

COMMISSION DECISION

C(2007)5280 of 05/11/2007

adopting a Horizontal Programme for Tempus, Erasmus Mundus and Youth in Action in the Western Balkans under the IPA-Transition Assistance and Institution Building component in 2007

THE COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Community,

Having regard to Council Regulation (EC) No 1085/2006 of 17 July 2006 establishing an Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA)¹, and in particular Article 14(2) thereof,

Whereas:

- (1) Regulation (EC) No 1085/2006 lays down the objectives and main principles for pre-accession assistance to candidate and potential candidate countries.
- (2) In accordance with Article 7 of Regulation (EC) No 1085/2006, the assistance should be provided through multi-annual or annual programmes, which can be established by country and by component, or, as appropriate, by group of countries or by theme. These programmes should be drawn up in accordance with the general policy framework referred to in Article 4 of Regulation (EC) No 1085/2006 and the relevant multi-annual indicative planning document referred to in Article 6 of that Regulation.
- (3) The Council established for all candidate and potential candidate countries an Accession Partnership or a European Partnership. The Commission has adopted on 29 May 2007 a Multi-Beneficiary Multi-annual indicative planning document (MIPD) 2007/2009 which presents indicative allocations for the main priorities for pre-accession assistance to all countries concerned².
- (4) The European Council underlines the desirability of promoting people-to-people contacts by making available more scholarships for the students of the region.³
- (5) Therefore, the horizontal programme for Tempus, Erasmus Mundus and Youth in Action in the Western Balkans under the IPA Transition Assistance and Institution Building Component for 2007 aims at providing the following assistance:
 - to contribute to an area of cooperation in the field of higher education involving the European Union and the Western Balkans;
 - to enhance the quality of European higher education by fostering cooperation with the Western Balkan countries in order to improve the development of human resources and to promote dialogue and understanding between people and cultures;

¹ OJ L 210, 31.7.2006, p. 82

² C (2007)2205, 29.05.07

³ Bruxelles European Council, 14-15/12/2006, 16879/1/06 REV 1

- to strengthen democracy and civil society in the Western Balkans by facilitating the integration and active participation of young people and by developing youth structures and the voluntary sector.

- (5) This decision meets the requirements of Article 90 of Commission Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2342/2002 of 23 December 2002 laying down detailed rules for the implementation of Council Regulation No 1605/2002⁴ (hereafter: “Implementing Rules”) and constitutes thus a financing decision within the meaning of Article 75 of Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002 of 25 June 2002 on the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities⁵ (hereafter: “Financial Regulation”).
- (6) In accordance with Article 4 (1), point 25 of Commission Decision 2005/56/EC of 14 January 2005⁶, the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) is entrusted with the management of this program.
- (7) The measures provided for by this Decision are in accordance with the opinion of the IPA Committee.

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

Article 1

The horizontal programme for Tempus, Erasmus Mundus and Youth in Action in the Western Balkans under the IPA Transition Assistance and Institution Building Component for 2007, as set out in the Annex, is hereby adopted.

This programme shall be implemented by indirect centralised management.

It shall be implemented by means of a Financing Agreement to be concluded between the Commission and the Governments of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia including Kosovo as defined by UNSCR 1244.

Article 2

The maximum amount of Community assistance shall be **€ 30.55 million** to be financed through Item 22.02.07.01 (= regional and horizontal programmes) of the General Budget of the European Communities for 2007.

Done at Brussels, [...]

For the Commission

[...]

Member of the Commission

⁴ OJ L 357, 31.12.2002, p. 1 Regulation as last amended by Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 478/2007 (OJ L 111 of 28.04.2007)

⁵ OJ L 248, 16.9.2002, p.1. Regulation as amended by Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1995/2006 (OJ L 390, 30.12.2006, p.1).

⁶ OJ L 24, 27.1.2005, p. 35. Decision as amended by Decision 2007/114/EC (OJ L 49, 17.2.2007, p. 21).

