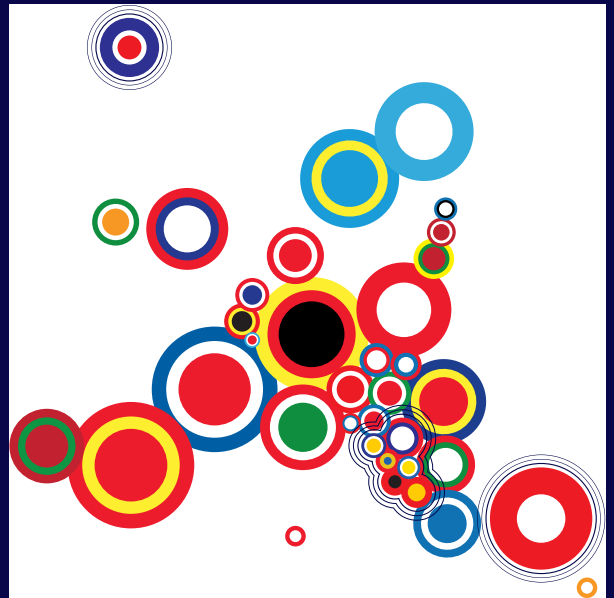




INSTRUMENT FOR PRE-ACCESSION ASSISTANCE (IPA II) 2014-2020

KOSOVO* Young Cell Scheme



Action Summary

The Action will contribute to build a professional, accountable and apolitical Civil Service at all levels in Kosovo by supporting the public administration through a scholarship programme that aims at improving the professional capacity of civil service to meet the obligations arising from the EU integration process.

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

Action Identification	
Programme Title	<i>2014 Annual Programme for Kosovo</i>
Action Title	<i>Young Cell Scheme</i>
Action Reference	<i>IPA 2014 /032353 / Kosovo/Young Cell Scheme</i>
Sector Information	
IPA II Sector	<i>Democracy and governance</i>
DAC Sector	<i>15111</i>
Budget	
Total cost (VAT excluded)¹	<i>EUR 1.5 million</i>
EU contribution	<i>EUR 1.5 million</i>
Management and Implementation	
Method of implementation	<i>Direct management</i>
<i>Direct management:</i> EU Delegation in charge	<i>European Union Office in Kosovo</i>
Implementation responsibilities	<i>European Union Office in Kosovo</i>
Location	
Zone benefiting from the action	<i>Kosovo</i>
Specific implementation area(s)	<i>Kosovo</i>
Timeline	
Deadline for conclusion of the Financing Agreement	<i>31 December 2015</i>
Contracting deadline	<i>3 years following the date of conclusion of Financing Agreement</i>
End of operational implementation period	<i>6 years following the date of conclusion of Financing Agreement</i>

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

PROBLEM AND STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

All recent **European Commission (EC) Progress Reports** on Kosovo emphasize the Public Administration Reform (PAR) as one of the preconditions for Kosovo's European integration aspirations. Most of the reports from 2009 onwards, including the Feasibility Study for Kosovo, point out that ensuring the delivery of public services to all people in Kosovo and establishing a professional, accountable, accessible, representative public administration free from political interference is a key European Partnership priority. EC reports also indicate and acknowledge the progress that has been achieved over the years; however, the administration is still needs to improve, to ensure that Kosovo is ready to meet the challenges of the integration process, since progress in the public administration related reforms will contribute to take Kosovo closer to the EU. Moreover the performance, professionalism and efficiency of public administrations are key foundations not only for the political development and Kosovo's path toward the EU, but also for its economic political development.

