European Commission

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

MULTI-COUNTRY

STRENGTHENING ECONOMIC GOVERNANCE AND PUBLIC FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Action Summary

The EU enlargement strategy 2013-14 puts emphasis on strengthening the dialogue on economic governance with candidate countries and potential candidates. In accordance with this strategy, the beneficiaries are invited to enhance economic policy and its governance through the preparation of annual National Economic Reform Programmes and, multiannual public financial management reform action plans/programmes. Reform priorities addressed in these programmes will be underpinned by IPA assistance.

In cooperation with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) the Action will provide for targeted technical assistance for the implementation of country-specific policy guidance issued in the context of the enhanced economic governance approach. It will also support implementation of the public financial management reform priorities in the beneficiaries.

Action Identification	
Programme Title	IPA II Multi-country action programme
Action Title	Economic Governance
Action Reference	IPA 2014/031-603.03/MC/economic governance
Sector Information	
ELARG Sectors	Democracy and Governance
DAC Sector	15111
Budget	
Total cost (VAT excluded)[1]	EUR 8 million
EU contribution	EUR 8 million
Management and Implementation	
Method of implementation	Direct management
Direct management: **ELARG unit in charge**	ELARG D3
Implementation responsibilities	ELARG D3
Location	
Zone benefiting from the action	Western Balkans
Specific implementation area(s)	Western Balkans
Timeline	
Deadline for conclusion of the Financing Agreement	Not applicable
Contracting deadline	31 December 2015
End of operational implementation period	31 December 2018

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

1. Rationale

The EU enlargement strategy 2013-14 puts emphasis on strengthening the dialogue on economic governance with candidate countries and potential candidates, in order to help them gradually to meet the economic accession criteria and be better prepared in terms of economic reform, competitiveness, and job creation. As part of the strengthened dialogue, beneficiaries are invited to prepare annual National Economic Reform Programmes, multiannual public financial management reform action plans/programmes as well as multi-annual Economic and Social Reform programmes. The reform undertakings set out in these different programmes will be underpinned by IPA assistance.

Furthermore, the availability of reliable and up-to-date data will also play an important role for strengthening the dialogue. Notwithstanding the important progress that has already been achieved in fulfilling the requirements of the Action Plan on Economic, Monetary, and Financial Statistics in Candidate Countries, additional efforts in some statistical areas are still needed to achieve full compliance.

In line with the new approach to economic governance, all enlargement countries are from 2015 onwards invited to prepare the **National Economic Reform Programmes**, which will be based on and replace the Pre-Accession Economic Programmes and Economic and Fiscal Programmes. These programmes outline the appropriate medium-term policy framework, including public finance objectives (regarding primarily public revenues, public expenditures and debt policy) and structural reform priorities. The National Economic Reform Programmes will be more comprehensive programmes in comparison to previous programmes, including also the key priority reform plans across sectors of most concern to improve competitiveness and growth. As in the past, the cycle will start in January with the submission by the enlargement countries of their programmes to the Commission. The programmes will then be analysed by the Commission and result in country-specific policy guidance. Implementation of country-specific policy guidance will be subject to annual progress review. Progress in implementing country-specific recommendations will be comprehensively reviewed as part of the following year's National Economic Reform Programmes. Already in 2014 country specific policy guidance has been issued by ECOFIN[2] (for the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey).

The beneficiaries will need a strong public financial management system to deliver the macro-economic stability, which is a pre-condition for sustainable growth. At the same time, whereas all the beneficiaries have engaged in reforms in different public financial management (PFM) sub-systems, none of them have so far taken a more holistic and long-term view on improving their overall public finance management system. The 2013-14 enlargement strategy therefore invites the beneficiaries also to prepare multi-annual **public financial management (PFM) reform action plans/programmes**. They will be subject to policy dialogue and monitoring by the Commission. Since all PFM subsystems are strongly inter-linked, a credible PFM reform programme should be based on a comprehensive assessment of all the relevant parts of the PFM system, including on revenue administration, budget preparation, budget execution with cash management, debt management, public procurement, fiscal accounting and reporting, public internal financial control (including internal audit), and external audit, and adequately sequence reform actions both within and between the sub-systems. A PFM programme will therefore provide an overall multi-annual framework for addressing country's PFM reform needs. It will ensure an appropriate sequencing and budgeting of reform actions.

