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**THIS ACTION IS FUNDED BY THE EUROPEAN UNION**

**ANNEX II**

to the Commission Implementing Decision on the financing of the annual action plan in favour of Bosnia and Herzegovina for 2024

**Action Document for EU Integration Facility**

**ANNUAL ACTION PLAN**

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

**1. SYNOPSIS**

**1.1. Action Summary Table**

<b>Title</b>	EU Integration Facility
<b>OPSYS</b>	ACT-62383
<b>ABAC</b>	JAD.1354682
<b>Basic Act</b>	Financed under the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA III)
<b>Economic and Investment Plan (EIP)</b>	Yes
<b>EIP Flagship</b>	Priorities: “Environment and climate resilience”, “Digital”, “Economic development (incl. private sector, trade and macroeconomic support)”, “Human Development (incl. human capital and youth)”, “Rule of law, governance and Public administration reform”, “Other”. Flagships: “VIII Digital Infrastructure”, “IX Support Competitiveness”
<b>Team Europe</b>	No
<b>Beneficiary(y)/(ies) of the action</b>	The action shall be carried out in Bosnia and Herzegovina
<b>Programming document</b>	IPA III Programming Framework
<b>PRIORITY AREAS AND SECTOR INFORMATION</b>	
<b>Window and thematic priority</b>	Window 2: Good Governance, <i>Acquis</i> Alignment, Good Neighbourly Relations and Strategic Communication Thematic Priority 1: Good Governance Thematic Priority 2: Administrative Capacity and <i>Acquis</i> Alignment

<b>Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)</b>	<u>Main SDG:</u> SDG 16. Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions <u>Other significant SDGs:</u> SDG 8. Decent work and economic growth SDG 9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation SDG 13. Improve human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning			
<b>DAC code(s)</b>	<u>Main DAC code</u> 43010- Multisector aid (59%) <u>Sub-code</u> 115110 – Public Sector policy and administrative management (41%)			
<b>Main Delivery Channel</b>	Bilateral			
<b>Targets</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Climate <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gender <input type="checkbox"/> Biodiversity			
<b>Markers (from DAC form)</b>	<b>General policy objective</b>	<b>Not targeted</b>	<b>Significant objective</b>	<b>Principal objective</b>
	Participation development/good governance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Aid to environment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Gender equality and women's and girl's empowerment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Disaster Risk Reduction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Inclusion of persons with Disabilities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Nutrition	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<b>RIO Convention markers</b>	<b>Not targeted</b>	<b>Significant objective</b>	<b>Principal objective</b>
	Biological diversity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Combat desertification	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change mitigation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change adaptation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<b>Internal markers and Tags</b>	<b>Policy objectives</b>	<b>Not targeted</b>	<b>Significant objective</b>
EIP		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
EIP Flagship		YES		NO

	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Tags:	YES		NO
Transport	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Energy	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Environment and climate resilience	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Digital	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Economic development (incl. private sector, trade and macroeconomic support)	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Human Development (incl. human capital and youth)	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Health resilience	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Migration and mobility	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Agriculture, food security and rural development	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Rule of law, governance and Public Administration reform	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Digitalisation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Tags	YES		NO
digital connectivity	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
digital governance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
digital entrepreneurship	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
digital skills/literacy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
digital services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Connectivity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tags	YES		NO
digital connectivity	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
energy	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
transport	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
health	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
education and research	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Migration	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reduction of Inequalities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
COVID-19	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>BUDGET INFORMATION</b>			
<b>Amounts concerned</b>	Budget line: 15.020101.01		

	Total estimated cost: EUR 3 700 000 Total amount of EU budget contribution: EUR 3 700 000
<b>MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION</b>	
<b>Implementation modalities (management mode and delivery methods)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Direct management</b> (procurement)</li> <li>• <b>Indirect management</b> with an entrusted entity</li> </ul>
<b>Final Date for conclusion of Financing Agreement</b>	At the latest by 31 December 2025
<b>Final date for concluding contribution / delegation agreements procurement and grant contracts</b>	3 years following the date of conclusion of the financing agreement, with the exception of cases listed under Article 114(2) of the Financial Regulation
<b>Indicative operational implementation period</b>	72 months following the conclusion of the Financing Agreement
<b>Final date for implementing the Financing Agreement</b>	12 years following the conclusion of the Financing Agreement

## 1.2. Summary of the Action

The proposed action is conducive to other IPA actions, designed to provide adjustable and adaptable support to the institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina (at all levels of government) regarding the needs originating from the European integration process and in relation to utilisation of EU financial assistance.

The **overall objective** is to contribute to Bosnia and Herzegovina's overall progress in fulfilling its obligations for European Union accession. The specific objectives are: (1) To identify and adequately address specific and unforeseeable needs in the course of European integration process of Bosnia and Herzegovina and (2) To Ensure policy dialogue concerning the various building blocks of the Interoperable e-governance infrastructure platform.

This versatile, flexible support aims to enable institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina to promptly respond to challenges and requirements of the European Union integration process and to better prepare and implement programmes and actions funded by the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (2021-2027). The action, envisaged as a facility, shall assist in reinforcing institutional capacity for the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) implementation and *acquis* alignment, as well as for absorption and management of pre-accession funds. Provision of this kind of support is even more important in the context of IPA III due to increased emphasis on the technical maturity of the proposed interventions. Various types of support are envisioned under the proposed flexible instrument, including capacity building and technical assistance to the

institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina, preparation of studies, assessments, strategic documents, assistance to tender/call for proposals assessment, communication activities, as well as provision of potential supplies underpinning EU integration processes.

Bosnia and Herzegovina is at the early stage of the digitalisation and additional efforts have to be put to pave the way to modernization and efficiency of public services delivery with the expectation that these changes will have impact on overall public administration modernization by reducing bias and discretion of administration and in the same time increasing transparency and accountability as well as ethical values in service delivery. Based on lesson learned, a strong policy dialogue on fundamental issues regarding the institutional and legislative framework is needed in order to ensure necessary preconditions for establishment key building blocks for digitalisation of the delivery of public services. This Action aims at establishing administrative and legal environment for further development of interoperable digital infrastructures in accordance with the requirements imposed by the accession process as well as corresponding EU regulations and directives.