Due to the historical legacy, it is important to note that the nature and structure of Kosovo's public administration have been modelled by the international missions in Kosovo, in the period following the conflict. This has also been followed by a high number of investments that the international community has done in this field of governance. Nevertheless and despite the progress that has been noted, Kosovo's public administration continues to remain excessively large, with unsatisfactory credentials, merit, training and credentials, underpaid in many cases, and politicized. This is reflected in the lack of professionalism characterizing all levels, which often fall short of delivering qualitative and professional services, especially to citizens, business and society-at-large. This also mirrors the inefficiency, corruption and lack of accountability to the consumers of public services. On the other hand professionalism should also be considered as the key challenge of Kosovo's public administration. Lacking a certain degree/average of professionalism, public administration cannot fulfil their functions towards ensuring effective and efficient delivery of services.

While the 2010 Law on Civil Service intended to provide for a merit-based, professional, sustainable, and efficient civil service system, high levels of political influence and formal political discretion over the employment status and policy orientation of the civil service and an unsuitable and unstandardized training and evaluation system continue to prevent the emergence of a merit-based and professional civil service system in Kosovo. Thus still nowadays, Kosovo's civil service system, the independence of the civil service is compromised by incumbent political parties and governments influence over the administration of the civil service (Kosovo Civil service reform – EU task Force) . While the 2012 Law on Civil Service supported a more diverse civil service in regards to gender and ethnic demographics, much work remains on the path towards a depoliticized, demographically diverse, merit- based, efficient and effective civil service system, including the completion of the adoption of the secondary legislation, the adoption of the job catalogue and the implementation of the performance appraisal of the civil service. Not only must Kosovo strengthen the civil service legislation and system to eradicate political interference and clientelism, but it must further work to strengthen European principles of civil service into the current legislation and system in order to progress in its EU path.

In this regard, Kosovo has concluded its negotiations of a Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) with the European Union (EU). Thus in the period ahead, Kosovo will need to implement the obligations deriving from it. In order to meet such obligations under a SAA and implement the necessary reforms, Kosovo requires a capable public administration, including further developing civil service expertise in the *acquis* and on other technical specific EU sectoral topics/chapters.

In order to better prepare for the implementation of a future SAA, the Ministry of European Integration, in 2012, initiated the project for the assessment of the administrative capacities and strengthening the key central government structures for transposition of the *acquis* and policy coordination. The project purpose was to assess the capacities of the key structures (Ministry of European Integration, Legal Departments and Departments for European Integration and Policy coordination of line Ministries) relevant for transposition of the *acquis* and policy coordination, as well as to develop recruitment and capacity building plans with the aim of increasing institutional and administrative capacity in order to cope with obligations that derive from the EU integration process.

The project findings strongly indicate to a need for better planning and further developing the human capacities of the administration in order to be able to adopt and implement effectively and efficiently the SAA. The capacity of public administration to comply with the obligations required in the EU integration process is a key criterion of assessment of candidate's preparedness for EU membership. It has been officially consolidated in what became later known as Madrid criteria.

Even though there is a suitable legal framework to ensure equal opportunities, it has not been adequately implemented. This has led to the unfair representation of certain gender, ethnic and age groups and persons with limited abilities, especially in managerial posts in the administration.

In addition even though the PAR strategy seeks to address challenges such as transparency, professional integrity, and de-politicization, these are not deemed as high priorities by policy makers.

What contributes to the deficient public administration is the lack of advanced specialized education in different fields related to EU affairs, which are identified as professional administrative gaps.

Kosovo needs to put in place a depoliticised public administration, based on European policies and best practice for human resource management. This will entail the establishment of effective horizontal and vertical structures organised in a manner that will allow for the effective and efficient implementation of their respective competences. Therefore this action aims at strengthening the public administration through ensuring that the administrative gaps in the Kosovo government are addressed via offering specialised education opportunities to the young Kosovars in EU countries. These professionals will be integrated within the current governmental structures with an aim of building sound system of public administration that meets the demands of EU processes.

