



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

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA EU4ALL



Action summary

The Action will increase general awareness of public in Bosnia and Herzegovina local communities on EU values and/or EU integration process benefits obtained through support of small/medium size interventions related to the EU integration requirements and/or to EU policies.

It will further result in improved learning and living environment in local communities in Bosnia and Herzegovina for targeted population groups such as youth, senior citizens, persons with disabilities and reduced mobility, minorities and other vulnerable groups.

The Action will indirectly result in the increased visibility of EU values and EU assistance in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Action Identification	
Action Programme Title	Annual Action Programme for Bosnia and Herzegovina for year 2018
Action Title	EU4ALL
Action ID	IPA 2018/decision number.sequence number/country/title(short)
Sector Information	
IPA II Sector	Democracy and governance
DAC Sector	15110
Budget	
Total cost	EUR 2 000 000
EU contribution	EUR 2 000 000
Budget line(s)	22 020 101
Management and Implementation	
Management mode	Direct management
<i>Direct management:</i> EU Delegation	Delegation of the European Union to Bosnia and Herzegovina
Implementation responsibilities	If possible, and if relevant, indicate the name of the person(s) in charge of management of the financial assistance
Location	
Zone benefiting from the action	Bosnia and Herzegovina
Specific implementation area(s)	Bosnia and Herzegovina
Timeline	
Final date for concluding Financing Agreement(s) with IPA II beneficiary	At the latest by 31 December 2019
Final date for concluding delegation agreements under indirect management	N/A
Final date for concluding procurement and grant contracts	3 years following the date of conclusion of the Financing Agreement, with the exception of cases listed under Article 114(2) of the Financial Regulation
Final date for operational implementation	6 years following the conclusion of the Financing Agreement
Final date for implementing the Financing Agreement (date by which this programme should be de-	12 years following the conclusion of the Financing Agreement

committed and closed)			
Policy objectives / Markers (DAC form)			
General policy objective	Not targeted	Significant objective	Main objective
Participation development/good governance	<input type="checkbox"/>	x	<input type="checkbox"/>
Aid to environment	x	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gender equality (including Women In Development)	x	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Trade Development	x	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reproductive, Maternal, New born and child health	x	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
RIO Convention markers	Not targeted	Significant objective	Main objective
Biological diversity	x	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Combat desertification	x	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Climate change mitigation	x	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Climate change adaptation	x	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

1. RATIONALE

PROBLEM AND STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

Integration with the EU, leading to membership of the Union, is a key strategic priority for Bosnia and Herzegovina. Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) applied for EU membership on 15 January 2016 and has completed the European Commission Questionnaire. It is expected that BiH obtains in due course the candidate status and consequently be fully engaged in the accession process.

The EU's objectives are to support Bosnia and Herzegovina's progress towards EU integration through the implementation of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement, and to help build effective and functional institutional structures fit for European integration. Furthermore, the EU has been providing financial support to Bosnia and Herzegovina and up to date these kinds of interventions have been supporting the implementation of political, institutional and economic reforms in line with EU policies and accession process of BiH. In this sense, the municipalities/local communities' and grassroots requests have not been directly addressed through these higher level interventions and there were no opportunities to provide small size interventions with direct benefits to them.

Since 2015, the general public support over EU membership has been decreasing in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The latest opinion poll, that included 1200+ of BiH citizens/examinees, conducted by Directorate for European Integration in April 2017, showed that 69,2% citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina would have voted in favour of EU membership, should an accession referendum have taken place at that time, while 17,8% of BiH citizens would have voted against. This survey also included the questions related to visibility and knowledge of EU/IPA financial assistance. In this respect, the opinion poll showed that 62,4% of BiH citizens was poorly informed about IPA assistance, while 14,18 % was fairly well informed about the same. Those citizens who were fairly well informed about IPA assistance were mostly interested in getting knowledge of financing rules (27.9%), as well as of concrete projects, supported by EU/IPA assistance (18.3%). They also expressed the interest for information on contracting/disbursing of funds and the projects' status (17,9%). The citizens of Republika Srpska (RS) and Brcko District expressed in the opinion poll slightly higher interest in getting knowledge of financing rules of EU/IPA assistance than those from Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FBiH), while the citizens of FBiH were more interested in concrete EU funded projects in BiH than the citizens of the RS. The citizens of Brčko District were the most interested in getting knowledge of financing rules of EU/IPA assistance.