A credible and relevant PFM programme is also one of the four pre-conditions for using IPA II funds in the form of sector budget support.

Public finance reforms are complex, requiring parallel reforms on the revenue side, public expenditures and in the overall PFM system. The relationship between a National Economic Reform

[2] Conclusions of the Ministerial Dialogue between the Economic and Finance Ministers of the EU and the Candidate Countries (Council of the European Union, 9561/14)

Programme and a PFM reform action plan/programme is that the former is a fiscal and structural reform programme, therefore focusing on revenue side (especially on tax policy) and on government spending (especially on healthcare, pension and social systems) as well as on public debt. It also covers other structural measures beyond public finance such as regarding private sector development and labour market. A PFM reform programme, on the other hand, focuses on improving country's budget process both upstream (strategic planning, medium term expenditure framework, budgeting) and downstream (revenue administration, cash management, debt management, public procurement, fiscal accounting and reporting, public internal financial control and external audit).

Dedicated technical assistance will be needed to support the EU's enhanced approach to economic governance. Supported by IPA II, a multi-annual technical assistance cooperation programme from the **International Monetary Fund (IMF)** will focus on supporting the implementation of country-specific policy guidance in the context of the National Economic Reform Programmes, covering public finance (pension and social systems, tax policy etc.), as well as on supporting preparation and implementation of the PFM reform programmes.

The IMF's technical assistance will be demand-driven and take into account country-specific needs as well as other ongoing and planned IPA and other donor projects. Annual coordination between the IMF and the EC as well as coordinated policy dialogue with the national authorities, the EU and other donors will (i) ensure that this technical assistance programme addresses the relevant reform needs and (ii) complement other ongoing and planned assistance that is financed both from the IPA multi-country programme and IPA national programmes or by other donors.

PROBLEM AND STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

Good economic governance is a key to sustainable socio-economic development and stability. In the course of the accession process, the beneficiaries are expected to build up their political and administrative capacities for the adoption and correct implementation of the EU *acquis*. Weak institutions, inefficient public administration, weak public financial management and flaws in law enforcement, all hamper socio-economic development and delay the necessary structural reforms.

In recent years, the EU has significantly strengthened its economic governance. In the European semester, Member States coordinate fiscal and structural policies before the respective parliaments adopt their national budgets. The tools of economic dialogue with the candidate countries and potential candidates are gradually being adapted, where appropriate, to the new challenges and the coordination mechanisms in the EU. The beneficiaries have already been asked to put more emphasis in their annual economic and fiscal programmes on assessing the sustainability of their external position and the main structural obstacles to growth.

The IMF has ongoing and longstanding technical assistance programmes with the beneficiaries in its various core competency areas. In the area of public finance, a key challenge remains to align various outdated public financial management systems, procedures, and processes with good international practice, and to ensure sustainable and growth-friendly tax and expenditure policies. The lingering effects from the global crisis, spill-overs from the subsequent intensification of banking and sovereign debt pressures in major trading partners, and pressing fiscal adjustment needs, have required IMF technical assistance to remain flexible and accommodating the changing country needs.

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

The **enlargement strategy 2013-14** proposed a new enhanced approach to help the beneficiaries tackle the economic fundamentals first and help them meet the economic criteria. The new approach implies a change in the dialogue and improved reporting in order to give clearer guidance on the reforms needed to support long-term growth and competitiveness.

On democracy and governance the **IPA Multi-country Indicative Strategy Paper 2014-2020**[3] (hereafter referred to as Strategy Paper) states that the beneficiaries require state-of-the-art knowhow and relevant experience with related reforms, which is mainly available in international organisations such as the OECD/SIGMA, World Bank, the IMF and the European Central Bank. Since the challenges are broadly similar, the support should therefore be organised at the regional level, but tuned to the specific situation in each beneficiary, so that it addresses specific national needs and problems. The Strategy Paper further highlights that assistance for economic governance will be provided to support participation in the fiscal surveillance mechanism with the EU and implementation of the country-specific policy guidance and that this assistance will be provided in strong cooperation with International Financial Institutions (IFIs). The Strategy Paper also notes that support for public financial management contributes to country-specific reform agendas, enhancing countries' revenue administration and collection, budget preparation, budget execution, cash management, public procurement, accounting and fiscal reporting, public debt management structures, public internal financial control and external audit.