The action, envisaged to be a flexible support to emerging needs of institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina, is in line with IPA programming Framework, mainly relates to Window 2- Good Governance, *acquis* alignment, good neighbourly relations and strategic communication, bringing the policies and legislation developed in Bosnia and Herzegovina in line with the EU policies and the EU *acquis* as well as building the administrative capacity necessary for efficient and effective implementation of sector policies and adopted legislation. The Action directly addresses the Window 2 Thematic Priority 1: Good governance, i.e., to modernise public administration and hence contribute to sustainable growth and to improve competitiveness. Action as such will also contribute to addressing sustainable development goals, especially SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong institutions) as well as EIP planned support for eGovernment and eServices. As the Action will provide the support to the civil protection area too, it makes the Action in line with Window 3 and Thematic Priority 1: Environment and climate change.

### **1.3 Beneficiar(y)/(ies) of the Action**

The action shall be carried out in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

## **2. RATIONALE**

### **2.1. Context**

The ever-evolving process of European integration with its challenging and complex dynamic, induces the necessity for versatile facility that will provide flexible support to the institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina (at all levels of government) in addressing specific and unforeseeable needs identified in the course of the process. The flexible facility shall assist in reinforcing institutional capacity for the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) implementation and *acquis* alignment, as well as for absorption and management of pre-accession funds.

In February 2016 Bosnia and Herzegovina applied for EU membership, and in May 2019 the Commission adopted an Opinion on its membership application, along with the accompanying Analytical Report, outlining 14 key priorities required for the country to become able to open EU accession negotiations. On 15 December 2022 Bosnia and Herzegovina was granted EU candidate status, what brings about new momentum, dynamics and requirements as far as the European integration process. Furthermore, Bosnia and Herzegovina has been utilising the pre-accession assistance instrument in the period 2021-2027 (IPA III) and needs to be able to fully benefit from it.

The proposed Action is in accordance with the overall IPA III Programming Framework objective defined for Window 2 and it will contribute to Bosnia and Herzegovina's overall progress in fulfilling its obligations for

European Union accession. Furthermore, by supporting and addressing specific and unforeseeable needs of the authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina regarding the European integration process, this action contributes immensely to the specific objective of the Thematic Priority 2 of the Window 2. It correlates to the Thematic Priority 2 specific objective by bringing policies and legislation developed in Bosnia and Herzegovina in line with the EU policies and the EU *acquis* and also by building the administrative capacity to efficiently and effectively implement sector policies and the adopted legislation. Furthermore, it builds the ability of Bosnia and Herzegovina to follow through The European Green Deal, which represents a roadmap for making the EU's economy sustainable by turning climate and environmental challenges into opportunities across all policy areas and making the transition just and inclusive for all. As stated in IPA III Strategic Response for Bosnia and Herzegovina – the Action will support interventions in various areas (e.g., enhancing civil protection system of Bosnia and Herzegovina, bringing it closer to EU standards), therefore it will contribute to the other IPA III Windows and Thematic Priorities as well (e.g., Window 3 and Thematic Priority 1).

This Action (Output 2) is also fully in line with **IPA III Programming Framework** that suggests IPA III countries to use **Digital Compass Communication** of March 2021 in terms of building necessary digital preconditions in a holistic way in order to change paradigm of how citizens' interact with public administration as well as prepare country for further fully accessible online public services. Through ensuring necessary legal and administrative instruments for further development of interoperable e-government platform for e-service delivery, this Action is in line with key points of Digital compass such as ensuring a secure, efficient, interoperable and sustainable digital infrastructure as well as digitalisation of public services. It is also in line with **Strategic Response** and Window 2 aiming to modernise public administrations and improve public governance by taking step forward in digital transformation of the government, as well as bringing the policies and legislation developed in Bosnia and Herzegovina in line with the EU policies and the EU *acquis* and building the administrative capacity necessary for efficient and effective implementation of sector policies and adopted legislation.

Through supporting further process of digitalisation of public administration this Action will contribute implementation of countrywide PAR Strategic framework (2027) and its Action plan which aims to establish interoperable infrastructure that will enable in a future fully transactional e-services. Thus this Action will be a step forward in fulfillment of 14<sup>th</sup> priority of EU Opinion of the European Commission on Bosnia and Herzegovina's application for EU membership which is related to public administration reform.

The Action (Output 1) in different areas will also contribute to the Strategic Framework of Public Administration Reform with respect to ensuring public administration capable of undertaking tasks and reforms required in the context of the European integration process, including alignment with the Green Agenda for Western Balkans. As such the action will provide support in relation to different sector strategies corresponding to the areas of the undertaken interventions.

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

The implementation of the proposed Action will take into full account the **Opinion on the EU membership application of Bosnia and Herzegovina** and the related **2019 Analytical Report**, as well as the **European**

**Union's Bosnia and Herzegovina 2023 Report**<sup>1</sup> – to contribute to the fulfilment of the key priorities and recommendations therein.

The implementation of the Action will also take into full account the priority actions and measures stemming from **the Communication on New growth plan for the Western Balkans**<sup>2</sup>.

The Action is also correlative to **The Economic and Investment Plan for the Western Balkans** and planned support for **e-government and e-services** which are foreseen through the launch of the instrument **Digital Agenda for the Western Balkans**. This Action will be one step ahead in using ICT technology in public administration which can play a crucial role in development of conducive environment to increase job creation as well as economic growth, which is stated in the EIP. This Action is also compatible with Joint Conclusions 2022 in the area of e-Government infrastructure, e-signature, as well as with **Interoperable Europe Act** proposal and accompanying Communication to strengthen cross-border interoperability and cooperation in the public sector across the EU, supporting the creation of a network of sovereign and interconnected digital public administrations in a way that will contribute to development of national interoperable structure which will be connected in future in common EU network.

Moreover, the Action corresponds to the **Guidelines for the European Green Deal** which emphasises greener public administration – capable to lead to modernised reforms that will result in a cleaner environment, more affordable energy, smarter transport, new jobs and an overall better quality of life.