The above described clearly indicates that the dynamics of the accession process in Bosnia and Herzegovina has not been translated into the understanding of the accession process, nor into the awareness of tangible benefits of the EU financial support for the country and its citizens. In particular, the communication and visibility activities regarding the EU funds and direct EU financial support to Bosnia and Herzegovina have not so far managed to capture the attention of the wider public, especially of that in local communities.

The European Union has acknowledged the BiH needs for small/medium size interventions with immediate benefit and impact on socio-economic development of the country, by providing concrete opportunities in achieving better conditions of life in local communities of Bosnia and Herzegovina, targeting, inter alia, specific population groups, such as young people, persons with disabilities and reduced mobility, elderly people, and marginalised and excluded groups in general. This Action tends to support the aforementioned interventions as well as to provide for the visibility of the various EU interventions, by improving knowledge and raising awareness of BiH citizens on various aspects of EU integration process and hence demonstrating that the accession process goes well beyond the approximation of EU *acquis* and standards. Positive perception and better visibility of the EU within the local communities will provide support to the EU integration process, which should ultimately contribute to a greater support from the general public for the European integration process itself as well as to have an impact on the acceleration of the aforementioned process.

The Action will complement the small scale interventions that are covered either by the EU Delegation/EUSR Outreach programmes or EU Information Centre, implemented throughout BiH. EU Member States as well as other donors will be well aware of this Action and will be invited to complement to this Action as well with their development assistance to BiH.

OUTLINE OF IPA II ASSISTANCE

The purpose of this Action is to improve knowledge and raise awareness of various aspects of EU integration process of local communities and their citizens as well as to ensure small scale tangible benefits in local communities targeting specific population groups, such as young people, sports clubs and groups, persons with disabilities and reduced mobility, elderly people, different social associations and marginalised and/or excluded groups in general. Hence, it is expected from the Action to improve general perception of the EU and foster a wider understanding of its values and policies.

The Action will assist local communities/municipalities to support interventions which tangibly improve the lives of children in schooling, young and senior citizens, minorities as well as the most vulnerable groups of these communities and to improve accessibility of their public places and buildings through reconstruction and adaptation interventions. Focusing on priority facilities (such as schools, sports clubs/facilities, social work centres, healthcare centres, employment services, etc.), the interventions will improve the lives and access to local services for specific population groups and therefore allow them to exercise their fundamental rights. The Action also aims to build the capacities and raise awareness among the aforementioned stakeholders in local communities in Bosnia and Herzegovina on EU policies and the accession process of BiH. The indirect aim is to ensure the positive visibility of EU integration process and IPA funding through small/medium size interventions that lead to the improvement of public areas in a large number of municipalities in BiH.

RELEVANCE WITH THE IPA II STRATEGY PAPER AND OTHER KEY REFERENCES

The Indicative Strategy Paper for Bosnia and Herzegovina 2014-2020 (ISP) calls for reinforced visibility of EU assistance as a tool to measure the impact of EU support in Bosnia and Herzegovina and as a result to generate additional support for reforms.

Further, the European Commission Western Balkans Strategy recalls that for the accession process to be a success, its opportunities and challenges must be communicated more clearly. Therefore, the Commission will support these endeavours by stepping up its strategic communication in the countries and in the Union to ensure the visibility of the Enlargement policy.

The Action will also contribute to the implementation of the Communication Strategy for Informing Public About Accession of BiH to the EU, adopted by the Council of Ministers of BiH, and its corresponding action plans adopted on an annual basis.

LESSONS LEARNED AND LINK TO PREVIOUS FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

The small/medium size interventions at the municipality level in BiH have not been directly supported by EU or have been included through some EU larger interventions but as indirect and side activities.

The visibility of EU funds and EU integration process have been in general terms supported through all the EU funded projects, but in specific manner with specific activities through EU Awareness phase I and II projects and EU Info centres projects.

Previous projects that were intended to enhance visibility of the European integration process and of EU financial assistance were EU Awareness phase I (implementation period: January 2007 - January 2009) and EU Awareness phase II (implementation period: September 2009 – September 2011). Both of these projects aimed at strengthening the capacities of the relevant institutions in BiH and at supporting the activities that had raised awareness of general public on the EU accession, the EU shared values and the benefits for BiH upon becoming an EU Member State eventually.