ANNEX: HORIZONTAL PROGRAMME FOR TEMPUS, ERASMUS MUNDUS AND YOUTH IN ACTION IN THE WESTERN BALKANS

1. IDENTIFICATION

The programme identification should be completed as follows:

Beneficiaries	Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia including Kosovo as defined by UNSCR 1244
Programme	<i>Tempus, Erasmus Mundus and Youth in Action Programmes</i>
CRIS number	2007/19333
Year	2007
Cost	€ 30.55 m
Implementing Authority	The European Commission on behalf of the Beneficiary countries Body to which the Commission delegates implementation tasks in accordance with Article 54 of the Financial Regulation: EAC Executive Agency (EACEA)
Final Dates:	Contracting: <i>two years following the date of conclusion of the Financing Agreements</i>
	Financing Agreements: at the latest by 31 December 2008
	Execution : <i>two years following the end date for contracting</i>
Sector Code	11420
Budget lines	[22.02.07.01]: regional and horizontal programmes
Programming Task Manager	DG Enlargement, Unit D3 "Regional Programmes"
Implementation Task Manager	EAC Executive Agency (EACEA) DG EAC (for some parts of the Tempus Programme)

2. PRIORITY AXES¹ / (MEASURES) / PROJECT

2.a Priority axes

EU cooperation with the Western Balkans aims at creating an area of peace, stability, prosperity and freedom. Youth participation is considered as a key element in this process. This is why the Youth in Action Programme especially encourages cooperation with this region.

In the same spirit, the European Union recognises the importance of higher education for economic and social development. Higher education plays a crucial role in producing high quality human resources, in disseminating scientific discovery and advanced knowledge through teaching and educating future generations of citizens, high level professionals and political leaders, who in turn can contribute to better governance.

The promotion of international cooperation between the European Union and the Western Balkans Youth organisations and higher education institutions, and in particular the facilitation of mobility,

¹ The priority axes correspond to the main areas of intervention foreseen in the MIPDs.

is a win-win situation for its potential contribution to the mutual enrichment of partners and of better understanding of people.

In the light of this, Education and Youth sectors have been included in the Multi-Beneficiary MIPD (2007-2009) as the seventh area of intervention.

Education:

According to the Communication from the Commission on the Western Balkans, opportunities for the mobility of teachers and both undergraduate and graduate students will be expanded as from 2007, which makes it necessary to undertake concrete actions under IPA. Furthermore, the European/Accession Partnerships of the Western Balkan countries consider efforts to improve the education system and to ensure the implementation of the Bologna criteria in higher education as a priority.

The Multi-Beneficiary MIPD (2007-2009) has indicated that the two primary programmes through which IPA assistance will be provided in the area of Education are Tempus and Erasmus Mundus.

- The Tempus Programme was adopted in 1990 by the Council to encourage cooperation in the field of higher education between the Member States and the Central and Eastern European countries. Progressively, between 1993 and 2000, the Western Balkan countries were included in the Programme. Over the period 2001-2006, the European Community has allocated over €101m to the Tempus Programme for the Western Balkan countries. This programme has supported the development of quality higher education in these countries and should continue to provide assistance for Bologna implementation and reform of higher education, as long as they do not participate in the internal programme in the field of lifelong learning. Turkey is not concerned, as it has already participated fully in the Socrates programme, and will participate fully in the Lifelong Learning programme as from 2007.
- Erasmus Mundus started in 2004 as a Community programme aiming at enhancing the quality of European higher education and at promoting intercultural understanding. It includes a scholarship scheme (Action 2) which allows non-EU country graduate students to obtain an Erasmus Mundus master degree in the EU. On the top of the general scholarship scheme, a specific "Western Balkan Window" was established through the Regional Action Programme 2006 to allocate extra scholarships to students from the Western Balkans for the academic year 2007-2008. To address the recommendation of the Communication from the Commission on the Western Balkans, the Western Balkans Window should continue.

In addition, the Commission now proposes to expand the number of scholarships for students at all levels as well as of academic staff in the Western Balkans countries in 2007. This follows both the recommendation of the Salzburg Communication and the European Council Conclusions in December 2006 which highlighted the desirability of promoting people-to-people contacts by making more such scholarships available. Therefore, it is proposed to provide these additional scholarships by extending the current Erasmus Mundus External Cooperation Window to the Western Balkans.

The two schemes are open to Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Kosovo (UNSCR 1244), Montenegro and Serbia. Turkey is not concerned as it has already participated fully in the Socrates Programme, and will participate fully in the Lifelong Learning Programme as from 2007².