Further, the Action is in line with the **Sendai Framework**, due to contributing to harmonisation of legislative framework, strengthening capacities of local communities, developing modules and raising awareness in the field of fire protection and firefighting. **Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030** outlines seven clear targets and four priorities for action to prevent new and reduce existing disaster risks: (i) Understanding disaster risk; (ii) Strengthening disaster risk governance to manage disaster risk; (iii) Investing in disaster reduction for resilience and; (iv) Enhancing disaster preparedness for effective response, and to "Build Back Better" in recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction.

Additionally since 2023, Bosnia & Herzegovina has also been participating as an observer in the pilot for enlargement countries under the Technical Support Instrument\*. Bosnia & Herzegovina observes a project in Estonia on the professionalization of public procurement personnel and supporting the development of strategic and sustainable public procurement policy. The aim of the pilot is to contribute towards accelerated accession by establishing connections between enlargement countries and Member States, and introducing enlargement countries to the types of reforms and projects done by EU Member States post-accession.

With regard to all the aforementioned, the Action is fully aligned with relevant documents of the EU Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance, including the political priorities of the Commission adjusted for external action in relation to the Western Balkans and a credible enlargement perspective. Increased engagement of the EU in the Western Balkans pertains to support the reform of public administration, including the provision of better services and the application of EU rules and standards in the countries of the Western Balkans.

## **2.2. Problem Analysis**

### ***Short problem analysis***

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<sup>1</sup>[https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/bosnia-and-herzegovina-report-2023\\_en](https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/bosnia-and-herzegovina-report-2023_en)

<sup>2</sup>[https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/2023-communication-new-growth-plan-western-balkans\\_en](https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/2023-communication-new-growth-plan-western-balkans_en)

For the European integration process in Bosnia and Herzegovina, it is of paramount importance to have efficient and effective institutional capacities, as well as to ensure their adequate cooperation and coordination. This in particular relates to the SAA implementation, the Programme of Integration (i.e. NPAA) development and implementation and the process of the EU *acquis* alignment. As pointed out in the SIGMA 2017 assessment, these processes remain rather challenging tasks in the context of Bosnia and Herzegovina's multi-level administrative set up. In case of sector-specific issues, the need for consultation and coordination becomes particularly emphasised since the competences, in line with the Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina, are in most cases divided or shared between sectoral institutions of different administrative levels. As the authorities at all levels of government in Bosnia and Herzegovina face challenges in relation to EU accession process, the institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina and concerned personnel need assistance in order to promptly and effectively respond to requirements of assuming EU membership.

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

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

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

At the present moment in Bosnia and Herzegovina there is no system of eGovernment set in place ensuring that business and citizens can effectively resolve their needs regarding the public services. The process of digitalisation and optimisation of public administration processes are dispersed over wide area of often unclear institutional competences. Necessity of streamlined efforts resulting in citizens/business focused interoperable IT systems and platform is recognised in every report and study on this matter. In order to establish such kind of platforms it is necessary to further develop a policy dialog on fundamental issues regarding the institutional and legislative framework that is necessary for enabling the key building blocks for digitalised delivery of public services. Especially in context of EU integration process, the clear picture of actions that are necessary when aligning with and transposing the corresponding EU regulations and directives is essential for Bosnia and Herzegovina's digitalisation process.

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

Regarding Output 1, institutions from all sectors and all levels of governance in Bosnia and Herzegovina may benefit from the assistance foreseen under this Action. Furthermore, the following are the main stakeholders



as far as European integration process and IPA utilisation in Bosnia and Herzegovina: The Directorate for European Integration (DEI) is the expert body of the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina responsible for coordination of activities concerning the requirements for the European integration process and coordination of EU assistance. The Director of the Directorate performs function of National IPA Coordinator (NIPAC) and provides all the necessary expert and administrative support for this function. In the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republika Srpska and the Brčko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina, there are institutions that coordinate European integration process. These include the EU Integration Office of the Government of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Republika Srpska Ministry of European Integration and International Cooperation and the Brčko District Department for European Integration and International Cooperation. In addition, the ten cantonal governments in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina have EU integration coordinators nominated and some also have established specific units in charge of European integration.

Given that the action will support the authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina at different levels to respond adequately to their duties and tasks in the EU integration process of Bosnia and Herzegovina covering different sectors, and therefore the list of stakeholders will be diverse according to the interventions within the action .

Regarding Output 2 at the state level, Public Administration Reform Coordinator's Office (PARCO) Bosnia and Herzegovina is a body of the Bosnia and Herzegovina Council of Ministers, which operates as a driving force and a coordinator of PAR process. PARCO is responsible for coordination of activities related to preparation, adoption and implementation of PAR strategy, which includes among others public service delivery, as well as e-services; Ministry of Transport and Communication (MCT) of Bosnia and Herzegovina is responsible for policy, as well as preparation of strategic and planning documents in the field of international and inter-entity communications and information technologies. MCT is also responsible for supervision over the application of the Law on Electronic Documents as well as Law on Electronic Legal and Business Traffic, while Office for Supervision and Accreditation of Certifiers according to Law on electronic signature is also located in the Ministry; Ministry of Security of Bosnia and Herzegovina is CERT responsible for cyber security, together with MCT which have responsibilities regarding law framework on cyber security. Besides these two ministries, state level institutions important for the unhindered implementation of the Action are the General Secretariat of Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina and The Agency for Identification Documents, Registers and Data Exchange of Bosnia and Herzegovina (IDDEEA). The General Secretariat contains Department for development of electronic business and e-government systems for the CoM and state level institutions. The IDDEEA is responsible for setting standards in the field of identification documents, administration and maintenance of servers which contain data from central registers, hosting applications through which competent authorities conduct administrative procedures related to the issuance of identity documents, maintenance of data transmission network between institutions at all levels of government and personalization (printing) of personal documents.