Furthermore, **the Indicative Strategy Papers 2014-2020**[4] all recognise the importance of economic governance and public financial management and will allocate indicative funds to this aim. Concrete actions, funded from national and multi-country envelopes, will be prepared in the course of 2014 and will be fully rolled out as of 2015.

LESSONS LEARNED AND LINK TO PREVIOUS FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

There has been a rather piecemeal approach to complex public finance reforms in most candidate countries and potential candidates in the past. Reforms have been ongoing in different public finance areas, but often without appropriate prioritisation and/or sequencing. In order to ensure a more comprehensive approach to overall public finance reforms, the beneficiaries are now invited to prepare National Economic Reform Programmes and PFM reform action plan/programmes so that both fiscal and structural reforms and the reforms required in relation to countries' budget processes and budget management can be addressed more systematically.

With regard to PFM, a diagnostics of the various PFM sub-systems should be the basis for preparing a reform programme. In order to ensure an appropriate baseline, such diagnostics should be based on standardised assessment tools such as the Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability (PEFA) assessment, the IMF's Fiscal Transparency Evaluation (FTE), the Tax Administration Diagnostic Assessment Tool (TADAT), and be complemented by other available assessments such as from OECD/SIGMA, ongoing IPA funded technical assistance and twinning projects, etc. Many beneficiaries already have the basic diagnostics work done and some have started to already prepare their PFM programmes. The EU has cooperated closely with the World Bank and the Swiss Cooperation in this area by funding through the common SAFE Trust Fund, PEFA assessments for Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Montenegro. A PEFA assessment in Serbia will be also funded in the second part of 2014.

The EU further foresees the necessity to ensure a more enhanced cooperation with the international organisations, including the IMF and the World Bank, on PFM and ensure a more coordinated PFM policy dialogue with the beneficiaries.

IMF has been engaged with South-East Europe (SEE), including the candidate countries and potential candidates, since the beginning of their transition process. This has also involved the provision of a considerable amount of technical assistance. In the IMF's capacity development strategy for countries

[3] C(2014) 4293, 30.06.2014

[4] C(2014) 5770, 18.08.2014-Albania; C(2014) 9495-Bosnia and Herzegovina,15.12.2014; C(2014) 5861, 19.08.2014-the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; C(2014) 5771, 18.08.2014-Montenegro; C(2014) 5772, 20.08.2014-Kosovo; C(2014) 5872, 19.08.2014-Serbia; and C(2014) 5998, 26.08.2014-Turkey

in South-East Europe, regionally-based, multi-annual assistance has become increasingly important over the last several years. The bulk of IMF technical assistance relating to fiscal issues is provided in three areas: (i) public financial management, which according to IMF's definition includes fiscal legal and regulatory frameworks; budget management including the management of key fiscal risks; medium-term fiscal/budget frameworks (MTFF/MTBF); public sector accounting; fiscal reporting; and cash and debt management operations; (ii) revenue administration (RA), which covers the framework and structures of tax administration, as well as processes and procedures in all core operational areas, including also the administration and collection of social security contributions; and (iii) tax policy, which includes general tax policy reviews and specific tax policy advice, particularly in the areas of income tax, value added tax, property tax, and taxation of natural resources, including oil and gas. In addition, the IMF also provides technical assistance on expenditure policy adjustments, including on both short-term expenditure rationalization and structural reform (e.g. pensions).[5]

The IMF and the Commission have already started to cooperate in the provision of technical assistance in a pilot programme for Albania for 2013-14. This programme has been financed from the IPA multi-beneficiary programme 2013. This has helped to pave the way for a future long-term systematic engagement. The ongoing project for Albania already reflects some conclusions from the last multilateral surveillance exercises. Specifically, the project aims to accelerate and deepen public administration reform in Albania, and is in response to requests for additional technical support made by the new Albanian government that came into office in 2013. The project builds upon the IMF’s current engagement in tax administration, tax policy, and PFM, and the progress and achievements in these areas thus far. Finally, the project also includes a multi-country component, aimed at strengthening regional networks of policy makers and experts in PFM to discuss and assess priority reforms in their own countries.

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[5] Note that, according to the Commission’s definition, areas (i) and (ii) are included under public financial management as set out here.

