

Standard Summary Project Fiche – IPA centralised programmes

Erasmus Mundus – Western Balkan - Turkey Window

1. Basic information

- 1.1 CRIS Number: 2008/020-370
- 1.2 Title: Erasmus Mundus – Western Balkan - Turkey Window
- 1.3 ELARG Statistical code: 02.26 Education and Culture
- 1.4 Location: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia as well as Kosovo¹ Turkey

Implementing arrangements:

- 1.5 Contracting Authority (EC): European Community represented by the Commission of the European Communities on behalf of the Beneficiaries.
- 1.6 Implementing Agency: The programme will be implemented by the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency.
- 1.7 Beneficiaries: Graduate students from the Western Balkans and Turkey

Financing:

- 1.8 Overall cost (VAT excluded)²: EUR 5 500 000
- 1.9 EU contribution: EUR 5 500 000
- 1.10 Final date for contracting: 30/11/2009
- 1.11 Final date for execution of contracts: 30/11/2011
- 1.12 Final date for disbursements: 30/11/2012

¹ under UNSCR 1244/99

² The total cost of the project should be net of VAT and/or other taxes. Should this not be the case, the amount of VAT and the reasons why it should be considered eligible should be clearly indicated.

2. Overall Objective and Project Purpose

2.1 Overall Objective:

To enhance the quality of European higher education by fostering cooperation with non EU members in order to improve the development of human resources and to promote dialogue and understanding between people and cultures.

The specific objectives of Erasmus Mundus Western Balkans - Turkey Window are:

- To strengthen European cooperation and links in higher education by enabling additional highly qualified graduates from the Western Balkans and Turkey to engage in postgraduate study at European universities and to obtain qualifications and/or experience in the European Union and EFTA-EEA states;
- To develop more structured cooperation between European Union/EFTA-EEA states and the Western Balkans and Turkish institutions.

2.2 Project purpose:

The project purpose is the provision of approximately 140 scholarships to students from the Western Balkans and Turkey.

By supporting the mobility of students from the candidate and potential candidates, Erasmus Mundus intends to prepare its European participants for life in a global, knowledge-based society.

The Western Balkans - Turkey Window will be earmarked to fund exclusively students (Action 2 "Erasmus Mundus Scholarships") and allow up to 100 students from the region to undertake postgraduate studies in EU high profile master's courses. These Masters Courses are predefined, because they have been selected under Action 1 of the Erasmus Mundus Programme.

Access to the programme is reserved for students from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Kosovo, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey having obtained a first degree awarded by a recognised higher education institution³.

2.3 Link with AP/NPAA / EP/ SAA

Higher Education is an issue which is mentioned in all the European / Accession Partnerships as a medium priority.

2.4 Link with MIPD

This project has been designed on the basis of the Multi-beneficiary MIPD 2008-2010 in which education is a priority under Section 2.3.2

³ As long as these beneficiaries are not entitled to participate under Action 1 of the Erasmus Mundus Programme concerning masters courses

The objective to be achieved according to the MB MIPD is to "*enable mutual enrichment and better understanding between the EU Member States and the beneficiaries through the provision of postgraduate studies to highly qualified students in EU universities.*"

2.5 Link with National Development Plan (where applicable)

Here are some examples of some national development plans in the region:

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, priorities for higher education identified in MTDS – Medium Term Development Strategy for Bosnia and Herzegovina in period, besides adoption of Higher Education Law aim at establishing entity-level higher education funds, as well as public and transparent mechanisms of quality assurance, including the procedures for periodic external assessment of universities.

In addition, a set of priorities is related to deadlines for implementation of the Higher Education Law in relation to harmonisation of lower level of legislation with the state law, institutional development in particular establishment of relevant agencies for recognition of qualifications, quality assurance and accreditation; transformation of public universities from loose associations of faculties towards integrated institutions.

In Croatia, the Accession Partnership with Croatia (Commission proposal: November 2007) includes the key priority of ensuring adequate capacity of Croatian authorities to manage the Life-long Learning Programme.

The key priorities of the National Programme for Croatia's Accession into EU 2008⁴ referring to higher education include fostering of mobility in higher education institutions within and outside Croatia. The Programme also includes plans of Croatia to fully join the Erasmus Mundus programme. One of mid-term priorities specifically refers to fostering of cooperation with foreign higher education institutions.

Higher education is also a key priority in Croatian Government's strategic document for education development "Education Sector Development Plan 2005-2010" whose priorities and activities are in line with the National Programme for Croatia's Accession into EU.

