Project reports
10.1 Number of joint activities implemented following support provided by the project	2019 =0	2021= 2	2023= 12	Project reports

## **5. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES**

### **GENDER MAINSTREAMING**

There is a clear interrelationship between gender, security threats and crime which is important to understand and tackle for the overall effectiveness of any security action. In this context, this action will strive to promote gender equality as well as to take measures to achieve equal opportunities for males and females in all programme dimensions. Gender equality incentives will be incorporated particularly in capacity building activities. Also, where possible, data collected will be gender-disaggregated.

The Council of Europe and UNODC have developed specific approaches and tools for gender mainstreaming which will be implemented in their relevant projects. In implementing activities under Result 8 (iProceeds 2 project), the Council of Europe will use its gender mainstreaming toolkit which provides guidance, information and 'stand-alone' tools to help mainstream a gender dimension into the project during its development and implementation, including monitoring and reporting. The Council of Europe recognises that taking account of gender equality in the prevention and control of cybercrime is important, because it helps shape effective responses, interventions and services to cybercrime. In some IPA II beneficiaries, the criminal justice sector remains primarily a male dominated domain, in particular as concerns high-level positions. Female criminal justice professionals in most IPA II beneficiaries appear to be underrepresented in institutions dealing with cybercrime. Most importantly, certain types of cybercrime are not gender neutral (e.g. cyber violence, in particular online sexual violence, is targeted primarily at women and girls). Where relevant, the action will promote a gender-based perspective as an important element in developing cybercrime prevention strategies and thus, ensuring a more comprehensive approach to countering cybercrime. The project will strive to increase capacity to ensure gender balanced approaches in dealing with prevention and handling of cybercrime (e.g. number and percentage of female and male staff participating in project activities; number and percentage of female and male staff designated as members of the relevant team; number and percentage of female and male staff participating in the Project Steering Committee; number of activities with components covering gender issues in cybercrime/cyber violence, etc.). The project will also ensure that the programme of the event addresses gender-specific issues related to cybercrime, where possible, whilst invitations to activities will state that a balanced participation of women and men is encouraged.

Under Result 4, UNODC will actively mainstream a gender perspective in its activities. Applying a gender perspective involves being aware of the gendered dimensions of any activity, which requires analysis, information and consultations with both women and men. Ultimately integrating a gender perspective will result in a more balanced and representative approach, thus a more effective response. Under the framework of the Container Control Programme's (CCP) Women's Network, which was launched in 2015, the CCP has taken a number of concrete steps to enhance the number and role of female law enforcement officers. Such steps include ongoing discussions with relevant governments to nominate qualified women to participate in training activities and to join the Port Control Units, as well as the development and implementation of a gender sensitisation module. This module is a mandatory part of the CCP training curriculum.

### **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

All activities under this action will be designed and implemented in accordance with the principles of good governance and human rights, gender equality, the inclusion of socially or economically deprived groups and environmental sustainability, wherever these issues are of particular relevance to the institutions and Western Balkans to be assisted.

### **MINORITIES AND VULNERABLE GROUPS**

Minorities and vulnerable groups have often been the target not only for potential terrorism recruiters but also for criminal groups recruiting. In particular, minorities have more predominantly been the victims of trafficking in human beings and victims of sexual and labor exploitation. The action through the activities

foreseen with the involvement of the ECTs will advocate that a special attention by the relevant investigators and police officers as well as any other state officials dealing with victims of Organised Crime is given to this element.

In addition, the police and judiciaries should also reflect the diversity of the relevant IPA II beneficiary assuring that minorities are properly represented which in turn would contribute to increasing the trust in the law enforcement and judiciary while on the other hand taking advantage of the understanding of the different communities by employing persons from these communities. The action will seek to address these needs.

#### **ENGAGEMENT WITH CIVIL SOCIETY (AND IF RELEVANT OTHER NON-STATE STAKEHOLDERS)**

Civil Society Organisations are crucial associates to the successful implementation of this action. In particular, under the Counter-Terrorism pillar of this action, CSOs will be associated through the inclusion to Radicalisation Awareness Network which aims to connect practitioners including first line responders such as NGOs and community leaders to exchange best practices on how to deal and address the challenges of violent extremism, radicalisation and reintegration into society. A particular activity under this action will be to address the needs of former Foreign Terrorist Fighters and their families and local CSOs will closely be associated in that programme to ensure an inclusive approach on addressing the reintegration needs and the requested assistance from state structures.