² In the long term, some of the Western Balkan countries will probably participate fully in the Lifelong Learning Programme (2007-2013). This will be achieved in a differentiated time schedule according to each country's preparedness and capacity to put in place the necessary administrative structures for the implementation of the programme at national level (LLP National agencies). In the short term, projects supported through the

Youth in Action:

Non-formal education and youth intercultural exchanges play an important role in creating an area of peace, stability, prosperity and freedom. The Commission Communication on the Western Balkans of January 2006 indicates that the Commission will also create new opportunities under the Youth Programme. The Youth in Action Programme succeeded to the Youth programme as from 2007. Like the Youth Programme, it supports projects leading to an enhanced intercultural dialogue and tolerance among young people, social inclusion of disadvantaged youngsters, as well as the strengthening of youth NGOs and the development of civil society. Most types of project co-financed by the Youth in Action Programme require a partnership to be established between two or more partners. A distinction is made between Programme Countries (EU Member States, EFTA Member States, Turkey and possibly in the future the Western Balkan countries) and Partner Countries (including for the moment the Western Balkan countries).

Although the modalities of participation of Western Balkan organisations introduced in 2005 will be confirmed under the new Youth in Action programme - covering the period 2007-2013 – the EU is called to further enhance its actions and instruments in the field of non-formal education and youth in the region. In this context, the establishment of a new “Western Balkan window”, funded by IPA within the Youth in Action programme, will contribute to achieve the objectives set in the Commission Communication on the Western Balkans of January 2006 by allowing more projects submitted by organisations from the Western Balkan countries to be supported.

This initiative is open to Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Kosovo (UNSCR 1244), Montenegro and Serbia. Turkey is not concerned as it is already participating fully in the Youth Programme³, and will participate in the successor programme Youth in action as from 2007.

2.b Description of projects grouped per priority axis and (if relevant) per measure

• Tempus

Project Purpose:

- Support the development of the higher education systems through cooperation between local higher education institutions and those of the EU Member States;
- Facilitate the active participation of the Western Balkans in a common European higher education area.

Expected results:

- Further alignment with EU standards;
- Improved university administration;
- Greater regional cooperation between universities.

Erasmus Mundus Cooperation Window will increase opportunities for beneficiaries in the region until the cited national structures are established.

³ In the long term, some of the Western Balkan countries will probably participate fully in the Youth in Action programme (2007 -2013). This will be achieved in a differentiated time schedule according to each country's preparedness and capacity to put in place the necessary administrative structures for the implementation of the programme at national level (Youth National agencies). In the short term, projects supported through the window will contribute to increase opportunities for beneficiaries in the region until the cited national structures are established.

Activities:

The third phase of the Tempus programme has expired at the end of 2006. There is a clear consensus within the Commission to continue Tempus with its strong focus on institutional co-operation for the period 2007-2013. Tempus IV will provide for three components: (a) Joint Projects based on multilateral partnerships between higher education institutions in the EU and the partner countries including mobility activities for students, academic staff and university administrators; (b) Structural Projects seeking to contribute to the development and reform of education institutions and systems in partner countries, as well as to enhance their quality and increase their convergence with EU developments and (c) accompanying measures comprising meetings of project co-ordinators and other stakeholders, dissemination activities as well as support to the National Tempus Offices in the partner countries. In addition, the EC can carry out other relevant activities like thematic conferences, studies on specific issues and activities aiming at the identification and dissemination of good practice.

Tempus projects are implemented by university consortia, selected through an annual call for proposals published in the Official Journal and on the programme's website. It is envisaged that the first deadline under the new programme would be at the beginning of 2008.

EC Delegations in the Partner countries/provinces will be closely involved at the various stages of the implementation of the programme. Firstly, EC Delegations will negotiate the list of national priorities with the competent authorities in the Partner countries/provinces. EC Delegations will be consulted during the selection of proposals. RELEX, ELARG, AIDCO and EAC will be invited by the Executive Agency to participate in selection panels.

The essential selection and award criteria for the award of grants are laid down in the Practical Guide to contract procedures for EC external actions.

- **Erasmus Mundus**

Project Purpose:

- Enable highly qualified graduates from the Western Balkans to engage in postgraduate studies at European universities (Western Balkans Window);
- Enable mutual enrichment and better understanding between the European Union Member States and the Western Balkan countries through the exchange of academic staff and students at all levels, improving their knowledge and skills at higher education level (External Cooperation Window).

Expected results:

- Increased mobility of students and academic staff;
- Enhanced intercultural understanding.