2. INTERVENTION LOGIC

LOGICAL FRAMEWORK MATRIX

OVERALL OBJECTIVE	**OBJECTIVELY VERIFIABLE INDICATORS (OVI)**	**SOURCES OF VERIFICATION**	
To contribute to better economic governance in the candidate countries and potential candidates by supporting the implementation of country-specific policy guidance in the areas of public finance and public financial management	Governments' effectiveness	.	
SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE	**OBJECTIVELY VERIFIABLE INDICATORS (OVI)**	**SOURCES OF VERIFICATION**	**ASSUMPTIONS**
To support the implementation of country-specific policy guidance in the context of the National Economic Reform Programmes and based on country-specific needs, to support preparation of public financial management reform programmes and the implementation of specific reform actions	Results of the assessments	Annual assessments of the countries' public financial management and economic reform programmes Progress Reports and repeat assessments (e.g., PEFA, FTE, TADAT) as needed to verify progress and achievement of objectives.	Political and economic stability
RESULTS	**OBJECTIVELY VERIFIABLE INDICATORS (OVI)**	**SOURCES OF VERIFICATION**	**ASSUMPTIONS**
Result: Reforms implemented following the country-specific technical assistance	Progress reported on implementation of reform recommendations as compared to the previous year	Countries' public financial management programmes and annual economic reform programmes Minutes of policy dialogue meetings	Governments' resolve to step up the EU integration efforts
ACTIVITIES	**MEANS**	**OVERALL COST**	**ASSUMPTIONS**
Activities to achieve Result: Beneficiaries assisted – delivery of agreed technical assistance on public finance and public financial management.	Agreement on Technical Assistance provision with the IMF	EUR 8 million	Governments' resolve to carry out the recommended reforms, agreement on country-specific technical assistance programmes, and efficient cooperation of the public administrations of the beneficiaries in the course of implementing the agreed technical assistance programmes.

ADDITIONAL DESCRIPTION

This Action in cooperation with the IMF will provide targeted technical assistance for strengthening public finance reforms (including on the revenue side, public expenditures and the overall PFM system) in the context of the Commission's enhanced dialogue on economic governance.

The IMF's technical assistance will contribute to implementation of Commission's country specific policy guidance in the context of National Economic Reform Programmes as well as development and implementation of the PFM reform programmes. The assistance provided will be country-specific and demand driven and will be complementary to support funded from the IPA national programmes and/or by other donors.

As concerns PFM, depending on countries' needs and the state of play with development and/or implementation of the PFM reform programmes, IMF technical assistance may cover support with diagnostic work. It may also include support in different PFM areas, such as strengthening expenditure control and preventing the accumulation of arrears; improving fiscal accounting and reporting systems (e.g., to meet the requirements of international standards not directly linked to the statistical *acquis*, including any potential European Public Sector Accounting Standards (EPSAS)); strengthening debt and cash management structures; improving macro-fiscal forecasting capacities, medium-term budget frameworks (MTBFs); and/or the identification and management of fiscal risks.

It could also include support to strengthening revenue administration structures and operations, geared toward helping tax administrations to better align with international good practices, including the European Commission Blueprint standards, and cover areas such as the overall tax administration framework (e.g., procedural legislation, governance and organisations' structures, and performance management systems); core business functions (e.g., taxpayer registration and filing and payment systems); compliance management (e.g., gathering and dissemination of data and intelligence, compliance strategy development, taxpayer services, audit, tax fraud investigation, and taxpayer appeals systems); and information technology (e.g. proper strategic approach to large scale replacements or systems overhaul).

The IMF's technical assistance advice, – together with other IMF activities in the context of its surveillance and Fund-supported programs – will also be a useful input for beneficiaries in their preparation of comprehensive and meaningful annual National Economic Reform Programmes. This will increase the level of policy planning and provide a good basis for their dialogue with the European Commission, the Member States, and with social partners within the beneficiaries. IMF technical assistance will therefore support implementation of the country-specific policy guidance (especially related to fiscal policy), following the National Economic Reform Programmes. The design of IMF technical assistance will take into account the specificity of the country context and the reform needs (of which many may be long-term). Such approach will require periodic adjustments, as needed, as the countries progress on their reform paths and new priorities emerge.