The lesson learnt from the aforementioned projects indicated the need for capacity building of civil servants from institutions in BiH, who had been involved in undertaking various promotional and communication activities in relation to EU integration process with the aim to reach specific population target groups in BiH as well as a general public. Furthermore, it was concluded that it was necessary to undertake the activities related to the promotion and raising awareness of the EU integration process on a continued basis and to recurrently explain why it was vital to continue adopting the EU standards and practices and what kind of benefits would come out of it, by using the simple language, understandable to an average citizen in BiH.

Activities undertaken under this Action will build on and complement the visibility and communication achievements and activities undertaken by the DEI's EU promotion and communication activities and EUD/EUSR Outreach programmes and EU Info Centre activities.

The EUD/EUSR Outreach programme has been implemented through targeted public diplomacy and outreach activities, designed to ensure a broader understanding and support from the BiH public on EU related matters, including by means of engagement of local civil society actors. Well planned, targeted and priority-driven outreach activities of the EUD/EUSR Communications Office aim to inform, educate and ensure support of various population groups on the EU integration issues.

The EU Information Centre (EUIC) network comprising of the EU Info Points in Banja Luka, Mostar and Brcko and the three EU Info Corners established at the Universities in East Sarajevo, Zenica and Tuzla, serve to increase general understanding of the EU, its values, its policies and programmes among the citizens of BiH as well as to increase knowledge of BiH's accession process and its implications. It reaches different target groups, primarily youth, students, media, CSOs, artistic, academic and business community through its activities/events organised in the premises and other venues across the country. Events organised include presentations, seminars, debates, workshops, briefings, exhibitions, competitions, film screenings, public fora, thematic European events, production of information and promotional material as well as regular text/photo/video coverage of the events organised to promote the EU funded projects. The EUIC network is also the venue for activities organised by EU Member States, EUIC and other organisations dealing with EU matters. The EUIC contract also includes hosting and maintenance of the EUD/EUSR webpage.

"The Evaluation of IPA Information and Communication Programmes for Western Balkans countries and Turkey (2011-2014)" was undertaken in 2015/2016 with the following main *conclusions*: Information and Communication (IC) programmes have been relevant in view of existing and emerging political priorities linked to the stage of the integration process in each Western Balkan (WB) country and Turkey and the need to increase the level of public support for the enlargement process. However, strengthening of the strategic approach to information and communication would be desirable. Information and communication programmes use available resources efficiently, yet weaknesses can be found in internal horizontal and vertical communication processes. Prospects for effective information and communication are good in general, but vary from case to case. Particularly strong contributions were noted in relation to mobilising citizens on issues pertaining to awareness raising on EU policies, culture and values. Somewhat limited effects were recorded in reaching out to the broader public. There are some however positive cases related to impact and sustainability.

The Evaluation suggested the following *main recommendations*:

- 1) Elaborate a strong results framework for the IC programmes with clear and measurable indicators, fewer instruments, more clearly targeted interventions for selected target audiences and with longer time-horizons;
- 2) Simplify complex EU information and communication messages;
- 3) Use social media more proactively;
- 4) Ensure better coordination and targeted communication of EU IPA projects and horizontal communication activities;
- 5) Continue cooperating and providing capacity building of government partners in terms of communication and information regarding the EU;
- 6) Conduct an evaluation of EUICs, and
- 7) Establish baselines, where relevant and realistic, for the Performance Monitoring Framework.

As a follow up of the aforementioned recommendation no. 6., "The Evaluation of performance of EU Info Centres in the enlargement and neighbourhood regions (2011-2017)" was launched in February 2018 and will be of 12 months duration. First lessons learnt, conclusions and recommendations will be available in spring 2019.

