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ANNEX III

of the Commission Implementing Decision on the financing of the multi-country annual action plan in favour of the Western Balkans and Türkiye for 2022

Action Document for “EU4Youth: European Week of Sport in the Western Balkans - 2022”

ANNUAL ACTION PLAN

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

1. SYNOPSIS

1.1. Action Summary Table

Title	EU4Youth: European Week of Sport in the Western Balkans - 2022 Multi-country annual action plan in favour of the Western Balkans and Türkiye for 2022
OPSYS	IPA III/2022/NEAR>EAC/03
Basic Act	Financed under the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA III)
Team Europe Initiative	No
Zone benefiting from the action	Western Balkans (Albania, Bosnia Herzegovina, Kosovo* and Montenegro)
Programming document	IPA III Programming Framework
PRIORITY AREAS AND SECTOR INFORMATION	
Window and thematic priority	Window 2: Good governance, EU <i>acquis</i> alignment, good neighbourly relations and strategic communication, Thematic Priority 1 (75%): Good governance and Thematic Priority 3 (25%): Good neighbourly relations and reconciliations
Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	Main SDG:17-Partnership to achieve the Goal Other significant SDGs: 3-Good health and well-being, and 5-Gender equality
DAC code(s)	16065 - recreation and sport – 100%

* 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.

Main Delivery Channel @	12000 – Recipient Government			
Markers (from DAC form)	General policy objective @	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective
	Participation development/good governance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Aid to environment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Gender equality and women's and girl's empowerment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Trade development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Reproductive, maternal, new-born and child health	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Disaster Risk Reduction	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Inclusion of persons with Disabilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Nutrition	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	RIO Convention markers @	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective
	Biological diversity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Combat desertification	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change mitigation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change adaptation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Internal markers	Policy objectives	Not targeted	Significant objective
Connectivity		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Digitalisation		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Migration		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
COVID-19		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
BUDGET INFORMATION				
Amounts concerned	Budget line: 15.020101.01 Total estimated cost: EUR 1 000 000 Total amount of EU budget contribution EUR 1 000 000			
MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION				
Implementation modalities (type of financing and management mode)	Direct management through Grants The action will be co-delegated to the Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture			
Relevant priorities and flagships from Economic and	Priority "Human Capital Development"			

Investment Plan for the Western Balkans	
Final date for concluding contribution / delegation agreements, procurement and grant contracts	At the latest by 31 December 2023
Indicative operational implementation period	72 months following the adoption of the Financing Decision ¹

1.2. Summary of the Action

The Western Balkans dimension of the European Week of Sport beyond Borders promotes participation in sport and physical activity in the region. Sport is a quintessential vehicle to share values and create meaningful experiences for all its participants. It creates opportunities for dialogue in the region and raises awareness about the benefits of healthy and active lifestyles, in particular among the youth.

The Action aims to support the implementation of the #BeActive campaign of the European Week of Sport initiative in the Western Balkans. In addition, it will raise awareness and understanding in the individuals (especially young) and civil society about other cultures in the Western Balkans. The Action builds on the success of the 2021-22 EU4Youth: European Week of Sport in the Western Balkans that is being extremely successful in promoting health and physical activity despite the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Thanks to a close focus on sport, physical activity and sustainability, the Action supports Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) 3 and 17. Events and training opportunities planned under the Action promote a healthy lifestyle and offer opportunities to people of all ages to do more sport. In addition to this, events will be organised using sustainable practices (e.g. no single-use plastic) and will seize each opportunity to sensibilise participants on sustainable habits.

2. RATIONALE

2.1. Context

Sport has the power to unite, build bridges between cultures, and enhance understanding between people. Sport plays a major role in contemporary society for improving people's health and contributing to social cohesion. Sport can also help stabilising good neighbourly relations, enhancing employment opportunities, easing social tensions, and be a vehicle for successful social integration, mobility and security. In particular, sport is a useful tool for empowering young people and promoting key EU values and interests of good governance, democracy, rule of law, human rights, equality for all and social inclusion. The promotion of sport provides opportunities to enhance capacity building in the Western Balkans.

¹ The Action is set to last for 24 months from the date of the signature of the four individual grant agreements and is expected to cover the year-round activities and the events of the European Weeks of Sport 2023 and 2024.