2.6 Link with national/ sectoral investment plans (where applicable)

Not applicable

⁴ The Programme was adopted by the Croatian Government in February 2008, but adoption of the Programme by Croatian Parliament is still to follow.

3. Description of project

3.1 Background and justification:

Erasmus Mundus addresses objectives set out in the Multi-Beneficiary MIPD 2008-2010 (Section 2.3.2.2.1) regarding the sector of higher education and especially the increased mobility of students.

In addition, the programme specifically addresses the recommendation of the Commission's Communication of 27 January 2006 "The Western Balkans on the Road to the EU: Consolidation Stability and Raising Prosperity" which indicates that "a special window will be made available in 2006 in Erasmus Mundus to allow up to 100 students from the region to undertake postgraduate studies in EU high profile master's courses."

This initiative confirms the Commission's desire to encourage the opening up of European higher education to the Western Balkans and Turkey. It complements the EU existing regional programme in higher education with the Western Balkans (Tempus) as well as the Erasmus Mundus External Cooperation Window.

In order to reinforce the added value of Community action, it is necessary to ensure coherence and complementarities between the actions implemented in the framework of the present initiative and other relevant Community policies, instruments and actions. Effective linkages in the area of higher education undertaken within the framework of the EU cooperation with the Western Balkans and Turkey and the competent international organisations will be ensured.

3.2 Assessment of project impact, catalytic effect, sustainability and cross border impact (where applicable)

The Erasmus Mundus programme has provided valuable support to the achievement of important results in the field of higher education at European level: elaboration of masters programmes compatible with the Bologna principles, increasing international student mobility, support to the quality assurance, fostering academic cooperation between EU and non-member institutions, enhancing profile, transparency and attractiveness of European higher education in non member Beneficiaries.

Furthermore the programme has had a catalytic effect on the implementation of the Bologna recommendations and has strongly contributed to the promotion of mutual understanding in a multicultural environment and training.

Performance is monitored through desk and field monitoring. The Erasmus Mundus National Structures act as information offices in EU Member States.

3.3 Results and measurable indicators:

Students from the Western Balkans and Turkey to obtain a Masters degree (joint, double or multiple) from an Erasmus Mundus Masters Course; Improved cultural understanding and respect for diversity.

Main performance indicators for Erasmus Mundus are the number of institutions, students and scholars participating in the programme.

The impact of the Western Balkans - Turkey Window within Erasmus Mundus will be measured against performance indicators such as the number of students participating in the scheme as well as the impact of their study in the EU on employability and career opportunities. This will be made the object of a thorough assessment and analytical study by Commission services.

3.4 Activities:

The different steps of the action are as follows:

- a) The Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency publishes the selected Masters Courses on the Europa website. If students start their courses in year "N" the publication of this information normally takes place at the end of summer of year "N-1";
- b) Erasmus Mundus consortia publish their selected Masters Courses worldwide especially in the targeted Beneficiaries (and the Commission publishes the Erasmus Mundus programme as a whole). The period of maximum publicity is normally between autumn of year N-1 and January of year "N";
- c) Students apply directly to consortia. Deadlines for applications may vary according to the Masters Courses but they normally fall between mid-January and mid-February of year "N";
- d) The consortia select students and propose a list of grantees, including a reserve list, to the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency by the established deadline of 28 February of year "N".
- e) The list of students is then validated by a Commission internal inter-service selection committee. Eventually it needs to receive the positive opinion of the programme committee and go through the EP's right of scrutiny. The whole procedure takes two or three months.
- f) The Commission normally takes the selection decision at the end of May of year "N".
- g) Grantees are informed that they have been selected in June of year "N". At this point they can start procedures to obtain visas to come study in an Erasmus Mundus Masters Course in August-October of year "N".

3.5 Conditionality and sequencing:

This Programme will be implemented on the assumption that participating consortia will be selected and that numerous students will be interested in mobility activities.

3.6 Linked activities

- Tempus aiming at up-grading higher education institutions and promoting regional and multilateral networking between higher education institutions in the EU and the Western Balkans. Tempus projects relate to curriculum development and institutional development.
- Erasmus Mundus External Cooperation Window. This Programme was extended to the Western Balkans in 2007 in order to enable academic cooperation as well as mobility of academic staff and students at all levels.

3.7 Lessons learned

During the first three years of implementation of Erasmus Mundus, students from the Western Balkans already had the opportunity to participate in the programme that is open to individuals from all Beneficiaries in the world.

More specifically Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro, Kosovo and Albania can participate in three of the four actions of the general Erasmus Mundus programme. Considering that the bulk of funds is for mobility actions, students and scholars from these Beneficiaries are the main beneficiaries of Erasmus Mundus.