Main Stakeholder in charge for this action is the Ministry of European Integration (MEI) which was established in April 2010. The mandate of the MEI was defined by a government decision of May 2010, setting out the competencies of MEI with regard to the overall management, co-ordination and monitoring of the European integration process for Kosovo. The decision emphasises the strategic role of MEI in ensuring a centralised and harmonised co-ordination of all government stakeholders involved in the implementation of the European agenda. It is the mission of the Ministry to ensure the technical management, coordination and monitoring of the European Union integration process. In order to ensure proper follow up and implementation of various priorities related to EU integration the government set up structures with the so-called Reform Package (or Plan on European Integration

2008-2010). These European integration structures were formalised through a Government decision in August 2008. The package mainly aimed at establishing institutions that could effectively run a complex and sophisticated process of EU integration. Ministry of European Integration is tasked to follow up and lead on the work of these structures to ensure they act as guardians of EU-oriented processes of public administration reform.

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

Efficient and effective public administration is crucial to fulfil the Copenhagen membership criteria and has a key role to play in improving governance through more stable institutions and the implementation of the PAR agenda. Support to public administration and governance will therefore continue to be a priority as far as the IPA II is concerned.

Furthermore, with regard SAA Obligations, the Indicative Strategy Paper for Kosovo acknowledges the need in the foreseeable future for Kosovo to build the necessary capacities and secure the resources to be able to address the key challenges arising from the EU integration process, in require all ministries and other relevant institutions. Therefore, it is imperative that Kosovo continues reforms of the administration through ensuring professional recruitment of the civil servants.

The Enlargement Strategy 2013 recognizes the need for Kosovo to further improve the service delivery by strengthening the civil service, since its professionalism and the presence of a certain degree of political interference need still to be address. Moreover further steps have been considered crucial, such as the representation of people belonging to minorities to be in line with the legislation. The need to strengthen the human capacities for e better service delivery and smooth administrative procedures is stressed as well in the Progress Report for Kosovo 2013 in several sectors (tax procedures, customs, energy, employment, civil service etc.).

Similar findings are found in the SIGMA annual report 2013, where patronage, politicisation and the lack of professionalism are still highlighted as the main constraints to the implementation of a service-oriented administrative culture. Furthermore SIGMA Country Priorities for 2013- 2020 reiterates clearly that Kosovo should have a well-functioning public administration in place characterised by professional civil service and sound administrative procedures, in line with the EU principles and followed by all public services.

Declaration of Medium Term Policy Priorities of Government considers good governance as a key priority which that will be achieved through: “public administration reform and creating a non-political, professional, merit-based and well-managed civil service, concentrating on the modernization of the public administration, and implementation of the legislative package related to public administration reform , with particular emphasis on implementing legislation that was approved for the civil service and civil servant salaries.”

According to The Medium-Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) 2014-2016 to achieve the objective of “Public administration reform and creation of a non-political, professional, merit-based and well managed civil service”, OPM plans to allocate an amount of €5,659,227 for three year period, namely €1,553,109 per annum, to carry out the Public Administration Reform and for this purpose, it planned to carry out the following actions: Reorganize ministries and their subordinate bodies, Finalize the process of job classification, Implementation of the new system of salaries and promotions, Implementation of the Action Plan for Reform of Public Administration.

Improvement of the professionalism, accountability, efficiency of public administration in all levels of government is also one of the aims of the **Action Plan for negotiation of the Stabilization and Association Agreement**

The action is also linked to **PAR Strategy and Action Plan** which highlights the strengths and weaknesses of the human resources component of the comprehensive public administration reform and

the need to strengthen the capacities throughout administration in response to European Integration process requirements.

SECTOR APPROACH ASSESSMENT

The Action is directly linked to the strategic approach of the Ministry of European integration. It complements the previous twinning light findings of the project on the assessment of the administrative capacities and strengthening the key central government structures for transposition of the *acquis* and policy coordination, as well as the findings of the EU funded project on evaluation of the EU IPA project covering support under the Young Cell Scheme (YCS).

The Action complements in full the planning of the IPA II assistance on further support to PAR. One of the key components of the Action on further support to PAR, is to develop recruitment planning in accordance to the needs of the future SAA implementation. Along with other capacity building measures, the YCS will directly contribute to strengthening the capacities of the public service in terms of educating young professionals in key sectorial areas of the government, that are crucial for effective and efficient implementation of the SAA. The project on capacity assessment has already provided an indication of those key areas in need for further support.