At sub-national level similar structure exists too. On the entity level the Ministry of Transport and Communication in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina is competent to put forward the Electronic Signature Law of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and it supervises the implementation of the law. The General Secretariat of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina Government is responsible, *inter alia*, for coordination and assistance in the development of e-Government in federal administrative bodies, in particular: construction, development, maintenance and monitoring of interoperability infrastructure, as well as catalogue of public registers and electronic services, portal of good e-practices. The Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina Financial and IT agency acts as an one-stop system for business and registration of business, based on Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina Government decisions (the law has not yet been adapted to the Government's conclusions). In Republika Srpska (RS) entity the Ministry for Scientific and Technological Development, Higher Education and Information Society performs administrative and other professional tasks related to: scientific and technological development, development of the information society in entity and other duties, including establishment and development of the electronic administration system as well as

coordination of technological and IT projects in the public sector in Republika Srpska. The General Secretariat of RS Government - Department for Information Technology performs the tasks of: execution and monitoring of policies related to the Government in the field of providing electronic services of the Government and administrative bodies, implements IT development priorities in the Government; maintains the central IT network of the Government and maintains the central register of IT equipment and software of the Government; takes care of the maintenance of the Government Data Center; creates a working environment of interconnection, policies and permissions for access to IT resources of the Government.

In District Brčko (BD) the Department for Professional and Administrative Affairs is responsible for ensuring the operation of the public administration information system while The Public Register Department is responsible, among others, for maintaining and improving public registers and archives; The BD PAR Coordinator's Office is responsible for improving services delivery in general as well as interoperability framework.

For effective PAR coordination, inter-governmental structure has been established with aim to enable the smooth implementation of PAR in general as well as in specific areas envisaged by the PAR Strategic Framework. In Service delivery pillar of the PAR Strategy, the inter-governmental group includes all the key institutions from state, entity and district level, which are responsible for implementation of activities from the PAR Action plan.

### **2.3. Lessons Learned**

Regarding Output 1, it has been demonstrated during the work of SAA Committee and Sub-Committees, EU *acquis* alignment, and other European integration processes, there is a need to strengthen capacities of all institutions required to undertake European integration related work at various levels of the government in their respective sectors. In addition, it is required to maintain effective coordination among different levels of the government for European integration purposes.

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

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

These conclusions are reiterated in the Second Country Interim Programme evaluation of IPA assistance in Bosnia and Herzegovina. With regard to the performance, IPA projects have been effective and efficient, although there have been challenges in implementation due to contractor performance, slow procurement

procedures, meeting conditionality or delay in reaching consensus between all stakeholders. Therefore, ownership and commitment of all relevant stakeholders of any intervention and its formalisation is an imperative before support under the Action starts. Moreover, a general lesson learned which applies to all sectors is that policy and legislative development needs to be evidence-based, costed and subject to appropriate internal and external stakeholder consultations at the right time of the legislative and policy-making process. This is a key in ensuring implementation and enforcement of adopted policies and legislation. Therefore, the action shall ensure consistency with the horizontal public administration reform efforts.

Regarding Output 2, one of the key recognized lessons from the previous period is that the inadequate or missing legislative framework related to digitalisation, as well as the lack of political support for the planned changes, can seriously affect the sustainability of the achieved results. With regard to this lesson learned, this Action is focused on addressing prioritized legal regulations in order to ensure necessary administrative and legal preconditions for further development of interoperable e-government platform, taking care at the same time of the alignment with the EU *acquis* aiming to reinforce the long-term sustainability of the achieved results in a future.

Lessons learned identified by the evaluation of IT projects financed through the Public Administration Reform Fund is the need for full participation and commitment of beneficiary representatives in order to enable timely completion, adoption and hand over of project results. Proper two-way communication will enable the participation of relevant civil servants who should ensure a balance between daily duties in public administration and participation in action activities. The lesson learned will be addressed through this action by providing support to the institution responsible for coordinating the implementation of this multifold action, in order to achieve effective coordination and involvement of all stakeholders concerned.

### 3. DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

#### 3.1. Intervention Logic

The **Overall objective** of this action is to

1. Contribute to Bosnia and Herzegovina's overall progress in fulfilling its obligations for European Union accession

The **Specific objective 1** of this action is to

Identify and adequately address specific and unforeseeable needs in the course of European integration process of Bosnia and Herzegovina

The **Specific objective 2** of this action is to:

Ensure policy dialogue concerning the various building blocks of the Interoperable e-governance infrastructure platform

The **Outputs** to be delivered by this action contributing to the corresponding Specific Objective (Outcome) are

- **Output 1** contributing to **Outcome 1**: The authorities (at all levels of government in Bosnia and Herzegovina) are enabled to provide more appropriate and timely responses to imminent EU integration priorities
- **Output 2** contributing to **Outcome 2** Legislative and administrative instruments for building blocks of the Interoperable e-governance infrastructure platform are established in line with EU *acquis*

The underlying intervention logic for this action is that **IF** the authorities (at all levels of government in Bosnia and Herzegovina) are able to provide more appropriate and timely responses to the imminent EU integration priorities (**Output 1**) and good cooperation between relevant stakeholders is established and maintained (**Assumption**), as well as if convenient technical, financial and human resources are allocated by the

beneficiaries (**Assumption**) **THEN** the specific and/or unforeseeable needs identified in the course of European integration process of Bosnia and Herzegovina will be adequately addressed (**Outcome 1**).

This will be possible **BECAUSE** of the nature of this instrument/facility that provides adjustable and flexible support in addressing specific, urgent and unforeseeable needs identified in the course of the European integration process. This versatile support to institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina aims at enabling them to respond promptly to challenges and requirements of the European Union integration process and to better prepare and implement IPA programmes/actions funded through the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance.

Also, **IF** Legislative and administrative instruments for building blocks of the Interoperable e-governance infrastructure platform are established in line with EU *acquis* (**Output 2**) and active participation of all stakeholders including highly ranking civil servants, both legal and IT experts in project activities, is established (**Assumption**) as well as legal experts in institutions respond in a timely manner to the Action proposals (**Assumption**) **THEN** policy dialogue for building blocks of the Interoperable e-governance infrastructure platform will be ensured (**Outcome 2**).