Through the "partnerships" action, universities in the Western Balkans are able to establish or reinforce cooperation projects with Erasmus Mundus Masters courses. This allows them, inter alia, to exchange good practices and receive students/scholars from Europe.

Institutions from these Beneficiaries are also eligible to participate in projects aiming to enhance the attractiveness of European Higher Education in the world.

Since the academic year 2005-2006, five country specific-windows within the general Erasmus Mundus Programme have been operational (China Window, India Window, Thailand Window, Malaysia Window, Other Asian countries Window). These windows have allowed for a strong increase of the participation of students from these countries. Financial absorption of additional funds has been very satisfactory.

The proposed Western Balkans – Turkey Window is foreseen to start in the academic year 2009-2010 and will benefit from the lessons learnt from existing Windows. It will allow additional scholarships to be offered to students from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Kosovo, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey.

4. Indicative Budget (amounts in m€)

			SOURCES OF FUNDING									
			TOTAL EXP.RE	IPA COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTION		NATIONAL CONTRIBUTION					PRIVATE CONTRIBUTION	
ACTIVITIES	IB (1)	INV (1)	EUR (a)=(b)+(c)+(d)	EUR (b)	% (2)	Total EUR (c)=(x)+(y)+(z)	% (2)	Central EUR (x)	Regional/Local EUR (y)	IFIs EUR (z)	EUR (d)	% (2)
Activity 1	x		5,500,000	5,500,000	100	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
TOTAL IB			5,500,000	5,500,000	100	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
TOTAL INV			/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
TOTAL PROJECT			5,500,000	5,500,000	100							

Amounts net of VAT

- (1) In the Activity row use "X" to identify whether IB or INV
(2) Expressed in % of the **Total** Expenditure (column (a))

5. Indicative Implementation Schedule (periods broken down per quarter)

Contracts	Start of Tendering	Signature of contract	Project Completion
N/A (students apply to selected consortia)	N/A	2009 Q3	2011 Q4

6. Cross cutting issues (where applicable)

It is necessary to increase Community efforts to promote dialogue and understanding between cultures world-wide, bearing in mind the social dimension of higher education as well as the ideals of democracy and respect for human rights, including gender equality, especially as mobility fosters the discovery of new cultural and social environments and facilitates understanding thereof, thereby ensuring that no group of citizens or Western Balkan and Turkey nationals is excluded or put at a disadvantage.

6.1 Equal Opportunity:

Over the past few decades there has been increasing attention paid to the gender dimension of poverty and development in transition economies, particularly in relation to the role of women in education and the impact of higher education on equal opportunity policies.

Projects should integrate gender mainstreaming in their aims and activities, specifically in subject matters and areas of study where the presence of women in the economy has traditionally been very low (science and technology). Projects should promote gender balance and identify factors influencing gender discrimination. They should monitor and evaluate the transition from education and training to working life, recruitment and career development of potential female top managers.

Projects in the sphere of education and sciences should promote the change of gender roles and societal stereotypes, avoiding in any sort of cultural prejudice educational materials.

The principle of equal opportunities should be taken into account when evaluating the quality of all projects proposed under the three components. Specific attention will be paid to this dimension when determining the benefit of mobility activities.

While implementing the project activities and, to the extent applicable, the Beneficiary will try to assure that gender disaggregated data will be made available to carry out an analysis of the social and economic impact of the actions undertaken.

6.2 Environment:

During the implementation of their actions, project beneficiaries shall ensure that due cognizance be given to the Government's development policy relating to environmental management and that such policy is embodied within all strategic policy documents that they may draft, all training activities that they may carry out and new study programmes and curricula that they may design.

6.3 Minorities:

Rights of minorities should be taken into account when evaluating the quality of all projects proposed under the programme.

ANNEXES

- 1- Log frame in Standard Format
- 2- Amounts contracted and Disbursed per Quarter over the full duration of Programme
- 4 - Reference to laws, regulations and strategic documents:

ANNEX 1: Logical framework matrix in standard format

LOGFRAME PLANNING MATRIX FOR PROJECT FICHE	ERASMUS MUNDUS WESTERN BALKAN - TURKEY WINDOW	
	Contracting period expires: 30/11/2009	Disbursement period expires: 30/11/2012
	Total budget: €5.5m	IPA budget: €5,5m