LESSONS LEARNED AND LINK TO PREVIOUS FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

The project will built on and consolidate previous phases of EC assistance, however the main pre condition is a successful integration of the past generations into the government's structures.

The YCS has provided funding for studies in Master Programmes across Europe in EU Law, Politics and Economics as well as in more technical sectors, like Veterinary, Engineering, Cultural Heritage, Statistics, Aviation, and so on. In the first rounds the grantees were sent to general European Affairs studies. The yearly scholarship schemes have been labelled as 'Rounds' See Annex 2 for breakdown.

A total number of 235 grantees have benefitted a scholarship from the YCS since 2004. As it can be seen from the table below in the first three years the number o scholarships was relatively small, while as of Round IV it increased substantially, reaching its peak in Round VIII with 40 grantees.

Out of the total of 153 grantees returned from studies (Rounds I-VII), 117 grantees (76%), were employed by the Kosovo Government institutions, while 36 grantees (24%) did not join the Public Administration.

Although the impact made by the previous assistance is satisfactory, challenges mentioned below remain:

- **Staffing:** Project implementation is hampered by insufficient staff and resources or by insufficient funds in the institutions' budget to allow proper implementation of the results. It is therefore of paramount importance that relevant institutions sign internship and employment contracts with students before their departure.
- **Coordination:** Close consultation between the many stakeholders involved in the project and a collaborative approach are essential to ensure that they are all fully informed and support the project.

In order to assess the impact of YCS program, EU funded external evaluation was conducted during the last quarter of 2012.

Main conclusions deriving from this evaluation stresses that YCS as a program has been very relevant for Kosovo. However the report also provides for clear recommendations which will be taken into account during the design phase of the next rounds. Thus the new intervention will be designed to ensure that all recommendations from the evaluation are incorporated in the new rounds.

One of the key recommendations is to ensure sustainability, which the EU will address through decrease of the funding for this project, while at the same time seek the funding commitment from Kosovo.

Moreover in order to address some of the recommendations the Law on Civil Service is being amended by having a new clause added which states that YCS and other similar schemes' grantees are given priority when vacancies in the civil service are announced. This will in turn lead to a stronger administration with key positions held by scholarship grantees.

For this purpose the draft Law Supplementing and Amending the Law No 03/L-149 of Civil Service of Kosovo proposed from MPA will include Article 18A "Advancement of Civil Service through scholarship schemes" The draft law is still in the institutional consultation and MEI has provided its own recommendations in line with the Conclusions of 2nd PAR Special group.

In this regard on June 4th MPA and MEI agreed about article 18th of the Law. The article will stipulate as following.

"The Government of the Republic of Kosovo based on paragraph 1 of Article 6 of the Law on specific areas deficient in the civil service may sign agreements with different organizations or countries with the aim of advancing the professional civil service through scholarship schemes.

Beneficiaries of scholarships can be civil servants and all other persons who fulfil the conditions required by the scheme.

Civil Service institutions will take responsibility to accommodate individuals from paragraph 2 of this Article the civil service, in accordance with the law and respecting the principles of civil service defined in law.

For the implementation of this Article ministry responsible for public administration will issue a bylaw."

Furthermore, the Cadre Fund, once it is reviewed, will support the existing highly qualified staff in light of further strengthening the capacities of key positions in order to cope with the obligations that derive from the SAA and Visa Liberalization process.