**IF** specific and/or unforeseeable needs are identified and adequately addressed in the course of European integration process of Bosnia and Herzegovina (**Outcome 1**) as well as policy dialogue for building blocks of the Interoperable e-governance infrastructure platform is ensured (**Outcome 2**) and the assumptions regarding political support to institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina to participate in the EU integration processes as well as political support to digitalisation efforts of institutions and global insignificant recession hold true (**Assumptions**), **THEN** it will contribute to Bosnia and Herzegovina's overall progress in fulfilling its obligations for European Union accession (**Impact**).

### 3.2. Indicative Activities

A non-exhaustive list of indicative activities related to **Output 1** are inter alia:

- Provision of technical assistance to the administrations at all levels of government in Bosnia and Herzegovina and preparation of required documents and analyses, respecting gender mainstreaming aspect as well, to support SAA implementation, EU *acquis* alignment and implementation, including Programme of Integration of Bosnia and Herzegovina into the EU (PI/NPAA), and the EU accession process in Bosnia and Herzegovina in general.
- Supporting urgent and/or unforeseen emerging priority tasks related to EU integration and SAA implementation priorities, through technical assistance and other interventions (including software and Information Communication Technology equipment, and, for example, provision of required translation of documents within the process of alignment of EU *acquis* and accession of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the EU in general) to the administrations at all levels of government in Bosnia and Herzegovina .
- Provision of technical assistance to the administrations at all levels of government in Bosnia and Herzegovina in acquiring knowledge and hands-on training on Sector wide approach, its implementation, and in preparation of sector programmes for IPA multi-annual programming purposes.
- Provision of technical assistance to the administrations at all levels of government in Bosnia and Herzegovina in acquiring knowledge, introducing and utilising sector budget support/sector reform contract, including preparation of respective programming documents for sector budget support/sector reform contract utilisation.
- Supporting urgent and unforeseen priority tasks to the administrations at all levels of government in Bosnia and Herzegovina (e.g. feasibility studies, damages and recovery needs assessments, action preparation, prevention measures against all kinds of natural disasters, as well as implementation of interventions to mitigate the consequences and prevent disasters in the future) in case of natural disasters, paying attention to specific needs of women and men.
- Provision of technical assistance for relevant institutions at all levels of government in Bosnia and Herzegovina in analysis, assessment and evidence-based preparation of country-wide sector strategies,

multi-sector strategies, strategic programming documents, for the alignment of legislation in Bosnia and Herzegovina with the EU *acquis*, SAA implementation, and the current and future use of EU pre-accession funds, ensuring paying attention to specific needs of women and men.

- Provision of technical assistance for relevant institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina in drafting manuals, working procedures, job descriptions, rulebooks and other procedural documentation for the implementation of SAA priorities, utilisation of pre-accession instruments, meeting requirements for indirect management of EU assistance, and in support of EU accession process in Bosnia and Herzegovina.
- Provision of technical assistance to relevant institutions at all levels of government in Bosnia and Herzegovina for capacity building on the 2021-2027 pre-accession instrument and acquisition of knowledge for raising absorption capacities.
- Provision of technical assistance to relevant institutions at all levels of government in Bosnia and Herzegovina in drafting of (pre-)feasibility and impact studies in relation to Bosnia and Herzegovina's compliance with the SAA and carrying out (pre-)investment studies, regulatory impact assessment studies, environmental impact assessment studies, business plans, market studies, economic and cost-benefit analyses, investment appraisals, project pipelines, etc., for the upcoming investments, ensuring that these include a gender component.
- Provision of technical assistance in setting up and developing methodology and single (sector) project pipelines for investment projects and utilisation of respective instruments of support for investment projects for relevant institutions at all levels of government in Bosnia and Herzegovina .
- Support to relevant institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina at all levels of government in preparing Actions for upcoming IPA funding, in particular those requiring specialised expertise, including support to the Action preparation process and all necessary Action documentation and annexes to programming documents, ensuring a gender component as well.
- Preparing of tender and procurement documentation to relevant institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina (terms of reference, technical specifications, market research, bills of quantities, guidelines for grant schemes and other supporting documents for tender dossiers) as well as support to tender/call for proposals evaluations, with due consideration of a gender component.
- Provision of technical assistance for relevant institutions at all levels of government in Bosnia and Herzegovina in developing Standard Operational Procedures (SOPs) i.e. coordination, engagement and cooperation of local communities in the field of fire protection and firefighting in Bosnia and Herzegovina in line with the EU standards, as well as in harmonisation of legislation on emergency situations/protection and rescue with legislation in the field of fire protection and firefighting in Bosnia and Herzegovina in line with the EU standards.
- Supporting awareness raising of EU programmes (current and future) and building capacity of end beneficiaries to access the funds available under EU Programmes and of relevant institutions at all levels of government in Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Provision of technical assistance to relevant institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina to enhance monitoring, reporting and evaluation processes and capacities.
- Provision of institution building activities and training of institutions at all levels of government in Bosnia and Herzegovina relevant to any of the above-mentioned activities and the European integration process, taking into consideration specific needs of both men and women.
- Participation in European integration related meetings, workshops, study visits.
- Provision of information, communication and training activities and material regarding EU integration to administrations at all levels of government in Bosnia and Herzegovina .
- Carrying out evaluations of IPA actions/programmes.
- Additional COVID-19 related specific response activities and/or other unforeseeable pandemic-related response activities.
- Investments (works and supplies) might also be supported through this Action.

## **A non-exhaustive list of indicative activities related to Output 2 are inter alia:**

- Create a prioritization list of administrative and legislative steps for establishment of interoperability platforms in B&H;
- Based on previous legislative analyses, draft the legislative and administrative proposals (laws and by-laws) for establishment of interoperability platforms in Bosnia and Herzegovina and interoperability building blocks (Public administration service catalogue, Registries, Shared Service centres, Certification authorities (CA), eMailbox, ePayment, e-identity (e-ID), e-signature, Government cloud);
- Carry out the consultations with all relevant stakeholder during the process of preparation of administrative and legislative proposals;
- Propose the dynamic plan of activities for each stakeholder for adoption of legislative and administrative proposals;
- Deepen the study on Interoperability in Bosnia and Herzegovina based on the needs and recommendations made by earlier studies;
- Identify all registers in Bosnia and Herzegovina and catalog them in form of map of registers Building capacity of key stakeholders for implementation of strategy for Information society.