Since 2015, the European Week of Sport has been carried out in 44 countries across Europe. Its main aim is increasing the levels of participation in sport and physical activity for citizens in the EU and beyond (Western Balkans and Eastern Partnership). The Week reached over 15 million individuals yearly in 2019 and 2020. The Week is carried out with close involvement of National Coordinating Bodies (Serbia and North Macedonia are two of the programme countries of Erasmus+ receiving a grant for this).

The goals of this Action and its activities are in line with the Western Balkans Agenda on innovation, research, education, culture, youth & sport². Under its Regional cooperation and people-to-people exchanges, the Agenda highlights the importance of the key activities outlined in the Action document such as the key role of the European Week of Sport to promote physical activity, mobility, inclusion joint regional events and healthy lifestyles. These subjects are also reflected in the Window 4 (Competitiveness and inclusive growth) under the IPA III programme framework and show the role that sport can play across different sectors. What is more, sport is also mentioned as one of the drivers promoting investment and human capital in the Economic and Investment Plan for the Western Balkans³.

Since 2020, the IPA II multi-country programme financed the activity EU4Youth: European Week of Sport in the Western Balkans with a longer term plan (2 years) and a larger budget. This allowed the four beneficiary ministries to organise the European Week of Sport in the period 23-30 September 2021 but also, and even more importantly, to organise tens of events all year round. These include for instance sport events in schools and universities, sport competitions for students, targeted activities for specific groups (women, people with disabilities), studies and conferences. These activities aimed to promote sport and physical activity in the region and at the same time intended to raise participants' awareness and understanding of other cultures in the Western Balkans.

Preliminary reports from the 2021 edition showed that this dual goal is being met with great enthusiasm among the participants⁴. Such actions are running until the end of 2022 and so far the main outputs include:

1. The Action is expanding opportunities for regional cooperation in sport and not only among the four beneficiaries. A key element in the EU4Youth project is the increased opportunities of cooperation with the National Coordinating Bodies of the Erasmus+ associated countries. Thanks to this cooperation, new synergies can be found.
2. The Action is successfully encouraging tens of thousands of individuals (including many school children) to be active. This is a very positive result since the levels of physical activity remain very low from 2018-2022 as the most recent Eurobarometer⁵ shows. The levels in the Western Balkans are not expected to be different than the average of EU27.
3. The Action is laying down the foundations for a healthier society thanks to the promotion of more physical activity and healthy habits. Since the pandemic broke out in 2020, health became more important than ever both from an individual but also from a societal standpoint.

2.2. Problem Analysis

This Action seeks to address a better integration and neighbourhood relations with and within the Western Balkans. Promoting deeper neighbourhood relations and creating a common narrative is key in ensuring the stability of each IPA beneficiary and within the region. Sport is an excellent vehicle to bring people together

² <https://wb-ministerial.tw.events/en/balkans-agenda>

³ COM(2020)641 final of 6.10.2020, pages 3 and 15

⁴ European Week of Sport in 2021 in the Western Balkans: over 371 200 participants, and almost 7 000 events.

⁵ <https://europa.eu/eurobarometer/surveys/detail/2668>

in a positive way, using a ‘common language’ that everyone can relate to. Sport is a proven tool for supporting integration and overcoming mental barriers. The joint events and occasions for cooperation among civil society and athletes will therefore help to contribute to the objective of building such a common narrative.

Sport can bring not only a healthier society, but the events organised under this Action will also create opportunities to meet others in a sport context that transcends language or cultural barriers and can develop a sense of community. Moreover, it allows individuals to gain new skills and spread positive values. When it comes to health, even low levels of physical activity have the potential to prevent several non-communicable diseases, including cancer. Sport also creates positive feelings and after almost two years of closures due to the COVID-19 pandemic, 2022 and 2023 represent two key years to promote being active again. This is particularly relevant for the young people whose well-being has suffered the most during the closures due to the pandemic.

What is more, sport can inspire human and entrepreneurial capacity to change and innovation. In a long term perspective, with thousands of young people being trained and exposed to positive values this can support stabilisation in the region and a more successful economic performance of the beneficiaries. This subject is also partially addressed by the Call for Proposals Capacity Building in the field of Sport under Erasmus+ whose main aim though is to support the capacity of grassroots sport organisation in the region.