2. INTERVENTION LOGIC

LOGICAL FRAMEWORK MATRIX

OVERALL OBJECTIVE	OBJECTIVELY VERIFIABLE INDICATORS (OVI)	SOURCES OF VERIFICATION	OF ASSUMPTIONS
Contribute to build a professional, accountable and apolitical Civil Service at all levels in Kosovo by supporting the public administration through a scholarship programme that aims at improving the professional capacity of civil service to better service Kosovo citizens and meet the obligations arising from the SAA.	Progress in contractual relationships between Kosovo and the EU. Fulfilment of the Feasibility Study priorities.	European Commission Progress Reports on Kosovo. Adoption of relevant legislation in compliance with the EU rules and standards.	
SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE	OBJECTIVELY VERIFIABLE INDICATORS (OVI)	SOURCES OF VERIFICATION	OF ASSUMPTIONS
To generate a core group of civil servants in fields identified as weak areas for Kosovo, who will be determined to drive and implement reforms in public administration, in particular those required for the SAA implementation.	1) 70 % of YCS grantees hired by Kosovo public administration one year after the completion of the studies (baseline last YCS round) 2) 60 % of match between the job skills required by the job catalogue and the skills of the civil servant covering the post. (baseline first performance appraisal) 3) 10 % of YCS grantees belong to the minority communities.	European Commission Progress Report. Administrative reform policy studies. Progress reports on related projects to strengthen the Kosovo administration.	Commitment on the part of the Kosovo Government to reform the public administration. Improved communication and exchanges of information between and within Government bodies.
RESULTS	OBJECTIVELY VERIFIABLE INDICATORS (OVI)	SOURCES OF VERIFICATION	OF ASSUMPTIONS
Result 1: Selected candidates chosen based on the professional administrative capacity gaps of GoK, complete postgraduate degrees in EU universities in relevant technical fields and are subsequently employed by the Government of Kosovo.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approximately 40 candidates combined from existing civil servants and general public (% to be decided) selected by a transparent process free of outside influence. Graduates who have completed Master's studies recruited to the 	Students' diplomas. Employment contracts. Budget allocation for employment of students upon return. Government strategy papers and policy documents. Contractors' reports.	Interest of EU universities in being involved in the selection process; Candidates will not withdraw after selection and coordination between the MEI and all line institutions is functional;

<p>Result 2. EU Scholarship Alumni association continues to operate in a sustainable manner and provide a forum for YCS alumni to further develop their EU related skills and capabilities.</p>	<p>Kosovo public administration.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alumni organises activities through external funding based on the identified challenges Kosovo's facing re EU integration. • Alumni recommendations policies support GoK to meet EU demands. 		<p>Non-resignation from the GoK; Opportunities to absorb YCS open in the different Government departments; Full commitment of all stakeholders and beneficiaries during implementation of the project; GoK takes into account lessons learned from past experience in addressing the problems</p>
ACTIVITIES	MEANS	OVERALL COST	ASSUMPTIONS
<p>Activities to achieve Result 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a recruitment strategy that addresses the findings and recommendations of the evaluation • Select up to 40 candidates for post-graduate studies in specific identified areas of the public administration that need strengthening • Organise information and communication campaign; organise language courses. • Organise placement of students in EU universities and internships and arrange employment contracts before students' departure. • Supervise students during their studies and support their employment. • Systematic incorporation of YCS into governmental institutions at local or central level • Development of concise contracts between the GoK and YCS before they depart to universities. <p>Activities to achieve result 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support logistically Alumni to organise activities impacting reform policy issues in Kosovo • Support alumni strategic developments in the strengthening the organization 	<p>One service contract</p>	<p>EUR 1.5 million</p>	<p>Commitment of the Government of Kosovo to support the implementation of the activities Commitment of the Alumni to actively engage and implement activities.</p>

ADDITIONAL DESCRIPTION

The rationale behind this scholarship scheme is to address the deficit of EU related knowledge by developing high level skills and expertise amongst selected candidates who either were working in Kosovo's Civil Service or had intentions of working in that sector.

The ultimate aim of the YCS is to contribute to build a professional, accountable and apolitical Civil Service at all levels in Kosovo by supporting the public administration through a scholarship programme that aims at improving the professional capacity of civil service to meet the obligations arising from the EU integration process.

The graduates selected for scholarships, upon completion of their studies would be (re)integrated into Kosovo Public Service for a period of minimum 3 consecutive years.