### **3.3. Mainstreaming**

#### **Environmental Protection, Climate Change and Biodiversity**

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

#### **Gender equality and empowerment of women and girls**

As per OECD Gender DAC codes identified in section 1.1, this action is labelled as G1. This implies that significant attention will be given to gender aspect within Action activities, including ensuring participation of both women and men, recognising different needs of women and men, ensuring benefits for both men and women, ensuring gender sensitive data and gender analyses. In general, a gender perspective will be maintained ensuring that the results of the Action impact positively on gender equality as well. By this, the Action will make contribution in line with the EU Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025 which aims at enhancing gender mainstreaming by systematically including a gender perspective in all stages of policy design in all EU policy areas, ensuring that women and men, girls and boys, in all their diversity, are equal. The Action will also contribute to Gender Action Plan of Bosnia and Herzegovina 2023-2027, as a framework strategic document for inclusion of the gender equality standards in key areas of reform. When creating the legal framework and instruments for e-government, necessary gender analyses will be prepared. As far as the capacity building programme is concerned, the principles of gender equality will be taken into account.

#### **Human Rights**

Due attention will also be given to the respect of human rights and integration of human rights principles within the undertaken interventions. Participation in the Action will be guaranteed on the bases of equal access regardless of sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation. Also, right on protection of personal data will be promoted and ensured to the maximum extent possible into the planning, assessment, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the activities related to digitalisation.

## Disability

The improvements in the public service and strengthened good governance to be gained from the Action will be beneficial for minorities and vulnerable groups. Based on the fundamental principles of promoting equality and combating discrimination, participation in the Action will be guaranteed on the basis of equal access regardless of disability, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, age or sexual orientation. Although vulnerable groups are not directly targeted with the Action, preparatory activities on establishment of e-services will be beneficial for **vulnerable groups** by contributing to ensure easier access to public administration and public services for those groups and help them to exercise their rights.

## Democracy

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

## Disaster Risk Reduction

The action is aligned with the **Risk Assessment of Bosnia and Herzegovina regarding Natural and Other Disasters** as it plans to undertake legislative, capacity building and awareness measures for better risk response and management in firefighting and fire protection sector. The Assessment identifies accidents and catastrophes, and analyses the probability, as well as harmful consequences on people, property, environment and infrastructure/social community.

## Other considerations if relevant

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

### 3.4. Risks and Assumptions

Category	Risks	Likelihood (High/ Medium/ Low)	Impact (High/ Medium/ Low)	Mitigating measures
Planning, processes and systems	The lack of cooperation among institutions at different levels of government in Bosnia and Herzegovina	M	H	Different mitigating measures, including the Commission's political support and enhanced policy dialogue, will be undertaken to eliminate risks to successful implementation of interventions undertaken under the Action.

People and the organisation	Full commitment and support of the decision-makers of the involved institutions	<b>M</b>	<b>M</b>	Commission's political support and enhanced inter-ministerial policy dialogue
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### **External Assumptions**

- Political support to institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina to participate in the EU integration processes
- Political will and cooperation to support the process of public administration digitalisation
- No significant global recession

### **Assumptions at outputs level that enable the outcomes to be achieved are the following:**

- Active participation of all stakeholders including highly ranking civil servants, both legal and IT experts, in project activities
- Legal experts in institutions respond in a timely manner to proposals



### **3.5. Indicative Logical Framework Matrix**

Results	Results chain: Main expected results [maximum 10]	Indicators [it least one indicator per expected result]	Baselines (values and years)	Targets (values and years)	Sources of data	Assumptions
<b>Impact</b>	To contribute to Bosnia and Herzegovina's overall progress in fulfilling its obligations for European Union accession.	Progress made towards meeting accession criteria	No progress to limited progress depending on the respective criteria (2022)	<i>Acquis</i> transposition largely achieved (2027)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Commission report on Bosnia and Herzegovina</li> </ul>	<i>Not applicable</i>
<b>Outcome 1</b>	Specific and/or unforeseeable needs in the course of European integration process of Bosnia and Herzegovina were identified and adequately addressed	Frequency of requests received by the EUD for EUIF assistance from Bosnia and Herzegovina authorities to address specific EU integration requirements	Up to 5 requests received by the EUD for EUIF assistance from authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina per annum (2022)	At least 15 requests received by the EUD for EUIF assistance from authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina per annum (2027)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Commission report on Bosnia and Herzegovina</li> <li>IPA Monitoring Committee meetings' conclusions</li> </ul>	<p>Political support to institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina to participate in the EU integration processes</p> <p>No significant global recession</p>
<b>Outcome 2</b>	Policy dialogue concerning the various building blocks of the Interoperable e-governance infrastructure platform ensured	% of evidence based law/bylaw proposals ready for adoption	0 % (2022)	85 % (2027)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>IPA Monitoring Committee meetings' conclusions</li> <li>Commission report on Bosnia and Herzegovina</li> </ul>	Political support to institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina to digitalisation efforts
<b>Output 1 related to Outcome 1</b>	The authorities at all levels of government in Bosnia and Herzegovina were enabled to provide more appropriate and timely responses to imminent EU integration priorities	<p><b>1.1</b> Number of outputs, such as ToRs, technical specifications, studies and other documents</p> <p><b>1.2</b> Percentage of tender procedures launched and finalised</p> <p><b>1.3</b> Percentage of IPA funds contracted</p> <p><b>1.4</b> Percentage of IPA funds disbursed</p> <p><b>1.5</b> Level of harmonisation of Civil protection laws and by-laws in line with the EU standards</p> <p><b>1.6</b> Stage of Civil/fire protection SOPs development</p>	<p><b>1.1</b> 0 (2022)</p> <p><b>1.2</b> 70% of the tender procedures launched and finalised in line with the anticipated tendering plan (2022)</p> <p><b>1.3</b> 70% of IPA funds contracted against the anticipated contracting plan (2022)</p> <p><b>1.4</b> 60% of IPA funds disbursed in line with the anticipated disbursement plan (2022)</p> <p><b>1.5</b> Insufficient (2022)</p> <p><b>1.6</b> SOPs not drafted (2022)</p>	<p><b>1.1</b> 8 (2027)</p> <p><b>1.2</b> 85% of the tender procedures launched/finalised in line with anticipated tendering plan (2027)</p> <p><b>1.3</b> 85% of IPA funds contracted in line with the anticipated contracting plan (2027)</p> <p><b>1.4</b> 70% of IPA funds disbursed in line with the anticipated disbursement plan (2027)</p> <p><b>1.5</b> Significant (2027)</p> <p><b>1.6</b> SOPs fully drafted (2027)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Database reports and Action documentation from individual TA and other contracts</li> <li>Project monitoring and implementation reports, DEI monitoring reports</li> <li>IPA Monitoring Committee meetings' conclusions</li> <li>Submitted and approved action documents</li> <li>Tender documentation</li> </ul>	<p>Identification of priority areas for assistance in a timely manner</p> <p>Adequate technical, financial and human resources allocated by the beneficiaries to the implementation of the activities.</p>