Activities:

- Award of scholarships to post-graduate students from the Western Balkan countries to participate in master courses jointly organised by EU higher education institutions (Western Balkan Window);
- Organisation and implementation of individual mobility for academic staff and students at all levels from the Western Balkans (External Cooperation Window).

- **Youth in Action**

Project Purpose:

- Promote youth exchanges and other activities in the field of non-formal education for young people;

- Build long-lasting and solid partnerships as well as promoting the exchange of youth work expertise and know how between non-governmental and governmental organisations established in the EU Member States and in the Western Balkan countries;
- Contribute to strengthening democracy and civil society by facilitating the integration and active participation of young people, and by developing youth structures and the voluntary sector.

Expected results:

- Increased number of intercultural exchanges, cooperation and solidarity activities among youth of the Western Balkans region.
- Established partnerships and contacts between youth NGOs in the Western Balkans and in the EU through the Youth in Action Programme.

Activities:

- Support Youth Exchanges offering an opportunity for groups of young people from the region to meet and learn about each other's cultures;
- Encourage youth to take part individually or in groups in non-profit, voluntary activities abroad including, helping in local projects in a wide range of fields: social, ecological and environmental, arts and culture, new technologies, leisure and sports;
- Support training and networking of those active in youth work and youth organisations, and in particular the exchange of experiences, expertise and good practice between themselves, as well as activities which may lead to long-lasting quality projects and partnerships and networks.

2.c Overview of past and on going assistance (EU / IFI / Bilateral and national assistance) including lesson learned and donor coordination

- **Tempus**

Programme / Year	Allocated (million€)
Tempus CARDS 2003	14.9
Tempus CARDS 2004	16.4
Tempus CARDS 2005	17.9
Tempus CARDS 2006	12.7*

* In addition to this amount, Croatia had a budget of €4.5m (financed under Phare).

Since the establishment of the Tempus programme in the Western Balkans, the budget has been allocated and centrally managed on a country basis.

Past assistance has supported the development of higher education through the Tempus Programme encouraging partner countries to adopt structure and curricula compatible with the Bologna process. The Western Balkans have been intensively involved in the definition of national priorities and in the reform of their higher education system.

The final evaluation of the second phase of the Tempus programme (1994 - 2000) and the mid-term evaluation of its third phase (2000 - 2006) were carried out in the period between October 2002 and September 2003. The results were published in October 2003.

Both the final evaluation of the second phase and the mid-term evaluation of the third phase confirmed the relevance of the programme to support higher education reform and development as well as the validity of its intervention logic and management approaches.

Apart from the evaluations carried out in 2002/03, over the past two years DG EAC has launched three major studies on the sustainability of Tempus projects, on university-enterprise co-operation and on the regional impact which the programme has had. The results of the studies equally underline the relevance of the programme and confirm its intervention logic.

- **Erasmus Mundus**

- The Western Balkan Window was created at the end of 2006. The Call for Proposals has been launched under the CARDS 2006 Programme, but at this stage, data related to the students' selection is not yet available. However, in 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 third countries in the world with the exception of the candidate countries. The participation and success rate of the Beneficiaries from the Western Balkan has been the following: 36 out of total 1689 funded students (12 for the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, 10 for Serbia & Montenegro, 10 for Albania, 3 for Kosovo, 1 for Bosnia and Herzegovina). Through this Western Balkan Window, the Commission aims to award a maximum of 100 scholarships to students from the Western Balkans (including Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia), conditionally to the availability of a sufficient number of quality applications.

The budget breakdown by beneficiary (see point 3.1) has been calculated on the basis of the results of the student's selection in the general Erasmus Mundus Programme (main list) as well as on the estimations of the Western Balkan Window 2006. The budget breakdown for 2008 will be calculated following the results of the present Programme.

- The External Cooperation Window was initiated last year by AIDCO for the ENPI countries, the Central Asian Republics and the East-of-Jordan countries. Since the Council Conclusions in December 2006 highlighted the desirability of promoting people-to-people contacts in the Western Balkan by making more scholarships available, it is proposed to extend this Erasmus Mundus External Cooperation Window to the Western Balkans. Since it's a new scheme, no lessons can be learned from the past at this stage. However, the feedback regarding the applications submitted under the first Call for Proposals launched by AIDCO in October 2006 was very positive. The call has been a real success: 87 proposals from universities have been received to participate in the programme and all the geographical lots have been covered even without any preliminary visibility campaign.