The employment opportunities for YCS graduates include Kosovo Central Public Administration, local governments and municipalities. Mutual obligations will be stipulated in the scholarship contract that grantees sign prior to their departure for studies. Financial liability for the full amount of the grant is expected to be provided for by the grants contract in case a grantee refuses to serve Kosovo Public Administration (or other agreed bodies) at the end of his/her studies programme. The grantee is entitled to take up employment also outside the Civil Service in case employment is not offered within the foreseen period time upon the completion of the studies

Selected candidates chosen based on the professional administrative capacity gaps of GoK, complete postgraduate degrees in EU universities in relevant technical fields and are subsequently employed by the Government of Kosovo. Selected candidates will be from both existing civil servants and other persons who fulfil the conditions required by the scheme.

Transparency of the process is ensured during each stage of the selection process as full information is publicly advertised at the same time for all applicants, and the same information is provided to everybody. Upon requests applicants will be allowed to view their own scoring, and where applicable the outcomes of their interviews, after the results are made public.

To ensure fairness of the process, the candidates will receive warns since the start that any of them attempting in any way or form to influence the selection process in his or her favour would be disqualified and eliminated from the selection.

Non-discrimination is ensured by the fact that females, minorities and people with disabilities are particularly encouraged to apply. Between equally qualified candidates (i.e. applicants with the same final score) the principle has been that females will be preferred and given priority.

The scheme has already developed its administrative and managerial procedures for the preparation of the selected candidates, to backstop them and follow up their integration to the civil service. All necessary contractual and formal requirements have been worked out and utilized in the consecutive rounds. The average value of the YCS grants, initially lower, has increased to 25.000 EUR in 2009 and further to around 30.000 EUR in 2012. This came mainly due to the offers for placement of students to prestigious and expensive universities.

The YCS Alumni Association was established upon the initiative of students of Round VI. The mission of the Association is that of contributing to the public and specialized debate on the future of Kosovo within the European family. EU Scholarship Alumni association continues to operate in a sustainable manner and provide a forum for YCS alumni to further develop their EU related skills and capabilities. There is further need for logistical support to Alumni to organise activities impacting reform policy issues in Kosovo.

The main assumptions that underlie the project can be considered:

- The Government is firmly committed to the scholarship programme; ensuring appropriate internship and completion of the recruitment process for the scholars before the start of the scholarship programme and shows readiness to absorb all returning graduates within the public administration.
- The Government has a strong principle commitment to employ the scholarship graduates and they commit special allocation for them from the budget.
- The beneficiary institutions will maintain the principle of transparency and impartiality in the joint selection process with EC representatives and independent experts and ensure preference to professional skills against political considerations.

Risks to be considered for this Action are:

- The government does not offer employment opportunities for the scholars.
- Most of young cells returnees seem to be highly committed to their work and fulfil their contractual commitments after the end of their scholarships and return to work for the Kosovo public service. However, they seem to be very dissatisfied and de-motivated with low salaries and the non-settlement of their contractual status in a longer term perspective.
- The government will not be able to offer a competitive career for scholars due to lack of funds or leaving them in uncertainty with short-term contracts.
- There is a high rate of fluctuation in the civil service and the scholars can easily convert their knowledge for the private sector.

In order to mitigate this possible risks government has decided that some of the grantees will be selected from within the civil service. Furthermore the employment of the individuals outside of the civil service benefiting from the scheme will be according to the law on civil service.

Furthermore, the Cadre Fund, once it is reviewed, will support the existing highly qualified staff in light of further strengthening the capacities of key positions in order to cope with the obligations that derive from the SAA and Visa Liberalization process.

Pre-conditions:

The EU assistance for this intervention will be available after the below pre-conditions are fulfilled:

1. The MEI signs MoUs with relevant GoK bodies to secure a budget allocation to employ 'young cell' students (YCS).
2. A proper assessment of the profiles needed by the relevant institutions is carried out and agreed within GOK.
3. The job catalogue is adopted and the implementation of the performance appraisal is started.

3. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

MEI is in charge of coordinating the implementation of the Young Cell Scheme from the side of the Kosovo Government. The MEI has the responsibility to support and follow the graduates in their employment process as well as progress in the respective ministries. MEI was put in charge of coordination of YCS due to its capacity as national coordinator of EU assistance to Kosovo. For this purpose MEI has appointed one official in charge of coordination of the YCS under the authority of the General Secretary

MEI has been permanently supported by different TA projects, which have served as the "Secretariat of the Young Cell Scheme" and have carried out the financial management of the funds supporting the Scheme.

The YCS has developed its rules and procedures, but they are properly formalized and systematic only for the phase of selection of applicants for studies abroad. Coordination of the process for selection of YC grantees has been co-managed by MEI and the TA Project, with more significant contribution from the second.

The process of announcements, applications, testing, selection, support to selected candidates to be ready for the studies, takes almost a year. Detailed rules and procedures are developed for each stage of this process. Each year procedures have been slightly revised based on lessons learned from the last experience and the need to improve the Scheme. It must be said that the process of application and selection of YCS grantees has been the most institutionalized part of the whole YCS management cycle.

The Project Steering Committee will be set up during the inception phase of the project. The Steering Committee will be responsible for the overall coordination and direction of the project and comprised of representatives from the MEI, the EU Office to Kosovo, University of Pristina and the Kosovo Institute for Public Administration (KIPA). The Steering Committee will also regularly monitor the implementation of the project. The TL's responsibility will be to act as a Secretariat to the Steering Committee (provide translation/interpretation if and when required, prepare minutes of the meetings, etc).

The Steering Committee during the Inception Phase and thereafter once every three months at least, as well as whenever any of its members deems it necessary. The Team leader will submit a comprehensive report at each Steering Committee meeting, detailing developments as well as achievements and any other relevant aspects of this project. The Steering Committee discusses ideas, gives advice and guidance, and ensures that appropriate measures are put in place to maximise the benefits of the project.

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

The European Union Office to Kosovo will manage the implementation, quality control, reporting and coordination with other donors of the development assistance and of the financial and technical cooperation related to the actions described.

The EU Office Task Manager has the ultimate authority regarding all decisions relating to the management of this project.

According to the recommendations from evaluation The MEI should, in the not so distant future, be given full responsibility of the Scheme. This change should aim at strengthening of institutional mechanism for managing the YCS. It should be taken as soon as possible, but not necessarily immediately, and not before certain conditions are fulfilled.

In order to meet this recommendation MEI will take necessary steps to raise the capacities to manage the scheme allocating more staff and resources for the following programming years starting from IPA 2015 onwards.

The implementation duration of the action is expected to be 24 months.

4. PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

METHODOLOGY FOR MONITORING (AND EVALUATION)

Monitoring will be performed by the European Commission. The project may be evaluated at the interim or ex-post stages under the supervision of Commission's Evaluation Unit. The project may be audited by Court of Auditors - in line with the standard European Commission procedures

In the Organization & Methodology, the Contractor will propose specific performance indicators chosen to provide valid, useful, practical and comparable measures of progress towards achieving the expected results. During the Inception Phase these indicators will be defined in close cooperation with the Beneficiary of the project. They can be quantitative, such as statistical statements or qualitative, such as judgments and perceptions derived from subjective analysis. As an illustration of initial indicators the bidder may propose among others: number of all candidates compared to previous years, number of candidates from minorities, women, territorial diversity of candidates, sectoral distribution of candidates, number of candidates from civil service and simple university graduates, how many of them passed successfully the different levels of tests, etc.

The project will be monitored according to standard procedures. Project monitoring and evaluation will be based on a periodic assessment of progress in delivering specified project results and achieving project objectives. Particular attention should be paid to minorities and women involved in and benefited from project activities.