<b>Output 2 related to Outcome 2</b>	Legislative and administrative instruments for building blocks of the Interoperable e-governance infrastructure platform are established in line with EU <i>acquis</i>	Percentage of high priority administrative and legislative recommendations necessary for implementation of interoperability building blocks addressed	0% (2022)	85% (2027)	○ Project monitoring and implementation reports	Active participation of all stakeholders including highly ranking civil servants with IT and legal expertise  Legal experts in institutions respond in a timely manner to proposals
		Number of new or revised legal instruments drafted and proposed to stakeholders	0 (2022)	Previous technical assistance “EU support for Interoperable eGovernance Infrastructure Platform in Bosnia and Herzegovina” will provide information for target value (2027)	○ Project monitoring and implementation reports	
		Number of dynamic plans of systemic change of organisations aimed to increase readiness for EU <i>acquis</i> transposition and implementation	0	Previous technical assistance “EU support for interoperable eGovernance infrastructure Platform in Bosnia and Herzegovina” will provide information for target value (2027)	○ Project monitoring and implementation reports	
		Level of inclusion of key stakeholders in consultation process	No consultations performed (2022)	All key stakeholders are included in consultations (2027)	○ List of event participants	

## **4. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS**

### **4.1. Financing Agreement**

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

### **4.2. Indicative Implementation Period**

The indicative operational implementation period of this action, during which the activities described in section 3 will be carried out and the corresponding contracts and agreements implemented, is 72 months from the date of conclusion of the financing agreement.

Extensions of the implementation period may be agreed by the Commission's responsible authorising officer by amending this Financing Decision and the relevant contracts and agreements.

### **4.3. Implementation Modalities applicable for Project modality**

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

#### **4.3.1. Direct Management (Procurement)**

The activities related to *the Output 1 (the authorities at all levels of government in Bosnia and Herzegovina were enabled to provide more appropriate and timely responses to imminent EU integration priorities)* will be delivered by means of several services, including twinning light, supplies and work contracts under direct management of the Delegation of EU in Bosnia and Herzegovina, taking into account the specificity of EU Integration Facility to provide multisector aid and specific response (unforeseeable activities).

The activities related to *the Output 2 (Legislative and administrative instruments for building blocks of the Interoperable e-governance infrastructure platform are established in line with EU acquis)* will be delivered through one service contract under direct management of the Delegation of EU in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

#### **4.3.2. Indirect Management with a pillar-assessed entity**

A part of this action may be implemented in indirect management with a pillar assessed entity, which will be selected by the Commission's services using the following criteria:

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

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

### 4.3.3. Changes from indirect to direct management (and vice versa) mode due to exceptional circumstances

If the implementation modality under direct management as defined in section 4.3.1 (procurements) cannot be implemented due to circumstances beyond the control of the Commission, the modality of implementation by indirect management, with a pillar-assessed entity would be used according to section 4.3.2

### 4.4. Scope of geographical eligibility for procurement and grants

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

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

### 4.5. Indicative Budget

Indicative Budget components	EU contribution (amount in EUR)	Other contributions
<b>Methods of implementation</b> – cf. section 4.3		
<b>Outcome 1:</b> <i>Specific and/or unforeseeable needs in the course of European integration process of Bosnia and Herzegovina are identified and adequately addressed</i>		
Procurement (direct management) – cf. section 4.3.1 <b>Output 1:</b> <i>The authorities at all levels of government in Bosnia and Herzegovina were enabled to provide more appropriate and timely responses to imminent EU integration priorities</i>  <i>(Part of Output 1 related to the Civil Protection; EUR 200 000.00)</i>	EUR 2 200 000	NA
<b>Outcome 2:</b> <i>Ensure policy dialogue concerning the various building blocks of the Interoperable e-governance infrastructure platform</i>		
Procurement (direct management, one service contract) – cf. section 4.3.1 <b>Output 2:</b> <i>Legislative and administrative instruments for building block of the Interoperable e-governance infrastructure platform are established in line with EU acquis</i>	EUR 1 500 000	NA
<b>Procurement – total envelope under section 4.3.1</b>	EUR 3 700 000	NA
<b>Evaluation</b> – cf. section 5.2 <b>Audit</b> – cf. section 5.3	may be covered by another Decision	

<b>Strategic Communication and Public Diplomacy</b> – cf. section 6	will be covered by another Decision	
<b>Contingencies</b>	N/A	NA
<b>Totals</b>	EUR 3 700 000	

#### 4.6. Organisational Set-up and Responsibilities

The main institutional stakeholders that will be involved in the implementation of the Action, Outcome 1 are:

- Directorate for European Integration (DEI)
- Ministries of the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Republika Srpska Ministry for European Integration and International Cooperation
- Ministries of Republika Srpska Government
- Brčko District Department for European Integration and International Cooperation
- Brčko District government departments
- EU Integration Office of the Government of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and cantonal Coordinators and bodies for European Integration
- Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina’s and cantonal line Ministries,

as well as direct beneficiary institutions that benefit from the activities financed from the Outcome 1 of the Action.