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

The main responsible bodies for the actions will be with the relevant National Coordinating Bodies (same as in the current call). These have been nominated by the administrations responsible for sport in the relevant IPA beneficiaries in 2018. They are:

- **Albania:** Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth
- **Bosnia and Herzegovina:** Ministry of Civil Affairs
- **Kosovo:** Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports
- **Montenegro:** Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports

At the time of the launch of the procedure for a direct grant, administrations responsible for sport in relevant IPA beneficiaries may propose different coordinating bodies.

The main role of the relevant coordinating bodies is to help ensure that the European Week of Sport initiative is successfully implemented with an important turnout of participants, gets good visibility in the participating countries, and that the messages of the Week reaches as many citizens as possible. The main role will be to prepare a plan, coordinate implementation and build the network of sport stakeholders at IPA beneficiary level.

3. DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

3.1. Intervention Logic

The underlying intervention logic for this action is to deploy sport as a multi-purpose vector to achieve different goals at once: bring people together, promote tolerance and inter-cultural understanding and encourage the adoption of healthy habits and physical exercise. The Western Balkans, as a region with a troubled past, can use sport to create new and stronger links in a positive way.

The Action aims at improving regional cooperation and good neighbourly relations through the mobilisation of youth and civil society.

To achieve this, the Action aims to organise sport events in schools and universities, sport competitions for students, targeted activities for specific groups (women, people with disabilities), studies and conferences. All these activities take place around the year with a peak moment constituted by the European Week of Sport being when the whole Europe will be celebrating sport and many other activities and communication happen. These activities are reflected in Outcome 1 of the logical framework.

National Coordinating Bodies are in position to contact sport federation and involve the youth. This makes them the best candidate to implement the project. In perspective, the implementation of the project itself and the successful organisation of activities, allows the National Coordinating Bodies to raise their capacity in involving the youth while also promoting common European values. In addition to this, thanks to the cooperation among themselves and other National Coordinating Bodies from the Erasmus+ Programme Countries, they have the chance to share best practices on how to best involve an increasing number of participants. These activities are reflected in Outcomes 2 and 3 of the logical framework.

These events will promote the values of sport but also advocate for European values through sport. These values, as mentioned in Section 3.3 (e.g. tolerance, social inclusion, sustainability, equality) lay the foundation for more open and tolerant societies. There will also be opportunities for cross-border activities and meetings where individuals, especially young people and civil society organisations can meet and share positive experiences together. These elements are reflected in the three outputs in the logical framework.

The EU4Youth Action pursues as a goal to increase the participation in sport, especially among the youth. The project is expected to reach this goal through the organisation of events taking place all year round and the European Week of Sport taking place at the start of the school and academic year (23-30 September) as a highlight. The expected result is that through the organisation of a large number of sport events with a capillary outreach in each country, the #BeActive message will reach a sizeable part of the population. In the medium-to long-run, it is expected that more and more young people will do more sport, will have taken positive health habits and will be, in general, healthier. Conferences and studies are expected to side sport activities so to reach the maximum result throughout the implementation of the Action.

3.2. Indicative Activities

The Action will involve implementation of sport-related promotional activities under the European Week of Sport the #BeActive campaign in the relevant IPA beneficiaries in the Western Balkans and ensure visibility of the European Week of Sport. These will be complemented by additional sport events and activities, including to promote sport and physical activities, healthy lifestyles and best practice sharing.

The coordinating bodies will plan the implementation of the #BeActive campaign in the relevant IPA beneficiaries in line with the guidelines of the campaign. This activity consists of the following actions:

Operational implementation

- Organisation of year-round events to promote sport, physical activity and healthy lifestyles;
- Organise opportunities for dialogue and discussion on values through sport;
- Plan and implement mobility opportunities both for the staff managing the project and for individuals
- Preparation of the European Week of Sport (such as trainings of relevant coordinating bodies);
- Implementation of activities planned during the European Week of Sport and/or in partnership with the European Week of Sport in 2022 and in 2023. The #BeActive Night or #BeActive Village could be part of the activities;
- On-line and communication campaigns, ensuring visibility for the European Week of Sport initiative, as a multiplier of the centrally-developed #BeActive campaign and spreading the messages of the campaign to local communities. The coordinating bodies will also collect applications for the #BeActive awards scheme.

Coordination and management

- Reporting and follow-up activities;
- Coordination: ensuring close links with key players in the relevant IPA beneficiary during the year (e.g., National Olympic Committees, sport federations and confederations, schools, other civil society organisations, municipalities and/or local public administration, the media, etc.). These will play an important role not only during the European Week of Sport but also in keeping the message of the Week (#BeActive) alive throughout the year.