- **Youth in Action**

Since 2000, organisations and young people from countries of the Western Balkans have had the possibility of participating as partners in certain of the activities supported through the Youth programme. In 2005, the Commission launched a pilot initiative aimed at reinforcing the level of participation of organisations from the region in the Youth programme. Through this pilot phase, organisations from the Western Balkans were granted the opportunity to become coordinating organisations of Youth projects and to directly apply to the Commission for a programme grant. Despite the limited resources, the results of the pilot phase were successful both in terms of number of applications received and quality of projects submitted; such results have shown that there is a demand for greater opportunities of participation in Youth projects in the region.

2.d Cross cutting issues, where applicable

- *Equal opportunities and non-discrimination;*

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 educational processes and the impact of higher education on equal opportunities.

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 cannot fail to promote the change of gender roles and societal stereotypes, avoiding any sort of cultural prejudice in 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 who will benefit from 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.

- *Support to minority and vulnerable groups;*

Rights of minorities should be taken into account when evaluating the quality of all projects proposed. Specific attention will be paid to this dimension when determining the benefit of mobility activities.

- *Environmental protection;*

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

2.e Benchmarks

This section should indicate the benchmarks for the tendering and contracting of the funds.

	N		N+1 (cumulative)		N+2 (cumulative)	
	EU	NF*	EU	NF*	EU	NF*
Call for proposals launched (number)			1 (Tempus) 1 (Erasmus Mundus, External Cooperation Window) 2 (Youth)		1 (Tempus) 1 (Erasmus Mundus, External Cooperation Window) 2 (Youth)	
Framework contracts			5 (Tempus)		5	
Call for Tenders			0		2	
Contracting Rate (%)	0		70		100	

* In case of parallel co-financing

3. BUDGET (amounts in million €)

3.1. Indicative budget table

EU – IPA assistance	Beneficiary							Total IPA assistance	Total Co-financing of Project (indicative)	Total (IPA + Co-financing)
	Albania	BiH	Croatia	fYRoM	Kosovo	Montenegro	Serbia			
Tempus	1.05	2.4	3.0	3.5	1.8	0.8	7.0	19.55	1.03	20.58
Erasmus Mundus 'Western Balkan Window'	0.7	0.5	0.7	0.7	0.5	0.2	0.7	4.0	-	4.0
Erasmus Mundus 'External Cooperation Window'	1.0	0.5	-	1.5	0.5	0.5	2.0	6.0	-	6.0
Youth in Action								1.0	0.25	1.25
TOTAL	2.75	3.4	3.7	5.7	2.8	1.5	9.7	30.55	1.28	31.83

3.2 Principle of Co-Financing applying to the projects funded under the programme

For Tempus, the total EC contribution to the implementation of the 2007 Tempus Programme in the Western Balkans will amount to **€19,55m**. The funded consortia will need to make available a co-funding of at least 5% of the eligible project cost. This co-financing comes typically from the participating higher education institutions themselves. Therefore, the total cost of the Programme should be estimated to at least €20.58 m.

There is no co-financing under Erasmus Mundus Programme. The full amount of the scholarships (**€10.0m**) is provided to the university consortia for the mobility of students and academic staff by the European Commission.

As regard as the Youth in Action Programme (**€1.0m**), the grant cannot finance the entire costs of the project. Promoters must show their commitment to the project by finding financing sources other than the Community grant (average of 20% on the top of the Community Grant, i.e. €250.000). This can be done, for example, by running fund-raising activities, by adding own resources, or by requesting grants from other organisations (e.g. municipalities or other local or regional authorities). Proof of co-financing must be included in the final report.

The total cost of the Programme for Youth in Action should be estimated to €1.25m

4. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

4.1 Method of implementation

The programme will be implemented on an indirect centralised basis by the European Commission following Article 53.1 (a) of the Financial Regulation and corresponding provisions of the Implementing Rules. The Tempus Programme will be sub-delegated to DG EAC which will manage the Programme until June 2008.

Implementation tasks are delegated under Article 54.2 (a) of the Financial Regulation to the Executive Agency for Education, Audiovisual and Culture, 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. In accordance with this mandate extension, the agency will now manage all the Youth in Action, Tempus (as of 01/07/2008) and Erasmus Mundus programmes in which IPA beneficiaries are involved.

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 programmes⁴, 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).