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

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

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

The main institutional stakeholders that will be involved in the implementation of the Action, Outcome 2 are:

Steering Committees will be established to guide implementation of activities that will be implemented as Technical Assistance. Apart from Contracting Authority and Public Administration Reform Coordinators’ Office PARCO (main beneficiary of the action), Steering Committees will include representatives of the Bosnia and Herzegovina’s Ministry of Communications and Transport, Coordination Body for Interoperability of the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina, IDDEEA. The composition of the Steering Committee will ensure equal representation of the interest of all key actors highlighting effectiveness and efficiency of such a body. As part of its prerogative of budget implementation and to safeguard the financial interests of the Union, the Commission may participate in the above governance structures’ set up for governing the implementation of the action. Steering Committee may decide to invite members from other institutions/entities, as deemed relevant. The role of the Steering Committee is to provide strategic guidance for the project as well as to give recommendation for the Contracting Authority (EU Delegation).

In addition, specific management structures like a coordination group, technical advisory body etc., if and where relevant, may be established to facilitate access to information, ensure timely and sufficient inputs from relevant institutions when required, provide advice, etc.

#### **4.7. Pre-conditions**

The present Annual Action Programme does not require any pre-condition to be implemented. Pre-condition for the implementation of this Action (Output 2) is implementation of EUIF 2021 financed contract “EU support for Interoperable e-Governance Infrastructure Platform in Bosnia and Herzegovina” which is considered to be a baseline study with initial recommendations for development of service delivery building blocks (service catalogue, GSB, e-Payment, e-Mailbox, Cloud, Trust services, CA). The EUIF 2021 study on interoperability will provide directions and areas where further development is needed and which activities will be implemented through this Action.

### **5. PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT**

#### **5.1. Monitoring and Reporting**

The day-to-day technical and financial monitoring of the implementation of this action will be a continuous process, and part of the implementing partner’s responsibilities. To this aim, the implementing partner shall establish a permanent internal, technical and financial monitoring system for the action and elaborate regular progress reports (not less than annual) and final reports. Every report shall provide an accurate account of implementation of the action, difficulties encountered, changes introduced, as well as the degree of achievement of its Outputs and contribution to the achievement of its Outcomes, and if possible at the time of reporting, contribution to the achievement of its Impacts, as measured by corresponding indicators, using as reference the log-frame matrix.

The Commission may undertake additional project monitoring visits both through its own staff and through independent consultants recruited directly by the Commission for independent monitoring reviews (or recruited by the responsible agent contracted by the Commission for implementing such reviews).

This action will be regularly monitored by EU Delegation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Internal monitoring will be implemented through the Steering Committee’s meetings, regular EU Delegation Implementation reviews, on-the-spot checks, meetings with beneficiaries and consultant companies/contractors. Additionally, the Action might be subject to external monitoring in line with the European Commission rules and procedures set in the Financing Agreement. This will provide, as necessary and required, an independent assessment of the on-going or ex-post performance of the Action.

#### **5.2. Evaluation**

Having regard to the nature of the action, a final evaluation may be carried out for this action or its components via independent consultants contracted by the Commission.

The Commission shall form a Reference Group (RG) composed by representatives from the main stakeholders at both EU and national (representatives from the government, from civil society organisations (private sector, NGOs, etc.), etc.) levels. If deemed necessary, other donors will be invited to join. The Commission shall inform the implementing partner at least 3 months in advance of the dates envisaged for the evaluation exercise and 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 partner country and other key stakeholders following the best practice of evaluation dissemination<sup>3</sup>. The implementing partner and the Commission shall analyse the conclusions and recommendations of the evaluations and, where appropriate, in agreement with the partner country, jointly decide on the follow-up actions to be taken and any adjustments necessary, including, if indicated, the reorientation of the project.

### **5.3. Audit and Verifications**

Without prejudice to the obligations applicable to contracts concluded for the implementation of this action, the Commission may, on the basis of a risk assessment, contract independent audit or verification assignments for one or several contracts or agreements.

## **6. STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC DIPLOMACY**

All entities implementing EU-funded external actions have the contractual obligation to inform the relevant audiences of the Union's support for their work by displaying the EU emblem and a short funding statement as appropriate on all communication materials related to the actions concerned. To that end they must comply with the instructions given in the 2022 guidance document *Communicating and raising EU visibility: Guidance for external actions* (or any successor document)<sup>4</sup>.

This obligation will apply equally, regardless of whether the actions concerned are implemented by the Commission, the partner country, service providers, grant beneficiaries or entrusted or delegated entities such as UN agencies, international financial institutions and agencies of EU Member States. In each case, a reference to the relevant contractual obligations must be included in the respective financing agreement, procurement and grant contracts, and contribution agreements.

## **7. SUSTAINABILITY**

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

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

Elaboration of strategic documents or new legislation/amendments especially related to digitalisation shall be carried out respecting the legislation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, especially that which regulates fiscal/regulatory impact assessments, public consultations, inter-ministerial coordination. As a rule, projects should start by providing support to the beneficiaries with options analysis, regulatory impact assessment, concept papers etc. prior to supporting them with drafting legislation/amendments. New legislation/amendments in area of digitalisation shall be coordinated among the different levels of government, thus promoting harmonisation and reducing fragmentation of the legal framework/instruments in the future what will ensure basis for further development of interoperable architecture for E-governance and its sustainability.

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<sup>3</sup> [https://capacity4dev.europa.eu/groups/evaluation\\_guidelines/info/evaluation-dissemination\\_en](https://capacity4dev.europa.eu/groups/evaluation_guidelines/info/evaluation-dissemination_en)

<sup>4</sup> [https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/knowledge-hub/communicating-and-raising-eu-visibility-guidance-external-actions\\_en](https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/knowledge-hub/communicating-and-raising-eu-visibility-guidance-external-actions_en)



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

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

The high involvement of the main actors will be ensured during implementation of the Action in order to ensure ownership and boost partnership among stakeholders, to take over the results of the Action to be used after the Action ends.