Overall objective	Objectively verifiable indicators	Sources of Verification	
The Programme's overall aim is to enhance the quality of European higher education by fostering cooperation with non EU members in order to improve the development of human resources and to promote dialogue and understanding between people and cultures.	Main performance indicators for Erasmus Mundus are the number of institutions, students and scholars participating in the programme.	Commission and EACEA services. Universities and Consortia	
Project purpose	Objectively verifiable indicators	Sources of Verification	Assumptions
To strengthen European cooperation and links in higher education by enabling	- Number of students applying to the scheme;	Universities and Consortia	After selection the assumption is that students and academics from

<p>highly qualified graduates from the Western Balkans and Turkey to engage in postgraduate study at European universities and to obtain qualifications and/or experience in the European Union and EFTA-EEA states;</p> <p>To develop more structured cooperation between European Union/EFTA-EEA states and the Western Balkans and Turkish institutions.</p> <p>The project purpose is the provision of approximately 100 scholarships to students from Western Balkans and Turkey.</p> <p>By supporting the mobility of students from the potential candidates, Erasmus Mundus intends to prepare its European participants for life in a global, knowledge-based society.</p>	<p>- Impact of their study in the EU on employability and career opportunities.</p>	<p>Commission and EACEA services.</p>	<p>WB are permitted to leave their country and enter the European host country.</p> <p>EC Delegations should cooperate if necessary with local EU embassies in the Beneficiaries in order to ease the visa application process.</p>
Results	Objectively verifiable indicators	Sources of Verification	Assumptions
<p>1. Additional scholarships to students from certain Western Balkans and Turkey</p>	<p>- Number of students participating in the Programme</p>	<p>Universities and Consortia</p>	

<p>2. Indirectly: increased cooperation between EU and Western Balkans higher education institutions</p> <p>3. Indirectly: increased mobility of students, academic staff at national and EU level</p>	<p>- Impact of students study in the EU on employability and career opportunities</p>		
Activities	Means	Costs	Assumptions
Award of scholarships		€5,5m	

ANNEX 2: Indicative amounts (in €) contracted and disbursed by quarter for the project

Contracted	4th 2008	4th 2009	4th 2010	4th 2011
Erasmus Mundus Western Balkan Window	0	3.850.000	1.650.000	
Cumulated	0	3.850.000	5.500.000	
Disbursed	4th 2008	4th 2009	4th 2010	4th 2011
Erasmus Mundus Western Balkan Window	0	2.200.000	1.650.000	1.650.000
Cumulated	0	2.200.000	3.850.000	5.500.000

ANNEX 3: Reference to laws, regulations and strategic documents:

- Council Decision of 18 February 2008 (2008/210/EC) on the principles, priorities and conditions contained in the European Partnership with Albania and repealing Decision 2006/54/EC
- Council Decision of 18 February 2008 (2008/211/EC) on the principles, priorities and conditions contained in the European Partnership with Bosnia and Herzegovina and repealing Decision 2006/55/EC
- Council Decision of 12 February 2008 (2008/119/EC) on the principles, priorities and conditions contained in the Accession Partnership with Croatia and repealing Decision 2006/145/EC
- Council Decision of 18 February 2008 (2008/212/EC) on the principles, priorities and conditions contained in the Accession Partnership with the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and repealing Decision 2006/57/EC
- Council Decision of 22 January 2007 (2007/49/EC) on the principles, priorities and conditions contained in the European Partnership with Montenegro.
- Council Decision of 18 February 2008 (2008/213/EC) on the principles, priorities and conditions contained in the European Partnership with Serbia including Kosovo as defined by United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 of 10 June 1999 and repealing Decision 2006/56/EC
- Multi-Beneficiary Multi-annual Indicative Planning Document (2008/2010)

ANNEX 4: Details per EU funded contract

The programme will be implemented on a indirect centralised basis by the European Commission following Article 53.1 (a) of the Financial Regulation and corresponding provisions of the Implementing Rules.

Implementation tasks are delegated under Article 54.2 (a) of the Financial Regulation to the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency, which was created by Commission Decision 2005/56/EC of 14 January 2005. The mandate of the agency was extended by Commission Decision 2007/114/EC of 8 February 2007.

According to Article 12 (3) of the Council Regulation No (EC) 58/2003 of 19 December 2002 laying down the statute for executive agencies to be entrusted with certain tasks in the management of Community programmes⁵, any programme delegated to an executive agency has to contribute to the financing of the administrative budget of the agency. Due to the nature of implementation, the administrative expenditure associated with operational appropriations in any given year is incurred in the following year. Hence the provision of management costs has been envisaged in 2008 to cover the administrative expenditure for the programmes planned under the 2007 budget (not included in the present Financing Proposal).

⁵ OJ L11, 16.1.2003, p. 1.