While the IMF's technical assistance support will mainly focus on strengthening public financial management, broader fiscal policy reforms (i.e., tax and expenditure policies) that have a bearing on the reforms in public financial management may also be supported by the technical assistance programme with the IMF. In the area of expenditure policies, for example, there is a need to improve the efficiency of government spending and enhance the sustainability of pension and social systems. Most beneficiaries face a number of challenges in containing the growth of spending while ensuring that essential government services and social protection are delivered. This will require efforts to improve the efficiency of spending over the short and medium-term on a wide range of categories, including, for example, the wage bill, health care, and social benefits. In addition, longer-term reforms of pension systems are needed to ensure their fiscal sustainability in many countries of the region. Technical assistance in the area of expenditure policy will aim to provide specific advice on reform options in these areas and boost the capacity of the authorities to assess and formulate reforms.

Similarly, in the area of tax policies, there is a need to support the beneficiaries in raising revenue in a growth enhancing and equitable fashion. Most beneficiaries also face challenges related to their transition process and/or the loss of trade-related revenues through their increased integration with the

EU. This, along with increased debt levels, is putting pressure on governments to strengthen tax policies. The IMF's advice will focus on identifying areas for tax base broadening and for improving the composition of tax revenues, including by providing specific advice on different areas of tax reform (e.g., income tax, value added tax, property tax, and the taxation of natural resources).

3. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The overall technical assistance will be provided by customized support: (i) missions from IMF headquarters (HQ); (ii) long-term experts (LTX) who are present on the ground and serve the region; and (iii) short-term expert (STX) assignments. IMF staff at HQ will closely supervise the work of the LTX and STX in terms of implementation of their work programs, and the quality and consistency of their advice ("backstopping"). The technical assistance programme will also include various targeted cross-cutting actions, in the form of training/seminars/workshops on specific issues, including at the regional and national levels, to facilitate the exchange of views and experiences among countries, and to help foster reform drive and regional cooperation.

All activities supported by the technical assistance programme will involve close cooperation with country officials and be coordinated with other technical assistance providers. Technical assistance for each country will be demand driven, and designed and developed in close consultation with country officials and the Commission, within the framework of the EU's enhanced economic governance approach to candidate countries and potential candidates, and in particular the assessments of the beneficiaries' National Economic Reform Programmes and PFM reform action plans/programmes. Annual consultations between relevant Commission and IMF staff will ensure the overall alignment of the technical assistance work programme with reform priorities in the beneficiary.

As is already current practice, the IMF's technical assistance advice will also be informed by and integrated into the core financing and surveillance operations of the IMF, and coordinated with that of other key TA providers in the region to avoid duplication and enhance synergies. In anchoring the IMF's technical assistance advice on the ground, the LTX will play a specifically important role, as they will undertake frequent visits to the countries in the region to follow up on previous recommendations, provide hands on advice, keep up the momentum for reforms, and maintain relationships with key counterparts.

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

The Action will be implemented in direct management. To this end, a grant agreement is expected to be signed with the IMF in Q2 2015 covering the first three years of implementation. The direct award is based on Article 190 (1)(f) of the Rules of Application, since a particular type of body on account of its technical competence and its high degree of specialisation is required.

The agreement is expected to be extended and replenished until 2020, as appropriate, in view of the policy context and progress achieved.

4. PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

METHODOLOGY FOR MONITORING (AND EVALUATION)

All technical assistance activities will be organized into specific projects (and modules). For each beneficiary, all projects will include objectives, outcomes, and measurable indicators. The indicators in the initial phase of the projects could be indicative in nature and subsequently may be fine-tuned as needed and monitored through the project-level reporting process. A baseline against which to measure progress, and baseline data will be specified and targets identified.

Implementation and monitoring will be facilitated through the IMF's computerized system for managing and tracking technical assistance. Relevant information on project status will be accessible to EU stakeholders via the IMF's Donor Gateway (https://www-extranet.imf.org), a secure website.

In addition to financial information, the Donor Gateway is a central repository of information, including documentation related to the contribution arrangements, project documents, progress reports, project status, and self-assessments. The Donor Gateway also provides access to documents on country-level and regional technical assistance priorities and well as other information on IMF capacity building. A mid-term assessment could be undertaken, if desired, by the IMF in collaboration with the Commission to review progress to date in individual beneficiaries and for the programme overall, and to reconfirm, or if necessary change, individual and programme objectives. If needed, an independent evaluation may be commissioned at just over the mid-point of the implementation of the programme.