2. INTERVENTION LOGIC

LOGICAL FRAMEWORK MATRIX

OVERALL OBJECTIVE	OBJECTIVELY VERIFIABLE INDICATORS (*)	SOURCES OF VERIFICATION	
To increase the level of positive perception and knowledge of the EU integration process by the population in Bosnia and Herzegovina	Continuous support to European Integration process in local communities in Bosnia and Herzegovina	<p>Polls undertaken by DEI and/or other government institutions in BiH, EUD, think-tanks</p> <p>EC Annual Country Report</p>	
SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE	OBJECTIVELY VERIFIABLE INDICATORS (*)	SOURCES OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTIONS
To improve awareness and visibility of EU by implementing small/medium size interventions in local communities in BiH linked to EU projects and/or EU policies	% of the population in local communities that is aware of the substance and extent of EU financial support to BiH at local level	<p>Polls undertaken by DEI and/or other government institutions in BiH, EUD, think-tanks</p> <p>IPA Monitoring Committee</p> <p>NIPAC Annual Report on IPA funding</p> <p>EC Annual Country Report</p>	BiH population as well as political support to EU integration process
RESULTS	OBJECTIVELY VERIFIABLE INDICATORS (*)	SOURCES OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTIONS
<p>Result 1</p> <p>Interventions in local communities' facilities and public areas implemented</p> <p>Result 2</p> <p>Various awareness raising /training and promotion activities in local communities implemented.</p>	<p>1.1. Number of local communities' facilities adapted and/or (re) constructed to become more comfortable learning/community environment for school children, youth, senior citizens, vulnerable groups, minorities (f.i. public schools, playgrounds, youth centres, sports centres, communities' social centres/various associations' centres, public areas, etc.)</p> <p>1.2. Number of beneficiaries from local communities' authorities and CSOs with strengthened skills in terms of mainstreaming of accessibility measures</p> <p>2.1. Number of thematic events/trainings/workshops and awareness raising activities in local communities organised and number of beneficiaries from local communities' authorities and CSOs who attended them (e.g. on specific EU <i>acquis</i>/directives related topics/EU Strategy for Western Balkan flagship initiatives, etc.)</p> <p>2.2. Number of media coverage on organised specific community events and awareness raising activities/training in local communities'</p>	<p>Activities' reports</p> <p>DEI and/or EUD Press clipping</p> <p>Polls undertaken by DEI and/or other government institutions in BiH, EUD, think-tanks</p> <p>IPA Monitoring Committee</p> <p>NIPAC Annual Report on IPA funding</p> <p>EC Annual Country Report</p>	<p>Population/different social groups (including media community) and institutions at the municipal/local level of BiH recognise the benefits of EU integration process and EU funding opportunities</p> <p>Identification of priority areas and locations for assistance in a timely manner;</p> <p>Sufficient and good quality applications by the potential beneficiaries;</p> <p>Good cooperation with all relevant stakeholders;</p> <p>Implementation of interventions undertaken under the Action in cooperation with authorities in BiH.</p> <p>Successful completion of prior actions on provision of technical documentation for the works and/or provision of equipment.</p>



DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES

The aim of the Action is to increase general awareness of public in local communities on EU values and policies, EU integration process requirements, EU assistance projects and related information, by supporting various activities with the direct impact and benefit for the various population groups in local communities. The Action tends to tangibly improve the lives of children in schooling systems, young and senior citizens, minorities as well as the most vulnerable groups of these municipalities.

The EU will deliver the assistance to local authorities and communities in Bosnia and Herzegovina under this Action through various types of support, covered by one grant contract, with its substantial part being used through sub granting.

The following list is indicative of the types of activities that may be implemented under this Action but is not exhaustive:

Result 1 Interventions in local communities' facilities and public areas implemented

Activity 1.1 Adaptation and/or (re)construction of public facilities, buildings and public areas in selected municipalities/local communities.

Activity 1.2 Adaptation and/or (re)construction of schools and kindergartens and surrounding playgrounds in municipalities/local communities by promoting EU values and standards.

Activity 1.3 Adaptation and/or (re)construction of local communities' social centres (youth, minorities, elderly people, vulnerable groups' centres), by promoting EU values and standards.

Activity 1.4 Providing equipment for stakeholders and local communities in Bosnia and Herzegovina to support EU integration process priorities.

Result 2: Various awareness raising /training and promotion activities in local communities implemented

Activity 2.1 Awareness raising among the main stakeholders and local communities in Bosnia and Herzegovina on EU policies and the accession process of BiH, including thematic sessions and campaigns, deriving from EU acquis chapters/directives, EU Strategy for Western Balkans and/or other pertinent EU strategic documents.

Activity 2.2 Supporting the organisation of social gatherings, culture and sport events organised in municipalities/local communities that are in context of accession to the EU and in line with EU projects and/or EU policies and/or strategies.

Activity 2.3 Supporting and organising media visits to the sites of EU financed actions.

Activity 2.4 Supporting and organising events and awareness raising activities in local communities, as well as trainings for the various target groups in the local communities on how to apply for the EU funding (e.g. preparation of project proposals according to the EC procurement rules).