In addition, it is relevant to mention that corruption is an enabler of organised crime and in that respect, the civil society plays a crucial monitoring and reporting role. The Civil Society Organisations will be empowered through the changing of mind-set towards Organised Crime that this action will bring to support and advocate for reform.

#### **ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE (AND IF RELEVANT DISASTER RESILIENCE)**

This action does not have any particular impact on environment and climate change even though environmental crimes could be tackled.

Climate action relevant budget allocation: EUR 0
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## **6. SUSTAINABILITY**

The action is expected to be sustainable beyond its implementation period as it will focus on activities directly assisting and providing mentoring to local law enforcement agencies on serious crimes. It is believed that the 36 months engagement through the GiZ consortium which was preceded by a 24 months similar engagement will have increased the capacity of law enforcement agencies to tackle investigations and prosecutions on serious organised crimes and increase their capacity to exchange information regionally as well as conduct cross-border investigations including JITs. The action will foster the cooperation between the Western Balkans and the EU JHA agencies such as CEPOL, EUROPOL and EUROJUST but also with the RAN and the ESCN and it is believed that these contacts and exchanges will be pursued beyond the implementation period in view of the number of meetings, training sessions and study visits envisaged under this action and the expected subsequent changing of mind-set and increased local capacities. Implementers of the various activities will further stress the importance that trained officials and contact points remain at these positions for a significant amount of time or that a proper internal handover is ensured so that the competencies acquired will remain in the institutions and not attached to the person itself.

CEPOL will ensure sustainability of the law enforcement training component on the basis of existing working arrangements and with utilising its relevant Contact Points in each beneficiary and the law enforcement training institutions of the Western Balkans. One of the results of the law enforcement training

component of the programme implemented by CEPOL will be a Training Needs Assessment focusing on serious, cross border and organised crime in line with the EU Policy Cycle priorities. The STNE will set a comprehensive baseline to monitor achievement of capacity building and serve a solid basis to address common training needs of the Western Balkans jointly with partner law enforcement training institutions. Besides, CEPOL will promote modern training methodologies following up outcomes of the activities of the action making sure that obtained competencies and skills are cascadingly disseminated and subsequently developed across the respective law enforcement services.

The CCP and AIRCOP contribute to enhancing law enforcement capacities in the selected seaports, dry ports and airports in the Western Balkans. Moreover, they contribute to dismantling drug trafficking and other organized crime activities, including trafficking of small and light arms. By fighting organized crime, and in particular container crime, the CCP and AIRCOP also contribute to minimizing an important barrier to foreign investment and economic development. In addition, they facilitate trade participation and sustainable development through the establishment of port control and security structures in the selected sea and dry ports. These UNODC activities are now replicated in airports in the region and beyond. The action is therefore sustainable at financial, institutional, legal and policy level and are focusing on human capital, the project will provide law enforcement officers with tools and methods for proactive profiling and targeting operations, as well as for enhanced inter-agency and international coordination and cooperation. Training elements and mentoring will allow officers to carry out their work with a higher degree of efficiency. Moreover, in the inter-agency cooperation agreement, provisions will be inserted on the need for personnel to remain in the JAITF for specific periods of time and the necessity of an adequate transition between officers leaving and those replacing them.

## **7. COMMUNICATION AND VISIBILITY**

Communication and visibility will be given high importance during the implementation of the action. The implementation of the communication activities shall be funded from the amounts allocated to the action.

All necessary measures will be taken to publicise the fact that the action has received funding from the EU in line with the EU communication and visibility requirements in force. All stakeholders and implementing partners shall ensure the visibility of EU financial assistance provided through IPA II throughout all phases of the programme cycle.

Visibility and communication actions shall demonstrate how the intervention contributes to the agreed programme objectives and the accession process, as well as the benefits of the action for the general public. Actions shall be aimed at strengthening general public awareness and support of interventions financed and the objectives pursued. The actions shall aim at highlighting to the relevant target audiences the added value and impact of the EU's interventions and will promote transparency and accountability on the use of funds.

Visibility and communication aspects shall be complementary to the activities implemented by the Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations and the EU Delegations in the field. The European Commission and the EU Delegations should be fully informed of the planning and implementation of the specific visibility and communication activities. The entrusted entities and the European Commission will develop, if relevant a joint consolidated communication and visibility plan for the action based on an agreed communication narrative and master messages customised for the different target audiences (stakeholders, civil society, general public, etc.).