3.3. Mainstreaming

Environmental Protection, Climate Change and Biodiversity

The individual projects within the Action shall be designed in an eco-friendly way and shall incorporate green practices in all its facets. Participants in the events shall be offered opportunities to discuss and learn about environmental issues, reflecting about what can be done at different levels. The organisers shall plan green and sustainable ways of implementing their projects. All events and activities will minimise the use of single-use plastics (including bottles) and of non-recyclable materials.

Gender equality and empowerment of women and girls

As per OECD Gender DAC codes identified in section 1.1, this action is labelled as G2. This implies that action will strive to promote gender equality, as well take measures to achieve equal opportunities for males and females in all aspects regarding the implementation of the action. Special attention in this regard will be given to young people, including young talented athletes and staff, since the gender gap is still very high in this area (female participation in sport and in coaching). The award criteria will mention gender sensitive aspects in order to balance the share of men and women participating in this action, as well as to encourage vulnerable groups to actively participate.

This implies that this Action will promote equal participation of women and men. This will be secured through appropriate information and publicity material, in the design of actions and accessibility to the opportunities they offer. An appropriate male/female balance will be sought on all the managing bodies and activities of the action.

Human Rights

Sport is an effective tool for implementing social policy in the broad context. It has the power to unite, build bridges between cultures, and enhance understanding between people. Sport is a factor of inclusion of minorities and vulnerable groups. Particular measures will be developed to reduce inter-ethnic distance/ promote social cohesion by fostering participation of young people from all social backgrounds.

This implies that this Action will promote equal participation of women and men. This will be secured through appropriate information and publicity material, in the design of actions and accessibility to the opportunities they offer. An appropriate male/female balance will be sought on all the managing bodies and activities of the action.

Conflict sensitivity, peace and resilience

This action helps to ensure an inclusive and transparent dialogue, consultation and communication with all relevant stakeholders in the respective sectors. Sport organisations are mostly Civil Society Organisations and organisations run by citizens on a voluntary basis. This action will contribute to enhancing active citizenship and participatory model of democracy.

3.4. Risks and Lessons Learned

Category	Risks	Likelihood (High/Medium/Low)	Impact (High/Medium/Low)	Mitigating measures
1-External environment	Risk 3 – COVID-19 cancelling events	H	M	Grant holders will be invited to take measures to reduce physical contacts or plan alternative events (e.g. outdoors)
3-People and the organisation	Risk 1 - Limited implementation capacity of relevant coordinating bodies	L	M	Continuous support to the four National Coordinating Bodies implementing the grants to resolve any issues related to implementation
3-People and the organisation	Risk 2 - Low interest of sport organisations in the Western Balkans to participate	L	M	Mitigation would include broad promotion of the action and involvement of main sport actors such as the National Olympic Committees and sport federations

Lessons Learned:

The current action under IPA II (EU4Youth, European Week of Sport in the Western Balkans) is still ongoing. The Sport Unit, in the Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture is in contact with the four beneficiaries and is following up the implementation. In December-January 2021, the beneficiaries provided the first interim report. The Sport Unit will take the lessons learned from these reports into account.

3.5. Indicative Logical Framework Matrix

Results	Results chain: Main expected results	Indicators	Baselines 2023	Target 2024	Sources of data	Assumptions
Impact	To improve regional cooperation and good neighbourly relations through the mobilisation of youth and civil society	Demographic, labour market and social inclusion indicators are on a positive trend	2022 Findings of EU enlargement reports show a positive trend	(2023) Findings of EU enlargement reports note a positive trend	(2024) Findings of EU enlargement reports show a positive trend	<i>Not applicable</i>
Outcome 1	Healthy lifestyles and active citizenship are promoted.	1.1 Number of people taking up physical activity (including data disaggregated by sex) thanks to the Action 1.2 Number of involved sport organisations 1.3 Number of sport events 1.4 Percentage of young people (aged <30 years) taking part to the events 1.5 Number of individuals with disability taking part to the events	1.1 100 000 1.2 120 1.3 300 1.4 >65% 1.5 1000	1.1 250 000 1.2 200 1.3 600 1.4 >65% 1.5 2000	Action reports	
Outcome 2	European Common values are promoted	2.1 Number of Joint sport events promoting values 2.2 Share of male and female participants to events	2.1 50 2.2 At least 40% for the gender with the lowest share	2.1 150 2.2 At least 40% for the gender with the lowest share	Action reports	
Outcome 3	Joint sport activities organised in the region increased	3.1 Overall number of joint events organised in the region	3.1 Increase compared to previous reporting period	3.1 Increase compared to previous reporting period	Action reports	
Output 1 related to Outcome 1	Increased mobility in the region	1.1.1 Number of projects including a mobility aspect	1.1.1 20	1.1.1 80	Action reports	
Output 1 related to Outcome 2	Enhanced cooperation with EU countries	2.1.1 EU and Erasmus+ Programme countries National Coordinating Bodies invited to events	30	100	Action reports	
Output 1 related to Outcome 3	Enhanced regional cooperation	3.1.1 Number of projects with cross-border participation	3.1.1 At least one per beneficiary	3.1.1 At least one per beneficiary	Action reports	

4. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

4.1. Financing Agreement

In order to implement this action, it is not envisaged to conclude financing agreements with the relevant IPA III beneficiaries.

4.2. Indicative Implementation Period

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

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

4.3. Methods of implementation

The Commission will ensure that the EU appropriate rules and procedures for providing financing to third parties are respected, including review procedures, where appropriate, and compliance of the action with EU restrictive measures⁶.

4.3.1. Direct Management (Grants)

(a) Purpose of the grant(s)

The purpose of the grants is to organise the European Week of Sport 2023-24 and year-round events in the Western Balkans. The grants have as main aims to promote sport and physical activity in the region and to promote common European values to ultimately support good neighbourhood relations.

The European Week of Sport initiative is part of an overall policy aiming at increasing the levels of participation in sport and physical activity in the EU. This level is stagnating and in some Member States even declining (as the 2018 Eurobarometer survey demonstrates). The situation in the Western Balkans is similar. This has an impact on society, people's health and results in direct and indirect economic costs (e.g., health care, employability, productivity). The need for action to better promote sport and physical activity has been regularly underlined at the policy level.

(b) Justification of a direct grant

Under the responsibility of the Commission's authorising officer responsible, the grants may be awarded without a call for proposals to the National Coordinating Bodies for the European Week of Sport. The four National Coordinating Bodies were nominated by Albania, Bosnia Herzegovina, Kosovo and Montenegro following an official request sent by DG EAC in 2018. The main responsibility for the action will be with the relevant National Coordinating Bodies (same as in the current call). These have been nominated by the administrations responsible for sport in the relevant IPA beneficiaries in 2018 and they are:

- Albania: Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth
- Bosnia and Hercegovina: Ministry of Civil Affairs

⁶ www.sanctionsmap.eu Please note that the sanctions map is an IT tool for identifying the sanctions regimes. The source of the sanctions stems from legal acts published in the Official Journal (OJ). In case of discrepancy between the published legal acts and the updates on the website it is the OJ version that prevails.

- Kosovo: Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports
- Montenegro: Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports

Under the responsibility of the Commission’s authorising officer responsible, the recourse to an award of a grant without a call for proposals is justified based on Article 195 (c) of the Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 July 2018 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union, i.e. “bodies with a de facto monopoly”. These ministries are the only ones having the necessary structures and networks to implement the Action. Considering the multifaceted nature of the Action ranging from the organisation of events including physical activity, to sharing of values and organising domestic and international mobility opportunities, no other entity would be better placed than the Ministries in charge of sport.

4.4. Scope of geographical eligibility for procurement and grants

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

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

4.5. Indicative Budget

Indicative Budget components	EU contribution (amount in EUR)	Indicative third-party contribution (amount in EUR)
Budget line: 15.020101.01		
Methods of implementation – cf. section 4.3		
All outcomes composed of	1 000 000	N.A.
Grants (direct management) – cf. section 4.3.1	N.A.	
Grants – total envelope under section 4.3.1	1 000 000	N.A.
Evaluation – cf. section 5.2 Audit – cf. section 5.3	shall be covered by another Decision	N.A.
Communication and visibility – cf. section 6	N.A.	N.A.
Totals	1 000 000	N.A.