Activity 2.5 Provision of information activities and materials regarding EU integration process as complementary activities to those of EU Information Centre to BiH and/or of EUD/EUSR Outreach or other programmes.

RISKS

Main assumptions for the implementation of the interventions to be undertaken under the Action include:

- Identification of priority areas and locations for assistance in a timely manner;
- Sufficient and good quality applications by the potential beneficiaries;
- Good cooperation with all relevant stakeholders;
- Implementation of interventions undertaken under the Action in cooperation with authorities in BiH.

The following risks are identified:

- Delays in the preparation of technical documentation for the realisation of works/ provision of required equipment ;
- Lack of relevant (re)construction documentation and permissions in local communities;
- Weak interest of local municipalities to get involved and participate in organised events, workshops, trainings, etc;

CONDITIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

There are no conditions that need to be met for the implementation of the Action

3. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The main stakeholders that will be involved in the implementation of the Action are:

- EU Delegation to Bosnia and Herzegovina;
- Directorate for European Integration (DEI);
- Local communities in Bosnia and Herzegovina;
- Entities, cantons in FBiH and Brčko District institutions/coordinators in charge of European Integration and government administrations.

Requests for utilisation of the Action, submitted by various stakeholders, mainly by local communities (e.g. youth centres/associations, social centres, municipalities, Civil Society Organizations, etc.) may be channelled through either DEI or entities or cantons in FBiH or Brčko District level or the EU Delegation to Bosnia and Herzegovina for consideration and approval. As the management of EU funds operates in a direct management mode in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the EU Delegation to Bosnia and Herzegovina is to provide a final approval of each request for assistance under this Action.

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

The action will be implemented in direct management by the EU Delegation.

The action will be implemented through indicatively one grant.

PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

METHODOLOGY FOR MONITORING (AND EVALUATION)

The European Commission may carry out a mid-term, a final or an ex-post evaluation for this Action or its components via independent consultants, through a joint mission or via an implementing partner. In case a mid-term or final evaluation is not foreseen, the European Commission may, during implementation, decide to undertake such an evaluation for duly justified reasons either on its own decision or on the initiative of the partner. The evaluations will be carried out as prescribed by the DG NEAR guidelines for evaluations. In addition, the Action might be subject to external monitoring in line with the European Commission rules and procedures set in the Financing Agreement.

The Action will be regularly monitored by EU Delegation to Bosnia and Herzegovina. In addition, the Action will be subject to external monitoring and evaluation in line with the EC rules and procedures set in the Financing Agreement.

INDICATOR MEASUREMENT

Indicator	Baseline (2017) (2)	Target 2020 (3)	Final Target (2022) (4)	Source of information
Continuous support to European Integration process in local communities in Bosnia and Herzegovina	69,2 % (2017)	75%	80%	Surveys/opinion polls EUD web page and social media
% of the population in local communities that is aware of the substance and extent of EU financial support to BiH at local level	25% (2017)	40%	55%	Surveys/opinion polls EUD web page and social media
Number of local communities' facilities adapted and/or (re) constructed to become more comfortable learning/community environment for school children, youth, senior citizens, vulnerable groups, minorities (public schools, playgrounds, youth centres, sports centres, communities' social centres/various associations' centres, public areas, etc.)	0	2 (per municipality)	2 (per municipality)	Project Reports Selected Municipalities' Reports EUD web page and social media
Number of beneficiaries from local communities' authorities and CSOs with strengthened skills in terms of mainstreaming of accessibility measures	0	10 (per municipality)	15 (per municipality)	Project Reports Selected Municipalities' Reports EUD web page and social media
Number of thematic events/trainings/workshops and awareness raising activities in local communities organised and number of beneficiaries from local communities' authorities and CSOs who attended them (eg. on specific EU <i>acquis</i> /directive related topics/EU strategy for Western Balkan flagship initiatives, etc.)	0	10 events 100 beneficiaries	15 events 100 beneficiaries	Project Reports Selected Municipalities Reports EUD web page and social media
Number of media coverage on organised specific community events and awareness raising activities/training in local communities	0	3 (per event)	3 (per event)	Project Reports Media monitoring EUD web page and social media

(1) This is the related indicator as included in the Indicative Strategy Paper (for reference only)

(2) The agreed baseline year is 2010 (to be inserted in brackets in the top row). If for the chosen indicator, there are no available data for 2010, it is advisable to refer to the following years – 2011, 2012. The year of reference may not be the same either for all indicators selected due to a lack of data availability; in this case, the year should then be inserted in each cell in brackets. The baseline value may be "0" (i.e. no reference values are available as the Action represents a novelty for the beneficiary) but cannot be left empty or include references such as "N/A" or "will be determined later".