INDICATOR MEASUREMENT

Indicator	Description	Baseline 2010 - 2013	Last available	Milestones 2017	Target 2020	Source of information
<i>Action outcome indicator1</i>	<i>70 % of YCS grantees hired by Kosovo public administration one year after the completion of the studies (baseline last YCS round)</i>	<i>60%</i>	<i>60%</i>	<i>60 %</i>	<i>70 %</i>	<i>Project reports</i>
<i>Action outcome indicator2</i>	<i>60 % of match between the job skills required by the job catalogue and the skills of the civil servant covering the post. (baseline first performance appraisal)</i>	<i>50%</i>	<i>50%</i>	<i>50%</i>	<i>60 %</i>	<i>Project reports</i>
<i>Action outcome indicator 3</i>	<i>10 % of YCS grantees belong to the minority communities</i>	<i>1.8 %</i>	<i>1.8 %</i>	<i>5%</i>	<i>10 %</i>	<i>Project reports</i>

5. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE (AND IF RELEVANT DISASTER RESILIENCE)

Environmental considerations will be duly reflected in all activities under this action.

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

Civil Society /Stakeholders involvement will be taken into consideration in all aspects of EU-funded activities in order to support civil society organisations to strengthen their capacities and professionalism, allowing them to engage in an effective dialogue with public and private actors and to monitor developments in areas such as the rule of law and respect for fundamental rights.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND GENDER MAINSTREAMING

During implementation of the project specific attention will be paid to the need for gender balance and equal opportunities for all communities in the selection process.

Terms of reference will cover the impact of the project on women and minorities, including employment opportunities, and will encourage the beneficiary to comply with Kosovo law on employment of women and minorities.

The Young Cell Scheme has already achieved an impressive gender balance. The gender balance has been naturally ensured by more than doubling grant awards to females. The procedures indicate that for similar scores achieved the selection process will give priority to females.

MINORITIES AND VULNERABLE GROUPS

Minority representation will be pursued across the civil service and in all aspects of activities on the project. As part of the strategy for ensuring minorities participate in the program, the criteria and the rules for application and selection will be developed to ensure that if candidates have opportunities to be tested and interviewed in all EU languages.

6. SUSTAINABILITY

MEI has, without doubts, the technical capacities to manage the Scheme on its own. The experience of the last two-three Rounds testifies that. Staff of MEI have actively participated to the revision of Rules of Procedures and shown an increasing ownership not only during the selection process but also during the follow-up done with grantees. Despite of some doubtful legacy of the earlier Rounds, it is observed (by dominant majority of those interviewed) that MEI has adopted a more principle approach in respect to transparency, fairness and non-discrimination of the selection process. Therefore, technically, the Ministry of Integration is indeed ready to undertake the management of the Scheme on its own. It was confirmed by all interviewed stakeholders that further EU support in provision of scholarships in public administration is needed.

In order to ensure the embedment of this programme in the Kosovo system, the co-financing of IPA will be progressively reduced, starting at 100% in 2014, 2015 and 2016 and progressively diminish to 75% in 2017, 50% in 2018, and 25% in 2019. As of 2020 IPA will not co-finance any longer the program, which will be then fully integrated in the Kosovo civil service management.

7. COMMUNICATION AND VISIBILITY

Communication and visibility will be given high importance during the implementation of the Action.

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

The European Union Office in Kosovo has developed clear visibility guidelines and ensures that all projects which are implemented in Kosovo are fully in line with these guidelines. Project visibility is also clearly stipulated in all contractual documents whereby the contractors/implementers are obliged to adhere to all EU visibility requirements.

All necessary measures will be taken to publicise the fact that the Action has received funding from the EU in line with the guidelines developed by the EU Office in Kosovo, as well as the provisions outlined in the Communication and Visibility Manual for EU External actions.

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

It is the responsibility of the beneficiary to keep the EU Office fully informed of the planning and implementation of the specific visibility and communication activities.

The beneficiary shall report on its visibility and communication actions in the report submitted to the IPA monitoring committee and the sectoral monitoring committees.