4.6. Organisational Set-up and Responsibilities

The main responsibility for the implementation of the action lies with the relevant National Coordinating Bodies (same as in the current Call). These have been nominated by the administrations responsible for sport in the relevant IPA beneficiaries in 2018 and are:

- **Albania:** Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth
- **Bosnia and Hercegovina:** Ministry of Civil Affairs
- **Kosovo:** Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports

- **Montenegro:** Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports

The Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture will monitor the implementation of the projects with scheduled meetings and request ad hoc reports. These meetings and reports will be an occasion to learn more about the accomplishment of each project, the challenges and the state of implementation of all the activities.

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

5. PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

5.1. Monitoring and Reporting

The day-to-day technical and financial monitoring of the implementation of this action will be a continuous process, and part of the implementing partner's responsibilities. To this aim, the implementing partner shall establish a permanent internal, technical and financial monitoring system for the action and elaborate regular progress reports (not less than annual) and final reports. Every report shall provide an accurate account of implementation of the action, difficulties encountered, changes introduced, as well as the degree of achievement of its results (Outputs and direct Outcomes) as measured by corresponding indicators. The Commission may undertake additional project monitoring visits both through its own staff and through independent consultants recruited directly by the Commission for independent monitoring reviews (or recruited by the responsible agent contracted by the Commission for implementing such reviews).

Roles and responsibilities for data collection, analysis and monitoring:

The Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture will be in charge of the activities of data collection analysis and monitoring.

5.2. Evaluation

In case a mid-term evaluation is envisaged: It will be carried out for learning purposes, in particular with respect to the implementation of the European Week of Sport and the organisation of joint mobility activities in the region.

In case a final or ex-post evaluation is envisaged: It will be carried out for accountability and learning purposes at various levels (including for policy revision), taking into account in particular the fact that by 2024, the Action will have been running under the IPA II and IPA III Programmes for a total of four years.

The Commission shall inform the implementing partner at least 1 month in advance of the dates envisaged for the evaluation missions. The implementing partner shall collaborate efficiently and effectively with the evaluation experts, and inter alia provide them with all necessary information and documentation, as well as access to the project premises and activities. The evaluation reports shall be shared with the IPA beneficiaries and other key stakeholders following the best practice of evaluation dissemination. The implementing partner and the Commission shall analyse the conclusions and recommendations of the evaluations and, where appropriate, in agreement with the IPA beneficiaries, jointly decide on the follow-up actions to be taken and any adjustments necessary, including, if indicated, the reorientation of the Action.

The financing of the evaluation shall be covered by another measure constituting a Financing Decision.

5.3. Audit and Verifications

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

6. COMMUNICATION AND VISIBILITY

Visibility of EU funding and communication about objectives and impact of Actions are a legal obligation for all Actions funded by the EU, as set out in the EU communication and visibility requirements in force.

In particular, the recipients of EU funding shall acknowledge the origin of the EU funding and ensure its proper visibility by:

- providing a statement highlighting the support received from the EU in a visible manner on all documents and communication material relating to the implementation of the funds, including on an official website and social media accounts, where these exist; and
- promoting the actions and their results by providing coherent, effective and proportionate targeted information to multiple audiences, including the media.

Visibility and communication measures shall be implemented, as relevant, by the national administrations (for instance, concerning the reforms linked to EU budget support), entrusted entities, contractors and grant beneficiaries. Appropriate contractual obligations shall be included, respectively, in financing agreements, delegation agreements, and procurement and grant contracts.

The measures shall be based on a specific Communication and Visibility Plan, established and implemented in line with the EU communication and visibility requirements in force. The plan shall include, inter alia, a communication narrative and master messages for the Action, customised for the various target audiences (stakeholders, civil society, general public, etc.)

Visibility and communication measures specific to this Action shall be complementary to the broader communication activities implemented directly by the European Commission services and/or the EU Delegations and Offices. The European Commission and the EU Delegations and Offices should be fully informed of the planning and implementation of the specific visibility and communication activities, notably with respect to the communication narrative and master messages. It is the responsibility of the implementing partner(s) to keep the EU Delegations/Office and the European Commission fully informed of the planning and implementation of the specific visibility and communication activities.

7. SUSTAINABILITY

This Action is meant to be sustainable in the medium to long run. While the outcomes and outputs of the Action are unlikely to produce immediate results (e.g. uptake of physical activity and spreading of European values), in the medium to long run, the Action is expected to reach an increasingly wide share of the youth and therefore spread positive habits and values among a wider population.

After a few years of implementation of the European Week of Sport at a small scale and one year through funding from the previous instrument IPA II, it is already possible to notice a great level of enthusiasm from the youth that is willing to be part of this Action.