(3) The target year CANNOT be modified.

(4) This will be a useful reference to continue measuring the outcome of IPA II support beyond the 2014-2020 multi-annual financial period. If the Action is completed before 2020 (year for the performance reward), this value and that in the 2020 target column must be the same.

5. SECTOR APPROACH ASSESSMENT

The current Action is developed under the sector Democracy and Governance and will increase general visibility of EU values and EU assistance, especially in local communities in BiH through support of small/medium size interventions related to the EU integration requirements and/or to EU policies.

The Action will support targeted stakeholders and local communities in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It may support the capacities of the municipalities to acquiring knowledge on EU integration, visibility, projects and related policies. Furthermore, the Action may provide support to specific activities related to adaptation and/or (re)construction of public facilities, public areas and social centres (youth, minorities, elderly people, vulnerable groups) in selected municipalities/local communities, schools and kindergartens and surrounding playgrounds, and promoting EU values and standards.

EU integration/accession process affects all the citizens of a country and requires their active engagement and support. As such, all citizens of BiH are ultimately a target group of EU-related information.

6. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

GENDER MAINSTREAMING

Due attention will be given to gender aspect within Action activities, including ensuring participation of both women and men, recognising different needs of women and men, ensuring benefits for both men and women, and ensuring gender sensitive data.

In general, a gender perspective will be maintained ensuring that the results of the Action impact positively on gender equality as well. The Action does not foresee the activities that will make impact on any differentiation between men and women covered by the activities and their results.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Based on the fundamental principles of promoting equality and combating discrimination, participation in the Action will be guaranteed on the basis of equal access regardless of sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation.

The principles of equal opportunities will be duly taken into account in the course of the Action implementation and the Action will promote an environment that is conducive and enabling to gender equality ensuring equal participation of women and men in all Action activities.

The Action will support interventions in local communities aimed at specific vulnerable population groups such as children, young people, senior citizens, minorities, disabled, etc.

MINORITIES AND VULNERABLE GROUPS

During the implementation of activities anticipated under the Action, full respect of minorities and vulnerable groups will be ensured. Publicity and dissemination of information will help to empower minorities and vulnerable groups to participate in the proposed activities. The Action envisions support to marginalised and excluded groups at the level of local communities.

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

The involvement and participation of civil society and non-state stakeholders in the European integration process is very important and cooperation between governmental and non-governmental sectors crucial. As an integral part of the European Union accession process, opportunities for dialogue and cooperation among civil society and non-state actors and public sector actors will be further developed through various activities under the proposed Action. To this end, the direct support to CSOs at the municipality level is, *inter alia*, envisioned to be provided under this Action.

ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE (AND IF RELEVANT DISASTER RESILIENCE)

The Action and the activities deriving from the Action will not have any negative impact on the environment nor jeopardise environment, health and security in the future. The activities deriving from this Action will be delivered in the most environmentally friendly possible way.

Climate action relevant budget allocation : 0 EUR

7. SUSTAINABILITY

The Action envisages to produce sustainable results since the foreseen activities will be conducted in cooperation with relevant institutions and local communities, thus ensuring sustainability in the medium and longer term in case of works interventions.

Strong dimension and focus on raising awareness/ visibility and training activities throughout the Action sets ground for building capacities of local governments, various public institutions (e.g. schools, sports clubs, senior citizens and/or vulnerable groups' associations, etc.) and CSOs in further management of similar activities. The foreseen visibility interventions will have a direct effect on sustained local development and social cohesion in the context of EU integration process of BiH and its more advanced approximation to EU standards and values.

It is expected that the high visibility of the results and impact of these small/medium size measures will improve perception of the EU interventions by the population of local communities in BiH.

8. COMMUNICATION AND VISIBILITY

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

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

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

Visibility and communication aspects shall be complementary to the activities implemented by DG NEAR and the EU Delegations in the field. DG NEAR and the EU Delegations should be fully informed of the planning and implementation of the specific visibility and communication activities carried out by the beneficiaries and the implementing partners.