INDICATOR MEASUREMENT

Indicator	Description	Baseline (2012)	Target (2020)
MCSP indicator	*Government Effectiveness Rank*	*2.4*	*2.9*

Indicator	Description	Baseline (year)	Target 2020
Action outcome indicator1	*National Economic Reform Programmes (NERP) assessments*	*N/A*	*Qualitative improvement towards the EU standards*
Action outcome indicator 2	*Assessments of country-specific public financial management reform programmes*	*N/A*	*Qualitative improvement of PFM sub-systems*
Action outcome indicator 3	*Progress Reports*	*N/A*	*Qualitative improvement as expressed in the Progress Reports towards the EU accession*
Action output indicator 1	*IMF HQ mission reports*	*N/A*	*Reports delivered for all IMF HQ missions in accordance with the annual TA programmes*

5. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE (AND IF RELEVANT DISASTER RESILIENCE)

The Action does not pursue environmental objectives, however sound economic governance entails equitable development concerns, which will be considered as appropriate.

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

The Action will primarily concentrate on close cooperation with the governments. It however will promote good governance, which as such requires close cooperation of the governments with all non-state stakeholders.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND GENDER MAINSTREAMING

The Action does not pursue the equal opportunities objectives and will have limited implications for any such issues.

5. SUSTAINABILITY

The main risks relate to the overall macroeconomic and political environment in the region. The beneficiaries remain prone to adverse macroeconomic shocks that can exacerbate already challenging fiscal adjustment needs. Also, addressing public financial management in a more comprehensive and systematic manner requires consistent political support and commitment from the national administrations. It also requires strong coordination capacity between the Ministry of Finance and other budget users.

In this environment, reform implementation may fall short of targets or reform progress may unravel due to sudden changes in political commitment. The Commission aims to mitigate this risk through a regular policy dialogue with the beneficiaries. Also, IMF staff will seek to address these constraints through reasoned suasion and references to best international practices, but will also consider linking the reforms that are supported by IMF technical assistance to the IMF lending programs as necessary and appropriate.

Other programme risks relate to limited capacity, insufficient resources and lack of strategic vision within the beneficiaries. Capacity will need to be built in such areas as change management, human resources development, and information technology. To ensure the effective delivery of the agreed technical assistance programme, the IMF will actively seek the close cooperation of other technical assistance providers as needed. The IMF will also seek to coordinate with the EC and with other technical assistance providers with regards to unmet technical assistance needs that are identified in the context of delivering the agreed technical assistance programme and which would strengthen implementation of the agreed actions. In the delivery of the agreed technical assistance, IMF staff will pay specific attention to putting in place viable medium-term strategies that help sustain the reforms and achievements once the Action is completed.

6. COMMUNICATION AND VISIBILITY

Communication and visibility will be given high importance during the implementation of the Action. All necessary measures will be taken to make public the fact that the Action has received funding from the EU in line with the Communication and Visibility Manual for EU External Actions.

The implementation of the communication activities shall be the responsibility of the contractor and shall be funded from the amounts allocated to the Action.

Visibility and communication actions shall demonstrate how the intervention contributes to the agreed programme objectives and the accession process. Actions shall be undertaken to strengthen general public awareness and promote transparency and accountability on the use of funds.

The Commission shall be fully informed of the planning and implementation of the specific visibility and communication activities.

Programme achievements and the EU’s financial support will be given wide publicity and visibility. Regional seminars funded under the agreed technical assistance, will allow stakeholders to discuss public financial management reform progress and challenges and provide a venue for sharing experiences. EU funding will be given due publicity at the seminars, and press releases from the IMF will summarize the seminars' discussions and indicate that the seminar was funded by the EU. IMF staff will use other forums to update on progress and achievements under the programme, including, for example, the quarterly FAD e-newsletter, the annual FAD Brochure, and/or the Public Financial Management Blog maintained by the IMF’s Fiscal Affairs Department.

LIST OF ANNEXES

1. **List of reference documents:**

Conclusions of the Ministerial Dialogue between the Economic and Finance Ministers of the EU and the Candidate Countries of 6 May 2014 (Council of the European Union, 9561/14)