4.2 General rules for procurement and grant award procedures

Grant award procedures shall follow the provisions of Part 1, Title VI of the Financial Regulation and Part 1, Title VI of its Implementing Rules.

The Commission shall also use the procedural guidelines and standard templates and models facilitating the application of the above rules provided for in the "Practical Guide to contract procedures for EC external actions" ("Practical Guide") as published on the EuropeAid website⁵ at the date of the initiation of the procurement or grant award procedure.

Procurement shall follow the provisions of Part Two, Title IV of the Financial Regulation and Part Two, Title III, Chapter 3 of its Implementing Rules as well as the rules and procedures for service, supply and works contracts financed from the general budget of the European Communities for the purposes of cooperation with third countries adopted by the Commission on 24 May 2007 (C(2007)2034).

As regards the Tempus Programme, the programme component III (Accompanying Measures) will be implemented through calls for proposals, calls for tender or framework contracts. An estimated maximum of 10% of the operational budget will be used to fund accompanying measures. In an indicative way, activities under this programme component will notably include the following:

(i) three meetings of project coordinators and other stakeholders for an indicative maximum budget of 3% of the total operational envelope to be held end 2008 and during 2009 (to be contracted through 3 specific contracts based on the framework contract for the organisation of conferences);

⁴ OJ L11, 16.1.2003, p. 1.

⁵ http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/work/procedures/implementation/practical_guide/index_en.htm

(ii) dissemination activities for an indicative maximum budget of 3% of the total operational envelope through two thematic seminars to be held end 2008 and during 2009 (to be implemented through 2 specific contracts based on the framework contract for the organisation of conferences) and two studies to be launched in the first and second half of 2009 respectively (to be implemented through 2 calls for tender);

(iii) grant support to National Tempus Offices in the partner countries for an indicative maximum budget of 4% of the total operational envelope following the designation of the Offices by the appropriate authorities. New contracts with National Tempus Offices are expected to be prepared during the second quarter of 2008.

Proposals or bids submitted under the calls for tender or the calls for proposals will be evaluated on the basis of their quality, their design and their cost-effectiveness.

5. Monitoring and evaluation

5.1 Monitoring

The Commission may undertake any actions it deems necessary to monitor the programmes concerned.

5.2 Evaluation

Programmes shall be subject to *ex ante* evaluations, as well as interim and, where relevant, *ex post* evaluations in accordance with Articles 57 and 82 of IPA Implementing Regulation⁶, with the aim of improving the quality, effectiveness and consistency of the assistance from Community funds and the strategy and implementation of the programmes.

The results of *ex ante* and interim evaluation shall be taken into account in the programming and implementation cycle.

The Commission may also carry out strategic evaluations.

6. AUDIT, FINANCIAL CONTROL AND ANTI-FRAUD MEASURES

The accounts and operations of all parties involved in the implementation of this programme, as well as all contracts and agreements implementing this programme, are subject to, on the one hand, the supervision and financial control by the Commission (including the European Anti-Fraud Office), which may carry out checks at its discretion, either by itself or through an outside auditor and, on the other hand, audits by the European Court of Auditors. This includes measures such as ex-ante verification of tendering and contracting carried out by the Delegation in the Beneficiary Country.

In order to ensure the efficient protection of the financial interests of the Community, the Commission (including the European Anti-Fraud Office) may conduct on-the-spot checks and inspections in accordance with the procedures foreseen in Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) 2185/96⁷.

The controls and audits described above are applicable to all contractors, subcontractors and grant beneficiaries who have received Community funds.

⁶ Commission Regulation (EC) No 718/2007 of 12 June 2007, OJ L 170, 29.6.2007, p. 1

⁷ Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) 2185/96 of 11. November 1996, OJ L 292; 15.11.1996; p. 2

7. LIMITED CHANGES

Limited changes in the implementation of this programme affecting essential elements listed under Article 90 of the Implementing Rules to the Financial Regulation, which are of an indicative nature⁸, may be undertaken by the authorising officer by delegation (AOD), or by the authorising officer by sub-delegation (AOSD), in line with the delegation of powers conferred upon him by the AOD, in accordance with the principles of sound financial management without an amending financing decision being necessary.

⁸ These essential elements of an indicative nature are, for grants, the indicative amount of the call for proposals and, for procurement, the indicative number and type of contracts envisaged and the indicative time frame for launching the procurement procedures.